

Peann agus Pár — New Galway writing

Delighted to be the first guest editor

BY GERARD HANBERRY

I am pleased to have been invited to guest-edit this week's literary page and to have the opportunity to gather together some wonderful poems for readers to enjoy. I am particularly delighted that the *Galway Advertiser*, together with the *Galway Review*, has been presented with two wonderful and important poems from the pen of London based Mark Reed, the only son of film actor Oliver Reed. The Reeds are a remarkable artistic family. Mark's great grandfather was the actor/manager Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree who built Her Majesty's Theatre in London (then called His Majesty's Theatre) and founded The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. It was Beerbohm Tree who first staged Oscar Wilde's 'A Woman of no Importance'. Mark's grand uncle was the film director Sir Carol Reed, perhaps best known for 'The Third Man' and 'Oliver!' for which he received an Academy Award. His grandfather was the sportswriter Peter Reed and his father was Oliver Reed.

In the poem published here, 'The Final Call', Mark writes for the first time about the tragic events surrounding his famous father's untimely death while filming 'Gladiator'. This poignant

poem allows the reader to see the sad events from a very different and personal perspective. It is an important poem because it is the first time that Mark has published on the death of his father and we are privileged to be his publication of choice. A major factor in his allowing us to be the first to publish this poem was the warm welcome he recently received from the good people of Galway who fondly reminisced with him about his father's boisterous visits to the city. Mark was in Galway at the time promoting the one man show 'Wild Thing' about his father and in his second poem published here, 'Cormorants and Swans', he recalls that short visit.

I am also delighted to present poems from a number of well-known Galway based writers, members of the Talking Stick writers group, who have all developed successful literary careers publishing widely. The Talking Sticks group, of which I am pleased to be a member, includes the writers James Martyn Joyce, Geraldine Mills, Alan McMonagle, and Hedy Gibbons Lynott. The poet Jessie Lendennie, Managing Director of Salmon Publishing, is also featured here with a fine poem recalling the fact that she once lived in the Claddagh.

A Different Kind of Footing

They say
you can tell the depth of ice
by how far down the fallen leaves
are trapped:
golds and reds of ochres
of last year –
possibilities in amber.

But
to walk on water
you must first let go of land
listen for the ice-song
seek its buried colours.

HEDY GIBBONS LYNOTT

*Hedy Gibbons Lynott: A regular contributor to radio, her prize-winning fiction and creative nonfiction have been published in anthologies. She holds an MA in Writing from NUI Galway, facilitates creative writing workshops and collects folklore and local history.

Words in the

Mouth of the Corrib

You don't know me.
Come down and watch
the becoming of me.

If you could believe,
I will be something
other than the stream

turning into sea
my name foaming darkly
before I let go of it.

GERALDINE MILLS

*Geraldine Mills has published four collections of poetry and two collections of short stories. Her third collection of short stories, *Hellkite*, will be published by Arlen House in December 2013.

The Hitchhiker

I had been sitting for hours upon a roadside stump
(somewhere between Mountbellew and Ballygar, I'm
sure it was)
in thrall to conspiring wrens and a crow's lofty advice

when they pulled up. Four of them, blotchy and
shrivelled,
and ancient-looking as the witchgrass in surrounding
fields,
crammed into the belly of a Fiat 127. A door clicked
open.

'In you get,' came the raspy voice and I wedged
myself between the lank-haired pair in the back.
'You're a nice-looking boy,' croaked the one to my left,

a gargoyle with mulch for teeth and a furry nose.
'How far are you going?' I asked the one behind the
wheel.

The others looked at me, feral-eyed and puckering,

tittered together, nodded their crackly heads.
'Don't you worry,' squawked the one to my right, as
she rested
a twitchy claw upon my knee. 'We're going all the way.'

ALAN MCMONAGLE

*Alan McMonagle is best known as a writer of short stories but he also writes poetry. Alan has been invited to read his works at events and festivals both in Europe and the US. His second collection of short stories 'Psychotic Episodes' has recently been published by Arlen House.

Quay Street, Galway

There are ghosts on Quay Street
Not the Claddagh ghosts
Who looked for company
Late crossings on the bridge
To the old place
But my ghosts
Left behind on Fairhill
Wondering now where I am
Why the light flickered
Why I can't find my way home

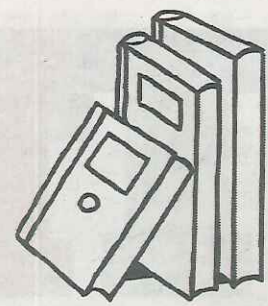
JESSIE LENDENNIE

Jessie Lendennie is a poet and also co-founder and Managing Director of Salmon Poetry. Her poems, essays and articles have been widely published and she gives numerous readings, lectures and writing courses in Ireland and abroad. Jessie's latest collection of poetry is called 'Walking Here' and she is currently working on a memoir 'To Dance Beneath the Diamond Sky'.

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Scryer

She proffered the mirror
in a thousand shards,
said it must be buried
before light,
where four fields meet,
to lay the curse.
Made me promise to
choose well,
her nail-grip holding me,
my heart
a pounding rush behind
my ribs.
'Bury it deep,' she
whispered.
'Keep nothing of it, ever.'

She told me how she'd
brushed and brushed,
used a torch to raise up
icicles of light,
swept every last particle,
the gleanings of the
floor,
wrapped everything in
her oldest blouse,
shook the knotted
bundle in my face,
her low hiss urging: 'Go!'

The moon is a watching
eye
as I stumble the rushy
hill.
I know the spot, I've
chosen well:
a dry-stone angle where
neighbours touch.
I'll push her bad luck
down to hell,
wait for her lips to save
me.

JAMES MARTYN JOYCE

*James Martyn Joyce is from Galway. His first collection of poetry 'Shedding Skin' was published in 2010 by Arlen House. His collection of short stories 'What's Not Said' was published by Arlen House in 2012.

Cormorants and swans

An Atlantic Friday in Galway.
Stoic, the ladies in their see-through waterproof
bonnets
lean through the elements.
Perms will remain permanent today.

In Eyre Square dogs bark to themselves
and an old vagrant continues to read Tuesday's Mirror
fag perched cleaning-lady style
crumpling pages to a bin as she goes.

On Shop Street buskers strum their stuff.
Outside the King's Head
Father Christmas like, a bearded man plays three
instruments at once.
He's happy.

In Dubray Books, Mary awaits her next learned reader
fine works here
no Mills and Boon,
Wilde's more the fare.

In Quay Street, bars offer homage,
heated by a thousand bodies
ice melts fast.
Artists hard at work.

At street's end the wind picks up,
Father Griffin's hoolie.
The Corrib lives today
fed by her bloated mother upstream.

Weirs plume peat coloured water baywards
past eel traps
and the blue Cathedral pierces a darkening sky.

MARK REED

The Final Call

We sped to a crying widow,
a fine hotel
but what does that matter now?

Where it happened -
a table next to a gaming machine in a Maltese
backstreet bar,
his last place a gloomy unbecoming shrine.

Passport corner clinically clipped.
"So very sorry - I liked his work."
A thin young man not used to his words.

An orange pillbox mortuary stood alone on the hill.
White rubber aprons and oversized green boots,
staring staff waiting to see important people.

And there were none,
just us.
Those that loved him most.

MARK REED

*Mark Reed lives in London with his wife Louise. He has a background in marketing communications and whilst he still works as a consultant he now spends much of his time writing, broadcasting and working in the area of voice-overs. He is currently working on his first collection of poetry.