

# Crannog 7 winter 2004

Editorial board:

Sandra Bunting; Catherine Heaney;  
Jarlath Fahy; Tony O'Dwyer;  
Gerardine Burke (secretary)

All submissions to:

**Crannog Magazine**  
**Galway Language Centre**  
**Bridge Mills**  
**Galway**  
**Ireland**

editor@crannogmagazine.com  
www.crannogmagazine.com

Published by  
Galway Writers' Workshop

ISSN 1649-4865

Front Cover: *"Love In A Cold Climate 1"*

Back Cover: *"Love In A Cold Climate 2"*

*Both images from Skeleton Woman by Edith Pieperhoff  
winner Best Animation 2004 Galway Film Fleadh*



Crannog acknowledges the assistance of Galway City Council

## CONTENTS

Tom Duddy .....	4
<i>The Christmas-Tree Sellers</i>	
Patricia Burke Brogan .....	5
<i>History</i>	
Ian Revie .....	7
<i>Venetian Notebook</i>	
Fred Johnston.....	9
<i>There is no Need</i>	
<i>Water Colours</i>	
Andrew Oldham.....	10
<i>2000 Year Stare</i>	
Ingrid Wall.....	11
<i>Angel Delight</i>	
Orlagh O'Farrell .....	16
<i>A Marriage</i>	
Mary Madec.....	16
<i>Under the Apple-Tree</i>	
David Butler .....	17
<i>Ars Poetica</i>	
Stephen Shields.....	18
<i>For a Daughter Gone To America</i>	
<i>Riptides</i>	
Sean Donegan .....	20
<i>Waked On Silver Strand</i>	
<i>Two Haikus</i>	
Kenneth Hickey .....	22
<i>Anthony</i>	
Joseph Horgan.....	23
<i>Temporary</i>	
Declan Feenan.....	24
<i>Over Carnlough</i>	
Gerardine Burke .....	25
<i>A Woman Of Property</i>	
Tony O'Dwyer.....	30
<i>Chirielle Chonamara</i>	
Adrienne Anifant.....	32
<i>Eclipsing</i>	
John Walsh .....	33
<i>Worlds Apart</i>	
Maureen Gallagher.....	34
<i>Mary Maca Speaks From The Bottom Of Her Heart</i>	
<i>Stranger</i>	
Ciaran Parkes.....	36
<i>Falling</i>	
Teresa Sweeney .....	37
<i>Caught For Air</i>	
Mary O'Rourke.....	38
<i>Epiphany</i>	
Nuala Ni Chonchuir.....	38
<i>Stretch</i>	

Jarlath Fahy .....	39
<i>You Didn't Get To See</i>	
<i>The Ballad Of Spidey Woo</i>	
Liam Guilar .....	42
<i>A Bit Of Diggy Pog</i>	
<i>These Heroics</i>	
Brian MacNamara.....	44
<i>Close Encounters Of The 2nd Kind</i>	
<i>Yellow Fever</i>	
Jameen Kaur .....	46
<i>The Gap</i>	
Margaret Faherty .....	47
<i>Weeds</i>	
Máire Iníon Bhreathnaigh.....	50
<i>Na Crainnte</i>	
<i>The Trees</i>	
Sandra Bunting.....	52
<i>Walking With Botius and Canrella</i>	
<i>Galway Morning</i>	
Betsey Carreyette .....	54
<i>Skeleton</i>	
Billy Murray.....	55
<i>Stormy Night</i>	
Kevin Donnelly .....	56
<i>Craigville Beach</i>	
Kevin Higgins .....	58
<i>Shirtless On Shop Street</i>	
<i>Almost Invisible</i>	
Lorna Shaughnessy .....	60
<i>Guadalupe, Tonantzám</i>	
<i>Whistler's Mother</i>	
Neil McCarthy .....	61
<i>Metronome</i>	
Noelle Hayes .....	62
<i>Laughter Lines</i>	
Geraldine Mills.....	65
<i>St Kevin Dreams He Is Shopping In Tesco's</i>	
<i>St Kevin Dreams He Is Bungee-Jumping</i>	
Breid Sibley.....	66
<i>Clonfert 1</i>	
<i>Clonfert 2</i>	
Sheila Phelan.....	68
<i>English Teacher</i>	
<i>Madman</i>	
Andy Johnston.....	70
<i>Threatened By Secondaries</i>	
Biographical Details.....	71

**The Christmas Tree Sellers** **Tom Duddy**

This year again they've defied the city fathers  
and arranged their conifers, mostly spruces,  
along the path from the bridge to The Vineyard.

They compete with one another cheerfully,  
cutting prices before an offer is made!  
They tout, asking sir if he wants a tree!

One hooded kid is quizzing a woman  
*Where's it for, hah? A window or a corner?*  
And she has replied, *window, bay window.*

The fresh-cut air of evergreens, the ticking cars,  
the bristling crowd, the cooling breath of class  
as I go by towards streets wired high for stars.

**History****Patricia Burke Brogan**

---

**June 1258**

In the banqueting hall  
of the Red Earl  
at Dúnbun-na-Gaillve  
wine spills  
over parchments,  
stains battlefields  
from Carrickfergus  
to Waterford,  
from Luchúid  
to Furbagh by the sea.

**June 1854**

The moon  
and the Pleiades  
pause  
as rhythms  
of a banjo rise  
from crimson petunias  
and rusting Crimean  
cannons  
on Eyre Square.

**June 1969**

From Ballinderry  
to Ballymena  
viridian hedges  
enclose drumming  
of railway lines.  
Wild roses  
entwine  
machine-guns  
under a lurid sun.

**June 1998**

She looks up  
at the preserved  
castle  
and says,  
'Isn't it strange  
how invaders  
build walls  
like these  
to keep the locals out.

**Venetian Notebook****Ian Revie****1.**

The city is a mask. The mask is epicene,  
The faces that it hides perpetually unseen.

This was the scene where Marcel stumbled  
On his past, following the ghost of Albertine.  
Among the leprous stones and serpentine

Canals they move like music from *il Buranello*  
Played in baroque palazzo rooms for tourists  
( grand style only ) come to see and be seen

Perhaps with *la distinction d'un regard*  
*Plus élevé et presque incompris.*

**2. Miroirs vénitiens**

The city has no philosophers but its artisans,  
Workers in glass, whose masterpiece is not  
The overgilded goblet but the mirror  
Set in a frame of many-faceted glass  
That surrounds with fragments of reflection  
The central, mercurial illusion of the present  
Self, whose right is left, returning candour  
Amid a centrifugal splendour.  
Existence here is reflections in a glass.

**3.**

The long-nosed mask was once the doctor's – the man  
Of reason, if the humour took him, - protection  
From the plague. Miasmas of the air repelled  
By the beak of knowledge. And here Von Aschenbach  
Remained in sight of god and youth when  
Reason fled the cholera, the city and the sphinx.  
A danse macabre plays along the gothic  
Crowning above the stolen body of St. Mark.

**4. *Market News***

What's new from the lagoon? The enormous  
Grin of the monkfish head confronts  
The eyes - once silent witness to the eternal  
Wedding of the city and the sea  
Conducted by a gold-robed priest who holds  
Out, in a reflexive gesture, a gold  
Ring as token of the city's constancy.

How long will you trust me? The spouses ask -  
Each of the other or the other's mask.

**5. *San Marco Blues***

Jazz in the Piazzetta tonight does not cause  
A storm. On the café terrace the last drinkers  
Call their favourite tunes to the obliging band.  
Saxophone and clarinet slide their way  
Among the pillars of the Doge's Palace and applause  
Scarcely disturbed by the sudden pursuit  
And arrest of a thief - perhaps? He carries roses  
As a seller's disguise. Falling to the police  
Tackle, he still clutches the battered flowers.  
The music does not falter, like the city,  
In its syncopation of water and stone.

**6.**

The artists came and went, composed, painted, wrote  
Where the patron saint forever turns his coat.

It is the Carnival of strangers one and all  
Drawn to the golden dance before the fall.

The city is a mask. The mask is epicene,  
The faces that it hides, perpetually unseen.

## **There Is No Need Fred Johnston**

*"There are no certain conclusions to be reached regarding the mathematical probability of everyone, sooner or later, finding an island within themselves, which welcomes them. "*

*Jacob Martin Keissler: 'Numbers and Knowledge'*

To go into the front room where the dead man  
Lies, guarded by a candle and a neighbour –  
Out on the dead black rocks under a growling sea.

To ask the question in the island's only shop  
Why everything's pricier than on the mainland, and  
You're mistaken for another woman with the same name.

To ask why we're here, like something breeze-whipped,  
Hanging back into ourselves, collecting the pieces, yet  
Not having a whole or memory of what we ever were or are.

To wonder why we give our children names in Irish,  
Making sounds of them to go out into the world, like bits  
Of language on bare feet scattering in search of a rhyme.

To bother with the woman in the Post Office  
Who has a question balanced on her lips for you, and  
Will one day tip it out into the air from behind her wire veil.

To be angry at the drunken young man who has never  
Seen anything like you and who can't see you now, who  
Forgets he abuses you in Irish, words of love gone haywire.

To look behind you in the dark, up the hill and back to  
The mainland where a vigil at a dead man's bed, once seen,  
Was gaffed in the mind like an algebraic riddle:  $If x + y = a + b$

**Water-Colours****Fred Johnston***for Jim McKee, painter, musician, actor*

All there is now are pubs like widows  
Spying on a climbing street where brighter days  
Brought young men who would never die,  
Bent in the wind as if they pulled a weight;  
Nothing of that now in a black sea bluster.  
There's a pub with a low ceiling and light  
The colour of whiskey; a TV hacks  
In a corner, an old curmudgeon seeking  
Attention; rows of bottles full of their own light  
Like angels stacked in their hierarchies;  
Over the road a high black tide smacks the boats  
With the sound of a hurley-stick on a ball;  
A scythe of green where dealers and makers set up  
Is empty, blind for a child's motley of pennants,  
awnings,  
Funny hats; above all, a wash of sun like a fizzy drink  
Tipping over it, everything running, tinting, changing.

