
Bray Arts Journal

Issue 9

May 2010

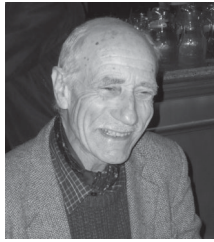
Volume 15



Preview of Bray Arts Evening

Mon 10 May 2010

Upstairs at the Martello, Seafront, Bray
Doors open 8:00pm Adm. 5 / 4 Euro conc.



'Camas Na Gall' - An Idyllic Childhood and **'The Loch Ness Monster is Alive and Well'** are extracts from **Padruig MacFarlane-Barrow's** personal memoirs. Padruig's reading will be accompanied by Artwork Display and music.

Art with **Aoife Fitzgerald**. "My forthcoming show in the Signal Arts Center concentrates on portraits of people around me, some of whom I know, many of whom I have only seen in brief glimpses. I am interested in the feeling of the people, so though it is great when one of my portraits looks like the person I am drawing or painting, it is incidental. I am more interested in the energy or feeling I get from the individual, trying to capture something of their essence rather than their external image."

'La Vie En Rose Lawless!'

Rose Lawless, is a cabaret singer with the ghosts of history breathing down her back. For her, Cabaret is a live pulse connected to the cafes and salons where it was born. She stands on tables, sits on bars, tells jokes - and invokes the raw spirit of *Parisian Fire* into her show, **'La Vie en Rose Lawless.'**



Rose Lawless by Isobel Henihan

She claims she was born 'A Cabaret Animal' - and with total fidelity to that destiny, she sings her own anarchic, clever and charged Cabaret songs. She also interprets some of the great Cabaret numbers with a unique and powerful vision.

'I bring the carousing chaos of the street entertainer under the roof of the respectable.'



Cover by

Aoife Fitzgerald. See Preview of May Arts Evening and Page 7 for details of Signal Arts Exhibition

Bray Arts Evening Review

Monday April 12, 2010

With the hint of Spring in the air after a long drawn out Winter, the meeting drew an audience of about 100 people featuring a larger than usual complement of younger people! This was due in no small part to the popularity of the two guest groups who were due to appear.

First up, Milshogue - an after dinner theatre group, presented a kaleidoscope of scenes from familiar masterpieces of Irish literature and drama. Beginning with



Patrick Dunne & Maire Iremonger in a scene from 'The Playboy of the Western World'

the Donegal-based scene from *Dancing at Lunasa* played by Patrick Dunne, Gerry Gill, Jackie Cullen, Maeve Miller, Máire Iremonger and Ailín O'Donnell, Milshogue captivated the audience who quickly realized that they were in for a treat. Moving smoothly to Dublin with a scene from "Juno and the Paycock", set in the time of the Irish civil war, we met Joxser Daly and enjoyed a moving performance of the character of Mrs Madigan.

This was followed by a spoken rendition of Patrick Kavanagh's well-known "Raglan Road".

Moving to the opposite side of Ireland with "The Playboy of the Western World" the players brought J. M. Synge's masterpiece to life before our very eyes!

By way of contrast, Padraic Colum's "Old Woman of the Road" featured next and the focus swung effortlessly South to Kerry with a scene from J.B. Keane's dramatic story of "The Field". We watched as The Bull McCabe fought desperately to save his land during a brilliant portrayal of the auction scene and the protection of the local interest against the intruding foreigner.

Each item was intriguing and brilliantly performed. Such items as the Dublin poem: "If I Were a Lady", "The Way



Jackie Cullen, Gerry Gill and Pat Dunne in a scene from 'Juno and the Paycock'

that I Am” and Oscar Wilde’s charming: “the Importance of Being Ernest” and a poem by Jem Casey The Bard of Boghall Road kept everyone spellbound. The performance concluded with a return to Donegal with “Monday Girls”.

Inviting audience participation, Milshogue delivered a sing-along version of “the Irish Washerwoman” and finished off with a soliloquy by way of encore.

The audience was transported and showed their deep appreciation with their lengthy applause.

After the interval, the unique Ulte Mara Band took the floor. Consisting of Gerry Anderson and Carlo Palanzuela on guitars, Antonellaf Di Paulo: Vocals and Dance, Rocco Antico: Flute and Tambourine, Eliana Valentini on Vocals and Tambourine, this unique group of players were the



Eliana valentini & Roco Antico

perfect complement to the earlier performance of the evening.

