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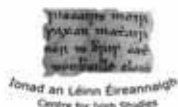
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Crannóg is published three times a year in spring, summer and autumn. Closing dates for submissions are: January 1, May 1 and September 1. Reading Times: Nov 1-January 1 for spring. March 1-May 1 for summer. July 1-September 1 for autumn.

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POETRY: Send no more than three poems. Each poem should be under 50 lines.

PROSE: Stories should be under 2000 words

We prefer to receive submissions by email.

When sending by email:

- *Include text both in body of email and as a Word attachment. (this is to ensure correct layout. We may, however, change your layout to suit our publication)*
- *Ensure each poem begins on a new page.*
- *If a poem takes more than one page, number each page Page X of Y.*
- ***Include a brief bio** as you would like it to appear and in the third person. Include this both in body and in attachment.*
- ***Include a postal address** for contributor's copy in the event of publication.*

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FICTION

It happened because Mary said I should try to talk politely to other children, but Mary was wrong. But you don't know who Mary is, so it is logical to begin with how she came to know me.

Four-and-a-half years ago, when I was seven, on the 13th of November 2006 at 9:42 AM, a woman with yellow hair (which is called *blonde*) and grey trousers and a white shirt and a grey jacket came to the school to watch me. She pretended she was not watching me but sometimes I turned around and her green and black and white eyes were always on me. Her eyes were firing thought lasers at my head but no-one else could see them.

Then the woman asked me questions in a small room I did not like. The questions were black and so was the ink from her pen. They were stupid questions. She asked if I liked to play with other children. I did not understand what the point of it was, because of course I did not like to play with them as they were excessively and constantly juvenile. Then she asked if I had any very special interests and I said that I liked aeroplanes and she knew nothing about planes as though she were a baby or a person from the Stone Age. When I said that the Messerschmitt Bf 109 was my favourite type of plane she made me stop talking before I was finished, like Mother often does.

Then on March the 19th 2007 at 8:58 AM, another woman came to the school and she walked over to my desk and she sat down and said hello and my name is Mary and I am here to help you. It was an inexplicable encounter, because she called me Kevin even though she had not asked what my name was, which is what you are supposed to do when you meet people. She told me that the woman with the grey and white clothes and yellow hair had sent her.

The woman called Mary had brown short hair and a yellow cardigan and white blouse and blue jeans. Her bottom was very large. So I told her that her bottom was very large and she laughed, which was strange because it was true. I did not understand why this was funny. If I had said that the whiteboard is white, it was not a joke, because it was not made up, and people did not usually laugh at things that were not made up.

Mary said that it was rude to say that a person had a very large bottom and she made me write it in a spare copy. I asked if it was rude to say that a person had a

medium-sized bottom, like Mother, and Mary said yes, it was rude to comment on the dimensions of bottoms in general. She said that I had to learn what I should and should not say to people. It was good to say 'excuse me' even though it took longer than pushing, and sometimes the other children did not hear because they were concentrating on eating a cheese string.

So that is how I met Mary and she started to teach me. I learnt about *similes* and *metaphors* and *figures of speech*, such as *raining cats and dogs*, which is stupid because it is impossible for precipitation to be composed of cats and dogs. Some similes are not stupid like when I told Mary that sometimes when I am very angry I feel like I could explode like the atom bomb which was dropped from the Enola Gay on the sixth of August, 1945. I learnt how to talk to people and what were *appropriate* and *inappropriate* things to say. This is called *social skills* and Mary says mine are improving all the time. I am eleven now and last Tuesday I put these *social skills* into action and this is what happened.

I jumped off the green-and-white 2005 Mercedes Sprinter school bus, rang the doorbell and waited for Mother to answer. Sometimes she is in bed when I get home so it takes her approximately one to two minutes to let me in. This was the case. Grandmother says that Mother stays in bed because of something called *nerves* but Mother does not seem nervous to me.

She opened the door and said hi, Kevin, did you have a good day and I said it was the same as every day, which is what I say every day. Then I went to the kitchen and ate a Muller Strawberry Fruit Corner yoghurt, which is delicious and eaten by me every day between 3:05 and 3:10 PM. After that I called for my cat, Jasper, who is usually in the back garden.

I like Jasper because he does not talk and there are no *social skills* with cats. Jasper is also very soft and when I rub his fur I feel calm. He is good at listening when I talk about aeroplanes.

