



# SIGNAL ARTS NEWSLETTER

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Issue 2

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Elizabeth Petcu, Illuminated Leaf Form

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Saturday and Sunday 12.00 - 5.00

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Signal Art Centre is represented on the following: Bray Partnership, Wicklow Arts Network, Bray Chamber of Commerce.

## NEWSLETTER TEAM

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Contact Signal Arts Society: [signalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:signalsociety@gmail.com)

Opinions expressed in this magazine will not always be those of Signal Arts Centre and of course we reserve the right to edit all submissions where necessary.

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## Signal Arts Society Membership offers you:

### A 10% discount

- ▶ on any purchase of artwork on sale in Signal Arts Centre
- ▶ on life drawing and other art courses
- ▶ on the hire of darkroom and ceramics facilities

Participation in the  
**Annual Signal Arts Society Exhibition**  
(subject to selection)

**Reduced commission** on sales of your work  
from 25% to 15%

Our **quarterly newsletter** will keep you in touch with what is happening in the arts community. You have the opportunity to publish a profile of your work, advertise your upcoming shows or projects, write about your favourite artist or review an exhibition that impressed you.

The opportunity to display images of your work and an artist's statement on **a page of the Signal website**. See links on the SAS page on the Signal website for examples.

**Invitations** to exhibition openings and other cultural events organised by the Centre.

## Editorial by Colum O'Neill

Winter is almost behind us and once again we look forward to the Summer. As always this brings us to thinking about the Annual Members Exhibition. Enclosed with this copy of your newsletter you should find your application form - if for some reason you have not received your application form please contact us at [signalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:signalsociety@gmail.com) or by phone / text to 0868319592. Entry to the exhibition is free to all current members of the Signal Arts Society - application forms are available at the Signal Arts Centre. The closing date for receipt of applications for the exhibition is Friday 27th April 2012. We are currently updating all our databases in Signal to include the latest information on SAS members and friends of the Centre. If you have a new email address or mobile phone number please let us know so we can update you with the latest information about activities at the centre. Even if you think we have your latest information it is not a bad idea to make sure your details are up to date so that you don't miss out on anything. Send your details to [signalartscentre@eircom.net](mailto:signalartscentre@eircom.net) or [signalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:signalsociety@gmail.com) to update, or just fill in your details on your renewal or application form or even on your exhibition application.

As always I look forward to meeting you all at the Exhibition opening and enjoying a glass of wine together. Don't forget to keep on sending in your articles and news for the next newsletter.

*Addendum 27th February 2012*

Myself and Jim have just returned from the Signal Arts Centre's solicitor having signed contracts to begin the process of obtaining a mortgage and beginning the process to purchase the building. The solicitor said that she expects the transaction to be complete in about four weeks.

Exciting times are ahead for everyone involved with Signal.

*Colum O'Neill*

## News from Claire

Dear Readers

Welcome to the Spring edition of your newsletter, in this edition there are many interesting articles and lots of information regarding what is going on in the centre for the season.



It is with a heavy heart that we have to say a fond farewell to Penny, who has worked here for the past three years, and has been a major contributor to the smooth running of lots of classes and events in the centre. She has been very forthcoming in volunteering for SAS committee, culture night and many other things outside of her remit as well as fulfilling her required hours on the scheme. Fortunately she has promised to stay involved with SAS and book club for the time being. I personally will miss her quiet presence in the building and her

reliability. That reliability displays itself in so many ways, such as the book club: I have yet to hear her say she liked any book we have read!!! We can also rely on her to be the first to dress up for any occasion (see photos attached) and further we can always rely on her to be the first to give a helping hand to other people on the scheme.

I would like to wish her the very best in all her endeavours in the future.

I have written a little bit about our Film Fest, which is very exciting for us, and also I would like to draw your attention to the new format for the Film Club. We are always looking for new members to the Book Club and if you are interested please contact me in the centre.

*Claire Flood*



## New Staff at Signal



### Jenny Dann

Jenny Dann has a diploma in art and ceramics and joined Signal in February 2012. Jenny has been painting and exhibiting for many years and is also currently teaching arts & crafts to primary school children. Jenny enjoys working with people with special needs.

## Submission Reminders

Closing date for submissions  
for **Exhibitions** in 2013  
**Friday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2012, 5pm**

please include the following:

- A minimum of **six images** (clearly marked with your name and title of picture), photographs or images on CD. All images should be suitable for print reproduction (300 ppi), in jpeg format, not exceeding 5mb in size.
- A submission **proposal** – covering what you would hope to exhibit if you are successful. Include proposed sizes of work where possible.
- **Artist CV** (art related only)
- **Artist Statement** (for PR purposes)
- Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope if you require your photos etc. returned to you.

There is an exhibition fee of €250 when selected.

