

IRELAND: HER PEOPLE AND LANDSCAPE



Lilian Lucy Davidson *Fair Day, Westport*

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ADAM'S Est 1887
at Clandeboye

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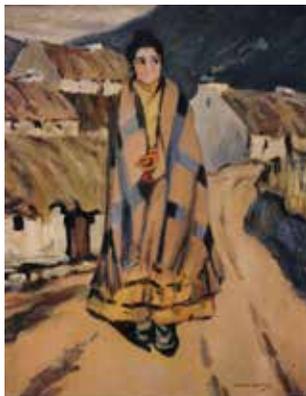


Fig I.



Fig II.



Fig III.

IRELAND : HER PEOPLE AND LANDSCAPE

Irish artists' preoccupation with depicting the pastimes and everyday life of people reflects the Irish public's fascination in the subject. The massive popularity of genre painting in the 19th century came at a time when art provided reassuring images of vernacular life, even in periods of great social turmoil. Contemporary interest in such work is reflected in two major exhibitions which explored this subject and which included some of the works in this exhibition. *Whipping the Herring* at the Crawford Gallery of Art and *A Time and A Place* at the National Gallery of Ireland in 2006 featured a wide range of such paintings and explored their contents from ethnographic and social perspectives. The show at Clondeboye includes a greater proportion of 20th century examples and as such it raises interesting questions about the changing attitudes of artists to contemporary life and to the ways in which artists chose to express this in their work.

One of the earliest exponents of Irish genre painting was the Cork artist Nathaniel Grogan (c.1740-1807) whose small monochrome wash *The Bantry Pact*, (c.1783, fig. No II), depicts a bard seated by a fire. He is surrounded by a captivated audience whose expressions indicate their reverence for his wisdom. Situated in West Cork the scene demonstrates the increasing curiosity about regional customs in Ireland which is often reflected in the growing attention to detail of costume and furnishing found in late 18th and 19th century painting.

First exhibited at the Royal Scottish Academy, Erskine Nicol's *A Shebeen at Donnybrook*, (1851, fig.no IV), could be construed as a stereotypical image of the Irish as drunken and carousing. Donnybrook, unlike today, was synonymous with drinking and debauchery largely as a result of its notorious fair which was eventually banned in the 1860s. The title's reference to Donnybrook alerts the viewer to the boisterous nature of its subject matter as scenes of Donnybrook Fair were common in Irish art. Nicol (1825-1904), who lived in Ireland from 1845 to 1850, was sympathetic to the Irish peasantry having directly witnessed the aftermath of the Famine and resulting eviction and emigration. Some of his works refer directly to these events. A closer examination of this painting reveals that the figures are gainfully employed in making music and in dancing and that in fact the work provides an alternative representation of Irish life to that found in contemporary media reports of suffering and hardship or in clichéd ideas of the Irish as aggressive and violent. Despite its careful recording of the material details of the shebeen the subject is framed within the conventions of art history rather than real life. Nicol constructed his scenes using props and models in his studio in Clonave, Co. Westmeath. The warm tones and carefully posed figures recall Dutch 17th century tavern scenes such as those of David Teniers as well as the early paintings of Nicol's famous compatriot David Wilkie (1875-1841) who visited Ireland and painted Irish genre subjects in 1830s.



Fig IV (Detail)



Fig V

By contrast the figures in Aloysius O'Kelly's *The Return of the Fisherman* (c.1879, fig.no III), appear as individuals rather than the more contrived characters of Nicol's work. At the same time the image conforms to Victorian ideals of contented domesticity and industriousness. The traditional cowhide pampooties worn by the couple plus the proximity of the sea and the fishing boats visible through the open door evoke the peculiar character of the Aran Islands or Connemara. Newly arrived in the west of Ireland from a spell in France where he had become a disciple of realism, O'Kelly (1853-c.1941) sought to challenge the widespread stereotyping of the Irish in art and popular culture. The Spartan interior of the cottage with its meagre but neatly arranged contents suggests the simplicity and purity of the islanders' lives. The west of Ireland was increasingly seen to provide a genuine view of Irish life, unsullied by cosmopolitanism, where Gaelic customs were preserved. O'Kelly's reference to the close connection between the environment and subsistence in the west is a theme that is developed in Seán Keating's (1889-1977) work in the 20th century. *The Port Authority*, (1942, front cover) shows Aran Islanders on a quayside and its title hints at official interference in their lives. The policing of Irish waters had taken on new and pressing meanings in the war years when Keating painted this work and like many of his other paintings conflict between modernity and tradition lies at its heart.

The vogue for realism in the later 19th century encouraged artists to depict their surroundings directly rather than relying on academic formulae. The call of Honoré Daumier, 'il faut etre de son temps' percolated through to Irish artists although rarely in the radical way used by painters like Gustave Courbet (1819-1877) in France. Nonetheless realism had a profound effect on Irish art. Numerous Irish artists studied in France and Belgium from the 1870s onwards. There they learnt of realism and practiced it in paintings of Breton peasants and rural French life. Their summers were spent in colonies in such locations sketching and painting 'en plein air'. The peasant or the worker became the major subject of art. The impact of realism on the representation of places and people in Ireland can be seen in the paintings produced by these artists when they returned home.

Richard Thomas Moynan (1856-1906), Walter Osborne (1859-1903) and Henry Allan (1865-1912) all studied in the academy in Antwerp. Moynan's *The Travelling Show* (1892, Fig V) is a rare depiction of a Punch and Judy show being staged in an Irish village. The experience of working in Antwerp and Paris is evident in the clarity which Moynan's approach brings to the representation of the scene. Influenced by the Salon paintings of the popular realist artist, Jules Bastien-Lepage (1848-1884), Moynan uses the square brush technique to give an almost photographic quality to the figures. In addition to its exceptional detailing of the cottages and the clothing, the painting uses the dramatic trope of the excited children racing to see the show as its focus. Osborne's *The Hurdy-Gurdy Player*, (1887, cat. no 42) is similar in terms of subject and



Fig VI (Detail)



Fig VII



Fig VIII

perspective. However its brushwork is looser and the interest is more on the effects of evening sunlight on the buildings and streetscape than on musician and the passersby. Tackling a more contentious subject, Allan's *The Rag Pickers*, (1900, Fig VIII) depicts women and children in Ringsend who collected rags and rubbish to eke out a meagre living. The rag picker is an iconic figure in the history of French realist painting as it features in Edouard Manet's *The Old Musician*, (1863, National Gallery of Art, Washington) a radical painting which addresses the social disruption caused by Baron Haussmann's development of Paris. Allan's painting combines loose brushwork suggestive of immediacy with the more self-conscious device of the old woman pointing into the distance. A more academic approach to realism was brought to Irish art through William Orpen's teaching at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art from 1902-14. His former studio assistant, Kathleen Fox (1880-1963) painted *Ruins of the Four Courts*, (1922, Fig VII) which depicts the familiar building from an established viewpoint across the Liffey. What is striking about the work is that within the tranquil scene the dome of Gandon's great building is missing and next to it are the shells of buildings destroyed in the War of Independence. Fox's work belongs to an important strand of early 20th century realist art, one which sought to record the major events of Irish history. This painting does so in a subtle but compelling manner.

The fashion for realism and naturalism encouraged artists to spend extended periods of time in the country. The resulting encounters between them and the people and places of remote locations reflects the widespread veneration in Western culture for rural life which was seen as authentic and precious compared to the artificiality and transience of the urban. The most famous example of this journey to the primitive in Irish art is Paul and Grace Henry's prolonged stay in Achill in the 1910s. Paul Henry's *Attending the Lobster Pots*, (c.1912-15, fig. IX) offers a poetic evocation of life in the west. The fisherman at work is rendered timeless by the subtle colour harmonies of grey and pink that unites him with the water, sky, and rocks. All are transformed by the misty atmosphere of the Irish climate. Typically Henry (1877-1958) devotes a large proportion of the composition to the sky whose complex cloud patterns provide a passage of almost abstract painting. While the west could generate positive romantic images it could also inspire more complex responses. Grace Henry (1868-1953) found life in Achill difficult and isolating. *Girl in a Village in the West of Ireland* (Fig I) is an unusual image of a peasant woman silhouetted against the crowded forms of thatched cottages and a high mountain. Her self-conscious pose and intense expression may come from reluctance on the part of islanders to pose for artists, something that Paul Henry notes in his autobiographies.¹ But equally the figure's demeanour and her sheltering beneath an elaborate shawl may reflect a problematic relationship to her surroundings, not normally presented in Irish art. By contrast George Russell's (1867-1935), landscapes are based on a close harmonious relationship between humanity and nature. Steeped in symbolism and theosophy, Russell believed in the connection between outward sensations and inner responses. His *Children at Slieve League, Co. Donegal*, (Cat. no 47) shows two figures embracing with a vista of sand and mountains extending behind them. Subtle exaggerations of light and colour such as the patches of intense blue in the cliffs and rocky ground create a pulsating vision of the Donegal landscape a location for which the artist had particular fondness. Unlike the Henrys Russell holidayed in the west rather than living there long term. His visits to Donegal were particularly productive and their regenerative power is reflected in the work that he made there.



Fig IX (Detail)

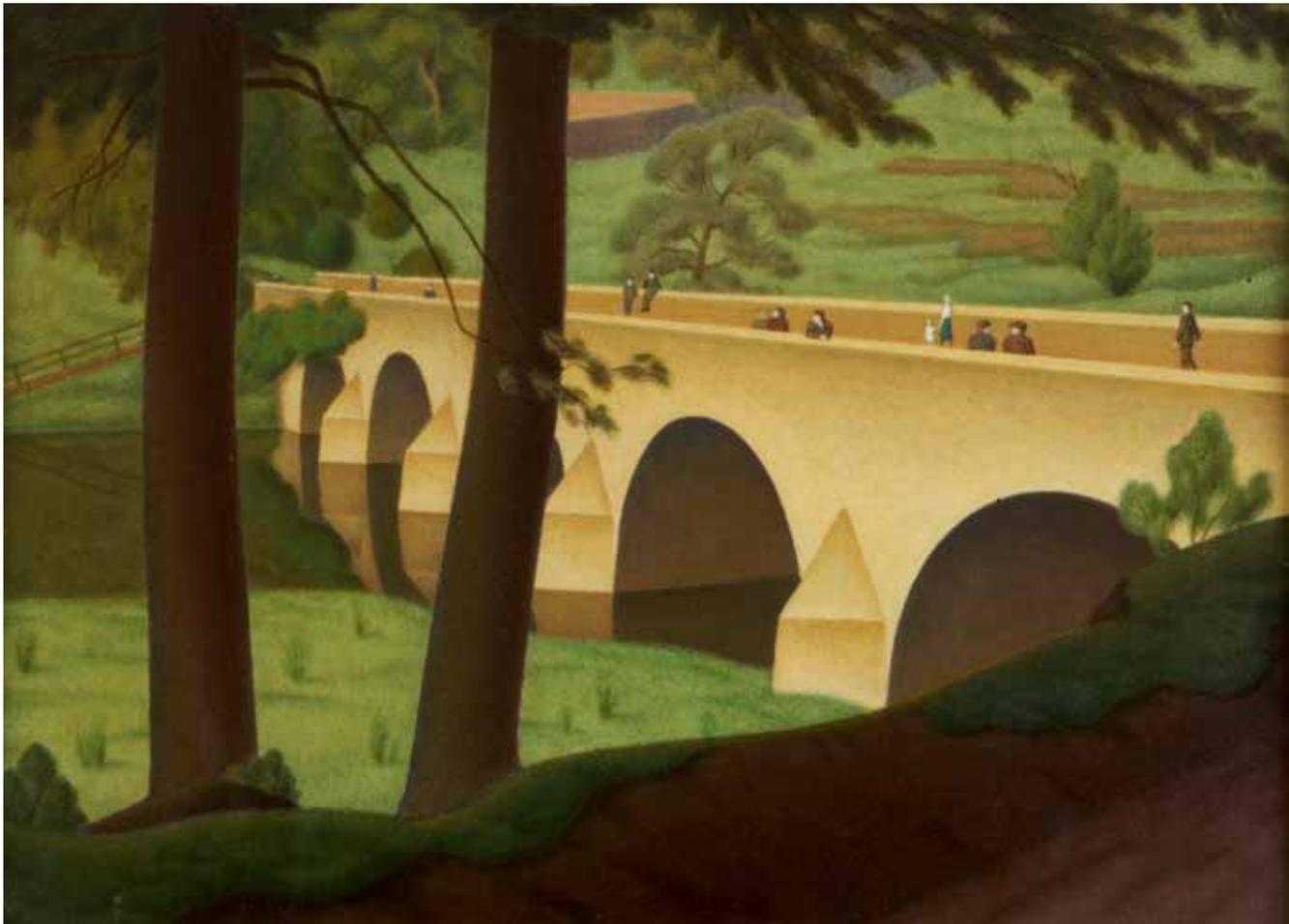


Fig X

The Henrys' journey from London to Achill in 1910 is akin to many such expeditions by taken by modernist artists. In the 1930s Elizabeth Rivers (1903-1964) also travelled from London to Inis Mór looking for inspiration which she found in abundance. Her etching *Shipping Cattle for the Galway Fair* (Cat. no 45(b)) brings modernist graphic design to bear on the labours of the Aran Islanders. The stark black and white image is indebted to the geometric forms of cubism which she had studied in Paris. Like Henry, Rivers's short visit resulted in a prolonged stay in the west of seven years from 1936 to 1943.

The new aesthetic language of modernism which Rivers brought to bear on the west was also used to transform urban locations into something more universal. It is deployed by Colin Middleton (1910-1983) and John Luke (1906-1975), Northern artists, who had encountered cubist and surrealist art in London and the continent in the 1930s. In Middleton's *The Holy Land* (1945, fig. no XI) the quotidian aspects of Belfast life – boys playing football, people strolling and reading, - are made strange through the application of a modernist style. The long rows of houses appear as simplified hexagonal boxes of red and grey. Newspaper pages float like giant butterflies across the sky. The harmonious relationship of figures and buildings is however subtly undermined by the overriding greyness of the sky and the ground which bring a decided tension into the work. Luke's *Shaw's Bridge*, (1939, fig. no X) monumentalises a nearby landmark. Strongly influenced by a cubist aesthetic, Luke makes the bridge into a giant solid form on which the figures appear tiny and inconsequential. Its golden colour and the strong greens and stylised shapes of the surrounding countryside indicate Luke's knowledge of early Renaissance art as much as modernism. Both Middleton and Luke's work are significant examples of art which refer to the impact of modernity on Irish life and do so in a highly stylised and poetic manner which is very different from the practices of realism.



Fig XI

Salvador Dalí

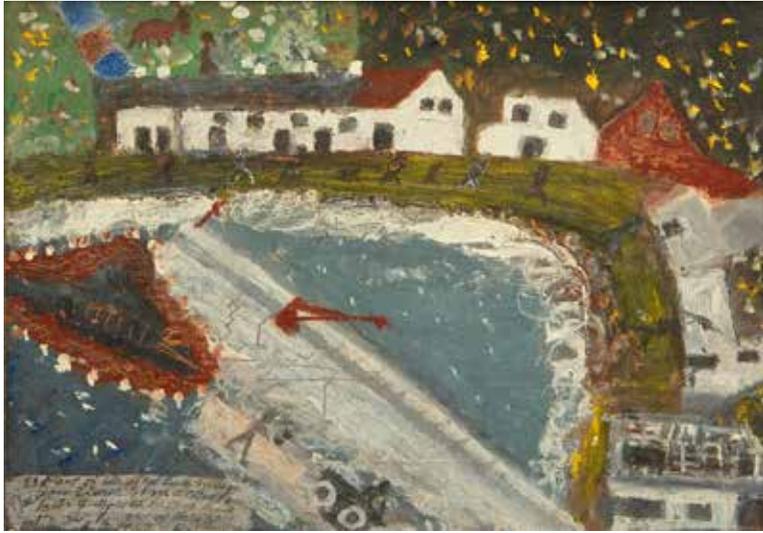


Fig XII



Fig XIII

The draw of the west to London based artists in this period continues to be seen in a work which belonged to Elizabeth Rivers, Kenneth Hall's *Hooker leaving Inisheer*. One of the White Stag group who came to Ireland in the war years, Hall (1913-1946) brings a new vision of the west. Influenced by the English naive artist Christopher Wood (1901-1930), Hall goes back to basics in his simple outlined elements of buildings, figures, boats and landscape. His view of the west strips away the monumentality of Henry's version and is also distinctly lacking in the nationalist rhetoric of Keating or Charles Lamb. His influence is apparent in the work of Gerard Dillon (1916-1971), whose painting shares Hall's unassuming approach. *The Jockey* (Fig XIV), its composition suggestive of a holiday snap, emphasises the importance of the community to the west. Dillon declared that Seán Keating's illustrations to J.M. Synge's *Playboy of the Western World* and the paintings of Marc Chagall (1887-1985) made him want to paint the west of Ireland. In both sources place is inextricably bound up with the lives and attitudes of its inhabitants. Dillon thought of Connemara as a magical place removed from the insecurities of post-war London, Dublin and Belfast. His view was shared by many of his fellow Irishmen and women and it is reflected in the humour and delight which he brings to his representations of the region. Of his own attitude to the west, Dillon wrote 'Some Irish critics say I'm stage Irish, that I see the people and the landscape of the West with the eye of a visitor. Think of the West and life lived there. Then think of my childhood and youth in the middle of industrial Belfast. Is not the west and the life there a great strange land of wonder to the visitor from the red brick city? I suppose these same critics call Synge 'stage Irish', and deny that his work is Art.'²

In trying to express the primitive nature of their experience artists became conscious of creating their work in ways that conveyed the directness of their encounter. Hall's painting of *Hooker leaving Inisheer* (Fig XIII) is an attempt to see the place afresh as if from a non-artist's or an innocent eye. This idea of an unmediated connection to place is most evident in the paintings of the untrained Tory Island painter James Dixon (1887-1970). He took up painting in the late 1950s having met the artist Derek Hill (1916-2000) when he visited the island. Dixon's images of Tory, although influenced by Hill's practice, seem to convey an honest, engaged representation of the island. This is attributed to the fact that the artist was a native islander who spent his entire life in its environment. Also as seen in *Giant Muldoon at the West End Village, Tory Island*, (1967, Fig XII) the flattened perspective, crowded composition and expressive use of colour indicate a childlike sense of his surroundings. The guileless qualities of the work convey the uncomplicated nature of the island, thereby fulfilling the cosmopolitan view of the rural as pure and simple. In reality, of course, Dixon's work is much more sophisticated than this suggests and life on Tory is equally more complicated. What is significant is that the expressive qualities of such outsider art were highly prized and were emulated by more conventional professional artists.

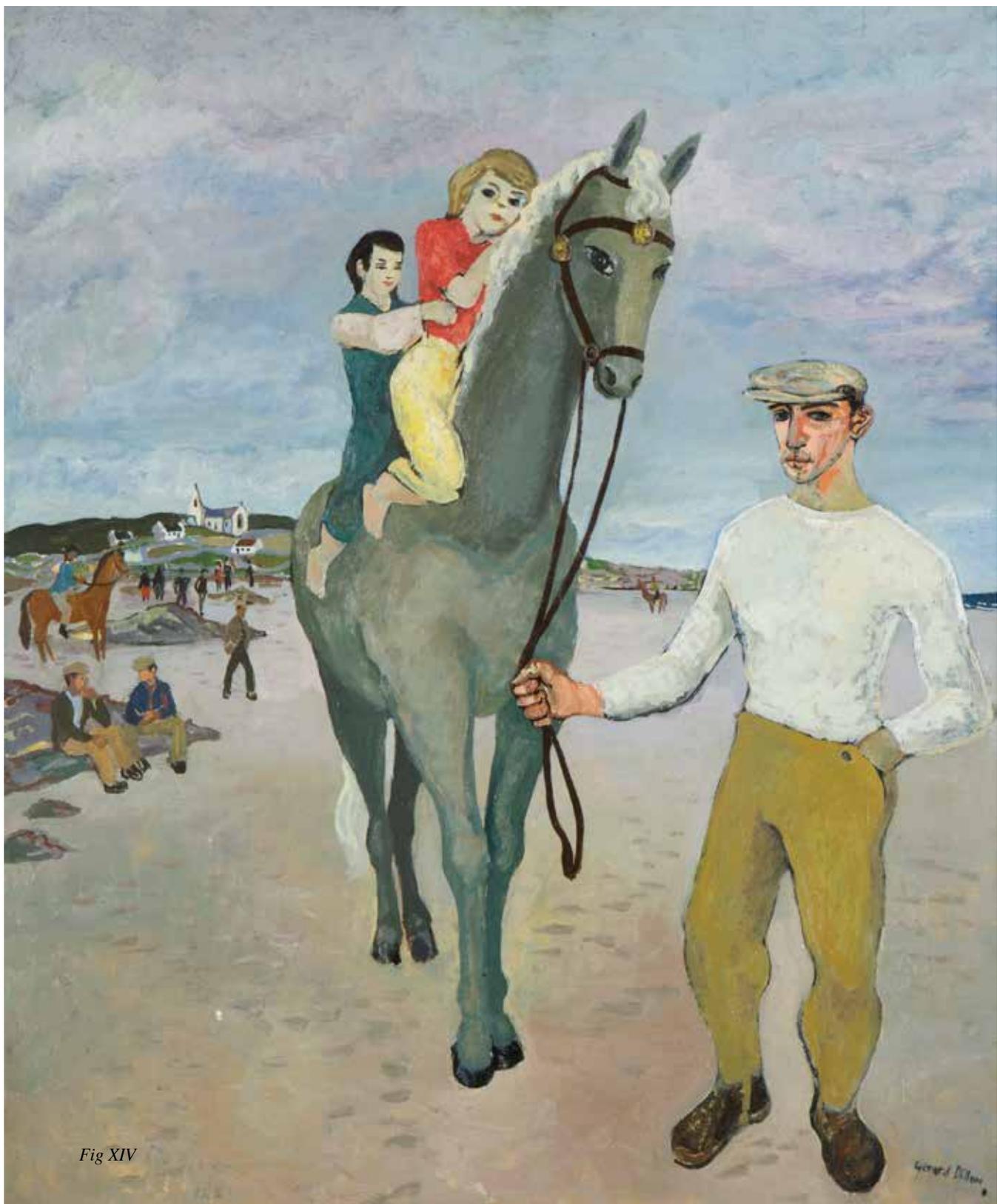


Fig XIV



Fig XV

Nano Reid (1900-1981) is an example of an artist who although trained in Dublin, Paris and London, sought to reject both realist and modernist conventions in her work. She developed a highly individual aesthetic to express her ideas. Her work draws on the landscape and inhabitants of the area around her native Drogheda. A key theme that it explores is the continuity between the past and the present. Like many of her contemporaries, Reid was conscious of this relationship changing fundamentally with the onslaught of urbanisation. *The Wren* (Fig XVI) refers to the Wren Boys who, on St. Stephen's Day, disguise themselves to hunt the wren and come asking for money to prevent them from killing the bird. Reid's energetic application of paint conveys the excitement of the event, with tribal like figures carrying torches through the landscape, into which typically of Reid, their forms appear imbedded. Her treatment of this subject evokes the longevity of the Wren Boys as a festival with ancient origins going back to Celtic times. Reid uses a high perspective so that the entire composition is taken up with the landscape. The absence of a horizon line intensifies the viewer's relationship to the subject and is indicative of an intimate connection between the artist and her surroundings. The richly layered application of earthy colours emphasises the ancient nature of the landscape and the primordial relationship of the Wren Boys to it.

