
Bray Arts Journal

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With People, So With Trees

With people, so with trees: where there are groups
O either, men or trees, some will remain
Aloof while others cluster where one stoops
To breathe some dusky secret. Some complain

And some gesticulate and some are blind;
Some toss their heads above green towns; some freeze
For lack of love in copses of mankind;
some laugh; some mourn; with people, so with trees.
Mervyn Peake



Front Cover

Detail from photograph
Johnny Rowing to the Island
Photographer : Joe Sterling. Joe will be presenting
a slide show of his photographs of
Inis Mhic Cionaithe at Nov Arts Night see pg

Bray Arts Review of October Arts Night

by Shane Harrison

October's meeting gave us music, jewellery and drama, just the ticket for those post-equinox blues. Julie Rose was mc for the night and a packet of cheer besides.

First up **Hugh Carr** presented an intense and witty two-hander, *Going Home*. The play is set in a nursing home as a ninety year old woman, **Mairin O'Donovan**, receives a visit from her sixty year old son played by **Frank O'Keeffe**. As Hugh pointed out in his introduction, "the more serious a subject, the more it needs humour." *Going Home* is full of the sadness and laughter of the heavily explored, if reluctantly revisited, days of family history.



Mairin O'Donovan and Frank O'Keeffe

The mother's ambitions for her son are typical of a certain conservative, rural milieu. He could have been a priest but marriage, not greatly approved, intervened. She scolds the man, an old man himself, for his drinking. Frank O'Keeffe's dedication to his craft is evident in the ease with which he portrays a man who's fond of the wee drop; method acting I would presume. Mairin O'Donovan also excels in the role of a faded woman who must tunnel back through her dreary, ruined past to find some spark of meaning.

Carr does wring some humour out of this unpromising situation with some sharply observed lines. "There's a whole new crowd out there walking the streets." is the son's weary riposte to his mother's queries on the catalogue of death he must deliver regarding old friends and neighbours. The mother attempts to admonish him and the health dangers of his drinking: "I had a dream about your liver last night".

The tension rises as skeletons in the family cupboard are revealed. The harsh glare of the past is softened as the son takes refuge in his poetry. The play is transformed, slipping into a denouement more aesthetic and restrained than had been hinted at. The withdrawal from melodrama worked, there was a startling realism here, but great depth of feeling too. Funny and sad? For once that overused couplet is correct.

Anna Felton showed us how she plays the glass bead game. She has always loved beads but it is only within the last five years that she has managed to share this passion. She works from her own studio and sells her designs locally and through Etsy Shop online under the moniker Beadansing. However, it is the simple desire to make beads that moves her more than the business of marketing. The skill in the former should, I think, do a lot of work for the latter.

She has an eye for the small, but perfectly formed artefact. Her presentation took us across time from the India in 300BC to the contemporary world where beadmakers thrive on interpreting traditional themes with skill and invention. There were Goddess Beads and Salmon Egg Beads, beads that look back at us like eyes and much use of colour to evoke different landscapes. Anna has been influenced by the landscape of the west, inspired by the stark beauty of Inis Iar and Mulranny.



Anna Felton

While a film of Anna's process did not see the light of day, her own presentation provided a clear insight into her craftwork. These items of beauty are worthy of admiration in themselves, while also feeding the curious human desire for adornment. Why do we do that? Because we can, I suppose, and thanks to people like Anna Felton.

Julie Rose pointed out that she had won **Evelyn Campbell's** CD, *Overdue Review*, at a raffle protesting against the Household Charge in Greystones. I would have thought they could well afford it out there, but more to the point, one should buy Evelyn's CD. On the evidence presented at the Arts night, she's a singer well worth hearing again and again.