**Two thousand Year Stare                      Andrew Oldham**

Glass vision: turned over in chocolate soil,  
the boy who bought penny sweets is still  
running down coffin ginnel, hollering,  
with hand in crook of arm, barrelling

through a game of soldiers,  
shoulders stuttering between mouthfuls  
of warm caramel that trickles down his chin,  
pushing forwards and outwards through coffin end

into streets that are seasons.  
Spring Street: he lurches, balloons  
between the thighs of his daydreams,  
tosses wax lips at neighbourhood kids,

jumps down across the potholes into  
Summer Street: he runs, wind  
in hair without a care of grenades,  
his hand moving fast and sharp, sniping

through cracks in the boarded up houses on  
Autumn Street: where the eaves are camouflage brown  
and all the doors are painted khaki, blasting holes  
in the cinder block macadam and net curtains

that twitch like the wings of angels, carry him up  
Winter Street. Not a house left, just holes  
in the ground, a crossword puzzle of  
two ups and two downs.

**Angel Delight****Ingrid Wall**

*"Not with the severity of his injury. Results of the scan show a... haematoma...frontal lobe. We'll have to whip it out. I'll give theatre a ring."*

The lid of my box is opened. Cold hands pull me out onto the trolley. I don't know where I am. Because there are all these other boxes as well, lined up along the bed. Each box has a name on it but I can't see them all that well. They have hand and leg and brain written on them in block capitals. The nurses line all the boxes up along the trolley. A few of the boxes are real heavy. I can see by the way she lifts them. This man stands by the trolley and takes my hand out of one of the boxes. He turns it over and over in his hands. Then he puts it back. He must be a doctor because he has a stethoscope around his neck.

*"Can his family see him?"* the nurse says.

*"How many of them?"*

*"Mother and one of the young brothers,"* she says

*"And his father?"*

*"Died last year. Didn't you know him? Famous actor, Gerry..."*

Voices float along the ceiling. Someone parts my hair in the box at the end of the trolley.

*"It was because of me, lovey. We had that row and I'd said you'd never be a good actor like your father."*

*"Ah Mammy, you can't blame yourself. 'Twas no-one's fault but his own."*

*"They don't know if he'll talk again. That's what that doctor said, we'll never know."*

*"He might be able to hear us though. Someone said hearing was the last sense to go."*

*"Can you hear me, Arnie?"*

*"I'm sure he can. I just know he can. Arnie will I read you "Philadelphia Here I Come."*

*"What's that?"*

*"Oh you must know it darling. Irish play by Brian Friel. The one Arnie was going on about before Christmas."*

There are lots of implements on the wall. Scalpels and scissors and those kinds of things. It reminds me of the butcher's back home in Dunteely.

They use the scalpel to put me back together again. The doctor takes my hands out of the box and fits them to my arms. Then he adds on my shoulders. He goes on like this until he gets to the bits that look like Angel Delight. The pieces are pinkie and quivering and there are bits of grey all the way through them. I'm very anxious now. All shivery and sick. I hope they aren't going to eat them or anything.

*"This is going to take a long time,"* one of the doctors says. And everyone nods their heads.

While they are fitting the angel delight together I think about this speech in Hamlet. I know about it because I was in the play last year. Hamlet said that despite being clever people were just made of dusty Angel Delight.

When I am put back together again the boxes are tossed away. They put them in a rubbish bin under the trolley. And I am wheeled out into the bright light.

The stars start talking to me. They want me to join them up in the sky. The doctors say my knee will take a long, long time to heal (there are no guarantees) and I've given my head a bang. It's the bang to my head that's making my words come out strange. They put me in a ward with ICU on it and tuck me up in bed.

*"In a few days,"* the stars say, *"you will come and join us."*

*"I want to go now,"* I say

*"You can't go now."*

*"Why?"*

*"We have to wait for the Angel Delight to set,"* the stars say.

*"Why is a box of Angel Delight so important?"*

*"Use your brain."*

*"I am using my brain."*

*"Of course you can't. Not yet,"* the stars say.

Which is when the rest of my family have little chats around my bed.

*"Mammy, why's Arnie talking about Angel Delight?"*

*"He's sick darling."*

*"How did he get sick?"*

*"He banged his head in the accident."*

*"That's not sick, that's hurt."*

*"What would his Dad say if he knew? What would he say?"*

*"He was so keen for him to take up acting."*

*"Not that he showed it."*

*"No he never showed it."*

*"And now it's too late."*

I am in Noah's arc now and the waves are dashing against the shore. I am trying to hold onto the railings but they keep slipping out of my grasp and I am thrown in amongst the waves. Boiling hot waves. And my face slips under and I can't breathe for hours and hours and hours. Gar O'Donnell is there as well and animals keep swimming towards me through the waves. I want to cry but there is so much water I can't. It's pressing on my eyelids and is kind of sore. There is nothing else to do but start counting the animals. It takes my mind off the pain. Counting the animals is fucking difficult. I get to about 10 and then I have to start all over again. Because some of the animals like the ostriches can't swim. They keep sinking to the bottom. The counting goes on for days. Then the storm finishes. I woke up in my bed on the shores of a beautiful desert island. And I still want to join the stars.

"Of course," says this woman's voice. She sounds exactly like Mammy. "But before you go to the stars you have to meet your father."

"What's my father got to do with me joining the stars?"

Silence.

"Well...what?"

"Prove it. To your father. That you are a star."

I can feel the heat from the sand even from my bed. Once I used to like walking across hot sand. But this sand is too hot. My feet would be roasted off me in seconds. And there is the whole business of the forest. A thick canopy of matted rainforest. There could be all kinds lurking in the woods.

A loud speaker goes ...ready... steady... go... ready... steady... go... a few times. Green lights flash and father

emerges from the trees. Fuck's sake I didn't want to talk with him. He is as drunk as he was on the day he died.

"Right Arnie...what are you going to do when you leave school?"

"Dunno"

"Most of us have to make a living," he says.

I curl up in the sheets.

"Come on lad...what are you good at..."

"Nothing."

"Gar... Gar O'Donnell private. *In Philadelphia, Here I Come.*"

"I never learnt that one," I say.

"You have...I know you have...the floorboards are worn away with your walking."

"I..."

"You walk while you recite the lines... I know you do... come on."

"Fuck's sake..."

"Mind your mouth."

"Leave me alone."

"Come on," he says

"All right, here goes... I'll fuck up... I always fuck up," I get up off the bed. "Directions. Walk to centre beach... fuck there's not enough room here... tides in... ah well he'll have to make allowances... *private gets slowly to his feet.* He stands looking down at him. Daddy's changing... *longer nose... dead eyes... flat face...* He's Gar's father now... here goes... accentuate the Northern accent... *God maybe Screwballs...* isn't that a nice name for a father? *It was an afternoon of 15 years ago...*

"Get a move on Arnie."

Fuck the lines, I'll do my own stuff. "We went down the forest park and you put the jeep in the car park next to some old green car. The paint was peeling and rust worn. You didn't take the lads I think not, because they couldn't make it but because you wanted me. We were going to plant conkers the way you did in Barna when you were a child. Didn't I run ahead of you most of the time... I was looking to see if there were imaginary dragons on the path. Maybe I would protect you with that great big imaginary shield I always took. There was

a light rain off the mountains that looked black in the evening sun and you put your coat round me because Mammy said the cold could make my allergies worse. What have allergies got to do with rain you said. That was before you got famous. We went up to the old coal house with no chimney and you looked to see if there were fairies inside. We planted a conker outside as a reminder. It was easy enough to forget the entrance to fairy chambers you said. I remember the fresh smell of rotten wood and the creepy crawlies you said wouldn't hurt and the cradle we made for the little conker. You laughed when I said we'd had to play the tin whistle on *Raidio na Gaeltachta* and the equipment packed up and, young as I was, I knew all sorts could happen with a live performance *and that this was precious and your hat was soft on the top of my ears...*"

"You're not on a summer picnic Arnie... this guy really feels the memory... it's the first time he's been close to his father..."

"Fucking sloppy."

"And able to express it in words... No point. I'll have to tell you... No way you'll get into stage school."

My arm throbs... my head aches... even my teeth ache.

"They said in school I would."

"Load of cock-eyed teachers... haven't a clue. It's a tough world Arnie..."

"I'm a star burning in my own energy."

I see this dazzling bright light. The kind of light they shine in your eyes when you go to the opticians. There are all these little red lines around the edge of the box. Like a delta cutting through white sand. It fills my head. I know that was the way out. Towards the light. I've made it. I'm a star.

**A Marriage****Orlaith O'Farrell**

The striking thing about her was her thumb  
 and he lived under it. For all her smile,  
 her charming looks, the detail  
 of his life was hers. He couldn't come  
 so much as out to lunch, she'd thrum  
 with anger. A shrug of chenille,  
 a flick of ponytail  
 determined every outcome.

He told himself he hated it; then, too,  
 he lived it that way. Some, when  
 they've bad home-lives, don't try for new.  
 In his familiar pen  
 with her he was a mouse. In lieu  
 at work was rampant, vocal, master amongst men.

