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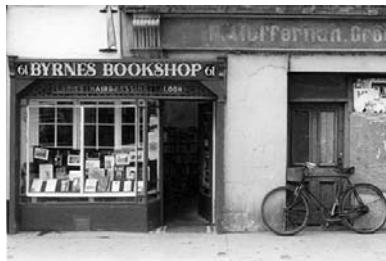


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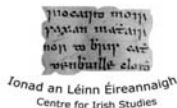
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Crannóg is published three times a year in spring, summer and autumn. Closing dates for submissions are: January 1, May 1 and September 1. Reading Times: Nov 1-January 1 for spring. March 1-May 1 for summer. July 1-September 1 for autumn.

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FICTION

I sit as far from the door as I can, curled away from the gusts of rain and the sour smell of the wet pavement. The young barista recognizes me by now, and she knows to bring me a silver pot of tea and a mug with a sliver of lemon. She places it down on my table with a cheery, noncommittal “there you are!” I appreciate that – it saves me the trouble of having to order it from a stranger, who will curl their lip and sneer and resent me for taking up their time.

I hang my hat and jacket on the coat-rack. They are faded and tweedish – like myself – and in their prime could at best have been called “scholarly”. But it’s been years since my brief academic heyday, when I had my thesis published – *Oedipal Complexes and the Cult of Masculinity in 1950s New England Fiction* – and was flown all over North America to speak at literary conferences and be interviewed by English undergrad valedictorians-to-be. My newsboy hat and suede-elbowed blazer were dapper and dignified then; now they have been chewed on by moth larvae, stained with coffee, and slept in more than I like to admit. They are imbued with blue ink stains and the long hairs and dander from Mariposa, my sweetie, my beautiful green-eyed darling, my only remaining companion and my last memento of an old life on an old continent, a world full of frustration and disappointments that I prefer not to dwell on.

A friend of mine, whose bell-like name I refuse to remember, once joked that after college we would all move to Europe and live as the throbbing heart of a post-postmodern literary movement, hobnobbing with artists and intellectuals. That was seven years ago. As far as I can tell, I’m the only one who actually made it out of the States, and so far the circle of bohemian ex-pats consists of myself and Mariposa.

The quarantine nearly killed her, poor sweetie; when we flew from Newark to Dublin they locked her in a cage and wouldn’t let me see her for forty days. Mariposa began to tear her soft, silvery hair out in chunks. She refused to eat – she looked so thin when I finally came to claim her – and she never was the same after, always pacing anxiously through the flat and rubbing herself against things and crying out mournfully in the night. Which reminds me, I can’t stay out too late – I need to stop by Tesco for cat food. Poor Mariposa is getting fussy in her old age, and she no longer eats the brand I’ve been buying her. I’ve been shelling out to get her Fancy Feast, but I’m only a lowly professor of American Literature, and between veterinarian bills for her and work permit fees for me plus rent for both of us, things

have been stretched a bit thin lately. For the past few months I've been shopping at Aldi and eating sparingly; of the two of us, Mariposa deserves quality food more.

My forehead twinges, and I realize I've been furrowing it as I stare deep into the amber heart of my teacup, the translucent lemon floating on its surface – it will keep me from getting scurvy, and give me the illusion of having eaten something substantial today. But no, I should eat in earnest; I make a mental note to pick up a loaf of rye bread on the way home, if there are any priced to clear in the bakery aisle.

I sip the tea, my tongue curling around the echo of citrus, and, steeling myself for the inevitable lack of inspiration, flip open my Moleskin notebook to a clean page. My forehead twinges again; I smooth it with my hand and once again remind myself that I don't regret going on sabbatical this semester. No matter that my artificially-tanned students, with their iphones, pods, pads and their gargantuan obsession with drinking and their complete lack of any interest whatsoever in Hawthorne, were virtually the only human interaction I had on a regular basis. I hadn't known this until they were gone, but such is life. Loneliness is harsher in Ireland than it is in America, I think; like the wetness, it sticks to you, seeps in through your clothes and burrows into your skin. But I have long experience in tuning it out.

