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# Bray Arts Journal

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Issue 10

June 2009

Volume 14



## The Death of Romantic Ireland

*"I am announcing the death of Romantic Ireland."*  
Mannix Flynn 2009

While preparing this journal the Ryan Commission report on its enquiry into child abuse was published. The extent and pervasiveness of the physical, psychological and sexual torture of children in religious institutions in Ireland, up to recent years, is truly horrendous.

It is not possible to simply relegate this shameful activity to another time and another place that has nothing to do with us. It is not possible to turn away and say that we had no part in it. Irish children were being brutally beaten, buggered and raped by Irish men and women and to our eternal shame no one spoke out and without a doubt many, many people knew what was happening. The industrial schools were state sponsored gulags of brutality and torture.

*"This regime, this indictment, this culture will sit alongside Pol Pot, will sit alongside Joseph Stalin, will sit alongside Adolf Hitler's Germany."*

Mannix Flynn 2009

It seems to me that there is no facet of Irish life, including the arts, that can continue without acknowledging what happened and examining why it was that we turned away and chose not to see the sickness in our midst. What of the writers, the poets, the artists? Were our souls so blighted by a sick religiosity that we were unable to raise even a whisper of complaint? What was wrong with us, with our parents, with our grandparents?

Where do we go to from here? A book of condolences, apologies and compensation are not what's required. Those who suffered want justice and they are still not getting it.

*"This is not a legal situation nor is it a compensation situation ... this is a human suffering and it is being prolonged totally and unnecessarily."*

Mannix Flynn

Mannix Flynn is a writer and artist. He is artistic director of Farcry Productions, an elected member of Aosdána and a former board member of Imma

*You can download the Ryan report from the internet and also listen to Mannix Flynn on the Newstalk.ie website.*

There is a writer today who has addressed this issue and that is Bruce Arnold. His Book

### The Irish Gulag:

*How the State Betrayed its Innocent Children:  
Gill and Macmillan, 351pp, •16.99*

Is highly recommended.

Dermot McCabe

Cover : Protection by Beverly Ranger. See Pg 7 for info on Beverly's upcomong exhibition at Signal Arts

## Bray Arts Evening May 11th Review

The evening began with a short AGM of the Bray Arts Club in which Zan O'loughlin, as outgoing chairperson, gave an account of the year and urged the members to help the committee in any way they could. Ger Thomas, Club Secretary, read the minutes of the last AGM and Carmen Cullen, Club Treasurer, delivered a brief account of the finances of the Arts Club. Zan thanked The members of the outgoing committee and reported that all would be available to stand again for the coming year. she also called for a change in the chairmanship as she felt that renewal was important.

Formalities over, the arts evening began with a taste of Sondheim's "Side by Side". This is Derek Pullen's latest



Robert O'Connor and Owen Clarke

show drawing performers from all over Dublin. Four singers from the cast sang a selection of numbers beginning with "A Good Time Going" a rich tenor and baritone duet from Robert O'Connor and Owen Clarke. This was followed by "Send in the Clowns" from Aisling Green Madden, "When Momma got Married" from Aisling and Naoimh Penston with piano accompaniment played by Russell Smith, the musical director of the show.

The performance continued with a beautiful rendition of "isn't it rich" and finished with a hilarious routine "if momma would marry"



Naoimh Penston and Aisling Green-Madden

For the last half, of the evening the arts club was treated to a rich tapestry of songs and guitar from Brendan Glennon and Liam Lawlor. They began with the familiar: "The Final Bell" penned by Brendan and Christy Byrne and based on a

### In Train

by Peter van de Kamp  
Salmon Poetry  
Paperback | 127 x 203 mm | 96 pages | ISBN 978-1-903392-85-0 | June 2008 Euro12



*"Many conversations are happening in these poems, wistful conversations which the poet is having with the reader and witty, engaging conversations with himself or with nobody in particular. Arresting, full of rhythm and gentle flow - never a dull moment. Oh, and he knows how to rhyme as well!"*

Gabriel Posenstock

poem by Vincent Caprani about a lightweight boxer, who fought 300 fights in ten years! The song celebrated "the courage to be strong"



Brendan Glennon

Brendan then sang his own composition: "Don't Turn on Me" with some skillful touches by Liam on the slide guitar. The talented duo continued with a fluent rendition of such well-loved songs as "Loving You", "Make My Dreams Come True".

