

# BRAY ARTS SHOW

Mon March 2nd  
2015  
8pm

COMHALTAS YOUTH

HELEN O'CONNELL  
STONE SCULPTOR

DERMOT McCABE  
WRITER



What's the difference between January and February? Four letters - and all. There we were at Bray Arts talking of a stretch in the evenings while embracing the Muse in the dark. Writing and politics intersect early on, music, as usual, waits to bring the house down.

John Walshe has worked as Education correspondent for the *Indo* and the *Irish Times*. As such, he would have been a critic of successive Ministers for Education. Then came the opportunity to vault the fence and work for Ruairi Quinn. Perhaps the grass really is greener on the other side - oops, sorry Ruairi! John is a journalist with some good things to say about government, a unique selling point these days. It was a time he found "exciting, exhilarating and exhausting," and he's not alone in that. His experiences are outlined in his book *An Education*, published by Penguin. A pious theme emerges, what after all, is black and white and re(a)d all over? John also provided pointers for the tyro writer. Good advice in that it came from someone who exploited the skills of the philosopher, editor and tight-rope walker. That's writing for you, and again, he's not alone in that!

Another story in black and white was presented by Thabi Madide. From South Africa, she came to Ireland fourteen years ago, sometimes calling herself the Zulu Wicklow woman. Her book, *Zebra in my Lounge*, is a child's-eye view of an alien environment, in this case Delgany. I know, not very alien to us, but it's all down to point of view. Thabi writes work accessible to adults and children, fiction and non-fiction. She excited some comment. The young narrator wonders whether another emigre family can be African as they are white. Her mother re-assures her. Black and white built Africa together. Later, this provoked a frank exchange of views. Thabi, conscious of her young audience, likes to explain in small steps. It's still all down to point of view.

Denis McArdle has regaled us before. It's always a pleasure. With subtle backing from Rachel on piano and Ray McGee on guitar, he weaves his spell with lugubrious airs, a fine baritone voice and an eclectic range of material. Shakespeare, the *Children of Lir*, Percy French and Fred Astaire all contribute to the evening's narrative. We could experience Brighton in a charabanc and take a Shortcut to the Rosses. He even tells a good football joke: a certain Scottish keeper, diagnosed with schizophrenia, received a sensitive welcome from opposition fans singing: There's only two Andy Gorhams! There's only one Denis McArdle, but the crowd called for more.

Shane Harrison

## COMHALTAS YOUTH



**B**ray Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann has seen unprecedented growth since its foundation in 2007. The branch now has over 250 members and 13 teachers actively participating in, and passing on, our music, song and dance traditions in Bray. With 47 classes scheduled two nights each week in Coláiste Ráithín, the branch is very active and is one of the fastest growing branches in the Leinster area.

All musicians from the branch participate at Fleadh Cheoil competitions and in local events through the year. Tonight a small selection of branch musicians from under 12 years to under 18 years will perform a variety of arrangements of traditional melodies in preparation for competitions in April. Some of these talented young musicians started learning traditional music with Comhaltas only a few short years ago, they have achieved great success in solo, duet and group competitions in Wicklow, Leinster and at All Ireland level in the recent past.



## HELEN O'CONNELL - STONE SCULPTOR

Since taking a dramatic detour from cerebral academic studies in literature into the manual world of physical labour that is stone carving my work has gone through a few different phases. Full of excitement with the novelty of the material I was initially interested in undermining the gravitas of stone and its associations of pomp and everlastingness.

I used a kind of irreverent, playful, almost cartoon like aesthetic. My approach to the material was very playful during this period possibly reflecting the generally carefree life I was living in the Leitrim countryside at the time. The first solo exhibition I had was inspired by music and musical instruments a lot of which were a response to some of the exquisite historical Baroque musical instruments my partner introduced me to in his world.

Much of this work was produced in Italian and Portuguese marble as I had been out working in the quarries and workshops in Carrara in Italy and in Alentejo in Portugal. A later body of work took the sea as its inspiration, rejoicing in the abundance of sculptural forms and inspiration provided by that ever changing body of water. At present I am working on a series of decorative vessels for Irish Year of Design. I love the endless variety in the deceptively simple vessel form and its ritual connotations. I find myself drawn to Japanese sculpture at the moment. The more I work with this material I realize less is more. I increasingly wish to impose less of myself on the stone and simply help to celebrate the wonderful material that it is in itself. My journey continues.





**D**ermot McCabe has produced a video using 13th Century music, medieval paintings and extracts from the opening chapters of his novel *The Lost Prince* to introduce the second novel in his *DREDGEMARSH* trilogy. In it he introduces some of the key figures in the novel and the critical events that drive this story of the Greyfells of Dredgemark. Experience the sights, sounds and the events set in the year 1254 when an unfortunate series of events threaten the demise of the Greyfells forever.