But really it's better to have four months free of distraction so that I may focus on the novel I've been conceiving for the past ten years. A tentative title is *In the Shadow of Miss Kipling*, and it will be set in Edwardian Dublin, during an age that is wedged between the close of a century and the dawn of a World War. I think of Miss Kipling – nineteen when her father, an English officer, goes to war, with a mentally declining mother at home, herself struggling to balance the responsibilities of an accomplished lady with the passions of a young woman that have been stunted since childhood by a rigorous Catholic upbringing. I think of her hands, slender and white, equally apt at playing a piano concerto, at scrubbing greasy pots, at apprehending one of her four younger sisters by the ear, at fingering the glass beads of her rosary.

With an envious ache that sits deep in my intestines I think of Miss Kipling's fortitude in accepting the news of her father's death – she will stoically deny a promising career in music so that she can care for her ailing mother and her sisters. It will become a love story in time, because no human being should go through life without love, even if he is only writing about it, but I can think of no male protagonist worthy of Miss Kipling's affections. I can't even think of a first name for Miss Kipling, because she remains stubbornly faceless no matter how much I try to develop her. There is only one name in the world perfect enough to associate with Miss Kipling, one name that lingers in my mind like the golden tolling of morning matins as the sun rose over the dome of St. Agnes, the parish school where we grew

up, she and I, together.

Sister Margaret excused us from class on Fridays to fetch the crates of milk cartons for lunch – sometimes they were half-frozen and sometimes they had gone sour, but it was a sin to waste food and the nuns saw to it that we drank every last drop. She took my carton once, the day I was almost delirious with nausea from the flu, and tipped the entire half-pint out the second-story window, a molten-white double-helix swirling down to the bushes below. They caught her and by that point they weren't allowed to corporally abuse children, so they made her bang all the erasers in the entire school. She inhaled sixty-eight rooms' worth of white dust, and her cough lingered for weeks.

For ten years after that incident I loved her, and for ten years she wouldn't allow me to carry her books, to give her my jacket when she shivered, to treat her with the chivalry she deserved. And when, sighing with frustration, one skinny hip jutted out to the side, she challenged me to voice my feelings to her, I could not – I could only write them. To this day I have no right to put her name to paper, or even to speak it aloud in the dark confines of my flat, where only Mariposa can hear, lying in bed when I am half-asleep and nearly dreaming. Though sometimes I do. *Clara*.

Who am I to write about love, anyway? Mariposa's is the only affection I need; and the love of animals, I think, is the most genuine. Animals love you instinctively, no matter what your faults – and I am a man of many faults, prone to brooding and self-pity, weak spiritually and physically, unsociable, incapable of grasping the rare chances at happiness that I am offered, and with a propensity to write lengthy novels that don't get published. An animal – a cat, for instance – would love me in spite of all this, asking only to be fed and sheltered in return. Poor Mariposa, my poor kitty... she gets frightened when I'm away from her for too long. I think she may have some feline strain of obsessive-compulsive disorder, because she's recently started chewing out chunks of her hair, rolling them into tiny pellets, and hiding them in various places around the flat. She always looks guiltily up at me when I find them. Mariposa is unhappy, and it hurts me to see her like this – but what she might have to be unhappy about, I'll never know. I take good care of her, because she is my sweetie, my only family.

Mariposa would never ask me to prove my love in ways that are beyond my abilities – she would never lay down an ultimatum, promising to wait so long and no more. And she would never, ever sell herself – and our dreams – so abominably short by marrying some hulking Neanderthal who barely knows her, who hasn't the foggiest comprehension of her graces and virtues, her million different intricacies, her sparkling intelligence, and who could never even come close to loving her the way I

love her, fanatically and masochistically. Mariposa would never break my heart – Mariposa would never tell me she hopes “this won’t affect our friendship” and then leave all my letters unanswered.