Reid and other mid 20th century Irish artists had an illustrious example of how an artist could push forward an individual approach in the painting of Jack B. Yeats (1871-1957), the exhibition and production of which accelerated in the 1940s and early 1950s. Yeats's work bridges the local and the universal. Although the west of Ireland is a recurring theme, it acts as a catalyst for more profound themes. The subject of *The Figure Head Carver* (1944, Fig XV) comes out of the artist's imagination but also his close attachment to Sligo, where he spent his childhood and to which he often returns in his later work. The peak-capped carver who stands in his workshop surrounded by the strange human-like forms of his figureheads, can be linked to the heroic figure of the pilot who appears in other works by Yeats. This man kept watch at Rosses's Point in a little hut on the headland and from there he guided the ships up the Garravogue River into Sligo town. Through the open doorway a view of ships at sea acts as a metaphor for the man's imagination and by extension that of the artist in his studio. As in so many of the works in this exhibition and more generally in 20th century Irish art, the painting demonstrates a nostalgic attitude to the past and a reluctance to deal directly with the present moment. Yeats's work does, however, resonate with the present in its expression of both an intense optimism and an underlying melancholy. Ernie O'Malley wrote that Yeats's vision makes us 'aware of inherent characteristics, psychological directives and eternal verities'.³

The diversity of approaches and practices in this exhibition belie any attempt to categorise or generalise about the representation of everyday life in Irish art. The sheer variety of work does, however, pay testament to the fact that Irish artists engaged continuously in new and challenging practices and that the people and places of Ireland provided artists with abundant inspiration and endless material for their art.

Dr. Róisín Kennedy
Dublin May 2012

1 Paul Henry, *An Irish Portrait. The Autobiography of Paul Henry*, London, 1951, p.52.

2 Gerard Dillon, 'The Artist Speaks', *Envoy*, February 1951, pp.39-40.

3 Ernie O'Malley, 'Introduction' in *Jack B. Yeats National Loan Exhibition Catalogue*, Dublin, 1945, reprinted in eds. C. O'Malley and N. Allen, *Broken Landscapes*, Lilliput Press, 2011, p.395.

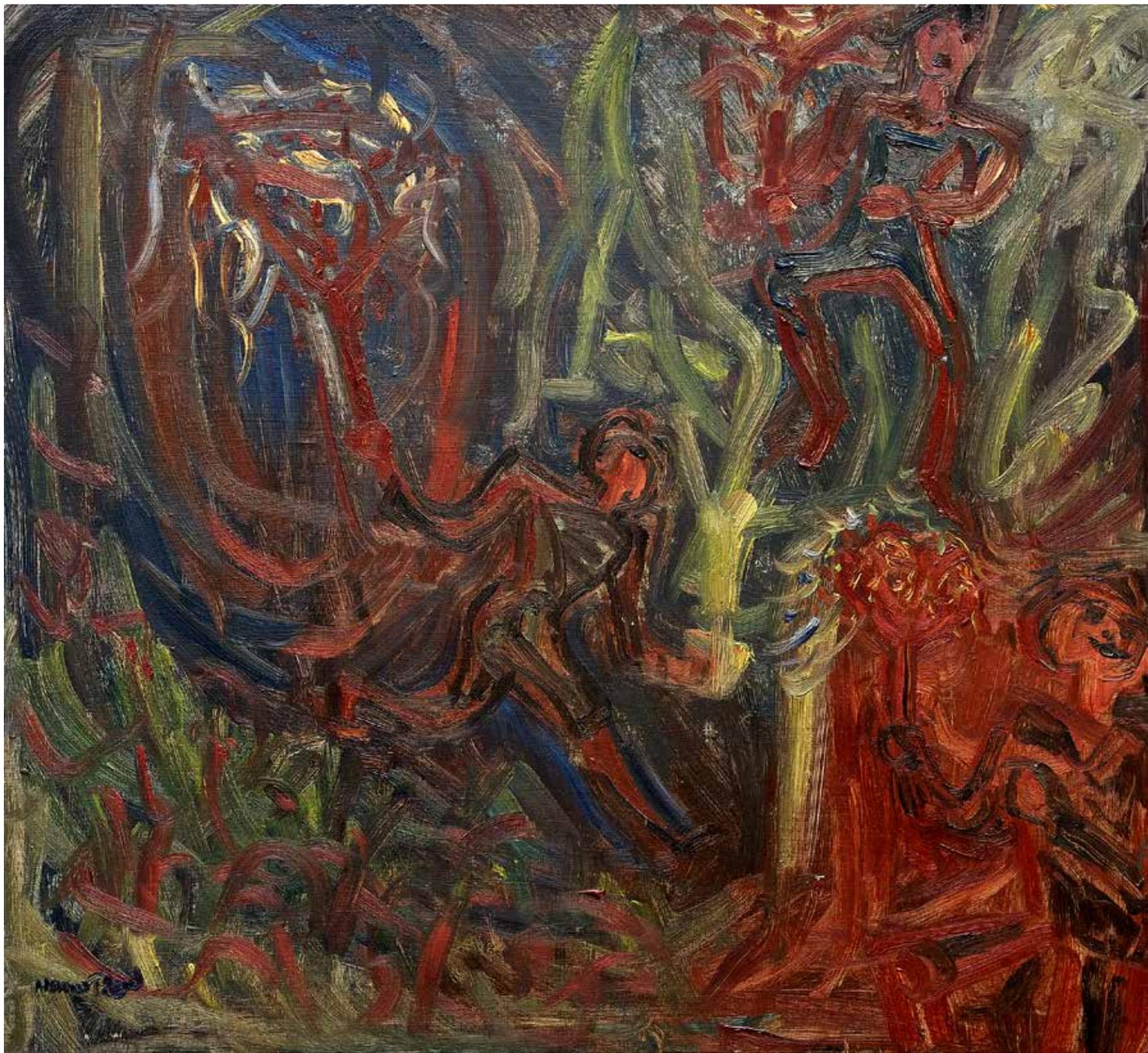


Fig XVI

1. HENRY ALLAN RHA (1865-1912)
THE RAG PICKERS (1900)
 Oil on canvas , 66 x 101.5cm (26.5 x 40"), Signed

Provenance: Previously in the collection of the artist Joseph Malachy Kavanagh

Exhibited: 1900 RHA Annual Exhibition, Dublin, Cat. No. 13
 1975 Crawford Gallery, Cork ROSC Chorcai "*Irish Art 1900 – 1950*" Cat. No. 1
 1977 "Irish Art from Private Collections 1870 – 1930" Wexford Arts Centre Cat. No. 1
 2006 "Whipping the Herring" Crawford Gallery, Cork

Literature: "Ireland's Painters 1600 - 1940" by Anne Crookshank and the Knight of Glin 2002 p266 (Fig 364)
 "One Hundred Years of Irish Art - A Millennium Presentation" by Eamonn Mallie 2000 p58
 "Whipping the Herring" Crawford Art Gallery 2006

Born in Dundalk in 1865, Henry Allan studied art in Belfast and Dublin before enrolling at the age of eighteen in the Academie Royale in Antwerp, where Vincent van Gogh had briefly been a student. In the late nineteenth century an artist's education was not considered complete if they had not spent time studying in Paris or Belgium. Most artists chose Paris, but many Irish artists favoured Antwerp, at least before moving on to Paris. Belgium was considered a safer country for young students, and the style of paintings taught at the Acadmie Royale was less radical than the Impressionism then coming into vogue in Paris. In Antwerp, Allan shared lodging with fellow Irish students Richard Moynan and Edwin Hill. He won a number of prizes for drawing and painting, and returned to Ireland in 1889, showing that year for the first time at the Royal Hibernian Academy – a work entitled *Country Road near Antwerp*. After living in Downpatrick for a year or so Allan moved to Dublin, where he won the Royal Dublin Society's Taylor Prize. In addition to painting mainly Victorian genre subjects such as beggars, rag-pickers, flower and match-sellers, Allan painted landscapes around counties Down and Dublin.

In this painting, two women ply their meagre trade in Ringsend, a windswept coastal area close to Dublin city. The term rag-pickers is used to describe those who sort through general domestic waste to identify anything that is recyclable or saleable. The theme was popular with artists who depicted the harsher side of urban life, such as Daumier in France and the Finnish painter Eero Jarnefelt. In 1900, when this painting was shown at the Royal Hibernian Academy, rag-picking would have been an extremely marginal occupation, as most households would have had little domestic waste; even clothes would have been handed down until they were, literally, rags. However, cotton rags had some value as they were used in the making of expensive hand-made paper, and so the two women may be collecting rags to be used at Rathfarnham paper mills, or at Clondalkin, where Thomas Sears had established his factory in 1837. There was also a paper mill in Dublin city itself, at Kilmainham. One of the women turns to her companion while pointing to another group of rag-pickers in the distance, perhaps complaining that their 'patch' has been invaded.

Peter Murray



2. GRETTA BOWEN (1880-1981)
QUIET SUNDAY NEAR THE SEA
Oil on board, 50 x 60cm (20 x 24"), Signed

The mother of George Campbell, Bowen took up painting shortly before her seventieth birthday, using materials belonging to her second artist son, Arthur. In 1955 the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts - the forerunner of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland - organised her first solo exhibition. "Rhythm and movement are the characteristics of her work...and whatever she paints conveys a feeling of happiness, of brightness, of delight in life" - The Times 29th December 1955. Other solo exhibitions followed in Belfast and Dublin between the 1960s and 1980s.

'She ignored conventional linear perspective in favour of horizontal arrangements reminiscent of medieval manuscripts and tapestries. She tended not to mix her colours, taking them straight from the tube and drawing directly with the brush. Her subject was everyday life, enhanced by childhood memory. No time for introspection here; her subjects are living life rather than contemplating it.'

Síle Connaughton-Deeny

3. DEBORAH BROWN (b. 1927)
PROCESSION TO THE MASS ROCK
(CUSHENDALL) 1951-53.
 Oil on board, 56 x 45 cm (22 x 18")

Exhibited: "*Deborah Brown Exhibition*" Belfast Museum & Art Gallery, 1956

Literature: "*Deborah Brown From Painting to Sculpture*" by Hilary Pyle 2005.
 Illustrated. Plate 7.

Deborah Brown was born in 1927, spending the war years in Cushendun where she knew Humbert Craig. After a year at the Belfast College of Art, she attended the National College of Art in Dublin. Early solo shows included the CEMA Gallery, Belfast, 1951, the British Council Gallery, Glasgow, 1955, and the Ulster Museum (organised by John Hewitt) in 1956, after which she spent several years designing sets for Mary O'Malley at the Lyric Theatre. The New Vision Centre Gallery in London exhibited abstract paintings in 1959 and 1964; there followed an important commission for a series of large paintings for the new Ferranti building in Manchester; and from 1966 she exhibited regularly at the Ritchie Hendriks Gallery in Dublin, by then working in fibre glass and moving towards three dimensions. Her many awards include the Carroll Prize in the IELA, the Open Painting Exhibition, Belfast, (both 1970), and a sculpture prize in Limerick in 1983. International exhibitions included representing Ireland at Cagnes sur Mer in 1973, and ROSC 71 and 84, which both toured America. After a 1982 mid-career retrospective, shown in Belfast and Dublin, her sculpture made a significant return to figurative themes.



4. GEORGE CAMPBELL RHA RUA (1917-1979)
MUSICIANS - VIRGINIA NO. 3
 Oil on board, 50 x 39cm (19 ¾ x 15 ½ ")
 Signed

Exhibited : "*George Campbell Exhibition*" The Ritchie Hendriks Gallery, Dublin August 1967 where purchased by current owner.

The son of the artist Gretta Bowen, Campbell was born in Co. Wicklow and schooled in Dublin. He was a close friend of Gerard Dillon and Daniel O'Neill, and exhibited at the Royal Hibernian Academy over a period of 30 years from 1948. He was greatly influenced by Spain, a country he first visited the decade before this work was painted, but to which he returned every year and which influenced his portrayal of street scenes and musicians.

This work dates from 1966/7 after George and Madge Campbell had returned to Ireland and built a home for themselves in Virginia, Co. Cavan. Campbell remembers his time there fondly "Virginia gave us years of pleasure, wandering and looking at lakes and generally funk holing from city smells and noise. Nights of good traditional music into which I plunged again - lively conversations in the McEvoy's, the McQuades houses and the McDonnells and Moores.

I finished a series of musicianers at this period - one of the best series I have done I believe. Mickey Caldwell, Tommy Reilly, Patsy Cook, Jimmy Fay, all striking individualists and excellent players, all playing with that fine sense of absorption into music" (Transcript of BBC radio interview).



5. ROBERT TAYLOR CARSON HRUA (1919-2008)
CHILDREN AT PLAY, ROSSNOWLAGH STRAND
Oil on board, 40.6 x 94cm (16 x 37"), Signed

Robert Taylor Carson studied at the Belfast College of Art. Working as an unaccredited war artist for the United States Air Force in Northern Ireland, he recorded the daily activities of the American troops during 1943-45. After the war he spent a year in America working as a portrait painter and won first prize in a National Art Competition in New York in 1947. He held solo shows in London, Glasgow, Belfast, Dublin, New York and Chicago and was a regular exhibitor at the Royal Academy, the Royal Hibernian Academy and the Royal Ulster Academy. Carson lived and worked in Co. Donegal for many years, spending part of each year abroad, particularly in Spain.

Rosstownlough has for years been a very popular beach for day trippers from Counties Fermanagh and Tyrone many of whom have established holiday homes in the area. This work hung for many years in the well known Hotel there, "The Sand House Hotel" which made worldwide headlines earlier this year when it was acquired at a knock down price by the management and staff who continue to run it successfully to the exacting standards laid down by its previous matriarch, hotelier Mary Britton.



6. JEROME CONNOR (1874-1943)
THE PIKEMAN (1940)
 Bronze, 83 cm high (32.7”), Signed

Provenance: Purchased directly from the artist by the current owners Father c.1940 and thence by descent.

Exhibited: 1942 RHA Annual Exhibition Cat. No. 310 where lent by current owners Father
 1943 IELA 1st Exhibition “Jerome Connor Memorial Section” Cat. No. 10
 1977 Wexford Arts Centre “Irish Art from Private Collections 1870 - 1930” Cat. No. 2
 1988 Annascaul “Jerome Connor Exhibition”
 1991 Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery, Dublin “Irish Art and Modernism”
 Cat. No.128 - this exhibition then toured to The Ulster Museum in Belfast.
 1993 The National Gallery of Ireland “Jerome Connor Retrospective” Cat. No. 22

Literature: “Jerome Connor I “ The Capuchin Annual 1963 by Mairin Allen p347 - 68 illustrated p351
 “Irish Art and Modernism” by Dr SB Kennedy 1991, illustrated p340
 “Jerome Connor - Irish American Sculptor”
 by Giollamuire O’Murchu National Gallery Ireland 1993, illustrated p73

Jerome Connor was born near Annascaul in Co. Kerry but in 1874 when Connor was only thirteen the family emigrated to Massachusetts, U.S.A.. Shortly after their arrival his father died and Connor had to leave home to seek work. He moved through various jobs including being a prize fighter before being trained as a bronze founder and he assisted Roland Hinton Perry in casting of “The Fountain of Neptune” bronzes for the Library of Congress.

He worked for a period with the Roycroft Institution and when his friend and patron Elbert Hubbard its founder died on the Lusitania he was commissioned to do a full sized statue of him. His Irish-American connections brought him the Robert Emmett commission and later the Lusitania Memorial commission which were to see him return to Ireland in 1925. Various other commissions in Ireland were to follow as well as a remarkable series of small bronzes which he described as ‘little pieces of free work’ more loosely handled than his earlier work. They are of particular importance as they are the product of talent which first introduced the process of casting, chasing and patinating of bronze to Ireland.

“*The Pikeman*” is Connor’s second design for the unrealized 1798 Memorial “Pikeman” intended for Denny Street, Tralee, Co Kerry where it was to replace a stone figure destroyed by the British Forces during the Irish War of Independence. The contrast between this design and the earlier one of 1928 - 31 illustrates Connor’s move from formal clarity and academic pose to a more expressive approach achieved through rugged modelling, simplicity of pose and defiant expression.

Judith Hill has written : “In 1938 the Tralee Pikeman committee took Connor to court for failure to complete the work and Connor was obliged to complete “The Pikeman” without further payment. His next “Pikeman” (The one here), freely modeled is quite different to the first. The surface of the clay is rough, expressive, the essence of vigour - the figure is alert, detached, slender. Connor seemed intent to project an image whose essential liveliness was not dissipated by a detailed attention to accurate surface detail.” (Judith Hill “Irish Public Sculpture”). It was never realised in Tralee as the committee abandoned Connor in favour of Albert Power whose limestone piece was unveiled by Maud Gonne in June 1939 which means this piece is likely to date to 1938 around the time of the court case.

We acknowledge Christina Kennedy’s private research and Judith Hill’s writings which formed the basis of this catalogue entry.



7. WILLIAM CONOR RHA PRUA (1881-1968)
GOING TO MASS
Oil on canvas, 55 x 65cms (21 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 25 $\frac{3}{4}$ "), Signed

Born in Belfast, William Conor began his career as an illustrator before being commissioned during World War I by the British government to produce official records of soldiers and munitions workers. He exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1921 and in Dublin at the Royal Hibernian Academy from 1918-1967, showing there nearly 200 works. Conor was one of the first Academicians when the Belfast Art Society became the Ulster Academy of Arts in 1930. Throughout his career, his paintings and drawings in richly coloured pastels and oils celebrated ordinary working class people and the Irish way of life, and treated his subjects with gentle humour and compassion. His work provides an insight, overlooked by many other painters, into everyday life in Belfast particularly, and produced a positive image of Northern Irish people in a time when sectarianism was beginning to strain society.

Going to Mass depicts a community making their way to Mass in rural Ireland. Despite using little detail in his Mass-goers, Conor manages to convey a real sense of a solemn community united in their religion. The open space at the front seems to invite us to take our place in the procession, while also leading the eye towards the mountains in the background.



8. JAMES HUMBERT CRAIG RUA RHA (1878-1944)
LOADING TURF IN CONNEMARA
 Oil on canvas, 38 x 50.8cm (15 X 20"), Signed

Provenance: Purchased from the Victor Waddington Galleries, Dublin, 1940, by the current owner's father and thence by descent.

James Humbert Craig was born in Belfast and raised in Co. Down. He abandoned a career in his father's wholesale merchant tea business to follow the artistic heritage of his Swiss mother and briefly attended the Belfast School of Art, before becoming a largely self-taught painter of landscapes. He quickly attained popularity for his richly textured landscapes with an elegant Impressionist treatment of light, and regularly exhibited with the Royal Hibernian Academy between 1915 and 1944, becoming an Academician in 1928. In the inter-war period he exhibited regularly in London, Dublin and Belfast and he visited the continent on several occasions, and painted in Switzerland, the south of France and northern Spain. His work is in many collections, including the National Gallery of Ireland and the Ulster Museum.

