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# Bray Arts Journal

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Issue 5

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**FREE**

## Marcus Aurelius (121 AD - 180 AD)

*a thought for 2013*



“Don’t be anxious. Nature controls it all. And before long you’ll be no one, nowhere – like Hadrian, like Augustus.

“Concentrate on what you have to do. Fix your eyes on it. Remind yourself that your task is to be a good human being; remind yourself what nature demands of people. Then do it without hesitation, and speak the truth as you see it. But with kindness. With humility. Without hypocrisy.”



Front Cover : Detail of Painting by  
Rodrigo Costa  
see Pg 6 for further information

## Bray Arts Night January 14, 2013

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

Bray Arts kicks off the new year with a really exciting programme of poetry, theatre and music.

### Shed Poets

Carol Boland, Judy Russell and Rosy Wilson of Shed Poets

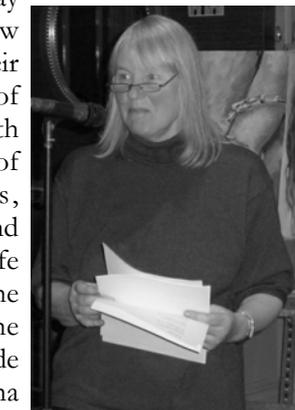


*Carol Boland*

return to Bray Arts to show part of their film of poems with images of landscapes, people, and natural life evoked by the poems. The film was made with Anna Wilson's independent film company, Little Fish Films, and part-funded by Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown

Community Arts. The poets will also read a sample of their more recent work.

*Rosy Wilson*



*Judy Russell*



## Kill The Monster

Kill The Monster is a longform improvisation group which emerged from No Drama Theatre. For people unfamiliar with "Improv" it is unscripted and involves the creation of a scene



*Kill The Monster*

from nothing more than audience suggestions. In Longform Improv, Kill The Monster create not just scene after scene but also magically weave, braid and reveal an unscripted theatrical play from a mere word or anecdote offered by the audience. These theatrical plays unravel before the audience's eyes over a 20 minute piece of time intertwining plots of romance, revenge, joy, deviousness, excitement, tragedy, comedy and comic tragedy in an entertaining dramatic spectacle. Don't miss it!

## Appellation Pending

Appellation Pending is a group of like minded but diverse people who share at least one thing in common- the fun and enjoyment of playing and singing traditional and contemporary American Bluegrass/Appalachian music. The group came together first in the summer of 2009 although many of the members had known and played together for several years beforehand. The line up includes Roisin Duddy (fiddle), Mark MacArtain (mandolin & harps) Shay Hiney (bass), Paul Blunnie,



*Some members of Appellation Pending*

Stephen Byrne, Killian Ivory (6 & 12 string guitars), Eddie Ryan (banjo & vocals), John Ivory (piano) and female vocals Theresa Bradley, Mary Sparks, Helen Rafferty and Marie O'Rielly. Its an all acoustic band and on the night and depending on space available the group varies from 6 to 12 members. The emphasis is on participation and engagement so if you know the lyrics or the harmonies join in !

## Review of Bray Arts Night 3rd December.

by Shane Harrison

An elegant gilded shape took centre stage at the December Arts meeting. This was the wonderful concert harp of **Claire O'Donnell**,



*Claire O'Donnell*

**O'Donnell**, elegance personified herself, who conjured fine music from the instrument to enthral a sizable winter gathering. As the first notes were plucked, the music seemed ushered in from the air, caressed with strumming fingers and dispersed about the room.

She is also full of knowledge of the lore of the harp, enthusiastic to share its story with us. Her own harp is of an early twentieth century design, originally from Chicago. The classic shape is perhaps most famed for its cinematic association with Harpo Marx. The harp's soundbox, she said, made a handy suitcase for the itinerant musician, Claire packs it mainly with sound.

The music took us from the sixteenth century with its Renaissance echoes to the grander, fuller sound of Rosetti's eighteenth century sonata in three movements. Claire would later turn to the smaller traditional Irish harp to play a selection of O'Carolan compositions. These are more resonant for an Irish audience, songs that make us smile with the pleasure of recognition. O'Carolan could have been lost to us, Claire says, only thanks to the music collector, Edward Bunting, were his compositions saved for us. Thanks to Claire for passing them on in all their traditional simplicity.



*Clair and Gerry O'Donnell*

Claire's father, Gerry, joined her for the traditional set, providing mellow depth with his accompaniment on flute. Ending on O'Carolan's Welcome, it was in fact a farewell, but hopefully a brief one, this is one musician of whom we will be hearing more.