Her songs explore the personal and political, with hints of Joan Baez or June Tabor in her clear, strong voice. Her rumbling guitar and rambling narratives takes us back to boxcar days with Woody Guthrie, through family biographies and shared experiences of coming of age. Flamenco influences flitted through *No Love Song*, one of her strongest pieces. On *Let Me Tell You a Tale* there's a strong linear narrative with a hint of Irish folksong. It told a personal

tale of lovers and workers, evoking much of life's struggles. A more recent occasion was remembered in *Dust and Ash*, meditating on the destruction of the Twin Towers. "The day that the sea touched the sky, we all cried", she sang, making a plea for the telling of stories to keep memories alive.



That's what songwriters do, it is where all writers find their niche. Evelyn Campbell understands this, linking narratives and melodies in a way that is unforgettable.

Near closing and she evoked powerful folk memories with the singing of *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?* Typically the song creates a feeling of solidarity, from songwriter, through performer and on to audience. This is more truly what a people's anthem is about, about the sharing of music, thoughts and feelings, not their imposition. A rousing response was assured, and the pleasant afterglow from a complex and deep repertoire. Oh, I forgot to say, she can whistle pretty good too.

Preview of Bray Arts night 12'th Nov 2012

8 pm Martello Hotel, Seafront Bray. Adm €5/€ conc

Vinyl Only is a Bray-based band that recently formed through a love of music in the Harbour Bar. All 5 members had played in previous bands & were looking to play a different kind of music. Although they have only been together for a few weeks, they have been quick to establish a unique sound which blends blues, soul, funk, rock & more. It is very hard to categorize their sound-it's quite unique. They just want to play songs that are fun to play & have a "groove" to them. Vinyl play mostly covers (though very different to the originals) and have also recently written some of their own tunes!

Joe Sterling, photographer, who has exhibited extensively over the past 30 years, will present "The Island" in Connemara. This is a work in progress, creating a pictorial record of fading traditions and crafts which have been handed on from father to son without being written down. See panel, next column.

Bray based artist, **Darren Nesbitt**, works in oil and acrylic. His subject matter ranges from portrait and caricature to landscape. Recently he has been working on paintings looking at those affected by of conflict and war.



Darren Nesbitt

El Grey is a solo artist, whose compositions organically blend a quirky, alternative vibe with influences that range from dream rock through acoustic music, minimalism, electronica and jazz. Compared to

Massive Attack, Tori Amos or Norah Jones fused together, she is an act that can give you goose bumps and can put you into a dreamy

mood. She has a broad vocal range and distinctive tone & singing style, with characteristic vocal improvisations; where the vocals can act as yet another creative instrument.

She released her debut single 'Woolly hat', currently working on her EP, and two other electronic projects. At the moment, it's a two-piece formation (duo).



El Grey

Happily settled in Bray, living here for the past 7 years, El Grey is originally from Gdansk - a beautiful seaside city in the North of Poland.

The Island.

The Families depicted in these Photographs originally come from a small Island off the Connamara coast called Inis Mhic Cionaith. Living on an Island being cut off from the main land means that the inhabitants had to be conversant with the only means of transport available at the time: the currach, a traditional working boat exclusive to the West of Ireland dating back centuries. Currach making and currach races are thriving in Connamara and many other parts of the West today.

As in many isolated rural communities, there is an emphasis on survival. This normally means harvesting from the local environment anything that is useful and beneficial to that survival, in some the bleakest conditions imaginable.

In August 2010 I returned to An Cheathru Rua to re establish my old friendships and make some new Pictures of the next generation carrying on the skills and rituals handed down. From Father to Son and not written down. I was immediately struck by the fact that nothing had changed much in the daily habits of the community, Fishing, harvesting of seaweed and the passion for currach racing and Galway hooker racing were still going on after my fifteen year absence. Although a noticeable generational gap had appeared in that, it seems that only the older more mature men were now engaged in these time honoured rituals.

The youth were more occupied like everywhere else in Ireland with computer games and the Internet.

Reaching out of what were once isolated parts of the country. Embracing the World Wide Web experience as opposed to the reality of diminishing local custom and ritual. During the Past decade many of the younger generation have been forced to emigrate. And as a result there are no future generations to hand on these precious skills.