During the 1920s and 1930s J. H. Craig spend a good deal of time painting in Connemara and County Donegal. Virtually a self-taught painter, the loose Impressionist brushwork and fluid paint evident in this picture are typical of Craig's oeuvre in general. Almost certainly painted out of doors, Loading Turf shows what Anthony Liddell called the 'extraordinary rapidity' of Craig's technique and ably conveys the very nature of the landscape, which was one of the artist's major accomplishments. 'No one,' said Liddell, 'can more confidently transfer to canvas the superb brilliance which bursts at moments upon the Irish scene' (Liddell, *The Ulsterman*, 1933, p. 19). Here, the heavy clouds massing overhead, which cast their shadows on the distant hills, add a gentle theatrical quality to the scene. Reviewing Craig's first ever one-man show at the Mills Hall, Merrion Row, Dublin, in 1923 the *Irish Times* (16 October 1923) thought his pictures were to be 'lived with', finding them 'restful and growing on one by their rhythmic composition and true lighting'. And in 1925 the *Irish Statesman* (5 December 1925) considered that his greatest strength lay in his pastoral scenes, a view that George Russell (AE) concurred with a year later when he wrote of Craig, 'out in all weathers' delighting in the nature he painted. 'I have seen Corots ... hung in important galleries which have no more moving beauty,' he said (Russell, writing as Y.O., *Irish Statesman*, 4 December 1926). Dated 1930s on stylistic grounds.

Dr. S.B. Kennedy



9. LILIAN DAVIDSON ARHA (1893-1954)
FAIR DAY, WESTPORT
Oil on canvas, 66 x 76cm (26 x 30”), Signed with monogram

Literature: “One Hundred Years of Irish Art - A Millennium
Presentation” by Eamonn Mallie (ed.) p116, illustration p117

Lilian Davidson was born in County Wicklow at the end of the 19th century and taught illustration in Dublin schools and at her home in Earlsfort Terrace. She also produced designs for the theatre, as well as plays for the Gate and Torch theatres in Dublin, under an assumed name, Ulick Burke. She travelled widely on the continent, painting in Belgium in the early 1920s, before moving to France and dividing her time between there and the west of Ireland. Davidson was well regarded as a portrait painter, but was also strongly influenced by Jack B. Yeats in his representational phase, although without his exuberant use of colour. Her works can be found in the collections of the National Gallery of Ireland and the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery, Dublin.



GERARD DILLON (1916-1971)

THE JOCKEY

Oil on board, 76 x 63.5cm (30 x 25")

Signed and inscribed with title verso

Exhibited: "Ulster Artists" Ava Gallery, 15th-29th April 2010, Cat No.9

"Collectors Eye" Cat No. 4, The Model Arts and Niland Gallery, Sligo January – February 2004

The Hunt Museum, Limerick March – April 2004.

Maxwell Galleries, San Francisco 1954.

A mostly self taught artist, Belfast born Gerard Dillon began painting full time in the late 1930s, having left school at the age of fourteen to pursue a career as a painter and decorator and studying at the Belfast Technical School before moving to London in 1934. In the following decade Dillon spent bouts in both London and Dublin, exhibiting there and in Northern Ireland. However, in common with many artists in this group, the place that significantly impacted the subject matter of his painting was the West of Ireland, where he spent much time with George Campbell and was intrigued by the locals and the landscape.

Dillon received international recognition in 1958 when he had the double honour of representing Ireland at the Guggenheim International Show in New York and Great Britain at the Pittsburgh International Exhibition. During his career he continually with the Royal Hibernian Academy, and in 1972 a major retrospective of his work was mounted by the Ulster Museum and travelled to the Hugh Lane in Dublin.

In the late 1940's Gerard Dillon entered into a stipend arrangement with Victor Waddington which allowed him to rent a cottage in Moyard, in the West of Ireland to execute images in preparation for his first solo show with Waddington Galleries in 1951. In August 1950, several friends visited him including a group of Australians he met at the Abbey Arts Centre, Hertfordshire, between 1947-51. These included the art historian Bernard Smith (1916-2011).

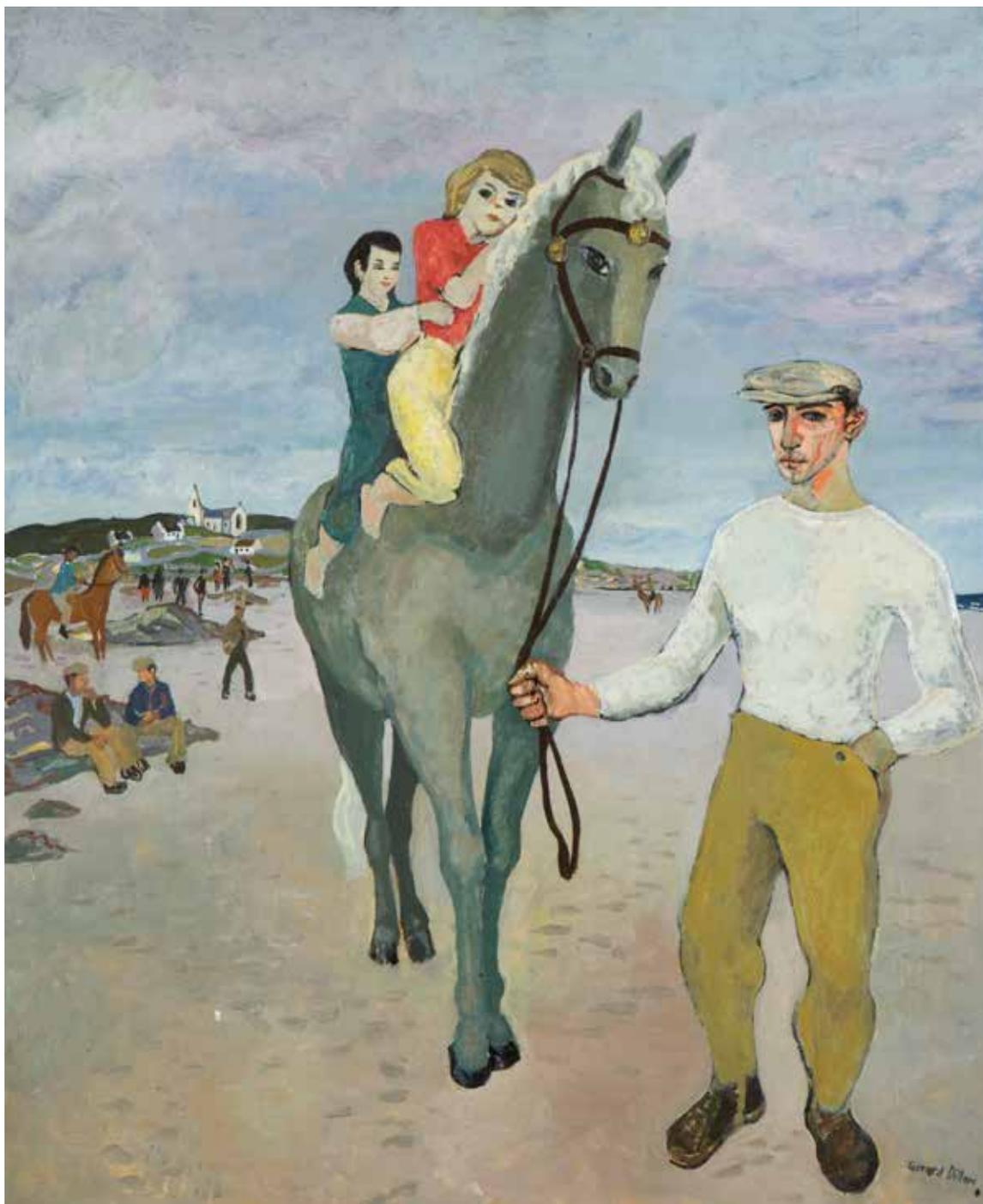
After Smith's visit to Moyard, Dillon wrote to him giving him an account of his life as Smith had undertaken to write an article on the artist for the *Envoy* magazine. The artist also spoke about a series of painting he had executed from a day trip he took to Omey Island. He described the events "...The Jockeys were local boys from Omey and some girls too. People were barking on the beach and there was great excitement. With the clouds racing in the sky over the Twelve Pins and the mainland looking most strange with crags in every field and stonewalls around the crags-you'd have loved it and the whole day without rain, not even a shower. I've painted some of the subjects-but my God the difficulty of getting the thrill one felt with it all..."

Omey Island is a tidal island close to Claddaghduff on the western edge of Connemara. Surrounded by views of the sea in one direction and the Twelve Bens in the other, the mile long beach only appears as the ten foot tide recedes. Annually, in August, at low tide a makeshift track is constructed, and jockeys, and horses are quickly groomed and exercised, and the race against the threat of the tide, and prize begins. After six hours, the sea returns and swallows up everything in its path. The Island itself remains a place of devotion to Saint Feichín, with a medieval granite church, holy well, and the ruins of Teampal Feichín.

The artist exhibited three Omey Island paintings in his first solo show with Victor Waddington Galleries in 1951. These included "Omey Island Regatta", "Omey Island Strand" and "Omey Island Race Day". Other titles from this series of works include "Before the Races, Omey Island" "Spectators Omey Island Race Day," and "Omey Island Ponies". This painting, "The Jockey" belongs to this series of paintings.

Later Smith reflected on his life in the 1940's in "A Pavane for another time" (published by Macmillan, 2002). He refers to his stay in Connemara and Gerard's "long colourful letters", adding with a tinge of sadness, "Gerard is dead and my essay is still unwritten."

Contact between Dillon and Smith ended, when Smith's scholarship to study at the Courtauld Institute ended, and it is unlikely that he ever knew that Louis Le Brocqy wrote the short essay on the artist for the *Envoy* magazine.



11. JAMES DIXON (1887-1970)
GIANT MULDOON AT THE WEST END VILLAGE, TORY ISLAND
 Oil on board, 38 x 53cm (15 x 21")
 Signed, indistinctly inscribed with legend and dated 1967

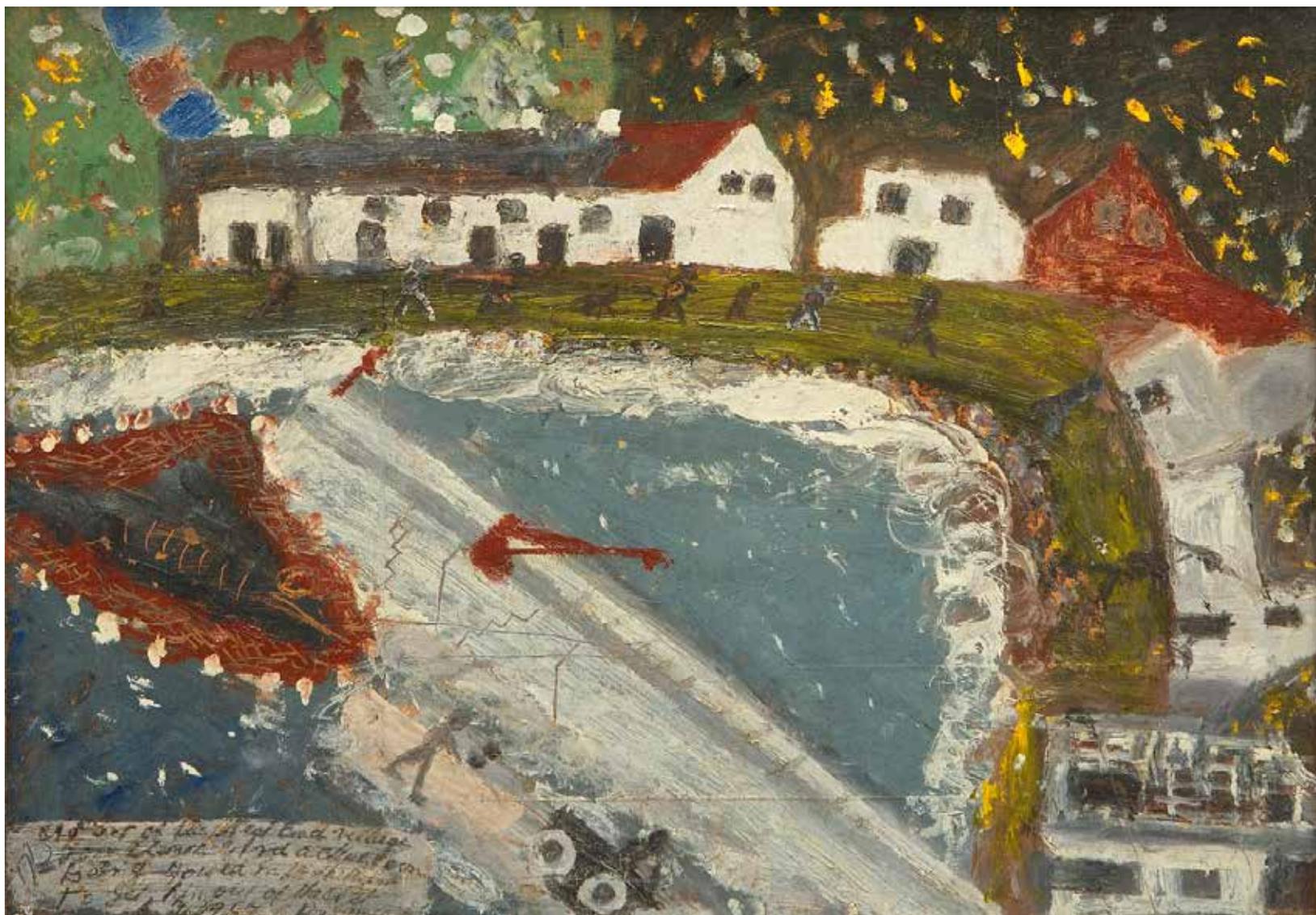
James Dixon was born on Tory Island, Co. Donegal, the most remote of all Ireland's off shore islands. Apart from an occasional visit to the mainland and one short period in the west of Ireland as a fishing instructor, Dixon spent most of his life there and was one of the most significant members of the highly regarded Tory Island school of primitive art. Dixon and other islanders painted what they saw around them in a distinctive detailed, naturalistic style: boats, the wild seas, the island and the small villages grandly named East Town and West Town.

The artist Derek Hill organised exhibitions of the work of the Tory school painters, the first of which took place at the New Gallery, Belfast in 1966, with subsequent exhibitions in Dublin, Vienna and London. In 1990 a retrospective exhibition was held at the Glebe Gallery, Co. Donegal, and the Boole Library, University College Cork.

The idea of an unmediated connection to place is most evident in the paintings of the untrained Tory Island painter James Dixon (1887-1970). He took up painting in the late 1950s having met the artist Derek Hill (1916-2000) when he visited the island. Dixon's images of Tory, although influenced by Hill's practice, seem to convey an honest, engaged representation of the island. This is attributed to the fact that the artist was a native islander who spent his entire life in its environment. Also as seen in *Giant Muldoon at the West End Village, Tory Island*, (1967) the flattened perspective, crowded composition and expressive use of colour indicate a childlike sense of his surroundings. The guileless qualities of the work convey the uncomplicated nature of the island, thereby fulfilling the cosmopolitan view of the rural as pure and simple. In reality, of course, Dixon's work is much more sophisticated than this suggests and life on Tory is equally more complicated. What is significant is that the expressive qualities of such outsider art were highly prized and were emulated by more conventional professional artists.

Dixon's work entered the collections of The Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, The Hugh Lane Gallery and the Bournemouth Art Gallery.

Dr. Róisín Kennedy



519 - out of the old land village
from the old land village
1538 - how to help them
to get them out of the old

12. LADY KATE DOBBIN (1868 - 1955)
MARKET DAY, ROUNDSTONE
Watercolour, 28 x 40 cm (11 x 15.5”), Signed

Exhibited: 1910 RHA Annual Exhibition, Dublin, Cat. No. 277 priced £6.6.0

Born in Bristol, Lady Kate Dobbin married Alfred Graham Dobbin a tobacco manufacturer and High Sheriff of Cork. She studied drawing and painting at the Crawford Municipal College of Art, Cork in the early 1890s and exhibited extensively with the Royal Hibernian Academy between 1894 and 1947. She painted mainly in watercolour and was a regular contributor to the Watercolour Society of Ireland over a period of 50 years. She is known for her scenes of surrounding landscape and countryside and particularly favoured the sea, mist and twilight, and was also well regarded for her flower studies. She continued painting up until her death in her 80s and her work can be found in the Cork Municipal collection and numerous private collections.



13. FRANK EGGINTON RCA (1908-1990)
HUGH STRAIN OF HORN HEAD, CO. DONEGAL
 Watercolour, 53 x 74 cm (21 x 29"), Signed

Frank Egginton, son of the painter Wycliffe Egginton, was born in Cheshire, and educated at Newton College and then Newton Abbot College of Art, before spending some time in an architect's office perfecting his drawing. In 1930 he visited Co. Donegal to paint and continued to return year after year. He exhibited *The Calabber River, Co. Donegal* at the 1936 Royal Scottish Academy. In 1938 he visited the USA and spent several months travelling and painting the landscape and American Indians in their villages. During the Second World War he worked in a Belfast factory, and in 1946 he moved with his wife to Cookstown, Co. Tyrone. A keen ornithologist, in his younger days he had painted on bird-watching trips in Iceland and Switzerland.

Between 1932 and 1938 Egginton exhibited a selection of works with Donegal connections at the Royal Hibernian Academy. In 1952 he was part of a joint exhibition at the Victor Waddington Galleries in Dublin with Howard Knee. A regular exhibitor with the Fine Art Society in London, he showed well over one hundred works there. He was primarily known for his watercolours, although later he began painting some oils. His works can be found in the Queen's University collection.

Hugh Strain was a colourful character who lived in a cottage at the top of Horn Head. He is shown here with his climbing rope examining eggs in his home. Hugh practiced a technique with a noose on the end of a long pole to take Guillemots from the cliff face in the same manner as the inhabitants of St. Kilda. Frank Egginton came across him first in the 1930's when he accompanied Jack and Lavens Mackie to Horn Head and Hugh assisted them in collecting peregrine falcon eggs from the precipitous cliffs of Horn Head which Lavens Mackie then reared and trained to assist airport staff at Nutt's Corner to keep the runways clear from bird strikes. Frank later accompanied Lavens to Iceland to collect Gyr falcons which replaced the peregrines.

When Frank Egginton was painting this picture Hugh (known locally as Hughy), after an extended sitting with lots of chat, remarked "The camera's a handy boy!" He was a colourful character with much chat and local knowledge, the likes of whom we will never see again.

Paddy Mackie



14. KATHLEEN FOX (1880 - 1963)
RUINS OF THE FOUR COURTS (1922)
 Oil on canvas, 50.8 x 68.6cm (20 x 26”), Signed and dated 1922

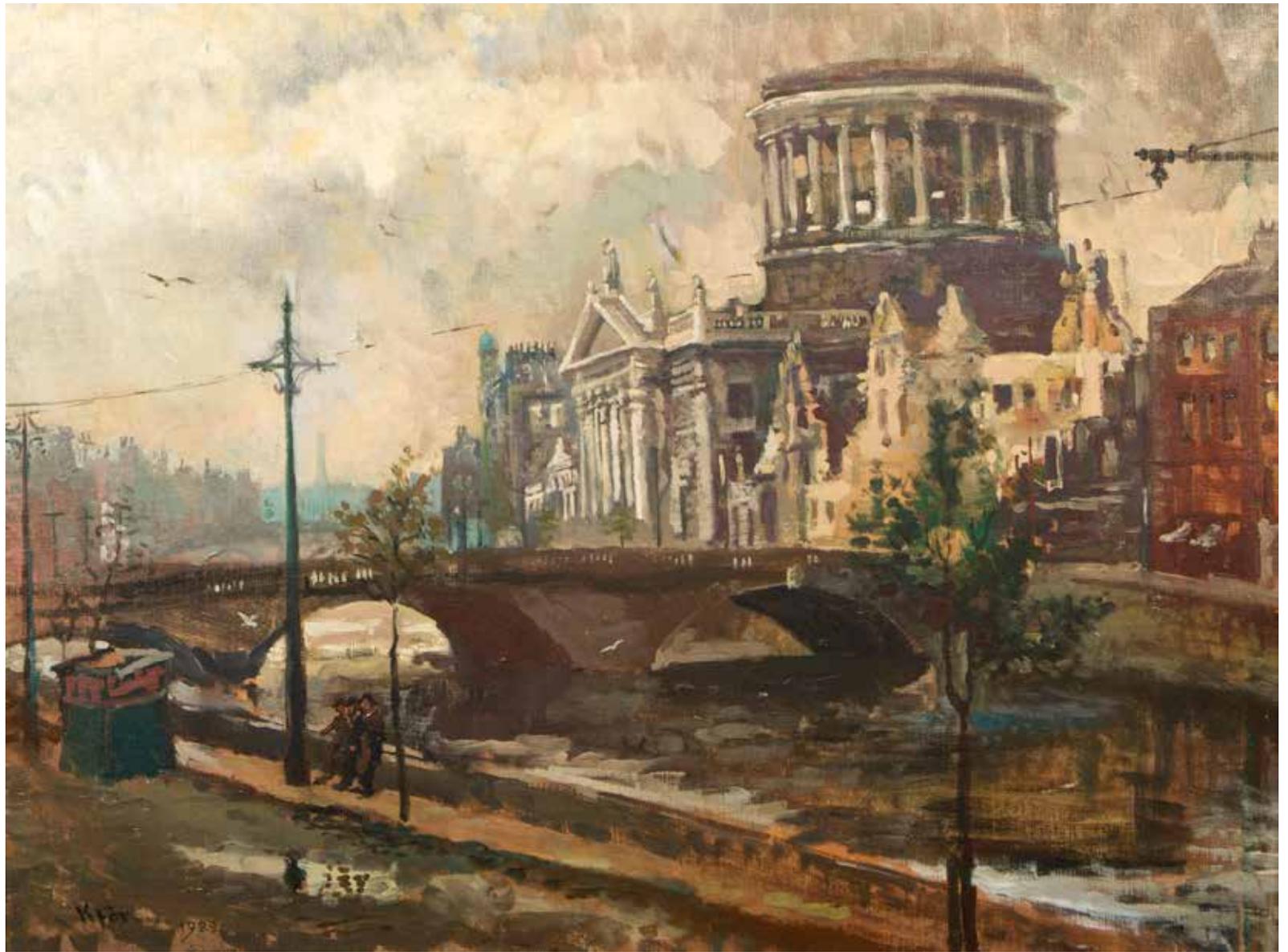
Exhibited: 1923 RHA Annual Exhibition, Dublin Cat. No. 243 priced £52.10.0

Literature: “One Hundred Years of Irish Art - A Millennium Presentation” by Eamonn Mallie (ed.) p222, full page illustration p223

Kathleen Fox was brought up in an Anglo-Irish family on the outskirts of Dublin and studied at the Metropolitan School of Art, attracting the attention of William Orpen, whose assistant she eventually became. She first exhibited with the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1911 before leaving to paint in Paris and Bruges, returning to Dublin in 1916. She moved to Nice at the end of the 1910s but continued to exhibit in London and Dublin as well as France, before returning to Dublin again in the mid 1920s. She was a highly successful portraitist in Ireland and England and well regarded for her flower studies of the 1940s and 50s.