**Anne Fitzgerald** is well known to Bray Arts, not only has she regaled us before with her poetry but she has manned the doorway too, keeping Bray Arts safe from gatecrashers and other freeloaders. All, of course, with her inimitable charm, a gift she brings to delivering her poetry.

The voice is mellow and warm, the verse beguiling. Narratives are spun on a web of folk memory and personal odyssey. Her latest collection is entitled *Beyond the Sea*, hinting at her most constant theme, the lures and opportunities of the ocean as highway, conveying emigrants outwards and an incessant flow of disparate cultures inwards.

Anne is a native of Dun Laoghaire, that strange republic just to the north of us, but she has trod a global life, living for many years in Manhattan. Imagine her vision as spun from a web of those experiences; so in her poetry we may swim off the Forty Foot, see lightning strike the Empire State Building, soar momentarily amidst the constellations above and sink in the sombre caress of the chants of the monks of Glenstal Abbey.

There is much more besides, hidden hints of the personal are scattered amongst the cartography of global movements, buried treasure that you must seek with the scantest of clues. All human life is here, indeed the title poem namechecks Zanzibar, Big Tom and the Russian Revolution. Buy the book to get the full story!

The **Blue Moon Jazz Trio** brought the evening to a close with an intimate blend of Latin, Swing and some of their own numbers.

Marion Smith provided both vocals and rhythm guitar, Andy Smith gave instrumental colour with his sax while the rhythm was laid down by Brazilian Zeca Munhoz.



*Marion Smith of Blue Moon*

There was a close and personable feeling to the combo, like observing friends having a good time playing around with familiar sounds.

Although we were up at conservatory level in the Martello, the dark Irish Sea spreading to the horizon beyond the windows, closing your eyes it was like being in a basement bar at the warmer latitudes, jazz and cigarette smoke mingling in the sort of toxic brew that is the fuel of life itself.



*Andy Smith of Blue Moon*

Well, if you can't have one at least you can have the other. After a laid back, toe-tapping repertoire that included one of my all time favourites - the great Ella Fitzgerald's (no kin, Anne?) Paper Moon, it really was time for a bit of the other. A finale on the theme of tequila, saw the rare spectacle of the Bray Arts



*Contentment: Frank O'Keeffe and Justin Aylmer long-time supporters of Bray Arts, giving their time and very considerable talents over the years.*



*Zeca Munhoz.*

floor filling with dancers. All sizes throwing shapes, as it were. It's said that dancing is a precursor to sex but, hey, we'll draw the blind on that. As for the more printable comments of the night, this was a good one, rounded off in seasonal form with a rendition of Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas....by all means do!



*Spontaneous Dancing : The music of Blue Moon was simply irresistible*



*Zan O'Loughlin and Olwen Dixon having fun, handing out a cornucopia of goodies at the Christmas Raffle*

### **Some more images from the last Bray Arts Night of 2012**



*The redoubtable Gladys Sheehan flanked by Barbara Donnelly and Zan O'Loughlin*



*MC for the Night: A resplendent Julie Rose McCormick kept the show ticking over nicely*

**West Moveen, Co. Clare, Ireland: By Way of a  
Thank-you for the Use of Your Cottage**

by Paul Allen

Dear Lynch,

In truth way does lead on to way,  
so I have done much, touristly revering  
Trinity's Long Room, St. Stephen's Green....  
My father died a year ago today.

I thought of him all day, most of it  
spent at Loop Head and Castle Point  
watching fishermen cast lines out  
and down several hundred feet of cliff.

He was 98, died at peace,  
etc. But that's not what went on  
with me today. (Blame the fishermen?)  
Today I couldn't shake Dad's honesty

pulsing in the meat around my eyes.  
When I was ten I stole a fishing cork  
from some ignorant son-of-a-bitch's truck.  
Dad took me to the man's shop to confess.

I learned a lesson. I don't know what it was.  
Since then I've stolen many things a man  
steals in the course of being merrily man—  
hook, line, sinker—vanities, virtues.

But tonight, I rose to go to bed,  
paused, then took one more turf clod,  
one last hundred thousand year old sod,  
and bedded it in the dying fire instead.

Why I feel I must confess to this  
almost frivolous, certainly extraneous prolonging  
of one day I don't know. It isn't stealing  
exactly, but this one block seems priceless.

