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# Bray Arts Journal

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Issue 1

September 2010

Volume 16



## "Good-bye to the Chair"

By Zan O'Loughlin

After four years as chair I am stepping down. I am remaining on the committee where I have been for the last 17 years. My main priorities, while chair, was to raise our profile in the community, give platforms for emerging artists, and raise needed funds. Bray Arts is a very special organization in my life. All my life I have been surrounded by a rich artistic environment. My work as a committee member and chair has been a very enriching and healing experience for me. I am fortunate to have a creative and supportive committee who give so much to the Bray Arts. This year The Bray Arts has three new committee members. They are Darren Nesbitt, Roisin O'Meara, and Niall Cloak. Our new chair is Cearbhall O'Meartha. With his vast experience and expertise he is a knowledgeable chair for us. I look forward to our new season with excitement and anticipation. I thank all my committee, and all the members who have been so supportive of me and my work as chair. I look forward to meeting everyone at our September 13th performance night at the Martello.



## THE BRAY SUMMER FEST

This year the Bray Arts took part in the festival with 70 artists. We presented The Phantom Art Gallery with 6 artists. The artists showed their work in vacant shop fronts. They are Darren Nesbitt, Eithne Griffin, Fiona O'Farrell, Aoife Fitzgerald, Roisin Verdun, and Sarah McGahern. It was very successful and greatly appreciated by all the feedback from the community. Special thanks to Darren Nesbitt, Peter Grouney, Roisin O'Meara, Brigid O'Brien and, all the artists who worked very hard to put on the show.

Carmen Cullen organised 8 workshops over two days. The workshops were: Adult drawing and T-Shirt design with Teresa O'Connor, The world and the Child with Eithne Griffin, Music and Muse with Carmen Cullen and Rocco, Dance with Barbara Donnelly, Singing with Eileen O'Sullivan and a Shadow Puppet workshop with Julie-Rose McCormick. Two Comedy Shows in the Pavillion on the seafront were: *A Night of the Invasion* with Plan B Entertainment, directed by Barry O'Donovan and *Safe* with Ciaran Coogan and Colin Coogan.

Bray Arts also organised a Children's Cavalcade of bikes, trikes and scooters in fancy dress and decorated bikes. Niall Cloak and Linda Ferguson led the group with bohran and whistle. The children paraded up and down the prom. A snack and live music after the parade with a puppet show with Julie-Rose finished the day.

The last event of the weekend was our Gala Performance Evening in the Mermaid Arts Centre. The Bray Arts presented six acts with Peter Donnelly "the Racker" as MC. The Acts included, Zoryanna, The Old Codgers with Frank O'Keefe and Justin Alymer, Oltre Mara, The Bray Gospel Choir, Rose Lawless, and The Cujo Family. It was a great success and well received. Special thanks to the great work of Derek Pullen, director and

the behind-the-scenes worker, Darren Nesbitt, Dermot McCabe and Marianne Cassidy. Special thanks to Anne Fitzgerald for the work on the raffle at the show. The posters were designed by Dermot McCabe and printed for us in the Mermaid. Aza Hand did a great job on the sound for the show. Special thanks to Nora Hickey and her staff for all their help. Bray Arts thanks Mick Glynn and the summer fest team who brought us on board and loved our ideas for the Fest. McDonalds gave us all the balloons and sticks for our parade. A special thanks to Tomas, manager of McDonalds for all his support.

The volunteers for the Bray Arts SummerFest, and without whom it would not have been possible to participate are: Jo and Alice Ritchie, Patrick and Will Fleming, Mary MacNeil, Pat Burns, Roisin O'Meara, Maura Laverty, Carmen Cullen, Eithne Griffin, Cearbhall O'Meara, Eliza Kane, Alva Magowan, Darren Nesbitt, Marianne Cassidy, Linda Ferguson, Nieve and Brohna and friends. Also the Underground Cinema club in DunLoaghaire. As a result of our large participation in the festival, BRAY ARTS now has a big profile in the community. It all was a lot of work and time but it was worth it!!!!!! Onward and upward!!!!!!