**Under The Apple Tree****Mary Madec**

Girl with her nylons withdraws  
 From the waiting dogs

Dogs with their paws  
 Pounce and pound out their threats

Girl digs in heels  
 At the foot of the old apple tree

There they are, her legs  
 Tan and inviting,  
 Pale though, underneath  
 White, like bare teeth,  
 Femme fatale  
 In a back garden in Mayo

**Ars Poetica**

**David Butler**

---

I hadn't seen her in fifteen years.

I'd grown so used to her absence -  
The memory more vague  
With every backwards glance -  
That I'd begun to doubt  
I'd ever met her in the first place.

Then out of the blue she turned up,  
Middle-aged, lecherous,  
Slovenly in her dress.  
A layer of cheap powder and  
A waft of gin on her breath.

The grin I gave her must have revealed  
How far into life I'd waded, wondering:  
'Is this what the Muse has come to  
That I once mistook for Beauty?'  
She grinned back at me, quick as the thought:

'Your Muse,' she winked.

**For a Daughter**  
**Gone to America**

**Stephen Shields**

You are a new world dawning.

The day was dense with rain  
when I delivered you  
to the airport. A check-in girl  
whisked away your luggage  
and the sterile escalator  
carried us up a floor.  
All the usual things,  
yet I was stunned  
as your head turned  
for the Departure Gates.

Now I will watch the sun set  
where your day ripens.  
You are the last tangle  
of silver in my twilight;  
you are the shell whispering  
on that opposite shore.

**Riptides****Stephen Shields**

was it the usual?  
as the water  
gripped around your  
thighs  
did you wave a  
*come on in*  
*the water's fine*  
but I heard only  
the surf's soft piping  
and its rhythmic  
repeats

at a second glance  
you rolled  
about in waves  
and disappeared  
behind their curly  
heads,  
riptides,  
and your limbs  
athwart  
stiff liabilities

like those of  
the crucified Christ  
moments...  
a minute  
you strode again  
chastened  
by the sea  
and I prayed  
for what?  
a sea  
with a sheen  
and shallow  
as a sheet of paper?  
maybe  
I even thought  
with the tap-tap-tapping  
of perfect sandcastles  
from our pails and spades  
of the chance  
to dispense  
some wisdom  
to the kids

**Waked On Silver Strand** **Sean Donegan**

The sea had mourned him first  
with soft sighs by the shore  
and agitated tugging at his sleeves  
as if to bring him back to life.  
Fearing the worst, yet slow to give him up,  
she kept her lonely vigil through the night,  
a white-knuckled grip on ebbing, hissing hope  
until the dawn appeared  
in time to see her full breast heave and swell  
as though her heart would break  
upon that shell-strewn shore -  
still slow to give him up and lay him out  
in seaweed sheets on Silver Strand  
with stars for candles,  
that slow, sad night.

What mother ever grieved a son as much  
or so alone  
save for the pallid moon,  
her closest sister,  
who kept her lonely vigil through the night?  
Slowly the rains came,  
soft at first, all gentle tears  
which then gave way  
poured out their sorrow shamelessly  
in sobbing, slanting tines  
that long, slow night.  
Still, she could not, would not be consoled,  
not even by the whispering breeze  
that wrapped her in its comforting embrace,  
it was all so sad  
so very sad indeed  
that lonely moonlit night.

Quite soon the seals arrived  
in funeral black and so respectful,  
their sad eyes said so much  
though not fully understanding what was wrong,  
each nodding nobly  
casting furtive wet- eyed looks,

too shy to venture near  
 like children at a wake ,  
 then slinked silently away,  
 their doleful duty done ,  
 a mix of curiosity and care.

A sacred silence reigned  
 as nature mourned her loss  
 and held him in her arms  
 of breeze and sea and shore  
 with gentle, deep respect,  
 that soft September morn.  
 So still, lying cold and wet,  
 stretched out upon the shore,  
 his body waked,  
 his soul by nature mourned.

Remember him, will you,  
 as you walk along that strand?  
 Reflect how nature too  
 first waked him on her shore  
 and how we're linked to her  
 by bonds so strong and sure,  
 an innate source of strength  
 while all our days endure.

### **Two Haikus**

**Sean Donegan**

---

Two scraps of paper  
 Dancing in the winter wind  
 Graceful pas-de-deux.

Through the lace curtains  
 A timid dance of sunbeams:  
 Ballet at breakfast.

**Anthony****Kenneth Hickey**

Anthony, always with  
Three and a half cigarettes  
For anyone who was short.  
Limping with his bad leg,  
The metal burnt,  
To English's corner  
To meet the other members of Dad's Army,  
But couldn't make the walks.

He put butter in his hair  
When he ran out of Brylcream.  
I watched his wife cut his ear  
As she played the barber  
In that small warm kitchen,  
Both standing,  
Circling,  
Courting butterflies.

He tended the strawberries,  
Falling in terraces,  
Across the banks of my father's garden,  
Below the little shed,  
Where neighbours told me horror stories.  
Wouldn't use the fancy cane  
They bought for him.  
The others might think he had money.

Those final days the hardest.  
Thinking the TV presenter was talking to him.  
Convinced the workmen  
In the street outside  
Were Nazis trying to blow him up.  
Back in Sheffield 1941 again.  
Screaming at his wife  
To get out of their bed.  
What kind of man did she take him for ?

Robbed of it all in the end.  
Till a short fall  
On a soft stairs ended it.  
All I have now, a photograph,  
Standing on the pier in short trousers.  
The first time I saw my Father cry.  
The largest funeral I remember,  
Following the coffin up the Cathedral hill.

**Temporary****Joseph Horgan**

The world is cracked, is fault lined  
Outside of his mind, his sturdy mind.  
He drinks the orange liquid smiling,  
Knowing, toxic, isn't it?

Demons and angels assail him  
From the television set,  
Mundane anxieties beset him.  
The wasps in his head, the wasps.

He throws back the orange liquid,  
Traces an arc with his arm,  
A rainbow, he says, a rainbow.  
Smiles at me, leaving and knowing.

**Over Carnlough****Declan Feeney**

The same moon that bleached  
Down on Neptune's ribs  
Shone across your window as we drove

At least half the roads that  
Wove through the Glens.  
From the coast to the marshes

I talked, reciting for you  
The close order of your books  
And describing those ballerinas on your wall,

Warming up it seemed  
For the epic of all dances,  
For their long awaited *Opera de Kiss*.

With the set-up all wrong to begin with,  
The tyres, the shoes, the shocks,  
You kept correcting us further,

Come the lying water, until those larger  
Insoluble pools where it seemed that  
Something else, strong and rushed, was driving.

We ended up lost on unknowable routes  
That I thought you knew by heart.  
And sitting at a junction without a signpost,

The rain holding off, the engine  
Turning over, deciding what direction,  
Whether or not to go with the gut,

You put your foot to the floor outright;  
The first *arabesque* in the *pas de deux*,  
The last drop of moonlight to search the sea.

**A Woman of Property** **Gerardine Burke**

When Maire came out of Turner and Turner, the solicitor's office, she felt as confused as she did had she drunk a bottle of sherry. She squeezed her eyes shut, hiding for a moment her astonishment. Recently released from prison, she had returned to Galway and had just learned that she was now a property owner. Daideo Paid, her grandfather, had died, leaving her a cottage in Connemara

The veins in her neck tightened. She lit another cigarette from the one she was finishing and stubbed the butt into the ground with the heel of her boot. A sharp wind made her ears ache. She cursed silently when she realised she had left her wool cap in the bag she had left with her brother, Pat, to mind.

She bought a gallon of cider and drank it. The sense of responsibility she had felt closing in on her since hearing the news, finally left her. She tottered down Shop St. shouting obscenities.

"Maire is back." Even children in the street muttered as she swayed along the Long Walk. Her wavering legs took her towards the docks. She went into a pub and cadged whiskey from a sailor with brown eyes and dark skin, she knew as Pedro.

When he tried to put his hand up her skirt, she called him a 'Spanish bastard' and 'Fish thief.' She pushed him off the bar stool, gave him the one finger salute and spat on the floor. He grinned good humouredly and beckoned to the barman for another round. The barman asked, "More drink? For her?"

Maire left in high dudgeon. As she walked up Dominic St, she picked up a rock and whopped it through a window. At Mill St. she fell in the door of the garda station. "Hello, Maire. When'd you get home?" Tom Mannion, the guard on duty, greeted her. She had met him at an AA meeting some years before. "We had your brother here last night."

'I'm drunk and disorderly Tom.'" Maire now had a constellation of pimples on her right cheek, and the long

hair blanketing her skull was uncombed. She smelled of stale tobacco and *pisleens* ran from her nose.

"You're in luck. We have room tonight."

Later in her cell, she began to sober up and realise she had no more booze. Time dragged. She took a piece of paper and a biro out of her over coat pocket. The refill was leaking and stained the nicotine yellow of her fingers to blue as she sketched. After some time, random lines formed a pattern and soon the paper contained an array of mice, rats, cats, dogs and elephants. She considered a while before she called each animal after family and friends. She smiled when she came to the elephant. She named it Sean Athar Paid. She fell asleep thinking of four walls.

When Tom Mannion came to get her out in the morning she staggered from her cell, mumbling about "bloody fleas" and headed for her favourite restaurant. At the back door she asked, "Any bread to spare?"

A scrawny washer upper wrapped some crusts in a newspaper.

Maire said, "I'll pay you sometime."

"They're only scraps. The pigs would have them if you didn't get them," he replied with a sneer.

Maire felt better then about the restaurant's broken window. She munched ravenously. The stale bread would do her 'til the volunteers from Simon brought round the soup that night.

