
Bray Arts Journal

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May 2012

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Preview

Bray Arts Evening Mon 14th May

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

Another great evening of Song, Literature and Art in prospect.

Amber Graham

17 year old Amber has been singing and playing piano for 10 years. She loves performing and will be performing Valerie (Amy Winehouse) and Sir Duke (Stevie Wonder).

Frances Brosnan

Frances, staff artist in Signal Arts Centre, was awarded the Mill Cove Award for ceramics in 2010. Using a combination of decals, wire and other materials, her 3D constructions are inspired by the shanty dwellings she saw first hand during her travels in Asia. Her work is an aesthetic reflection on home and space within the most poverty stricken societies. Frances has lived in both the UK and Australia and is now resident in Bray where she has her own studio.



Frances Brosnan at work

Carmen Cullen



Carmen Cullen

Carmen Cullen will be reading from her new novel *Two Sisters Singing* (see page 6). Carmen was Head of English in Coláiste Dhúlaigh Coolock for over twenty years. She directed plays, compiled student poetry collections and devised the now renowned FETAC Communications and Journalism Courses. In 1994 she was seconded by CDVEC to provide her own programme of Drama workshops for teachers. Her book of original plays and workshop themes for the classroom, *Class Acts* was published by Folens in 1994. Other books are *Sky of Kites Poetry*, Kestrel Books 1998 and *Under the Eye of the Moon* Mercier Poetry Press 2001. She won a best Director Award in The Bray One Act Festival for *Square One with Silence*, by Harold Pinter and was Director of The Oscar Wilde Autumn School between 2000-2004. Her revue, a tribute to Delia Murphy, has been touring extensively from Listowel Writers Week to The New York Irish Center since 2009. Carmen is also a founder member of Bray Arts..

Paul Mathias

London-born singer/songwriter/guitarist Paul Mathias was a frequent performer in the London/UK folk scene in the early 1970s, both as a solo artist and with his contemporary folk duo, Narcissus. Based in Bray for the past 30 years Paul has continued writing and recording new material while working as a Lecturer in the Dublin Institute of Technology, where he also studied music. In this rare live

performance Paul will be singing a selection of his original contemporary songs and ballads influenced by such artists as Bob Dylan, Nick Drake, Neil Young and Joni Mitchell, played with flair and passion in his own unique style. The set will include a special guest appearance by his son, musician **Alex Mathias**. Paul's music can be heard at myspace.com/paulmathias.



Paul Mathias

Review

April Bray Arts Evening

By Shane Harrison

Bray Arts April bash may have been the day after April Fools' Day, but Peter 'The Racker' Donnelly was there to open it. If Peter has swallowed a dictionary, he spits it back out in more entertaining form. Conjuring rhymes from the flotsam and jetsam of modern life, and history, he creates a bizarre and entertaining alternative reality. Spotting a misprint in the local press sports page, we are told that an unfortunate football team finds itself in 'lingo'. No stopping the Racker after that and he plays a mad game of what you might call word-association football. Irish, English and many languages in between go into the blender creating a tasty blend of laughter and rhyme. Oh, there's no doubt, he's a cunning linguist.



Peter (The Racker) Donnelly

Next, film night came to the Martello. The most difficult discipline, usually requiring a team of experienced practitioners with a caseload of money, came in the singular form of Jade Travers. A graduate of



Jade Travers

the National Film School, she won a Kodak Award for a commercial she directed in her final year. Jade can also draw on a background in modern dance which she studied throughout her teens and remains an abiding passion. This is evident in *The Evelyn Tables*, a piece exploring the physical art of movement and the painterly possibilities of light. She also showed a music video, again displaying a distinctive touch with lighting.

Overall, her style is monochrome, a contrast of bleached whiteness and gloomy dark. The same could be said for her narrative work. There were elements of David Lynch and Samuel Beckett in her short, idiosyncratic dramas. A bleak enough vision, then, but with enough wit and warmth to hint that Jade Travers could be a serious force in Irish film in the future.

The plays of Alan Bennett exemplify that particular feature of Englishness, that of hanging on in quiet desperation. Presented by Bray Arts - not us, them - *A Visit from Miss Protheroe* raked in the awards at the Bray One Act Drama festival, winning best play, best actor for Martin Davidson and best director for that great stalwart Derek Pullen.