Closing date for submissions  
for the **Signal Film Fest**  
**Friday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2012, 5pm**

All films will be judged by our in-house panel and the films short listed will be screened at The Mermaid on May 1st.

- Films should be no longer than 12 minutes
- All submissions to be on DVD **only**
- A submission fee of €5 should accompany each entry
- All submissions for the attention of Claire Flood Signal Arts Centre, 1A Albert Avenue, Bray, Co. Wicklow, Phone: 01 - 2762039, email: [signalartscentre@eircom.net](mailto:signalartscentre@eircom.net)
- If you would like your DVD to be returned to you please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope
- Submission forms and Terms and Conditions on our website



## The Good, The Bad and The Ugly by Penny Byrne

Taking a tour of three of Dublin's galleries lately I found quite a mixed bag of work; some good, some bad and some which has left me undecided.



Carey Clarke, *Portrait of Hannah Bloom Tekey*

Our first port of call is the R.H.A. where the lifetime's work of artist Carey Clarke is technically brilliant, almost to the point of being photographic, but compositionally mundane. The progression through 50 years is played out from the early days of holiday scenes which are, to me, painted at the wrong time of day when the sun is at its highest bleaching all colour and shape from the scene. Painting in the morning would have made it a more inviting scene when the sun is still finding its place in the sky or maybe the early evening when shape and hue are better defined by the depth of shadows. The only redeeming feature in these landscapes is the presence of 1960's cars parked at Mont St. Michel for example, who nowadays, because of their quirkiness, steal the attention. The scenes of the west of Ireland have the most character for me with, for example, a quaint cottage complete with rotten wood door, or an old bike propped against a roughened wall. But Clarke's

portraits are by far his best works and feature family members and the odd familiar face like Albert Reynolds; his still lifes however, leave me unsure.

There is no mistaking Clarke's skill as a painter in the detail of brass pots and lace cloths, but the composition of his still lifes is uninspiring. Typically three items on a shelf to the top left of the painting and the bare expanse of wall left to bear an occasional beam of light or shadow just does not cut-it with me. The jury is out on this artist. On to the Kerlin, where Richard Gorman's Kozo exhibition of work on handmade paper, disappoints. 19 out of the 20 pieces all remind me of a project by a lazy teenager who has taken an idea and repeated it only to change the colours from one to the next. The 20th piece *All Wall* is more what I expected of this show where the artist fuses different colours of handmade paper together. Surprisingly, a lot of the pieces are sold, and at a



Richard Gorman's work in the Kerlin gallery

mere €2,200 too! Am I missing something here???? Moving swiftly on.... and to the Chester Beatty Library where John Thompson's *China* is a



worthwhile end to our tour. Photographs taken from 1868 – 1872 portray a life that still seems relatively unchanged in today's China. The hairstyles, the clothes and the life-story etched on faces are fascinating.

The sepia tones with blackened spots from when negatives were made on glass plates add to the charm of these characters. I cannot even narrow down the choice of favourites such as the appeal: *The Manchu Bride*, *The Artist*, *Dong-Xun*, all of them interesting in their own way. There are also some items of clothing on display with such elaborate stitching that they become a work of art themselves, and a little pair of shoes with a wooden platform sole just scream to be tried on, for an exercise in balance if nothing else! The next time you are in the city pop into a gallery and send us your comments on an exhibition: was it good, bad or just plain ugly?

## The Lost Landscapes of the Dargle by Biddy Scott

Between the early eighteenth century and the 1850's, the Dargle ravine between Tinnehinch and the Enniskerry road became one of the most popular destinations for tourists day-tripping out from Dublin in search of sublime visual experience. The river path, marked by an ancient carriage gate at the lower entrance, remains a right of way to this day, although only an overgrown shadow of its former glory. The tourists who picnicked here, below the 'Moss House', before climbing to experience the thrilling prospects from the 'Lover's Leap' were generally of a superior sort. These gentry, interested in proving their cultural sophistication were drawn to the Dargle by every notable Irish landscape artist of the period. They found here prospects which reflected both the visual terror of the 'Sublime' and, downstream the more decorous elements which came to constitute

the 'picturesque'.

These artists included George Barret (c 1732-1784), William Ashford (1744-1824), the brothers Thomas Roberts (1748-1777) and Thomas Sautelle Roberts (1760-1826) and the three friends George Petrie (1790-1866), Francis Danby (1793-1861) and James Arthur O'Connor (1792-1841).

The 'Sublime' has now become again a resource for



James Arthur O'Connor  
*A Dargle Landscape with a Fisherman*



Drawing by Samuel Frederick Brocas

post-modern visual culture. It seems a shame that the history and the art made of our local landscape appears to be so lost to our present experience and practise.

(See Ray Cranley's excellent article 'The Dargle's Forgotten Past' in *The Journal of the Bray Cualann Historical Society*, 2011.)



