

# Contemporary Diversity

## 2

Cecily Brennan • Joe Butler • Elizabeth Comerford • Jackie Cooney  
Maud Cotter • Mick Cullen • John Doherty • John Philip Murray



# Contemporary Diversity

## 2

## Sponsors



## Introduction

In 1986 I moved to Lissardagh, Co. Cork. Macroom is the nearest town, six miles away. My objective was to paint. Inevitably, I met people in the locality who were interested in culture in a broad sense. I became a little involved with Macroom Museum, and through that I got to know Eugene O’Riordan. Eugene had long been harbouring a wish to have an arts festival in Macroom. Now there were two of us. In May 1990 we organised a broad programme of events, music, poetry, drama, environmental walks, etc., but at the centre we had two exhibitions. One, of artists living locally, was held in the then Palace cinema – now the purpose-built Briery Gap Cultural Centre, the other was Contemporary Diversity held in the Town Hall. For the latter, I chose a group of artists of roughly the same age as myself, all but two of whom I knew from my college days in Dublin. All of these artists were working in roughly traditional media, painting, sculpture, stained glass, etc., but within those formats they showed a diverse collection of concerns and treatments. In the intervening years it is interesting to note the directions that their work has taken. In some, the gradual developments have meant that, at least superficially they have gone off in what seems like polar-opposite directions to their starting-point in 1990, others retain “signature” markings, that allow us to recognise them more easily. Interestingly, all have remained working with “traditional” media, though here-and-there, a painter becomes a sculptor, a stained glass artist becomes a sculptor and so on.

While all of the artists had very full CV’s in 1990, it would probably take a book of small print to document their comings-and-goings in the meantime, so we have pared ruthlessly in the interest of brevity.

For the original exhibition we got our support from two main sources, The Arts Council and Cork County Council. It is good to note that once again, these two bodies are behind the venture. Since that first exhibition in 1990 Cork County Council has substantially increased its support for the arts and the involvement of the Arts Officer, Ian McDonagh, has been central to this project.

Macroom Town Council, have once again, given us the use of the Town Hall, a fine airy space, and have also carried out the necessary building of temporary walls and lighting, to display the works to their best advantage. The Town Clerk, Kevin Curran, has been our support in this and a conduit to the town councillors, who also gave the project their full backing.

We were blessed by having Hilary Pyle living in Cork at the time of the previous exhibition. We are delighted that even though she now lives in Dublin, she has taken such an important part in this exhibition. Aside from visiting all of the artists in their studios and selecting their work from the work that they had available, she has written a wonderful essay about the experience, and has coordinated the text for this catalogue. We have also had the benefit of her vast knowledge and experience in planning the catalogue and exhibition layout. I heartily thank the artists for their participation again, this year. I am delighted that they have given this exhibition such a rich mixture of wonderful work.

It is not easy (but *very* satisfying) to put together an exhibition such as this. Most of the original reasons for so doing are as valid today as they were in 1990. It is still very important for a vibrant rural community to be challenged by a thought-provoking exhibition. We hope that the town of Macroom takes it to its heart in the same way that it did the original.

John Philip Murray  
Lissardagh. June 2004

# Welcome

## Mayor of the County of Cork

It gives me great pleasure as Mayor of the County of Cork to congratulate everyone associated with this project, the artists, the various personnel including county council and town council staff, involved in organising this exhibition. This exhibition is supported by Cork County Council as part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing the cultural and artistic life of the county. Cork County Council is proud to be the main sponsor of this exhibition and catalogue and also warmly acknowledges the contribution made by other bodies including Macroom Town Council, the Arts Council and others.

P. J. Sheehan

Mayor of the County of Cork

## Mayor of Macroom

On behalf of Macroom Town Council, and the people of Macroom, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Contemporary Diversity Exhibition 2004. It is wonderful to see the vibrancy of the contemporary Irish art scene on display here in our Town Hall and I heartily recommend this exhibition to all. Please enjoy.

Evelyn McSweeney

Mayor of Macroom

## Acknowledgements

When John Philip Murray first mooted the idea of Contemporary Diversity 2, I was intrigued by the prospect and challenges of a reprise exhibition featuring the same artists that took part in the first Contemporary Diversity show in Macroom in 1990. Since then the project has become a labour of love for John, who has devoted a huge amount of personal time and energy to the project. At an early stage John suggested that Hilary Pyle might curate the show. Hilary, then resident in Cork, had written the introduction to the first exhibition. Her involvement has been critical and is evident in the care with which she selected the work for the exhibition and the insight that she gives to the work in her catalogue introduction.

Many other people have assisted us in this project: the artists themselves who have given very generously of their work. The private galleries, John and Pat Taylor, Mary Touhy and Louise at the Hallward Gallery, Josephine and Cate Kelliher at the Rubicon, John P. Quinlan at the Vanguard Gallery. Thanks also to Peter Murray Director of the Crawford Municipal Gallery of Art. Sinead Collins and Helen Pyne from the Arts Office. In Macroom Kevin Curran, Town Clerk and his staff including Paddy Murphy, Joe Cunningham, John Spillane, Jerome Connors, Pat Crowley assisted enormously in transforming the town hall for this show.

Very special thanks to Bernadette Gallagher for organising a web presence for the exhibition. Photography for the catalogue was done by Con Kelleher, Denis Mortell and John Kellett. A very special thanks is due to Robert South, Don Hawthorn, Davey Anderson and the staff of Nicholson & Bass.