To lighten the mood, Brendan turned to one of his own favourites, a blues song by Steve Lovet called "My Old Friend Blues". He followed this with one of his own songs, written some time ago, "Let's Wait Another Day" and the Don Williams song "Gipsy Woman".

**Peter van de Kamp** was born in the Hague. He is a poet, translator, critic, anthologist and scholar. He has published 17 books. He teaches at the institute of Technology, Tralee

Two poems from In Train

### The Harper's Song after Goethe

He who succumbs to solitude  
Will soon be on his own  
Everyone lives and loves,  
And leaves him to his pain.  
But not so with me.  
If only I would be  
Utterly, solitary,  
I would'nt be alone.  
Does a lover sneak away  
If his heart writhes awake?  
Night and day creep up  
And rape my solitude.  
If only you would wake me,  
Let me be a memory,  
Sealed in the grave,

and solitary

### The Harper's Second Song

You speak of trust-  
Is the booty not enough?  
St. Jerome bemoaned  
The sack of Rome -  
The birds had flown  
The beasts had gone  
Fish forsook the sea,  
The land was overgrown  
When the Goths moved on.

If only I could be  
Utterly solitary  
Now that you've plundered me.  
But you distrust your prey  
Foray what you've forsaken  
And scour the remains.  
'It may sound harsh,' you say,  
'But there's no other way.'  
Hide me in an unmarked grave  
Give me nought that can be saved.  
And once you're done - turn away,  
For love can never stay  
Beside an indifferent grave.



Sketch of Niall Lawlor by Veronica Heywood a distinguished artist and friend of Bray Arts.

Brendan and Liam brought their wonderful session to a close with "Come let the Good Times Rock" and "A Lesson too Late for the Learning".

In a well-deserved encore Brendan and Liam sang and played "I Hope that I Won't Get It Wrong Any More" and "Some Day I'll Get Over You" to loud and sustained applause.

Cearbhail E. O'Meadhra

Photos : Peter Gowney

Websites:

Brendan Glennon :available on myspace

Niall Lawlor : <http://www.myspace.com/nclawlor>

## Images

by Debashis Sen

Young memories crowd back to me,  
fresh as flowers that touched sunrise,  
or of evening birds in late skies;  
amber-blue petals slowly unfolding  
as if an immortal love –  
flowing by the Yamuna river carrying  
those traceless centuries.

The Taj Mahal's sculpted marbles  
in a forever corner; where colours play  
air a fragrant tune: unknown voices rise  
and fall to the river's sibilant course.

## one else

by Sean Ryan

Masted silhouettes heft and sink,  
swayed black on black sky  
(one over one, else none).  
An ocean's weight in the lap  
of water on hull as  
bow breaks surf.

in quiet coitus  
there is no else,

else  
a heaving unseen,  
else had.

## Poem

by Sean Ryan

### I finger the woodgrain grooves of wooden breakfast tables

scarred, and packed  
with the blackened grease  
of a hundred unwashed hands.

I dig thumb nail in, and  
scratches  
out the dirt, gathering  
bliss.

scraped from under nails,  
thumbed and rolled and  
mingled with crumbs of toast,  
the remains are gathered together  
and brushed to  
floor.

## Tiger Lily

By Stanley Regal

Martin Booth died of a massive heart attack on 18 July 2007. He was just 64 and seemingly in good health. He had yearly physicals, was a jogger and exercised regularly. For some reason his heart gave out. His family took his death extremely hard, especially his wife Lillian. She was only 55.

After his death, she let herself go completely. She almost shut herself off from her friends and family. She gained weight and seemed to lose all interest in life. Her children Jan and Dean were extremely worried about her. They went by to check on her daily, but couldn't stay long because of their own family commitments. Her reaction was always the same. She was polite, social, friendly but she just seemed to be doing all those things to humour her children.

Before her husband died she took a great deal of attention to her appearance because she wanted to look good for her Martin. After he died she cut her hair short in sort of a manly style and let it go grey.

The children insisted she join them for weekly dinners alternating between their houses. Before dinner one night they had a discussion. "What are going to do," Dean said?

"I don't know," Jan replied? "But if we don't do something soon, we'll be burying her. Maybe she should live with you?"

"What! I'm married and two women in the same house."

"She'll never get along with Mia. I mean Mia loves her and respects her as her mother in law but two women fighting for control over running the same house. He shook his head. It just won't work. She should stay with you."

"Me?" It was almost a shriek. "What about the two women in the same house idea?"

"But it's different for you. You're mother and daughter."

"We still have the same fights over running the house."