*A trip to Dargle, or the Pleasures of Jaunting, Print*





Sylvia Callan and Denis Dunne have expanded the film nights to a Signal Film Club. "Through our research and feedback we have found out that there is a huge interest in the genre of documentary/art related subjects. With this in mind we selected *Circus Born*, for our February movie, a feature documentary directed by Matt Skinner."

Here is the list of the next few screenings:

**Friday April 20th**

**Aileen** directed by Nick Broomfield

**Friday May 18th**

**Séraphine** directed by Martin Provost

**Friday June 29th**

**Caravaggio** directed by Derek Jarman

Sylvia and Denis are inviting people to come on board. Are you interested?

We are looking for suggestions for the summer schedule. If film is your love and passion and you enjoy a good discussion, we look forward to seeing you at the screening, which will include lively debate. As if that isn't exciting enough, we have now added an extra dimension to the film



Sylvia Callan at the screening of 'Circus Born'

nights for all SAS members. From now on all screening will be free to SAS members. Email us at [signalfilmclub@gmail.com](mailto:signalfilmclub@gmail.com) with any comments, questions or suggestions.

## Meeting Matt

I met up with Matt Skinner who directed the film *Circus Born* one Saturday in a Bray workshop where he was working on some wood shutters for the renovation work for his house, which seems to be a passion for him. I have known Matt for a long time. We would meet at family gatherings mainly when my brother would have one of his famous barbeques.

Matt has been teaching cinematography at IADT for 10 years and has worked from director of photography, focus puller and most recently to director on his documentary feature *Circus Born*. So when I met up with Matt I was curious as to where his inspiration to make a documentary on the Circus came from. The interest started back in the '80's when Matt studied Italian and Archaeology and while on a visit to Italy to further his education in Italian he came across an ad for collaborators wanted for a theatre company on the outskirts of Rome. Matt then went on to study an MA in Commedia dell'Arte whereupon he staged a production of Isabella from a very old play of this form of theatre, Isabella being a character within Commedia dell'Arte. *Circus Born* is a feature documentary on a year in the life of Ireland's National Circus Family, Fossetts. It tells the true story of life in the Circus. Family bonds are forged in lifelong learning, twice daily performance and endless build ups, pull downs and moving on, creating bonds that last over generations. The movie gives the viewer more than a glimpse of the ghosts that dwell in Fossett's Big Top.



At the screening of *Circus Born*  
top: Matt Skinner talks about his film



From the left:  
Claire Flood, Matt Skinner, Brigid O'Brien



## Middle Eastern Cuisine

### Falafel Burgers

400g can chickpeas, rinsed and drained  
garlic clove, chopped  
handful of flat-leaf parsley or curly parsley  
1 tsp ground cumin  
1 tsp ground coriander  
½ tsp harissa paste or chilli powder  
2 tbsp plain flour  
2 tbsp sunflower oil

Pat the chickpeas dry with kitchen paper. Tip into a food processor along with the onion, garlic, parsley, spices, flour and a little salt. Blend until fairly smooth, then shape into four patties with your hands. Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan, add the burgers, then quickly fry for 3 mins on each side until lightly golden. Serve with toasted pittas, tomato salsa and a green salad. This can be served with toasted pitta bread, tomato salsa and green salad.

### Greek Style Spinach Pie

200g bag spinach leaves  
175g jar sundried tomatoes in oil  
100g feta cheese, crumbled  
2 eggs  
½ 250g pack filo pastry

Put the spinach into a large pan. Pour over a couple tbsp water, then cook until just wilted. Tip into a sieve, leave to cool a little, then squeeze out any excess water and roughly chop. Roughly chop the tomatoes and put into a bowl along with the spinach, feta and eggs. Mix well. Carefully unroll the filo pastry. Cover with some damp sheets of kitchen paper to stop it drying out. Take a sheet of pastry and brush liberally with some of the sundried tomato oil. Drape oil-side down in a 22cm loose bottomed cake tin so that some of the pastry hangs over the side. Brush oil on another piece of pastry and place in the tin, just a little further round. Keep placing the pastry pieces in the tin until you have roughly three layers, then spoon over the filling. Pull the sides into the middle, scrunch up and make sure the filling is covered. Brush with a little more oil.

Heat oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Cook the pie for 30 mins until the pastry is crisp and golden brown. Remove from the cake tin, slice into wedges and serve with salad.