The barista comes to take away my teapot and empty mug, and I notice her hands – small and white, the color of spilled milk, but capable and constantly occupied. Miss Kipling’s hands. She shoots me a smile and asks what it is I’m always writing when I come here. I don’t see why she feels the need to patronize me by feigning interest in my work – I always leave her a euro tip, and that’s not going to change. “I’m Amelia,” she tries again, and she is twisting the pale fingers, one by one, of her left hand in her right fist. The girl is clearly a neurotic, and I think it’s time I left.

“I have to go feed my cat,” I bluntly tell her, gathering up my hat and coat. I leave money for the bill and rush out into the finely sifting mist of rain, where I heave a sigh of relief. All in all, I prefer the coziness and cramped quarters of Mariposa’s and my flat, our wee garret, as I call it. I have boxes and boxes of tea there – I will sit up late tonight in front of my typewriter with a pot of lapsang souchong and surely I’ll make some progress without being plagued by nosy, overly-talkative baristas. I will stave off sleep as the pages fall away and my storyline progresses – it doesn’t matter if there are plot-holes now... I’ll fill them in on later drafts. Mariposa wouldn’t like that, I realize – she’d say it’s unhealthy, sitting up all night without taking any real food into my system for over thirty-six hours. To be honest, I get so used to it that I don’t even realize I’m hungry anymore, but of course Mariposa has to worry about me. Mariposa cares.

As a compromise, I stop by a shop on the way home and pick up some bread, a block of cheese, plus a pint of cream as a treat for my darling. There, now. Let’s see her try to finagle me to sleep now, with her disapproving meows. I will sit up until dawn, the dawn that you never see in Galway because of the constant, overriding shroud of rainclouds, and by tomorrow morning I’ll finally know where I’m going.

Awake. Too early. Black. Sleep. Awake again. Window going orange. Still too early, but can't sleep. Sit up. Put on slippers. Slippers like sandpaper on dirty floor. Dry riverbeds vein down flower wallpaper. Wardrobe door leans against wall. Holy pictures glow in morning light. Beauty.

It is the sixth of July, 1948. I am eight. This is my room. I won't leave until my mother calls for me.

No sheets on bed. Forgot about them. Walk to get them. Sound of wood floors. Peek out into hallway. Empty. Safe. Only open doors ahead of me. Two, four, six, eight open doors. Look into first room. Robert? No. Just bed frame. Across the hall. Seamus? No. Just pile of clothes. Doorless wardrobe, single hanger, window tall and thin, too thin to jump out of. Next room, bed frame, square of cardboard, empty beer cans. Next room, pink paint peeling near water stains. Smell of human shit.

Open space. Desk. Arseless chairs waiting in rows. Must stop to use toilet. Squares of plaster from ceiling on floor and in sinks. Plaster snow. Black bird watches from shower curtain, flaps his wings, but doesn't fly away; he knows me. Done.

Don't like to pass yellow room. Check inside. No people. Safe. Metal machines. Don't like the machines. Remember the machines.

Finally, linen closet. Shelves falling off wall. Sheets folded into neat squares. I run my finger over one. Finger gray with dust. I can't remember what I came in here for. What did I come in here for? Why am I in here at all? Go back to room.

Halfway back, voices. Stop walking. Don't know what to do.

Man's voice: "Look at the window. The mould is just caked on."

Other man's voice: "The heating probably hasn't been on in years."

"It's on. I can feel it. No wonder we're paying through the nose to keep this place up. They're heating wards that aren't even in use."

"But are they heating it?"

"It's very warm."

"Maybe it's just the heat downstairs coming up?"

Footsteps going into room. Must get back to my room. Walk quickly.

"Feel the radiator there. It's hot. I don't believe it. They're actually heating empty wards."

"Oh sweet Jesus!"

My own voice: "Heh!"

"Sorry. Sorry. Sorry there. We didn't mean to frighten you."

"We didn't realise there was anyone here."

Suits. Suits standing in the doorway of the room across from mine.

"You gave us a fright."

"What are you doing in this ward anyway?"