A more academic approach to realism was brought to Irish art through William Orpen’s teaching at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art from 1902-14. His former studio assistant, Kathleen Fox (1880-1963) painted *Ruins of the Four Courts*, (1922) which depicts the familiar building from an established viewpoint across the Liffey. What is striking about the work is that within the tranquil scene the dome of Gandon’s great building is missing and next to it are the shells of buildings destroyed in the War of Independence. Fox’s work belongs to an important strand of early 20th century realist art, one which sought to record the major events of Irish history. This painting does so in a subtle but compelling manner.

Dr. Róisín Kennedy



14A. ROWAN GILLESPIE (B.1953)

THE GREAT DEPARTURE (1996)

Raw Bronze, 28 x 30 x 23 cms (11 x 12 x 9")

Signed and numbered 2/9

Born in Dublin, Rowan Gillespie spent his formative years in Cyprus with his family, only returning to the British Isles when conflict broke out on the island in the 1960s. Known as the 'island of copper' these early years spent in Cyprus influenced his later career, as it is here that he was first introduced to the 'lost wax' process of bronze casting. He was educated at art college in York, going on to study in London where he met and was inspired by legendary sculptor Henry Moore. He spent some time in Norway before settling down in Blackrock, Co. Dublin where he still works today. Early commissions from the Bank of Ireland led to international projects and public works can be found in Europe, the USA and Canada. He is well renowned for his FAMINE sculpture work – a life size group of seven emaciated and cowed figures and a dog make a never-ending journey alongside the Custom House by Dublin's River Liffey.



15. NATHANIEL GROGAN (c1740 - 1807)
THE BANTRY PACT (OR THE BANTRY BARD) C.1783
 Monochrome wash, 19 x 15cm (7.5 x 6")

Exhibited: "*Whipping the Herring: Survival and Celebration in Nineteenth Century Irish Art*" Crawford Art Gallery, 2006

"*The Arcadian Landscapes of Nathaniel Grogan and John Butts*" The Crawford Gallery cat no. 30 2012

Literature: "*Whipping the Herring: Survival and Celebration in Nineteenth Century Irish Art*" Crawford Art Gallery, 2006, Full page illustration p141

"Irish Rural Interiors in Art" by Claudia Kinmonth 2006 p181

"*The Arcadian Landscapes of Nathaniel Grogan and John Butts*" by Peter Murray The Crawford Gallery, 2012, Full page illustration p95

Grogan was born in Cork and began life as an apprentice to his father, a turner and block maker, but had a love for the arts and taught himself to draw. At his father's request, he enlisted in the British Army and served in America during the War of Independence. Little, if any, is known of the paintings he produced there. Grogan went on to produce numerous oil and watercolour paintings depicting urban scenes of Cork, aquatint prints and decorative works and murals in stately homes. He painted landscape and genre scenes of his native Cork, before such genre scenes became popular among Irish painters, and was influenced by Dutch artists such as Heemskerck. His 1780 painting, *View of Cork*, is considered an important record of the city's history.

This small study contrasts with his more crowded scenes of markets and gatherings, showing only a small group gathered close to and beneath the huge canopy of a stepped fireplace. The bard or poet was historically held in great esteem and was influential within Irish society. By the late eighteenth century the term bard was increasingly used as a romantic appellation for people who entertained through poetry and traditional song. Grogan exaggerates the size of the poet's head in this sketch compared with those around him, suggesting and emphasising his superior intellect, or people's perception of it. He is shown here with his notebook in hand, seated in the place of honour which traditionally was closest to the heat of the fire, and surrounded by interested admirers as he writes and recites.

To the left, a woman sits to spin wool at a wheel which was based on the big wheel, most characteristic of the west, which required spinners to walk to and fro as they spun. This is one of the only early images to show this type of wheel without legs, placed at ground level, thus enabling the spinner to sit and therefore spin more slowly. Previously this design was considered characteristic of Kerry, so its distribution can now be slightly expanded as Bantry, in west Cork, is not far from the border with that south-westerly county.

Claudia Kinmonth



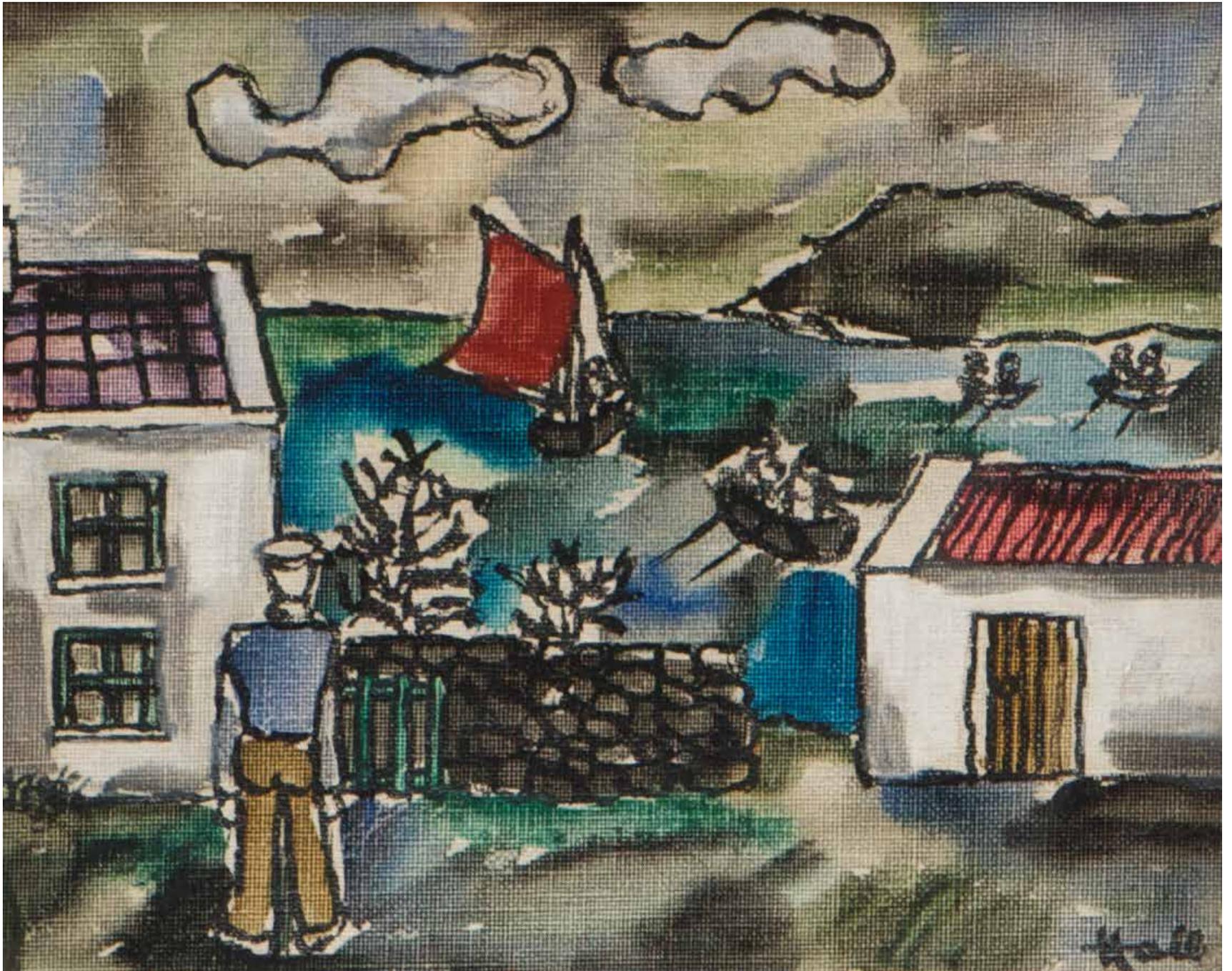
16. KENNETH HALL (1913-1946)
HOOKER LEAVING INISHEER
Oil on board, 20.3 x 25.4cm (8" x 10"), Signed

Provenance: From the estate of the artist Elizabeth Rivers who was given it as a present from the infamous London art gallery owner Lucy Wertheim

Born in Farnham, Surrey and briefly educated at Lancing College, Hall was designing furniture in London before he showed his work to the dealer Lucy Wertheim who offered to put on an exhibition of his work at her gallery in Mayfair. He met the painter Basil Rakozci, and together they led the White Stag Group, to promote psychological analysis and art.

From 1935 to 1938 Hall and Rakozci travelled Europe and acquainted themselves with the various movements of the time including Surrealism. At the outbreak of the Second World War the pair moved to Ireland to try to avoid the conflict in Europe. They stopped first in Galway before heading to Dublin, where The White Stag Group found success. Hall organised the group's first exhibition in April 1940, and it was received well, with praise from the Irish Times. They broke the conventions of Dublin at the time and their work was more avant-garde than anything yet seen in Ireland. In all of their exhibitions, the works displayed were varied, ranging from surrealist-inspired images to abstract, semi-representational and symbolist pieces.

Despite their success and the growing depth and influence of the group in Dublin, as well as support from Mrs Wertheim in London, Hall was always racked by personal demons and depression. In 1945 he returned to London and had an exhibition at Redfern Gallery, before moving to Mrs Wertheim's flat in Manchester and committing suicide on 26 July 1946.



17. EVA HAMILTON (1876-1960)
CÉILIDH AT DUNBOYNE
 Oil on canvas, 58 x 54cm (23 x 21 ¼")

Provenance: Major John Bonham - the artist's nephew

Exhibited: "A Time and A Place - Two Centuries of Irish Social History" National Gallery of Ireland 2006

Literature: "One Hundred Years of Irish Art - A Millennium Presentation" by Eamonn Mallie (ed.)
 Nicholson & Bass, Dublin 2000, illustrated p153
 "A Time and a Place" National Gallery Ireland 2006, illustrated p42

The older of the two Hamilton sisters shown here, Eva Hamilton was born in Co. Meath and, with her sister Letitia, studied under William Orpen at the Metropolitan School of Art in Dublin. She went on to study at the Slade School of Fine Art and later specialised in portraiture, finding most success in her depictions of children. When portrait commissions dried up she turned to landscapes, particularly Irish scenes, of both domestic and outdoor activity. She exhibited regularly, including at the Irish International Exhibition in 1907, the Irish Exhibition of Living Art in 1945 and the Royal Hibernian Academy between 1904 and 1945. Her works are in the collections of the Ulster Museum and the Crawford Municipal Gallery, Cork.

Interestingly, the spirited scene depicted here by Hamilton evokes more immediately the Scottish céilí, which constituted an on-stage concert. In fact, the formality of the scene suggests that the young dancer may be taking part in a feis, a music festival involving competition, or at least a dance demonstration. This is suggested by various details. The young dancer, for example, wears a dance costume, dances alone on a raised platform, and is flanked closely by an accordion player on one side, and a dance mistress on the other, who watches intently while clapping out time. A comic counterpoint to the apparent formality of the scene is provided by the young boy in a hat in the foreground, who beats a drum rather perilously close to the dancer's feet and rather too vigorously.

The title indicates that the picture records a scene in Dunboyne, County Meath, the nearest village to Hamwood, the house where Eva and Letitia Hamilton grew up. As a scene of recreation this is a relatively unusual choice of subject for Eva, who when not painting portraits and landscape, tended towards scenes of domestic activity and outdoor work. Nor is there obvious evidence of the influence of her former teacher William Orpen, which features conspicuously elsewhere in her early work.

Despite the number of figures involved and the animated subject, Hamilton's picture is consistent with the taste for simplicity that the artist displayed in much of her mature work.

Dr. Brendan Rooney



18. LETITIA HAMILTON (1878-1964)
A FAIR DAY, CLIFDEN
Oil on canvas, 50 x 61cm (20 x 24"), Signed with initials

Following her education with William Orpen in the Metropolitan School of Art in Dublin which began when she was 29, Letitia Hamilton studied further at the Chelsea Polytechnic and in Belgium. She exhibited at the Royal Academy and the Royal Hibernian Academy from 1909, the Paris Salon and the Irish Exhibition in Paris. On her return to Ireland she helped to found the Dublin Painters' Society with Paul Henry, among others, in 1920. In the interwar period she travelled frequently to mainland Europe, and her painting style shows a strong French influence, inspired as she was by Dufy and Marquet. Her main subjects were landscapes and hunting scenes and she painted and exhibited almost right up until her death at the age of 86. Her paintings can be found in the National Gallery of Ireland, the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery in Dublin and the Ulster Museum.



19. FATHER JACK P. HANLON (1913-1968)
SWEEP FLOWERS
Oil on canvas, 76 x 51cm (30 x 30in)
Signed and dated 1965. Signed also verso.

Exhibited: The Dawson Gallery (label verso)

Born to comfortable circumstances in Dublin, Hanlon was educated at Belvedere College, University College and Maynooth, before completing his studies for the priesthood in 1932. In those restrictive days the freedom to develop as a painter while devoting oneself to a religious vocation was not always considered compatible. However he persevered, encouraged by his parents, and he won a Taylor Scholarship to study in Belgium and Spain and several prizes for his painting, before going to Paris to join Andre Lhote's teaching atelier. He showed at the RHA in 1935 and at the New York World Fair in 1939. He had four solo exhibitions at the Waddington Galleries, the first of which was staged in 1941. He also held shows in Paris and Brussels and his work was regularly shown in the group exhibitions of Irish art. In the 1940s Hanlon was a regular contributor to the Dublin Painters and became a founder member of the Irish Exhibition of Living Art in 1943. He also continued to produce religious works, including commissions for several Irish churches.

From his mother he inherited a love of flowers and was an award winning gardener. Many of his most successful pictures were acknowledged to be still lifes of flowers, exhibiting a keenly felt connection with nature, via his enthusiastic use of colour and freedom of expression. Here Hanlon has taken the familiar flower still life convention and produced a surprisingly beautiful and unusual scene, where an abstracted chimney structure takes the form of a vase above the contorted human figure contained within.



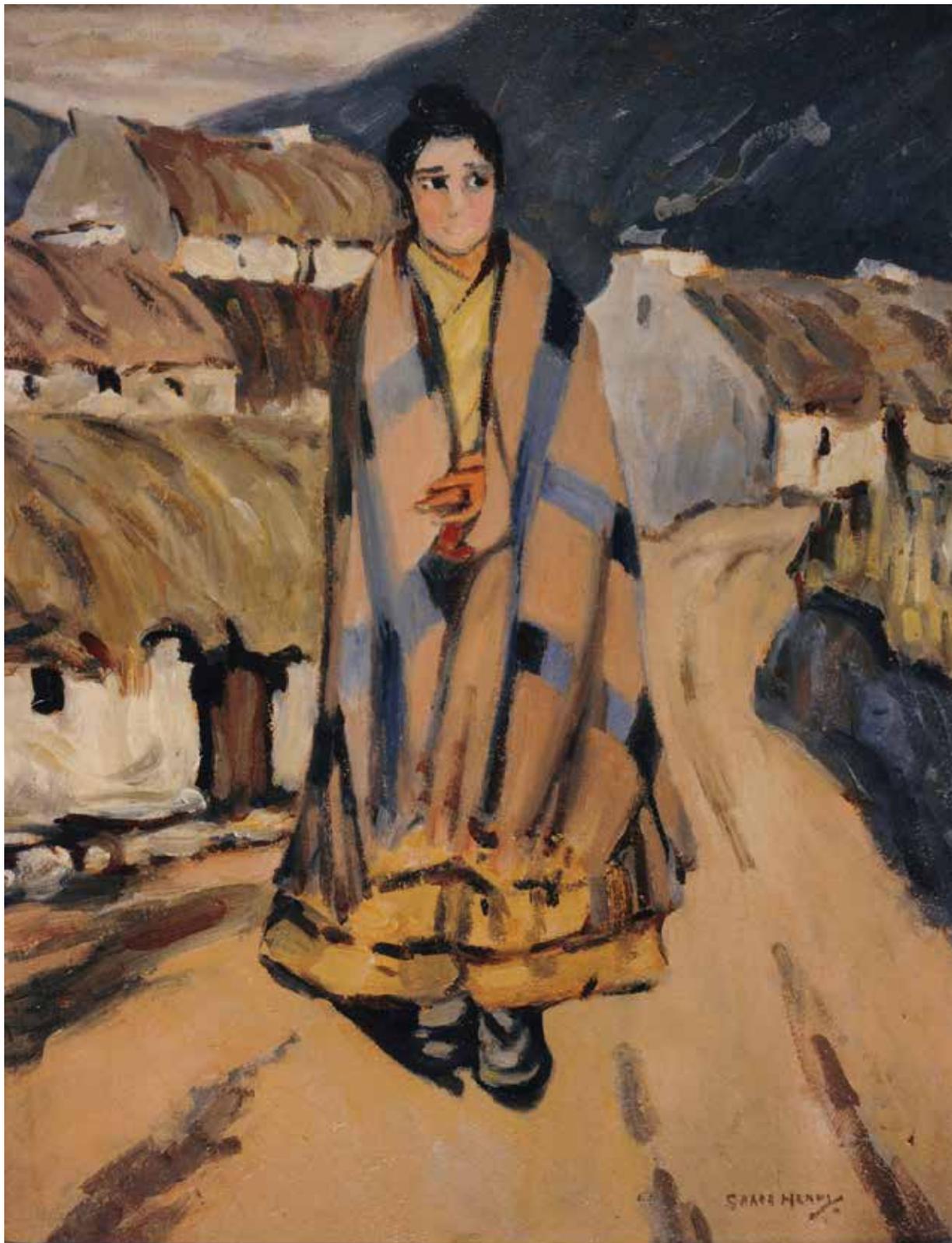
20. GRACE HENRY (1868-1953)
GIRL IN A VILLAGE IN THE WEST OF IRELAND
 Oil on Canvas, 45.7 x 35.6cm (18 x 14"), Signed

Exhibited : 2010 "*Grace Henry Retrospective Exhibition*"
 Jorgensen Fine Art, Dublin

Literature: " One Hundred Years of Irish Art - A Millenium Presentation" by Eamonn Mallie, (ed.)
 Nicholson & Bass Dublin, 2000 p162 Full Page illustration p163
 "Grace Henry - The Person and Artist" by J.G Cruickshank, 2010, illustrated p18

Grace Henry was born in comfortable surroundings to a Church of Scotland Minister, the second youngest of ten children. She lived and studied in London, Brussels and Paris where she met and married Paul Henry in 1903. They returned to England and lived in Surrey for several years, both deeply influenced by the avant garde Post Impressionist mood of the time. As a couple they spent almost a decade from 1912 living on Achill Island, a career defining period for both of them, but particularly for her husband. The seeds of separation were sown in these years, as Grace began to travel frequently to Dublin and London and to exhibit separately in Belfast in the 1920s. They founded the Dublin Painters Society with 6 other artists in 1920 but by the mid 1920s had separated from each other, although they never divorced. In the 1930s she spent more of her time abroad but continued to show her work in Irish art exhibitions. During the Second World War she returned to the west of Ireland, and exhibited regularly at galleries in Dublin and at the Royal Hibernian Academy.