Martin Davidson

Rosary Morley

Derek Pullen

An enthralling two hander, grimly witty, it featured Rosary Morley McPhilips in the title role of the aged secretary bringing bad news to her former boss Arthur Dodsworth (Davidson). It is the sort of grim joust you can't bear to watch, but can't tear your eyes away from either. The sadness of the futile grind of a lifetime's work in some deadend job is laid bare, Miss Protheroe seeking to further diminish poor Dodsworth's fading life in relating how his one innovation in a lifetime with the firm has just been scrapped. There's a humanity twitching beneath all of this, but with Bennett it's not all that apparent. Pullen, Davidson and McPhilips drew us into this world from the start and, if we were relieved to be released from it, it was due to their quiet talent. A truly cathartic experience.

Finally, Brendan Glennon took the stage with a musical fire that drew the audience like a moth to its flame. In fact, the already large audience grew in size during the performance, a trick at which good music is particularly adept. This was Brendan's second Bray Arts appearance, he impressed with his debut almost three years ago. Within minutes, it was like he hadn't been away. Accompanied by his three amigos, he created a relaxed atmosphere with a blend of guitars, bass and mandolin - or, what I'm assured is a banjolin.

Glennon's earlier CD, *The Final Bell*, supplied some of the self-penned repertoire with *Loving You*, co-written with his friend Christy Byrne, to start the set. He complements his own material with well chosen covers and the odd standard that he makes his own. Mid way through we were taken on a railcar journey through a different era with *It Takes A Worried Man*. There were shades of Appalachian mountain music peeping through, and a glimpse of Steve Forbert amongst more modern influences. But Brendan Glennon is strictly himself and draws disparate influences together into his own style.

Part of the dubious bliss of the reviewer is the need to defer pleasure in the interests of the pen. Couldn't do it, I'm afraid. This was music to be absorbed without distraction. Excellence doesn't need much analysis, it is pure and obvious. Better yet, there was never any feeling that we were getting talent crammed down our throat, the musicians sacrificed their egos to the music and so the audience could enjoy it in its pure form. One of the best gigs we've witnessed, and to prove it, I rushed up to get my copy of *The Final Bell*.



Brendan Glennon

Gougane Barra

by James O'Sullivan

Beneath the Silver Mountains it lies –
That tapestry of green, deep in the hollow,
Along the fabled banks where stoics slept.
Her ancient mouth hangs open still –
countless lines were built upon her words,
as down through the ages they crept.
Those forgotten words do not speak
of time, but of secrets, passed among birds
who have been bred upon these branches.
There is peace there for all who seek
freedom from the burden of man,
or any such creature that breathes.

Here, among the branches, lie the gates
of Arcadia, covered by dark moss.
Deep in the stillness, that utopia waits
for those who would boldly cross
its threshold, taking from the Fates
that which has been our greatest loss.

Beneath the Silver Mountains it lies –
that tapestry of green, deep in the hollow,
where stoics slept and visions walk freely
without fear of life's endless ties.

Birthday

by Oliver Marshall

We went to Mellaray that September.
My twelfth birthday. The car
Took the old way: Newcastle, and across
The mountains. Or else by thin roads

To the Vee. It rained,
So there wasn't much to see,
Just rain blurring the fields.
Time now blurs the mind

And memory, like windscreen wipers
Moving across a car window
Five of us stand on the steps
Of the guest-house, facing the photographer.

My father and mother. Me, in that tightly-fitting
Cardigan I zipped up proudly.
My aunt-in-law beside me. Bernie Keane
At the back, a cigarette stuck

In his mouth. My father
Hired him every year
To bring us to the sea.
Days with my father

Were like milestones
On the road to happiness.
Later, that same afternoon,
When rain hung around us

Like a heavy coat, five of us look again
Into the small lens: My father and mother.
Then me. Then my aunt-in-law
Beside my uncle. So it must have been

My uncle who took
The first photograph
At Mellaray. Now all of us
Look again at the camera,

And the sea. And me
Me thinking of my birthday-
cake, and twelve candles
Shining, waiting for my breath.

All five of us facing the camera and sea.
All five of us keen to be remembered.
Our lives, and loves. All five of us
Remembered by others, perhaps.

Remembered especially
By me.

Rhododendrons

By Eddie Tynan

I always visit them
In April
When they're
At their worst -
My scarlet women;
Scandalously
Attention seeking,
No shrinking violets,
All panty and bra,
In-your-face,
They never beat
About the bush.