My own voice: "This is my room."

Suits. Suits standing in the hallway outside my room, mouths gaping like drowning fish. Mouths gaping like drowning fish, look at each other, then at me. My mother pulled a fish from the lake. Its face was just like that, right before she clubbed it. That was yesterday.

"You live...here?"

"This is my room."

Suits with necks bent, looking into my room. I go in there. Don't want to look at suits. Don't like suits. Suits were there when they tried to take my mother away, put her into the box, but I fought them. Suits brought me to the uncle's. Uncle wore a suit when he brought me here. That was yesterday.

"How long have you been living here?"

"Sixth of July, 1948."

"My fucking god. He's been here sixty years!"

Sound of door opening. Woman's voice: "Gentlemen! How did ye get in here?"

"Madame, we're from the council and—"

"I know who you are, thanks. I asked how you got in. You're not supposed to be in here."

She brings the tray.

"Here you go now, Eamon. Just brought you some breakfast."

My voice: "Thank you."

"This is HSE property. You can't just walk in as you please."

"What is this man doing here?"

"He lives here."

"This is appalling. Absolutely appalling. He told us he's been in here since the forties."

"And he has. He was committed when he was eight."

"Eight! That's ridiculous!"

"Look, I know it's wrong. You know it's wrong. But that's what was done back then."

"And he's still here! What is he still doing here?"

“This is his home. This is where he lives.”

“But look at these conditions. I wouldn’t put a dog into this. Can you not do something for him?”

“Well, as you know yourself, we’re on a tight budget. I don’t think the taxpayers would let us get away with doing up this ward just for one person.”

“This is disgusting. This place should have been shut years ago. Don’t you think he’d be better off somewhere else?”

“There’s a bed below for him –”

My voice: “This is my room!”

“And why doesn’t he move in below?”

“Because he doesn’t want to go. And, you know yourself, we can’t make him go.”

“Can’t you?”

“No.”

My voice: “This is my room! This is my room! Heh! Heh! Heh!”

“Now. You’ve upset him! Eamon. Eamon. It’s OK. Nobody is going to make you go.”

Voice like Mother’s.

Door opening again. Footsteps coming closer. Not safe anymore. My mother kept me safe. Walking down road, other people coming, she would pull me into the ditch and we’d hide behind trees until it was safe again.

Second female voice: “Excuse me now! Do I need to ring the guards?”

Then mother didn’t get out of bed. Days and nights. Hunger. I walked down the road. Two women came. Couldn’t hide. Frozen.

“Where’s your mother?” asked one.

“Bed,” I said.

“How long has she been in bed?”

“Days.”

One woman looked at the other and said, “I get a bad feeling about this.”

Man’s voice: “I think I’ll ring the guards myself. What do you think they’re going to say when they find this man living here like this?”

Woman’s voice: “They’re going to say that due to the Mental Health Act, we can’t make him live anywhere he doesn’t want to live.”

“He’s free to go?”

“Of course he’s free to go.”

Go? Go?

“Heh! Heh! Heh!”

“Eamon. Eamon. Calm down. Nobody can make you go. That’s all we’re saying. You can stay right here.”

“He’s free to go and yet he stays here?”

“That’s right. They might even say he’s got squatter’s rights, he’s been here for so long.”

“And we’re paying one-hundred and sixty-thousand euro a year to heat empty wards for someone who has squatter’s rights?”

Woman’s voice: “Ah! Now we get to the real reason for this little stunt of yours.”

Other woman’s voice: “Will I ring the guards?”

“That’s quite alright. We’ll just be leaving now.”

Leaving? I take the child of Prague from the pile of holy medals and cradle it. Tears fall on its white body. Paint is completely gone. Used to be bright red.

“It’s OK, Eamon. You can stay here. Nobody is going to make you leave. Why don’t you eat your breakfast now?”

Man’s voice, fading: “Just think of it. He hasn’t seen the outside world in sixty years. He wouldn’t recognise the town if he saw it now.”