But Jasper did not come.

I called his name fourteen times and made a *psssswssss* sound nine times. I was confused because Jasper always comes after I have finished my yoghurt. He licks the carton. I had a swooping looping feeling like miniature planes were buzzing around my stomach. I felt angry and sad and the two were duelling to see which was in charge. Neither won the duel.

I concluded that Jasper had run away. Logically, the next step was that I had to try to find him. Mother shouted that she was just having a quick shower, Kevin, and I knew I had to leave then. Mother does not like me going out alone, which overlaps with my view on this subject. The angry / sad feeling was duelling with a new feeling

of fear of going out, and angry / sad won.

At our front gate, fear was taking revenge on angry / sad. There were no people on our road, though, so I started walking and calling Jasper. He did not come.

I ran to the next estate, which was what angry / sad wanted. Fear wanted me to walk very very slowly. There were boys playing football on the green.

Talking to new people is hard but I knew it could help me find my soft silent friend Jasper. I made two columns in my head. They were:

Talking to People

Finding Jasper

Bad

Good

My mind was swinging like a see-saw.

Thinking about talking to the boys made me feel quivery like jelly – which I hate very much - so I made my humming noise like a biplane engine and the quivery feeling became a bit smaller.

I walked over to them, because Mary says it is rude to shout, and said excuse me and asked the closest boy what his name was. The boy wore a shiny red top and navy and red and white tracksuit bottoms and he had light brown hair that spiked like a hedgehog's. He also had a shiny earring in his left ear. He said it was none of my business so I decided I would call him Mr Anonymous, which is the word for people with no name.

Then I said have you seen my cat, Mr Anonymous. The boy said what did you call me, buddy, and then declared I don't know what your stupid cat looks like, do I? I said he is mainly black with some small white patches and his eyes are green and brown and black with little shards of yellow. Then the boy turned around to another boy, who was mimicking my voice, although he was not very good at mimicking. All the boys laughed but I did not find it funny.

Mary says that it is polite to make conversation when you meet a new person so even though I was mainly worried about finding Jasper I tried to think of something we could talk about. The day before Mary taught me about something called *paying compliments* which means that you say something nice about the person you are speaking to. So I said that the boy's earring was nice. Are you some kind of queer said the boy. I said no because I am not sure what queer means but I think it is something bad. I tried to find more to say about the earring and then I thought that it is usually girls who wear earrings, two of them, and this is the first time I have seen a boy with an earring so I said this.

The boy's face crumpled like when you scrunch a piece of waste paper. What did you say you little f-ing w-, shouted the boy. The boy started walking towards me, swaying like one of my cousin Joe's Subbuteo players when you flick it. It all happened very fast, like the movement of an X-43A scramjet, which is a hypersonic plane, so I did not have time to answer the question. Again he asked what did you say you little f-ing c-, which is an even worse thing to say than the f and w words. Before I could speak the boy was pushing me. I hate people touching me; this is called an *invasion of personal space*. I especially hate if they are using dirty fast pushy hands like the boy's. I shouted stop pushing me and the other boys were laughing and shouting kill him, Mark, kill him. I only wanted to find Jasper and not to be killed so I shouted louder stop pushing me but he pushed me harder and then I fell. The ground was mucky and now I had goeey brown hands and mud splat tracksuit bottoms.

Now I felt rage, which is like anger with a more powerful engine. I ran at the boy shouting that was bad that was bad that was bad. I wanted to push him hard so he would crash through the ground and through the Earth all the way to its molten core.

Then I felt his fast cold sore fist on my ear. I heard a ringing sound and then another punch came in slow-motion. This struck my right eye, which was logical as the boy was right-handed. My eye felt stingy and squashed. Even though the ground was muddy I sat down. I felt heavy and spinny and tired. The next simile is that the boy's foot came like a rocket towards my nose. Soon blood was flowing from my nostrils like when a fuel tank has a leak and gravity makes the fluid fall.

Then I heard Mother's voice. She was running and shouting you get away from my son. The boys ran. I tasted thick sour blood and I spat. I told Mother that Jasper was missing and I was trying to find him. Then Mother forgot our rule about not hugging and she swung her arms around my shoulders and I had to push her back. She said I'm so sorry that this happened, Kevin, and this was bemusing as it was not her fault that Jasper was gone and neither did she punch or kick my face.