**Cover:**  
**The Visitor**  
By Charmain Fitzgerald  
Upcoming exhibition at  
Signal Arts Centre. See  
Pg. 7

**The Cujo Family's** new CD is now available in Tower Records, Wicklow St., The Secret Bookshop, Wicklow St., City Discs, Temple Bar and The Boardroom, Church Rd., Greystones. Their CD will also be available at the upcoming September Bray Arts Evening. There will also be a launch in Sept. Further information at <http://www.myspace.com/stoneymoany>

The band gave a foot stomping, hand clapping performance at the Bray Arts Summerfest Concert in Mermaid. The evening before the concert they performed to a huge crowd on the bandstand.

*"The Cujo Family delivered what was described as 'the gig of the festival, on Saturday night.'"*

Bray People



Cover design by Robert Slattery

## Review of June 14 2010 Bray Arts Evening

The final Bray Arts evening of the last season 2009/2010 opened with a large crowd and a buzz of excitement. Not for the AGM which was scheduled to take place first, but rather the fact that Mary Coughlan was due to present her book and perhaps sing a song or two!

The AGM passed mercifully quickly with all the proper reports and accountability that the members could want. Zan O'Loughlin retired as chair after completing a successful four year term, culminating in the Bray Summer Fest 2010 to which Bray arts presented some 70 artists in 16 different events covering a wide range of activities from shop fronts through workshops to a major concert in the Mermaid to round off the Festival. Bridget O'Brien and Dermot McCabe retired from the committee.

Zan was presented with a bouquet of flowers in appreciation of her unstinting service to Bray Arts. She will continue as an ordinary member of the committee.



A presentation was made to Dermot in appreciation of his technical support for the Arts evenings over the past ten years in addition to maintaining the web site and the editorship of the Bray arts Journal. He will continue in his role with the Journal and Web Site.



Zan O'Loughlin The new Chairman is Cearbhall O'Meadhra who will also continue to do the Bray Arts reviews. Carmen Cullen continues as Treasurer, Ger Thomas as Secretary.



Carmen Cullen



Gerard Thomas

After a suitable interval, the musical performance commenced with the **Gitane Swing Band** consisting of **Phil Stuart** on Violin, **Lorcan Egan** on Guitar and **Henry Egan** also on Guitar. The



group opened with a soft, mysterious sound on the guitars redolent of the mysteries of feline wiles in a tune called "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof". This was easy music but with a shivery effect reinforced by the subtle playing of the violin. The audience responded with jaleos and wolf whistles to show their appreciation.

After a short break, **Mary Coughlan** took the floor and presented her book **Bloody Mary**. She read extracts covering her early experience in Ballinasloe and her early relationships. Through the singing of Van Morrison, she learned how the words of a song can "reach out" to the audience. She was deeply affected by the words of Leonard Cohen who became important in her musical life. A bit of a rebel in her own way, she told about her early experiences and how those who tried to manage the tearaway in her succeeded in separating her from the boy she loved. She spent some time in Ballinasloe hospital and described how the memories of it "sends shivers up my spine"! Eventually she married "in a big blue and yellow gingham dress"! Her story involves a life of drugs, drink and complicated relationships, of friendship and love obsessed with parental and avuncular figures. Turning from her book, Mary thrilled the audience with her rendition of "My Heart It Is Uncharted" sung without accompaniment.



Mary Coughlan  
Sketch by Brigid O'Brien



Revellers take to the floor

During a short interval tickets were drawn for the final raffle of the season. A wonderful improvised session followed with the members of Gitane Swing volunteering to play again to keep the good mood going. Mary opted to join in and sang some wonderful numbers including "God Bless The Child" and her unique rendering of "Summer Time" as a well-deserved encore leaving Gitane Swing to bring the celebration to a close.

Cearbhall E. O'Meadhra

**Asylum for Insane, Idiotic, and Nervous**  
by Donna Barkman

Oshkosh, 1940s

They pace the grounds,  
sad men in long black robes  
behind the fence that saves me  
from their mumbling, their stares.

