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# Bray Arts Journal

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Issue 1

September 2013

Volume 19



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**T**he Bray Arts welcomes you back to a fantastic line-up of Artists and Musicians from Wicklow and further afield. This season we have artists from many different disciplines. Meeting once a month at the Martello Hotel, on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month at 8.30, from September to June.

The Bray Arts offers a platform to artists and performers to showcase new and unusual work in all mediums. We provide a "youth" slot to give a voice to the young.

If you would like to show your work or have a literary piece printed in the Bray Arts Monthly Journal, please let the committee know and we will try to accommodate you. Our performers and artists range from 10 to 90 years. It is a relaxed and social evening of arts open to all.

We now have Calendar cards available, listing dates of events throughout the year and including contact details.

Our first meeting will take place on 9<sup>th</sup> September, when we have local Wicklow singer/songwriter Sonny Condell and Robbie Overson performing, Jane Stanford will be reading from her new book "The Irishman", Rejuv Designs will also be present, displaying her quirky handbags and accessories made from upcycled fabrics.

We would like to thank the outgoing committee members for their trojan work. Dermot McCabe, Cearbhall O'Meadhra and Michael Monaghan and would like to welcome our present committee Karen Quinn, Editor. Cam Lytle, Sound and Julie-Rose McCormick, Chair.

Looking forward to seeing everybody on the 9<sup>th</sup> at the Martello.

Regards,

**Julie-Rose McCormick, Chairperson, Bray Arts.**



**Committee Members**

L to R, Ger Thomas (Secretary), Carmen Cullen (Treasurer), Julie Rose McCormick (Incoming Chairperson), Zan O'Loughlin (A Former Chairperson), Aoife Hester (Graphic Designer), Cearbhall O'Meadhra (Outgoing Chairperson) and Michael Monaghan (Sound Engineer).

Insets, L to R, Anne FitzGerald (Creative Writing Editor), Harriet Ledwidge, Niall Cloak, Eithne Griffin and Darren Nesbitt.



#### **Front Cover**

"Little one not alone"

by Martina McAtee

Upcoming exhibition at  
Signal Arts see page 7

## **REVIEW**

Bray Arts Night, June 2013

By Shane Harrison

So, the Bray Arts came to its sultry seasonal conclusion, palm trees swaying in the tropical June breezes of the seafront. Sultrier than most, but not swaying in the breeze so much (not yet, anyhow), **Carmen Cullen** kicked off proceedings with a rousing and varied interpretation of her novel, *Two Sisters Singing*.

The story is set in the 1940s, inspired by the life and art of ballad singer Delia Murphy, one of Carmen's own kin. It follows



**Carmen Cullen**

the two sisters, Lily and Moyra, from rural Ireland to student life in Dublin with the war, conservative Catholicism and the music of the era forming a vivid backdrop.

Carmen brought all this to life in her inimitable way, switching from song to text and back again. The audience were beguiled by the Three Lovely Lassies from Bannion, all the while Eileen was spinning, and ramblers, gamblers and other ne'er do wells downed the moonshine - that's Bray Arts for ye. Something of a one woman show then, but to be fair, I should mention the musical accompaniment of Gerry Anderson on acoustic guitar, his subtle picking holding the performance together.

**David Jokhadze** has darkened our door before, huffing and puffing and bringing the house down. He surely is the ace of bass with a voice then compasses the whole body and shakes the audience to their very boots. Hailing from Georgia he brought a touch of the exotic to proceedings, with his green t-shirt and curly, Red-dish locks - well, the Georgian bit sounds exotic.



**David Jokhadze**

Indeed, the absence of formal attire breaks a lot of barriers, bringing a keen focus to

the singing itself, further enhanced by David's lively performance. He snatches a wine glass from a clubber as a prop for Mario Lanza's *Be My Love*; returning it unspilt, incidentally. I seem to remember him performing a similar trick with an umbrella back in the day, thankfully it wasn't raining tonight. David's repertoire ranges from such popular favourites as Cole Porter's *Every Time I Say Goodbye*, through operatic favourites, concluding with more depth in a slice of Russian opera and more balalaikas than you can shake a stick at. It's over but he's not finished. As a fully fledged Irish citizen, thirteen years here and looking younger on it, he returns to round off the evening with the National Anthem. Standing room only, and rightly so.