Their music was traditional and came from Naples and Puglia in Southern Italy with forays into the music of the Philippines.

Introducing each item with a much appreciated lengthy description the group introduced an ancient instrument from Southern Italy. This was a feature of the first item which was an enticing slow air which broke out into a lively piece just as we would expect in the Irish tradition! This piece involved the? castanets, keyboard, guitar and fiddle. The four-beat rhythm produced a rousing response from the more than capacity house. The spectacle of traditional dancing by the ladies of the group brought a vivacious spirit to the performance. Rocco later explained that



Antonellaf Di Paulo

improvisation formed the main part of this performance.

We then moved to music of the Philippines featuring the tambourine. This was a slower and more melodic piece with nice touches from the flute. There was a portion of the song where the singer broke into an unaccompanied solo which drew a cheerful jaleo from the audience!

The next item was a song from the 6th century about impossible love between man and woman which featured the intriguing tradition where the handkerchief was the only means of communication. The instruments came in with a more lively number using the same verses. Then the song returned to the slow air without dancing.

Ulte Mara finished the night by inviting people from the audience to come up and dance. A multitude of 25 to 30 responded! They took some time to learn the appropriate steps and were launched into the dance in various circles.

Thus a wonderful evening’s entertainment drew to a close accompanied by the entire band of Ulte Mara.

Cearbhall E. O’Meadhra

Evening Falling

by Oliver Marshall

In memory of John McGahern

The important thing
Was not to rush it,
To write slowly.
First, the white pages,
Reminding you of snow,
Snow on a day in childhood

When you were young.
Watching your mother
Bake a cake.
Time passing,
And evening falling.
You never knew

How things would come out.
It was all inside you,
The task was to get it out
On the page
So that it would remain there
Like footprints

On a field of snow.
Girls in a wood
Driven out of the house
By their father.
They complaining about him,
He complaining about

His own life.
Women in a wood
Walking close to flowers.
You wrote slowly
Content enough
With what came your way.

Outside
The day darkened.
You put away the pages
Like a man
Putting away oars in a boat.
You look out

At the sky changing
And evening falling



John McGahern
1934 - 2006

I WAIT

By Tara Nixon-O'Neill

Heaven boiled me and cut me loose
Between the Steaming Sleeper of the tracks.

I wait.

Shivering and violent for your
Plastic Promise
Trains passed, rain ceased
Birds sang, night fell

and I wait

Torn words twisted frames
Urged me on, forget it, fuck it, fight
Maybe, perhaps, by chance
And despite myself.

I wait

Head bangs, chains rattle
Time is too loud
Neither beyond, below or between
I quicken my step
Sinking to the swosh swosh
Ice barren waters sucking my flesh
Hush, hushing my reasoning and regrets
She tenderly fills my world with salty silence
She dulls and softly deafens me to the
smothering

Wait of time.
And the spitting me up, in revolt I fall into the
rotating tick tock

That is mine.

My First Kite

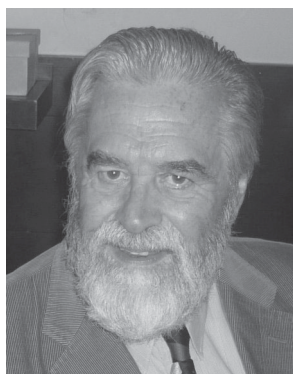
by Eileen Mayer

I held a gossamer thread
a cosmic cord to the wind
and with a trick of atmosphere
speaking hands found in rhythm,
a scent of the free.

Umbilical edges dissolved,
becoming serpent in the sky
released from my coil.
Laughter rushed into my chambers
at the pure wonder of me.

JACK THE LAD

By Frank O’Keeffe



Every town and village has one, indeed maybe more than one. You have yours we have ours-the local character; that larger than life personage; the story teller extraordinaire; that person whose way of life we may secretly envy.