She trudged in the direction of Salthill. When she came to the Claddagh Palace, she climbed over a high wall and picked her steps among beer cans and tree trunks. At last she came to a Hiace van, disabled and rusty. There she traded the last of her bread for two mugs of sherry with a fella from Northern Ireland. She didn't realise how sour it tasted until she puked three mouthfuls over her skirt. But he had left by then. Her head lolled on her breast and she began to doze.

Darkness was falling when she woke again. Fog hung like limp gauze over Galway Bay. She left the van, climbed back over the wall and headed for the shelter in Salthill, a mile away. Ahead of her she saw another hurrying figure and as she narrowed the distance

between them, she recognised her brother's scuttling walk and saw her bag in his left hand. As she drew nearer, she noticed that, along with carrying her belongings, he was clutching his coat lovingly across his bosom.

"Pat, it's Maire," she cried.

Pat rushed on. He knew it was her when he heard his name. Nobody else in Galway called him Pat.

Maire broke into a trot. "Pat. Why are you walking so fast?"

He waited.

Maire approached warily but her tone was enthusiastic. "I'm glad I found you Pat. I... I wanted to be with you."

Pat shrugged. "Whatever you say," he said under his breath. "More like you've come to collect the bag you dumped on me."

They walked on together until they came to the shelter. "Maire," he asked, "how did you know it was a bottle of gin I had under my coat?"

"Gin," Maire said with mock incredulity. "You have gin?"

Pat answered her harshly. "I don't mind sharing my gin with you. Half and half. But you always try to drink it all." He stared at her. "You always had to have it all," he said evenly.

They huddled together taking alternate gulps from the bottle. The fog blew in from the sea and greyed their coats with moisture. The wind moaned.

They talked about the people they had met since they had made a new life in Galway. One had died, two were in jail, another had broken his leg jumping off a wall in the early hours of the morning. Two more were in Hope House. They grew silent then.

"Do you ever think about it Pat?" Maire began at last. Her expression softened. "The old life," she said slowly.

Pat hunched over. He drew stubbed fingernails through his hair. "I do." His tone was abrupt. "Often." He had frequently told Maire many lies beginning, "When you were a baby Daddy and me and you ... .."

He had told her the fairy stories he felt she had wanted to hear.

"What happened at all?"

"You know what happened. Our auld man bet on too many slow horses and our mother died."

"She did, didn't she? And now we haven't even a roof over our heads." Maire drank greedily until her brother took the bottle. Suddenly her mouth dropped open. "Pat, I'd forgotten! I have a house."

"A whore house maybe?" Pat said. "You're a liar. You don't own a house," he continued.

"No, Pat. Swear to God. I'm not lying. Daideo Paid died. He left his house to his favourite grandchild."

"His only grandchild, bar me, you mean."

"I didn't see it since I was fifteen."

Pat sat silent and sullen. Gradually his face reddened. He shouted, "You'll be too chicken now to break anybody else's windows. Too afraid your own will be broken." He put down the bottle.

Stealthily, Maire took it up and set it in her own lap. Neither of them spoke until Pat grabbed the bottle back.

"Pat, what was Daddy like? Really."

"A bollocks if there ever was one. He beat the shit out of us after Mammy died. Needed a new punch bag. Didn't bother his barney looking after us. Didn't need the responsibility he said."

"I don't believe you." Maire's words echoed her brother's a while before.

"Please yourself." He put the bottle of gin to his head. "This fucking thing is empty. You're some woman. Knacking all my booze as usual."

Maire rose unsteadily and held herself upright against the wall. "Mammy was nice though, wasn't she, Pat?"

"Fuck off, yourself and your questions." He raised his hand as if to strike her but didn't get up. "Shag off to your house."

"You can come too, Pat. Honest to God you can. We can live together."

"To fuck we can. You'd lord it over me all the time. You've become a woman of property now. You'll forget that I shared everything with you, even my gin."

"I won't. I swear."

"So you think now," said Pat coldly. "But when you have a house to sleep in, then we'll fucking see. Pat will be the poor wino brother."

The only home she'd known for the last couple of years was a cardboard box that had once contained a large fridge. She had wedged it between a stone wall and a cooker, covered it with P V C and curled up in it like a worm. She had gone to a lot of trouble to make her nest but she was hardly ever sober enough to make it 'home' and when she did she worried whether 'squatters' would have taken it over. What would she do with a house?

"Give me a drink."

Pat said in a discouraged voice. "The bottle's empty."

"Fuck you too. Time I was on my way. No point in hanging around here." She didn't look at him as she gathered her bag from beside him. "No booze, no fags and no sign of the soup. Think I'll just have to go and claim my inheritance." Her step was sure as she strutted back along the prom.

**Chirielle\* Chonamara****Tony O'Dwyer**

The morning light begins in flames,  
Ruby glintings that edge the peaks  
Then flourish into pallid gleams  
Entrancing by an ancient lake.

A cauldron of effulgent lead  
Casts text in stones, the annals' face,  
Rude founts of legend to be read  
Entrancing by an ancient lake.

The autumn gods have bronzed with paint  
The stems of moorgrass, fluent streaks  
On burnished reed with gentle, faint  
Entrancings by an ancient lake.

Three cattle stand knee-deep in bog,  
White and black and dun, and bleak  
Their grazing in the brumous fog,  
Entrancing by an ancient lake,

As if they'd broken from a frame  
Where some Paul Henry sat to paint  
Them, primordial, rooted, tame,  
Entrancing by an ancient lake.

The sky is swirling where its mass  
Of clouds casts shadows in its wake,  
Dark stirrings on the copper grass,  
Entrancing by an ancient lake.

A single gorse beside the track,  
A ragged hiker, torn, the wreath  
And twist of sorrow on his back,  
Entrancing by an ancient lake.

The wild swans' wings with awesome waves,  
Sky-writing mythologies, stroke  
The fading page over Gleann nAoibh,  
Entrancing by an ancient lake.

The dying light with charcoal streaks  
The smudge of evening's shadow shape.  
The darkened water shivers, sleeps,  
Entrancing in an ancient lake.

*\* A kyrielle is an old French form written in quatrains of iambic dimeter, i.e. with eight syllables per line, the first and third line rhyming and the fourth line repeating as a chorus.*

**Eclipsing**

**Adrienne Anifant**

---

Enamoured  
by the first melt  
of glacial silt  
between my thighs

And the pulsing  
of all nuclei,  
I moved to you  
on a hardwood,  
gymnasium floor

In your hair,  
I swallowed  
Mimosa, Veda,  
Betelgeuse

Twelve minds coalesce  
into this point,  
and I knew you  
with all twelve lives.

**Worlds Apart****John Walsh**

---

Long, a long time after,  
I watched  
the blackened rocks  
that the waves beat,  
seethe.  
It was a day to be alone.

Was it over and done?

Toss a pittance into the beggar's lap  
and catch his whispered blessing.  
That's all he has to give us,  
worlds apart  
like the sky and the grey sea  
at odds on the horizon.

Was it over and done?

I scrounge driftwood memories from the shore,  
as the sand tracks withdraw.  
And the flame burns concentric,  
licking the darkness,  
while the rags of loving lie ashes  
in the back of my mind.

Was there a hint of a smile  
as he passed me of late?  
Does he know how these things turn  
that make men yearn?

Was it his eyes that reminded me of yours?  
Moonlit on the bed,  
hard like the blackened rocks,  
cold as the midnight shore.

*For Marilyn*

**Mary Maca Speaks From**  
**The Bottom Of Her Heart** **Maureen Gallagher**

Well, thank you, thank you. Lookit, I know I don't have any real power, but sure I knew that from day one. I see my role rather as going to the far corners of this island and saying bravo to the ordinary man and woman in the street who are the backbone of this country, who work for free, can you believe it, for free. I mean lookit we talk about people who work in China for buttons but right here in this country we have people who work for NOTHING and they do it with a smile on their face and I applaud them sincerely and from the bottom of my heart...

Having no power is not the same as having no effect. Can you imagine what these people feel like when their very own president comes right down to them and says well done keep it up. I feel privileged to be the one that keeps them at it, setting up day centres for Alzheimer's, activity groups for the elderly, centres for delinquents, soup runs for the homeless, education for special needs, I could go on....

There is too much emphasis on money these days. We need to nurture the spirit of selflessness and generosity that is so much part of the Irish psyche, that we are known and loved for. Honestly, with so much materialism in the world, isn't it wonderful to see people getting down and dirty for sweet fanny adams, if you'll excuse the expression. That's what makes this country great. I mean we've come on so well in the past seven years since I came to office. You have only to look at all the wealth that's been created and to be honest if it weren't for the little people doing all this necessary work free gratis how the hell, oh excuse the language, I'm getting carried away but you know the adrenaline's been up since I heard that wee Rosemary\* was knocked clean out of the race and lets face it between me you and the wall there's divil the bit of difference between myself and herself, both of us against divorce, abortion, you name it, so what odds if there was no election but where was I ....

Oh yes, I was saying this country has changed so much in the past seven years. There's money being made hand over fist, the place is awash with it now, where before, well...you know yourself. I get back to my main point. It's all the good work that's being done out in communities. I mean if you, the people of Ireland, and in particular, if I may say so – Mna na hEireann - didn't do it, sure then, the government would have to pay to get it done and God knows, how could a little country like ours survive not to mind grow. Sure how could we afford the grants and subsidies for the movers & shakers.... and the dogs in the street know we would never have the O'Reillys', the Smurfit's and the O'Brien's if it weren't for the rest beavering away.... my hat goes off to them, you who make our country great, who get up off your backsides, excuse the french and never ask for a penny, I applaud you and listen, I know there are still issues like equal pay, proper creches, equality of education and all the rest of it but all in its own good time or as the fella says, a lot done, more to do....