# Exhibitions Programme Signal Arts Centre April - June 2012



Gallery Hours: Tuesday to Friday 10 - 1 and 2 - 5 | Saturday and Sunday 12 - 5  
All are welcome! See [www.signalartscentre.ie](http://www.signalartscentre.ie) for more information

## ILONA MADDEN 'Travelling Resident'



Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March - Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> April. Opening Reception: Friday 30<sup>th</sup> March 7pm-9pm

## LITTLE BRAY & ST FERGAL'S PORCELAIN PAINTING GROUP 'Bits and Pieces'



Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> April. Opening Reception: Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> April 7pm- 9pm

## V. SUTHERLAND & E. PETCU 'see no where – an exploration in porcelain'



Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> April - Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May . Opening Reception: Friday 27<sup>th</sup> April 7pm-9pm



## PHILIP LEE 'Small Absurdities'



Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> May. Opening Reception: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> May 7-9pm

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## ST FERGAL'S ART GROUP 'Ten Ladies'



Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May - Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> June. Opening Reception: Friday 25<sup>th</sup> May 7-9pm

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## BRAY STUDENTS EXHIBITION - RAVENSWELL & ST. THOMAS



Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June - Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> June. Opening Reception: Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June 3-5pm

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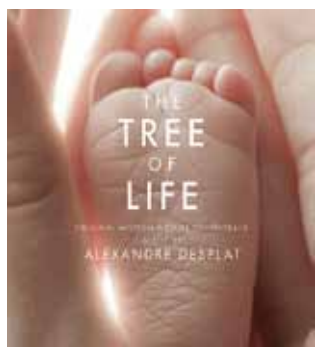
## JAN FREIBERGER 'Black & White Square'



Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June - Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July. Opening Reception: Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 7-9pm

# Views and Reviews

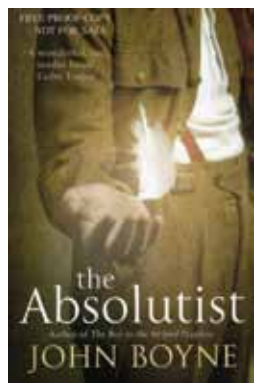
## A Star is Born by Róisín Verdon



Anybody who wants to have an experience and watch first hand the unveiling of a future star needs to watch the film *The Tree of Life*. Putting aside the stunning cinematography and the sensuous visual delivery of wonder, belief, faith and the depiction of existence itself...the thing that stands out the most in *The Tree of Life* is its star actor Hunter McCracken. The remarkable thing is that this kid has never actually acted before in his life. Having been literally plucked

from the school playground after a yearlong sweep of Texas schools by the filmmakers, McCracken landed the top role out of 10,000 other kids. And it's fairly obvious why. This film, although a bit preachy in parts, is such a delight to watch. It washes over you in a cocktail of visual and audible enchantment. McCracken plays a riveting and fully delivered role as Jack, the eldest son of Brad Pitt's character Mr O'Brien. The film is centred on the relationship between the two and the stark differences between the fun loving gentle caresses of the mother (played by Jessica Chastain) and the father who is strict and a total disciplinarian. Delving into the very origins of life, writer/director Terrence Malick has produced yet another fine film in *The Tree of Life*. It has well deserved the Cannes Film Festival's coveted Palme d'Or, which it won last year. A beautiful film, weird and wonderful. A star is born!

## The Absolutist by Rita Canavan



Reading *The Absolutist*, curled up by the fire on a chilly Sunday afternoon in February I was so caught up in the story that I tried to brush away the filth, mucky slime and stench of the French trenches during World War 1. I felt the lice itch as they fed and the slash from the tails of the scurrying rodents. Such is the story telling power of John Boyne, better known for one of his earlier books, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. The story is told from the point of view of Tristan who is one of only two survivors from his training group in Aldershot. After the war he visits Marian, the sister of his best friend, Will, the Absolutist,

on the pretext of returning the letters she wrote to her brother during the war. His real motivation is guilt and his seeking of forgiveness.

Once started, nervousness for the very flawed character, Tristan, makes the book a compelling read. Indeed all of the characters are flawed, before, during and after the war. All are war casualties, the living, the dead, those who fought and those who stayed at home.

It is a story of love and hate and the contradictions of human nature. How courage and cowardliness can co-exist in the heart of man. How the same act can be viewed as courageous by some, cowardice by others and yet have a selfish aspect to it, when the effect it has on others isn't considered. Maybe the greatest courage is shown by those like Marian and Will's parents, who quietly get on with their lives in circumstances not of their own making. There are moments of kindness and cruelty and a fine line between what will elicit one instead of the other.

The author succeeds in conveying the social pressures and norms of the times. A society where respectability was key and any behaviour outside this narrow band of what was deemed acceptable was considered deviant, not just for the perpetrator but also for the extended family. The punishment, social and economic exclusion, was carried out silently and without a hearing, fair or otherwise.

Through a series of flashbacks the story of the war and the cause of Tristan's guilt is revealed. In the final chapter the story moves on sixty years and to the climax of Tristan's guilt.

The word absolutist is one that I hadn't heard of before in the context of war. A person who objected to fighting, officially a conscious objector, was known as a feather man. There were those who wouldn't fight but would help with the war effort (work in factories, stretcher bearer, etc.) and then there were those who didn't want to have anything to do with any aspect of the war what so ever, they were known as absolutists.