My child eyes read the metal plaque  
two times each day, to school and back.  
*My mother whispers I don't know,*  
*they're priests, I think.*  
And what is that?

She's on the couch too often,  
cool cloths draped across her eyes.  
*It's just my nerves, she shrugs,*  
*I'll get up soon, there's*  
*ironing, cleaning, supper, kids.*  
As if I weren't one too.

Do nerves mean nervous?  
Will she be snatched away  
like one of them?  
But wait.  
Idiot. Idiotic.  
Words my brother hurls at me.

So she and I will go together,  
live in a grey stone mansion  
and be priests,  
wear long dresses,  
stroll the lawns hand-in-hand  
humming.  
We'll play croquet

safe behind the fence that  
keeps the others out,  
the ones the world calls sane.

**Dream of a clouded moon**  
by Pauline Fayne

In this silent sleepscape  
you pose like a dancer  
on a cliffs edge

aim sapling arrows  
at a clouded moon  
in a purple sky

twist, turn and swing  
the waist length hair  
of your youth

drop strange gifts  
of amber leaves  
and kingfisher plumes

to the night damp sand  
where oystercatchers  
weave and wail

while I wait and watch  
voiceless,  
Flightless.

**The Troubadour**  
by John Cooney

Born in the tumbril-fall  
Of shadows, my eyes receive  
Light on dream exposure  
And I  
Bathe in rainwater. I touch  
My face with petal lotions  
And sing through the looking  
Glass for hours

I listen with the trees,  
Druids crouching in the hum  
Of woodbark. For my fingers  
Seek that pliant steel, the true  
Metal of my craft.

And I can hear the robin's song  
The spell of words in that  
Refrain, "come stay, oh traveller,  
Rest awhile. For deeds are done  
And bards grow few."

**Who's counting?**  
by Shirley McClure

You wore contact lenses  
for the first three dates  
French Connection shirts  
your warm cheeks shaved.

You brought yellow daisies  
on every second date  
refilled my wine glass  
after every second taste.

You played me Gershwin  
braised me tofu  
praised my textures  
oiled my shoulders  
wormed my compost  
turned my corners

said you loved me  
on the sixty-second date.

## PASCAL'S CHOICE

by Hugh Rafferty

He kept moving up river, trudging his way along the tree lined bank, paying no attention to the gentle play of sun and shade on the slow moving water, as he tried to handle last night. Dressed for fishing, he was wearing his old slouch hat, grey, grandfather shirt and comfortable corduroy trousers covered by thigh-high waders. In his right hand he carried his fishing rod and hanging across his right shoulder he carried his basket and across his left a battered tackle box and a landing net. By nature he was a careful man, slow and deliberate in his actions and, usually, comfortable with his place in the order of things. But last night Sophie had left him.

Haunting echoes of a distant Angelus bell, almost musical in the midday air, were ignored, as were the threads of birdsong, the flutter of fast moving feathers, the rustle and scurry of small creatures, the sighting of deer, even the soft swish of the river; none of the rewards of woodland isolation registered. He was numbed, like a trout in spasm after a feeble strike of the priest; his senses were limited to a basic default mode.

Upstream, the big river fell through a series of gentle bends until it widened in to a deep pool that fed fast moving water over a natural weir. That was where he was headed. He knew it as the 'fishing hole' because it had no designated name. It was a difficult walk in from the road and only serious fishermen would ever make the effort so he usually had the place to himself or, at worst, he might have to share with a like-minded angler. The 'fishing hole' was where his father had taught him to fly fish and where he was always sure of a good day's sport. It was also his haven; the place to which he retreated when he needed to revive his spirit.