Maisie Fairgame and her father Shoveller

## SIGNAL ARTS CENTRE EXHIBITION

Signal Arts Centre is delighted to be exhibiting works by talented artist Vicki Sutherland.

Vicki draws inspiration from memory and forensic traces left behind in nature. Childhood memories of searching for fossilised ferns has led her to create porcelain 'fossils' by encasing plants in porcelain and firing them until all organic traces are obliterated and only the fragile porcelain skeletons remain. Vicki is also fascinated by the Victorian habit of placing remembrances and taxidermy under glass domes. Her Memento Mori Series celebrates the fleeting nature of life, with ghostly floral porcelain arrangements under glass domes. The naked-raku fired, porcelain series, Memento Mori is inspired by cave art from millennia ago and symbolizes man's attempt to have total control over his environment. Vicki obtained a Higher Diploma in Fine Arts from Bray Institute of Further Education in 2011. She has exhibited with the Signal Arts Centre, Ceramics Ireland, Sculpture in Context 2014, and the 2014 RDS National Craft Awards. She is a member of Ceramics Ireland and registered with the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland.



MEMENTO MORI



ENDS MARCH 1ST



## POETRY

### YOU SAY TOMATO, I SAY POTATO

Northern climes and cloudy skies  
Can dull the days.  
So why would she believe me when I say  
There's more vitamin C in a potato than in a  
tomato?

Our middle neighbours call them pomme de  
terre -  
Apples of the earth.  
But for her people it's apples of gold -  
The pomo-d'oro.

One matures silver beneath the surface  
Hard, crooked and full of character  
Well able to face into the wind  
And all that nature throws its way.

The other needs sunshine,  
Florid sunshine, to burst forth  
Shapely and sweet for all to see  
With a flavour that melts in the mouth.

II

Long before Aeneus met Dido  
A golden apple sent his people  
To leave a lush land like yours  
Along the blue Adriatic -  
The Greek elbow of Italy -  
Where I first met you.

Every would-be hero needs a Penelope  
Waiting for her fool dreamer to return.  
Not for her art, philosophy and politics,  
Mighty deeds to proclaim or Troys to burn.  
But humour and warmth and food on the  
table  
Children to rear and feet on the ground.

III

After many one-eyed wanderings  
And a decade's circumnavigation  
I returned home,  
To you,  
My sun-ripened prize.

Not the idealised dream too soon to fade.  
Not Beatrice, the blesser  
Or Silvia with her sweet maiden's song  
Or even Laura, the Laurel  
The fair-haired garlard of the golden dawn

But a wild barbarian,  
A dark, funny girl  
In whose flaming, green eyes  
Safely back in Portonovo  
I knew I'd found my Penelope.

IV

You still say tomato and I say potato.  
But it's not our diverse cultures and planets  
that misalign us.  
It is the moon's silver tide and the sun's golden  
splendour  
That tether our barks, knocking and nestling  
together.

You still seek sun-soaked shores  
And lament this distant fool.  
But four lustrums on  
Remember this.

That if I were to circle this globe  
Once more  
My golden apple  
I would give to you  
My dark, green-eyed girl  
From the Adriatic shore.

Paul Martin



# BRAY ARTS SHOW

layout by John McCann c/o Signal Arts Centre

THE  
MARTELLO  
HOTEL  
BRAY  
MON MARCH 2ND  
2015  
DOORS OPEN 8PM  
ADMISSION  
€5 - €4 CONC.



Comhaltas Youth - musicians from under 12 years to under 18years, With a variety of solo, duet and group arrangements of traditional melodies having achieved great success in Wicklow, Leinster and at All Ireland level.

## Helen O'Connell – Stone Sculptor

Will reveal the realistic figurative sculptural tradition of the ancient craft of stone carving which led her to North Leitrim, Italy and the marble quarries of Portugal and the stone for her sculptures.



## Dermot McCabe – Writer

Will introduce The Lost Prince, second novel in his Dredgemark trilogy, in a new video featuring 13th Century music, medieval paintings and extracts from the opening chapters.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PERFORM OR PRESENT YOUR WORK AT THE BRAY ARTS PLEASE CONTACT JULIE ROSE McCORMICK AT 0872486751: ALL ART FORMS WELCOME, FILM, DANCE, ART, LITERARY, MIXED MEDIA, MUSIC, SONG, PUPPETRY, EXPERIMENTAL, SHOWCASE NEW WORK.



BRAY ARTS ON FACEBOOK OR [WWW.BRAYARTS.COM](http://WWW.BRAYARTS.COM)  
[WWW.BRAYARTS.NET](http://WWW.BRAYARTS.NET)