Will I read another book by John Boyne? Absolutely.

## Born to Die - Lana Del Rey by Róisín Verdon

So I'm on Facebook, as one is, and I receive a link from my daughter in the next room (because nobody walks in my house). This link is for Lana Del Rey's song *Video Games*. All of a sudden I'm sitting up and I find myself listening to what I'm sure is the sound of 2012. This girl with the voice of a sixties minx has a lure and charisma that just draws you in and has you hanging on every word.



Closing my eyes and listening she has a mixture of early Gwen Stefani and Nelly Furtado going on. But of course that's just scraping the surface and me trying to label that which I haven't heard before. So of course I'm off like a hare out of a trap and I'm straight onto iTunes to find out what more can I find from this remarkable voice only to find her album isn't even out yet.

I only had a few weeks to wait though.

Of course there's ways and means of getting to hear a number of songs through YouTube etc. so I had an idea of what was coming. Too many times I've heard a song of amazing promise only to be greeted by a limp album of second bests. And so it's here (released January 27th) and I've bought the Deluxe version because I'm a greedy girl. There are a few songs on the album that hold up to the standard of *Video Games* but the rest I'm afraid to say are quite monotonous. Further to the disappointment is the fact that the media have decided that Miss Del Rey is not worthy of the chalice that had been set-aside for her. And I hate to say it, but they're right! After hearing her terrible performance on the Jonathan Ross show and reading about the record company's drive to re-invent her or basically manufacture her sound, I have come to the conclusion that Lana Del Rey no doubt has no desire or inclination to be a part of the genre she finds herself. It's all a sham and it's totally obvious in the performances she gives that she is disinterested. I'm afraid the would-be Dietrich has been uncovered as a young girl out of her depth. *Born to Die*, is it worth it? Yeh it's got enough umph to warrant a purchase but I'd say it won't be long before it's left on the shelf. Shame though!

## The Walls: Stop the Lights by Róisín Verdon

As a nation I think we are one of the finest examples of supporters. We are dedicated, honourable and full of cheer. So, if there is one band this year who deserves the support of the Irish people and the thumbs up for accomplishment, it's *The Walls*. Brothers Steve and Joe Wall (formally of that other amazing band *The Stunning*) have done it again. Their third album will probably be on release by the time you read this. The Walls have decided to enlist the help of their steadfast fans in the final stages of mastering and manufacturing. Using a *Fund It* campaign the guys have endeavoured to raise the money by selling a variety of rewards in relation to the project. From €10



for the album to €1000 to play a gig in your house... the boys mean business. I have my copy of a signed limited edition digipak ordered. At €20 that's a steal. With the release of *Bird in a Cage* last year, the first single from the album and the new *Stop the Lights* release, the album promises to be the best sound to date from these highly talented lads. Look them up on iTunes. I wish them all the best on their new release. Remember, The Walls *Stop the Lights* in early March. Please support them....They deserve it!!!



# Views and Reviews

## Leonardo da Vinci by Ilona Madden

This exhibition in the National Gallery in London (9 November 2011 – 5 February 2012) has been hailed as one of the most important art exhibitions ever in the world. That was not my main reason why I wanted to go and see it, and then nearly didn't even make it (but that's another story). My thesis for my B.A. in Fine Arts was titled "The Original and its Copy" and I referred to works by Leonardo da Vinci. So when I heard that the two versions of "Madonna of the Rocks" were on show for the first time ever together, I just had to go!

Part of my intention in the thesis was to prove that there is something in an original art work that is lacking once it has been copied or reproduced. Generally it is a different person making a copy (or sometimes a forgery) of a masterpiece. In the case of those two Madonnas, however, it was the same artist, who just painted the same theme a couple of years later again. Most likely, Leonardo has never seen his two paintings together.



1483-1486

1495-1508

I have seen both originals in the National Gallery and in the Louvre, and next to each other only in reproductions. I always felt there was not the same energy in the second version. The exhibition guide tells us that Leonardo had changed his intentions when he was working on the latter version. That he was interested in nature in the first one, and more in the spiritual essence in the latter one. It is also possible that some of his pupils did parts of the latter version. It was interesting to hear that several Leonardo da Vinci's were in fact "finished" by his pupils and that he always tried to teach them to paint exactly like he did.

Looking at the two paintings facing each other and taking plenty of time to really take them in, I am convinced that there is something in the first version that the "London" one is lacking but I just can't pin it down. It was interesting to read that a copy of the Mona Lisa has recently been found. This was another question I asked: "How would we feel if for whatever reason we were at some stage being told that the Mona Lisa that we're admiring in the Louvre is actually not the original?"