Ours was Noddy Doyle, who liked to be called Jack after his hero, Jack Doyle, the Gorgeous Gael, champion boxer, ex Guardsman and one time husband of the beautiful movie star Movita. The real Jack was always erect, charming, sartorially elegant with a permanent buttonhole, invariably broke, and not adverse to the odd jar or ten. It could be argued that our Jack had a lot in common with his hero. Well both were male, well dressed; yes, nearly always broke and fond of the demon drink and wore a button hole as a sign of old decency. Whereas the real Jack stood ramrod straight at well over six feet, our Jack stood at five foot six and was somewhat rotund. The Gorgeous Gael, in his time, socialised with “celebs”. Our Jack socialised with ... er .. us. Both had the ability to regale their audience with far fetched stories and hot tips on horses and dogs that were still running. Our Jack always had tips on a dead cert winner that invariably came in second last. Jack always had a sure fire scheme in the pipeline that would earn every investor a small fortune for a modest investment, which never, of course, happened. There was always a great “touch” just around the corner. Jack had tried everything. He’d sold double glazing, insurance, encyclopedias, and had once sold a vacuum cleaner to the widow Moroney, who hadn’t yet got “the electricity in”.

Jack was married to the long suffering Bridie Murphy who was as wide as she was tall and they lived in the cottage at the end of the village in Blackberry Lane. Bridie was an aproned martyr who worshipped Jack. They eked out a precarious living raising hens, a cow and a pig that Jack got to fond of to kill for the pot. Now Jack was a thinker. Always thinking where the next jar would come from. He had a bucolic face and being flat footed, walked like a pregnant duck. His most striking features were the Hairy Molly eyebrows shooting skywards in different directions, competing for attention with a blue veined proboscis that would have done credit to a baby elephant. A bad topper

called “a rug”, which is a wig to you and me, perched precariously on his bald pate and was occasionally known to tilt to starboard after the fourth or fifth jar went in. He always, like his hero, wore a pin striped suit, somewhat ill fitting, but the only one in Oxfam in the town that nearly fitted him.. This was complemented by an obscure club or regimental tie which he had no right whatsoever to wear. Jack would make his grand entrance into whatever pub he wasn’t barred from. He, like the good actor he was, paused fractionally to establish his presence. Then moving into his selected audience, he would graciously accept proffered drinks as if by right in return for dispensed wit, bonhomie, tips on various dogs and horses, seasoned with a soupcon of well disguised flattery. He came into his own with his somewhat exaggerated accounts of being on “the piss official. He’d tell epic stories of his friend “Dickie” Richard Harris and himself in Kilkee Limerick and the bohemian pubs of Dublin. He’d say, “O’Toole and I were the best of mates.” Now nobody could prove the veracity of any of these statements. Whilst Harris was an extraordinary man, he must have been able to bilocate. At the same time he and Jack were supposed to be boozing it up in Limerick, the papers showed a photo of Harris at an award ceremony in L.A.

But we didn’t mind. Another time he claimed to have pulled a twenty to one winner in Galway, and spent three days on the booze with Peter O’Toole and Bertie Ahern in the “tent”. “Yes,” He added with a nod that had earned him his nickname “Noddy”. The nod was apparently a Sales trick known as the positive nod which got potential punters nodding in agreement to a slick sales patter until eventually they nodded in agreement and signed on the dotted line for whatever dubious goods or services he was selling. A true wheeler dealer he always had a golden opportunity just around the corner. At one stage he’d roped a few of the lads into a scatterbrained scheme of rabbit farming. “We’ll sell the meat to the butcher and the fur for ladies fashions.” The sight of the lads, well oiled, leaving the pub in an inebriated state to go “lamping” for rabbits at night, led to several articles about apparitions in the local paper. Rabbits being rabbits and nature being nature, they multiplied at great speed. The enterprise didn’t take off. However, ’tis said, and I believe with great veracity, he and Bridie had eaten nothing but rabbit for nine months. Now there’s only so many ways you can cook rabbit. Boiled, stewed, casseroled, and in a moment of madness Bridie bought some curry powder in the local convenience store. The lads had mighty crack that night when Jack arrived in

the pub smelling like a take-away from Khan's Balti House, with a yellowed mouth and a thirst that needed a multiplicity of pints to cool the heat of the curry. 'Tis said their Old dog who had eaten the remains of the dinner was found howling on the river bank having nearly drank it dry. Bridie, not stinting on the spices had added three cartons of curry powder to the dish and for good measure had added a packet of chilli powder just in case it might taste too hot. The enterprise didn't take off. However, 'tis said Jack's long suffering wife was wearing fur knickers for years afterwards, hopefully not the same pair. One thing you didn't do was ask Jack what he'd had for dinner.

