

west 47 Jan - March 2008

Timepieces

In this instalment's 'New Writing' **Mike McCormack** presents the unsettling meeting of two Mayo brothers who have not seen each other for five years. Theirs is a fraternity fraught with differing standards of fidelity to home, family and work. **Kerry Hardie** gifts us two intriguing and subtle variations on the theme of doubt, or, more precisely, its absence; the slight differences between her two pieces express in form the degrees of self-consciousness which constitute their theme. They are meditations on — and they demonstrate, in their various punctuations — the ways in which poems and people can change in time.

In 'Markings', from **Seeing Things** (1991), **Seamus Heaney** re-activated memories of football and farming which time had rendered dim: "*All of these things entered you/As if they were the door and what came through it./They marked the spot, marked time and held it open.*" The selected works in this instalment of **West47** echo, in their various ways, Heaney's imperative that writing should hold the moment. **Alan MacMonagle's** 'Sun Showers' calls our attention to slivers of transient beauty in the noise of road construction, and gives in story an account of our complex reactions to the problem and promise of progress. Nothing stays the same, alas, and time cannot be held down or to account. It strides on; the roads may be disorganised now, one character observes, but "*one day they will be beautiful again. Maybe they already are. Beauty doesn't belong only in the past or in the future.*" **Clare Ryan's** 'A City Tale' remembers the summer of 1960, and the resonant and residual influence of a neighbourhood presence. **Tom Sheehan's** narrator in 'Knickers' recalls a day out at the beach, a defining childhood familial moment evoked vividly in garish clothing. 'The Opening', by **Jackie Morrissey**, conjures a sweltering customs shed at Ho Chi Minh airport where a queuing couple put down time by people-watching.

The Scottish poet **Don Paterson** once aphorized that a poem is "*a little machine for remembering itself*". As though prompted by Paterson, **Andrew Caldicott's** poem is itself a timepiece about a timepiece which remembers in its continued ticking the decline of a loved one. **James Martyn's** poem describes the passing years' etchings on a battered door; the poem is about the door itself but its new noises call back the ghosts of those who came through it. **Sheila Phelan's** two poems trimly and poignantly between them define family life distinctly by remembering interactions outside, in Crete on holiday, and at a neighbour's party.

This issue of **west47** also includes reviews of the highly successful creative writing happenings run by the **Galway Arts Centre**. **Miceál Kearney's** 'Listen to your Elders' attests to the strength of the monthly , while the writings of **Romane Gawley, Oliver Martyn, Margaret Moynihan, and Nick Williams** demonstrate the value of a ready outlet for creative talent. These events, like **west47** itself, are an immense credit to the work and enthusiasm of **Maura Kennedy** of Galway Arts Centre, who has played such an outstanding role in the encouragement of writing in Galway and beyond. In my capacity as guest editor of late, I would like to express my thanks to **Maura**.

Inishlacken: A Place Apart

The evening of the 30th January will see Galway Arts Centre's first exhibition opening of 2008; 'Inishlacken: A Place Apart'. For several years, Roundstone based artist Rosie McGurran has run a residency for artists on the now uninhabited island of Inishlacken. Drawing inspiration from the artist Gerard Dillon, who spent a lot of time on the island in the 1950's and invited fellow artists to join him, artists from Ireland and abroad have been making work with McGurran each Summer on the Island. The resulting exhibition will feature twenty-three artists' work. Galway audiences will be familiar with artists such as Kathleen Furey, Seán Ó Flaithearta, Margaret Irwin, Jim Vaughan, Dolores Lyne, Siobán Piercy, Aideen Barry, Jay Murphy and Louise Manifold. The exhibition will also feature work by Mick O'Dea and will see the return of UK artist Caroline Wright, who recently exhibited work in Tulca 2007. The exhibition will also introduce Netherlands based composer Kate Moore and several Belfast artists including Simon McWilliams and Susan McKeever.

The exhibition will consist of work of varying media; from the paintings of Kathleen Furey Mick O'Dea and Dolores Lyne which capture the beauty, tranquillity and sometimes loneliness of the island to multi media artist such as Louise Manifold who has drawn inspiration from a Gerard Dillon painting which considers the island as a different, alienated and dreamlike world. Caroline Wright will present video work of performances made on the island.

The title of the exhibition: Inishlacken: A Place Apart explores the idea of an island as separate, alien, perhaps an in-between space for artists to separate themselves from daily life in order to reflect and create. The idea of re-inhabiting is also prevalent in the exhibition: of re-populating what was once a vibrant community. It is a reflection of peoples' current need to re-connect, to slow down and to re-inhabit the periphery.

The exhibition will be opened by Martin Dillon, nephew of Gerard Dillon. Inishlacken: A Place Apart was devised by Rosie McGurran and is supported by Galway County Council.

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Opening Hours
Monday to Saturday 10am - 6pm. Closed Sundays.