I thought it was absolutely amazing to see how much demand there was for this exhibition. Tickets sold illegally on the internet for £250 (official price £16). People started to queue at 4 am for 6 hours in the freezing cold. Why? All the images can be seen in endless reproductions. Is it because this is a "Must-see" exhibition for all art-lovers? Do we treat an original art work like some sort of celebrity? Do we bestow value on an art work because we know it is a Leonardo da Vinci? Do we want to boast that we have seen this celebrity? Several pieces in the exhibition were actually by his followers and the queues in front of those were far less than in front of the Leonardos. Again, you could sense the different energy or lack thereof, but why? Because there is a real difference or because we know that they are not by the famous artist?

# What's happening?

## Vacant Spaces Project by Donna Kiernan

Vacant Spaces are a hot topic around the country right now. Bray has its share of unoccupied buildings from Dell to Dawson's and every size, shape and area in between. At the start of this year I put the call out for like-minded individuals in the area and I was bowled over by the amount of people thinking about the potential of these buildings for the local arts community. At the last meeting we decided a few important issues for the group. Initially we would be a research group who would gather all the information we could on different vacant spaces projects out there and find out as much as we could about the possibilities for Bray. Then the hope, well my hope, is that we can put together a short festival during the summer so that we can all work together to show the community and the town the potential of these buildings and what we as an art community could do for Bray with access to them. If you are interested in getting involved with the Vacant Spaces Project or Festival contact us at [vacantspaces2012@gmail.com](mailto:vacantspaces2012@gmail.com) or come down to Signal any Wednesday evening between 7-8pm. Also look out for us on facebook: *Vacant Spaces Project - Bray*

## Signal Arts Centre Film Fest 2012

This is our first venture into the film world and it is proving to be very interesting; the energy and enthusiasm for this medium is astounding. We have discovered that there is a huge amount of budding Scorseses out there. The response to the call for submission has been excellent; don't forget you can submit up to 5 p.m. on Friday 30th March. The winning entry will be shown on 3e, one of our national stations, as far as I can tell this is the only film competition in the country with a national screening as the prize, thank you TV3! Filmbase have also kindly offered €300 Training Voucher for Filmbase, €200 Training Voucher for Filmbase, €100 Training Voucher for Filmbase as 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes, they will also give 1 complimentary membership to Filmbase for each of the 3, which would include a subscription to Film Ireland magazine. We are hoping that this will be the start of an annual event so try to support it in any way you can.

The screening of the top ten entries will be showcased in the Mermaid, who have offered us the venue for the event, on May 1st 2012 where the three winners will be announced. Tickets can be booked in advance through the Mermaid booking office. I would like to take this opportunity to thank TV3, Filmbase and the Mermaid for their contributions to the event and a very big thank you to Mr Noel McCabe who has consulted with myself and Donna all the way through the process.

## Bray Students' Exhibition Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> June - Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> June

This exhibition is a collaboration of two student groups, one primary school group, 4th and 5th class from St. Philomena's / Ravenswell and secondary school group, 1st - 3rd year students from St. Thomas Community College. Though both groups are quite separate and the work content of each group is very different, they both fall under the banner and funding of the *School Completion Programme*. Over the past 5/6 years Signal Arts centre has built up a relationship with the SCP, originally through Ronan McCool and now with Michelle Murphy at the helm, and on this particular project with the assistance of Ciara and Niamh.

During the past year the students from Ravenswell have been taking drawing classes once a week, and the students from St. Thomas have been taking a graffiti class once a week, both with Greg Murray from Signal Arts Centre.

This exhibition gives a great opportunity to both groups to display some of their work in an exhibition space and invite friends and family to come along and enjoy their artistic endeavours.

# Exhibiting Artists about their Work

## Ilona Madden

I decided in 2006 to use my work as a tourist guide as a subject matter and have constantly been working doing sketches, writing notes, thoughts about art, being creative, work, life, taking photographs, collecting ideas, reproducing sketches as ink drawings or paintings etc. At some stage, I decided to sort through all the produced works and "ordered" them in my "Resident Alien" diary. I made one little art work for each day I stayed in a hotel room for work, using a sketch, photograph or memory of that particular day. These original images and the scanned images on the computer make one part of the exhibition. The images and text are very personal and can be seen as "Research" and more about the creative thought process of making art rather than "finished" works.

From this "playful" creation of little art works I have identified two topics that seemed to be most interesting:

1. The tourists taking photographs in the same typical photo-stop places all over the country where hundreds of people would take the same photographs each year. Yet every person takes home a completely different memory.
2. Hotel rooms: They are repetitive, sterile and impersonal, yet they become your own space once you spread your things out and make yourself a cup of tea using the kettles.

My finished works consists of photographic giclee prints on paper or canvas and acrylic paintings. I took photographs of typical photo-stops and painted over the tourists integrating them into the landscape. I am removing something yet at the same time creating something new: just like memories.