Their argument got very heated and quite loud. They hardly heard Lillian's knocking. When they finally did, they both glanced at each other wondering how long she had been at the door and what had she heard.

Lillian had now put on more than a few extra pounds and her grey hair hung loosely. She was almost unrecognisable as their mother. She said nothing during their dinner and reluctantly accepted a ride home from Dean. She didn't invite him in. He didn't bring up the idea of her living with one of them.

Lillian disappeared that night.

Both children were terribly worried. They contacted the police and all the hospitals for unknown accident victims and deceased. Posters and flyers were put in shops around the town asking if anyone had seen her or had any information about her whereabouts. It was as if she had just dropped off the face of the earth or been plucked up by aliens.

Jan and Dean continued their weekly dinners and one day about eight months after Lillian's disappearance they got a telephone call from some mysterious unknown man telling them that they would receive information about their mother on the evening of their next weekly dinner.

The police were contacted and several unmarked cars were on duty to apprehend whoever was bringing the information. They feared a ransom note and were all set to arrest whoever would bring it.

A policeman inside the house received a phone call that an unknown person was approaching the house on a motorcycle.

Jan and Dean were tense as they heard a motor approaching. The figure arrived on a Vespa. The figure wore jeans and a black leather motorcycle jacket and had a motorcycle helmet covering the face. It stopped in the driveway and the children walked outside. The figure strode towards them and stopped in front of them.

It took the helmet off and, there in front of them both was their mother. She frowned. "Is that the way you treat your mother? You should be ashamed of yourselves. Where's my hug?"

They rushed over loaded with questions. "Where were you? What have you been doing? Why haven't you contacted us?"

"I hope you have enough food for more than you two tonight." She walked into the house.

Lillian sat on the sofa and they had a closer look at their mother. Her hair was now shoulder length and was dyed a light shade of red. When she took off her jacket they could see that she had lost a lot of weight. She was wearing a low cut top and Jan caught sight of the edge of a tattoo just below her mother's right collarbone. She was stunned and pointed at it. "Mother! What is that?"

She smiled and pulled down the front of her top showing the full tattoo of a small lily similar to the colour of her hair covered with black tiger stripes. "It's a tattoo, a flower, a tiger lily."

"Mother! A motorcycle! A tattoo! What on earth has gotten into you?"

She got that far away look in her eye. "Zed. I met him in the commune. And he's absolutely fabulous. He phoned you about me coming, didn't he? I know you'll like him.

He's about your age so you should have a lot of things in common."

They both stared at her. Finally Jan said. "What about dad?"

She stared at them. "I will always love your father. But I've come to realise that he is dead and I'm alive and life is for the living. Zed helped me see that."

"Mother, if he's our age, he must be twenty years younger than you."

She gave a nearly breathless, "Yea. She smiled. "I've invited him over for dinner."

"You invited him here, to my house. How could you do this? How could you dishonour dad's memory like that? You're behaving like a love sick teenager."

Her mother stared at her. "This is my life. I won't argue with you about this." She slammed her hand on the table. I will not have this argument. Remember it takes two to have an argument."

"Not with me it doesn't," Jan said. "Not about this. I can't get over this. You were so broken up over dad's death. And then you disappear from sight for almost a year. Now you say you've been living in some kind of commune and you've found another man. I can't believe you're saying this. I can't believe my mother is being unfaithful to my dad. I can't believe I'm from a broken home."

"Don't be so dramatic Jan. Your dad had been dead for almost two years. I'm still a woman, and a woman has..." she searched for the right word, "needs."

"Oh mother, you're hormones are getting the best of you. I won't stand for that."

"Well if Zed isn't welcome here then I refuse to stay too."

She stood and headed for the door.

"Mother, please!" they both said and followed her.

They heard another Vespa entering the driveway. A figure dressed almost identically to their mother rode up. She rushed over. He took off his helmet and they kissed passionately like two teenagers who had just discovered sex.

He was tall, but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangled far out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for shovels, and his whole frame loosely hung together. His head was small, and flat at the top, with huge ears, large eyes, and a long pointy nose. It looked like a weather-cock perched upon his spindle neck to tell which way the wind blew. They both wondered how the helmet could fit over that head. When the wind blew his clothes fluttered about him, one could have mistaken him for a famine victim, or some scarecrow escaped from a cornfield.

"My tiger lily," he said. "My good woman."

They kissed passionately again. "No, I'm a bad woman, very bad. She giggled. He kissed her again and reached around her and put his hands on both cheeks of her bum. He pulled her tightly to his loins as they kissed. She responded in a similar way.