At last he arrived and he stopped moving. For long seconds he stood fully laden, silent and unseeing. His head reverberated with the hollow noise of the slamming door and, like a bomb victim who survived the immediate blast he was caught in the aftermath of that explosive sound –

He had been late home. His watch said 8.30pm, so not too late and certainly better than usual. 'I'm home,' he had called out from the hallway. No answer. Always ominous. He moved to the kitchen, whistling a few bars of her favourite 'I do it for you' as he walked, ready to work his charm. Empty! No sign of food preparation, no smell of cooking, certainly no meal had been planned for this kitchen. *Christ*, he thought. *Were we to go out? Was this some occasion or anniversary?* Nothing came to mind, but he was no longer whistling as he circled the rest of downstairs and then made his way up to their bedroom. Sophie was there. 'Hello,' he said. No acknowledgement. Not good. She was sitting on the edge of the bed, folding clothes and packing them in to a suitcase. He noticed that she was wearing an extremely attractive summer dress in shades of blue against white that picked up the

colour of her eyes and showed off the lines of her shapely body. Her fair hair, always pretty, had been freshly styled in to a halo of blonde curls glinting with golden highlights. He realised that she looked young and fresh and incredibly beautiful; something which he was always aware of but had not perceived for ages.

'Are we going out to dinner,' he asked.

'No.'

'Oh! I thought...you know. You're all dolled up ... and everything.' His eyes took in the case again. *Jesus*, he thought, *a funeral*. 'Did someone die,' he asked coming round to her side of the bed ready to offer comfort.

'What are you raving about? She stood. In her four inch heels they were eye to eye. He looked away first.

'I'm sorry,' he said. 'You're packing a case and I just thought, you know, it might be a funeral. Silly,' he laughed. 'Where are we going?'

'Not we,' she snapped. 'I am going.'

'What?'

'To David.'

'David? His voice almost failed him. 'Are you telling me Dave is dead?'

'No. I'm not telling you that. Look at me when I'm speaking to you. Let's get this clear.' She looked in to his eyes and spoke slowly and distinctly. 'I am leaving you, Paschal. I am going to live with David.' She turned back to the bed, picked up a silk nightie and folded it in to the case.

'But...' he said.

She swung back to him. 'No buts and don't act surprised. I begged you to make time for us but you ignored me.'

'I-I love you Sophie,' he stammered. 'I could never ignore you.'

'Love me? Hah.' Her tone grew harsh. 'You don't love me. You don't even love yourself. All you love is your God damned job.'

'I'm just very busy. You know that.'

'I'm busy but I can make time for what is important. You roll in here every night in time for the news, then you roll into bed and in the morning you roll off to work again. That's not busy, that's a life sentence.'

'But I'm so close, Sophie. When I finish this project it's a seat on the board and then it's easy street and good times for us.'

'Good times,' she snorted. 'What do you know about good times? When was the last time you laughed, for God's sake. When was the last time we had a holiday together? Or made love?'

'You said you didn't want to.'

She sneered at him. 'To think I worshipped you, gave you six years of my life. Well no more. I'm leaving this old folks home.' She closed her

suitcase and looked at him for a long moment before turning for the door,  
 He said, 'You can't be serious about Dave.'  
 'I love Dave.'  
 'He's not dependable.'  
 'I've done dependable. Now I want a man.'  
 She walked out of the room and he heard her footsteps on the stairs. He ran after her.  
 'Please Sophie. Please don't leave me.'  
 She slammed the front door when she left.

Now he stood at the river, trembling, trying to feel and failing. After a while his eyes focused a little and he took in his surroundings. 'What am I doing here?' he wondered and found no answer. At last he fell to his knees. The fishing rod slipped from his hand. Then, slowly, he began to cry; little shivers of sorrow at first that soon grew to great gulping sobs that racked his body. He cried for Sophie, for his loss, he cried for himself, for his pain, and at a deeper level he wept because he knew that Sophie had not easily left him; she had pleaded with him, asking only for love and he had not listened. He cried for the future he had planned, the wealth and prestige almost within his grasp. He just had to push harder and it was his but... what for?  
 'What for,' he screamed and he had no answer.  
 Without Sophie he had no future.

THE END



### Strands of Silk

published by Boland Press

This is the fourth collection from Shed Poets: Bernie Kenny, Maureen Perkins, Rosy Wilson, Carol Boland, Marguerite Colgan and Judy Russell.