Ian McDonagh  
Arts Officer, Cork County Council

# Contemporary and Still Diverse

by Hilary Pyle

Arranging a reunion fourteen years after the original event can be problematical. But for artists it is a fresh opportunity to show their work, and eight of the nine who exhibited in *Contemporary Diversity* in 1990 have been able to take up the invitation to exhibit together again. What have they in common? They are Irish. All but one attended art school in Dublin or in Cork in the mid 1970s, and all were affected by the student revolt of a few years before, which made life drawing a discipline of the past.

Ireland at that time had recently entered a new phase of history as a fledgling member of the expanding EEC, and the regeneration of national consciousness as a respected member of an international coalition breathed a zipping confidence into the native air that had hitherto been lacking. The European Community recognised that member states bristled with disparities, but was determined that despite all differences the world could become 'safe for diversity', and this suited the Irish psyche and students of the seventies.

The creative arts flourished within the growing economy, reaching a high point by 1990: and the slight disproportion of men to women in the first *Contemporary Diversity* – four to five – indicated how women, who had fought for equal recognition for so long, had at last attained their right, which they have maintained. Perhaps appropriately this second *Contemporary Diversity* occurs as another ten countries have entered the European Union (and during Ireland's presidency), increasing significantly the propensity for a diversity whose significance must therefore of itself broaden.

A quality that these eight Irish artists share is their innate individuality. They are satisfied to remain at the edge of a post post-modern thrust towards the lures and novelty of more and more sophisticated technology. Their predominantly figurative work forms a bridge between past as well as future, and, while moving with the eddying currents of contemporary trends and themes, still favours tangible traditional materials as anchor for the soaring imagination. The world's complexities grow more involved by the day, magnifying issues such as the physicality of existence, the effects of human presence or absence, present-day stress, possessive links with prehistory, the frantic need to examine self identity; and they have taken these sort of enigmas on board without abandoning their incipient dedication to art's mystery, and the making of marks.



*Mutable Series I, 2003*

Making marks has preoccupied Jackie Cooney throughout her career. 'Traces' first became a theme when she was living in Wicklow, and became interested in marks in snow, and in summer in the green ciphers of the bog. During the development of her graphic style, exploring detritus found in layers of bogland led her to use transparent Japanese paper collage (later superseded by Vilene) for collage layering so as to partially reveal 'subterranean' marks. She studied Minoan frescoes in Crete, and restored Greek pottery, extracting surviving shapes and hints of what was no longer there in her search for a personal imagery. For her, collage allows the visual language to build up gradually.

Cecily Brennan's mark-making connects directly with the Icelandic landscapes she showed in 1990, when she traced the stress and pressure of natural evolution in vibrant slashing charcoal. But now the emphasis is on contemporary 'heat' and pressure on people, diseases of the skin like psoriasis and

eczema that come as disfigurements from nowhere, and, if they disappear, seem to go for no reason. Her videos, and short sound pieces of women talking avoid any emotion, and simply describe the onset of the disease. To further abstract an experience of unbearable stress, suicide attempts such as the lacerating of wrists are painted as 'signs'; and she fashions vacuum-formed plastic armllets stained with acrylic paint to be worn so as to imagine what it is like to be afflicted with disfiguring rashes.



*Self-Harm; Male, 2003*

She employs egg tempera on board of modest standardized dimensions for her 'heat' paintings, deliberately using a purist technique associated with religious icons even though these are secular images. The fact that she makes her three-dimensional work in steel – a very hard material which gives a clean precise image – increases the aura of detachment she wishes to cultivate.

The development of organic marks has been at the core of Maud Cotter's technique whether working with charcoal, glass, plastic or the card which is the material from which she makes her current sculpture. Her habit of worrying at some particular medium may be connected with an obsessive commitment to detect some universal identity in the form of her own self-identity. Since the 1990 exhibition an awareness of being, and of presence and absence – both conceptions approached very personally – have not only made 'breath' a theme in itself, but actually imply respiration in all her recent works, which are conceived within a notional body presence. Her card, woven over a mould and dipped in plaster which runs all over the surface, is perforated to emphasise the breathing in of a piece. One can compare the work of Italian artist, Giuseppe Penone, whose gusts of breath are visually identified in landscape settings. Breath itself can be presence or a non-presence – as she



*Into, 2001*

puts it, air 'held by a coat seeps out a trail of absence.' The conceptual/physical structures are created to contain air; the separate parts of *The Evidence of Things* to inhale as well as to expel.

All these abstractions interconnect, each developing from the previous one, and they are intended to hang together. The huge dramatic pieces with their visible choreography exchange energy with the smaller more intimate pieces, which are sanded down to be soft and approachable. Of all this recent work she has said, 'Within these pieces lies a remembrance of the ordinary, spaces that cushion the everyday and intervene between our flesh and other things.'

Repetitive symbols are fundamental to the work of all eight artists on view. Cooney at present concentrates on picking out recurring marks in her own work, to trace their possible symbolism in a continual review of absence and presence. Pots with running or leaping figures, as in *Vault*, and hints of the landscape they come from, are a permanent fascination, as are the different colours of that landscape and how they can complement or affect one other, or are affected by light or absence of light. For Mick Cullen the repetitive symbols of cowboy, chimpanzee, circus and love, coaxed up in a nonchalant cartoon style, juggle with the nature of reality.