In the second half we found ourselves back amongst the Wicklow Hills with **An Tochar Drama Group**, and you can't get hillier than that. With a cast of eight actors, this was a welcome release from the all too ubiquitous one or two hander that has become the staple of the one act form. Self penned by the troupe,

*The Wake* is a darkly humorous farce exploring the greedier recesses of bereavement. As a despised farmer dies, his less than

loving family gather by the bedside with an eye to divvying up the cash they're sure he's skied away. Alone, they can excoriate the poor deceased from a height, but a procession of interruptions from the parish priest to the undertaker and a scheming neighbour require them to put on a show of grief. All the hypocrisy, false hope and, ultimately, wasted wealth is laid bare, punctuated by much hilarity.

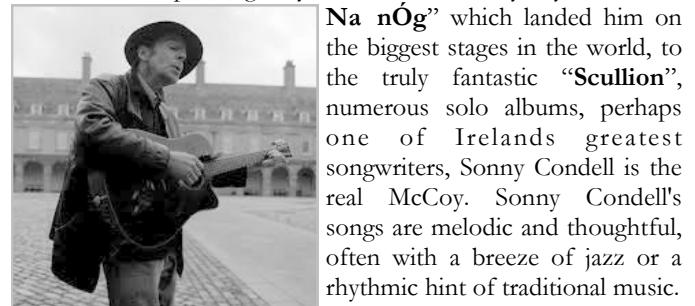
Great performances all round, especially from the sons, Tom and Billy, who create a comic duo within the play, and Paddy the neighbour, who may be mad, but not stupid. All told, a malediction on the underbelly of Irish life. But really, where in Ireland would you find people so grasping, callous and duplicitous? Surely there can be no place for people like that, outside of Dail Eireann.



*An Tochar Group*

## Sony Condell & Robbie Overson

An integral part of the Irish music scene since the early '70s, a musical career spanning 35 years, from the heady days with "Tír Na nÓg" which landed him on the biggest stages in the world, to the truly fantastic "Scullion", numerous solo albums, perhaps one of Irelands greatest songwriters, Sonny Condell is the real McCoy. Sonny Condell's songs are melodic and thoughtful, often with a breeze of jazz or a rhythmic hint of traditional music.



"Down In The City", "Teeside", the Poptastic "Carol", stunning lyrics, distinctive driving rhythm guitar. A prolific songwriter with 15 albums to his credit.

"Three decades equals a remarkable repertoire in Scullion's world, most of it drawn from the creative genius of Condell, whose subtle lyricism and matchless melody lines bear scant kinship to anyone else on the planet"

Siobhan Long - Irish Times June 2008

## PREVIEW

Bray Arts Night

Monday Sept 9<sup>th</sup> 2013

Martello Hotel, Bray

Everyone Welcome: Adm. €5 / €4 conc.

Sonny Condell's new studio album "Swallows and Farms" released on April 26th 2013 on CD and Digital.



## Nicole Keating

Nicole set up Rejuv designs in 2011 to create handmade handbags, hats and soft furnishings using old garments and vintage cloths. Nicole sells at local markets and online. Her ethos is rejuvenate, to design, draft a pattern and create her handmade individual pieces. Nicole's fabrics are sourced from family, friends and charity stores.



Working from her studio, the rejuvenating process begins with the cleaning treatments and the deconstruction of garments. Where possible all zips, buttons and buckles are revitalized. Her individual designs take time to create and Nicole is passionate about her work.

## Jane Stanford

Jane Stanford is an independent historian and author. That Irishman, her biography of John O'Connor Power, the nineteenth century Nationalist leader, tells the story of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and the role of the Irish in England in the struggle for independence.



She is working on a companion volume and maintains a blog [thatirishman.com](http://thatirishman.com). She has three daughters and lives in Monkstown, County Dublin.

## Congratulations to Rosy for another splendid publication.

*Carraigona Burns* (Lapwing) is a collection of poetry that draws together a commemoration for family, friends and strangers. Her poems have an emotional quality without a sense of melancholy - just courage and honesty. To obtain a copy of *Carraigona Burns*, contact Lapwing publishers or Rosy direct on Facebook.



# In Memory of Davin Harrison



## Bright Star

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art--  
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night  
    And watching, with eternal lids apart,  
    Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremit,  
The moving waters at their priestlike task  
    Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,  
    Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask  
    Of snow upon the mountains and the moors--  
        No--yet still stedfast, still unchangeable,  
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,  
    To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,  
    Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,  
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,  
    And so live ever--or else swoon to death.

by John Keats



**The Irish man who drowned in the US has been identified as Wicklow man Davin Harrison.**

**Davin Harrison** (20), from Bray, was rafting on the Delaware river in New York on Saturday afternoon when he got into difficulty while swimming in the water which had recently been swelled by rain. Friends reported that he went-under while swimming alongside the raft and a search was launched immediately.