This new collection comes in the distinctive chapbook format of the Shed Poets. The quality of this pocket size book is only fitting for the elegant poetry it contains.

*Strands of Silk* was launched on 5th August by Liz McManus in

Signal Arts. All of the poets read from the collection to a very appreciative audience.

*"A collection which reveals over and over the dangerous joy of dealing unashamedly and fearlessly, for better or worse, with the myriad possibilities of the real."*

Macdara Woods

Bray Arts will have a more lengthy and in depth review in next months journal.

In the meantime if you want to purchase *Strands of Silk* you can email [shedpoets@hotmail.com](mailto:shedpoets@hotmail.com) or tel M: 0851138367. It costs €7. We highly recommend it.

## Preview of Bray Arts Evening for September

8:00 pm September 6<sup>th</sup> 2010  
 Upstairs at the Martello  
 Seafront, Bray  
 Everyone welcome : Adm. €5 / €4 conc.

This is the first Arts evening of the 2010/2011 season. Bray Arts has great pleasure in presenting another of its spectacular evenings of entertainment.

### Dance :

Maire Dee a dancer, dance teacher and musician with a wide range of experience in Ballet, Contemporary, Irish, Hip-Hop, Jazz and Aerial dance will perform some of her work.

### Art :

The Bray based artist, **Darren Nesbitt** trained in animation in Ballyfermot Senior College and worked in the animation industry for ten years. Five years ago Darren left animation to pursue a career in painting. Combining a strong grounding in drawing, with painting in all mediums. As well as concentrating on life painting and drawing, Darren has also been commissioned for portraits, landscapes and caricature's and has sold in and outside Ireland.



### Poetry :

Bray-based writer **Shirley McClure** will read from her debut collection of poetry, *Who's Counting?* at Bray Arts Club on September 13th. Winner of Cork Literary Review's Manuscript Competition 2009 and runner-up in the Patrick Kavanagh Poetry Award 2009, *Who's Counting?* (BRADSHAW BOOKS) will be launched by Poetry Ireland on September 9th, 2010.



### Music:

Alastair Davis, Bass / Baritone, has performed with Opera Ireland, Lyric Opera Company and his Oratorio repertoire includes Stainer's Crucifixion, Handel's Messiah and most recently Jerusalem Passion. In more recent years he has been a member of the RTE Philharmonic Choir, toured Ireland and the UK with the World Renowned musical group 'Anuna' and is currently a member of Crux Vocal Ensemble and Strollers. He also performs as a guest soloist for Choirs and Musical groups around Dublin.

## Arts and the Recession

Despite the financial shambles visited on us by a vulgar, greedy, talentless shower of shysters, liars ... Don't get me started ... the arts, as represented by The Bray SummerFest, and earlier, the Bloomsday celebrations were beacons of hope and optimism. These events were almost exclusively run by volunteers. No one was trying to get rich. It was for the people and by the people in a very real sense. It proved that if there is a will to do something it can be done no matter what the obstacles. Ironically, it is the arts, that is stimulating business and commerce all over Ireland.

D. McCabe

## Signal Arts Centre Exhibitions

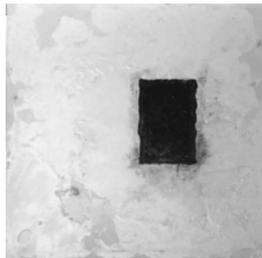
### Met With Elsewhere

Exhibition by Kathryn Ryan, Jonathan Curran and Laura Butler

From Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> August to Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2010

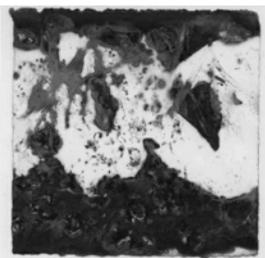
This a group exhibition by artists **Kathryn Ryan, Jonathan Curran** and **Laura Butler**. They have worked together as artists since they met as students in IADT, Dun Laoghaire.