Mother gave me a tissue to wipe my face but there were traces of snot, which is properly called nasal mucus, on it so I did not use it. She forgot our no touching rule again and tried to brush the blood away with her hand, so I pulled away. Then she said that she was so happy I was safe now and she was smiling and crying together, which is very illogical and is called an *oxymoron*. I did not know why Mother was happy. Jasper was missing and my head was sore and bleeding. It was not logical at all.

After a few months of seeing a counsellor, my wife came home and said she would probably need me to move out.

She said this fairly diffidently, but then her face changed and her eyes shone and she said, "I've been on a journey," triumphantly.

I learned that this journey had led up to an *Aha!* moment in which she knew, clearly and distinctly, that she had never loved me and only married me to get away from her mother.

I said something about it all being very difficult because of the children, which seems to be a very common thought in these cases. Thoughts are like the strands of a spider's web: they stick to you if you touch them.

She said that a clean break was better for Helen and Roy than an atmosphere of uncertainty and hostility. Her way of saying this credited me with agreeing with it, and I thought it might be true. As she said it, she was knitting a sea-green square, the yarn thick and yielding, for she knitted squares to stitch together into blankets for refugees. My mother told me she used to do that at school, but until I married Miriam I didn't know that anyone still did it. I could have said to Miriam, thinking there was something in it, that knitting blankets for refugees was a way of siphoning her feelings of kindness and concern away from those who should properly be the objects of her kindness and concern, but in fact I loved her doing this knitting, for it showed she was her own woman, unaffected by current fads. The hands that at the bank spoke the body-language of authority and then came home and knitted squares for refugees' blankets - I wanted those hands and my skin to be touching.

Clive, to whose flat I sometimes went when I was supposed to be playing badminton, confirmed that a clean break would be better for the children, and then his manner during sex was more joyous than usual, for he assumed I would be moving in with him when Miriam's need for me to move out was satisfied. In a teasing way he asked how I could have fathered them. I said I loved Miriam, but he said, "Oh, *love*, yes, but..." Then he said, "Ah, well, I suppose you shut your eyes and thought of Nick Clegg. They can stay here for visits. Kids understand about two dads these days. From when I first came out to being with you as two dads - it's been quite a, like, journey."

My wife said that to be fair to me she would consult a second counsellor. After a few weeks with him she came home and said she was now definite that she needed

me to move out. This time she spoke with the calm poise with which I thought she might explain her bank's stance on a multi-million-pound loan. It brought home to me how reasonable her view was and that mere emotion was not involved.

I learned that she had had another *Aha!* moment, in which it was borne in upon her that she had never loved me and only married me because in those days she had had so little self-esteem that she'd been afraid no other man would ever want her if she didn't take me. She said she now had the self-esteem to understand and transcend all that.

Then the calm poise gave way to a face-change and her eyes shone and she said, "I've been on a journey." This time the emphasis was on *I've*, whereas before it had been on *journey*, and I understood that in contrast to her life mine was just a jumble of one damned thing after another.

Again I said it was all very difficult because of the children. My wife told me she thought I was using the interests of the children as an alibi because I did not have the courage to explore who I really was. That was an interesting thought.

She said people needed to find their true selves, as she had done. If I did that I would find the self-esteem that I needed to move out. She had learned from her second counsellor that I shouldn't be scared of what I might find because there was nothing wrong with any feelings a person might have.

Not even, I asked, if the feelings of my true self turned out to include e.g. an urge to strangle old ladies? While saying this I was wondering whether she was hinting that she knew about me with Clive.

"That's a very silly thing to say," she said in her calm-poise voice.

She then said, for she had taken English at university, that a lot of literature is about finding the true self, the doings of people in Jane Austen villages as well as knights setting out on quests.

"Journeys," she said, nodding significantly and holding my eye.

Clive thought that this about going off and finding my true self meant she definitely suspected about me with him. He said, "Perhaps she even knows." The thought came that he might somehow have tipped off Miriam about me with him, in order to speed up his journey.

