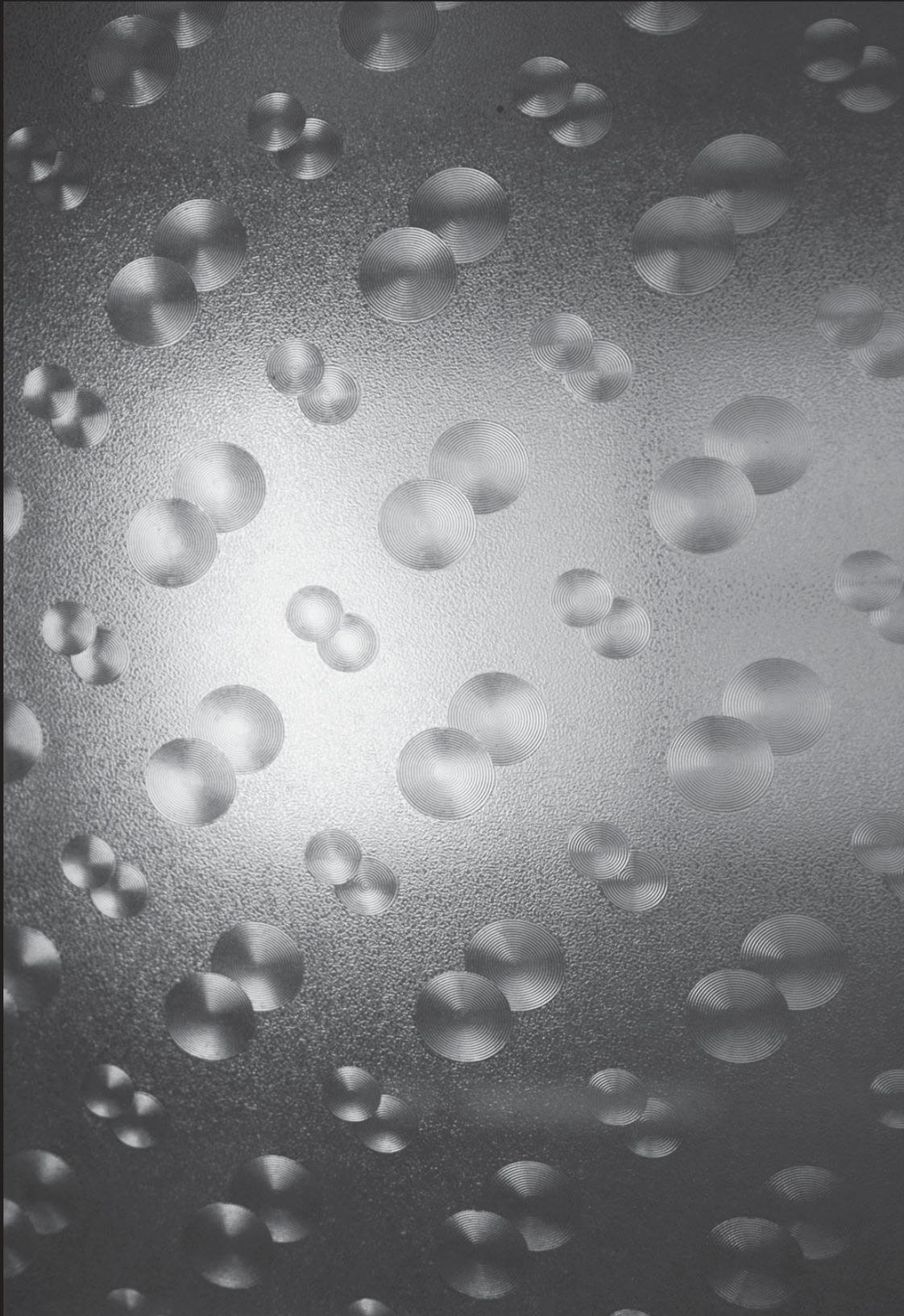

Bray Arts Journal

Issue 8

April 2008

Volume 13



April

April brings to mind that exquisite conjunction of poetry and music that is sung by choirs all over the world during Easter: *All in the April Evening* is a hymn based on the poem *Sheep and Lambs* by Katherine Tynan (1859-1931) and the music of Sir Hugh Robertson (1874 - 1952)

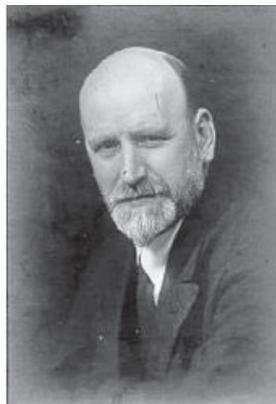
Katherine Tynan was born into a large farming family in Clondalkin, County Dublin, and educated at a convent school in Drogheda. Her poems were first published in 1878. She went on to play a major part in Dublin literary circles, until she married and moved to England; later she lived at Claremorris, County Mayo when her husband was a magistrate from 1914 until 1919.