Occasionally, after a long session on the jar, Bridie would arrive in their ancient Ford Escort, both of them belching smoke in equal proportions, to drag Jack ignominiously home to cold tongue and maybe even another plate of cold rabbit. It is said men often marry clones of themselves. This was certainly true of Bridie. She was squat, rotund, possessed of feral eyebrows and always in need of a shave. I remember well the night he arrived in the pub dripping with bonhomie and fifty euro notes."I Cleaned them out lads," he said, referring to the bookies in Listowel; 'the drinks are on me.' Not Wanting to seem ungracious or look a gift horse in the mouth, we allowed him, with alacrity I might add, to buy round after round. Alcohol flowed like a veritable Niagra. One thing I'll say about Jack, when he had the readies, which was not very often, he was generous to a fault. Whilst most of us staggered home at midnight Jack carried on drinking various concoctions. 'Tis said he was seen in "Suzie's, a night club of a somewhat dubious reputation, throwing back multi-hued cocktails down his gaping maw. Ordering four "sex on the beach" cocktails and taking a break from his repetitious philosophical platitudes, he was heard to remark, "'tis far from it I was reared"; a statement which left his audience more puzzled than before, if that was possible. Ferried home to Bridie by Mick the Taxi, he was out of his skull for a week, "on the piss official," as he put it. One night during his mammoth booze up, he went into the horrors. Bridie called it the "DT's". Sweating and trembling he chased imaginary frogs and spiders he saw crawling up the duvet. Another night he swore his father was at the end of the bed sharpening the old rusty slash hook that was out in the barn and hadn't been used since his father had gone to the great farm in the sky some twenty years previous. Eventually, Bridie's saint-like patience could take no more. Off she goes over the hill almost self-propelled by equal measures of indignation, worry and the belching fumes of the

Ford Escort, to see old Dr. Dolan, who was said to have had great experience in this field. Indeed he had a slight hand tremor which just proved the point that he'd served his time, albeit, on the other side of the counter. The good doctor with his minty breath and rheumy eyes listened attentively as he absentmindedly picked the remains of his breakfast off his golfing sweater. He was totally sympathetic to Bridie. "Don't worry, Bridie," he said, "we'll have him sectioned." "Mother of God, no way," gasped Bridie. "You're not going to cut him open?" "Not at all," the doctor reassured her, "we'll book him in to St Fidelis' Hospital; this will give him a chance to dry out."

Later that day with Jack safely ensconced in the doctor's car, they bade farewell to a tearful Bridie and set off for St Fidelis'. Now, of the two men, it must be admitted that Jack was the more sartorially elegant. Even the collars of his Dunne's shirt had been carefully ironed and his old brogues shone like a mirror. This day he wore a Brigade of Guards tie. The doctor, for his part, had gone casually dressed in his old golf sweater, cavalry twills and a pair of well scuffed suede Hush Puppies.

Jack was still a bit jarred from the previous night's jollifications as he entertained Dr. Dolan with real and imagined escapades until they reached the grey granite portals of St. Fidelis' Hospital. The doctor led the way into the austere marbled foyer. "I'll be back in a minute, Jack, wait here," said the doctor as he headed down the corridor to the admissions office. In a blinding flash of inspiration, Jack approached the middle aged, old maidish, twinsetted receptionist and switched on his undoubted charm. Introducing himself as Dr. Dolan he explained how he was signing in a difficult delusional patient to dry out. "The poor man's convinced he's a doctor." In his pin stripe suit and regimental tie, Jack certainly looked the part. Crossing herself, the receptionist beckoned the two shaven headed Polish security guards. She explained the situation just as Dr. Dolan arrived back in reception. The receptionist gave the two Poles the nod. They advanced in a pincer movement that would have done credit to the Duke of Wellington. They frogmarched the incredulous and protesting doctor down the corridor to the secure unit. Jack winked and nodded at the still shocked receptionist

Exiting the main doors he took his battered race track flask from his pocket and drank deeply. Lighting a cigarette, he inhaled smoke and fresh morning air in equal proportions. Yes, he thought, it was a good day for a few jars. Come to think of it, any day was a good day for a jar. Besides, he had a new story to tell the lads tonight. **THE END**

SIGNAL ARTS EXHIBITIONS

A Collage of People

Exhibition of Paintings, Prints, Drawings and Sculptures
by Aoife Fitzgerald
From Tuesday 11th May to Sunday 23rd May 2010

Aoife's work has always stemmed from the energy and



substance that she senses in the world about her, and even though her work is definitely influenced and directed by both an intellectual and intuitive response to events, it is first and foremost a gut and visual interpretation of this planet.