Her bold use of paint and fluid brushstrokes simplified the composition of her paintings to its essential elements, leaving at their core the humanity and humble spirit of the figures within them, so often inspired by the noble islanders she came across on Achill.



21. PAUL HENRY (1876-1958)
ATTENDING THE LOBSTER POTS
 Oil on canvas, 51 x 61cm (20 x 24"), Signed

Exhibited: 1921, *Paul & Grace Henry exhibition* Dublin painters society, June 1921
 1991, *Paul & Grace Henry exhibition*, Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery Nov/December 1991 cat. no 45
 2003, *Paul Henry Retrospective*, National Gallery of Ireland, February/May 2003, catalogue no. 35
 2004, *Collectors Eye Exhibition*, The Model Arts & Niland Gallery, Sligo, Jan/Feb 2004, The Hunt Museum, Limerick, Mar/Apr 2004 cat no 10

Literature: Front cover illustration *Paul Henry, Catalogue Raisonne* by Dr. S.B. Kennedy no.554

Paul Henry was born in Belfast, the son of a Baptist minister. He studied art in Belfast before going to Paris in 1898 to study at the Académie Julian and at Whistler's studio. He married the painter Grace Henry in 1903 and returned to Ireland in 1910. From then, until 1919, he lived on Achill Island and learned to capture the peculiar interplay of light and landscape specific to the West of Ireland. He moved back to Dublin and in 1920 was one of the founders of the Society of Dublin Painters. He separated from Grace in 1929.

In the 1920s and 1930s Paul Henry was Ireland's best known artist, one who had a considerable influence on the popular image of the west of Ireland. Although he seems to have ceased experimenting with his technique after he left Achill, he created the quintessential image of a peaceful, rural Ireland.

An almost graphic emphasis of simplified forms, particularly in the sky, characterises this work which, judged stylistically, must date to around 1920-1. It is a companion picture to *Attending the Lobster Pots* and one of a number of pictures by Henry similar in theme and arrangement. The simple elegance of the Post-Impressionist-inspired composition, and the monochromatic palette demonstrate the artist's confidence and technical dexterity in this period, while the subtlety of the composition gains a theatrical touch from the low horizon which is broken up the upward thrust of the figure, the prow of the boat and the massing of the rocks in the foreground. The original owner of the picture, Henry MacDermot, was almost certainly Henry's Galway patron. The direct painting to the canvas, with little or no underpainting or revision, recalls Whistler's dictum to his pupils that one should work with precision and resolve issues in one's mind before committing them to canvas.

This painting was on loan to the National Gallery of Ireland and hung with the Irish collection at the opening of the gallery's Millennium Wing in 2002.

Dr S.B. Kennedy



22. JOAN JAMESON (1892-1953)
MAKING THE BED
Oil on canvas, 63 x 78cm (23.75 x 30.75")
Signed, inscribed with title verso

Exhibited: The Irish Exhibition of Living Art, Dublin 1945, Cat No. 79

Joan Jameson was born in Co Waterford and studied at Académie Julian in Paris. She lived in London throughout the 1920s and had two solo exhibitions at the Leicester Galleries in London. On returning to Ireland she showed regularly in the exhibitions of the Royal Hibernian Academy, the Victor Waddington Galleries and the Irish Exhibition of Living Art and was a member of the Dublin Painters Society.

Norah McGuinness was one of her closest friends and was a frequent visitor to her home Rock House, Ardmore, Co Waterford, where her circle included the infamous novelist Molly Keane.

This is thought to be an interior of a bedroom in Tourin House near Ardmore Co. Waterford



JOHN SINGLETON

Provenance: Commissioned directly from the artist by the current owner's father c.1940/1 and thence by descent.

Exhibited: 1942 RHA Annual Exhibition, Dublin Cat. No. 33 on loan from current owners Father.

1989 RHA Gallery, Dublin "*Sean Keating Retrospective*" Cat. No. 85

Seán Keating was born in Limerick city in 1889. The eldest of the seven children of Joseph and Annie (née Hannon), he showed signs of artistic talent while still in junior school. He entered the Limerick Municipal Technical School of Science and Art in 1907 where he won many prizes for drawing and painting in oil. In the summer of 1911 Keating won a Scholarship to the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art to train as an artist and art teacher. He was elected an Associate of the RHA in 1918 and a full or constituent member in 1923. A life-long nationalist, early in his career Keating became well-known for his portrayal of the heroes of the War of Independence. But the Civil War made him change his mind about violence in the cause of nationhood; he did not, for instance, paint images of 'the Troubles' in the 1970s. Keating was elected President of the RHA in March 1950 after the death of his friend and colleague James Sinton Sleator (PPRHA) in January that year. He resigned his position in 1962 so that he would have time to complete his last major mural commission which was installed on behalf of the Irish Government in the International Labour Offices, Geneva. Keating was, during his lifetime, a deliberately controversial figure, and is well-remembered for his televised performance during the ROSC exhibition of 1972. Although previously written into Irish art history as something of a bulwark against modernism in Ireland, recent research has revealed the nature and extent of his valuable contribution to the arts in Ireland and argues the case for Keating as a painter of the modern.

While Keating's paintings of the Aran Islands were and are perennially popular, from the 1930s onwards the artist was not interested in portraying prettified images; his project was to document contemporary history. The scene portrayed in *The Port Authority* is one that was typical of the working and living conditions on the Aran Islands. There are many examples of Irish paintings illustrating warm cottage interiors with huge burning fires; but the turf that fed those homely fireplaces was not indigenous to islands. It had to be brought in from the mainland. The local waters were shallow, even in the small harbours; the heavy turf was off-loaded a mile or two offshore into vessels that looked like currachs, but were larger rowing boats called *bád iomartha*, a few of which are shown in *The Port Authority*. It was then brought in to the local harbour and unloaded onto the quay, an activity that provided a day's work for several of the men resting in the foreground of Keating's painting. They stacked the turf along the upper harbour walk, seen in the background, ready for collection by the locals. In this case, one man has piled his share into wicker baskets known as *creels*, which in turn, are carried by his donkey whose assured footing should guarantee its safe arrival across the stone-covered and rough-hewn pathways that crisscross the island landscape. A day such as the one represented offered the local men a chance to talk, to do business, and to catch up with news from the mainland. They were the 'authorities' to which Keating refers in his title; experts on the sea and carriers of the ancient rituals that originated through sheer necessity and the human will to survive.

Keating's acute observation of the weather conditions; the cloudy sky with rain in the distance, and the turbulent undercurrent in the sea water is striking. So too, his attention to detail in the individual portrayal of the men; some leaning, others looking, one or two resting after a hard day's work. According to the shadows, the sun is beginning to set, and the day's work is just about done. In the middle of the activity, a small puddle reflects the blue sky above; there were no rain clouds over Inisheer that evening in the late autumn of 1939. There is an atmosphere of authenticity to the scene that would have been nearly impossible without the use of modern technology, and which, in turn, makes *The Port Authority* an image that reflects the up-to-date socio-economic conditions in 1940. Robert Flaherty, the film maker who lived and worked on the Aran Islands during the early 1930s while making the well-known socio-documentary *Man of Aran*, was a friend of Keating's. It was Flaherty that introduced the artist to the world of the cine camera, and Keating purchased his own in the mid-1930s. He took it to the islands on several occasions over the following few years and he used the footage taken in 1939 to compose a group of paintings in 1940 that he called his 'Aran Series.' One of those paintings was *The Port Authority*, made as a private commission in 1940, and framed by Victor Waddington in 1941. Having used the cine footage as a guide to the composition, Keating could not but help depict the reality of the scene he was aiming to portray. Unloading the turf was both a tradition and a reality of living on the islands, the veracity of which is clear in the painting. Yet, it is also of significance that although the sea is murmuring but relatively calm, and the rain is miles offshore, there are no fishing currachs to be seen in the water. Nor are the nets or the expected accoutrements of the fishing trade to be seen around the quay side. The reality was that the mackerel market, crucial to the economy of the islands, collapsed in the 1930s; the fishermen had little to do. In *The Port Authority*, along with many other of his pictures of Aran from the 1930s onwards, Keating painted, for posterity, a truthful account of life on the islands; contemporary history paintings, rather than beautified images of a folkloric past.



HEATING

24. HARRY KERNOFF, RHA (1900 - 1974)
THE TWINS: "THERE'S ONLY A FEW OF US LEFT"
 Oil on board, 61 x 74cm (24" x 29¾"),
 Signed, signed again verso & inscribed.

Exhibited: National Gallery of Ireland, *'A Time and a Place'*, October 2006-January 2007.

Literature: *'A Time and a Place'*, Brendan Rooney. Page 134. Illustrated.

Harry Kernoff was born in London, to parents of mixed Jewish and Spanish descent. He began his training by attending night classes at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art, winning the Taylor Scholarship in 1923. He began exhibiting with the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1926, his paintings were on display almost every year until 1974. He exhibited often in Ireland and London and was also a book illustrator, involved in theatre design and arguably the best woodcut artist in Ireland at the time, one of a very small group. The people and places of Dublin were a central focus for many of his works, and he depicted street and pub scenes as well as Dublin landmarks with sympathy and good humour. Through a life of artistic involvement he captured the changes in Irish society and painted generations of prominent Irish figures.

Harry Kernoff executed many pub scenes, often of some of Dublin's best-known establishments, such as Davy Byrne's The Bailey, The Palace Bar and the Brazen Head. He invariably presented them, either implicitly or explicitly, as places of both social and cultural importance, which were frequented by Dublin characters, where significant literary and artistic figures (often friends) met, and where theatres like the Abbey and the Gate advertised their productions. Kernoff often included himself in these pub interiors, wearing his distinctive wide-brimmed hat. Placing himself amongst such company, Kernoff asserts his position within Dublin's social, literary and theatrical circles, a position also implied by Maurice MacGonigal in *The Olympia Dublin* (Ulster Museum, Belfast). Through the Radical Club, founded by Liam and Tom O'Flaherty, Kernoff became a member of the Studio Club, which itself subsequently became Toto Cogley's Cabaret in Harcourt Street. Madam Cogley became one of the first directors of the Gate Theatre, which provided Kernoff with a number of his notable sitters, including Micheal MacLiammoir and Hilton Edwards.

Typical of the hardy 'real' types of Kernoff often elected to paint, the twins give little away over their Guinness, both fixing the artist and in turn the viewer, with a sceptical although not unamused gaze. With their patched frieze coats, collars turned up at the neck (despite being inside) and a betting slip tucked into a cuff, they embody the summary of Kernoff's best work as delivered by the critic Edward Sheehy:

"Clarity of vision, the refusal to poeticise, a sanity expressed through a careful and untemperamental craftsmanship, these are to me the predominant qualities..." (quoted in Theo Snoddy, *Dictionary of Irish Artists, 20th Century*, Wolfhound Press, Dublin, 1996, p 235.

Dr. Brendan Rooney



25. CHARLES LAMB ARHA, RHA (1893-1964)
CONNEMARA HARVESTERS
 Oil on canvas, 91 x 86 cms (36 x 34”), Signed

Exhibited: '*Charles Lamb Retrospective*', Municipal Gallery, Dublin, April 1969 Cat. No. 30

Charles Lamb was born in Co. Armagh but became one of a group of Irish Artists who, in the 1920s and 30s, found their inspiration in the life and in the landscape of the West of Ireland. He studied under Keating after winning a scholarship to the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art and exhibited yearly at the RHA from 1922, with other exhibitions as far afield as New York and Los Angeles. Apart from a year or so painting and living in Brittany in the 1920s, he continued to live and paint in Carraroe until his death in 1964. He had a deep interest in the everyday life and work of the people and painted intense singular figure compositions, before progressing mainly to landscape painting.

The sitters in this work were neighbours of the Lamb Family on An Bóthar Buí, An Cheathrú Rua. The girl is Bríghid Mháirtín who is also in the painting 'Pattern Day in Connemara' from 1934 now in University College Galway. The man in the painting was Máirtín Conroy, her next-door neighbour. Due to the uneven ground, corn had to be cut by hand with the scythe here held by Máirtín whereas Bríghid holds a sickle for the edges which the scythe could not cut and ties the sheaves.

We are grateful to Lailí Lamb for this extra information on what ranks amongst Charles Lambs finest works.



26. SIR JOHN LAVERY, RA, RHA, RSA (1856 - 1941)
THE WALNUT TREE, ST. PATRICK'S PURGATORY, LOUGH DERG
 Oil on canvas, 50 x 61cm (20"x 24"), Signed, inscribed with title.

Provenance: Miss Mor Murnaghan. Dawson Gallery, Dublin.

Literature: Sir John Lavery in a letter to Thomas Bodkin, dated 12th January 1930, letter 556, Trinity College Library, Dublin;
Sir John Lavery The Life of a Painter, Cassell and Company Ltd., London, Toronto, Melbourne and Sydney, 1940, pp.202-6,
 the final work illustrated;
Sir John Lavery, by Professor Kenneth McConkey, Canongate Press, Edinburgh, 1993, p165-7, No.203, the final work illustrated in colour.

St. Patrick's Purgatory Lough Derg is the most famous of all Lavery's Irish subjects, and offers clear evidence of the artist's deep love for his country. He originally conceived the idea of depicting the ancient Irish pilgrimage at Lough Derg while painting in the north of Ireland in 1928, and he lodged at the Priory for three or four nights to study the subject in August 1929. Lavery discusses the pilgrimage at length in his autobiography describing it as an ideal subject for a painter; and the experience had affected him deeply: "*In the Southern Highlands of County Donegal lies a lake - Lough Derg - some eleven miles around, circled by low, barren, heathery hills and studded with islands planted with trees. In the midst of the lake is the famous Purgatory of St. Patrick, as it is marked on all medieval maps. For centuries this has been a pilgrimage place of the Irish people*".

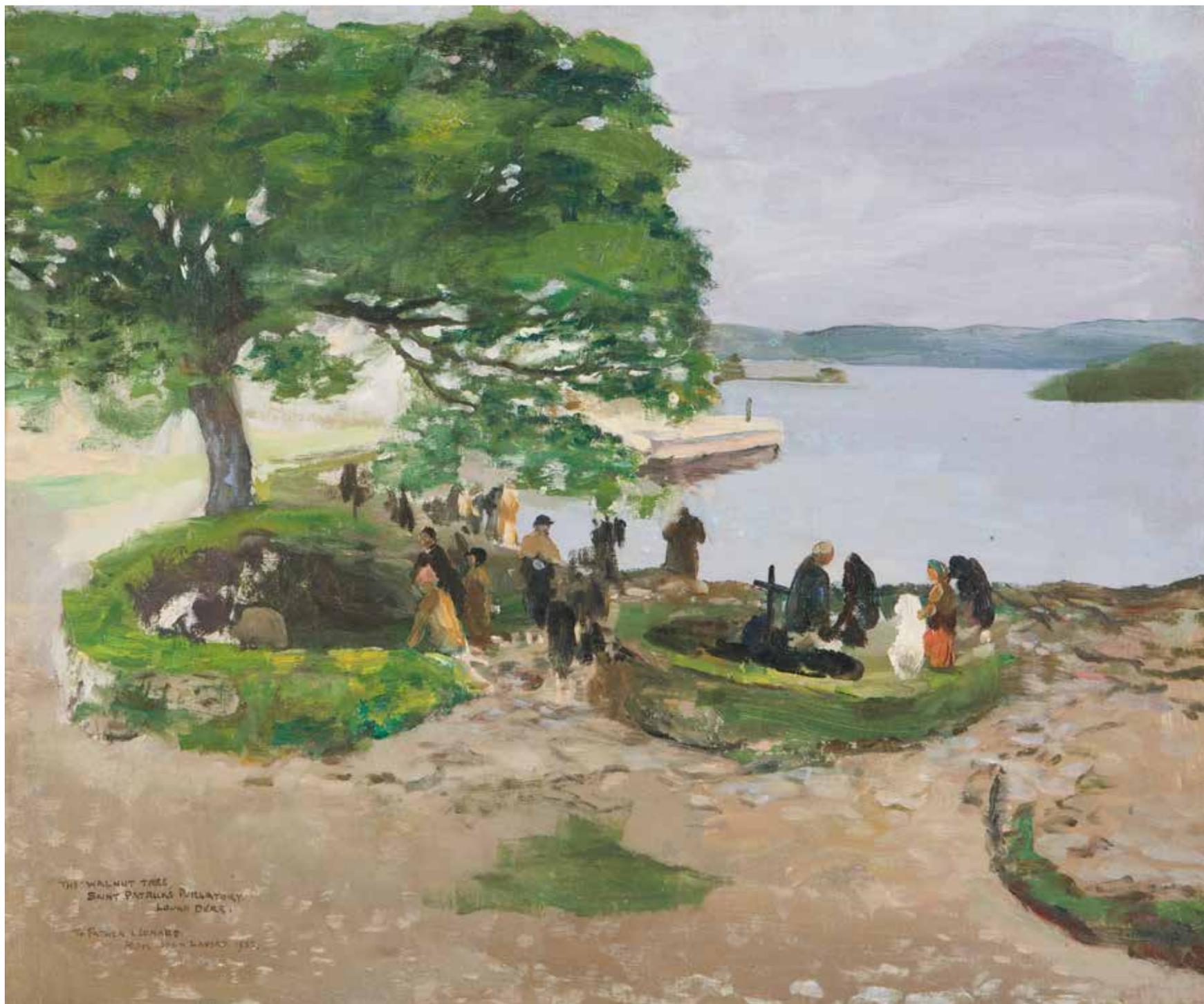
According to a legend of Ossianic times a dragon was slain in the lake by the Fenian heroes under Finn MacCoul, and the blood of the monster coloured the water, giving the lake its Gaelic name. St. Patrick replaced the Druids on the island and turned their cave into a place of penitence where "great sinners and desperate criminals" would come to serve their time and thus receive absolution. The pilgrims in the cave were said to have witnessed such visions as to inspire Dante.

Lavery recounts how "the pilgrims are required to walk barefoot round the stony beds of the Saints. The island is now beautified by a modern basilica full of the finest Irish glass, which appears to be floating on the waters. One tree, an old sycamore, grows on the island. It is accounted the holiest tree in Ireland, and it is recorded that half a million pilgrims have prayed in its shadow at different times. The lake is full of fine trout, but never a salmon owing to a curse by St. Patrick: one day at the stones across the Freg River he had stepped on a sleeping salmon and slipped. Henceforth salmon were never seen in the Lough. This is the most wonderful corner of Ireland for legend and folklore and for a traditional history into the unplumbed past." The practicalities inherent in painting the pilgrimage generated within Lavery a genuine affection for his subject, and he received a warm welcome from the Prior, who had no knowledge of any other painter ever having attempted to capture the scene. Lavery describes how on arriving by boat at the end of the quay, seen here, that "not being a pilgrim in the strict sense of the word, I was allowed to keep my boots on, a privilege also extended to the Prior, who welcomed me on landing and helped me with my painting outfit to a cold grey stone building, where he gave me, so far as I could see, the only furnished room in it. I discovered afterwards that it was his own bedroom, and that the three or four nights when I occupied it he had slept in another part of the building on the floor".

The variety of types amongst the pilgrims further stimulated Lavery's interest. He loved the vibrant splashes against the stark landscape provided by the Connemara peasants, dressed in their primary colours of red, blue and yellow, with black shawls over their heads. In a sense all of Ireland was there, with "the picturesque peasants from the West" alongside "the everyday types one would see in the streets of Belfast or Dublin... old and young, rich and poor" all mixed together. Lavery was amazed to discover a Professor of Science from an English University barefoot amongst the others. He even went so far as to wonder whether "I might paint better if I took my head out of the paint-pot for a moment and thought of other things than trying to paint pictures" although he confesses that "the mood did not last. I was no sooner back and had turned out my studies than the problem of picture-making banished everything else".

The present work represents one of these rare studies made on the spot (and inscribed with a later dedication), Lavery rather incongruously completing the final work at the Hotel Beau Site in Cannes at the beginning of 1930. Professor Kenneth McConkey lists only two preparatory sketches: the first (private collection) was exhibited at the Royal Academy and toured, *Sir John Lavery, R.A. 1856-1941*, 1984, no.108 (illustrated in the catalogue), and the second was an upright version of the composition inscribed *To Monsignor Vance, April 1929*. The finished work is in the collection of the Hugh Lane Municipal Art Gallery in Dublin, and represents the same scene viewed from a different angle. The focus of the composition has been shifted further to the right to include the bell tower of the modern basilica, cropping all but the outermost leaves of the left tree.

Our thanks to prof. Kenneth McConkey whose writings formed the basis for this entry.



THE WALNUT TREE
SAINT PATRICK'S WILLAGHT
LEANN DARA.

F. S. MACLEAN
1891. 1891. 1891.

27. LOUIS LE BROCQUY HRHA (1916 - 1912)
TINKERS IN THE SPRING
 Watercolour, 18.5 x 24cm, (7.25 X 9.5"), Signed and dated (19)45

Exhibited : The Galleries of Associated American Artists, Fifth Ave, New York

A self-taught artist, Louis le Brocquy was born in Dublin and abandoned his job working in a lab in 1938 to pursue a career in painting. In 1947 le Brocquy moved to London which was to be his base for the next ten years, and showed his work in Paris, New York and Italy. He married Anne Madden in 1958 and began dividing his time between France and Ireland. Considered the most important Irish artist of the second half of the 20th Century, a progression of styles comparable to that of Picasso is apparent in le Brocquy's work. He played a significant role in the Irish art world, helping to found the Irish Exhibition of Living Art in 1943. A multi-talented artist, he was also known for his tapestries and illustrations, and received international acclaim with retrospectives held in France, Spain, Japan, Australia and the US.