For a while, Katherine was a close associate of William Butler Yeats (who may have proposed marriage and been rejected, around 1885), and later a correspondent of Francis Ledwidge. She is said to have written over 100 novels. Her *Collected Poems* appeared in 1930; she also wrote five autobiographical volumes. She died in Wimbledon in 1931 at the age of 70.

Sir Hugh Robertson, a conductor and composer was born in Glasgow in 1874. He worked as a funeral director. He was a highly motivated and self-taught choir-master and founded the Toynbee Musical Association in 1901. Five years later, this became the *Glasgow Orpheus Choir* which gained a world-wide reputation and went on to perform under Robertson's direction for some 45 years.

Sir Hugh composed a lot of original music for his choir, with perhaps his most famous pieces being *All in the April Evening* and the *Mingulay Boat Song*. He died in 1952.



Sheep and Lambs

All in the April evening

April airs were abroad;

The sheep with their little lambs

Passed me by on the road.

The sheep with their little lambs

Passed me by on the road;

All in the April evening

I thought on the Lamb of God.

The lambs were weary and crying

With a weak, human cry.

I thought on the Lamb of God

Going meekly to die.

Up in the blue, blue mountains

Dewy pastures are sweet;

Rest for the little bodies,

Rest for the little feet.

But for the Lamb of God,

Up on the hill-top green,

Only a cross of shame

Two stark crosses between.

All in the April evening,

April airs were abroad;

I saw the sheep with their lambs,

And thought on the Lamb of God.

Front Cover : Photograph *Glass 2* by Malcolm Mc Gettigan. See more about Malcolm in the preview of the April Arts Evening, Pg. 3

Bray Town Council Arts Bursary Awards

Bray Arts welcomes the award of E 3,000 from Bray Town Council. Congratulations also to Serendipity and singer Sarah Power, both of whom also received E 3,000 Arts Bursaries. Open Door, Works on Paper and Triskill Design received awards of E 2,000 each.

The decision to allocate fewer awards of greater amounts than previously is a realistic approach. Apart from the essential financial support, these awards are also a recognition of the value of the recipients' contributions to the Arts. A big thank you to Bray Town Council and the awarding panel.

Short Cuts at Mermaid

Local Arts - 10th Apr 2008 at 8pm
E16.00 /E14.00

Bray Institute of Further Education Will Showcase emerging talent in Irish film, Short Cuts is a collection of graduate short film work from Bray Institute of Further Education Students. Comedy, drama and experimental pieces come together to give an eclectic view of life from the everyday to just plain strange.

Would You Believe

On Sunday 16th March RTE celebrated the inspirational Gladys Sheehan in their Would You Believe series. Fortunately you can still view this programme on the website : <http://www.rte.ie/tv/wouldyoubelieve/>



Gladys is a regular visitor and performer at Bray Arts. She is a really remarkable and likable woman who is loved by all who come in contact with her. Congratulations Gladys and may you grace our Arts Evenings for many years to come.

MANDSCAPE at Mermaid Gallery

11 April - 10 May

The Ark, A Cultural Centre for Children presents Mandscape Exhibition

Mandscape is a made-up word, which describes the theme of the exhibition - images of landscape where mankind is present, or where man has left a trace on the landscape and includes urban images as well as rural landscapes. Curated by Martin Drury, founding Director of The Ark, the exhibition features work from their visual arts collection by ten leading contemporary artists and represents a range of different media, including prints, paintings, photographs, light boxes, and audiovisual work.



Mandscape features works by contemporary artists Brian Bourke, Oliver Comerford, Daniel de Chenu, Michael Durand, Martin Gale, Joy Gerrard, Nickie Hayden, Clare Langan, Brendan Neiland and Barbara Rae.

