
Bray Arts Journal

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The March Hare

Hares have long been thought to behave excitedly in March, which is their mating season. Lewis Carroll is among many



who have used that behaviour in stories - Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. The main character, Alice, hypothesises,

“The March Hare will be much the most interesting, and perhaps as this is May it won't be raving mad – at least not so mad as it was in March.”¹

More recently the strange behaviour of the hare has been questioned and it is now thought that hares behave oddly - boxing, jumping etc. - throughout their breeding season, which extends over several months.

Be that as it may; hares, especially March hares, have that reputation, which will surely stay with them.

The first record of the belief in their madness, or in this case their brainlessness, was circa 1500, in Blowbol's Test reprinted by W. C. Hazlitt in Remains, Early Popular Poetry of England, 1864:

“Thanne [th]ey begyn to swere and to stare, And be as braynles as a Marshe hare.”

Of course, the phrase 'hare brained' refers to the same behaviour. This is also old and is referenced in Edward Hall's Chronicle, 1548:

“My desire is that none of you be so unadvised or harebrained as to be the occasion that ...”

In Ireland there are two types of hare found - the Brown Hare and the Irish Hare. The Brown Hare came to Ireland from Europe, while the Irish Hare or Blue Hare is native to this country. The blue hare is also found in parts of Scandinavia and Scotland. The Irish Hare is small and does not have a white winter coat. It differs from the brown hare in its stocky build, short ears and white tail. Hares look like rabbits, but are much larger and look taller. The Irish Hare, also known as the Blue Hare, can measure up to 56cm and can weigh 3.5 Kg.

The number of hares in Ireland is small and are a protected animal under the Wildlife Act of 1976

Review of Bray Arts Evening

on Monday February 1, 2010

After the snows of January, the first evening of 2010 welcomed a full house of enthusiastic supporters for our three guest artists.

Noel Cleary, Artist, opened the evening with relaxed presentation of his paintings. Originally from Clones Co. Monaghan, he described his approach to painting and his experiences as a baker by trade who has travelled widely in many parts of the world. Painting is Noel's first love and his work contains reflections on his many experiences. His landscapes invite the viewer to join him in travelling round the painting. He paints from sketches done onsite or from



Noel Cleary

photos which he has taken for the purpose. Sometimes his paintings evolve by themselves. He uses oil, watercolour or acrylic. He notices that roads appear often - perhaps they are a metaphor for a journey? He allows accidents to happen as he works so that the painting gains energy. He prefers to work with black using watercolour, ink and

charcoal. Noel sketches to

gather information and likes to keep a fragment which he has sketched without modification. When something comes out of the head it is from some other source - not the sketches. Displaying one work which he described as approaching abstraction but there are elements that can be recognized.

Noel showed a short experimental video explaining that he went back to college to learn more about this medium. He was impressed with William Ketteridge whose technique is so like his own. Noel displayed works ranging from line drawings to representations of people using black and white and colour with abstract pieces around the fringes. Commenting, he observed that painting is immediate whereas video needs time. Inspired by his presentation Noel was plied with many questions before being allowed to conclude.

Sarah McGahon, Milliner, followed and stole the evening. Born in Enniscorthy, Sarah informed her attentive audience that she is a designer in her head, wondering how things worked.

She saved up while working as a personal Assistant to pay for a four-year degree in Textile Design at NCAD. She won a scholarship to join Steven Jones for six months on internship in London which gave her the opportunity to design hats for many quite famous people.

Sarah showed one of her pieces from this period which she called her “little UFO” using knitted tubular nylon, made with images of ships and ship's knots. After returning to

Ireland, she worked on film items where she found herself called upon to produce designs at short notice. She also worked on a production in the Abbey Theatre.



Sarah McGahon

Although Sarah enjoys the creativity of designing fantasy pieces she wanted to be more commercial with wearable pieces and, as a result, two boutiques are now stocking her hats in Ireland.

Sarah explained the technique of hat making illustrating her points with details of one or two of the exhibits displayed.

She particularly likes to recreate old hats and has established a hat rental service to cater for those who only want a hat for that special occasion.

Sarah concluded her very unique presentation with an invitation to everyone to try on the hats which she had brought because she felt that hats are better experienced rather than talked about.

After the break, **Donal O'Sullivan**, singer and guitarist, took the floor with a series of songs about the dreams of growing up. Speaking of his own dreams, Donal described how he wanted to be like George Best.