We were sitting in his car at the car-park at ASDA, where I had driven him to do a shopping he couldn't do for himself because he had fallen off a ladder re-tiling his bathroom and broken his upper arm in two places; re-tiling it, I thought, to show that he was taking seriously the responsibility of having the children staying. He was excited that his journey was that bit nearer its destination of he living happily with me. A young man's eagerness looked out of the hard and heavy lines of his face, the

face of a man trained to be responsible for the world. This eagerness was touching and gave me an impulse to kiss him. I acted on it, simultaneously noticing that a jar of Bon Maman strawberry conserve had split the side of one of his plastic bags. A stern-mouthed elderly woman pulling a wheeled shopping-bag saw us through the windscreen, but her glance passed on as though what she had witnessed was wholly unexceptionable. The thought came that Miriam did not know about Clive and that her talk about finding myself only meant she hoped that if I shook myself up a bit I'd find I wanted something new in my life that would make me fall in with her need to have me move out. I wondered where else I might want something new if not in my life.

There is a children's playground near our house, where I take the children every day after school. It's been refurbished, but some of the old stuff is still there, side by side with the new. Perhaps that has something to do with the cuts. There's a new see-saw made of lots of tubular steel but an old sand-pit that now has bushes growing in it and is referred to by the kids as the dogs' toilet. Some lovely carved animals, fashioned from wide chunks of tree-trunk and incorporating carved seats or saddles for the tots, are now more or less unrecognizable from hackings and fires, but they overlook a new trampoline built into the ground, a frame of brick securing a tough green web over a hollowed-out space.

Helen rushed to the one unbroken swing of the decrepit set of swings and sat there, not just pleased with herself for beating Roy to it, but with a look of unquestioning entitlement on her face, and I wondered whether we had cultivated the Little Princess syndrome in her or whether it is innate in women or whether our society inculcates it irrespective of the efforts of parents. Each seemed very plausible.

The first thing Roy did was to start digging into the black burnt-out carcass of the wooden eagle, using a length of metal that was lying about, and then he was trying to push another boy into the dogs' toilet, over which Helen soared on her swing.

I remembered that I had always wanted a go on a trampoline. I gave a furtive look-round, which served no purpose because I knew there were plenty of people to see me, adults and children, and I was going to do it anyway, and then I stepped from the brick frame on to the bouncy green webbing. I wondered if this had come about as a result of a journey, but did not think so. In case anyone shouted that I'd break it, I prepared a response: "I'm no heavier than two or three children at once." With much pleasure I went up and down lots of times, jumping more and more vigorously.

I noticed that Roy was being told off by the father of the he'd been trying to push into the dogs' toilet. I thought how common it was for parents, especially fathers, to object vehemently if their child was told off by another adult. I thought that someone

whose wife needed him to move out might be especially likely to do this, but I just kept on bouncing up and down. Roy went back to digging into the wooden eagle. Bouncing, I thought that violence and destructiveness are inborn in males, then that social conditioning pushes them towards it, and then that Roy was acting out inner distress at what was going on between his parents. I wondered what other sort of distress there is besides inner.

As I jumped, watching how engrossed Helen and Roy were, delight in their faces, I thought of something Miriam had said in the hospital when, following her second *Aha!* moment, I came round from my overdose. After saying that it would be irrational to allow my overdose to make a difference and that what I had done was an attempt to control her, she remarked that children are much more robust than we think, often much better able to handle the ups and downs of life than adults, and that when we think of children as fragile we are projecting our own adult vulnerabilities onto them. I thought there might be something in that. I was also visited by the thought that not going to live with Clive would spoil his journey and would mess up his life more than the children's would be messed up if Miriam and I did not stay together.

Stepping off the trampoline at last, I noticed what I thought might be another consequence of the cuts, a skimping on health and safety. The web of the trampoline sat above a pit several feet deep, and the pit floor was of unmitigated concrete. There could be a bad injury if ever the webbing broke: a bone breaking in half and one bit splintering into the other from the force of the impact.

When my wife came home that evening, I told her that I had been going with Clive but would not do it any more and that she and I must stay together for the sake of the children. To make my point of view as compelling as possible, both to her and to me, I knew there was something I must say with a particular kind of fervour and with a certain enlarging of my eyes so that they shone in a certain way. I said, "I have been on a journey, through your life and mine and Clive's, and I have now reached my destination." It all worked and Miriam and I are staying together, for she is able to see life with me as a journey now and the sex is very good.