When they finally came up for air, she took him by the hand and said. "Change of plan. Lets go find some oysters."

They both got on their Vespas and revved the engines and rode away without a backward glance.

Jan and Dean stared as they rode to the end of the road and turned left.

THE END

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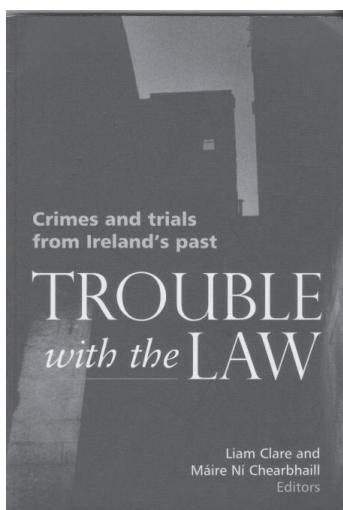
### **Trouble with the Law**

Crimes and Trials from Ireland's Past  
edited by Liam Clare and Máire Ni Chearbhaill,  
published by The Woodfield Press.

review by James Scannell

Law breakers fascinate the general public and also historians. Their interest is not confined to the guilt or innocence of those in court but to what the breaking of the social rules i.e. law, tell us about those who lived in former times. In this collection of essays, the authors show that court trials were not simply the technical means by which the law was applied; the courtroom rituals were part of the system by which one was expected to conform with the social order of the day and to respect authority with judicial pronouncements affirming this.

The collection of stories in this excellent book reveal the variety of ways in which people got into trouble with the law and, in the selection of cases featured, the reader is



provided with an insight into the local, public, and private world of Ireland in the past in which the relations between husbands and wives, rulers and the ruled and between buyers and sellers is reflected.

Crime touched every level of society, often daily, as it still does today. Motives and contexts changed from event to event and by dissenting on these motives and contexts, as the essays in this book do, it is possible to understand something of the social dynamics of Ireland in the past and in particular the inner workings of local societies. These insights are often very different from what contemporaries thought but by analysing crime in this way, the reader is better placed to understand how people in the past chose to live their lives.

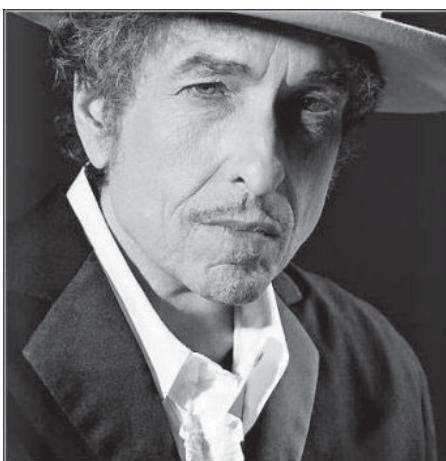
The essays explore corruption in Dublin Castle in the late 1600's, various forms of matrimonial disputes including a 19th century divorce case which ran for 20 years, heiress abduction, bigamy, adultery, policing in 19th century Tallaght, false accusation, crime and sport in Co. Westmeath, the pursuit and death of a Fenian rebel in 1867 County Cork and the Paul Singer Affair from the 1950's which is still shrouded in controversy

A truly excellent collection of essays, some which demonstrate that some issues as well as some aspects of human nature have not changed with the passage of time.

### **You've Got a Lot of Nerve**

**Bob Dylan at the O2 Dublin, May 5<sup>th</sup>**  
by Shane Harrison

The posters said Bob Dylan - In Person, but Dylan's Dublin appearance at the O2 was less than personal. Over two hours there wasn't so much as a 'hello' or 'thank you', just a guy in a big hat standing off to the side at the keyboards. He moaned in a vaguely Dylanesque way, but the vocals were mostly swamped in a wall of sound from the five piece backing band. Far away in the cavernous heights of the old



Point depot without the benefits of giant screens it could have been any pick-up band going through their stock repertoire with a handful of Dylan numbers thrown in. With due respect to the great man's new material, it's not the reason we're here. Of course new songs are a welcome addition and a reminder that the great poet (as he likes to see himself) is alive and kicking, but at big arenas they work better as the spice than the whole stew. Dylan has a back catalogue to sustain a string of concerts so three or four songs in the main set is a disappointment. There was a grungy but impressive Memphis Blues and the vapid Just Like a Woman. Then at last everything took off with Like a Rolling Stone and the place erupted. Then he left the stage.