The abstract paintings also consist partly of a photograph (in this case images of kettles in hotel rooms) and a fantasy painting around it. As a viewer, we are trying to make sense of what we see, but only part of the image makes sense (the photo) and the rest doesn't (abstract painting). The photo can be reproduced over and over again (hotel rooms), the painting is individual and creative (my private space).

## St Fergal's & Little Bray Porcelain Painting Group

The groups involved in the upcoming exhibition have been painting for several years now. People initially joined for different reasons and heard about it in different ways - reading a piece in the local newspaper, hearing about it from a friend, seeing what others had produced and reading about it in the community newsletter - but however they got involved they have become friends and stayed together. Friendship and support is very important to the groups as well as the skills they have acquired. Over time confidence has

built within the groups and from a starting point where people said 'I couldn't do that' - we now have a confident group of porcelain painters happy to try out new designs and methods of decoration. The pieces can include vases, plates, bowls, jugs, teapots, cups and saucers. Artwork can be abstract or representational, the only limit being the scope of your imagination.

China painting, also known as porcelain painting refers to the method of painting on white glazed porcelain objects. The paint used is an overglaze paint - this means it is designed to be used on top of already glazed porcelain. Pieces must be painted slowly and carefully to ensure a smooth finish. The pieces are then put into a kiln and fired for about 3.5 hours until they reach 800 degrees. They then cool in the kiln for a further 10-12 hours until they are ready. After cooling, more paint can be applied and the piece fired again. This can be repeated until the artist feels the piece is complete. However some artists maybe complete a piece in one firing. The friendship that has evolved within the group has developed over time and members describe time in the porcelain painting class as therapeutic and calming. Not that it isn't challenging at times, but it has been described as 'my time' 'our space' 'very social' and 'relaxing'. The resource centres are places where people can come together to learn new skills, express themselves and find support and friendship. The porcelain painting group get great satisfaction from producing a finished piece of art, hanging it and saying 'I did that!'. For the two hours each week that the groups are engaged in producing their art, the motto is - 'Forget all your troubles, leave them outside the door'.

V. Sutherland & E. Petcu

Vicki and Elizabeth spent three years together in Bray Institute of Further Education, fussing over notebooks, essays and deadlines. They graduated in Fine Art last May. Since early childhood Elizabeth remembers the joy of making things. Encouraged by her mother, she was adept at sewing, knitting and crochet before she reached double numbers. "Helping" in the garage with her father, she picked up a love and understanding of woodwork. Later, finding a night class in Blackrock with Peter Brennan, renowned teacher and potter of those times, the fascination for clay and all the wonderful things it can do, in all its different stages, began and never stopped. Mud sticks.

"When I'm not in my studio I worry about what I'll make next but I always get inspiration when I touch my material. I often get my best ideas from something a child says or from a "mistake" I make. I love when the material itself inspires me and does something I least expect."

Vicki grew up in New Zealand in a small farming town, near to beautiful beaches and mountains. Memory and remembrance are key themes in Vicki's work, not surprisingly, considering she has

chosen to live in a country half the world away from where she grew up.

"I love the feeling of clay under my fingers tips...its sensual malleability. This is especially evident when throwing on the wheel, as a lump of wet clay is magically transformed into a vessel. In recent years I discovered porcelain clay, which is a beautiful material to work with. Although I have developed other means of working with porcelain, I will never stop throwing on the wheel, as that is the part of creating ceramics that gives me the most pleasure." With their Diploma in Fine Art (HND) still shiny and fresh, Vicki and Elizabeth are now enjoying the freedom of designing their own briefs and challenges. See *No Where* is a premier; the first example of their combined strengths and creativity.

## Philip Lee

In 2002 after a gap of over 20 years (and having finally dispensed with the necessity of doing a normal job!) I found myself in a portfolio course in Ballyfermot College of Further Education and with no intention of returning to College, I still ended up on the way to National College of Art & Design for the next four years as a 'mature' student. What started out merely as a desire to re-connect with painting and Art became a first step on a much longer unplanned journey.

In NCAD to a large extent you are left to your own devices to find your own unique way of expressing yourself. In looking at many many works by established painters I was particularly drawn to the expressive work of the Bay Area Figurative Artists of the West Coast in particular the work of Richard Diebenkorn and the early Nathan Oliveira. In later years, some European based Artists such as Gerhard Richter, Luc Tuymans and Marlene Dumas sought to use particular subject matter in a way I think imbues their paintings with meaning or ambiguity. At one time or another over the past 10 years, these Artists have influenced the development of my work as I try to balance meaning with expression and still produce interesting outcomes.