I am so thrilled to have another seven years, overjoyed in fact. I have never been happier being able to do so much for my country. And I must mention something I'm especially proud of and it is this..... I was the one who was instrumental in getting the one-off windfall for every single Irish citizen raised to €2000 – regardless - as soon as ever they reach 100 years of age. Not bad if I say so myself. Of course there's always going to be the wise wit who'll say what's the use of that since few and far between will ever make it to a century and if they do it will only be to pop their clogs. Listen, I don't deny that but sure lookit we all have to go sometime. At least it'll pay for a good coffin.

Anyway as I said before this is a great day for me, indeed it's a great day for my country. God bless Ireland and may the lord in his goodness and holy wisdom preserve you all.

**Stranger****Maureen Gallagher**

I met you in Java's café  
And offered you my heart.  
I ripped it out  
There on the spot,  
Sliced (pearl-handled knife)  
And fried it  
With onions, mushrooms:  
Salubrious sustenance,  
Topped with a garnish  
Of finely chopped ardour.  
But sadly, you said, I'm sorry,  
Didn't you know, I've changed,  
I don't eat meat anymore,  
And arose to go  
Although you'd only just arrived.  
My heart grew cold as you said goodbye.

**Falling****Ciaran Parkes**

We take it in turns  
to fall backwards  
and catch each other,  
a game to show  
how much trust you can place  
in another person.

Am I too heavy for you?  
you ask, falling softly  
into my arms for  
the third or fourth time.  
No, I answer,  
of course not, no.

**Caught For Air** **Teresa Sweeney**

These are shallow thoughts,  
But like a bird with no wings I return for more.  
That fool's smile resurrects my heart,  
A soul screaming for punishment.  
So I fall to his bed of roses,  
But I never saw the thorns 'til they tickled my blood.  
Floating on a cloud of false promises,  
I fall through  
Thinking that his arms will be there to catch me.  
Surely once a heart has been broken  
Will it not learn from it's mistakes?  
Not mine,  
Fool that I am.  
Breathing your lies and betrayal  
I'm caught for air.

**Epiphany****Mary O'Rourke**

Suddenly, with a new insight  
She rejoiced at her own sense of wonder.  
She had always looked at children and envied them.  
They did not pretend, they just were.  
She had always sensed that she was more like them.  
A shiny stone, a blue sky with feathery clouds,  
A flower, a weed, had always delighted her.  
She did not share her pleasure with adults:  
They might think her childish and mock.  
Now she appreciated that sense of wonder  
And knew it brought her freedom.  
She would never be lonely or bored,  
There would always be stone, sky, flower and weed.

**Stretch****Nuala Ní Chonchúir**

There's a stretch of time  
reaching behind that's  
as taut as a length of cat-gut,  
it threads right through you,  
stitched as snug as the baby  
who made a drum of your belly,  
it holds you to that moment.

There's a knot in the line,  
no pulling hand over hand  
can un-kink to drag you to here,  
you'll stay where we left you,  
under the late December sky,  
that spilt white light like  
the ooze of cut raw potato.

**you didn't get to see****Jarlath Fahy**

you didn't get to see the council  
finish resurfacing the road,  
the bluebells bloom around your gate

you didn't get to paint the awning  
replace that bulb you'd been meaning to  
sweep the beech casings from the path  
redig the vegetable plot

you didn't get to see lime green butterflies  
bees dip their busy heads in the purple  
flowered periwinkle, the lemon tree in blossom

you didn't get to hear the cuckoo  
the drilling in the quarry, the blasts  
that shake the house to its foundations

you didn't get to see hendersons new wall  
imported from south america they say it'll  
never fall and the stone the cut of it

you didn't get to see reilly's new four by four  
off roader metallic green with silver fenders  
now they really do look down on everyone  
they'd run over yah

you didn't get to see the esb erect the pole  
that's being lying outside darcy's for years  
hard to believe that in this day and age  
there are people without electricity

you didn't get to see the new leaves on the oak tree  
the blackbird disturb the perfection of morans lawn  
rooneys sell higgins two up two down for half a million

you didn't get to see the dutch couples copper horse  
fahy's two hundred and ninety one bats  
set out on their nightly forays

no you stole away when no one watched  
and very few listened to the lifting of a latch  
the opening of a gate a small gust of wind  
in the twinkling of an eye

**the ballad of spidey woo****Jarlath Fahy**

wee poor spidey  
how did you diedy  
on the floor of the bathy  
like a wee long haired matty  
was it a catty or was it a ratty  
or was it that girl that cleans  
the house called patty  
that left you like that  
on the floor of the bathy

she ought to be hung  
for what she's done  
she ought to be drawn  
for what she's torn  
she ought to be quartered  
for who she's slaughtered

give her a clout  
put her lying eyes out  
send her to Guantanamo bay  
take her human rights away  
try some sensory deprivation  
a bit of rape and mutilation  
beat her 'til she's black and blue  
electric shock and cattle prod too  
when she's a quiverin mass of jelly  
we'll up an put her on the telly

*patty on telly in orange jumpsuit*

`yes its true  
on Monday morning  
at half past two  
in the bathroom  
with little else to do  
i patty mc goo  
killed spidey widey woo  
with a blow from a pink  
and blue j cloth  
god forgive me  
i'll sign anything  
just stop torturing me'

*Spidey woo from heaven*

i had fallen from my nest  
into the great white bath  
i did everything in my power to get out  
so as not to make a nuisance of myself  
so there i was anyway  
minding my own business  
when i was set upon by this woman  
for no good reason other than I was a spider  
the last thing i saw was a blur  
of pink and blue

**A Bit of Diggy Pog****Liam Guilar***(A Modern Fable)*

First Friday of the month, the parish priest would visit on his rounds and make me nervous. "Show Father Jones your flute or book" and I'd be standing there with book or flute to wonder at the weirdness of it all. He'd sip his tea and nibble biscuits, talking about nothing and I'd wish he'd go and leave us to ourselves.

One Friday he said: "Pat, God's house is looking dim." My dad, like many tradesmen, loved the practice of his trade, agreed to paint the church. He'd been working nights and had applied for something else: Final Inspection. Sounded terminal to me but it was in the day so he'd become a figure at the table rather than a silence in the house upstairs.

Oh the confusion! Heaven was a big blue board with golden stars that hung above the altar. In the middle was God's face: a strangely oval face, with golden rings that radiated out. "Now fatty, where's your dad?" "Well, he's in heaven painting stars and God." (Even then I knew they'd never let him in. He'd have paradise on eight hour shifts with intravenous tea). But there were good things too: I could escape school dinners and have lunch with him, dangling legs from scaffolding; sandwiches in paper bags, tea straight from thermos flask in plastic cups and the sharp clean smell of paint drying on the face of God.

After school he'd sit me on the cross bar of his bike and push me home. Until one nosy biddy stuck her head inside the door. "Oh painter, painter, it's so fine and tell me painter, what's the colour's name?" Now when it came to paint, my dad was nothing but pedantic. "Madam," he said: "it's called *Geisha Pink*". She shrieked and ran away. That night the priest appeared. "Now, Mr. Guilar, we cannot have the house of God coloured like an Asian whore. We'd really be relieved if you would change it. Soon."

And here's my dad, freely giving of his time, and paint. Instead of saying, "Up yours, Jack", he went back

to the church. "A bit of diggy pog, son." God alone knew what that meant and his freshly painted smile was inscrutable.

Dad seemed to take a long time doing little 'til the biddies came, in numbers this time. "Painter, it looks better." "Ah," says he, "this paint's called *Mary's Blush*."

They nodded in assent and left. Good job they never looked; same paint, same tins, a bit of thinners on the brush. They never knew. We packed it all away and headed home, riding the old green spotty bike down past the park where Ron was waiting to say "Well done, Joe. You start on Monday."

I wish they'd told me then the days of diggy pog were strictly numbered.

### **These Heroics**

**Liam Guilar**

*(from rereading the Tain)*

I envy you, Cuchulain, the simplicities  
of your trade; finite as any whore's.  
How easy it must be to "step up to the ford"  
and face "an overwhelming host".  
I know the fear that dries the mouth,  
and I have learnt how it refines performance  
when technique and habit overcome the urge  
to flee. What's there to fear in death  
if life has been enjoyed? As metaphor  
you're flawed. What do you know?  
The father's fear when doctors  
can't discover why the child is sick?  
You never faced the dole, never  
measured out each day not knowing  
if you'd won or drawn or lost, when  
the only victory you could claim  
was to say, *I turned up every morning  
to face the endless repetitious nothing  
of a job*. I'll trade you, boy,  
your life for mine.

We'll see who's hero then.

**Close Encounters  
Of The Second Kind****Brian MacNamara**

*Don't mind the bars between you and the driver. They're for your protection, not his.*

*- Intro to Live And Dangerous. Thin Lizzy Album.*

Damn! The light has diminished so badly now that I am almost upon the figure before I see him. I slam on my brakes and, as the screech of tyres on the road's surface cries out eerily into the lonesome landscape, my vehicle shudders to a halt ... a mere two inches from his long black cloak. And my engine now splutters and dies.

Oh! It's The Final Harvester. Although now I can fathom that this is no ordinary harvester... a Baleful Hunter more likely.

In dismay I watch as this strange spectre glides across in front of my motor. And, despite the closeness of the incident, he remains remarkably unperturbed - in fact totally oblivious to my presence. Although manoeuvring crookedly now his frame, if fully extended, would comfortably reach a height of more than a dozen feet. With his face obscured from view inside a dark cowl, this rakely apparition slowly, methodically, shuffles on his way, carrying a burden, the carcasses of two donkeys! Effortlessly he holds them aloft, the hind legs of each grasped by an osseous hand (there is no flesh!), one beast with its throat slashed from ear to ear, the other with its abdomen slit open, its entrails spilling out, and trailing along the ground behind ... My eyes follow this hideous vision as he mounts a stile through the ditch and, with the wind tugging vehemently at his flimsy garments, vanishes into the descending night.