All over bar the encore which started promisingly with a rousing All Along the Watchtower before losing its way with a mangled Blowing in the Wind and finally petering out altogether. A pity. There were few old favourites and no rapport. I doubt that I was alone in phrasing a response to Bob, in person - 'You've got a lot of nerve...'

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## Video Voyeur

Harold Chassen

I went to see Twilight because of all the hype about it and the book's writer.



Bella moves to gloomy Forks Washington from sunny Phoenix. At school she meets and falls in love with Edward. But Edward is a vampire who doesn't exist on blood. All girls love a bad boy. It sounds corny but it isn't bad. I didn't find it great but though it fairly watchable and an interesting concept. I thought bout it as a kind of modern Romeo and Juliet. Their relationship is

threatened when a new vampire James decides to hunt Bella. Teenage girls will love this film.

## Signal Arts Exhibitions

### Colourful Out Of Our Imagination

An Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by Rehab Care  
From Tuesday 9th June to Sunday 21st June 2009



Signal Arts Centre is delighted to showcase this collection of work by Rehab Care Group. This exhibition is an amalgamation of artworks from Signal's two resident Rehab Care groups. The facilitators are Sarah Morshead and Joanne Boyle who have worked with the groups over the last two years and Ilan Metoudi who has recently joined.

Opening Reception: Thursday 11th June 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

### Strands Of Memory

Watercolours and Multi-Media Exhibition by Beverly Ranger

From Tuesday 23rd June to Sunday 5th July 2009

Through her work Beverly Ranger explores love, the dualities within relationships, her constant search for balance and the Human condition. She works primarily with Figurative Sculpture, initially through drawing, observation and research; she draws inspiration from a



deeply emotional level, her work mirroring the ups and downs of her personal life and emotional landscapes.

This exhibition searches to unravel the connections in the psychology of Human Relationships. It is about connections created by human memory, emotions and intimacy. Everyone who touches us leaves a thread and this is how we tie ourselves to one another, to our family, community, race, religion and country. These Strands are universal, they ground us, give us humanity, identity, they can bind and control or set us free. In intimacy we are tied in knots, and when the strands are severed, are bewildered with the weight of losss.

Opening Reception: Friday 26th June 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

### Gallery Opening Hours:

Tuesday to Friday: 10am - 1pm/2pm - 5pm

Saturday/Sunday: 12pm - 5pm

# Peter Pan

**Children** - 12 Jun (10:00, 12:30) and 13 Jun (12:00, 15:00)  
at Mermaid Arts Centre

## Visible Fictions

Ticking crocodiles, flying fairies, dancing dogs, pirates, Indians, mermaids and a boy who won't grow up. A brilliant fusion of shadow puppetry and vibrant storytelling allow these timeless characters to play out their adventures in an ever changing and exhilarating Neverland unlike any seen before on stage.

The classic adventure of Peter Pan comes to life in a stunning new production. A thrilling, dark, and surprising new production for everyone aged 8+.

## Submission Guidelines

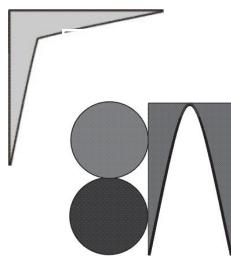
Editor : Dermot McCabe : editor@brayarts.net

Creative Writing Editor : Anne Fitzgerald : afitzgerald3@ireland.com

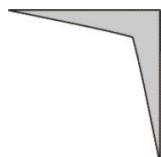
Email submissions to any of the above or post typed submissions to

The Editor BAJ 'Casino',  
Killarney Rd. Bray,  
Co. Wicklow  
Deadline 15th of each month.  
Bray Arts website : [www.brayarts.net](http://www.brayarts.net)

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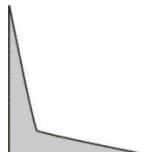
*Arts Evening Monday 8th June 2009  
at the Heather House Hotel Strand Road 8:00 pm  
5 Euro / 4 Euro Conc. Everyone is welcome.*



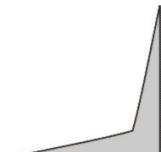
**Patricia Aherne O'Farrell:** The well known Bray Artist will show and discuss her paintings.

**FlautistRocco Antico :** creating an imaginary tale live.

**Inndivaara:** Egyptian style bellydancing and music.



Bray Arts is grateful for the support of Bray Council, Wicklow Council, CASC and Heather House Hotel.  
Printed by Total Print Design



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