I guess there is the fear that...fear?—surety  
that all my fires, those to come or past,  
cannot fix day's ending hour fast  
like this, hold such death's-glow purity.

So I confess this theft before I go,  
not the power, the water, the time, the tea,  
or all the turf: Only this one piece.  
The old man would have wanted you to know.

Paul Allen, from the USA, a brilliant poet and singer/songwriter, is a joy to listen to. Bray Arts had the great pleasure of his company on 6<sup>th</sup> Oct 2008. He delighted the audience with his words and music that captured all the humour, wit and poignancy of life.

Songwriter Josh Ritter said of Allen's first album of poems and songs "[This] CD is AMAZING. It has totally

made me rethink the potential for recorded music. I'm going to play it for everyone I know." In May, 2010, Allen retired



*Paul Allen and Anne Fitzgerald at Bray Arts Nov  
2008*

from teaching poetry writing and writing song lyrics at the College of Charleston in Charleston, SC, Professor Emeritus. He currently lives on the road in a camper.

You can hear Paul at his website  
<http://poems-songs.com>.

**Nora**

by Eileen Mayer

Two redundant TVs behind the sofa  
take the pose of sulking cats,  
while the new plasma dictates  
brazenly over faded elegance.

A tray lies abandoned  
on a dishevelled bed piled high,  
torn cellophane swallows  
stale cake and soft ginger nuts.

The tea-pot warm, clogged  
by pouring debris, stands testament  
to couplings, gossip and friendships  
that left their stains.

No famed crown of thorns, bleeding heart  
or cape crusader, no crucifix to confuse,  
she left those long ago  
and very clear about that.

This is her own routine,  
ornaments bought to fill the spaces,  
a wardrobe full of clothes from others' lives,  
disguises to adorn at will.

No photos here, nor does she want any,  
the need has gone,  
the blaring plasma now sufficient  
in her voyeur's world.

continued →

**Eileen Mayer, Poet and Artist.**

Originally from South London, Eileen Mayer now lives in Stock Essex. She has published work in both Ireland and the UK. Eileen Mayer, while relatively new to poetry is also a talented artist and stone carver.



*Eileen Mayer*

Together with Portuguese artist **Rodrigo Costa** a book of paintings and poems entitled *The Landscape as the Place of Everything* was published in October 2010. It was launched in Canning House in London's Belgrave Square.

John Kelly, a local man and friend of Bray Arts, in his introduction to the book, describes a visit to Rodrigo's home in Salreu, Aveiro, Portugal. There he observed the the beginning of the process whereby the painter Rodrigo and poet Eileen worked together to eventually create *The Landscape as a Place for Everything*.

Describing Rodrigo at work he says, 'As we move through the water sodden landscape, Rodrigo's love of the area is palpable ... His easel in this place becomes the stage on which he translates the scene through palette to canvas.' He continues, 'On that day Eileen was breathing in the landscape too. As an artist, who has expressed in line, form and word through drawing, sculpting and writing poetry, Eileen is also conscious of the universality of the landscape. It is therefore appropriate that Rodrigo and Eileen should create a joint work to reflect the pivotal importance of landscape in all our lives.'



*Rodrigo Costa*



The Landscape as the Place of Everything  
poems Eileen Mayer . theme and paintings Rodrigo Costa  
introduction John Kelly  
available from Amazon, Ebay, Book Depository

Sample Painting and poem from *The Landscape as the Place for Everything*:



**Winter's Lament**

Winter folds into itself, closing down  
its exhausted consciousness. Tossed  
seams flinted with thought become  
orphan paths, lamenting loss.

Silence – in memoriam, casts an ear  
to the lyre as tears of leaves fall, trees  
flay and whisper, orchestrating a chorus  
of breezes, setting the odyssey free.

Plates of jagged ice lean together recalling  
order. Love notes carved from a refrain  
of footfalls seep below. Winter thaws,  
begins the caress of giving again.

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TURLOUGH O'CAROLAN.

(1670—1738.)

TURLOUGH CAROLAN, or O'CABOLAN, commonly called the last of the bards, was born in the year 1670 at the village of Baile-Nusah, or Newton, in the County Westmeath, and went to school at Cruisestown, County Longford. When about fifteen (some say eighteen and others twenty-two) he lost his sight through an attack of smallpox. While at school he made the acquaintance of Bridget Cruise, whose name he made famous in one of his songs.