I know they flirt
Behind my back
Tossing their
Wanton heads,
They flutter
Their eyelids
Wink at old men
On doddering
walking canes,
Pout at
Passers-by in cars,
Enough to make
A saint sin
Or cause
An accident.
It's all
A charade,
A face-saving
Device,
The least whisper
Of a breeze
Unnerves them.
They watch helplessly
As their bits
And bobs
Crash
To the
Wet pavement
Leaving them
Standing starkers
Waiting again
For Spring
To come around
And re-dress them.

Text Message from the Giggle Factory

By Eddie Tynan

U hauled my ass in here, 4 what?
Is this all a mistake?
Do feel strangely at home.

Bray Choral Society



Bray Choral Society

Summer Concert

Invitation from Chairman, Martin Davidson

Dear friends,

We would like to invite you to our forthcoming Summer Concert on **Sunday 20th May 2012** at **8pm** in **Christ Church**, Bray, conducted by our Music Director **Frank Kelly**.

The Concert will feature **“Lux Aeterna”** by the great American contemporary choral composer **Morten Lauridsen**, and **“Eternal Light”** by the British composer **Howard Goodall**.

Morten Lauridsen (born 27th February 1943) is an American composer. He was composer-in-Residence of the Los Angeles Master Chorale from 1994 until 2001 and has been a professor of composition at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music for more than 30 years, where he currently holds the title of Distinguished Professor of Composition. He was named an “American Choral Master” by the National Endowment of the Arts in 2005, and in 2007 he received the National Medal of Arts from the President in a White House ceremony “for his composition of radiant choral works combining musical beauty, power, and spiritual depth that have thrilled audiences worldwide.”

Howard Goodall CBE (born on 26th May 1958) is a British composer of musicals, choral music and music for television. He also presents music based programming for television and radio, for which he has won many awards. In May 2008 he was named as a presenter and Composer in Residence with the UK radio channel Classic FM, and in May 2009 he was named “Composer of the Year” at the Classical BRIT Awards. He has won Emmy, BRIT and BAFTA awards for his compositions.

We are delighted to welcome our soloists for this concert, **Jennifer Davis** (Soprano) and **Christopher Cull** (Baritone). We will be accompanied by a full orchestra of 20 musicians.

Concert tickets will be available for €20, with concessions €15. Tickets may be purchased at the door, or from Tanseys on Quinnsboro Road or Dargle Pharmacy in the Superquinn Shopping Centre on Castle Street.

We would be delighted if you can join us for what promises to be an exciting and memorable evening of beautiful music--making.

Martin Davidson

Sacred Spaces: Sacred Sounds Concerts present:

Baroque Masterpieces

Vivaldi, Rameau, Carolan

8pm Friday 25th May, Nuns Cross, Ashford

8pm Friday, 8th June, Calary Church, Ashford

Tickets: €15/€12 Available at door or email:
info@eamonsweeney.net

The Musicians

Rachel Factor : Harpsichord

Rachel teaches with Co Wicklow VEC and DIT Conservatory. She is an established chamber musician and soloist having performed with many of Ireland's leading orchestras and ensembles including The Irish Chamber Orchestra, Crash Ensemble, Trio Quattro and others. She is well known in Irish Music Festival circles with performances at Dublin's Handel Festival and The Ardee Baroque Festival. Her artistry is generously supported by Music Network & the Arts Council.



Eamonn Sweeney: Baroque Guitar

Eamonn teaches with Co Wicklow VEC and performs extensively on early, classical, and electric guitars, and has given lectures and seminars on early guitar performance at International Guitar Festivals in Ireland, Scotland, and England and performs regularly with the group, *Tonos*, with soprano, Róisín O'Grady. See: www.tonos.ie Eamon is committed to the provision of Community Music, Early Years Music, and Music in Healthcare Settings. Eamon gratefully acknowledges the support of The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, The Arts Council and Music Network through the Music Capital Scheme 2011 & The Artist Bursary Award 2012.



Annette Cleary: Cello

Annette is a member of the teaching staff of the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin and is guest principal cello of the N.S.O. She regularly premieres works by Irish composers and at the other end of the scale, is a recognised exponent of Baroque music.

