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Selected works from the IMMA Collection at Friars Gate Theatre, Co Limerick

4 December 2009

An exhibition featuring film works from the Collection of the Irish Museum of Modern Art opens to the public at Friars Gate Theatre on Monday 7 December 2009. *Prospect* features five film-works which survey environments that bring together a range of perspectives from the natural to the manmade, the intimate to the vast and the familiar to the unknown. Artists featured in the exhibition include Paddy Jolley, Clare Langan, Brian Duggan and Isabel Nolan. This exhibition marks the first occasion that Friars Gate Theatre and the National Programme have collaborated.

As part of the exhibition Irish artist John Beattie facilitated talks and workshops with local primary and secondary school groups. Resulting artworks are exhibited in the foyer space as part of *Prospect*. John Beattie frequently works in video, photography and drawing and his practice explores ideas and perceptions relating to the Artist, the Studio and the Audience (viewer, spectator, and participant) in various contexts such as the studio, the gallery, or in more socially engaged environments. The workshops are supported by the Department of Education and Science.

Paddy Jolley's film-work, *Hereafter*, 2004, is the result of a commission from 2002 to make a film in Dublin's north-side suburb of Ballymun - an area targeted for radical social and economic change due to Dublin City Council's plan to regenerate the area by demolishing and rebuilding residential housing and services. As part of this plan, residents were requested to move from flats in tower blocks, which in many cases were their lifetime dwellings, to new contemporary houses. Jolley in collaboration with German artist, Rebecca Trost and Norwegian artist/ animator, Lise Inger Hansen, focused on the freshly departed flats and the physical items left behind.

Clare Langan's trilogy of films are shot on location between Ireland, Iceland and Namibia, the works explore the seemingly limitless forces of nature, tracing the path of a solitary figure through a post-apocalyptic landscape. *Forty Below*, 1999, depicts a world where the delicate balance of nature has been upturned. There appears to have been a flood and the familiar world is now submerged in water. There is a weightlessness, a lack of gravity, where time and place merge and the division between earth and sky become unclear. In *Too Dark for Night*, 2001, the second in the trilogy, there are again violent extremes of climate; in contrast to *Forty Below* this landscape is an arid one becoming engulfed by an ever-advancing desert. The final part of the trilogy, *Glass Hour*, 2002, is set in a deserted urban and industrial wasteland which shifts from the natural to the built environment. Smoking chimneys point to the possibility that the apocalypse suggested by all three films is man-made. However, the violence of nature is also present as an angry, fiery-red earth opens up ready to engulf the world.

In Brian Duggan's work, the artist himself is the protagonist performing activities which are constrained and testing space even when undertaken in the great outdoors. *Door*, 2005, was

made in the Burren, Co Clare, yet the artist has chosen the parameters of a window frame in a ruin in which to perform his feat. In Isabel Nolan's work *Sloganeering 1-4*, 2001, notions of identity are explored using a white T-shirt on which Nolan repeatedly scribbles slogans. These slogans are underlined, added to and ultimately cast away as the artist takes off her shirt to start writing on a fresh one worn underneath. This work explores the complexities of identity and how it can be reduced to clichés, it also looks at how in today's culture communication is often reduced to sound bites.

Friars Gate Theatre, Kilmallock has been operating successfully as a theatre and arts centre since October 1997. The theatre has a vibrant performing, visual and educational programme. Friars Gate is committed to the promotion of arts in their widest form and incorporate the significance of all forms of artistic expression and encourage the participation of all members of the community in activities which enrich appreciation of the arts.

Focusing on the Museum's Collection, the National Programme facilitates offsite projects and exhibitions in a range of venues and situations throughout Ireland. The Museum aims to act as a resource at a local level through working in partnership and relying on the knowledge and concerns of the local community. Partner organisations are wide-ranging and include a variety of venues both in traditional art and non-arts spaces, allowing for far-reaching access and interaction. The National Programme in 2009 has been supported by the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism.

Prospect continues until 27 January 2010.