His body was recovered on Monday in the swollen river around 40 feet from the bank.

The area where the accident occurred is known as Knight's Eddy near Lumberland in Sullivan County. It's understood that Davin got into difficulty while swimming in the area of the Kittatinny "staircase" rapids.

He was not wearing a life jacket at the time.

Davin was on a student work visa from Ireland, and was visiting the Sullivan County area from Brooklyn.

He grew up in Bray and was a student at Presentation College there.

His parents Shane and Marian were on holiday in Alaska when they received the news of the tragedy, and Davin's older brother Oran was also travelling.

By Conor Feehan

Irish Independent

## Crossing the Bar

Sunset and evening star,  
    And one clear call for me!  
    And may there be no moaning of the bar,  
    When I put out to sea,  
  
        But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
    Too full for sound and foam,  
    When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
        Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,  
    And after that the dark!  
    And may there be no sadness of farewell,  
    When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place  
    The flood may bear me far,  
    I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
        When I have crost the bar.

by Alfred Lord Tennyson



## And Never Feared Danger

*The noblest and most terrible manifestation of this unconquered nation.'*

O'Connor Power met Michael Davitt soon after his arrival in Lancashire, 'Mr O'Connor Power I knew when I was a boy; we were brought up together.' It is probable that he recruited Davitt, who joined the IRB at the age of nineteen. O'Connor Power was his commanding officer on the raid on the military arsenal in Chester Castle in February 1867.

The *Manchester Guardian* wrote in his obituary, 'In his youth he was connected with the revolutionary movement, and is credited with organising the daring Fenian plot to seize Chester Castle.'

A band of a thousand Irishmen from the north of England marched on the walled city and converged in large groups in the centre of Chester. They arrived from Manchester, Liverpool and other towns where the Irish were numerous, ostensibly to attend a prize fight.

The success of the raid depended on the Fenian Trojan horse, a sympathetic Irish soldiery, within the garrison walls. The plan was to seize arms and ammunition in the castle armoury. They intended to cut telegraph wires and tear up railway lines, creating confusion and preventing pursuit. Commandeering the mail train en route to the boat at Holyhead, they would sail to Wicklow to prepare for the planned insurrection.

A police informer, John Joseph Corydon, gave the warning, and the authorities, alerted, were poised to intercept the rebels. News of the betrayal reached the Fenians, and an orderly and speedy withdrawal was set in place. The men dispersed and were heard singing the American Civil War march, 'When Johnny Comes Marching Home', as they wended their way to their bases, the 'little Irelands' of Britain. No shots were fired. The attempted raid was aborted without loss of life. O'Connor Power travelled home by train in a second class carriage. Arriving ahead of his comrades, he greeted them with a welcoming party in Watson's public house in Marybone, Liverpool.

The following month, the planned rising in Ireland failed for lack of men and arms. Bishop Moriarty of Kerry famously declared that 'eternity is not long enough, nor hell hot enough to punish these miscreants'. He condemned the rebels with 'God's heaviest curse, his withering, blasting, blighting curse'.

That summer, the Head Centres met in Manchester to reassess the position. They condemned the ill-conceived Rising in the spring and blamed certain members of the American Brotherhood for the misadventure.

O'Connor Power was in Manchester in September for the dramatic rescue of two Fenian officers, late of the American army, on their way to Salford jail. The police van, in which they travelled, was ambushed. In broad daylight, on a main thoroughfare, in 'a great English city', a band of thirty men emerged from under the railway arch, seized the horses' reins and released the hand-cuffed prisoners. A bullet, fired to force the lock on the van's door, accidentally killed the police officer

in charge. Several raiders, who failed to make good their escape, were arrested.

At the trial, Chartist lawyer, Ernest Jones, led the defence but the prisoners stood convicted by public opinion and a prejudiced jury. Inflamed by fear and hatred, England was baying for vengeance, 'The truth is that, at a time of panic, a technical point of law was strained against them, and a terrified Manchester jury sacrificed them to political prejudice and national excitement, and convicted them on evidence of the flimsiest description.'

John Bright approached the Home Office for a reprieve, 'to hang these men will embitter the Irish Question'. The Tory government did not yield. Three men have a place in history as the Manchester Martyrs. From the dock, the condemned shouted defiantly, 'God Save Ireland'. These words became the hook in a rousing song, the anthem of the rebels, and sung, significantly, to the tune of the American Civil War March, 'Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Marching.'