The challenges I face in trying to make Art are two-fold. Firstly there are the normal daily demands of family life and rearing children which means having to create time and space apart. The second is to have to continuously create and destroy work in an iterative cycle until it becomes almost a subconscious process combining form, colour and mark-making. If it were at all possible, then the characteristics I would most like to develop would be resilience and patience. In the end it is as much about the process as the work itself and a constant challenge to not fall into any formulaic trap of how to make a painting.

In my work, past, current and hopefully in the future, I am trying to develop a language for expressing some of the issues, concerns, realities and absurdities that I see in myself and around me in humanity. This journey hopefully will continue.



# COMMUNITY PROJECTS



A Women's Art Group at St. Fergal's Community Centre, facilitated by Tony Clarke, working towards a group exhibition in Signal Arts Centre



Norah from Atlanta Nursing Home Art Group facilitated by June Molloy and Conall McCabe.

These are just a few of the projects currently run by Signal Arts Centre



A group at Festina Lente, facilitated by Sylvia Callan, will create a short fictional film.



Aoibheann Doyle and Sylvia Callan with the Carmona Group Dun Laoghaire creating a map of the locations familiar to the group.



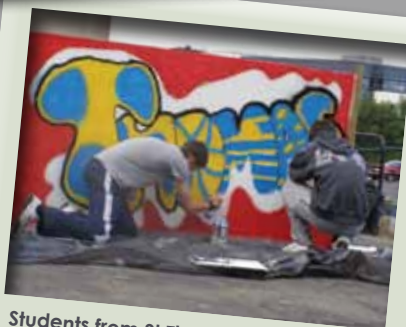
Life Drawing Sessions facilitated by Aoife FitzGerald



An art group from Sunbeam Ashford at Signal, facilitated by Fran Brosnan and Jenny Dann



A group from Sunbeam Bray making Valentine's cards at Signal, facilitated by June Molloy and Christine Power



Students from St Thomas Community College working on a graffiti project, facilitated by Greg Murray



A group from Carmona services creating art work, facilitated by Christine Power and Fran Brosnan



A creative Rehab group, facilitated by Conall McCabe and June Molloy





## Digital Photography Courses including nature photography walks

An 8 week photography course aimed at anyone who wants to learn how to use their digital cameras to take better pictures.

The course includes classroom time, field trips and learning how to use computer software to get the best out of your photographs.

Contact David Stephenson,  
phone: 086 9164236,  
email: davidstephenson@gmail.com,  
www.davidstephenson.ie  
Limited places available

*Each person has a unique way  
of looking at the world, find yours*



## Signal Book Club

First Tuesday of every month  
at 5 pm in the gallery

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April - **Even the dogs** by Jon McGregor

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> May - **The Black House** by Peter May

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> June - **The Blind Assassin** by Margaret Atwood

## Bray Arts Club

Performance Nights  
Mondays 8 pm at the Martello

2<sup>nd</sup> April 2012

14<sup>th</sup> May 2012

11<sup>th</sup> June 2012



## Signal Film Club

Films start at 7pm and the entry fee is €5  
**Free entry for all current SAS members**  
Contact Sylvia 087 939 1924 or 01 276 2039

Friday April 20th: **Aileen**, directed by Nick Broomfield

Friday May 18th: **Séraphine**, directed by Martin Provost

Friday June 29th: **Caravaggio**, directed by Derek Jarman

## Life Drawing

Facilitated by Aoife FitzGerald

**2 Week Sessions: € 25**

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March and 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 7 pm - 10 pm

Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> March and 7<sup>th</sup> April, 9 am - 12 noon

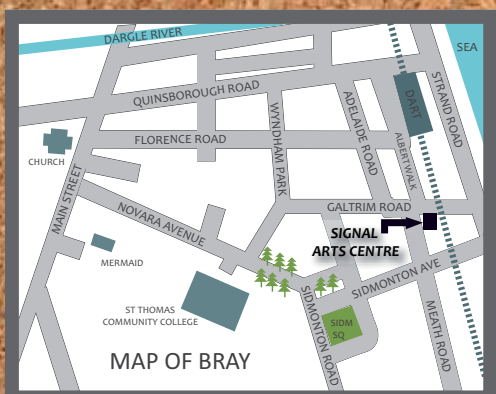
**5 Week Sessions: € 62.50**

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May - 5<sup>th</sup> June, 7 pm - 10 pm

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May - 9<sup>th</sup> June, 9 am - 12 noon



**Closing date for submissions for the next newsletter: 1<sup>st</sup> May 2012**



## Signal Arts Centre

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Bray, Co. Wicklow.

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Fax: 01 2869982

www.signalartscentre.ie

info@signalartscentre.ie

## Gallery Hours

Tuesday to Friday 10 - 1 and 2 - 5

Saturday and Sunday 12 - 5

## Office Hours

Monday to Friday 9 - 1 and 2 - 5

This project is funded by

FÁS Community Employment