Joe Sterling. November 2012

Message from Yanny Petters

Dear Friends and Artists, please see below information about VUE at the RHA Gallery, Ely Place, Dublin 2, an opportunity to see all the better known Irish Galleries in one place. I will be showing some new works including Verre Églomisé panels and Monoprints with the Olivier Cornet Gallery. Admission is free and you can meet the artists too!

Hoping to see you there one of the days.

Kind regards, Yanny

VUE (National Contemporary Art Fair) at RHA

Fri 2nd Nov 11am - 6:30pm, Sat 4th 11am - 7 pm Sun 4th 12am- 6pm

LONGING

by Anne Fitzgerald

From the sound of things you say
he's as hard as that stick of rock

Young Jim Long's Jack brought
back last May twelve months, to suck

as leaves fall crisp, and Jenny scores
ochre skin, cuts two eyes 'n a mouth out

Lobotomises soft pink tissue, fingers
pith 'n seeds, takes insides out,

blind-bakes pastry for pumpkin pie
before she sews brown buttons for Guy's

eyes, effigy of her own little gun powder
plot, plit-plotting away with the fairies,

whilst twee-twee flappers circle as if twists
of chalk askew, like aunt Lily's wild

vermilion lippy, she'll smear along
Jack's long back; tracing his discs,

as a castaway in search of an island
her lip-hush kisses sail his vertebrae

like her index over the spine of an upturned
hull beached in the scent of bladderwrack.

from *Beyond The Sea*
(Co. Clare, Salmon Poetry, 2012)

I READ TODAY

by Rosy Wilson

*serenity is not
having what we want
it's wanting what we have.*

Morning spreads blue sky
bunked with duvets of cloud
Bray Head, a lumpy green bolster,

slopes into the harbour
a constant in the landscape
viewed from my white cottage

where spring flowers yellow
the garden, , robin red breasts
blue tits share breakfast.

Today I meet my friend
in the cafe, all sorts of talk
over cups of coffee

then swim lengths in Bray pool
stretch old limbs on cedar wood
slats in the sauna.

This is what I have,
the small canvas on which
I write colours of serenity.

from *Keeper of the Creek*
(Lapwing Publications 2012)

AUTUMN

by N. D. Griffith

Now, in the autumn of my life,
I will take a leaf out of Mother Nature's book.
Gone are the fresh green days of spring with their passions
And the endless, busy summer days.
Now, it's party time,
Time to enjoy the fruits of my labours,
Time to let the wind blow away
The withered leaves of my roles, masks and defences,
Until I too, like the tree,
Am down to the bare bones of who I am,
The essential me.

But first, like Mother Nature herself,
Let me play out the autumn of my life flamboyantly,
Let me be as extravagantly fruitful,
Let me be as outrageously profligate.
This is not the time for delicacy and diffidence,
For political correctness or fashion consciousness,
For prudence or probity.
Time, now, to throw caution to the wind,
Time to don fiery reds and blazing oranges,
Time to show my true colours,
Before winter.

WING SILENCE

by John Clarke

A butterfly
Flapped silence into the room today.
Fluttered around the window,
Lightly wiping its wings
Down the window pane.

As light as an eyelash.

It paused for a moment,
Puzzled at air made of glass.

Eventually felt
The difference
Between vision and temperature,

And fly-floated back onto
The wind again.

Christmas Down-Under

by Jennifer Howlett

**Dashing through the bush in a rusty Holden Ute
Kicking up the dust Esky in the boot
Kelpie by my side. Singing Christmas songs
It's summer time and I am in my singlet, shorts & thongs**

Chorus

**Oh jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way,
Christmas in Australia on a scorching summer's day,
Jungle bells, jingle bells, Christmas time is beaut
Oh what fun it is to ride in a rusty Holden ute**



Welcome to Christmas Down Under where you're sure to get sun, barbies, eskies, tinnies: only thing missin?? Chapped lips, frozen toes. No need for your mulled wine or hot cup of bovril here!