Annette has performed both as soloist and principal cellist with leading international orchestras and played in venues in U.S., Japan, France, Germany, Italy, Belgium under world renowned conductors including Leonard Bernstein, Christopher Eschenbach, Paavo Berglund and Colin Davis.

Annette gratefully acknowledges the support of The Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, The Arts Council and Music Network through the Music Capital Scheme 2011



Book Reviews

Under an Irish Sky

by Darren Darker

Darren Darker's debut is set on the Wexford coast and spins an action yarn of hidden Nazi treasure and revenge. The story begins at the height of the Battle of Britain, following a renegade German aircrew as they attempt to ditch themselves and their illegal cargo in neutral Ireland. Things go wrong, of course. The story resumes in modern times where we meet soon to be action hero, John Morgan, jogging on a Wexford beach. Morgan is an ordinary guy, but tough, and recovering from the tragic loss of his fiancée in a ferry disaster. Working as odd-job man at a local hotel, he forms a relationship with surviving Luftwaffe crewman, Muller, and the three generations of his Irish family. Events are catching up on this rural idyll, however, and a trio of neo Nazis, their leader the grandson of the only other survivor of the doomed warplane, trace Muller to Ireland and attempt to extort their share of the ancient cargo. When Muller's grand-daughter and her baby son are kidnapped, Morgan must be in like Flynn to save the day.



The story certainly rattles along and Darker is particularly good at the action set pieces. The opening flight sequence is edge of the seat stuff and the flashback to the ferry disaster is suitably harrowing. Morgan makes a fine hero too. Good with his fists but without the superhuman qualities authors sometimes give their leads, he's tough, clever, but humanly vulnerable too. Again, Darker handles his many scraps with a deft touch.

Elsewhere the narrative could have benefitted from more robust use of the yellow marker. Darker's prose gets bogged down in the mundane and there are times when it seems we must follow every footstep of our protagonists as they go about their business. Quite literally in the case of Morgan's introduction, his footprints on the beach getting the sort of attention that would make Robinson Crusoe blush. Nor are the villains worthy of a hero like Morgan. The trouble with neo Nazis is not that they are lacking in sheer badness, it's just that they are dumb - dumb, dumb, dumb - and so read more like stooges than villains. In fiction of this genre, there must be intelligence on each side of the conflict, something to involve the reader till the very end.

Meanwhile, Morgan is poised for a return as Darren Darker establishes his series. It's a promising start and a good hero will carry things a long way. But there is room for improvement. Darker will need more severe editing, tighter plotting, better antagonists and a more assured writing style if this planned series is ever to realise its potential.

Shane Harrison

You can purchase *Under an Irish Sky* at <http://xrl.us/bm5pb8> also at Dubray bookshops in Bray and Dunlaoghaire.

Two Sisters Singing

By Carmen Cullen

The action of this novel takes place in 1942. Ireland during the second world war is adrift from Europe. Bathed in the beauty of her native Mayo, feisty eighteen year old Lily O'Donoghue, dreaming about being a singing star, is beguiled by the bright lights of Dublin. Her future is already decided by her parents; to complete a degree in UCD and make them proud. The summer before she goes to university a heady romance sweeps Lily into the arms of Theo, a handsome American visiting her locality in Mayo. Sent away to Dublin, student life becomes too big a distraction for the spirited girl and at home in Ballyhale, her sister Moyra aims to win Theo over.

About this time the war intrudes in the presence of an American Naval Base in Belfast. Theo is drawn towards signing up to fight, but the fate of one of the sisters will hinge on his decision. Trying to move their plans forward, the power of the Catholic Church and other conservative forces in Emergency Ireland threaten to crack the girl's resolve. Caught up in a problem too big for her, Moyra desperately needs Lily's support. Should Lily pursue her ambition to be a singing star or help out the traitor Moyra in her new dilemma?

The difficulty of maintaining close links between sisters when personal ambition and stolen love conspire to pull them apart, drives this story forward. Love for Lily is an idyllic romance. For her sister Moyra however, it has darker consequences.

Lines of songs spill into this narrative, particularly Irish ballads of the period sung by the author's iconic aunt, the much loved Delia Murphy.

Two Sisters Singing is Carmen's first novel. It will be launched in The Mermaid Theatre Bray on 13th June at 8.00pm, with her revue on Delia Murphy and **The Jazz Freaks Band**, as part of The Arcadia Festival. All are welcome.