Many years later Carolan went on a pilgrimage to what

*O'Carolan by Johann Van der Hagen*

is called St. Patrick's Purgatory, a cave in an island on Lough Dearg in County Donegal. While standing on the shore he began to assist some of his fellow-pilgrims into a boat, and chancing to take hold of a lady's hand he suddenly exclaimed, "By the hand of my gossip! this is the hand of Bridget Cruise!" So it was, but the fair one was still deaf to his suit.

Carolán moved with his father to Carrick-on-Shannon, and there a Mrs. M'Dermott-Roe had him carefully instructed in Irish and also to some extent in English. She also caused him to learn how to play the harp, not with the view to his becoming a harper, but simply as an accomplishment. In his twenty-second year he suddenly determined to become a harper, and, his benefactress providing him with a couple of horses and an attendant to carry the harp, he started on a round of visits to the neighbouring gentry, to most of whom he was already known; and for years he wandered all over the country, gladly received wherever he came, and seldom forgetting to pay for his entertainment by song in praise of his host.



*O'Carolán's Harp*

In about middle life he married Miss Mary Maguire, a young lady of good family. With her he lived very happily and learned to love her tenderly, though she was haughty and extravagant. When he married he built a neat house at Moshill in County Leitrim, and there entertained his friends with more liberality than prudence. The income of his little farm was soon swallowed up, and he fell into embarrassments which haunted him the rest of his life. On this he took to his wanderings again, while his wife stayed at home and busied herself with the education of their rather numerous family. In 1733 she was removed by death, and a melancholy fell upon him which remained until the end. He did not survive his wife long. In 1738 he paid a visit to the house of his early benefactress, Mrs. M'Dermott-Roe, and there he fell ill and died.

Dr. Douglas Hyde says in his "Literary History of Ireland": "He composed over two hundred airs, many of them very lively, and usually addressed to his patrons, chiefly to those of the old Irish families. He composed his own words to suit his music, and these have given him the reputation of a poet. They are full of curious turns and twists of meter to suit his airs, to which they are admirably wed, and very few are in regular stanzas. They are mostly of Pindaric nature, addressed to patrons or to fair ladies; there are some exceptions however, such as his celebrated ode to whisky, one of the finest bacchanalian songs in any language, and his much more famed but immeasurably inferior 'Receipt for Drinking. Very many of his airs and nearly all his poetry with the exception of about thirty pieces are lost."

Examples of his poetry will be found in translations by John D'Alton, Arthur Dawson, Sir Samuel Ferguson, Thomas Furlong, and Dr. George Sigerson.

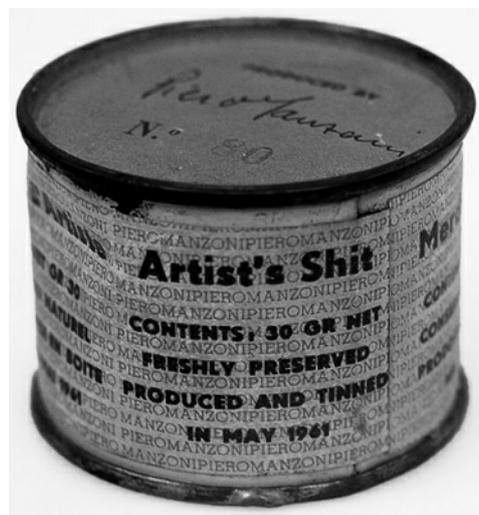
## Conceptual Art is Shit

*Killing the Emperors*, by Ruth Dudley Edwards is a satire on "the cynical, money-grubbing, sensationalist world of conceptual art, presided over by Sir Nicholas Serota of the Tate empire and the Turner Prize, who puts great paintings in storage to make room for the garbage his indoctrinated curators laud to the skies in laughable language that the brave, dissident Jackdaw magazine rightly calls "art bollocks"

I am sad to say that the Art establishment in Ireland has embraced this "art bollocks". I have attended final year art exhibitions at our Art Institutions over many years and the Fine Art painting and sculpture gets more pathetic with each passing year apart from a few brave souls who defy the established view and try to salvage something of the aesthetic heritage that imbued great art through the centuries.

My own view of those who promote this conceptual art, that Ruth Dudley Edwards so deplors, is that they are as misguided and stupid as those who believed that the Celtic Tiger economy was real. Those art speculators and dealers at the top of the various art establishments are simply greedy money men/women exulting in their ability to market and sell 'Shit' to those idiots who have totally lost their ability see that they are being duped. But, like the bubble economy, this house of cards will eventually fall down.