Review of March Arts Evening

The evening started with a film called *Marion agus an Banphrionsa*. It was written and directed by **Melanie Clark Pullen** and produced by **Simon Maxwell**. This is a story about a small girl who realises her dream to present flowers to Princess Grace of Monaco as she passes through her village on a Royal visit to Ireland, despite her older sister Una's catty remarks that Marion would be too small to even see the princess.



But Marion is not deterred. We see the expectant crowd lining the streets of the village as the Princess's car comes into view and Marion decked out in her communion dress steps out into the main street in front of the car which slows to a halt. The car door opens and the Princess takes the bunch of flower's proffered by a jubilant Marion. The final frame of the film is a photograph of an actual event which, in fact, was the inspiration for this beautiful little film.

Congratulations to Melanie and Simon on a classy piece of film making and our thanks for giving us the opportunity to see it.

Congratulations to Melanie and Simon on a classy piece of film making and our thanks for giving us the opportunity to see it.

Route 66 Theatre presented extracts from *The Ninth Bar*, their forthcoming play by **Noel McAiodh**.

Ciaran and Colm Coogan are two friends Denno and Steve. Denno is a bit of a headcase who cajoles a reluctant Steve to help him rescue his brother who is captured by a vicious gang; or so Denno thinks. Denno thinks he has been instrumental in his brother's disappearance because he cut a chunk off a block of hash which he was minding for the same brother. The incompetent two burst in on the gang who supposedly kidnapped the brother they get a big surprise.

This was a really enjoyable piece of theatre. Ciaran and Colm are naturals and they had the audience captivated which can be difficult in the prop-less surroundings of the Heather House. All the best to Noel and the boys with this one; I think they have a winner.

St Fergal Men's Choir with their Musical Director, **Michael Byrne**, rounded off the evening with a varied programme of music and song. Michael opened with a very atmospheric composition of his own called "Sugarloaf Mist," played on the Synthesiser. The choir followed with "Black is the Colour of My True Love's Hair" and then a solo by Frank, "My Cavan Girl."

Michael's second composition was called "Graceful Swan." His music is somewhat similar to that of Phil Coulter, evocative and relaxing.

We were then treated to some further choral pieces, including "Can You Feel the Love," "You're My Best Friend," "Thinking About Things," and "Trailer for Sale or Rent." A lot of feet were tapping by the close of the evening. A big thank you to Michael and the Choir.

Indian Spring

By Debashis Sen

Dappled shadows slyly cross along
walls, shyly twist around the huddled
rows of where other shadows stand
near old bent outskirts; obscured as low lines.

By the last-most bend of the path,
the wide but illegible and untracked,
lost by-tracks, tarmac road old detours,
the sun slightly peeps up and then dips .

its glow, rises like invisible tears to a sad
longing of dark eyes beyond boarder lines.
There beyond the lull of traffic stillness
to the congestion of commuters trapped

by themselves; the tan of rainbow rises
like the swirl of small distances in the small
breath of the scene. Its the same old tale of starts
and finishes of growing and green coming alive.

Rose of Picardy

By Jack Cuddihy

He seemed off to me,
banging on about Ypres,
in his thirties and me seventeen.
But I was gone from home
and was lonely. So he sang to me
his song of Picardy, me his rose
in the heart of the silver dew,
the me, mind you, who turned out
wellies down Maine Road. A chesty
little man, bowed in the legs,
darts and rings and two pints of mild.
A mean life enough, and still lonely
For a rose of Picardy.

Mary Baird

By Jack Cuddihy

The woman who bore him
but a short time gone knelt
hollow in loss on arthritic
knees. Her injudicious plainswoman's
howl shredded eddies of
incense, the staid solemnities
of redundant sons. Only she
mourns lonely the lost lovely boy
who steepled her upon his
knee like a young girl
to hear him sing
to her, in drink his
Lovesong "Marguerite".

No Holes Bard

By Berni Alexander

I had just finished reading the last page of Othello
From a book so long written it's pages are yellow.
And it started me thinking long and hard,
About the life of the worlds most famous bard.
I could see him work by candlelight,
Scripting late into the night.
Skilfully wielding ink and quill,
To write the words we are reading still.
He wrote of love and he wrote of death,
His speeches steal away my breath
But for all his genius I suppose,
Like everyone else, he picked his nose.