His current work seems more relaxed than that of the nineties. He has always been fascinated with Velasquez, and now paints his own response to *Las Meninas*. Apart from the master's brushwork, the mirror is a magnet. Used in the past as a symbol of human life reflecting eternal reality, he extends its significance, seeing Painting as a mirror of life, setting the scene in his own white floored studio. A pink elephant dancing in a mirror connotes pregnancy, dominating the centre of one of his

*Las Meninas* series. Nearby, Vincent Van Gogh's self portrait wearing a hat is reflected in a broken glass – recalling the Joycean reference to Gogarty shaving in the Tower. In a second view of the studio, the elephant painting is half visible, stacked behind a canvas, as if the animal itself is disappearing – 'the studio scene is changing all the time like a stage set'. Blue of a delphinium and red of his easel in both paintings complement the brilliant yellow, viridian, purple and lime of the interior: and yet with all the loaded colour and symbolic detail, light filtering the picture space determines a harmonious whole.



Vincent: *Through the Cracked Mirror of a Servant, 2001*



*Daughter, 2003*

Elizabeth Comerford's symbolism refers to paradigmatic artists such as Rego and Gauguin, drawing also on medieval sacred models as exemplars for presentation and decorative patterning. She paints on diptychs, cutting out shapes from some canvases, using the predella below in two icon-like works to indicate 'people standing on the edge'. She has always been a figurative artist, first studying nature, then the human body, and most recently has been making notebooks for the Ballymun project, where last year she was allowed into the deserted flats for two hours at a time to draw interiors as empty spaces (the impression of hurried exit) with a curious sense of presence (the few little things left).

Drawing as a means of direct thought in art is instinctive to her – at the time of the last *Contemporary Diversity* she worked only with oil crayons or

pastel. It is only fairly recently that she recognised her compatibility with acrylic which is her main medium now, above all as a sensuous implement for strong drawing and vocal colour.

Body art in its various manifestations, so much a part of the contemporary process, can sometimes verge on the sensational, though such is not the case with these artists. A trained architect, John Doherty was originally drawn to deserted buildings in cities or country towns for the effect time and the inhabitants have had on them, very often – he will say – just before they disappear, or the environment suffers some major change. Even though the fabric may be neglected and decayed, the mood he conjures up is serene, beyond time, and rarely including people. The buildings themselves are bodies and personalities. He embraces the solidity of the still presences, enjoying the textures of brick, plaster, paint and stone, caressing the surfaces with sunlight or the quieter light of rain.



*Outback, 2003*

His colour seems more radiant than ever since he has taken to painting marine subjects, discarded buoys and containers in quayside yards or empty lighthouses. Once common and essential adjuncts to life, now left to decay, Doherty detects the resilient inner spirits of these once loved familiar shapes as reflections of positive human sensibilities, human physique and emotions. The vibrancy of these challenging images, reinforced by tangy punning titles which extend the image through the questions they pose, offsets feelings of nostalgia or regret.

Both John Philip Murray and Joe Butler concentrate on the head as the cognitive, spiritual centre of the body. Obsessed with trees in 1990, and subsequently lakes, Murray's heads developed out of

his attraction to the classical fragments he observed in mosaics in the architectural ruins of Tunisia, and for some time he has been painting his his reaction to these mosaics as a form of timeless memory, where images fail to complete themselves, hovering amid antique tiles, beyond scrutable space. The paint may be crusty, applied with a palette knife and scraped away as he works, or it may be spread smoothly with a brush. He makes small preliminary pencil drawings in a sketchbook beforehand, planning the content of a picture, the textured surface as well as the figuration, 'but the face comes from I know not where.'



*Small Song No. 3, 2003*

Besides seeking a balance between the figurative and the abstract, his aim is to convey a message about the changes art is capable of, though in *Small Song* he is well aware of how imperceptible these changes may appear to be. He regards his recent painting as a plea for humanity, giving the name 'Advocate' to his last show. The human head crowns the body as an ancient symbol of being. "We see heads in the shapes of nature – clouds, puddles – we see our human selves everywhere", he says.

Made from scraps of found metal assembled in collages of eccentric weapons or warlike figures, Joe Butler's original sculpture had an aggressive mood, inviting fear. Any added colour roused perceptions of the ethnic or magical. Now, while not abandoning the prefabricated abstract shapes of the mechanical industry that fascinate and stimulate his imagination, his primary aim is to find beauty. He focuses on the head for its ability to express the inner spirit.

Steel is his current material, and gives him the option of working in different ways. With mild steel he can move existing shapes around in a painterly, flexible style, almost drawing. The gold colour



*Lover, 2000*

washed over the controlled iconic collage, *Lover*, contributes to the mood of joyous calm. Working in stainless steel is more complex and requires preliminary planning. In *Spectre* he has created an image full of enigma, staring up with an adoring expression. The burnished scribbled surface dances with reflected light. His abstract shapes incorporate both male and female personalities, and through all hovers a gentle vein of humour.

‘There are many gifts, but one spirit,’ wrote St. Paul, and this seems an apt phrase with which to sum up an exhibition such as this of artists who do normally associate together as a group. However, in the climate of the current bureaucracy which inevitably reduces everyone to the size of an official chit, its importance may be seen to lie in the refreshing imagination of this particular gathering of practitioners, still keenly aware of their connection with art of the past, and capturing the present with such inspired humanity.