Woman’s voice: “You know what his problem is? There’s people living here that he hasn’t canvassed yet and he can’t stand it.”

Footsteps go. Door slams. Alone. Safe. It is the sixth of July 1948. This is my room. I’m not going anywhere until my mother calls for me.

POETRY

If I begin maps by drawing geometries,
consecutive,
parallel,
I can make companions of them.
If I use white ink on white
paper, like something imagined,
my routes become
judgments. “Can you follow?”
they challenge. What they mean is
“There are places far more
secretive than any of
our own concealments,
underground gatherings
where people collect to bury
their hearts, their selves.”
It is hard to follow
a trail you can’t see,
harder still to walk the earth
half-hearted.

WINTER STILL

SUSAN TEPPER

Refresh me, I'm lonely
Again and winter
Still a shadow
On the cherry tree
Is spoken for –

Once you got to them
Before birds swooped down
Devouring, orange berries
Picked clean off the *fire bush*
– going down, did they burn?

And with willows crying into the scummy water, a herd
of wrens swung down from the nickel-grey sky, alive and

moving like a great flag of nature, snagging the mind's eye
as it drove, sending the paltry light into streams of disarray.

The air was touched by children tossing clutched spills of
breadcrumbs, and ducks quacked, gathering beneath them

like boats in the night, snapping viciously at each others'
patch of sodden titbits. A drunk lay lazily in the shade of a

rowan tree, dozing among shadows that stunk of acrid drink.
The children hardly noticed him, but when his worn face

opened its eyes and they saw there was life in the crumpled
pile of clothes, they ran on ahead to be near mother's side,

touching her familiar sleeve. It was as if they suddenly knew
living and dying could meet in the middle, that there was a

space in the galaxy where both could coexist. This idea sank
slowly, leaving something like a balloon inside the pocket of

their bellies, a feeling that spread its wings throughout each
sapling limb, making them trip over their straggling feet to

look back; a feeling that – no matter how hard they tried –
couldn't be picked up and thrown away like breadcrumbs.

SAILOR

FRANK DULLAGHAN

for Rosemarie

You sunk your well
where the hazel dipped.
Water rose sure and clean,
coming up to you
from the cold folds of the hill.

Now standing in the whip-wind
off the gable, gazing across
a grey lap of fields,
it seems as if this place
floats through the evening.

Braced wide-legged
against the roll of the ground,
I look towards the house,
your head bowed in the window.
And I could be a sailor

within sight of land,
waiting for the tide to turn,
as your face lifts up
and your hand
beckons me in.

Biographical details

Emma Bartholomew was born in London, England. She holds a B.A. in English and Philosophy from Muhlenberg College, Allentown, PA and an M.Sc. in Creative Writing from the University of Edinburgh. She has been published in various literary magazines in the UK and USA and her first chapbook will be released by Forest Publications, Edinburgh, in the spring of 2011.

Stephanie Brennan has been living on Inis Mór, Oileáin Árann, for the past ten years. She divides her time between paid work, cliff walks and being in her vegetable garden. Her poems have been published in *Island Writings* (2007).

Sandra Bunting is originally from Canada but has lived in Galway for more than 20 years. Currently on the editorial board of *Crannóg* literary magazine, she obtained her MA in writing from NUI, Galway in 2003. She works at the Academic Writing Centre, NUI Galway, and leads a creative writing seminar for undergraduates. Her poetry collection, *Identified in Trees*, was published in 2006 by Marram Press. She also works in printmaking, batik and bookbinding and has had her work exhibited in Galway, Sligo and Montreal.

Oonagh Doherty have recently published poetry in *Margie*, *Common Ground Review*, *Illuminations*, *Naugatuck River Review*, *Hurricane Review*, and *Louisiana Literature*. She is a 2009 Pushcart Prize nominee.

Frank Dullaghan's first collection *On the Back of the Wind*, was published in 2008 by Cinnamon Press. He holds an MA with Distinction in Writing from Glamorgan University Wales. His poems have been widely published, including in *Poetry Ireland Review*, *HU*, *The Shop*, *Poetry Wales*, *London Magazine*, *Poetry London* and *Poetry Review*. He lives in Dubai, UAE.