Arriving in Australia in October with my friend Ciara by my side, we had plenty of time to prepare ourselves for what we were sure was going to be a very different Christmas.

But before Christmas, we had to prepare ourselves for a bit of a culture shock!!

Being two green horns, we believed everything we read in *The Guide to Down Under* book. Aboriginal natives are cannibals, Spiders are as big as (display hands), with Snakes running riot all over the place.

We'd both had a very sheltered convent education!

We decided we'd better attend a language course, sure we don't know how to speak Australian!!!

We arrived for our class to learn that the tutor had called in crook, and that the replacement tutor was a 'Pom' who had just slipped out to the Dunny. We discovered all females were called Shiela and males Bruce. Eventually when the Pom returned from the Dunny, he turned out to be a dead ringer for that Crocodile Dundee character, the one with the Akubra.

But at last we felt ready to meet Christmas and all its celebrations head on. We'd had a few months practice with the tinnies or Victoria Bitter to be precise, though we were becoming more and more partial to a glass of Jacobs Creek. A bit like paint stripper but what the heck, it did the trick.

At last it was time for Christmas. We did get used to the lingo but hardly ready for the shock that instead of dressing up we'd be dressing down. Instead of our party dresses it would be our singlets and shorts. No need for our stilettos here; thongs were the order of the day, or flip-flops for those of you who are still struggling with the lingo.

There's be no struggling to walk or push your way down Grafton Street to see the window display in Switzers, instead you'd merely stroll at a leisurely pace down Bourke Street, Melbourne, where everything was larger than life. Shops were all decked out in glitter, white snow everywhere, and huge toys the size of a mini house. No there'd be no dodging into Bewleys for a current bun and coffee, it'd be more a case of have your cossies ready for the afternoon dip!

Sounds cool doesn't it, then you can appreciate how dismayed we were when we decided to spend Christmas with my cousin in Sydney to discover that it turned out to be more like a bad take on a typical Irish Christmas. My cousin being a bachelor and his mate being in the same boat constituted disaster for two very cultured vain glory girls, who sought glitter, and romance, and all that Wham promised in: *Last Christmas I gave you my heart*. But it was more a case of *The very next day you gave it away* or in our case: our hearts weren't going anywhere!

But boys will be boys and all that, and great as my cousin was, he was a male. There was to be no decorations, Christmas tree or crackers. It was not to be the dreamed of Christmas dinner on the beach either. We soon learned that that notion was a down right fallacy. But hey we were in Sydney, one of the most exciting cities in the world, didn't that account for something? Funny, how the glory of a city can get lost in the swelter of a small flat on East side where air conditioning is a luxury not well known. Where cold showers are plenty but drying off a waste, with humidity at its all time highest, enough to keep any vain girl gasping.

With the best yet to come!

Time to ring home. ET- eat your heart out. Remember we are talking about the dark ages, when mobiles or internet were unknown entities. It was a case of down to the nearest phone box, which luckily didn't have a queue, probably not many Irish fools looking for a phone box at 2am in the morning. Well, maybe not from our phone box anyway, but they were on one somewhere else cos ringing home became a marathon. Quick dial now, see if you can get through? No? Ok give me a go. No luck, ok just keep trying. 3am - still in the phone box!! Wait, eureka! Hello Mum, Happy Christmas from Australia, We're having a beaut day, lovely turkey dinner with John with all the trimmings. No we didn't have dinner on the beach; we decided to skip that What time is it? Oh it's early still. Did we have problems getting through? Nah it was a doddle, got through straight away!! Better go now Happy Christmas. Right Ciara, quick your turn before some other Paddy nabs the line.

Chorus

**Oh jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way,
Christmas in Australia on a scorching summer's day,
Jungle bells, jingle bells, Christmas time is beaut
Oh what fun it is to ride in a rusty Holden ute**



Jennifer Howlett is a Writer and Presentation Skills Coach. She is a member of Abraxas Writers and lives in Bray.