POETRY

A BOG-OAK BOWL

LIAM AUNGIER

For S.H., word-turner

It is a gift: a log
Of bog-oak,
Rough-hewn and fissured;
Its silver grain
Darkened to the inky
Blackness of a sloe.
I take it in hand,
Begin the slow art,
Honing it down
To the shallow bowl I know
Lies hidden in its timber.
So the lathe hums and the chisel
Inscribes a first line
On the spinning wood,
And a first
Flurry of wood shavings
Falls like a black snow
On the workshop floor...
Once it is made
You may hold it in your hands,
And it will hold
Whatever you bring to it:
Strawberries in summer, in autumn
Hazelnuts, a harvest of blackberries,
Or even, all out of season,
Apples in winter.

MEMENTO

PAUL BREGAZZI

Our father
entertained us
in graveyards;
Sunday morning-
the vaults of the rich.
Squat granite blockhouses
ranked along the sidewall.
Multiple skins of green paint
over amorphous coats of arms.
Receding tracery of light
through the grilles;
the particular beauty of dust,
lit by stained glass,
over the cryptic slump
of leaden caskets.
Two small boys wide eyed
at a vase of sear flowers
unexplained.

THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

CAROL CARPENTER

The green webbing breaks
and hangs down one side
of my aluminum lawn chair
and I worry
I might break
in that same unexpected way,
maybe even today,
this February day of the Great
Backyard Bird Count,
this frozen day everyone will recall
as snow blots out the sky.

The town closes
and everyone stays home,
even me who huddles in my backyard
in my dilapidated lawn chair
just waiting to jot a check
mark in the box next to the robin,
the hope of spring clutched between its beak,
its promise of damp soil and fertility.

I am prepared with my Field Guide
of Birds, binoculars, thawed birdbath,
a thermos of coffee, two sandwiches,
some cookies, blankets, my check sheet,
and one pile of small rocks to chase squirrels
from my own backyard. I yearn for birds.

Mourning doves coo but I cannot
spot them. The starlings, crows, and grackles:
all those black birds blend into dark branches.
I cannot see even one feather.
I cannot see my boots
covered with snow below me.
I am afraid the birds have eaten all the birdseed
when I wasn't looking,
have flown off on their journey
and left me here alone.

THE LOOKOUT POST

KEVIN GRAHAM

Forty days and nights I've spent
in this concrete bunker you wouldn't
swing a cat in. I don't pay rent;
it's Government work. They say it was built

in a day, erected before the moon
had time to flood. The blue view
I'm afforded is more beautiful than Rome.
It's my safe-house, now. I stew

for weeks, waiting to catch the strain
of an aeroplane over the jumpy sea
or the low hum of a boat snailing
the span of the horizon. Shags spree

on the wind, fall away in their flight
as war broods, left to right.

Cotton plateau
then peaks and slopes
puffed and fluffed
on ephemeral plains,
deserted.

Icarus eye view,
icecaps burnished
tawny, fractured
and crusty.
How long more can this last?

The midnight blade
hacks into a ledge,
to find purchase
under the over-hang
an avalanche

of immense whiteness
starts to crumble
then tumble
in sweet silence
slipping

down the sheer face
past stalactites
will-o'-the-wisps
of froth, down
frosted floes

to land across
the mouth of the fjord,
the wedge-shape
of attrition, eating into
those honeycombed

caverns those canyons
pale as egg-white
down into
blue glazed
flats of wedgewood.

Ah! Baked Alaska.

the stillness of paper
confluence of spark and ink
squid and tide

hieroglyphic argot
carved on rock
above the wave's handwritten note

the stone wall of the temple
this eroded playground
the soul's lies etched

on the grain of rice,
chiseled into the bone flute
played by a memory of wind.

GENESIS

KARINA TYNAN

It has been good here in the cracks.
A lot of fine things have been preserved.

Portraits of Princes, objet d'art,
quills lacing words and wishes

not to mention the day long wanderings
about a love, pure as a vowel.

A wish can make a palace shine with life
but outside the world is lonely

without the honeyed talk from the bushes,
the written warnings from the hawk,

where the brooch of a goddess is left
deserted in some plastic jewelry box.

The children know. They find things and
give them meaning, then a light shines.

The biggest effort is to make it real,
light or not, bring it to its earthly conclusion

like imagining the making of a poem on the seashore,
then sitting there with a pen and writing.

Biographical details

Liam Aungier has had poems published in *Cyphers*, *The Irish Times*, *the Poetry Ireland Review* and *THE SHOP*. His first book, *Apples in Winter*, was published by Doghouse in 2005.