Choosing songs from an album recently recorded in bray Donal covered such titles as: "Do your dreams set you free or put you in chains?" and "Dreams are dreams till dreams come through".



Sullivan

Inviting his audience to sing along, Donal turned to another album with such songs as "We might be ok" followed by "Human family" - about optimists.

In an attractive rendition of "Learn to love the rain" Donal used the guitar to convey an impression of drops of rain at the end.

Warming to his audience, Donal finished off the evening with well-known songs from Bruce Springstein, Elvis Presley and others whom he admires greatly.

Cearbhall e. O'Meadhra

All photographs for the evening are courtesy of **Peter Growney**. As mentioned in Cearbhall O'Meadhra's review, the hats caused a big stir and the ladies really enjoyed trying on Sarah McGahons wonderful creations. Peter caught a flavour of the excitement with some further photographs:





View from Carraigoona

my husband's passing,
takes its toll, loneliness as
Christmas looms on the horizon.

Sun climbs higher
dazzles snow, ice
this winter solstice.

Seeking Solace

by Rosy Wilson

Boots crunch snow
up Carraigoona
reach the cairn

we face east watch
marigold sunrise
over blue lead sea

on our west are
Wicklow Hills folding
towards the Sally Gap

to the south more
mountains, Lugnaguilla
longest, hardest climb

northwards Howth
stretches one arm
holding Dublin Bay.

We need to greet this day
occasion of ancient prayer
ask pardon of our planet

for failure to take measures
which may save, nourish
every living part of earth.

We invoke exorcism
sins of the Fathers who
harm little children

millstones round their
collared necks, our
heads are bent.

Turning we look inwards
sadness of the year,
your son's illness



German Cemetery

The Night the Sky Above Me Turns

By Rosy Wilson

swerving to avoid young searching deer
I turn in under an ancient stone arch
to Glencree Reconciliation Centre

pale circles ring the copper moon
stars paint abstracts on a dark blue cloth
burnt umber river foams like Murphy's
beer

damp leaves warn walkers to take care
I slip down steps, water tumbles on rocks,
climb the far bank, look across

at the German Cemetery, where airmen
rest in Irish earth, each grave signed
by a low cross, a white anemone.

I close my eyes, thunder of waterfall
transports me a century or more
to the reform school once sited here

Fathers take poor children to task
a ravished boy cascades into a raging pool
minnows in his lips, a river in his eyes.

Preview of Bray Arts Evening Mon March 1st 8:pm Martello - Upstairs Bray Seafront

Two Class Acts

1

One Act Play : *The Librarian* by James Prideaux
Produced and Directed by Derek Pullen.
Cast : Rosary Morley, Martin Davidson and Elaine Twomey.

Last January local drama group 'Bray Arts' took the top spot again this year in the Bray One Act Festival. The winning play was 'The Librarian'. Director Derek Pullen also scooped the Best Producer Award and the amazing Rosary Morley took the Best Actress award for the 2nd year in a row. This same group have won quite a few honours last year including first place in The Hawlbowl Open Section. A reviewer from hawlbowl reports as follows.:



Derek Pullen receiving his award in Hawlbowl

"The Librarian Winner of the Open Section Performed by **Bray Arts** Written by **James Prideaux** and Directed by **Derek Pullen** The setting, an interview room in a mental institute. There was a buzz around the theatre about this play and those in the know (theatre officianados) had heard great things and boy were they right, I wouldnt know where to begin writing a short synopsis , I will let the results of this Festival speak for the Play.



Rosary

Best Actress
R o s a r y

*Morley/McPhillips playing (Rose Penmore: The Librarian) was outstanding. Also winner of the Adjudicators Award for Best Actor **Martin Davidson** (Voice of Doctor) although having no physical presence on stage, brought a vocal element that enhanced the setting and storyline immensely. The (Nurse)*



Martin

played by **Elaine Twomey** completed the ensemble and brought an added dimension to the overall production."

2

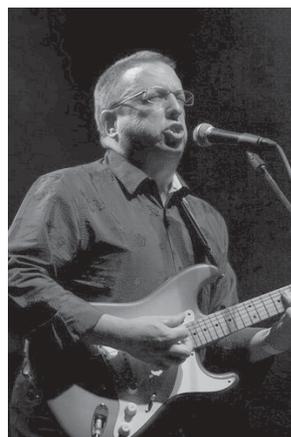
Music with **Mia Parsons** and **Robbie Overson**

Both Mia and Robbie play regularly in Dans Bar, Greystones. Their next outing there is on March 19th.