The tinkers that le Brocquy first encountered in 1945 near Tullamore became the artistic embodiment of his nascent artistic philosophy. Their independence, adaptability and strong sense of community drew him into their orbit. His many studies of their daily lives and environment became his commentary on the lives of so many others dispossessed by the war who would remain at the margins of life in Europe for decades to come.

President of Ireland Michael D. Higgins paid tribute to the artist after his death this year, saying "Louis le Brocquy's pioneering approach to art, influenced by the European masters, was highly inspirational. His works including the Tinker Paintings broke new ground and opened dialogue around the human condition and suffering. Through painting, tapestry and print Louis le Brocquy has provided us with individual works and collections that give the insight and response of an artist of genius to Irish history, culture and society."



28. JOHN LUKE (1906-1975)

SHAWS BRIDGE (1939)

Oil and tempera on linen laid on board, 32 x 44cm (12 ½ x 17”), Signed and dated ‘39

Prov. Previously in the Collection of Kathleen Bell

Exhibited: 1940 Royal Academy, London “United Artists Exhibition” Cat. No. 352

John Luke Retrospective, Arts Council of Northern Ireland 1978, catalogue no. 39

Literature: “The Landscapes of John Luke” by John Hewitt *The Studio* August 1949 (Illustrated)

“John Luke” by John Hewitt *Belfast* 1978 p38 (Illustrated Front Cover)

Belfast artist John Luke worked at the York Street Flax Spinning Company and as a shipyard riveter while studying art in evening classes at the Belfast College of Art. In 1929 he won the coveted Dunville Scholarship to study at the Slade School of Art in London under the celebrated artist Henry Tonks, who greatly influenced his development as a draughtsman. He shared a studio with F. E. McWilliam and exhibited at galleries in London, while continuing his studies at night at the Westminster School of Art. He returned to Belfast by 1933 where he remained for the rest of his life, apart from a time during the Second World War when he taught in County Armagh.

Painter, muralist, printmaker and occasional sculptor, he was able to continue working in the city as a professional artist and part-time teacher at Belfast College of Art. During the 1930s Luke exhibited with the short lived group Northern Ireland Guild of Artists, and began exhibiting at the RHA. He also visited Achill where he met Paul Henry, and represented Northern Ireland in New York at the Exhibition of the Art of Seventy-Nine Countries. Although he stopped painting during World War II the 1940’s were significant for Luke’s artistic career with a major solo show at Belfast Museum and Art Gallery and a retrospective held by CEMA.

Fine and precise draughtsmanship characterised his work and his paintings were clear and precise, imbued with traditional values inspired by masters of the Italian Renaissance. In the mid and late 1930s Luke’s preoccupation with formal structures began to assume a greater importance in his work and bridges became a favoured subject for the artist.

“Shaw’s Bridge” is probably Luke’s last major work before the start of the second World War and a watershed in the artist’s development. Luke completed the work in 1939 and did not return to painting until 1943 to complete “Pax”, culminating in his first one-man exhibition in 1946. “Shaws Bridge” represents a synthesis in the artist’s style, culminating in the more recognisable decorative and rhythmical compositions and it is the work in which he settled on the technique of applying oil glazes over a tempera base. Luke had been experimenting with this and other methods from the early 1930’s and continued to use this technique for all the remainder of his easel paintings. Moreover, “Shaws Bridge” is probably the last painting that Luke completed with an identifiable topographical subject.



29. MAURICE MACGONIGAL PRHA 1900-1979)
UNLOADING TURF AT KILMURVEY PIER, INIS MÓR, ARAN ISLANDS
 Oil on board, 40 x 50cm (15.7 x 19.7”), Signed

Maurice MacGonigal was born in Dublin and started his career at his uncle's stained glass design business. He took classes at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art, and was awarded medals for his painting, particularly of landscapes. After a brief visit to the Netherlands to study, he returned to Dublin and became a respected teacher in the same art school where he had previously been trained. He exhibited at the Royal Hibernian Academy extensively between 1924 and 1968, in total showing over 200 paintings, and was made an academician there in 1933. He also exhibited regularly in the Royal Academy in London and the Royal Scottish Academy.

“*unloading turf at Kilmurvey pier, Inis Mór, Aran Islands...*” probably dates to 1954...the Islands having no natural peat bogs remaining due to erosion, all the fuel has to be brought in from the mainland, and that particular little pier is the main landing place for the most westerly part of the main island Inis Mhór or Inishmor...and not be to be confused with Aranmor off Burtonport Co. Donegal..that particular year was a very long dry summer so that the turf (peat) was of the highest quality..and unloading the turn from the Hookers & Púcáns was a community effort requiring a large collaborative effort. For a painter the appeal is obvious, and the artist and his family were staying at the local “big house” Kilmurvey House home to the O’Flaherty Johnstons; adjoining the pier was the original house built by Robert Flaherty for his Movie, “Man of Aran”. The flat limestone flags overlooking the little pier were an ideal perch for a painter who could sit there for hours drawing and painting and just sufficient wind to keep the midges at bay.(always a hazard for plein air painters).

MacGonigal had been on the Island painting in the 1930s, but this work dates from the 1950s, a time of long warm days and zephyr breezes.

Ciarán MacGonigal



30. KATHLEEN MACKIE (1899-1996)
AT THE POINT-TO-POINT (1925)
Oil on canvas, 71 x 91.5cm (28 x 36"), Signed

Exhibited: 1926 Belfast Art Society Cat. No. 189
1926 Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin Cat. No. 3
1985 'Kathleen Mackie Retrospective Exhibition', Castle Espie Cat. No. 3
1996 'Kathleen Mackie Retrospective', The Ulster Museum, Cat. No. 27

Literature : "Kathleen Isabella Metcalfe Mackie" 2009 by Eamonn Mallie and Paddy Mackie, full page illustration p169

Kathleen Isabella Mackie was born in Belfast where she attended the School of Art from 1918 . She moved to the the Royal Academy Schools in London in 1921 after winning various awards and there she came under the influence well known painters George Clausen, Sir Gerald Kelly and Sir William Orpen. The setting has been identified as Lisnalinchy, near Ballyclare and this is thought to be one of the first point-to-point races. Her love of Donegal brought her into contact with fellow artists Frank Egginton and they went on many painting expeditions together. In 1936 she was appointed ARUA . She exhibited regularly at the RHA, RUA and the watercolour Society of Ireland.



31. KENNETH MAHOOD (B.1930)
STREET SCENE
Oil on canvas, 30 x 40cm (12 x 16"), Signed

Exhibited: *Lewinter Frankl Collection*, Ulster Museum, March/April 1958, cat no. 29

Kenneth Mahood was born in Belfast in 1930. After an apprenticeship in lithography, 1945-49, he turned to painting, winning a CEMA travel scholarship to Paris. Throughout the 50s he was a regular exhibitor at the Irish Exhibition of Living Art as well as the RUA and the Victor Waddington Gallery in Dublin where he had his first one man exhibition in 1955. From 1960 he worked primarily as a cartoonist and illustrator for Punch, the Times and the New Yorker, retiring from the Daily Mail in 2009. Since the 1980s his paintings have concentrated on collage.



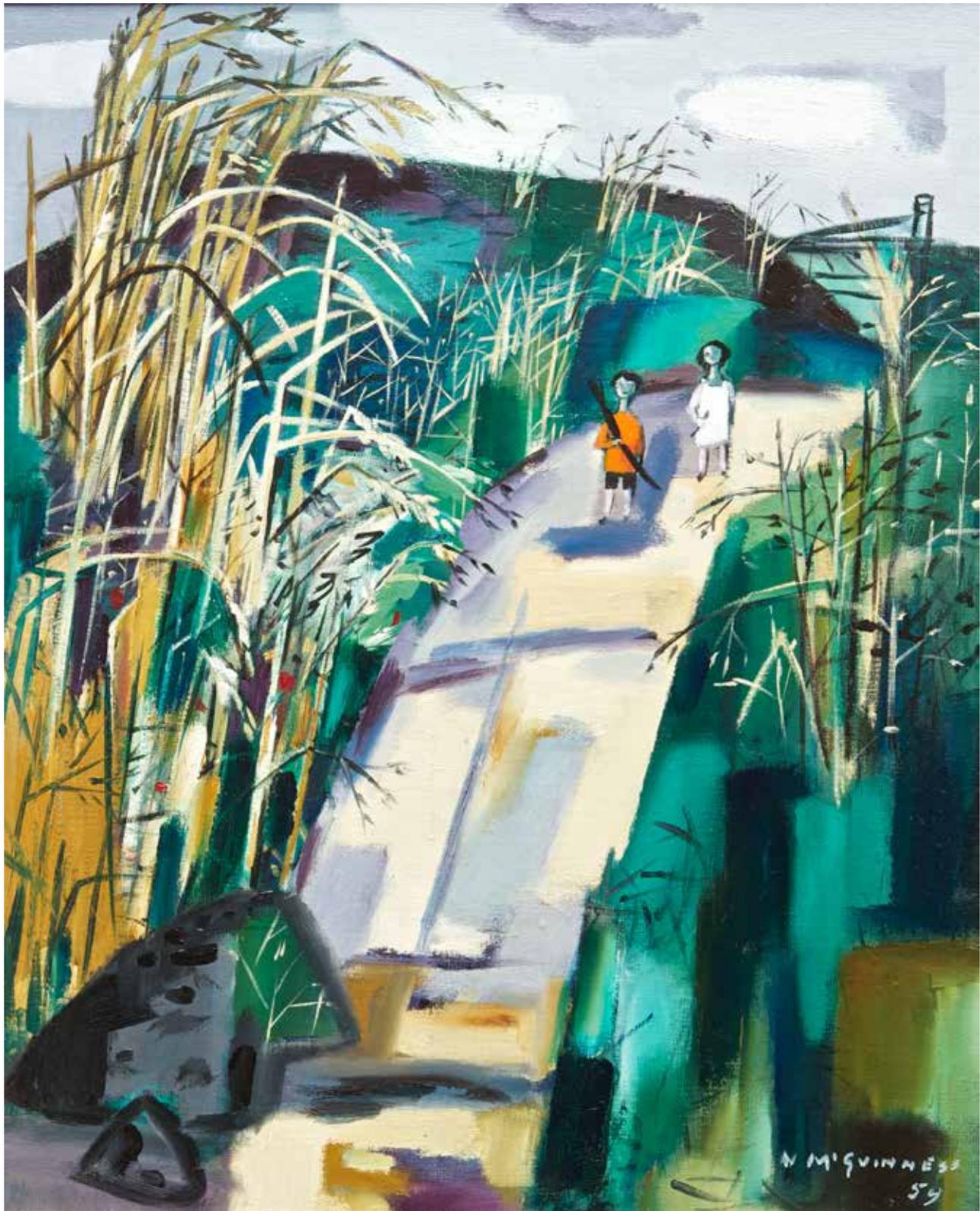
32. NORAH MCGUINNESS HRHA (1903-1980)

CHILDREN ON THE ROAD

Oil on canvas, 50.5 x 61cm (20 x 24in) Signed and dated 59' (lower right)

Exhibited: "*A Celebration of Irish Art & Modernism*" Adams at Clandeboye, The Ava Gallery 16th June-3rd September 2011
Cat No.31.

Norah McGuinness was born in Derry. She studied at the Metropolitan School of Art, the Chelsea School of Art and with Andre Lhote in Paris and spent the 1920s working in Dublin as a book illustrator and stage designer. She was elected President of the newly formed Irish Exhibition of Living Art after the untimely death of Mainie Jellett in 1944 and Honorary Royal Hibernian Academician in 1957. In 1950 with Nano Reid she represented Ireland at the Venice Biennale. She was acknowledged for having a central socio-political role in the Irish art world of the time and her contribution to the Modern Movement in Ireland lay not only in her work but also in her openness towards and encouragement of other, usually younger, painters.



33. FRANK MC KELVEY RHA (1895-1974)
KELLY BOATS AT QUEENS QUAY, BELFAST
 Oil on canvas, 45.7 x 61cm (18 x 24”), Signed

Frank McKelvey studied at the Belfast School of Art in his hometown, winning the prize for figure drawing in 1912. Four years later he exhibited at the RHA for the first time and continued to do so annually for the subsequent fifty years, being elected a full member of the academy in 1930. Between 1923 and 1935 McKelvey exhibited regularly at the Glasgow Institute of Fine Art and his first solo show was held at Locksley Hall, Belfast, in 1936. The following year a second solo show was held at the Victor Waddington Galleries. During the 1920s McKelvey received many portrait commissions and his work was included in exhibitions of Irish portraits at the Belfast Museum and Art Gallery (later the Ulster Museum) in 1927 and 1931. He was also included in a major exhibition of Ulster artists at the same gallery in 1951 and another at Ulster House in London in 1947. He bequeathed a major collection of his work to the Ulster Museum, and his work can also be found in the collections of Queen’s University Belfast, the Masonic Hall in Dublin, Crawford Gallery in Cork, and the Royal Palace of Soestdijk in the Netherlands.

This fine painting by the artist demonstrates his sense of ease with the subject. It would have been painted from a photograph with an element of artistic licence, most likely post 1920 when John Kelly would have seen early works in McKelvey’s commissioned series from Thomas McGowan for paintings of ‘Old Belfast’. This painting could even have been commissioned after 1950 when Kelly began commissioning the artist to record his vessels for the annual Kelly Calendar.

Although the date of execution is unclear, the time of depiction is more certain. The painting features a series of quayside bows of sailing vessels dating to c1900. This mixture of sailing colliers belonged to various owners with the Kelly coal boats predominating. One of the vessels has the name “Happy go lucky” which is certainly not a Kelly name.

The painting relates well to the watercolour ‘Queen’s Quay’ by McKelvey that features John Kelly’s offices and those of other colliers of the time. The row of terraced offices is featured in the far right mid ground and this acts as both a topographical device while also highlighting the scale and importance of the docked ships, in that the architectural detail is dwarfed by the ships themselves. Steamships have arrived at the time of depiction but this is kept as a minor detail, seen through the ship’s masts in the left mid ground, its importance lessened via the bright cast of light with which McKelvey treats the vessel. A line of coal men are stationed at the edge of the quay with their Clydesdale horses and high sided two-wheeled carts lined up along the quay to move the loads. They await the men leaving the boats by gang plank, stooped under the sacks of coal on their backs. It is a composition that sees McKelvey employ an ideal palette to capture the era with freshness and vitality. The scene itself is a celebration of the ships and their importance at the turn of the century. It is full of activity and a sense of nostalgia, and this coupled with the light, presumably of high summer, lend the painting a natural air. It is clearly a key work in McKelvey’s oeuvre.

Marianne O’Kane Boal



34. CHERITH MCKINSTRY (1928-2004)
ROCK MAN
 Watercolour, 24 x 30.5cm (9 ½ x 12")
 Signed under her maiden name Boyd

Exhib: *Lewinter Frankl Collection*, Ulster Museum, March/April 1958, cat no. 137 under her maiden name Boyd

Cherith Boyd was born in Worcester in 1928; she came to Ulster as a child and during the war years was evacuated with her school to Co. Tyrone. Having interrupted initial studies in sculpture at the Belfast College of Art, she returned there from 1950 to 1953 to study painting under Romeo Toogood, meeting fellow students Basil Blackshaw and T. P. Flanagan. A CEMA travelling scholarship brought her to Italy in 1953 and in 1958 she married the architect Robert McKinstry. Her first solo show was at the CEMA Gallery, Belfast in 1962. Public commissions included Stations of the Cross for St McNissi's, Magherahoney, Co Antrim, a large staircase mural for Queen's University, and her most celebrated work, the six large tromp l'oeil ceiling panels for the restored Belfast Opera House.

Cherith McKinstry's formative experience of nature was solitary and one of solace, found in the wooded foothills of the Sperrin Mountains as a wartime evacuee and recovering from childhood polio. For Cherith landscape was essentially pastoral and benign, often ideal, even arcadian, and open to the possibilities of wonder. It was to the figures within that she invested dignity, and while her sensibility to human endurance and suffering would later suggest religious themes, the tone of this early work, *Boy on the Shore*, remains serene; it might illustrate her friend Kenneth Jamison's observation that "in the private world of her imagination she postulated the presence of young people, innocent, noble, androgynous, untainted by the baleful influence of society".

At the Belfast School of Art under Romeo Toogood she inherited the London-taught francophile draughtsmanship of Luke and Carr, while an initial study of sculpture informed her ability to achieve an emotional grandeur with a modesty of means and the monumental quality suggested even on the scale of this watercolour.

David Foster



35. COLIN MIDDLETON RHA MBE (1910-1983)
THE HOLY LAND
 Oil on canvas, 26.7 x 30.5cm (10½” x 12”), Signed

Exhibited: “*Colin Middleton Exhibition*” CEMA, 1945, cat. no. 22.
 “*Collectors Eye*” Exhibition Cat No. 20
 The Model Arts and Niland Gallery Sligo January – February 2004
 The Hunt Museum, Limerick March - April 2004

Literature: “*Colin Middleton, A Study*”, by Dickon Hall Jago Press 2001, Full page illustration p23.
 “*Collectors Eye*” Exhibition catalogue, illustrated p.11

Born and artistically trained in Belfast, in 1947 Middleton retired from his family damask business to concentrate on his painting. He settled in Bangor in 1953 and taught art for sixteen years. He was elected a member of the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1970. A retrospective exhibition of his work was held in 1976 at the Ulster Museum, Belfast and the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin.

In his early years he painted in a boldly expressionist way and worked his oils thickly on the canvas. Later he expressed himself in symbols painted with miniaturist precision in smooth paint and cool colours. The meaning is often obscure and there is often a sense of the quirky or humorous or sometimes mysterious.

This striking and exceptional painting stands almost alone in terms of style and subject within Colin Middleton’s large and varied oeuvre. It depicts the area near Queen’s University in Belfast known as the Holy Land, after the tightly-knit grid of roads that have such names as Palestine Street. The atmosphere of joie de vivre here is rare at a period when Middleton was deeply affected by the war; perhaps his marriage to Kate around this time was responsible for these feelings.

The scene of figures relaxing at the weekend is reminiscent of Seurat (particularly the seated men in hats to the left of the painting), but the most obvious influence, and an unusual one for Middleton, is of Stanley Spencer. The contorted rhythmic stylisation of the figures recall the English painter who spent some time in Belfast in the 1950s although it would be interesting to know where Middleton became familiar with his work.

The long red Victorian terraces carve out deep angles which dominate the composition and are as dynamically alive as the figures that people them. The extreme simplification of the forms of these houses sweeps up towards the group of footballers, while other colourful groups lead the viewer around the lower part of the painting. This controlling rhythm in the lower half is mirrored by the swirling sheets of newspaper that fly through foreground and distance.

The high level of finish and the flat planes of colour are familiar aspects of Middleton’s early painting, but the treatment of figures and the remarkable dynamism of the painting, as well as its humorous atmosphere, do hold it apart from the bulk of Middleton’s work.

Dickon Hall



36. RICHARD THOMAS MOYNAN RHA (1856 - 1906)
THE TRAVELLING SHOW (1892)
 Oil on canvas, 61 x 101.5cm (24 x 40"), Signed and dated 1892

Exhibited: 1892 RHA Annual Exhibition Cat. No. 23
 2006 Crawford Gallery, Cork "*Whipping the Herring Exhibition*"
 2006/7 National Gallery of Ireland "*A Time and a Place*" Exhibition Cat. No. 42

Literature: "*Dictionary of Irish Artists*" by Walter Strickland 1913 P145
 "*Ireland's Painters 1600 - 1940*" by Anne Crookshank and The Knight of Glin 2002 p267 (Fig 365)
 "*Whipping the Herring*" The Crawford Gallery p104 (Note by Julian Campbell) Full page illustration p105
 "*A Time and a Place*" Published by National Gallery Ireland p89-90 (Note by Brendan Rooney) Illustrated Fig 40
 "*One Hundred Years of Irish Art - A Millennium Presentation*" by Eamonn Mallie (ed.) p222 Full page illustration p223

Moynan was born in Dublin and first studied medicine at the Royal College of Surgeons, before attending the Metropolitan School of Art with Roderic O'Connor. He trained at the Antwerp Academy between 1883 and 1885 where he won first prize in painting from life, and shared lodgings with fellow Irish artist Henry Allan. He also spent two years in Paris and finally returned to Dublin in 1888. He was employed for a time by Dublin newspaper *The Union* as a political cartoonist under the pseudonym 'Lex', but hoped to become renowned for large scale genre paintings such as this, and was also well regarded for his portraiture. He exhibited regularly at the RHA between 1880 and 1905.

He was the principal recorder of Dublin, city and county, in the late Victorian era, fascinated by outlying villages such as Shanganagh, Shankill and Leixlip, and the thatched hamlets that lay along the earth roads that lead from Dublin to the countryside. He was influenced by Osborne in his portrayal of naturalistic scenes of village life, and his cultivated naivety belies a keen eye for detail and composition.