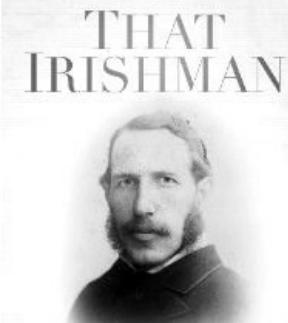
On a cold, foggy morning in November, the men were taken out and executed. The hangings were botched and the agony cruelly prolonged. Denied a Christian burial, the bodies were consigned to quicklime, adding fury to the flames of outrage. Masses were said in Irish communities throughout the north of England and Scotland. Processions and demonstrations took place in Ireland and across the world. A mock funeral was held in Cork. A Requiem Mass was celebrated in Cong, County Mayo and on subsequent anniversaries. The faithful wore green defiantly. These men were martyrs to the Irish cause, blood sacrifices. In death they acquired iconic status and brought new impetus to nationalist aspirations.

Several others involved in the rescue were imprisoned for life. Eight years later, at Westminster, O'Connor Power did not offer an eyewitness account when rehearsing the events of that day, 'Now, this is, as well as I can recollect from the newspaper reports at the time, an accurate description of what took place.'

In December, while O'Connor Power was in America, an attempt to free Fenian officers from Clerkenwell prison caused death and serious injury to innocent bystanders. The thick prison wall was blown apart with gunpowder, leaving a very large gap. The explosives had been inexpertly placed, and several hundred neighbouring houses were shattered by the blast. Collateral damage was not part of the plan, and the perpetrators were as horrified as the authorities. The Liberal leader, William Ewart Gladstone, urged that the violent attack not 'deter the doing of justice to Ireland', and, the following spring, a newly inaugurated IRB Supreme Council would forcefully condemn it, 'This dreadful and deplorable event was the work of persons without authority,' and the Council saw it not only with horror but also with indignation: 'were the perpetrators within our control their punishment would be commensurate with our sense of justice'.

The police had received information in advance from a well placed informer but no attempt was made to derail the plot, 'Persons in England who deal in statecraft have seized upon this unhappy event, which, in all probability, they foresaw and fore-knew, as a circumstance well calculated to afford a temporary apology for their most guilty practice towards Ireland.'

The extent of the destruction panicked the public, and the swell of sympathy, after the execution of the Manchester Martyrs, ebbed fast. The Fenians' base support, the working class and the trade union movement, was alienated, and the credibility of the rebels' purpose was undermined. Subsequent legal proceedings were weighted against the offenders. John Bright asked for a retrial.



One fifth of the population of Canada was of Irish birth or descent. Here the Irish integrated with more ease than their fellow countrymen in Boston and New York, who met with the prejudice of an ensconced establishment. The French speaking community in Canada was Catholic, and the Irishman's faith was not seen as a badge of inferiority, but rather a calling card. Assimilation was less troubled, and the Irish excelled in a country where there were few restraints on their native abilities. Gaelic was spoken so extensively, that it might well have been declared a national language.

Over a five year period, the United Brotherhood in America organised several raids into Canada. It planned to take control of the newly created British Dominion of Canada and exchange the territory for Irish independence. The United States gave covert support to the raiders, who had a long, unguarded border to aid their efforts. Again the British Secret Service infiltrated the lines of command and the incursions were not successful.

Of the many who escaped to Ireland after the raid on Chester Castle, most were later arrested. O'Connor Power hid out in Manchester and, in the autumn, as 'accredited agent', travelled to America to discuss reorganisation with the United Brotherhood. He returned in the New Year to set up the structures of a revitalised IRB. Its governing body, the Supreme Council met in Dublin for the first time 13, 14 February. The organisation, independent of the American Brotherhood, continued to enrol, drill and arm in secret, awaiting its chance – England's difficulty.

A few days after his twenty-second birthday, O'Connor Power was arrested on suspicion in Dublin and held under the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act, a law which allowed detention without trial or evidence, in Kilmainham and Mountjoy. The harsh application of this law in Ireland expedited the transference of operations to England where the deracinated Irish, with intimate knowledge of the foe, were deeply politicised.

The police file and photograph give us a great deal of information. O'Connor Power had dark brown hair and grey eyes. He was well built, 5ft 9in, fresh complexioned, with the pits of smallpox evident. He was a newspaper reporter, living in Rochdale, or Bolton, Lancashire. His birthplace was County Roscommon. He glowers fiercely at us from the photograph taken in custody. It was a sedentary life; prison food was stodgy; a common complaint, and he has put on weight.