Orla Fay is a member of Boyne Writers Group. In 2010 she was included in *ROPES*, *Crannóg* and in *Boyne Berries 7 & 8*. She had a poem highly commended in the Cavan Crystal Windows Publications Poetry Award.

Virginia Gilbert is a BAFTA nominated, award-winning writer and director for film, radio and television. Her screenwriting work has been placed on the BritList and she was named as a 'Star of Tomorrow' by Screen International 2008. She also writes short fiction. She has been shortlisted for the RTE Francis MacManus award and BBC Radio 4 broadcast a season of her short stories in March 2009, under the banner *Abroad*. Most recently, she wrote her first original BBC Radio drama, broadcast 2010, entitled *Meeting of Minds*, starring Joss Ackland and Adrian Dunbar. She lives in Dublin.

Caroline Graham has taught languages in post-primary, language school and university settings. She is a former director of the University of Limerick Language Centre and helped to establish the University of Limerick Writing Centre.

Kevin Graham has had poems in *Poetry Ireland*, *The SHOP*, *The Stinging Fly*, *Magma* and others. He won an Arts Council Literature Bursary Award in 2010. He lives and works in Dublin.

Deirdre Grimes' journal of her first pregnancy was published on the internet and subsequently reviewed and part published in *Othermindedness, the emergence of network culture* by Michael Joyce of Vassar University. Other publications include: *Red lights*, *Crannóg*, *Electronic acorn*, *The Burning Bush*, *American Tanka*. She blogs at thispoeticlife.com.

Kevin Higgins is co-organiser of Over The Edge literary events in Galway, Ireland. <http://overtheedgeliteraryevents.blogspot.com>. He facilitates poetry workshops at Galway Arts Centre; teaches creative writing at Galway Technical Institute and on the Brothers of Charity *Away With Words* programme. He is also Writer-in-Residence at Merlin Park Hospital and the poetry critic of the Galway Advertiser. His first collection of poems *The Boy With No Face* was published by Salmon in February 2005 and was short-listed for the 2006 Strong Award. His second collection, *Time Gentlemen, Please*, was published in March 2008 by Salmon. One of the poems from *Time Gentlemen, Please*, 'My Militant Tendency', featured in the *Forward Book of Poetry 2009*. His work also features in the anthology *Identity Parade – New British and Irish Poets* (Ed Roddy Lumsden, Bloodaxe, 2010). *Frightening New Furniture* is his third collection of poems and was published in April by Salmon Poetry. He has new poems recently published or forthcoming in *The Irish Times*, *Washington Square Review* (New York), *Harry's Place*, *Emergency Verse: Poems In Defence of The Welfare State* (UK), *The Raintown Review* (New Mexico), *Southword*, *The Galway Advertiser* and *The Bermingham Poetry Review* (Alabama).

Afric McGlinchey's poems have been published in a number of journals, including *Acumen*, *Revival*, *Southword*, *Poetry Ireland Review*, *Tears in the Fence*, *Scottish Poetry Review*, *Magma* and the *SHOP*. She won second prize in the 2010 Chapter One Promotions poetry competition and was a guest poet this year at O'Beal and the White House. She writes book reviews, edits manuscripts, facilitates creative writing workshops and teaches English. She lives in Kinsale, Co Cork.

Danielle McLaughlin lives in County Cork. Her fiction has been shortlisted for the Fish Short Story Prize, the Over the Edge New Writer of the Year Award, and the Writing Spirit Award. She was winner of the Twisted Tails Short Story Competition Autumn 2010 and third prize winner in the Doris Gooderson Short Story Competition 2010. She has had short stories published on a number of web-sites and also writes non-fiction articles for newspapers and magazines.