Full details of the launch and Carmen's show *I'll Live Till I Die*, based on the life and songs of her aunt Delia Murphy can be accessed at www.carmencullen.com. Accompanying Carmen in that show are

**Máirín O'Donovan
& Gerry Anderson**

Two Sisters Singing will be available in bookshops or can be ordered directly from www.bookrepublic.ie.

Book Republic is an imprint of **Maverick House**



Came into Being
A Showcase by Signal
Artists
From Tuesday 8th
May to Sunday 20th
May

Signal Arts Centre Exhibitions

Came into Being

A Showcase by Signal Artists

From Tuesday 8th May to Sunday 20th May

Signal Arts Centre was set up in July 1990 to address the lack of a focal point for the visual arts in Bray and North Wicklow generally and at the same time create a practical facility where artists could both develop their own work and make the arts readily accessible to the local community as a resource. The long-term aim is to establish a permanent centre of excellence for the visual arts in north Wicklow that will act as a facility both for local artists and arts bodies as well as the general community. Signal involves artists and innovative people who are developing their own artistic skills as well as providing arts workshops or working on projects within a community context.

'Came into Being' is the work of the staff artists, from Signal Arts Centre, and will showcase a range of their work.



Meditation - Drawing by Linda Fidorra



Reclining Nude with Book - Oil painting by Conall McCabe



Painting by Christine de Paor

We are happy to include some ceramics by Frances Brosnan, handmade jewellery by Aoibheann Doyle, portrait paintings by Conall McCabe, photography by Denis Dunne, prints and ceramics by Tony Clarke, drawings by Aoife Fitzgerald and Linde Fidorra and mixed media paintings by Christine de Paor, Jenny Dann and Sylvia Callan.



Prints by Tony Clarke

Opening Reception: Friday 11th May 7pm - 9pm

Ten Ladies

An Exhibition by St. Fergal's Art Group

From Tuesday 22nd May to Sunday 3rd June

Signal Arts Centre is delighted to host an exhibition by St. Fergal's Resource Centre Art Group. St Fergal's is a group of ten ladies who live in the Bray area. The ladies come together each Thursday night for two hours. The group have been together for almost twenty years, so there is a high quality to the work they produce. Some ladies have been practising for years, while other ladies are relatively new to the experience.



The majority of the work is landscape based, some of which are scenes of Bray. Other themes of interest are flowers, seascapes and figurative work. All the paintings have been created using oils. Some of the work lends itself to the impressionist style, while others are of a more classical nature. The themes have been chosen by the ladies themselves, their ideas come from memories, dreams etc, that have a certain resonance and individual appeal on a personal level.

Opening Reception: Friday 25th May 7pm - 9pm

Bedlam

By James O'Sullivan

I will visit myself in Bedlam
when the time comes. But
for now, I will continue to
Look to our hills. Why sail
Anywhere, when you need
Only look to our hills.

俳 John Jennings 俳

Inner streetlight

Light on with no blinds
I am a night time beacon
My room lights the street

Funky lenses

Rose tinted glasses
Everything now sepia
Alternative view

Water everywhere

Water drops conspire
Crawling up my doorstep kerb
Puddle follows me

Officer bear

Toy bear on my couch
Watch my house till I return
Soft security

Distraction

Looking up and down
Fight between my page and screen
Television wins

Hunger

I think about you
Tasting melting in my mouth
Chocolate craving

Snail chase

Morning snail moving
Lays a trail across my drive
Slimy line behind

Stealthy spider

Scary spider gone
Blinked it vanished from my sight
Where will it go next

Bray Arts Evening Mon May 14th

Martello, Seafront, Bray Doors Open 8:00pm Adm: €5 /€4 conc. Everyone welcome.

Brilliant line-up of Irish talent in Art, Poetry and Song

Youth Spot : **Amber Graham** - Singer

Art: **Frances Brosnan** - Ceramic Artist

Writer: **Carmen Cullen**

Music: **Paul Mathias** - Singer/Songwriter

Submission Guidelines

Editor : Dermot McCabe : editor@brayarts.net

Creative Writing Editor : Anne Fitzgerald :

annefitz3@gmail.com

Email submissions to the above or post to :

Editor Bray Arts Journal
'Casino',
Killarney Rd.,
Bray,
Co. Wicklow

Text in Microsoft Word

Pictures/Logos etc Jpeg preferably 300 dpi

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