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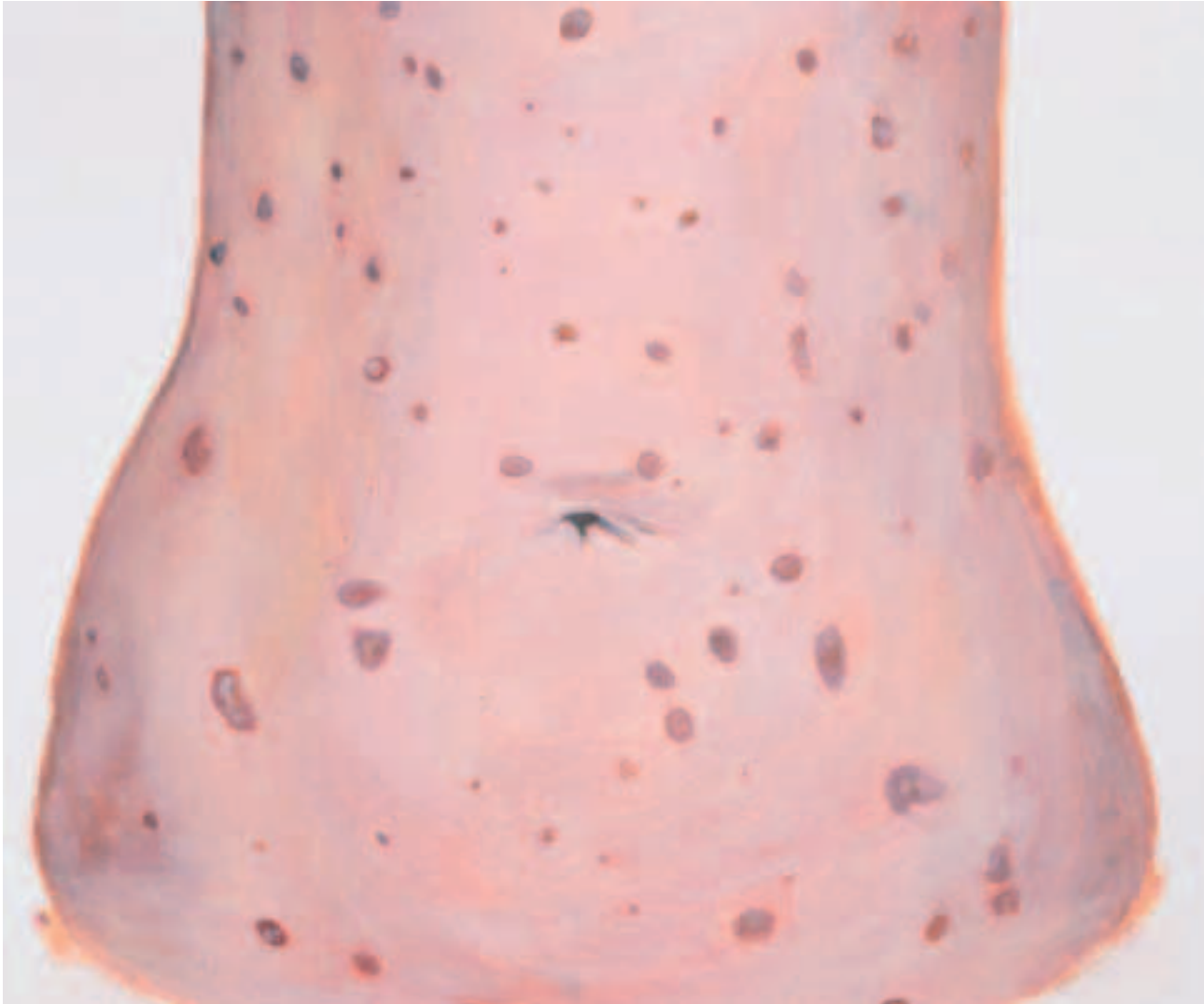


## cecily brennan

“Her most recent work is figurative, but retains her long fascination with surface tension – the balance between the chaos and confusion of the interior and the thin veneer covering the exterior world. Whether examining the unstable volcanic landscape of Iceland, or more recently the human body, she has consistently addressed ideas of damage and repair, of injury either self-inflicted or accidental. The technique of egg tempera on gesso, normally associated with icon painting and therefore images of the sacred, is deliberately chosen in these works to address the secular.

The two paintings shown here are selected from a series called *HEAT* which focused on how the body manifests stress and pressure.

The stainless steel works are chosen from an exhibition *Bandaged Heart*, which took place in the Taylor Galleries in 2001. Cast stainless steel, polished and finished to a high sheen, references not only the surgical aspect of the work, but also steel's history as the metal used in the manufacture of armour. The theme of armouring in many forms is a constant underlying subject matter.”