An Exhibition of Recent Work by:

Darren Nesbitt

Christine De Paor

Donal Murray

Conall McCabe

Exhibition from 17th to 23 Nov 2012

at

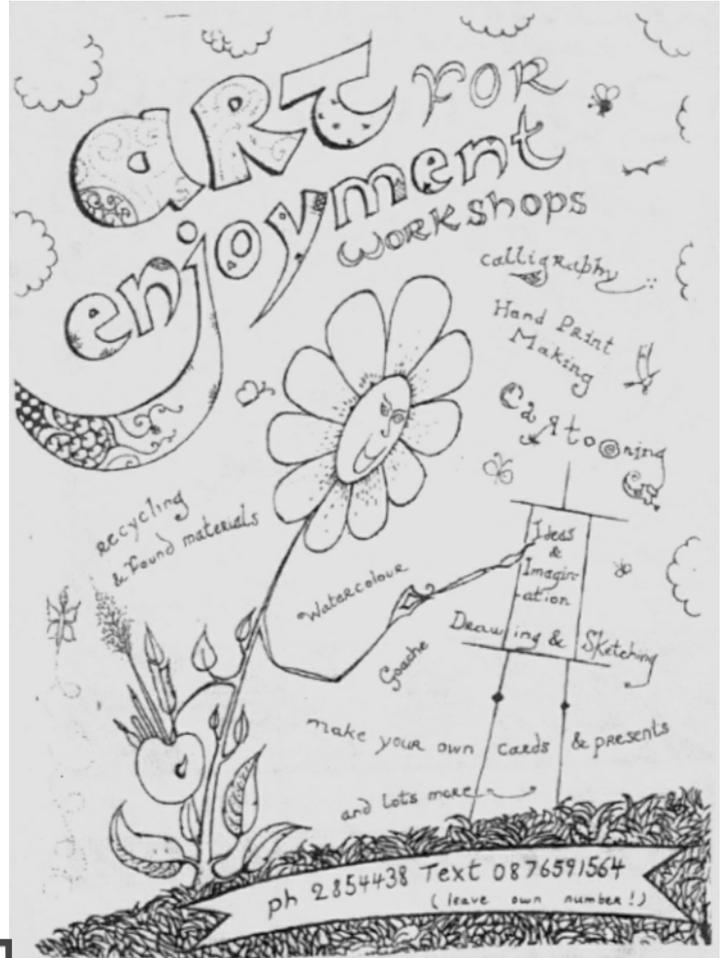
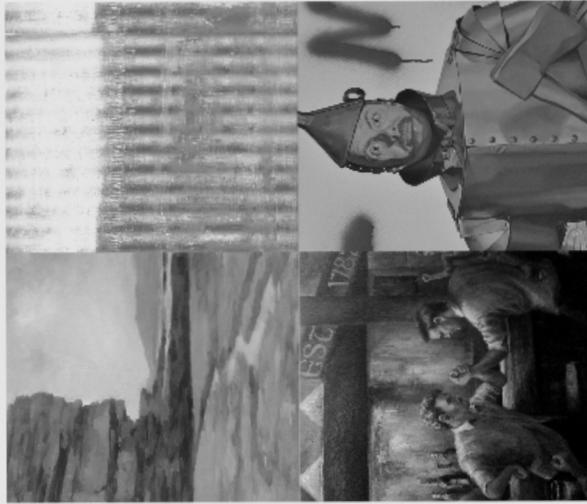
Sol Art Gallery