I use the word 'Shit', not as an involuntary, but perfectly understandable, swear word when confronted by the contemporary art I witness around me. No, I mean actual shit. As Ruth Dudley Edwards pointed out in her excellent article



*A Can of Artist's Shit - Piero Manzoni*

in the Sunday Independent on 9th Dec., "A few years ago, Tate Modern paid £23,000 for one of Piero Manzoni's 90 small tin cans. Produced in 1961, each carries a label, printed in Italian, English, French and German, identifying the contents as 30g of 'Artist's Shit'. They are much sought after: Tate Modern is thought to have got a bargain. Reverentially, in the accompanying art bollocks, we're told that the merda d'artista, "dried naturally and canned with no added preservatives, was the perfect metaphor for the bodied and disembodied nature of artistic labour: the work of art as fully incorporated raw material, and its violent expulsion as commodity."

She goes on to say, "There's Chris Ofili, who in 1998 won what is described disobligingly in my book as: "the Turner

Prize, which is named after an innovative painter of genius and is awarded annually to whatever bluffer has caught the eye of the knaves and fools who dominate the contemporary art world." Ofili has talent and a good way with colour, but you have to shock to win the Turner, and his unique selling point was the lumps of elephant dung he incorporated into his work."

Terence Koh, the Canadian Chinese artist sells his gold-plated shit for hundreds of thousands of dollars. He sells it to students in its natural state for only \$150 (€116).

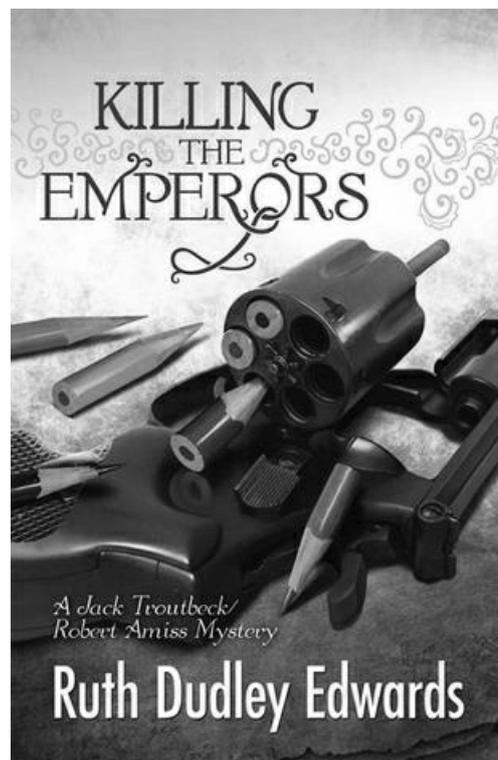
Paul Noble, shortlisted for the Turner Prize displayed "an omnipresent view" of a "dysfunctional world" in which "people become turds and turds become people". He showed black and white sculptures of turds copulating. He didn't win, probably because he was frowned upon for actually being able to draw."

At a fairly recent artist's talk, subsequent to the unveiling of her work, a certain sculptor and art teacher from our première art college, NCAD, declared that she was a bit out of practice in the making of her sculpture. In my view it was a meaningless piece of self indulgent junk that I'd knock together in about twenty minutes in my shed. And, I could justify it with the excruciating contortions of the English language that is Art-Speak.

As I write this, the clock has passed the midnight hour and it is 2013. I've had enough of being polite and indulgent about conceptual art. Well done Ruth Dudley Edwards. I'm with you all the way.

Please feel free to respond to this article, either to refute or support the views expressed.

Dermot McCabe



Why have luminaries of the world of conceptual art been kidnapped? And why has Baroness (Jack) Troutbeck – who has publicly described them all as knaves or fools – gone missing too? As victims surface publicly and horrifically dead, in what become ‘The Hommage Murders’, can she be rescued in time?

## Bray Arts Night Mon Jan 14<sup>th</sup> 2013

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

### Shed Poets

Carol Boland, Rosy Wilson and Judy Russell open the new year with live readings and a unique screening of their new DVD associating images of landscape, people and natural life with their creative words.

### Kill the Monster

bringing the art of “Longform Improv”, magically weaving, braiding and revealing an unscripted theatrical play from impromptu audience suggestion.

### Appellation Pending

An exciting group sharing the fun and enjoyment of playing and singing traditional and contemporary American Bluegrass/Appalachian music, inviting all to join in.

### Submission Guidelines

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Email submissions to the above or post to :

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Co. Wicklow

Text in Microsoft Word  
Pictures/Logos etc Jpeg preferably 300 dpi

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