Mia Parsons

Mia also performs in Benito's Restaurant in Dalky with Drazen Djerek, Croatian Guitarist and composer/songwriter.



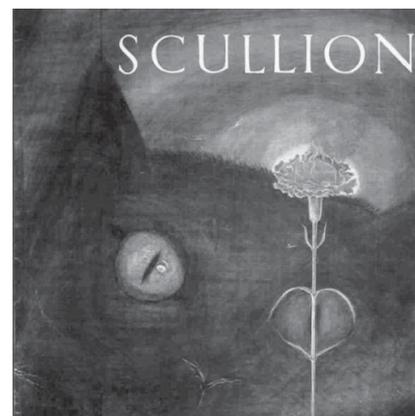
Robbie Overson

In 2008 Mia launched a beautiful album titled 'Ocean and Other Stories.' When you hear Mia perform you can understand why she used the word stories in the title. She doesn't just sing beautifully; she tells stories, entices the listener into places of love, loss regret and redemption.

Robbie Overson, the Hoochie Coochie Man, is one of Bray Arts favourite performers. He is also one of the most highly esteemed musicians in the Irish music industry. Robbie is currently recording

with Scullion who will be making an appearance at the Button Factory on 21st March. With Mia and Robbie we are guaranteed a 'kick ass' evening.

Scullion : March 21st 2010 7pm



Button Factory, Templebar, D2 Tel: 6709202

Extracts from **Precursor to Catacombs of Salt**

by Thomas O'Hare
Thomas@RedTile.Com

*... like salt once leached from the catacombs of stone
Your life's past once buried now streams forth—
Cleansed by clear mountain rivers flowing ...*

As our years turn into decades every one of us has life experiences left unresolved. Life experiences that lay inside us like salt lays among the rock that makes up the catacombs of distinguished men long passed.

Our unresolved experiences can occupy catacombs that we create inside of ourselves. Tombs that hold what we never faced in an open and honest way. Hidden from view in an out of sight, out of mind sort of way. Yet, like a true catacomb they are always there for us to visit whenever we feel the need. Always there to remind us and maybe even haunt us until we can fully face what we have buried deep inside of ourselves.

...

The catacombs, hollow spaces inside the stone under the streets, hold lives once spent and then ended as all life will be. The frail reminders of persons past occupy niches of underground caves cut into solid rock. These hollow spaces hold not only the remnants of life gone by, but also the essence of the wisdom learned. They are monuments made to remind us of the past. They are also markers of time that guide us from our yesterdays, to our today, and through our tomorrows.

...

Without salt the human body will become weak and lethargic. Much like how our souls will become if we do not extract the past experiences that lie within us and feed our souls with these essential nutrients required for spiritual growth.

...



Roman Catacomb

As the waters of your spiritual discovery wash the catacombs inside you, so may the life giving salts of resolve spring forth to nourish your soul. For until you expose what you once buried deep inside you, you will never realize all the lessons that you were meant to discover. Inside every one of us is a source of nourishment for our own spiritual needs required for a more meaningful life. Deep inside each of us resides the true "catacombs of salt".

Signal Arts Exhibitions

3 x 3

Exhibition of Glass Artworks by **Andrea Spencer, Scott Benefield and Seán Campbell**

From Tuesday 2nd March to Sunday 14th March 2010

Each of the artists employs a different method of working with glass and each pursues a substantially different artistic agenda.

Andrea Spencer's finely detailed hollow sculptures exploit the material properties of transparency and fragility characteristic to flameworking, whilst also addressing form, context and qualities found in the drawn line.



Scott Benefield's intricately patterned blown vessels are closely tied to the forms of functional glass objects and engage the history of the medium through their innovative application of traditional Italian glassblowing techniques.

As a child **Seán Campbell** used to watch the clouds in the sky and conjure up stories from the forms that materialized. As an artist he returns to that same process. Using a painterly approach and the process of abstraction to generate a creative impulse from the unexpected images that appear.



Opening Reception: Friday 5th March 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Found Line

Exhibition of Scraperboard Artworks by **Brian Gallagher**
From Tuesday 16th March to Sunday 28th March 2010

Brian received a BA (Honours) Degree in illustration from Bristol Polytechnic. He has exhibited in many shows and his work features in private collections nationally and

internationally. Some notable clients include Le Monde, London Evening Standard, Sunday Independent, Penguin Books and Harper Collins. He currently works as a full time Illustrator/Artist in Dublin.