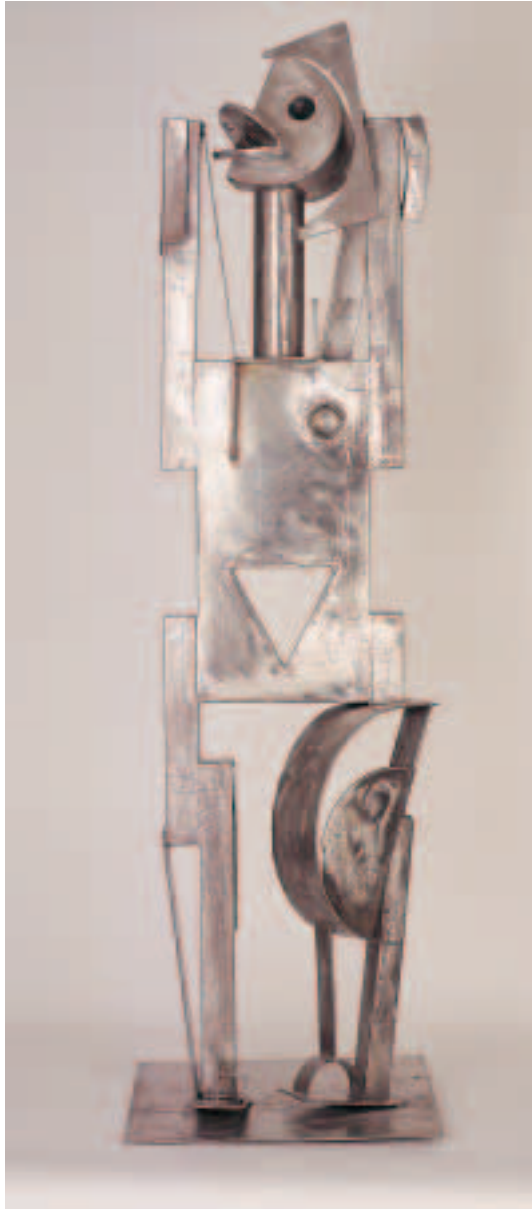


1. *WOMAN WITH KOEBNERSING PSORIASIS*, 2002 (illustrated), Egg tempera on gesso, 25 x 30 cm, Collection of the Crawford Municipal Gallery, Cork
2. *SELF-HARM; MALE*, 2003, Egg tempera on gesso, 25 x 30 cm
3. *BANDAGED HEART*, 2001, Cast stainless steel, 15 x 36 x 36 cm
4. *SUICIDE GUARDS*, 2001, Stainless steel with velcro, 9 x 5 cm



joe butler

“If sheela-na-gigs had only been male. Jo Butler has reconstructed them to perfection, using postmodern materials. His collage figures, with their pathos of the ages ringing out arpeggios of human emotion, seem also to chant silently, ‘From this we all came. Where will we go?’ ”



1. *SPECTRE*, 2003 (illustrated), Stainless steel, 109.3 x 50.5 x 50.5 cm
2. *LOVER*, 2000, Mild steel varnished, 100.5 x 20 x 20 cm



## elizabeth comferford

“The advantage and disadvantage of being a figurative artist now is that you are left to work out a set of motivating concepts by and large by yourself. Instinct, sometimes inadequately articulated drives me along paths of exploration. Writing this comment has given me the opportunity to see what I did and did not choose to explore in my work.

The painting *Daughter* developed from a sketch of Maggie my youngest child. It uses some of the conventions of medieval and early narrative painting – decorative elements, symbolist motifs and a formal layout. Early Renaissance, Assyrian reliefs and Egyptian painting all have a narrative function, the story is there to see, lucid and clear. For me they are also just beyond understanding and on the edge of the familiar. Exploring these conventions clarified for me how the visual sign strives to communicate, to tell a story and that its failure to fully communicate, its silence, acts like a siren song and an invitation to respond.

This interest in the narrative function of painting led me to Giotto and his use of gesture.

The second painting, *Woman Getting up to go* is based on a Muybridge photograph. Muybridge's photographs showed me the importance of the gesture that comes before and prefigures the significant gesture used by Giotto. There is a small story contained here, something seen in passing, but the conventions of early medieval art, colour, formalism and decorativeness help monumentalise this moment and imply significance.

In the past year I have worked with imagery found in two empty towers in Ballymun. I have come to believe that the inability to understand is part of every engagement we undertake. In the towers this inability to understand was not alienating or isolating – small configurations of random objects held nuances of significance that called for a response. The resulting drawings/paintings were not in themselves the response; my being there, willing to see despite all the restrictions and limitations of understanding was what was important in that encounter.

Both the paintings on exhibit hold elements that became key issues in the work I do now.”



1. *WOMAN GETTING UP TO GO*, 2003 (illustrated), Acrylic on board, 133 x 122 cm

2. *DAUGHTER*, 2003, Acrylic on board, 132 x 61 cm



jackie cooney

“My work over the years has been in response to land, movement and dance. My ‘Land’ work involves pattern, fissures, movement and habitats. ‘Nature’ is precarious, beautiful elusive; sometimes calming or unsettling, proceeding from one event to the next.

Archaeology provides me with a connection between places, times and ritual. The ‘Dance’ of the Minoan Bull Leaping Ritual in ancient Crete has been a recurring theme in my work.

LEAP, Soar and fall.

My work continues to be influenced by visits to Europe, Arizona, New Mexico, California and Japan. I am currently working in California.”



1. *VAULT*, 2003 (illustrated), Acrylic collage on paper, 60 x 100 cm
2. *MUTABLE SERIES I*, 2003, Acrylic collage on paper, 60 x 100 cm



maud cotter

“Maud Cotter’s work explores the reciprocal relationship between the human body and the structures we build around it. She achieves a celebration of the urban environment that is neither utopian, sentimental, nor ironic.

Her work is preoccupied with boundary conditions. Cotter seeks that the works are not held fast in their identity as material objects, but that they become dispersed through their range of reference and sensory connection with the viewer. The basic substances with which she works are often quite ordinary – cardboard, industrial rubber or clear plastic, but they are transformed into objects or elements with a strong but ambiguous material presence.

Cotter realises forms by using composite elements, which expand and contract to inhabit, as well as challenge the space they inhabit. They become a mechanism through which space is investigated and ingested. The work’s desire is mediated through and masked by its own adaptability. No single identity or fixed reading of the piece is absolute.”