Laura Treacy Bentley is a poet, fiction writer, teacher and book editor. Her work has appeared in the USA and Ireland, and her first book of poetry, *Lake Effect*, was published in 2006. She received a Fellowship Award for Literature from the West Virginia Commission on the Arts. Her poetry has been featured on the websites of *A Prairie Home Companion* and *Poetry Daily*. One of her poems, *Keepsake*, was recently chosen by Maria Shriver and the editors of *O Magazine* to be featured on Oprah's website. Her website is: www.lauratreacybentley.com.

Christie Bingham is a poet living in Texas. Her poems have appeared in *Denton Writers Anthology*, *The North Texas Review* and *The Inn is Free*.

Rumjhum Biswas's fiction and poetry have been published all over the world. She was longlisted in the Bridport Poetry Prize 2006 and was also a finalist in the 2010 Aesthetica Creative Arts Contest. Her story, *-Ahalya's Valhalla*, was among Story South's Million Writers' notable stories of 2007. Her poem, *Bones*, has been nominated for a 2010 Pushcart by Cha: An Asian Literary Journal. She was a participating poet in the 2008 Prakriti Foundation Poetry Festival in Chennai. She was a featured poet during the Poetry Slam organized jointly by the US Consul General, Chennai and The Prakriti Foundation in 2009. She was an invited poet at the first Hyderabad Literary Festival organized by Osmania University and Muse India in 2010. She blogs at: rumjhumkbiswas.wordpress.com and polyphagous.wordpress.com. She has a monthly column (Rumjhum's Ruminations) at Flash Fiction Chronicles - www.everydayfiction.com/flashfictionblog.

Paul Bregazzi is a primary school teacher in West Dublin. He has been writing seriously for only two years. This is his first published work.

Paul Brownsey been a journalist on a local newspaper and a philosophy lecturer at Glasgow University. He has published about forty short stories in Scotland, England, Ireland and North America. In Scotland his work has appeared in Chapman, Cencrastus, Markings, North Words Now, Cutting Teeth, a Macallan prize collection and collections published by the Association for Scottish Literary Studies. He lives in Bearsden, Scotland.

Sandra Bunting currently lives in Montreal after spending many glorious years in the west of Ireland. She is working on her second poetry collection.

Carol Carpenter's poems and stories have appeared in *Barnwood International Poetry Magazine*, *The Pedestal*, *Orbis* and *Quiddity*. Her work had been exhibited by art galleries and produced as podcasts (*Connecticut Review* and *Bound Off*) Her chapbook, *The Empress of Patton Avenue*, appears online at Heartsounds Press. She received the Hart Crane Memorial Award, the Jean Siegel Pearson Poetry Award, Artists Among Us Award and others. She lives in Michigan, USA.

Sean Donegan has had his work published in Ireland, England, the United States and Canada. His haiku have been featured in the anthologies, *Time Haiku*, (London) and *The Backyards of Heaven*, (Canada). Other publications include *Blithe Spirit*, *Journal of the British Haiku Society*, *Shamrock Haiku*, *Crannóg*, *Markings*, *Spirituality*, *Poetry Ireland Review*, *Ireland's Own*. His work has also been broadcast on RTE Radio.

Derbhile Dromey is a freelance writer, originally from Clonmel, Co Tipperary, now living in Waterford. She holds a BA in English and History and an MA in Journalism. Her work has appeared in the *Irish Independent*, *Irish Examiner* and numerous trade magazines. Five essays about her life as a visually impaired person were broadcast on Lyric FM's Quiet Quarter slot and one of them is included in *The Quiet Quarter, Ten Years of Great Irish Writing*. (New Island). She was shortlisted in the 2011 West Cork Literary Festival Short Story Competition and her work featured in an anthology of the shortlisted stories, *From the Well*. Her first novel, *The Pink Cage* (Book Republic) was published in 2011.

Anna Evans' poems have appeared in the *Harvard Review*, *Atlanta Review*, *Rattle*, and *32 Poems*. She gained her MFA from Bennington College, and is the editor of *The Raintown Review*. Recipient of a 2011 Fellowship from the MacDowell Artists' Colony, she currently teaches poetry at West Windsor Art Center. Her chapbooks *Swimming* and *Selected Sonnets* are available from Maverick Duck Press.