To Beads or Not To Beads

By Berni Alexandra

Macbeth, tis long since I have slept, I spoileth for a fight,
A tempest roars within me on this calm midsummer's night.
As thy breathing rose and falleth and contentedly thou slept,
I tip-toed from our chamber, to my writing desk I crept.

The fibres in my parchment and the ink within my quill,
Recoileth from the secret I compeleth them to spill.
My Lord, thou hath been rumbled, the garments that thou
weareth
Art mine and mine alone, my clothes art not for thou to
shareth.

Thou art a doublet crossing Sovereign, didst my King
suppose
His Queen would never notice he was wearing out her hose?
Every farthingale I owneth hath strained against thy hips
And my mercury and sulphur stain the contours of thy lips.

There is fallout from thy Van Dyke in the layering of my ruff,
My buttons hath all poppeth and my gauntlets reek of snuff.
Corsets made to firm and sculpt me faileth in their task
Buckledeth by the manly shape thou forceth them to mask.

If this were some raucous wench, thou could not but pursue,
I wouldst meet and match the challenge in the taming of the
shrew.
Or some merry widow's drying eyes engageth thine in dance,
I'd convinceth thee beside my love no other love could
prance.

This circumstance doth try me Liege, put paid to this desire,
A pledge to me, a guarantee to wear thine own attire
Will shake speares from my heart, free the measure of that
muscle
To pound like any other 'neath a bodice and a bustle.

I lay my disappointment bare but despite the bile that
gushes,
I confront thee through the written word to spare my king his
blushes.
For I'd take the blade from Caesar's back, buried to its hilt,

If I thought, I'd instigate in thee, a modicum of guilt.

The witching hour's upon me Lord, 'tis far too long I've tarried,
My heart feels light, relieved tonight of burdens it hath carried.
To bed I'll creep to claim the sleep a twelfth night won't deny me.
Slip this note in thy frock-coat and take my place beside thee,

Though far from me to lecture thee on consequence of error
The exposure of thy secret must imbue thy heart with terror
So, be leery of my patience Sire stay outed from thy screen
Before thy power I wilt not cower thou canst not be King
and Queen

(If rumour mongers quiz me on the 'man', in whom I married
Silence will endure; rest assured all questions will be parried).

The Gift

By Shirley Farrar

Listening to gravel crunch
on the path to Killult. With a smile,
handing Cassandra over.
Seamus puts my girl
into warm breast pocket.
The black stove roars
between red pine pews,
celebrating our world with another.

The tiny church, a noisy throng,
musicians playing, singing songs.
Great Irish wordsmiths
captivate with words
their gift for truth,
breathing deeply, deliberately
taking time to listen,
words that make us human.

Sunlight streams through arched windows.
Robed in purple, atmosphere alive,
Joyous voices greeting
Gabriel, Sean, Marie and Anne.
Songs of amplitude and longing,
until beguiled by spirit,
one by one the poets speak
fiercely casting their nets
before the mountains and the sea.

Noah's Arc

By Stanley Regal



Noah and Zinnia were the Burton and Taylor of the North Side Active Retirement Centre. Although she preferred to be thought of more like and Posh and Becks.

Before they joined, the centre was more of a warehouse for keeping the local pensioners warm in the winter months so they didn't have to spend a large portion of their incomes on heating their homes. They patrons spent most of their days watching daytime television or playing bingo, dominos, cards or draughts.

Noah "got them off their asses," Zinnia often said. He first got them to do tai chi and once got them used to activity, he got them doing dancercise and ballroom dancing and other activities that kept them active and alert.

The centre was an old factory building that the local council purchased. The building had a sign on the outside with initials ARC rather than the full name of Active Retirement Centre.

Soon after Noah and Zinnia started attending the word got out about the increased activities and the patrons coming to the facility more than doubled. One night someone spray-painted NOAH'S over the sign and in urban legend the facility became known by all the patrons as Noah's Arc.

Once a week they held a pot-luck lunch where everyone brought in a dish from home. They would take a small bit from each dish and have a nutritious hot meal from several dishes.

But Zinnia faced a constant battle with weight. She was not obese but teetered on the edge of between being nearly overweight and overweight. She was always on a diet and of course if she was dieting, so was Noah, even though his metabolism was a lot more efficient than hers and was not in the least bit overweight. In fact most people who met him thought that he could stand to put on a stone or two. With Noah on the same diet as Zinnia he was constantly hungry.