John Webster was his alias of the day. Had O'Connor Power already developed a great interest in the playhouse? And had he recently seen the Jacobean, bloodthirsty revenge plays of John Webster? But the adjective Websterian was current, an allusion to Webster's dictionary. Phrenology was fashionable, and a Websterian head spoke of great knowledge and prodigious memory.

*That Irishman*, pp. 29-32.

## Best of Luck Michael!

Bray Arts would like to wish **Michael Monaghan** the very best of luck with his future music studies. Michael has been our wonderful sound technician and has provided his expertise on all of our performance nights. He is now parting ways with Bray Arts to further his studies in the UK.



## POTATOES

I can smell the sweet potato peel  
Upon my skin and I visualise walking  
Amongst the summer rows



I pick over the box of earthy potatoes  
When I pull one that is perfect  
I turn it in my hand like a gold nugget  
Buried in my memory a charm.

I peel back happiness from the soil,  
Memories drop into a watery bowl;  
The day we planted them – sowing  
Love which had lain on the edges

Uncertain, I nearly threw love out -  
With un-seeded tubers; to decay in hedges.  
Instead I wrapped them and stored them -  
In a cold shed - for spring planting

I can already see your face shining pride  
At flowering drills; you stand with a wide-stance;  
The posture of the accomplished soul your eyes,  
Stare lovingly at each planted offering.

By Helen Harrison 2013

## Harbour Bar Lives!!!

The doors of the Harbour bar are open with new owners, a new coat of paint outside, and a clean-up inside. The wonderful manager Paul O'Toole is still the manager. One of the oldest pubs in Bray, established in 1831, has been owned and managed by the O'Toole family. The warm atmosphere still has the glow and comfort to relax and have a good pint. Come for a pint and see the refreshed Harbour Bar.



Local band "**Vinyl Only**" (featuring Bray Arts committee member **Aoife Hester**) will be performing in the newly renovated Harbour Bar on 14th September at around 10pm. The band are looking forward to rocking out on the brand new swanky stage! All welcome!

"This is the only reason to try to make a work of art: to say that there was a man once here, and this is how he saw this amazing, beautiful place ..." John Banville

# SIGNAL ARTS CENTRE

## 'TREOIR'

An Exhibition of Paintings by Martina McAteer

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> August – Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2013

This exhibition is a highly personal development in the artist's life. In some sense there is a strong sense of metamorphosis in style, tone and even approach to painting. The works were painted at a time when the artist felt "she was at a bridge where the other side was difficult to see".

For the first time in her life as a painter there was a sense of a need to navigate onto the next step. The title "Treoir" which means "Direction" was literally explored through painting.



Up to now the artist's works were a fusion of classically influenced painting juxtaposing with an almost naïve narrative type painting. Poetic, lyrical, often with an ethereal sense of pathos, the paintings often had a mystical quality about them. Post-modernistic style icons, angels, spirits, alongside lyrical paintings reminded the artist of being on a journey where she watched the old solemn religious art and lightly told a tale along the way

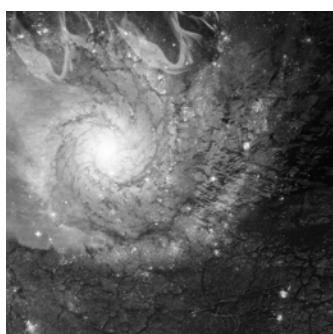
*Opening Reception: Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013, 7-9 pm*

## 'ELEMENTS'

From Tuesday 10th September – Sunday 22nd September 2013

A Showcase by Signal Artists

'Elements' represents a cross section of the Signal staff artists past and present who have exhibited throughout Ireland and also abroad. The Staff artists decided to work within the theme of Elements. All of the selected artists were encouraged to experiment and to push this theme to the extreme. Some of their ideas include, 'A part or aspect of something', 'To be in



one's element', 'Atomic elements', 'Natural elements' and 'The 5th element (the Void)'. Many different types of art making will be on show for the exhibition, from drawing, painting,

print, digital photography, video work, sculpture to mixed media. We would like to invite you all to the reception. The exhibition will be officially opened by a Signal artist and a brief talk about the exhibition will take place. You are encouraged to meet with the staff artists and chat about their work. Signal staff artists participating in the exhibition are Frances Brosnan, Sylvia Callan, Tony Clarke, Jonathan Curran, Linde Fidorra, Aoife FitzGerald, Sara Fry, Conall McCabe, Greg Murray, Andrea Paul and Christine Power.