**Kathryn Ryan's** current portfolio contemplates old and largely redundant farmhouses and outbuildings that reflect Irish rural life of long ago around Wicklow and its surrounding counties. The artist focuses on the ageing, deterioration and inevitable abandonment of these buildings – the absence of occupancy – for whatever reasons. She pays particular attention to details of the windows and doors – their entrances and exits.



*Window on Setham's Farm*

**Jonathan Curran** works mainly in the area of print. His work is lyrical fun and playful, he uses everyday images or objects in his practice. For the past few years Jonathan has been creating a series of abstract rust prints. These are a type of mono print which use rust as a transferable pigment. This project started when the artist found one of his old plates from college which had been left outside. He became fascinated with the intentional and accidental process of the rusting.



*36 Hours West*

**Laura Butler** is a painter whose practice focuses on developing work processes in which the definitive can evolve through the interplay of accident and intention. The support becomes a space on which to celebrate the unresolved. Using resist techniques in the application of the paint, Laura impedes the precision of intentional gesture and encourages the incorporation of chance.



*Minor Hours - Decline*

Opening Reception: Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

### Through the Looking Glass

Exhibition of Paintings by **Róisín Verdon**

From Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> September to Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2010

Róisín chooses movies and TV as her source to first of all portray image but also because of the heightened sense of colour and composition. In fact there is a development or transition from focus on motion to focus on composition in her work. She is now developing her work around the law of reflection and in

particular Specular Reflection. Specular reflection is where the angle at which the wave is incident on the surface equals the



*Natalie*

angle at which it is reflected.

Through the process of image analysis and research, Róisín has collected hundreds of references to base her work on. Her new body of work comprises of paintings developed from the use of specular reflection within the realm of film.

Opening Reception: Friday 17<sup>th</sup> September 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

### Unusual House Guests

Exhibition of Paintings by **Charmain Fitzgerald**

From Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> September to Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2010

Charmaines main influences are Lempicka, Singer-Sargent, Hopper, Klimt and Botticelli to name a few. She works predominantly in oil and draws upon her experiences, observations and imagination to bring about figurative realism



*Isaac's Geckos*

with a touch of surrealism, combining seemingly domestic scenes with exotic wildlife.

Her paintings are figurative and realist/surrealist, using representational form to create a sense of otherness, not detached from everyday things.

In March of this year, Charmain and her painting "Koi Bath (2007)" were featured in Hotpress magazine and the painting has been used on the album cover of Cork singer/song writer Daniel Jones. In 2007 her painting "Wee Bitsie" was featured on RTE's The Afternoon Show as a runner up in a nationwide competition.

Opening Reception: Friday 1<sup>st</sup> October 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

PS

Do you feel like a rant?

Is there something you need to get off your chest?

Do you think art serves any purpose?

What is Art?

What is the moon?

The Journal would like to encourage you to write to us on any topic that has some connection with the arts, no matter how flimsy that connection is.

## Submission Guidelines

Editor : Dermot McCabe : [editor@brayarts.net](mailto:editor@brayarts.net)

Creative Writing Editor : Anne Fitzgerald :  
[annefitz3@gmail.com](mailto:annefitz3@gmail.com)

Email submissions to the above or post typed submissions to :

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'Casino'

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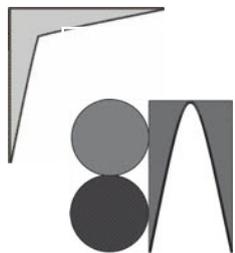
Bray

Co. Wicklow

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## Bray Arts Evening Monday 13th Sept 2010

Upstairs at The Martello on the Seafront  
€5/€4 conc. Absolutely everyone is welcome.  
Doors open 8:00pm

**Maire Dee** : Dancing Bray Arts into the 2010/2011 season.

**Darren Nesbitt** : Darren is an emerging local artist with a very strong grounding in drawing from his earlier career in animation.

**Shirley McClure** : Award winning poet reading from her collection *Who's Counting*

**Alaistair Davis** : Bass/Baritone chosen to represent Ireland in the Rugby World Cup Choir

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