Brian was especially drawn to using linocut and then scraperboard through the tutoring of wood engraver Peter Reddick at Art College in Bristol. His work is figurative, graphic and based on drawing. The scraperboard process he practices is the reverse from usual mark making. He begins with a black

board and gradually removes parts of its thin dark surface to reveal the white china clay beneath. He is very interested in the clean crisp line that this technique affords and the way the drawing can seem to oscillate.

Along side the selection of scraperboards Brian will also be showing a few acrylic paintings, plus some limited edition prints derived from the scraperboards that have been manipulated on the computer. These digital experiments using machine washed textures and colour bring a whole new dimension to the original black and white work.

Opening Reception: Friday 19th March 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Absence, Heart, Fonder

Exhibition of Paintings by **Aoife Hand**

From Tuesday 30th March to Sunday 11th April 2010

Signal Arts Centre is pleased to present this series of work by artist Aoife Hand. Aoife graduated from IADT with a BA (Hons) in Fine Art and has since been dedicated to improving her skills as a painter. She fuses traditional approaches with modern techniques, using digital cameras to obtain her source images before creating the paintings with oils on canvas.



Aoife is influenced by the Japanese aesthetic of wabi-sabi, a philosophy concerned with impermanence and asymmetry. She seeks beauty in the imperfect: her dual aims are both to

contemplate on the universality of the human form and to pay homage to the uniqueness of the individual.

By illuminating sections of the body in otherwise total darkness, she imbues each part with an elevated importance. The resulting aspects are neither the most nor the least beautiful; they are perfect in their humanity, being both distinct unto themselves and sharing commonality with all humans. The creation of these images has allowed the artist to meditate on the perfection that already exists in nature, even in perceived flaws.

Aoife has been shortlisted for the Davy Portrait Awards 2010. Her painting, *Hide and Seek*, will be exhibited with the other selected works in the Naughton Gallery, Belfast in February, and at Farmleigh House, Dublin, in May.

www.aoifehand.com

Opening Reception: Thursday 1st April 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Book Review by James Scannell

“ A Pictorial History of Bray -Volume 7 “

compiled by Henry Cairns and Owen Gallagher, published by the Old Bray Society.

This is the latest addition to this excellent series of photo-book which had now reached its 7th volume. When this series of books began several years ago, it was envisaged that it would only run to about 4 volumes but such has been the interest in these books and the vast amount of material lent by people for inclusion in them, that the series has now reached Volume 7. At its December 2009 launch, Noel Keys, of the Heritage Council, in the Mermaid Arts Centre, reminded the audience that books like this reflect the true life of the people through the images, notes and other items that accompany them in contrast to the traditional photographs of the gentry and upper class which show them standing rigidly and all dressed up in carefully posed pictures with their staffs outside their residences.

Henry Cairns and Owen Gallagher, have striven to provide a balanced and interesting view of the town by using new material and avoiding repeating material used in previous volumes which at times can be difficult since all the material in it has been lent by the people of Bray who have supported this series of books.

As Michael Kelleher says eloquently in the Introduction “ The volume and its preceding companions allow the reader a leisurely saunter down memory lane and a lush wallow in nostalgia. This is as it should be. We are after all among friends “.

Henry Cairns and Owen Gallagher are working on Volume 8th which is scheduled to be released in December 2010.

Copies of this excellent book can be obtained from the Town Hall Book Shop, 23 Florence Road, Bray, Co. Wicklow.



Front Cover :
Scraperboard Artworks
by
Brian Gallagher
Signal Arts Exhibition
From Tuesday 16th March to
Sunday 28th March 2010
(see page 6/7)

Submission Guidelines

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Creative Writing Editor : Anne Fitzgerald :
annefitz3@gmail.com

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

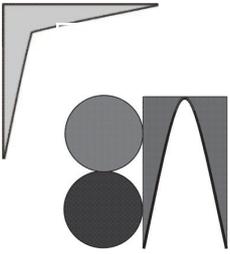
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Arts Evening Monday 1st March
Upstairs at the Martello on the Seafront
5 Euro / 4 Euro Conc. Everyone is welcome.
Come Early Doors open: 8:00pm sharp

'THE LIBRARIAN' Bray One Act Festival Winning Play
Dir: Derek Pullen
Cast: Rosary Morley Philips, Martin Davidson, Elaine Twomey

MUSIC :

Mia Parsons and Robbie Overson

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