1. *THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS*, 2001/2 (illustrated), Card and resin (x3), 250 x 70 x 23 cm
2. *HERE I AM*, 2002, Lafarge model dur and card, 50 x 47 x 12 cm
3. *INTO*, 2001, Card and lafarge plaster, 21 x 11 x 11 cm



michael cullen

“The various milieux through which the Painter moves are reflected in what is painted by the Painter. The images in the paintings spring from the Painter’s nervous system. It is the world of the Painter’s imagination shot through with every facet of reality. The reality which this Painter inhabits.

The Painter is a vagrant. This vagabond Painter passes through the worlds of reality and imagination, in a seemingly picaresque fashion, encountering all the joys and cares of a life. As the Painter spends most of the time painting, the substance of the Painter’s paintings is adumbrated by studio elements. Or such elements as happen to be at hand.

The Painter, no less than the rest of humanity, finds love. The Painter’s lover, along with being the Painter’s companion in the world, becomes the Painter’s model. The Painter’s muse. And so it goes on.”



1. *RICÓN DEL ESTUDIO*, 2001 (illustrated), Mixed media on Indian paper, 66 x 94 cm

2. *VINCENT: THROUGH THE CRACKED MIRROR OF A SERVANT*, 2001, Mixed media on Indian paper, 66 x 94 cm



john doherty

1. *THE FAMILY REUNION*, (5 part) 1998  
(illustrated), Acrylic on canvas,  
30.5 x 274.5 cm,  
Collection of the artist
2. *OUTBACK*, 2003, Acrylic on canvas,  
89 x 122 cm,  
Private Collection



“My paintings are about colour, composition and texture, and evoke formative memories.

*Family Reunion* is the first painting of the *Buoy* series from the Commissioners of Irish Lights yard, Harbour Road, Dun Laoghaire. After my first visit to the yard, on seeing the results of my photographic survey, I got very excited. I realised that the colour, form, texture and scale I had experienced while walking through the space of the yard transferred itself into an intriguing sculpture garden in two dimensions that evoked a great sense of claustrophobia. On top of that, the colours – yellow, red and stripes – reminded me of football teams or tribes. While I was working on the five pieces that make up the work, a period of about a month, being an antipodean the title slowly revealed itself to me.

The *Buoys* live a hermetic life out in the ocean – alone, except for the seabirds, the occasional seal and of course the odd boat giving them a nudge now and then. Every other year they are collected and transported back to base for a clean up, fresh coat of paint, numbers and name, and sent back on their way.

Having all this in mind, I realised that each of the *Buoys* has its own presence. Even though the colours are similar, they have a loitering demeanour, giving off an uncomfortable air of closeness.”



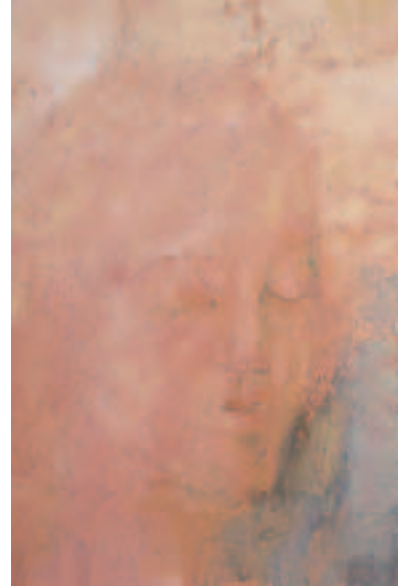


john philip murray

“The paintings I am showing in this exhibition, *An Innocent*, and *Small Song no. 3*, are part of an ongoing process, using images of the human head. Because of the location of eyes, mouth, ears, nose, etc., the face is the primary instrument of communication.

I gravitated to the face following a visit to Tunisia where I saw the remains of ancient Roman mosaics at first-hand. I was drawn to the method of building up an image by using very small tiles or tesserae. I appreciated the low-key colours, how they resonated gently against one another. Some of the mosaics were more visibly affected by the passage of time. For me, the most striking of these was the Sousse Mosaic, now in the Bardo museum in Tunis. This depicts the poet Virgil, seated, with a scroll on his knee, showing a line from his epic poem "The Aeneid". He is flanked by Clio, the muse of history and Melpomene, the muse of tragedy. He is recognisable by the props, but as there are tiles missing around the area of his nose and mouth, we would not recognise his likeness.

When I became aware of this, I thought of the millions of people who had lived and died since Virgil, without commemoration. My musings directed me to work on "Anonymous Portraits", where the features have been deliberately obscured or painted loosely. The viewer is free to impose features, or likenesses, on them in much the same way that my mind's eye did when I first saw the Sousse Mosaic. With the current political situation worldwide, these anonymous portraits take on greater significance for me, making a small song for voiceless people.”



1. *AN INNOCENT*, 2003 (illustrated), Oil on board (x4), 61 x 41 cm
2. *SMALL SONG No. 3*, 2003, Oil on cotton, 30.5 x 30.5 cm

## CECILY BRENNAN

### PERSONAL DETAILS

- 1955 Born in Athenry, Co. Galway, Ireland  
1974-78 National College of Art and Design, Dublin  
1983-86 Director, Project Arts Centre, Dublin  
1991 Elected member of Aosdána  
1993-97 Chair, Visual Arts Committee, Dept of Foreign Affairs, Ireland.