*Opening Reception: 13th September 2013, 7-9pm*

## 'OUT OF FOCUS'

An Exhibition of Paintings by Ray Corcoran

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September – Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2013

Largely a self-taught artist having received a small amount of invaluable formal training, Ray has been working on various commissions and projects over the years.

Originally his intention was to complete a project on NAMA, but as was pointed out by friends this has already been covered by various artists. Therefore this exhibition is a number of personal observations in variant styles, enjoying the freedom of not being confined to one style or method of expression, which to others might be viewed as a loss of direction or focus.

Ray explains, "At this point in time I am sharing a studio with some other artists and working on various projects and ideas some of which I imagine I will never achieve because of so many constraints, not just financial but physical, like not enough studio space and not enough materials to experiment with and 101 other things that all artist want to do both by way of experiment and expression."

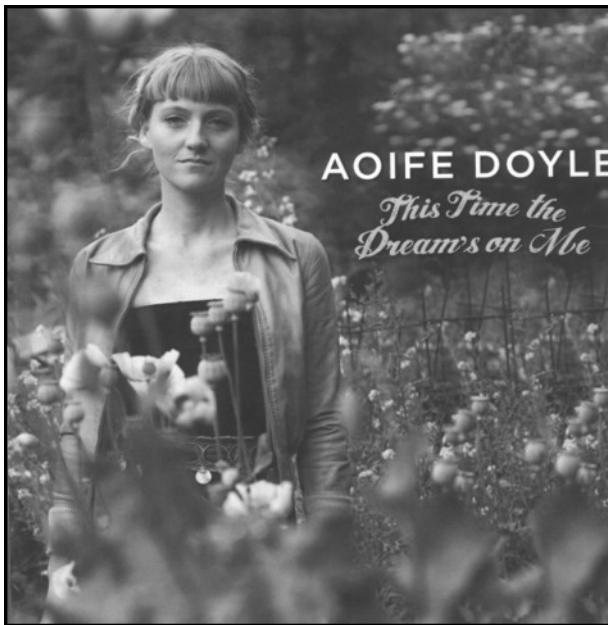


*Opening Reception: Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2013, 7-9pm*

"Bearing, countenance, voice, robe and posture can lend weight to things which in themselves are nothing but babble"

*Montaigne*

**Available now to buy**



## **Submission Guidelines**

**Editor :** Karen Quinn - [editor@brayarts.net](mailto:editor@brayarts.net)

**Creative Writing Editor :** Anne Fitzgerald -  
[annefitz3@gmail.com](mailto:annefitz3@gmail.com)

**Email submissions to the above or post to :** Editor Bray Arts Journal, c/o CASC, Lewis Room, Madeley House, Bray, Co. Wicklow, Ireland

**Text in Microsoft Word**

Pictures/Logos etc Jpeg preferably 300 dpi

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## **IFI Stranger Than Fiction, Documentary Film Festival, returns on the 26th-29th September 2013**

Amongst a host of documentaries, discussions and workshops at this exciting four day festival is a very special world premiere from the Bray-based Film Director **Isolda Heavey**. Isolda lives in Bray, and her film **Where the blue Flowers Grow** is a documentary on **The Cujo Family** hardfolk band. The Cujo family will be present on the night with an acoustic session in IFI the foyer before the film. Congratulations to Isolda from Bray Arts and we wish her every success in the future.

**Where the Blue Flowers Grow** will be showing on Sat Sept 28<sup>th</sup> at 8:30pm

Tickets are on sale **NOW** at the IFI Box Office on 01 679 3477 or online at [www.ifi.ie/stf](http://www.ifi.ie/stf).



## **Bray Arts Night Monday September 9th 2013**

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

More on Bray Arts on Facebook and [www.brayarts.net](http://www.brayarts.net). For more information call: 01 2864623

### **Nicole Keating - Rejuv designs**

Will show how she creates wonderful, unique items from revitalising old garments and vintage clothes to skilfully bring out a fabric's new potential.

### **Jane Stanford - Historian and Author**

Will read from "That Irishman" - her historic biography of a nineteenth century Nationalist leader in England and the Irish struggle for independence.

### **Sonny Condell and Robbie Overson – Singers, Songwriters and guitarists**

Well-known to lovers of folk and traditional music will bring melodic, thoughtful songs with a breeze of jazz, stunning lyrics and a distinctive driving rhythm guitar.