Mary Melvin Geoghegan's first two collections, *The Bright Unknown*, 2003, and *Abbeycartron Epiphanies*, 2005, were published by Lapwing. Her third collection, *When They Come Home*, was published by Summer Palace Press. Her next collection, *Say It Like A Paraphrase*, is forthcoming from Bradshaw Books.

Christine Murray has been published in *Speech Therapy Magazine*, *Caper Literary Journal* and *Asylum Magazine*. Poems published in *Ramus*, a bicentennial celebration of the national Botanic Gardens. Upcoming publications include a review for *Posts Magazine*, and two poems in *Revival Magazine*.

Marcella O'Connor lives in Kerry and is a student at UCC.

Tony O'Dwyer has been published in *Poetry Ireland Review*, *Books Ireland*, *The Stony Thursday Book*, *The Raintown Review* and others. His poetry collection *Off Guard* was published by Bradshaw Books, Cork, Ireland. He was a runner-up in the Patrick Kavanagh Award in 1999. He is a member of the editorial board of *Crannog Magazine*, www.crannogmagazine.com. He is co-owner of *WOW! Magazine*, www.wordsontheweb.net and of *Wordsonthestreet Publishers*, www.wordsonthestreet.com.

Mary O'Rourke has had three collections of poetry published, *My Mirror was Cracked* (1999), *It's all Happening* (2004) and *He Touched Me: Gospel Poems* (2009).

Julia Pallone is a visual artist. She graduated in 2002 with a Masters from the Ecole des beaux Arts in Nantes, and also holds a Masters in Italian Studies from the University of Nantes. She has exhibited extensively in European countries and has been awarded several art residencies. She is currently working as an Artist Facilitator for the West Cork Art Centre, Arts for Health programme, and also teaches art. She moved to Ireland from France 4 years ago. <http://juliapallone.free.fr>.

Heather Parker is a freelance writer and was recently awarded the Benjamin Franklin House/Daily Telegraph Literary Prize. She has won several literary competitions and her stories and articles have been published in many popular UK and US magazines. She has had a novel published by Drollerie Press, with the sequel due out shortly, and a novella published by Wild Child Publishing. Her stories regularly appear in anthologies including the 2009 *Out of Line Peace and Justice Anthology*, *Absent Willow Review Anthology*, *Hoi Polloi 111 Literary Journal*, *Bridge House Publishing Anthology* and *50 Stories for Pakistan*. <http://www.heatherparker.co.uk>.

E.M. Reapy is a Mayo writer. Her flash fiction, poetry and short stories have been published in Ireland and the UK. She has an MA in Creative Writing from Queen's University, Belfast. In 2009, she was shortlisted for Over the Edge New Writer of the Year Award and she's the founder and editor of wordlegs.com.

Máire T Robinson graduated from the MA in Writing at NUI Galway in 2008. Her short stories have been published in *Boyne Berries*, *Writing4all Anthology: Best of 2009*, and *WOW! Anthology 2010*. While volunteering at The Irish Writer's Centre (IWC), she helped to establish The Lonely Voice: Short Story Introductions, an ongoing series of monthly readings by emerging writers. She blogs at www.notmuchmore.blogspot.com.

Anna Snyder is from the United States but has lived as a publishing intern in Dublin, an English teacher in Moscow, and a commune-hippie in central Finland. She is currently working on her MA in Writing at NUI Galway, Ireland.

Rebecca Stephens is from Waterford and has been writing since she could hold a pencil. She is currently in her second year of college at NUIG studying French, Spanish and Creative Writing.

Susan Tepper's fiction has previously appeared in *Crannóg*, *The Stony Thursday Book*, *Revival*, *Boyne Berries*, *Linnet's Wings*, *Poetry Salzburg* and many other journals. She is the author (with Gary Percesepe) of the epistolary novel *What May Have Been: Letters of Jackson Pollock & Dori G* (Cervena Barva Press). Her collection *Deer & Other Stories* came out in 2009 (Wilderness House Press). Her chapbook *Blue Edge* came out in 2006. She has been nominated this year by Gargoyle for a Pushcart Prize.