Friars Gate Theatre, Sarsfield St., Kilmallock, Co. Limerick
Open: Monday - Friday 9.30am - 5.30pm and later on performance evenings.
Other times by appointment.
Telephone: 063-98727
Website: www.friarsgate.ie



Clare Langan, *Glass Hour*, 2002, Super 16mm film transferred to DVD with surround sound, Dimensions variable, Collection Irish Museum of Modern Art, Purchase 2003

Source : www.imma.ie

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Artist's book launch:

Walking Drawing Making Memory by David Lilburn,
Limerick City Gallery of Art
Thursday 10 December, 5pm-7pm

Please join us for a wine reception to celebrate the launch of the limited edition book *Walking Drawing Making Memory, A Ballynahinch Sketchbook* by artist David Lilburn.

David Lilburn explores ideas about place and memory through the graphic processes of drawing and printmaking.

'Walking drawing for me is a way of expressing a relationship with the landscape, an intense cognitive and physical involvement with the terrain. Drawing is like mapping. It is a sort of journey. When you set out to make a drawing you set out on a journey through space and memory, towards the source of the drawing.'

Walking Drawing, Making Memory, A Ballynahinch Sketchbook is published in a limited, numbered edition of 300 by Ballynahinch Castle and Occasional Press, July 2009. Numbers 1-150 include a frontispiece of an original intaglio print signed and numbered by the artist. Books 1-150 are priced at €85.00 (+ P&P); books 151-300 at €30.00.
www.occasionalpress.net



Detail from *Riverbank Ballynahinch Estate*, pencil and oil on paper,

LCGA Opening Hours: Mon-Fri: 10am-6pm, Thurs: 10am-7pm, Sat: 10am-5pm,
Sun: 2pm-5pm, Closed Bank Holidays.
LCGA offers free tours to schools and groups.

*For further information, or to book a tour, please telephone: +353 (0)61 310633
or email, artgalleryeducation@limerickcity.ie*

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Dev Victory Telegram Put On Public Display

A telegram sent by Eamon de Valera to his wife following his election as MP for Clare has been placed on display at Clare Museum in Ennis.

The document, which confirms the former Irish Taoiseach and President's 1917 By-election victory over Patrick Lynch of the Irish Party, is being exhibited along with the first Minute book of Clare County Council recorded in April 1899. The exhibits form part of a joint conservation initiative between Clare County Archives and Clare Museum.



The telegram has been placed on display alongside a comprehensive account of the first meeting of Clare County Council, which was held in the Grand Jury room of Ennis Courthouse on 22 April 1899. During the inaugural meeting Michael A. Scanlon was elected as the first Chairman of Clare County Council.

According to County Archivist Rene Franklin: "It is clear from this Minute book that those present regarded the new Council as a stepping stone to national independence. This nationalist fervour was the spirit behind a series of motions recorded in the minutes and preserved now in Clare County Archives".

Thomas Blackall proposed the following motion: 'while accepting the Local Government Act [1898] as a tardy instalment of justice, and while we are determined to work for the benefit of all classes in our country, we hereby declare that we will never relax our efforts in the National cause until we see a native Parliament in College Green' (CC/MIN/1, 22 April 1899).'

All minute books of Clare County Council are preserved and available for public viewing to the public by contacting **Clare County Archives** at :
archives@clarecoco.ie
or **065 6846414**.

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Wettest November on record brings widespread flooding; mild and windy

— Met Éireann

Atlantic depressions passing close to Ireland brought wet and windy conditions throughout almost all of November, continuing a pattern of very unsettled weather over Ireland since mid-October. Persistent and often heavy rain over this period led to unprecedented levels of flooding in parts of the west and south, as ground conditions became saturated. Rainfall totals for November were the highest on record at most stations, including the long-term stations at Malin Head and Valentia Observatory, where records extend back over 100 years. Valentia's total of 360mm was its highest of any month since observations began in the area in 1866, while its previous highest annual total of 1923mm in 2002 was also exceeded during the last week of this month, reflecting the persistence of wet weather throughout the year. More than twice the average November amounts were measured at almost all stations and close to three times the normal amount fell in some places. Rain or showers were recorded on almost every day, with between 22 and 27 wet days observed (days with 1mm or more rainfall), compared with the normal range for November of between 13 and 20 wet days. Heaviest daily falls at most stations were recorded on the 1st, in the period 16th to 19th, and on the 29th in the east; two-day falls of over 100mm were recorded in parts of the west and southwest on the 18th/19th. Much of November was mild with little or no frost, but temperatures fell considerably towards the end of the month. Overall, mean air temperatures for the month were close to average higher than normal generally. Air and ground frost became widespread at the end of the month, but the total of between seven and 12 ground frosts at inland stations was below normal for November. Despite the very wet weather, sunshine totals were above normal generally, especially in the north.