No. 8 Dawson St. Dz

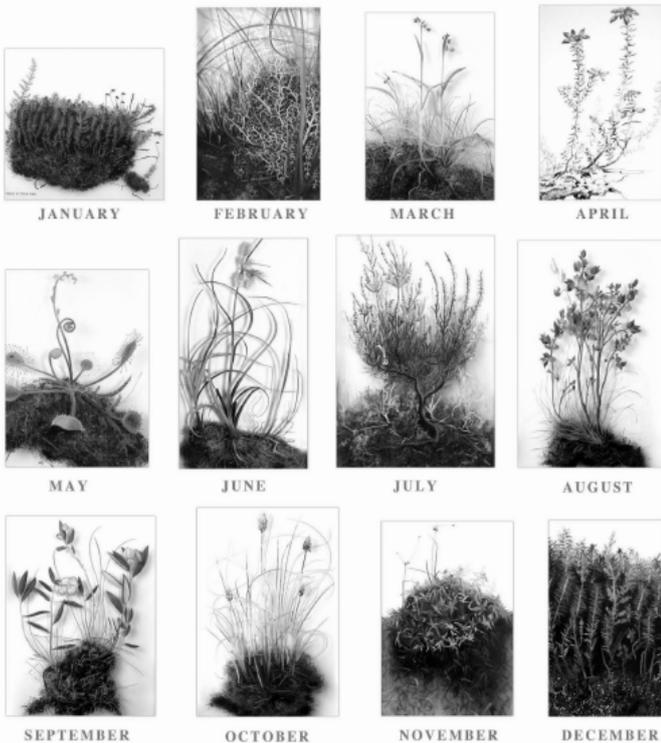
Opening Reception:

17th Nov 7 - 9pm

Guest: Cathy Davey



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Wyvern Studio : Painting in Oils



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Conall McCabe HND, BA, MFA

Class Ongoing : Mon 7pm - 9pm
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(beside Roches Chemist)

Fee: €15 per night (Group Rates)
Individual Tuition €30 hour

Contact : Conall McCabe 087 9702173



Signal Arts Exhibitions

Between Lines

An Open Submission Drawing Show

From Tuesday 6th November to Sunday 18th November

"The 2nd Open Submission Drawing Exhibition" is being run in the Signal Arts Centre next November. As well as pure Drawing this exhibition includes Prints and multimedia and 3-d work, whose contents rely primarily on drawing.

The theme this year is based on "The gap between reality and what our perception of reality is" and as such, lends itself to a wide and diverse interpretation.



The Exhibition will be held in conjunction with Artist's talks and discussions.

Opening Reception: Thursday 8th November 7-9pm

Sacred Landscapes

Exhibition of Paintings by Christine De Paor

From Tuesday November 20th to Sunday 2nd of December

"The Irish Landscape is full of memory; it holds the ruins and traces of ancient civilization.....

It has a secret and silent memory, a narrative of presence where nothing is ever lost or forgotten"

*John O' Donabue
Anam Cara*

"Sacred landscapes" arouse something deep inside of us; they awaken ancient memories embedded in our collective consciousness and connect us to our true core. When we arrive at such a place we resonate with its energy and its physical presence and experience the memories that the landscape has carried for millions of years.

This body of work is inspired by that "presence" in the landscape. Mark making and layering are used to create a visual language that evokes a sense of presence and embodies "an ancient and silent form of consciousness". Layers of paint and other mediums are added then scrapped to reveal a complex surface of marks and patterns.

Signal Arts Centre is pleased to present the second solo show by artist Christine De Paor. Christine graduated from WIT with a Diploma



Silent Memory by Christine de Paor

in Art. Christine has participated in various group shows in both Dublin and Wicklow, including a recent show at Sol Art Gallery.