And I am alone once more, with only the circling bats and the hooting of owls and, somewhere in the distance, a lone wolf howling to keep me company ...

A bead of sweat trickles down along the side of my face, a salty rivulet that enters the corner of my mouth. I put my hand to my forehead to find -

oh! - that I am sweating profusely. The smoke from a children's Halloween bonfire wafts through the air and into my nostrils ... My heart pounding I feel for my tobacco and, with trembling hands, I build myself a smoke ... And I sit here alone in the cold. At last I turn the key in the ignition once more ... and my car first stutters, then roars to life. I flick a switch, and the headlamps pierce the night. Slipping the controls into gear I gradually release the clutch ... and I slowly move off again.

And I puff my pipe and I roll along.

### **Yellow Fever**

**Brian MacNamara**

---

#### ***Fly-Swatter In China***

Sometimes bees sit  
on the thing that  
will kill them.

#### ***Chinese Peaches***

A man sells fruit  
in Beijing  
on Wednesday evenings.  
His words  
are not mine,  
yet he speaks in  
the voice of  
traders on Moore Street.

#### ***To The Chinese Socks Girl***

Isn't it funny how you remind me  
of somebody  
whom you are nothing like.

**The Gap****Jameen Kaur**

It's that turn, the turn of his body  
that has just hugged mine,  
to the gap. 'Mind the gap'  
is what they say on the underground.  
That gap, where now the light  
from the moon filters in,  
where histories and legends  
swerve to take over,  
running like foot soldiers  
as they tackle the gullies  
and alleyways of a foreign land.  
The darkness of the gap  
which minutes before,  
had radiated like the soothing  
warmth from a baby's milk bottle.  
And the tiny soft hair follicles  
on my arms had been encircled  
by his, and they had held each other  
tight as they shyly began their dance.  
I can feel the stares from the black space  
as it eats the moon's light.  
I can feel its cold eyes  
and hear its harsh whispers,  
its points and cross references  
to dates and battles  
which were fought long before  
I walked on sandy beaches  
and which will go on whispering  
long after my airless body  
plays with the waves.

**Weeds****Margaret Faherty**

'Callispera, Maria,'

'Calispera, Father Alexandro',

'Over the flu, Maria?'

'Yes, thank you, Father Alexandro'.

*'Hypocrite, dirty, dirty, hypocrite. Quick enough you were to measure me for my coffin when you thought I'd croaked it. Shrunken to four foot I have.*

*Wrote my grave words too, you did.*

'MARIA ANDROCOPOLIS BORN 1810–Died 1890  
REPENTENT SINNER BY THE GRACE OF GOD and the  
congregation's prayers.'

'The arthritis bad, Maria?'

'No, Father.'

*Filthy fucker, standing there gloating at my crippled  
limbs.*

*If only I could straighten up.*

*Crouched like this I don't even reach the shite's knees.*

*If my fear weren't greater than my hatred,*

*I'd stick my two remaining stubs of teeth into his scabby  
calf.*

*That's if I could reach it.*

*The old toad doesn't even pretend to bend down to see  
my face.*

*Can't say I blame him for that though.*

*The day in hospital when they made me look into a  
mirror and the yellow old crone with more seams than  
the driest apricot looked back at me, I couldn't keep the  
vomit down.*

*But I'll tell you something, Fuck-Face,*

*You're yellowing towards death yourself.*

*Even with my half closed eye, I can see the egg stains  
on your soutane. Snuff. And snot too.*

*'When you die, Maria, you'll have earned God's  
forgiveness.'*

*Forgiveness!*

*After forty years of plucking weeds  
in blazing sun on this hellish island.*

*I wasn't the only whore in Athens forced to kill a  
customer.*

*And it wasn't even the pain that made me draw the  
knife.*

*No. It was when he pissed and shat all over the feather  
bed I'd saved a year to buy.*

*If he hadn't been an Elder, my sentence would never  
have been so terrible.*

*Oh, why didn't they jail me in Athens instead of  
condemning me to a lifetime of plucking weeds in  
blazing sun on this hellish island?*

*'Oh, Stefan if only you'd docked that day, we could have  
sailed away to Santa Rea.'*

*'It's a pity you're not able to attend church anymore,  
Maria.'*

*'Yes, Father Alexandro.'*

*Pity my arse. To listen to your rantings and have all  
those hooded crows gathered outside to jeer as I pass  
by.*

*Shit, my head's going round and round. If you don't go  
now, you'll see me drench the horta.'*

.

'Elena will collect the Horta before curfew. The Elders say your Horta makes the best salad on the island, Maria.'

*So it should, fertilised each night with old woman's piss.*

'I'll leave you now. Remember there is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety nine just men.'

'Yes, Father Alexandro.'

*Repent! May you die roaring. Fuck I'll have to crawl into my hut. Yes. Crawl. Crawl.*

*But then I'll rest 'til dusk.*

-----  
*Oh, Stefan, he does not know tonight's our magic night  
 He will not see our moon swoop down to silver  
 All the dark dark doors until they shine and shimmer,  
 He will not see me shed my sinners' weeds  
 Or see me slip into my scarlet robe  
 To wait beside my candle's glimmering flame,  
 He will not see you streak across the street  
 Or see you steal inside my open door,  
 He will not see me glide across the room,  
 He will not see us slide on to the floor  
 Or see you kiss my snow white breasts  
 Or stroke my gold gold hair,  
 He will not hear you sing sad sailor's songs  
 Or hear your tales of phantom lands unknown,  
 He will not see us mingle lonely tears  
 Or hear our whispers low.  
 He does not know  
 He does not know  
 Your sailor's shoes are underneath my bed,  
 Your sailor's shoes are underneath my bed*

**Na Crainnte Máire iníon Bhreathnaigh**

I gcoillín úr  
i measc na ndriseóg  
bhí dhá fhearnóg ag fás.

San Earrach, tháinig an méid sin spreagadh  
i bhfás na nduilleóg  
go raibh dídean acu  
in aghaidh ceathanna an t-Samhraidh

Chómh brioghmhar is a bhí siad!

Leag siad a fhallaing duilleach ar an talamh  
i ndeire an Fomhair,  
agus shín siad amach  
le na sgith a leigint  
i rith an Gheimhridh.

Tréimhse roimh Nollaig  
Bhí toirmeach agus tinntreach ann.  
Sgriosadh crann amhain.

Tá an ceann eile in a sheasamh  
i lom agus tanai  
ag brathnú í gcómhnuí  
ar an cheann atá sgríosta.

**The Trees** **Máire iníon Bhreathnaigh**

In a green wood,  
amid the brambles,  
two alders grew.

How splendid they were!  
How shapely their sap-filled branches!

In Spring, their leaves sprouted  
In untamed splendour,  
In Summer,  
they were a canopy  
dropped from Heaven,  
their roots shaded.

Their leafy cloak fell from them  
In Autumn.  
They stretched out  
for easeful rest  
in Winter.

A November storm  
crashed one to the ground.

The other remains  
Windswept and worn,  
Bent towards the other.

**Walking with Botius  
and Canrella**

**Sandra Bunting**

This church has a smell,  
closed in, unwashed, decaying.

Out in the rain Our Lady  
beckons in a grotto among wild roses,  
raspberries and ferns,  
woodland at the back.

Lichened gravestones  
stand over lumpy ground  
that may open up, suck you down.

But you take a liking to  
Botius O'Sullivan and Canrella Cadogan,  
imagine them walking with you,  
soft drops catching in your hair,  
the three of you outside, breathing free.

**Galway Morning**

**Sande Bunting**

---

Tall Bríd passes  
saying prayers by rote  
while the postman sings opera  
to roller bin percussion.  
Dogs bark in rounds.

Tin-whistle notes escape  
the pub next door,  
joining the cut of swans' wings  
through rain-soaked air  
over the Corrib, now the sea

and back to a crow that taps  
for snails among the ivy.  
A football thumps steadily  
against the outside wall.

My dream struggles  
to keep its shape  
but loses itself  
to the everyday.

**Skeleton****Betsey Carreyette**

---

In still of night -  
skeleton  
awaits  
under moonlight  
spilling like breast milk  
over stained teeth;  
thorax,  
ribcage,  
pelvis  
hip.  
Ball joints  
anointed  
snuggly fit  
ting femurs  
bleached,  
slipping  
to knocked-knees  
and ankles,  
to long lichen toes  
poised  
as eyes smart in  
skull's dark recess;  
Waiting for breath  
through fossilized ribs.  
Waiting for flesh.

**Stormy Night****Billy Murray**

Avoided for a while  
then full on it comes  
a wave full on in the chest,  
dancing eyes, giddy tones  
of form, salivating mood  
wanting something else,  
desire.....

The want to escape  
a habit of a lifetime,  
running from reflections  
that hide behind black  
silhouettes of multiple  
lampposts  
along an endless street,  
joined at the hip  
by white lines  
right up the middle  
of the wet macadam,  
neon light splashing  
on the dark night....

when I am old I'll be famous and beautiful  
and handsome and rich  
and happily married,  
so I will.

you hoo hoo  
I wanna be like you hoo hoo  
talk like you, walk like you.

screaming, looking for the party,  
the action that takes  
you out.  
Bliss, part of the universe,  
fitting in, just fix me, give it to me  
that piece of the jigsaw that lets me be.

**Craigville Beach****Kevin Donnelly**

20

Shining Sea Path I

K.L.B.