Moynan painted several pictures of children playing marbles, ball games or see-saw in the village street. Such scenes of mischievous barefoot children or ragged urchins were popular amongst late nineteenth-century artists, for example in the work of Adrian Ceccioni (of the Macchiaioli in Italy), Bastien-Lepage in France, John George Brown in America and Moynan's friend Walter Osborne in Ireland. But Moynan brings his individual mark to this sub-genre in the large number of children featured in the one picture, in the receding perspective of the village scenes and in the strong narrative quality.

In *A Travelling Show* Moynan captures the excitement when the Punch and Judy show arrives in a tiny village. Touchingly, he includes older and younger children, girls and boys, playing together. And he contrasts obedient children with mischievous urchins. In the background, the Punch and Judy man beats a drum in front of a striped tent, while in the foreground a barefoot boy shouts with excitement. Moynan made several preparatory sketches for this painting (NGI no. 19, 171 and 19,172). It was exhibited at the RHA in 1892, and at the Irish International Exhibition in Dublin in 1901.

Julian Campbell



37. ERSKINE NICOL RSA, ARA, (1825 – 1904)
A SHEBEEN AT DONNYBROOK
 Oil on canvas, 61 x 87.6cm (24 x 34.5")
 Signed and dated 'E Nicol 1851'

Exhibited: Edinburgh, Royal Scottish Academy, 1852, no. 74.

Cork, *Whipping The Herring*, Crawford Gallery, May-August 2006 p116, illustrated p117.

Erskine Nicol first visited Ireland from his native Scotland in 1846, the beginning of a longstanding relationship with the country. Travelling through Ireland and especially Connemara, Nicol witnessed the outbreak of the great potato famine which devastated the over-populated West of Ireland causing the death of more than a million people within ten years, with another million forced to emigrate. The artist stayed in Ireland until 1851 when he returned to Scotland, the same year that he painted the present work.

Between 1850 and 1869 Nicol exhibited over ninety Irish subjects at the Royal Scottish Academy and over twenty at the Academy in London. After his fourth visit the artist returned for some months every year until ill health prevented him from traveling. He is better remembered as a genre painter, but as a recorder of an Irish way of life he becomes historically important because there were few artists working in Ireland at that time, a country devastated initially by famine and later by mass evictions forcing mass emigration.

Donnybrook Fair attracted numerous artists, including Edward Glew, George Du Noyer, William Brocas and Samuel Watson, who together with Nicol left a legacy of detailed panoramas. The fair was held near Dublin (now subsumed within the city), and attracted farmers from all over Ireland to buy and sell livestock. The huge, centuries-old annual gathering incorporated drinking booths, carousels and popular entertainments, and lasted up to two weeks. In the 1860's the authorities finally succeeded in closing the event because of 'revolting scenes of drunkenness and degrading immorality which were enacted every August at Donnybrook. The festival was the site of such predictable drunken violence that the word 'donnybrook' subsequently became synonymous with a 'riotous assembly'.

A Shebeen at Donnybrook (shebeen meaning an illegal drinking house) shows more than twenty people in a triangular composition surmounted by a piper. Allusions to fighting are absent; instead there is the type of easy intimacy which authorities equally disliked. The emphasis is on drunkenness, and stereotypically stage Irishmen with red noses loll in the corners. The one of the left adjusts a fiddle, another slouches on the table in the centre, which behind someone shirls a shillelagh to dance, and an old woman smokes a pipe.

The image is full of details of farmhouse paraphernalia, the press in the background with its door ajar displaying its contents, as shown previously by Grogan. The raggedness of people's clothes and the way the boy is dressed in tucked-up skirts reflects Nicol's attention to detail and his familiarity with his subject.

The artist was made an Associate of the Royal Scottish Academy in 1855 and an Academician in 1859. Nicol exhibited at the Royal Hibernian Academy and the Royal Academy and was made an Associate there in 1866.



38. DIARMUID Ó CELLACHÁIN (1915 - 1994)
PATRÓN NAOM MIC DÁRA (ST. MAC DARA'S PATTERN)
Oil on canvas, 58 x 74cm (23 x 29")
Signed, inscribed and dated '35 verso

O'Cellacháin was born in Cork and studied at the Crawford School of Art and the Metropolitan School of Art under Keating and MacGonigal. He was one of Charles Lamb's first students and this work is thought to have been painted during a visit to Lamb in Carraroe, Co. Galway.

St. Mac Dara is the Patron Saint of Connemara Fishermen and St. Mac Dára's Island is just off Carna. Pattern means either a saint's feast day, or the various devotional activities that take place on the feast day at sites associated with the saint's life. It is thought to derive from the word patron, as in a patron saint. Typically a pattern involved a procession by one or more communities to a nearby holy well named for a saint; the water having medicinal healing properties. The Pattern Day is still celebrated today in mid-July with a traditional regatta and an annual pilgrimage to the Island.



39. ALOYSIUS O'KELLY (1853-1941)

THE RETURN OF THE FISHERMAN C.1879

Oil on canvas, 61 x 48cm (24 x 19"), Signed

Exhibited: 1880, The RHA cat no 150

1999, "*Aloysius O'Kelly - reorientations*" Hugh Lane Municipal cat no 6

2006, "*Whipping the Herring: Survival and Celebration in Nineteenth Century Irish Art*" Crawford Art Gallery 2006

Literature: "*Whipping the Herring: Survival and Celebration in Nineteenth Century Irish Art*" Crawford Art Gallery 2006 p198

Aloysius O'Kelly - reorientations by Niamh O'Sullivan, Full page illustration p18

Irish Rural Interiors in Art by Claudia Kinmonth 2006, Full page illustration p115

Aloysius O'Kelly lived a long and peripatetic life, working as a painter and illustrator, and travelling extensively. He was born into a nationalist family in Dublin in 1853 and in 1874 went to Paris to study at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. He painted at Pont-Aven in Brittany (c.1877-78) and then in the west of Ireland. From 1880 he worked for the Illustrated London News, depicting scenes of rural agitation and distress, the activities of the Land League, and evictions. O'Kelly later worked in Egypt as a painter and illustrator. He exhibited Connemara, Breton and Egyptian subjects at the RHA, and in London. After emigrating to America, he returned to Paris to study at the Académie Julian (1901-3). His later years were spent in America and in France.

He was informed by current French ideas of Realism – the necessity to represent working people in their own environment and to paint in a physical, textured way. Thus, in this painting, he moves beyond the genre style of earlier artists, and creates a more modern image of west of Ireland life. The realistic observation of costume and objects, the evenness of light, and the granular paint surface give a sense of actuality to the figures.

O'Kelly features a spacious, light-filled cottage interior, open to the sea outside. In contrast to the dark, sorrowful nature of some genre pictures, he depicts a happy, smiling family group which has been reunited. A fisherman has entered his dwelling, and reaches out to hold his baby's hand who greets him with delight. The woman is dressed in simple, cream-coloured skirts, with a beautiful red and gold shawl over her striped jacket. She has the strong hands of a hard-working woman, but the neat, trim posture of a ballet dancer. Her husband wears a Scottish-style beret, tweed jacket and breeches, hand-knitted stockings and pampooties.

The battered creel that the man carries is weighed down with fish. The cottage is plain, with weathered and smoke-stained walls, yet contains the items sufficient for subsistence living. Small bantam hens peck on the earth floor. To the right, the open doorway adds another dimension to the picture; the sky and the sea with fishing boats can be glimpsed, linking the world of home with that of nature. The proximity of the Atlantic suggests that it could have been painted near Salruck, Connemara, where O'Kelly was living, or inspired by an Aran Island cottage.

O'Kelly has represented an austere and industrious way of life and a hardy and happy family. In his Connemara paintings this existence may be slightly idealised, but it also conveys a realistic image of the way of life.

Julian Campbell



40. DANIEL O' NEILL (1920-1974)
OH DANNY BOY (1970)
Oil on board, 45.75 x 61cm (18 x 24"), Signed

Provenance: From the collection of George and Maura Mc Clelland and on loan from them to IMMA 1999 – 2004.

Dan O'Neill was born in Belfast, the son of an electrician, and himself an electrician by trade. He was largely self-taught, although he briefly attended Belfast College of Art life classes, before working with and studying under fellow Belfast artist Sidney Smith.

His first exhibition was in Belfast in 1941 and thereafter he exhibited regularly with Victor Waddington in Dublin. He was influenced by a visit to Paris in 1949 and exhibited in London, with fellow Ulster painter Colin Middleton in 1954. In the 1950s he moved out of the city to Conlig in Co. Down and was in close contact with fellow artists Gerard Dillon and George Campbell. Financial difficulties played a part in his move to London between 1958 and 1971 and his work in this period was increasingly introverted and less exuberant than his previous output. He returned to Belfast for a one man exhibition in 1971 and died there in 1974.

According to O'Neill, he painted landscapes with people in them but really he was interested in using landscape as a tool, to represent the dreams and concerns of those in them. His work is represented in many collections including the Ulster Museum and the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery in Dublin.



Oil on canvas, 71 x 91.5cm (27.75 x 35.75"), Signed and dated 1943

Provenance: Purchased directly from the artist by the current owners Father in 1943 and thence by descent.

Exhibited: 1943 RHA Annual Exhibition, Dublin, Cat No. 92

Literature: "Ireland's Painters 1600 - 1940" by Anne Crookshank and The Knight of Glin 2002 p28" Irish Art (Fig 388)

"One Hundred Years of Irish Art - A Millennium Presentation" by Eamonn Mallie p250 Full page illustration P251

Seán O'Sullivan was born in 44 St Joseph's Terrace, South Circular Road, and later raised in 126 St Stephen's Green in Dublin, where his father, John, ran a business as a carpenter and joiner. He was educated with the Christian Brothers' at Synge Street. Measuring over six feet, he was a good boxer, a fencer, a squash player and an enthusiastic sailor. He was also a keen reader and was fluent in both Irish and French. O'Sullivan entered the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art in 1926 where one of his teachers was Seán Keating. His student days were intermittent but while at the school O'Sullivan came to the attention of the then Headmaster, George Atkinson, who arranged for him to undertake a three month training course in lithography at the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London under Archibald Standish Hartrick. While in London, O'Sullivan met and later married a young Anglo-Dutch art student, Rene Mouw, and the pair spent their early married years studying in Paris. He then worked as a lithographer with Frank Brangwyn having returned to London in the late 1920s. The couple returned to Dublin in the early 1930s and in 1936 O'Sullivan took a studio at Molesworth Street where he remained until he moved to 6 St Stephen's Green in 1939. He remained in that studio until his death in 1964. Working in the centre of Dublin meant that O'Sullivan was well-connected in the social scene at the time. He was on friendly terms with many of Ireland's best-known writers, actors, poets and painters including Keating, Hilda Van Stockum, Maurice MacGonigal, Harry Kernoff, Patrick Kavanagh, Myles na gCopaleen, F.R. Higgins and John Ryan.

O'Sullivan was an extraordinarily talented artist who could turn his hand to any medium. Although perhaps better-known as a portrait painter, he was a keen observer of life on the western seaboard of Ireland. He painted the landscape and people, both young and old, of Connemara and Kerry. According to Claudia Kinmouth the scene presented in *The Old Couple* is an interior of a cottage in Kerry, and perhaps even the Blasket Islands. This may well be the case as O'Sullivan, a fluent Irish speaker, spent a lot of time there and was on close terms with the Great Blasket's most famous resident, Peig Sayers (1873-1958).

The cottage in *The Old Couple*, which was likely built of mud, is not one of great material comfort, but on the other hand, the couple appear happy and content. They are surrounded by simplicity: a kettle over a glowing fire; a pot of boiled potatoes; a modest bench and a mud-flagged floor. Yet the surroundings reveal so much: the arm holding the kettle over the fireplace is burnt and the formerly white-washed chimney breast is blackened, all signs of age and use. A half concealed door remains closed to prying eyes; a partial bannister suggests a room upstairs; the bench, if opened, might reveal a hard-won trousseau, or the miscellanies of a family long-reared. It a large, clean kitchen, in a bright house, but there is no sign of a table or a dresser, and the walls are peculiarly bare but for the clock hanging to the right of the fireplace; a metaphor for the passage of time. The atmosphere suggests many types of absence; histories that only the old couple can remember between themselves. In the meantime, they are very much involved in the moment of their relaxation.

She presents a fascinating portrait. Her hair is greying, her face well-worn, and her hands are like those of a man – well-used to hard labour. She stoops to light her white clay pipe, a form of rest from the labours of the potato fields. By implication, she will sit back on the bare bench to enjoy her few moments rest – there is nowhere else, unless the floor. He, on the other hand, is fully shod from top to toe. His unlined features are highlighted by the bearing of his little cap. He leans forward, pipe in hand; his left hand is raised as if waiting to ask for the match to light his tobacco. He is seated on the only chair in the room; the two are united by their histories, their surroundings and through the gestures that enliven the scene. Meanwhile, unnoticed, his faithful companion, also well-settled, appears to be contemplating the pot of potatoes with that focussed and seriously intentioned stillness that dog owners know well.

Although apparently bare, O'Sullivan's painting of the unnamed pair in *The Old Couple* reveals a great deal. It is a wonderfully observed image for which the artist undertook at least one, if not several compositional studies. The relaxed atmosphere of the work seems to have been augmented by what appears to have been the artist's comfortable familiarity with the couple: their past; their daily routine; their home; and of course, their dog. The painting portrays a lively, happy, if timeworn twosome, well-content with each other, and with their lives as already lived. Yet, it also signals their acceptance of the inexorable journey that will take them both someplace else. In the interim, however, by virtue of the attitude of their 'best friend', which seems to have gone entirely unnoticed, they may have a rival for the contents of the pot.



After studying in Antwerp, 1881-83, and painting in Brittany, 1883, Osborne spent the rest of the eighties dividing his time between Ireland and England. Generally he spent the summer months in English villages or small towns, painting rural scenes, children in farmyards, street scenes, agricultural subjects and landscapes. In 1887, when the present picture, *The Hurdy-Gurdy Player* was painted, Osborne worked both in Berkshire and Hampshire in south central England and in Dublin. This was a productive year for the artist who executed a number of appealing pictures, including *Down an Old Court, Newbury*, 1887, *Boy under Trees, In St. Patrick's Cathedral* and *Near St. Patrick's Close* (National Gallery of Ireland), one of Osborne's most popular pictures, as well as *The Hurdy-Gurdy Player*, all of which include the figures of children.

Osborne was attracted by village scenes with figures in the street with sunlight falling on red-brick houses and red tiled roofs. Although the street scenes are naturally observed, Osborne almost treats the street as an open air stage set where a cross-section of the local community, men, women and children, are shown going about their business: shopping, working, pausing to talk, playing music, or simply observing the goings-on. Some people are well-to-do, some wearing working clothes, while the garments of others are more threadbare and impoverished.

The stage-like impression is emphasized here by the fact that the view is closed off by buildings in the background. In the centre middle distance is a working woman with a long apron, while closer to us are a well-to-do woman and a teenage girl. The hurdy-gurdy player stands in statuesque pose and wearing a hat, left of centre. (Although the picture is named after him, cobble stones appear to show through the figure, suggesting that it may have been added in afterwards.)

The hurdy-gurdy was a stringed musical instrument which dated to the early Middle Ages. It was played by turning a handle, which made a droning sound, while the pressing of keys created the tune. The hurdy-gurdy became popular amongst travelling musicians in France and the Low Countries in the 17th Century. There is a fine example of a hurdy-gurdy instrument made by Jon Quig of Coleraine in the late 18th Century in the National Museum of Ireland.

Hurdy-gurdy players began to be included in paintings, for example, *A Dutch Merrymaking*, 1692, by Cornelis Dusart and *Fete Champetre* by Jean Lebel (NGI), by French artists such as Antoine Watteau and also by Irish artist George Sharpe. Travelling musicians or performers were the sort of itinerant characters that appealed to Osborne, here in *The Hurdy-Gurdy Player*, and also in *St. Patrick's Close* (NGI) with its piping boy, and *Life in the Streets* (1893, Dublin City Gallery, the Hugh Lane) including a barrel organ player. Richard Thomas Moynan shared this interest, as for example in *A Travelling Show*, 1892 (cat no 36) which includes a Punch-and-Judy man with drum.

More prominent in Osborne's painting is the group of figures in the right-hand foreground, including a girl with red scarf and tray, a woman with black scarf, and two children who look back at the scene. The little boy with cap is a familiar type in Osborne's paintings, such as appears in many of his pictures.

Although relatively small in scale, *The Hurdy-Gurdy Player* could almost be a prototype for the more elaborate street and market scenes which Osborne was to paint: the aforementioned *St. Patrick's Close* and *Life in the Streets*, as well as *Cherry Ripe*, c.1889 (Ulster Museum, Belfast), set in Rye, and market scenes in Galway, all of which include a variety of figures and a wealth of anecdotal detail.

Although depicted in part in shadow, the painting is denominated by a warm reddish-brown, burnt sienna and umber palette, which was later used more vividly in *Cherry Ripe*. Some of the figures are suggested in a sketchy but skillful manner. Horizontal strokes are used to convey the brickwork in the buildings and cobble stones, and a 'square-brush' style is employed in the chimney stacks to give blurred edges against the sky. The picture is signed with the squared capital letters that Osborne used in the late 1880s.

Julian Campbell



43. BASIL IVAN RÁKÓCZI (1908-1979)
ROCKY ALLEY, DUBLIN
 Oil on board, 52 x 69cm (20½" x 27"), Signed

Provenance: From the collection of the late Mary Rynne.

Exhibited: 'The Dublin Picture Club' 1941

The opening of the New Millennium Wing exhibition of 20th Century Irish Art, The National Gallery of Ireland Jan 2002-Dec 2003
 'The Collectors Eye Exhibition', The Model Arts and Niland Gallery, Sligo, Jan-Feb, Cat No.24

Although born in England, Basil Rákóczi's mother was from Co. Cork. He studied at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière in Paris. In the early 30's, he joined the New Britain Group, which met to discuss ideas in psychology and psychotherapy, and there he met Herbrand Ingouville-Williams, a medical student at Cambridge, who became a life long friend and confidant. Studying privately a under Ossip Zadkine, Rákóczi founded the Society for Creative Psychology with his friend Kenneth Hall, who he had met in 1935, and exhibited under the name of the "White Stag Group" in London. At the onset of war, Hall and Rákóczi sought refuge in Ireland, eventually moving to Dublin in 1940. They gathered around them a small circle of friends who shared their interests, and exhibited with "The White Stag Group" at Upper Mount Street, and then at Lower Baggot Street. In 1946, after the war, Rákóczi went to London, before finally settling in Paris.

From The Irish Digest June 1944 (Condensed from "The Leader") "*A sensible approach to art - WHY I BUY PICTURES*" by Mary Rynne.

"One of my most cherished pictures is a large oil of the Dublin slums called "Rock Alley" by Basil Rakoczi. I found it at a one man show at the Picture Hire Club in 1941. I fell for it on the spot, but being in rather low water at the time I lowered my eyes, my gaze lingered on the catalogue. Four Guineas! I purchased hurriedly and have never regretted my impetuosity"

Mary Rynne's collection included works by Jack Yeats, Grace Henry, Father Jack Hanlon, Charles Lamb and such works by Mainie Jellett as "The Ninth Hour" bought in the same year, 1941, and now in the Hugh Lane Gallery Collection.



44. NANO REID (1900-1981)

THE WREN

Oil on board, 55.5 x 61 cms (22 x 24"), Signed.

Provenance: The Dawson Gallery, Dublin where purchased by current owner

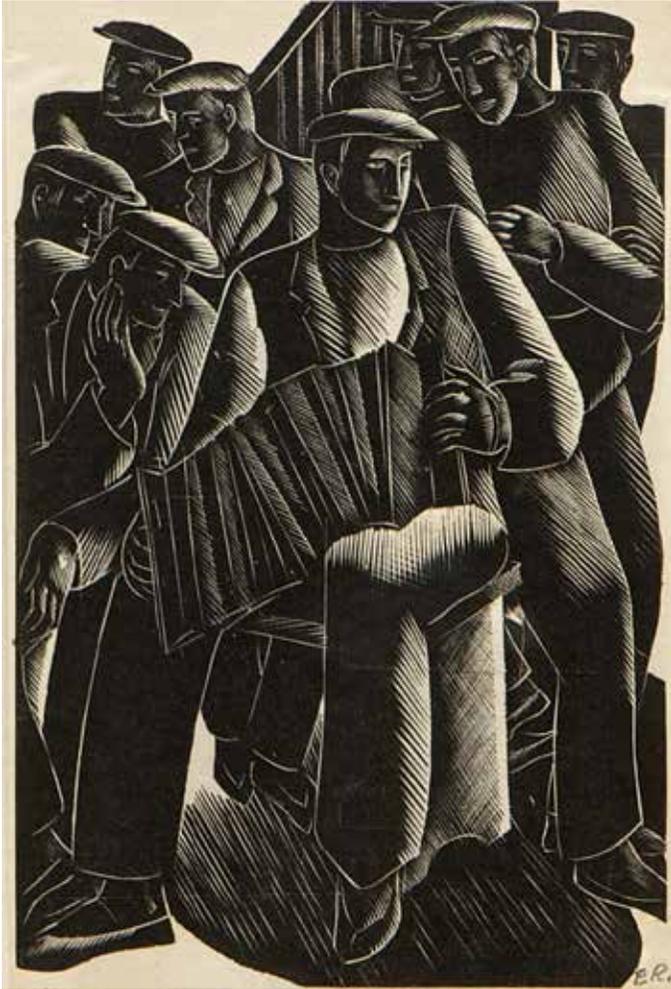
Born in Drogheda Co. Louth, Nano Reid trained at the Metropolitan School of Art in Dublin, where she studied under Sean Keating and Harry Clarke. Afterwards she travelled to Paris, enrolling at the Académie de la Grande Chaumiére along with other Irish artists such as Kathleen Fox. Reid then attended the Central School in London, studying under Bernard Meninsky. Her first solo exhibition was held at the Dublin Painters Gallery in 1934. After returning to Ireland, Reid spent the rest of her life in Drogheda, concentrating on painting aspects of local life and landscapes. However, her paintings are in no way bound by a sense of locality, but are accomplished essays in painterly abstraction.