Opening Reception: Friday 23rd November 7-9pm

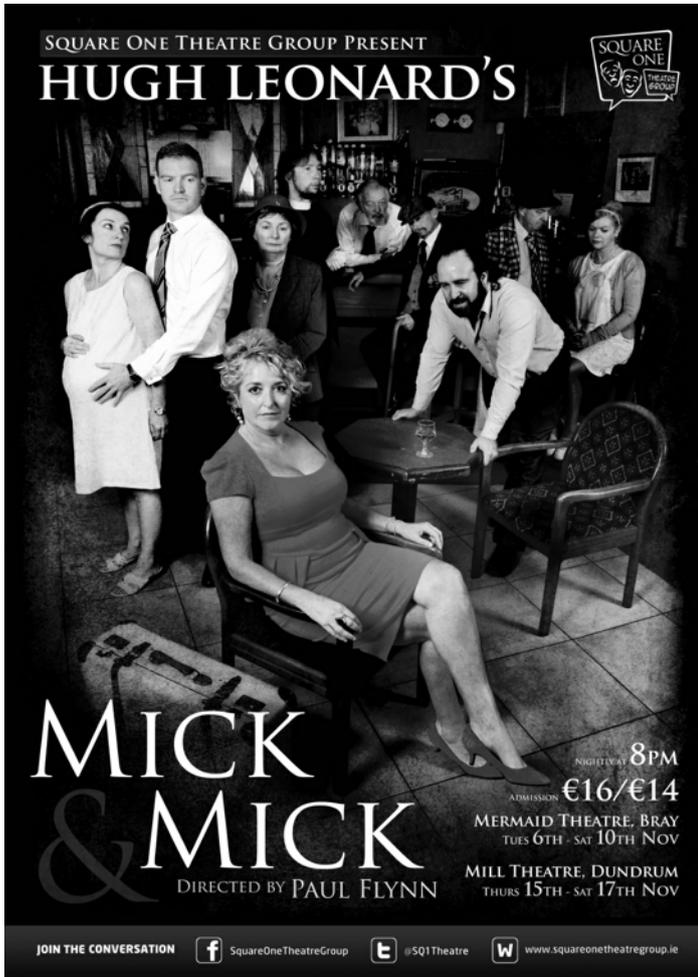
Meitheal

This year the annual Meitheal will run from 3rd – 24th December, we are hoping to have a great array of craft goods and art work. The work will be produced by current and past staff of Signal Arts Centre. Last year we had some beautiful work that suited every pocket and taste. These are just a few of what we expect to be selling during the 3 weeks:

- Paintings
- Textile covered journals/diaries
- Ceramics
- Jewellery
- Plaster cast kits
- Embroidered crafts
- Cushions
- Hand made Christmas Stockings
- Selection of designer scarves etc. from Bev Flood
- Culinary delights such as Jam, mincemeat, Christmas Puds
- Christmas cards & calendars
- Vintage photography

Don't forget to book your vintage photograph beforehand by ringing the gallery and giving your details to one of the staff.





Square One – Happy 21st !

Founded way back in the Strand Hotel in 1976, this November, Square One Theatre Group is proud to present our 21st production at Bray's Mermaid Theatre. The production will also be our first visit to the Mill Theatre, Dundrum.

To mark this special occasion, Square One Chairman Paul Flynn directs Hugh Leonard's classic comedy "Mick & Mick". Widely regarded as Ireland's funniest playwright, Leonard fills the stage with lust, longing, love, laughter and a rollicking story based around the choices we make. Having been jilted eight years previously by her fiancé, Mick, Fran returns from England on the eve of her brother's ordination to the priesthood. She brings a breezy freshness into her family home and stirs up some wild emotions in the town. But how long before her past catches up with her and she is forced into an impossible choice?

The play runs from Tuesday 6th to Saturday 10th November at the Mermaid, and from Thursday 15th to Saturday 17th at the Mill Theatre. For more information, look us up at SquareOneTheatreGroup on Facebook or look us up at www.squareonetheatregroup.ie.

David Butler

Bray Arts Evening Mon Oct 1st

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

Vinyl Only : a new Bray group with a different kind of music

Darren Nesbitt : Bray based artist - working in Oils and Acrylic

Joe Sterling : The Island: photograpic record of Inish Mhic Cionait, its Lanscape and its People.

El Grey: A vocalist who can give you goose bumps

Submission Guidelines

Editor : Dermot McCabe : editor@brayarts.net

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

Email submissions to the above or post to :

Editor Bray Arts Journal
'Casino', Killarney Rd., Bray,
Co. Wicklow

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

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