During the potluck lunches Zinnia always went up to the line for them both and brought back small portions on the plate. Noah wolfed down the food and sat staring across the table at the other people eating their meals dreaming like Oliver of "some more." But he knew better than to ask Zinnia for another helping.

The other women of the facility tried to sneak a bit more to Noah's plate but Zinnia always stopped them. "He really doesn't want any more," Zinnia always said. "He's like a child in a candy store. His eyes are bigger than his

belly. And you don't have to spend all night with him burping and complaining of dyspepsia."

Occasionally he would enlist the help of some of the women who would take Zinnia to the side and engage her in conversation while he ate as much as he could from neighbouring plates. He was sometimes successful at getting some food before Zinnia's attention came back to him. He always have an excuse or put some food on a fork and try to entice his wife to eat some. "Try this Z, it's delicious. Remember to get some of this at our next lunch."

She usually sniffed. "I've had quite enough, thank you very much and so have you."

About eight months after they started coming to the centre Zinnia passed quietly away in her sleep. Her funeral was massive with nearly everyone who attended the centre coming the funeral, though most came to give their sympathies to Noah rather than their respects to Zinnia. She was not liked all that much, especially by the other women.

Noah was absent from the centre for about a month and received daily phone calls urging him to come back because the place wasn't the same without him.

When Noah finally did return to the centre everyone was shocked by how bad he looked. He existed on soup and toast and jam. He never was that good in the kitchen. He knew how to use a can opener; it was what to do with the contents once it was open that was the problem. Zinnia always took care of that and now she was gone.

Several of the women took pity on Noah and out of respect to Zinnia did not try to move in on Noah.

Mary knew his weakness was food and enticed him to her home for a meal. He was allowed to eat as much as he wanted. He was so full that he fell asleep in front of the television after the meal. He ate at Mary's several times after that.

Mary thought she had the inside track on making their relationship a more permanent one. The thing about it was that she was so happy over the situation that she bragged to some of the women at the centre.

A few of the others also had designs on Noah. After talking to Mary they knew the key to getting to Noah was food. They also started inviting Noah over for meals. The meals got bigger and bigger with elaborate desserts, each trying to out do the other to keep Noah coming back.

At first Noah felt like a worm being pecked to death by all the hens in the chicken coop. After a few weeks he had his pick of meals to choose from. The first thing he asked when he received an invitation was, "What's for dinner?"

Within a month of that first dinner he had a dozen women vying for his affections and had a regular

circle of women's homes to eat at. He was like the only cockerel in the henhouse.

He was putting on weight but for the first time in years he felt full.

Stanley Regal is a member of Abraxas Writers

A Few Random Thoughts on Music

In a recent Interview on the Late Late Show, Pat Kenny asked Sir David Attenborough, one of the world's most acclaimed and loved naturalists, if he believed in God. David replied that he was an agnostic and that the one thing that stopped him from being an atheist was music. Although he could not explain it, music it seemed to him, transcends the physical world that he observes with such insight and passion.

Is music our most direct link with God, Logos, Nirvana or that nameless and unexplainable otherness, beyond the empirical world?

Unlike Sir David Attenborough, the savagery and cruelty of the natural world repelled Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860). According to him we inhabit a world of violence, injustice and greed which ends in death. But even in this dark and pessimistic world of Schopenhauer, the one thing that could moderate and provide temporary release from the pain of existence was art and in particular music. Schopenhauer regarded music as a sort of super-art that transcended all others.

Almost a hundred years before Schopenhauer, William Congreve (1670 - 1729), the English Playwright said much the same as Schopenhauer, in his, now famous quotation,

"Musick has charms to sooth a savage breast,
To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak."

The Morning Bride Act I Scene I



And of course, Shakespeare has, as always, his commentary on music:

" In sweet music is such art,
Killing care and grief of heart"

Henry VIII, 3.1.4-15

More recently, a friend drew my attention to a recent Reith Lecture, *In the Beginning was Sound* by **Daniel Barenboim**. During that lecture he talked about this power of music to transcend our everyday lives:

“Why is music so important? Why is music something more than something very agreeable or exciting to listen to? Something that, through its sheer power, and eloquence, gives us formidable weapons to forget our existence and the chores of daily life. My contention is that this is of course possible, and is practised by millions of people...”