By 1942, she had established a reputation for her richness of invention, with economy of means, and her watercolour landscapes were compared to those of Raoul Dufy. She exhibited at the RHA during the 1930s; but, from 1943, generally exhibited with the IELA, the Dublin Painters and later with the Independent Artists. She represented Ireland with Norah McGuinness at the Venice Biennale in 1950.

Nano Reid (1900-1981) is an example of an artist who although trained in Dublin, Paris and London, sought to reject both realist and modernist conventions in her work. She developed a highly individual aesthetic to express her ideas. Her work draws on the landscape and inhabitants of the area around her native Drogheda. A key theme that it explores is the continuity between the past and the present. Like many of her contemporaries, Reid was conscious of this relationship changing fundamentally with the onslaught of urbanisation. *The Wren* refers to the Wren Boys who, on St. Stephen's Day, disguise themselves to hunt the wren and come asking for money to prevent them from killing the bird. Reid's energetic application of paint conveys the excitement of the event, with tribal like figures carrying torches through the landscape, into which typically of Reid, their forms appear imbedded. Her treatment of this subject evokes the longevity of the Wren Boys as a festival with ancient origins going back to Celtic times. Reid uses a high perspective so that the entire composition is taken up with the landscape. The absence of a horizon line intensifies the viewer's relationship to the subject and is indicative of an intimate connection between the artist and her surroundings. The richly layered application of earthy colours emphasises the ancient nature of the landscape and the primordial relationship of the Wren Boys to it.

Dr. Róisín Kennedy



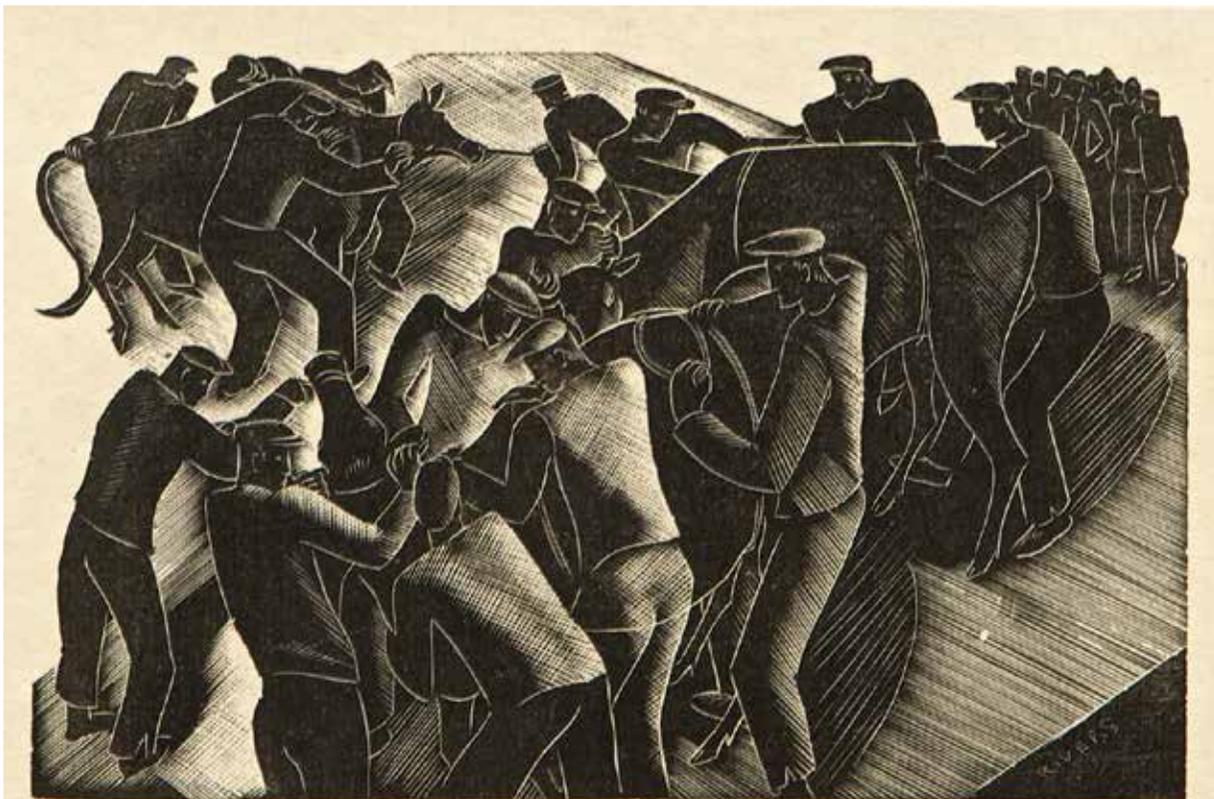


45. ELIZABETH RIVERS (1903-1964)
 (A) *YOUTH WITH MELODEON*
 Wood engraving, 18.4 x 12.7cm (7¼" x 5")
 Signed with initials and signed & inscribed on mount board.
 Provenance: From the artists estate

(B) *SHIPPING CATTLE FROM THE GALWAY FAIR*
 Wood engraving, 10.2 x 14cm (4" x 5½")
 Signed, inscribed with title and numbered 6/10.

Born in 1903 in England, Rivers studied first at Goldsmith's College, under Edmund J. Sullivan (1869-1933) from 1921 until 1924, showing distinct interest in wood engraving. She won a scholarship to the Royal Academy, where she studied for five years under Walter Sickert, and won a number of medals and prizes.

In 1931, she studied in Paris under L'Hote and Severini, and also at the Ecole de Fresque: by 1934 she had returned to London, and visited Aran where she went to live the following year. She lived on Inis Mor until 1941, exhibiting during these years in Manchester, London and Dublin, including the RHA in 1936. During the war years, she worked in London as a fire warden, but returned to Aran, publishing *Stranger in Aran* with The Cuala Press, 1946-55, she painted in Dublin, and assisted Evie Hone in her stained glass studio. She contributed regularly to the Irish Exhibition of Living Art, had a solo shows in the Dawson Gallery, Dublin, and a memorial exhibition was held in the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery, Dublin, 1964.



Shipping cattle for the Galway Fair - Anon. 6/50

E.J. Revere

46. MARKEY ROBINSON (1918-1999)
DONEGAL COUPLE
 Bronze, 23 x 13 cm (9 x 5.1”), Signed on wooden base

Provenance: From the collection of George and Maura
 McClelland and on loan from them to IMMA 1999- 2004

Exhibited: The original brick piece “*The Lewinter-Frankl Collection*, The Ulster Museum 1958,
 Cat. No 223

From his early childhood Markey liked to draw and paint. He was unable to follow his interest and was apprenticed as a welder but took some classes at the Belfast College of Art in the late 1930s and early 1940s. At the outbreak of war he joined the casualty service of the Civil Defence and painted when he could. After the war he went to sea in the merchant marine and traveled extensively. For a while he lived in Paris where he moved among artists. One can see the influence in his work of Rouault, Matisse, Derain, Dufy and others. He exhibited his paintings in the Salon d’Automne and in the Salon des Independents in Paris and in the Living Art Exhibition in Dublin.

In a “*Maverick Spirit*” Michael Mulreany wrote “Mc Clelland was among the first to recognize and collect Markey’s sculpture and wood carvings. He bought the piece “*Man and woman*” which was shown in 1953 at CEMA’s exhibition of sculpture from Zoltan Frankl. This piece, which Mc Clelland had cast in bronze and which variously became known as “*Old Couple*,” “*Donegal Couple*” or “*Farm Labourers*” is probably Markey’s best known work in sculpture and one with humble beginnings. Markey said he made it from wet brick, which he worked with a sharpened stick and which he fired in a kiln on a night he stayed at a Belfast brickworks.

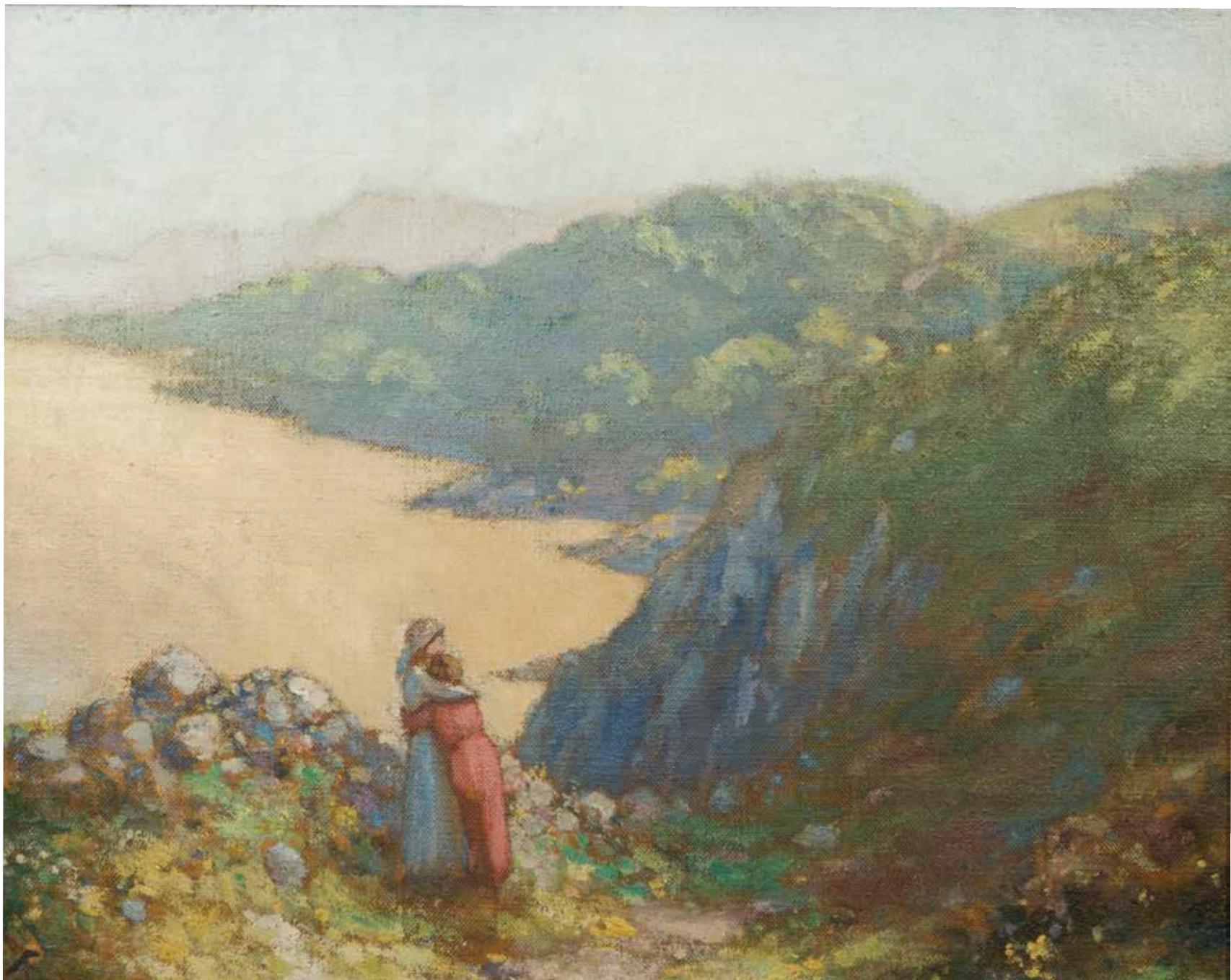


47. GEORGE RUSSELL (Æ) 1867 – 1935)
CHILDREN AT SLIEVE LEAGUE CO. DONEGAL
 Oil on canvas, 61 x 76cm (24 x 30”) Signed with monogram.

George Russell grew up in Lurgan, Co. Armagh but moved to Dublin at the age of 11. He is known not only for his paintings but as a writer, poet, critic, theosophist and economist, and by his pseudonym Æ (a derivative of the word Aeon). He began night time painting classes at the Metropolitan School of Art just two years after moving to Dublin, and went on to receive academic training at the RHA. Æ supported Hugh Lane’s campaign for the gallery of modern art and was active in the Irish Literary Revival. He exhibited abroad at the 1913 Armory Show in New York and at the Whitechapel in London, and created a large scale series of murals of 3 Upper Ely Place in Dublin which has been compared to the work of Goya. His paintings can be found in the collection of the Ulster Museum, National Gallery of Ireland, Hugh Lane, OPW, Trinity College Dublin and the Crawford Gallery.

George Russell’s landscapes are based on a close harmonious relationship between humanity and nature. Steeped in symbolism and theosophy, Russell believed in the connection between outward sensations and inner responses. His *Children at Slieve League, Co. Donegal*, shows two figures embracing with a vista of sand and mountains extending behind them. Subtle exaggerations of light and colour such as the patches of intense blue in the cliffs and rocky ground create a pulsating vision of the Donegal landscape a location for which the artist had particular fondness. Unlike the Henrys Russell holidayed in the west rather than living there long term. His visits to Donegal were particularly productive and their regenerative power is reflected in the work that he made there.

Dr. Róisín Kennedy



48. CAROLINE SCALLY (1886 – 1973)
150TH ANNIVERSARY '1798 COMMEMORATIONS' AT DONNARD, CO. WICKLOW (1938)
Oil on board, 32 x 40.5cm (12 ½ x 16")

Exhibited: '*Caroline Scally Retrospective*', The Frederick Gallery, March 2005, Cat. no. 62

Caroline Scally was born in Dun Laoghaire and studied at the Metropolitan School of Art with Sean Keating and James Sinton Sleator under William Orpen. Awarded the Taylor Art Scholarship in 1911 she headed for Paris and then on to Rome. She held her first one-woman show at the Dublin Painters Gallery in 1930 and was later to become President of the Dublin Painters Society in 1962. She exhibited at the first IELA exhibition in 1943 and showed regularly at the RHA and with the Watercolour Society of Ireland, becoming a committee member in 1958. Throughout her career, Scally experimented with different styles, her work maintaining a quiet and consistent quality, enlivened with a quirky humour and strong sense of colour and lyricism.



49. ESTELLA SOLOMONS HRHA (1882-1968)
HAYFIELD NEAR RUSH
Oil on board, 30 x 40cm (12 x 16")

Exhibited: '*Estella Solomons Retrospective Exhibition*', The Crawford Gallery, May/June 1986, Cat. no. 42
'*Estella Solomons Exhibition*', The Frederick Gallery, Nov. 1999, Cat. no. 13
'*Shades of Light*', The Hunt Museum 2005

Estella Solomons was born in Dublin into a prominent Jewish family, and In 1898, at the age of 16, Estella attended the Royal Hibernian Academy Schools under Walter Osborne, and entered the Metropolitan School of Art, where she became a pupil of William Orpen. In 1906 she visited the Rembrandt tercentenary exhibition in Amsterdam which was a significant event for her and her early use of chiaroscuro in portraiture. She went on to study in London and Paris, and upon her return to Ireland spent some time painting in County Kerry.

She was active in politics before and during the Irish war of independence. She took the republican side in the civil war and her studio was used as a safe house by republican volunteers. She married poet and publisher Seamus O'Sullivan in 1929 and they worked together on *The Dublin Magazine*.



50. IMOGEN STUART RHA (B.1927)
STILLORGAN CHILDREN
Bronze, 11.4cm (4½") high, Signed

The eldest daughter of Germany's leading art critic of the thirties, Imogen Stuart was born into a cultured Berlin family and began to sculpt from a very early age. After meeting her Irish husband Ian Stuart, the grandson of the artist Maud Gonne, through her studies in Berlin, she came to Ireland in 1949 and became interested in Irish saints and scholars and their connection to nature.

She works in wood, bronze, stone, steel, clay and terracotta and has regularly exhibited at the annual RHA and Living Art exhibitions. A member of Aosdana since 1981, she was also elected a full member of the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1990 and Professor of Sculpture by the RHA in 2000. She is well known for her ecclesiastical artistic work such as the monumental Pope John Paul II in St Patrick's College Maynooth and the carved altar in the University College Cork chapel, but also public works such as '*Fiddler of Dooney*' and these figures located in the Stillorgan shopping centre, portayals of youth, innocence and joy.



51. JACK BUTLER YEATS, RHA (1871 - 1957)

THE FIGUREHEAD CARVER

Oil on canvas, 36 x 46cm (14" x 18")

Signed

Provenance: From the collection of Jack Toohey

Exhibited: "*Jack. B. Yeats Exhibition*", Waddington Galleries, Dublin 1945, Cat No. 15 Priced 60.0.0"*An Ireland Imagined*" Pym's Gallery, London 1993, Cat. No. 64.Literature: "*Jack. B. Yeats Catalogue Raisonné*" by Hilary Pyle, Cat. No. 619.

Jack B. Yeats was the son of the portrait painter John Butler Yeats and the brother of the poet W. B. Yeats. He was born in London but spent most of his childhood with his grandparents in Sligo. Yeats studied art in London but for the most part was self-taught. He began working as a magazine illustrator in 1888 and returned to live in Ireland in 1910 where he settled in Greystones, Co. Wicklow. He exhibited in over 160 group exhibitions and had more than 60 solo shows. He wrote plays and books and also submitted illustrations to Punch magazine between 1910 and 1941 under the pseudonym "W. Bird". He was elected RHA in 1915.

There have been many retrospective exhibitions of his work in Ireland, Britain and North America, including three at the National Gallery of Ireland in 1971, 1986 and 1990, and one at the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art in 1988. In 1991, a major exhibition of the late paintings was exhibited at the Arnolfini and Whitechapel Art Galleries in London which toured to Holland.

Dr. Róisín Kennedy has written "The Figure Head Carver (1944) comes out of the artist's imagination but also his close attachment to Sligo, where he spent his childhood and to which he often returns in his later work. The peak-capped carver who stands in his workshop surrounded by the strange human-like forms of his figureheads, can be linked to the heroic figure of the pilot who appears in other works by Yeats. This man kept watch at Rosses's Point in a little hut on the headland and from there he guided the ships up the Garravogue River into Sligo town. Through the open doorway a view of ships at sea acts as a metaphor for the man's imagination and by extension that of the artist in his studio. As in so many of the works in this exhibition and more generally in 20th century Irish art, the painting demonstrates a nostalgic attitude to the past and a reluctance to deal directly with the present moment. Yeats's work does, however, resonate with the present in its expression of both an intense optimism and an underlying melancholy. Ernie O'Malley wrote that Yeats's vision makes us 'aware of inherent characteristics, psychological directives and eternal verities'.



52. LILY YEATS (1866-1949)
THE GPO
 Needlework Panel, 25 x 20cm (10 x 8")
 Signed

Label verso inscribed with title and states that this piece was designed by the artist Dorothy Blackham

The Yeats family moved from Howth, County Dublin, in 1883 to Terenure, Dublin, and that year both Lily and Lolly Yeats entered the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art. Lily took embroidery lessons from May Morris (1862-1938), daughter of William Morris (1834—96), a prime mover in the English arts and crafts movements. After six years, she began exhibiting her own embroidered pieces, mostly focusing on artistically stylized flower compositions. Bold black lines are reminiscent of the strongly graphic treatment Jack Butler Yeats gave to sodality banner saints he designed for his sister to embroider for St. Brendan's cathedral, Loughrea Co. Galway.

In 1902, the sisters settled with their father at 'Gurteen Dhas', Dundrum, Co. Dublin. Ms Evelyn Gleeson also settled in Dundrum, and she founded the Dun Emer Industries, Lily working at embroidery and Lolly mainly at printing. About 1906, Lolly widened the scope of the Press, and began to specialize in hand-coloured prints, Christmas cards, pamphlets, and she executed many of the designs.

Cuala press was adapted after a break with Evelyn Gleeson and her brother Willie. Lily continued to teach local girls in a wide range of expressive stitches, and some were framed, or incorporated into cushions, table or bed linen or furnishings. Many were sold at nationalist art fairs, art and crafts exhibition in Dublin, London and New York, or given as presents far and wide.



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The Sean Keating will be included in our forthcoming sale on 26th September.
 The other pictures highlighted in red above will be included in our December Important Irish Sale.
 Further entries for this prestigious sale are now being accepted .