Source : <http://www.met.ie/>



Image : Skehenagh Roundabout near Ennis

Source : Clare County Council

<http://www.clarecoco.ie/>

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‘*Voyage of the Orphans*’, a film and three-act play will have its premiere screening and staging on Friday December 11th at the Honey Fitz Theatre in Lough Gur.

Work on the project commenced in March 2009 and involved over 50 members of the local community in east Limerick, including 28 full-time members of the Youth Theatre. The idea to explore migration developed out of a series of workshops, facilitated by drama and arts specialist Fiona Quinn.

Ms. Quinn explained: “Arising out of the workshops was an interest and keenness among the Youth Theatre members to make a film and devise a play on the theme of migration. We successfully applied for a Youth Initiative Grant under the European Youth in Action scheme to help them research and produce the film and three-act play.”

She continued: “Looking at our own history of forced migration, the County Limerick Youth Theatre focused on the poignant true story of the 4,000 Irish famine orphans who were transported from the Irish workhouses to Australia during the Great Famine. This story of our past helped draw parallels between our nation’s experience of migration and the plight of migrants today. Youth Theatre members undertook detailed historical research with the help of their coach, Kate Hammond.’

According to Ms. Hammond: “We looked at modern migration issues and the way that Irish society and the Irish media receive immigrants arriving here. This information was used as a springboard for improvisations at the weekly youth theatre workshops and slowly common characters and themes began to emerge”.

Shot on location in County Limerick during August, the ten-minute film documents how three young sisters ended up as orphans in a Workhouse before two of them were transported to Australia. The social and economic differences between the landed gentry and tenant farmer families of the time are starkly demonstrated in the production. The film featured a local cast, ranging in age from 4 to 92 years old. The oldest member of the cast sadly passed away in recent weeks.

As part of the research on migration, members of the County Limerick Youth Theatre were also involved in visiting exhibitions on migration and democracy, inviting speakers to talk at the Honey Fitz venue and performing short plays commissioned by Amnesty International on the topics of racism and migration.

17-year-old Siobhan McCormack, from Herbertstown in County Limerick, noted that the project was very different to anything she or her fellow Youth Theatre members had ever done before. She explained: “For us, this was a complete eye opening experience. We devised a play about the orphan girls of famine Ireland who travelled to Australia for a better life but were often met with racism and prejudice. These things are still happening today and are as bad as they ever were. People come to our country from poor countries or countries who are experiencing civil war and who have no choice but to leave.”

The County Limerick Youth Theatre was originally founded 14 years ago and is an initiative of Limerick County Council.

Ms. Mc Kernan said that the Youth Theatre had grown from strength to strength since its establishment fourteen years ago. “We established the Honey Fitz branch in Lough Gur four

years ago to allow young people living in a rural isolated area direct access to the arts. There are now 28 full time members of the youth theatre aged between 13 -18 years old. We are always open to new members”, she concluded.

‘*Voyage of the Orphans*’ is showing at The Honey Fitz Theatre, Lough Gur, Co. Limerick from 11th – 13th December 2009 at 7.30pm. Tickets €10/€5 concessions.

Booking on **061 385 386**

For more on the County Limerick Youth Theatre contact the Limerick County Council Arts Office on **061 496 498 / 496 300**



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Internet Women's History Sourcebook

"Yes, I am fond of history."

"I wish I were too. I read it a little as a duty, but it tells me nothing that does not either vex or weary me. The quarrels of popes and kings, with wars or pestilences, in every page; the men all so good for nothing, and hardly any women at all — it is very tiresome:"

Catherine Morland, in *Northanger Abbey* (1803), by **Jane Austen**

Source : <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/women/womensbook.html>