Given the undoubted transforming power of music, I wonder why, in our mainstream educational system, it is generally considered an optional extra that is nice to pursue so long as it does not interfere with real education. However there is a positive development in the form of music therapy which is proving invaluable in engaging and reaching out to young people who have difficulties or even disabilities that prevents them from experiencing the beneficial effects of mainstream education. But even this positive development has a potentially negative aspect, in that music may be relegated to the area of special needs rather than becoming a core subject in education.

Tom Conroy

Video Voyeur

Harold Chassen

The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford is a western but not in the shoot-em-up style of the past. It is more of a study of the relationship between Jesse James



and Robert Ford (Casey Affleck). Ford is fascinated and has a love-hate relationship of Ford for James. At first he idolises James which soon changes to jealousy. When James includes him in his next job the jealousy

soon turns to paranoia and to the inevitable assassination of James by Ford. The Oscar nominated performance by Affleck is well worth the price of the rental.

Bray Choral Society ñ 10th May 2008 - National Concert Hall

The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace ñ Karl Jenkins Requiem ñ John Rutter

Sarah Power ñ soprano
Colette McGahon ñ contralto
Ross Scanlon ñ tenor
Jeffrey Ledwidge - bass

The Bray Choral Society, under their musical director Frank Kelly, will be performing their 2008 concert at the National

Concert Hall on Saturday 10th May 2008. They are delighted to be joined by the Bray Youth Choir at the NCH and to be able to feature among the soloists two young Bray musicians, Sarah Power and Ross Scanlon.

The Armed Man was commissioned for the millennium and is a compelling account of the descent into, and terrible consequences of, war. This performance will be accompanied by a powerful multi media presentation that emphasises the poignancy and relevance of the work.

Preview Arts Evening Monday April 7th Heather House, Seafront at 8:00pm Adm. E5 / E4 conc. Everyone Welcome.

Malcolm Mc Gettigan a photography graduate of Colaiste Dhulaigh will present ‘**John Player Blues**’ This collection of images are taken from the old John Player factory on the 5th Circular rd which is due to be demolished in the near future to make way for ‘Players square’

Frank O’Keeffe will direct **Justin Aylmer** in a shortened version of *Throwaways* by **Iris Park**. This is the second of a series of 6 monologues which Iris is writing as part of her PhD thesis for UCD following her M. A. in Drama and Performance Studies. Her plays ‘*Shelling Peas*’, ‘*For the Birds*’ and ‘*Sidhe Gaoite (The Fairy Wind)*’ were read by the Abbey Theatre and Fishamble Theatre Company. The plays ‘*That Look*’ and ‘*Baked Beans and Raspberry Ripple*’ were produced at Bewleys Café Theatre. A series of her plays were produced in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and she adapted her stage play ‘*The Fairy Wind*’ for radio and this was broadcast by RTE as a 1 hour play of the week.

Once again we have pleasure in presenting the brilliant Flamenco guitarist **Garcia**. This very talented musician has made his home in Bray. He performed at Bray Arts last November. The audience loved him. Garcia will be going



on a National and International tour shortly, so we are delighted that he has agreed to perform at Bray Arts before he hits the road. If you missed him last time round, now is your opportunity to hear his spectacular playing.

This will be a very special night because we have’nt lost the “only **Racker** of the Western world.” Peter Donnelly is back from London and ready to Rack and Roll. He’s MC for the night that’s in it.

Bray Choral Society

at

The National Concert Hall

performing

The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace

by Karl Jenkins

&

Requiem

by John Rutter

on Saturday 10th May 2008

(see page 7 for more details)

Submission Guidelines

Editor : Dermot McCabe : editor@brayarts.net

Creative Writing Editor : Anne Fitzgerald :

afitzgerald3@ireland.com

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

The Editor BAJ 'Casino',
Killarney Rd. Bray,
Co. Wicklow

Visual material: Photographs by Post. Digital Images by
Email or CD in JPEG format.

Deadline 15th of each month.



*Arts Evening Monday 7th April
at the Heather House Hotel Strand Road 8:00 pm
5 Euro / 4 Euro Conc. Everyone is welcome.*

Malcolm McGettigan : Photographer, presents his
"John Player Blues"

Throwaways : The talented **Justin Aylmer** performs *Throwaways*
written by **Iris Park** and directed by **Frank O'Keeffe**

Garcia: Flamenco Guitar playing at its very best.
"Peace, that is some wicked playing..." - BONO

MC : The Racker (AKA Peter Donnelly)

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