Oh beautiful and such spacious skies along  
The path: the old railroad bed, indian trail.  
Through woods, marsh, swamp, by salt ponds, the sea,  
Three point three miles, Falmouth to Woods Hole.

And time-line measured from the granite marker  
Where it and time begin to human time and  
History, the worn mark at Path's end,  
Color in dim lit caves.

Then the noise and lovely mess of life itself:  
Woods Hole Steamship Authority Ferry Terminal.  
Summer. Ebb and flow; arrivals, departures;  
De generatione, de corruptione. Life.

And the gull's pivot on one wing;  
The caw, caw, caw, call. Three hoots and  
Backing out; Harbor islands: Rams, Devil's Foot,  
Naushon transcendent in the glare.

And children's hands being held  
And a hat gone in the wind; the man  
Standing there, thinking, and, love lost,  
A young man calling: Carol, Carol, Carol.

21

## Shining Sea Path II

Then back. And the question: is it I ravelling  
Time and those I meet, unravelling?  
Whatever, sun on my back, I read  
Time's meaning in their faces.

And linger at Trunk River Beach,  
Sly glance the young bikini'd girl  
And marvel the man fatter than myself  
Who leans sideways to see water at his toes.

And linger even longer still if the bench  
Is free that overlooks Salt Pond and  
Hear birds and rustle of wind  
And color change marsh grasses.

And color gone from white to gold  
That paints the backs of houses.  
And what I have for my own supper  
And the book near-read lying on the chair.

I squeeze into my car, the crowded lot.  
Back out enough to give the door a solid  
Thunk. Not quite the Big Bang  
But it will do.

**Shirtless in Shop Street Boxing the  
Invisible Man  
on a Saturday afternoon Kevin Higgins**

How you love to drone about non-events,  
which like blank jigsaw pieces, soggy old cardboard,  
always add up to nothing. If anyone were to fall  
for your personal myth, they'd know  
your woes are just the worst, like  
Tuesday evening's young Canadian  
in Taylor's Bar, who wouldn't stoop  
to grant you the pleasure of tickling her fancy,  
and when you suggested you should rub  
your bald head between what you imagined might be  
her attentive breasts, she didn't even have the courtesy  
to make her excuses, but just upped, left you stranded,  
another Tuesday evening high and dry,  
stumbling around a corner in a few hours time,  
legless around another towards a possible black-eye.

She could have given you the benefit  
of the non-existent doubt and the chance  
to paw her tight-lipped thighs  
one last time. The situation forced your hand,  
you had to stay til closing-time  
and go back last night for an encore,  
until that ape of a bar-man manhandled you out the  
door,  
and now you're down to just loose change.

And how you ended up in such an invidious position is one of life's great big mysteries, as you ask me for yet another fiver. But you've a distance yet to travel before you fall to the level of the guy, who as I speak, this busy Saturday afternoon, is naked from the waist up and throwing cockeyed punches at an invisible opponent on the pavement across the road.

He gave the invisible man a good left jab as I handed you that fiver, which now, like his shirt, is another lost cause. Yes, my friend, though you've a distance yet to travel before you reach his shirtless in Shop-Street boxing the invisible man on a Saturday afternoon level, that distance is less and, then again, even less, until one day the only question left, when we meet on Shop Street, will be, well then, old boy, whatever became of your shirt? Whatever became of your shirt?

### **Almost Invisible**

**Kevin Higgins**

When winter's chill and pallid spectre  
ripples across the horizon  
to thrust itself once more  
upon a gilded autumn's final fling,  
and to roughly wrap dead hands around  
the sultry traces of those lingering summer days,

the rust-red leaves in swollen gardens,  
the buoyant banter of candent girls  
who pulsed the wild streets  
aggravating the symptoms,

then he will, again, venture from his shady hollow  
to hang on the frigid corners of unfrequented lanes  
thickly stained in the jet-black of dusk. Almost invisible.

**Guadalupe, Tonantzm\*                      Lorna shaughnessy***ForEstelle*

If black is the absence of colour  
 the night sky is not black,  
 but has many hues,  
 like pain,  
 a raven's wing,  
 Tonantzm's hair.  
 And the souls of those  
 untouched by this world  
 shine in the blue of her mantle  
 like morning stars  
 in a lightening sky,  
 brushing the dark skin  
 of her mothers' arms  
 that open in embrace  
 in the darkest of nights.

*\*The Virgin Of Guadalupe reportedly appeared to Indian peasant, Juan Diego, in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, on a mountainside long associated with the worship of Aztec Goddess, Tonantzfn. Guadalupe, in turn, has always been depicted as having dark skin and wears a blue mantle covered in stars.*

**Whistler's Mother                      Lorna Shaughnessy**

No, this is not how I remembered you:  
 your mouth never made a straight line,  
 your mirth fizzed those afternoons  
 drinking lemonade on the veranda,  
 recounting childhood escapades,  
 or gazing toward the lake  
 across well-trodden grass,  
 respectful of all that went before,  
 attuned to the voices calling from the garden  
 you touched my hand and smiled  
 "Go now, they're waiting".

**Metronome**

**Neil McCarthy**

---

You burden me with your  
sorrows,  
your misconceptions,  
your bitching and  
your animosities.  
And I tell you that  
you look good in pink.

At night, while  
you are sleeping,  
you can say nothing and  
I can hear what I want.

**Laughter Lines**

**Noelle Hayes**

*"To truly laugh, you must be able to take your pain and play with it!"*

*-Charlie Chaplin*

I would if I could  
skydive through  
the watery loneliness  
of your brown eyes,  
salvaging you from  
the anchor of anguish  
dragging you down.

I would if I could  
swing from the rafters,  
veering your gaze skyward  
reviving the ring  
of your laughter,  
lost, in the loss of love.

I would if I could  
leap through hoops of fire,  
rekindling that vital  
spark in your soul,  
inspiring that zest for fun,  
she liked best in you.

I would if I could  
breathtakingly fly  
on a high trapeze,  
alighting  
softly,  
on your leaking heart,  
squeezing gently to heal.

I would if I could  
return you to the ring once more,

master of your destiny,  
laughter lilted a loud homecoming,  
your clowns, drowned in mourning,  
allowed once more the freedom of your eyes,  
your thinned face now graced with roguish grins  
as you juggle your pain in bubbles of memory.

She would,  
if she could;

If I could,  
I would.

**St. Kevin Dreams He is  
Shopping in Tesco's**

**Geraldine Mills**

He knows from the moment he steps  
into the store with its measured air  
that there is more to life  
than gulls' eggs and salted fish.

He takes his basket, woven  
that very day by the monks of Iona,  
and fills it full of heavenly things:

dolphin friendly unleavened bread,  
shampoos not tested on sheep,  
lotions for the sensitive tonsure,

Puffin burgers- low salt  
that Lot's wife had a penchant for  
before she turned.

He checks the labels on the shelves before him,  
their bar codes written in ogham, and chooses only  
those that are pride free, guilt free, sloth free.

With credit built up from a life time  
of worshipping God on his knees  
he prayerfully walks to the checkout

where the truth descends like the Paraclete  
on every item scanned.  
He bows his head in acceptance  
it's visa, laser, cold cash.

**St. Kevin Dreams He is  
Bungee-jumping****Geraldine Mills**

The rope that he has spent weeks  
twisting from the reeds of the river  
is now long enough;  
with pigs' bladders cut in strips  
tied to give it stretch.

After matins and some porridge oats  
he climbs the three hundred and twenty four steps  
to the top of the round tower,  
secures the rope round his waist, jumps.

Down he goes, down, down,  
Glendalough rushing up to greet him,  
his holy well, Brother Oran's beehive hut,  
Lally's tour bus.

He sees it all until his habit closes over him,  
his hair shirt flutters in the wind  
and his legs forked, pale as milk,  
become the branch for the eagle waiting.

**Clonfert 1**

**Breid Sibley**

---

*Notes from the cemetery*

Valerian has seeded in the tower  
above the carved heads  
on the Hiberno - Romanesque doorway.

A beam of ultramarine,  
from the angel on the stained glass window.  
Spirit of cowled monks  
and my ancestors of the Ui Maine Sect  
surround me in the rain  
under a yew tree  
in St. Brendan's Cemetery.  
Birds shimmering silver  
above the memorials,  
a straw teddy bear,  
evergreen trees and flowers.

A dove flies south.

**Clonfert 2**

**Breid Sibley**

---

*Tree*

Deep in the woods  
On St. John's day  
a light rain is falling.  
I do not feel it.

What is this mystical tree  
that grew from the centre  
of a holy well  
hundreds of years ago?  
Coins in the crevices,  
rosaries pinned to the tree,  
holy pictures, a baby's bib, a hammer,  
a horseshoe, an angel earring.

The sun brindles the earth floor and the paper as I  
write.

The wind is praying  
through the topmost branches.  
The sky is radiant through the canopy.  
Black birds gather, an owl repeats his cry.

It is cool in the woods,  
I do not miss the warmth  
'til I emerge.

**English Teacher****Sheila Phelan**

Miss Keane ruled her classroom,  
like Napoleon, from her desk.  
She lectured in a deep bass voice

the social lessons of Austen,  
intricacy of Yeats,  
and everything in Shakespeare —

sexual morality, corrupting power,  
innocence, experience, time, death.

The onslaught was relentless.  
Essays, analyses, mocks. Extra classes  
for the blind prophet, Milton.

Emily Dickinson was reclusive  
but her poems contain the world.

I met her once at College Green,  
hurrying through winter dusk  
from research at the National Library.

'You never give up' she smiled  
and walked on towards the river,  
a small burly figure, laden with books.