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2003 *Heat* (with additional work), Taylor Galleries, Dublin  
2002 *Heat Nuova Icona*, Venice  
2001 *Bandaged Heart*, Taylor Galleries, Dublin  
1996 *To Contain*, Taylor Galleries, Dublin  
1992 *Cecily Brennan*, Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin;  
Crawford Municipal Gallery, Cork; Limerick City Gallery

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2002 *Something Else*, Irish Contemporary Art, touring to Helsinki, Turku, Oulu and Joensuu in Finland  
2001 *Sean McSweeney and Friends*, Boyle Arts Festival, Boyle Co. Roscommon  
2000 *Kingdom of Heaven*, RHA Gallery, Dublin  
1999 *0044-Irish Artists in Britain*. PS1 Gallery, New York; Albright Knox Museum, Buffalo, New York, Ormeau Baths Gallery, Belfast and Crawford Municipal Gallery, Cork.  
1997 *Printed Matter*, Triskel Arts Centre, Cork  
*Gateway to Art*, Aer Rianta Dublin  
*Group Show*, Taylor Galleries

### AWARDS

- 2003 Project Studio, Temple Bar Galleries and Studios  
2002 Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht  
1998 Arts Council Bursary

### COLLECTIONS

The Arts Council/An Comhairle Ealaíon • University College Dublin • Bank of Ireland • Allied Irish Banks • Crawford Gallery, Cork • Irish Museum of Modern Art • St. Patrick's Hospital, Dublin • Limerick City University.

## JOE BUTLER

### PERSONAL DETAILS

- 1955 Born: Gowran, Co. Kilkenny  
1973-77 National College of Art and Design, Dublin  
1977-78 New York Studio School of Drawing Painting and Sculpture  
1982-83 New York, U.S.A.

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 1996 Temple Bar Gallery, Dublin  
1994 The Basement Gallery, Dundalk  
1993 The Butler Gallery, Kilkenny  
1984 Project Arts Centre, Dublin  
1983 Art's Galaxy, Mott Street, New York, U.S.A.

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2003 Hallward Gallery, Dublin  
2002 RHA, Dublin  
2001 *Bless the Beasts*, The Ark Dublin  
2000 *Gateway to Art Aer Rianta Dublin*  
1999 *Boyle Arts Festival Main Exhibition*, Boyle, Co. Roscommon.

### COLLECTIONS

The Arts Council/ An Comhairle Ealaíon • The Ark, A Cultural Centre for Children, Dublin • Private Collections in Ireland, and the U.S.A.

### PUBLIC COMMISSIONS

- 2001 *Bird* Ballinasloe, Co. Galway  
*Bless the Beasts*, The Ark Dublin  
1999 *Flight*, The Ark Dublin  
*Musician*, Halston Street, Dublin Corporation  
1988 *Heads*, Arts Council School Show

## ELIZABETH COMERFORD

### PERSONAL DETAILS

1953 Born, Dublin. Studied at National College of Art and Design, Dublin in '70s. Lived and worked in Kenmare, Co. Kerry for much of the '80s and returned to Dublin in the early '90s.

### EDUCATION

1974-1978 N.C.A.D. Kildare Street, Dublin 2 Diploma, Fine Art-Painting  
Stained Glass Workshop (N.C.A.D.)  
Preparing Artwork for Print Workshop (NC.A.D.)  
Traditional Stained Glass Painting (Pangur Bawn)

### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2004 *Drawings and Paintings from Pearse and MacDonagh Towers*, The Axis Theatre, Ballymun  
2003 *Figurative Art Ireland*, Dun Laoire  
2002 Toradh Gallery, Duleek, Co Meath  
1991 Vangard Gallery, Macroom  
*Inside-Out* Wyvern Gallery, Dublin

### GROUP SHOWS

2003 *Art+Action*, Rubicon Gallery  
2002 *The Art of the Possible*, Art Auction  
Special Olympics  
2001 Balbriggan Arts Festival  
1999-2003 RHA Annual Exhibition, Ely Place, Dublin  
1990's Cork Artists Collective

### AWARDS/COMMISSIONS

2002 Springhill Award, Eigse Arts Festival, Carlow  
2000 Breaking Ground, B.R.L. Commission  
(5 notebooks drawings)  
1998 Studio Space, Sunlight Studios, Balbriggan

## JACKIE COONEY

### PERSONAL DETAILS

National College of Art and Design, Dublin (Fine Art Painting 1977)

### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2000 *Hot, Cold & Shadow*, Hallward Gallery, Dublin  
1991 *Hot & Cold, Sweet & Sour*, Riverrun Gallery, Dublin  
1976 Grapevine Gallery, Dublin

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2000 *Gateway to Art*, Aer Rianta Millennium Show  
1995-00 *RHA Annual Exhibition*, Ely Place, Dublin  
1994-5 *Boyle Arts Festival Main Exhibition*, Boyle, Co. Roscommon.  
1992 *Living Landscape*, West Cork Arts Centre, Guinness Hop Store  
1991,93,97,99 *Iontas*, Sligo

### SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Arts Council, OPW • Bank of Ireland • Dept. of Taoiseach •  
Gift by Irish Government to Spanish Foreign Minister •  
St James Hospital, Dublin • National Concert Hall •  
University of Limerick Print Collection • Aer Rianta.

### RECENT AWARDS

1st Prize Painting Iontas (1999) Joint Award.  
Arts Council Bursary (1992)  
Art Council Travel Award (1996)

## MAUD COTTER

### PERSONAL DETAILS

Born in Wexford in 1954.  
Graduated from Crawford College of Art in 1978.  
Delfina Trust Studios in London 1992-97  
Currently lives in Cork.

Maud Cotter served on the Arts Council 1999-2003 and was elected as a member of Aosdána in 2000.