This exhibition deals with people Aoife has met, they are portrayed through a mixture of drawings, paintings, prints and sculpture, and then brought together to make a collage of images. When she was growing up she enjoyed making photomontages for friends and herself; she was always fascinated with the way this medley of images created stories from those visual snatches of memories. This exhibition arose from her attempts to transfer that impression of life stories into the visual arts realm. She created portraits by working from the individuals while they sat, worked or played, attempting to capture their innate energy and life force.

Opening Reception: Friday 14th May 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Echoes

Exhibition of Paintings by Tony Gunning
From Tuesday 25th May to Sunday 6th June 2010

Tony's work defies labels and ranges from small local scenes to very large scale contemporary realism but blue skies, bright colour, stark contrast and irregular perspective are recurring style motifs.

The work for this exhibition is a continuation of the artist's preoccupation and fascination with themes of transition within the urban and rural landscape. These scenes of abandonment, decay, dilapidation and dereliction have a beguiling attraction. Beyond the aesthetics there is a deeper resonance. They evoke memories of youthful exploration. Echoes of people's lives remain in the layer

upon layer of wallpaper, paint and floor coverings. In an age of shopping malls, multiplexes and sterile living environments these places offer an insight to another



Ireland - not in a nostalgic sense but as repositories of our history, our culture, our heritage. Above all they are reminders of the transience of time and the ephemeral nature of our own mortality. These are monuments to impermanence and the never-ending cycle of death and rebirth.

Opening Reception: Sunday 30th May 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Book Review by James Scannell

“ Writers and Artists of the Borough “

by Colin Scudds, published by the Dun Laoghaire Borough Historical Society, price •6.

Researched and written by Colin Scudds, this fascinating 74- page publication looks at 27 writers, artists, a film maker and a conservator who worked / lived or who are still working / living in the Borough of Dun Laoghaire area which now embraces most of south County Dublin following the creation of the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council in 1994. The biographies of each of the 29 individual featured in this publication are short, concise, and to the point outlining the highlights of each individual's career, and include an illustration of him / her if available in most cases. A bibliography at the end of the publication provides sources for those who wish to pursue further research.

Copies of this publication which is dedicated to the memory of Barbara Durak, an active member of the Dun Laoghaire Borough Historical Society who passed away in 2006 and whose sister Monica Lonergan provided support for it, are available from Readers Book Shop in Lower George's Street, Dun Laoghaire, or at the monthly meetings of the Dun Laoghaire Borough Historical Society which meets at 8 pm. on the 3rd Wednesday of the month September to May in the Kingston Hotel, Adelaide Street, Dun Laoghaire.

In association with the Wicklow Arts festival, a **Bealtaine Poetry Workshop** is scheduled to take place in Wicklow Town on Saturday 29th May at 12 noon. While the Bealtaine element of the workshop is aimed at the older adult, the aim of the event is to explore the idea of two different generations working together on the same creative project using the material object that the participants bring along as a starting point.†
Go to website for more details.†
<http://www.wicklowartsfestival.ie/node/78>

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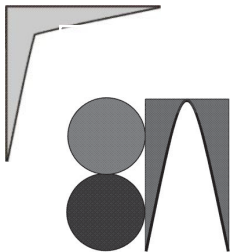
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annefitz3@gmail.com

Email submissions to any of the above or post typed submissions to

The Editor BAJ 'Casino',
Killarney Rd. Bray,
Co. Wicklow
Deadline 15th of each month.
Bray Arts website : www.brayarts.net

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Arts Evening Monday 10th May
Upstairs at the Martello on the Seafront
5 Euro / 4 Euro Conc. Everyone is welcome.
Come Early Doors open: 8:00pm sharp

ART with Aoife Fitzgerald

Transferring images of impression of life stories into the visual arts realm

'Camas Na Gall' and 'The Loch Ness Monster is Alive and Well'

Extracts from Padruig MacFarlane -Barrowís Memoirs with pictures and music.

'La Vie En Rose Lawless!'

'I bring the carousing chaos of the street entertainer under the roof of the respectable.'

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