**Mad Man****Sheila Phelan**

---

He taught religion  
in a classroom  
with no windows,  
Arm-wrestled boys  
in quiet moments,  
and picked  
intellectual fights  
with brainy girls.  
He said when  
he read Darwin  
he threw the book  
across the room.  
We left more  
confused than  
when we started,  
and still uncured  
of apathy  
for a non-exam  
subject.

**Threatened by Secondaries      Andy Johnston**

There is that chill of Autumn in the air  
Saying to nature: we've not long to tarry;  
It is as if seedpods are in a hurry  
To drop and lie in field, in marsh, in moor;  
The short day tightens now; the light is squeezed  
out of the sky's blue veins; a rash of brown  
Dark yellow, darker rust - either discrete or fused -  
Proclaims that shrouds must feature in the scene;

Thistledown sifted over dune and scree,  
Great solitary gannets fishing southwards  
Descending like dive bombers on their prey,  
Whimbrels more kinked billed than the bigger curlews  
Whistle and ti ti from the broken headlands.

Nature'd refill her caries, truncate our fear  
But that our own deaths ambush and chill the air.

## Biographical Details

**Adrienne Anifant** writes poetry and fiction. She has been previously published in *Crannóg*. She recently completed an MA in creative Writing at NUIG.

**Máire Inion an Bhreathanigh** is a founder member of the Rhyme Revivalists. She has been previously published in *Crannóg*.

**Patricia Burke Brogan** is the author of the internationally acclaimed play *Eclipsed* and *Stained Glass at Samhain*. Her collection of poems and etchings *Above the Waves Calligraphy* was published by Salmon. Her work was the subject of two academic papers presented at the recent IASIL conference in NUIG.

**Sandra Bunting** is from Canada but living in Galway. She has been included in such magazines as *iota*, *Turbulences*, *Quills*, *Xerography* and *Regina Muse*.

**Gerardine Burke** teaches English and History at 2<sup>nd</sup> level. She gave a reading of her work at a recent Over The Edge Series in Galway City Library. Her work has previously been published in *Crannóg*.

**David Butler** has won a number of poetry competitions including the Ted McNulty (2001) and Brendan Kennelly (2002) His collection, *Via Crucis*, will be published by Dedalus next year. He was runner-up in the Patrick Kavanagh Award in 2002. A novel, 'The Last European', will be published next year by Galway's Wynkin de Worde. His poetry has appeared in *Poetry Ireland*, *The Burning Bush*, *The Stinging Fly*, *Metre*, *The Shop* and *The Sunday Tribune*

**Betsey Carrayette** has been published in *West 47*, *The Burning Bush*, *The Lantern Review* and other journals. She featured in Anthology 1, the anthology of Galway Women Poets, published by Annir. She is studying Art at GMIT.

**Nuala ni Chonchubhair** won the inaugural Cúirt New Writing Prize (2004), the Francis Mac Manus Award (2002), the Cecil Day Lewis Award (2003) and was nominated for a Hennessy Award, all for fiction. Her first collection of short fiction, *The Wind Across the Grass*, has just been published by Arlen House. Last year the same publishers brought out her first collection of poetry. Her poetry and fiction have been published in Ireland, the UK, Canada and the US, appearing in publications such as *New Irish Writing*, *The Sunday Tribune*, *Whispers & Shouts*, *Poetry Ireland Review*, *The Shop*, *The Stinging Fly*, *Northwords*, *Black Mountain Review*, *Garm Lu*, and two US anthologies.

**Sean Donegan** has been published in *Markings*, *Poetry Ireland Review*, *Blythe Spirit*, *Time Haiku* and in the USA

**Kevin Donnelly** lives and writes in Galway. He read recently at the Over the Edge series in Galway City Library. He is completing a series of poems set in Craighville Beach, Cape Cod.

**Tom Duddy** teaches in the Philosophy Department at NUI Galway. In 2002 he published an academic book, *A History of Irish Thought* (Routledge).

**Margaret Faherty** has been published in a number of magazines and has won a number of prizes. She is getting her novel ready for publication.

**Jarlath Fahy**, a native of Tuam, now lives in Moycullen with his wife and three children.

**Declan Feenan** was born in Newry in 1980. He received third place in the Patrick Kavanagh Award 2003. His first verse for theatre, *The Young Man With The Cream Tarts*, was produced by SNEAKY Productions in Belfast May 2004.

**Maureen Gallagher** took part in this year's Poetry Ireland Introduction series of readings. She was recently featured in *Anthology 1*. She has had poetry and short stories published in Ireland, the UK, New Zealand, Canada and the US. She was a finalist in the Dublin Writer's Poetry Slam in 2002. Her poetry has been broadcast on RTE's *Rattlebag* arts programme. [www.maureengallagher.net](http://www.maureengallagher.net)

**Liam Guilar** was born in Coventry, England, moved to Australia in 1986. He has two collections published, *The Poet's Confession*, a chapbook, and an award winning book called *I'll Howl Before you Bury Me*, available from Interactive Press. Selections and reviews at: <http://www.ipoz.biz/titles/howl.htm>

**Noelle Hayes** facilitates the Maple Poetry Group in Portumna, and works with children in schools and libraries.

**Kenneth Hickey** is from Cork. He is an artist, poet, short story writer and film maker.

**Kevin Higgins** has poems forthcoming in *Metre*, *The Shop*, *Gargoyle* (USA), *The Antigoneish Review* (Canada) etc. He reviews poetry for *Books In Canada*, *Vallum*, *Metre*, *Poetry Quarterly Review* (UK) & *The Galway Advertiser*. [www.kevinhiggins.net](http://www.kevinhiggins.net)

**Joseph Horgan** has had poetry published previously in *Books Ireland*, *The Shop*, *Southword*, *Poetry Ireland*, *The Stinging Fly*, and *The Sunday Tribune*. He was short listed for this year's Hennessy Award for poetry and was the winner of this year's Patrick Kavanagh Award.

**Andy Johnston** is originally from Mayo. He lectured for many years at GMIT. His chapbook, *The Spirit's Too Much With Us*, was published by Poetry Monthly Press in 2003. His selected poems is due shortly.

**Fred Johnston** is a poet, critic and novelist. He has published eight volumes of poetry, a collection of stories and three novels. He is currently editor of *The Cork Literary Review*. He is manager of The Western Writers' Centre. Recently he was appointed 2004 Writer-in-Residence to the Princess Grace Irish Library in Monaco.

**Jameen Kaur** works with Amnesty in Galway.

**Neil McCarthy** works as an English Teacher in Galway and abroad - a keen performance and slam poet, recently been published in *Aesthetica Magazine* and *Dreamcatcher*.

**Bryan Macnamara** has been published previously in Crannóg.

**Mary Madec** has lived in Galway for most of her adult life but was born in Mayo. She does research and teaching at Third Level.

**Geraldine Mills** is a poet and short story writer, with two books of poetry published, *Unearthing Your Own* in 2001 and *Toil the Dark Harvest* 2004. She was recently awarded an Arts Council Travel Award to attend the Provincetown Theatre Playwright Festival, Massachusetts to see the premiere of her first dramatic piece, titled *'This is from the Woman who Does.'*

**Billy Murray** lives and writes in Galway

**Tony O'Dwyer's** collection, *Off Guard*, was published by Bradshaw Books in 2003.. His novel, *Objects in the Mirror*, was recently long-listed for the Fish First Novel Award

**Orlagh O'Farrell** is a member of Airfield Writers in Dundrum, Dublin and has been published in *Cork Literary Review Vol 4*. She was highly commended in the South Tipperary Writers and Clogh Writers poetry competitions. She is a lawyer by profession, married with four children.

**Andrew Oldham** is prior recipient of a Writer's Award from the ACE NW (UK), a Peggy Ramsay Award (UK) and a nominee of the Jerwood-Arvon award (UK) and has been nominated for the London International Award. His work has appeared in the *Poetry Salzburg*, *Interpreter's House*, *Borderlines*, *Aesthetica* and *Grain*.

**Mary O'Rourke** has published two collections of poetry, *My Mirror* was *Cracked* 2002 and *It's All Happening*, 2004.

**Ciaran Parkes** has been published in *The Shop*, *The Yellow Crane*, *Crannóg* and elsewhere.

**Sheila Phelan** lives and writes in Galway.

**Edith Pieperhoff** emigrated to Ireland from Germany in 1985, became an Irish citizen and studied film at Dum Laoghaire College for Art and Design. She now works as an independent animator in Galway where she has directed five short films: *An Bonnan Bui*, *Orpheus*, *Pangur Ban*, *How it all Began*, *Skeleton Woman*.

**Ian Review's** work has appeared in *Leviathan Quarterly*, *Orbis*, *Red Wheelbarrow*, *Zed 20*, *Poetry Scotland* and *Atlanta Review*. A first collection *The Walrus Tusk and the Dancing Bear* was published by Akros Press in 2002.

**Lorna Shaughnessy** teaches at NUIG. She has given readings at the Over The Edge Series in Galway City Library and in Scribblers.

**Stephen Shields** has published poetry with *Markings* and the Athenry Writers' Group. He recently completed an MA in Creative Writing in NUIG.

**Breid Sibley** lives in Loughrea. She has been a prizewinner in the Baffle and Cathal Buí poetry competitions. She has been published in *Ropes* and *Time Haiku*.

**Teresa Sweeney** is 22. She is from Galway but currently lives in Mullingar. She has been writing both poetry and short stories for about 9 years

**Ingrid Wall is** from Cambridge and now lives in Galway. She has been previously published in *Crannog*. She is working on her second novel.

**John Walsh** now living in Galway was born in Derry and has taught there and in Germany. He has been published in *Flaming Arrows*, *The Black Mountain Review* and *Crannog*. He is also a singer/songwriter.