Maureen Gallagher has won many awards including the Hennessy Award (nominated) and the Poetry Now Award (shortlisted). In 2011 she won the Goldsmith Poetry Award and came second in the Jonathan Swift Satire Award. Her first collection of poetry, *Calling the Tune*, was published by Wordsonthestreet in 2008.

Kevin Graham's work has appeared in *Poetry Ireland Review*, *The Shop*, *The Stinging Fly*, *Crannóg* and other magazines. In 2010 he won an Arts Council bursary and in 2011 he was placed 3rd in the WOW! Awards. He lives and works in Dublin.

Seamus Harrington has won prizes and has had poems published in the U K, the US and in Ireland . He has read his verse in Strokestown and contributed also to the Radio Programme Seascapes. His work also features in the Caird Library at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich.

Rachael Hegarty is from Dublin. She attended the University of Massachusetts, Boston and Trinity College Dublin. Her poetry is published in numerous anthologies. Her short stories are broadcast on radio. She won the Francis Ledwidge International Award for Poetry in 2010. Her poem, *Cockle Picker*, was highly commended by the Forward Prize Judges and published in the Forward Book of Poetry 2011.

Angel Gómez Jimenez was born in a small village in the mountains of Toledo. He worked for years as a fashion and costume designer in Madrid before going back to his love of drawing. He now specialises in detailed ink drawings inspired by the vegetation of the south of Spain. gomezangel@telefonica.net

Hugo Kelly has won many writing awards for his short fiction in Ireland and the UK. He has twice being short listed for both the Hennessy Award in Emerging Fiction and the Fish Short Story Competition. In 2009 he won the Brian Moore Award judged by Richard Bausch. His work has appeared in various publications including *The Sunday Tribune*, *Fish Anthology*, *Cúirt Annual*, *Books Ireland* amongst others. RTE Radio 1 and BBC Radio 4 have broadcast his short stories.

Seán Kenny is from Dublin and now lives in County Meath. He has written for *The Irish Times* and *The Irish Examiner*. He was shortlisted for the 2011 Swift Satire Award.

Deirdre McClay lives and works in County Donegal. She has published short stories in a variety of publications in both the UK and Ireland, including *The Sunday Tribune*, *Crannog*, *Ulla's Nib*, *Boyne Berries* and *The Ramfurlly Review*. In June 2011 she was a winner in The Lonely Voice Short Story Competition, and in 2004 she was nominated for the Hennessy First Fiction Award.

Mary Madec is from Galway. She won the Hennessy XO Prize for Emerging Poetry in 2008. Her first collection appeared in 2010 from Salmon Poetry.

Edward O'Dwyer's work has been published in *Poetry Ireland Review*, *The Sunday Tribune*, *Southword*, *THE SHOP*, *The Stony Thursday Book*, *Agenda*, *Weyfarers*, *Scottish Poetry Review*, *A Hudson View Poetry Digest*, *The Houston Literary Review*, *Danse Macabre*, and *Crannóg*. He was selected by Poetry Ireland for their Introductions Series, 2010. He edited the Revival Press anthology, *Sextet*. His work is translated into Slovene by poet Veronika Dintinjana.

Mark O'Flynn's poetry and short stories have appeared in a wide range of journals and magazines. He has published three collections of poetry. A fourth is due.

John Saunders' first collection, *After the Accident*, was published in 2010 by Lapwing Press, Belfast. His poems have appeared in *Revival*, *The Moth*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Sharp Review*, *Boyne Berries*, *Riposte*, *The Smoking Poet* (online), and *Minus Nine Squared* (online).

Anna Snyder recently completed her Masters of Writing at NUI, Galway. She is from the USA but has lived in Dublin, Moscow, and Átähri. She has previously been published in *Crannóg* and *Essay*.

Karina Tynan originally from Kilkenny now lives and works in Co Dublin. She was shortlisted for the Wow Poetry Award and published in the *Wow Anthology 2010*. She has also been published in *Boyne Berries* and in *Women's Work V, VI, VII, VIII, and X*, published by The Works, Wexford.

Carolyne Van Der Meer is a Montreal journalist and PR practitioner who lectures in McGill University's Public Relations programme in Montreal, Canada. Her poetry and short fiction have been published in *Ars Medica*, *Bibliosophia*, *Canadian Woman Studies*, *Carte Blanche*, *Helios* and the *WOW! Anthology* and is forthcoming in *Boyne Berries*.

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