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2002 Rubicon Gallery, Dublin; West Cork Arts Centre Skibbereen, Cork
- 1999 *Shadow*, Street Installation, Temple Bar, Dublin
- 1998 *In Absence*, Rubicon Gallery, Dublin
- 1995 *Mute Displacement*, Galerie Schlossgoart, Luxembourg (catalogue)
- 1991-92 *My Tender Shell*, Triskel Arts Centre, Cork; Maison Internationale de Rennes France; West Wharf Gallery, Cardiff (catalogue)

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2002-03 *Something Else, Contemporary Art from Ireland*. Turku Art Museum/Amos Anderson Art Museum/Helsinki/Oulu City Art Museum/Joensuu Art Museum, Finland (catalogue). 1994 *Compulsive Objects*, Rubicon Gallery, Dublin (curator)
- 2000 *IMMA/Glen Dimplex Artist Award*, IMMA, Dublin (catalogue)
- 1999-0 *0044, Irish Artists in Britain*, PS I Contemporary Art Center, New York; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; Ormeau Baths Gallery, Belfast; Crawford Gallery, Cork (catalogue)
- 1996-97 *Human Nature – Seven Artists from Ireland*, touring Newfoundland (catalogue)
- 1994 *Compulsive Objects*, Rubicon Gallery, Dublin (curator)

## MICHAEL CULLEN

### PERSONAL DETAILS

- 1946 Born in Kilcoole in County Wicklow
- 1962-68 Attended evening classes at the National College of Art, Dublin
- 1969 Ditto, at the Central school of Art and Design, London
- 1970-73 National College of Art, Dublin: School of Painting

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2004 *Through the Looking Glass* Taylor Galleries, Dublin
- 2002 *New Paintings* Fendersky Gallery, Belfast
- 2001 *Paintings for E* Taylor Galleries, Dublin  
*Napoleon's Ghost and other Paintings* Vanguard Gallery, Cork
- 1997 *Three Shows in One* Taylor Galleries; Temple Bar Gallery; Graphic Studio Gallery

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2001 *Estampe 2001*. Un Exchange d'estampes contemporaries Francaises et Irlandais. Cite Internationale, Paris.  
*Sean McSweeney's selected Painters*. Boyle Arts Festival
- 1999 *Three Hundred Years of Irish Art*. The Ulster Museum, Belfast, Catalogue
- 1997 *2nd International Biennale of Watercolours*. Municipal Gallery, Kamnet, Slovenia
- 1996 *Imaginaire Irlandaise*. Paris. Catalogue
- 1995 *Irish Potato Famine*. New York

### AWARDS

- 1997 Painter of the Year Award. Sunday Independent and Ford Motors.
- 1997 2nd International Biennale of Watercolours Award. Kamnek, Slovenia.

### PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

The National Gallery of Ireland • Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin • Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin • The Ulster Museum, Belfast • The Museum of Modern Art, Kamnek, Slovenia • The Arts Council of Ireland • Bank of Ireland • Allied Irish Banks • The Berlin Senate.

## JOHN DOHERTY

### PERSONAL DETAILS

- 1949 Born Kilkenny, Ireland  
1968-73 Bolton Street College of Technology, Dublin, Ireland  
1979 National College of Art. Artist in Residence, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2003 Taylor Galleries, Dublin  
2000 Australian Galleries, Sydney  
1998 Taylor Galleries, Dublin  
1995-96 Louis K. Meisel Gallery, New York  
1992 Robin Gibson Gallery, Sydney

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 1992-2003 Australian Galleries, Sydney and Melbourne  
1991-2003 Taylor Galleries, Dublin

### COMMISSIONS/COLLECTIONS

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne • Institute of Modern Art, Chicago • Allied Irish Banks, Dublin and London • Athlone Regional Technical College, Athlone, Ireland • Guinness Peat Aviation, Shannon, Ireland • Waterford Municipal Gallery.

## JOHN PHILIP MURRAY

### PERSONAL DETAILS

- 1952 Born, Dublin. Studied painting in National College of Art and Design, Dublin 1970-76. Moved to Cork, 1986

### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2004 *Facing Music*, Vanguard Gallery, Carey's Lane, Cork.  
2003 *Advocate*, The Courthouse Arts Centre, Tinahely, Co. Wicklow.  
2001 *Drawing from Mosaics*, Guinness Gallery, Foxrock, Co. Dublin.  
1994 *Demiurge-Drawing Words*, New Drawings, Vanguard Gallery.  
1991 *Gearagh Works*, Wyvern Gallery, Dublin.

### RECENT GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2003 *Boyle Arts Festival Main Exhibition*, Boyle, Co. Roscommon.  
*Composition*, Lavit Gallery, Cork.  
*Hibernia of the New Millennium*, Lola Gallery, San Francisco, CA, U.S.  
*The Hermione Exhibition*, Alexandra College, Milltown, Dublin.  
*Art London*, Islington, London, with Lead White Gallery, Dublin.

### COLLECTIONS

Charles Hummel (ex-Swiss Ambassador to Ireland) • Pan Celtic International Insurance, Galway • University College, Cork • Murnane Nolan, Chartered Accountants, Dublin • Coláiste Stiofán Naofa, Cork, A.I.B. Macroom • A.I.B. Leeds • Museum of Fine Art, Césis, Latvia • GSI, (Ireland) • Great Southern Hotels Ltd., Conrad International, Dublin • Radisson Hotel, Galway • Institute of Technology, Tralee, Co. Kerry (ITT) • A.I.B. Corporate Collection, and private collections in Ireland, the U.K, Germany and the USA.



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