

Primary Schools Worksheet

EACH DAY Eilis O'Connell (Born 1953)

Eilis O'Connell was brought up in Donegal and studied art at the Crawford College of Art in Cork and Massachusetts College of Art. O'Connell hoards objects as diverse as gourds and discarded



agricultural tools and through her drawings transforms them to enjoy a new existence in her sculpture work. She has built her reputation on large-scale public sculpture, sensitive to its environment in Ireland and the UK. She takes inspiration from archaeology, architecture and the human body to create her unique forms that can be at the same time intimate and monumental.

Each Day is a sculpture in bronze that occupies the courtyard of the Crawford Art Gallery. It stands two and a half metres tall and echoes the form of a cloak, cowl, or folded cloth. There is a human presence evoked by the shrouded form, a strong, immovable, protective force that seems ancient and magical. The dense, bronze surface is gently curved and encompassing and at the same time reassuringly robust and impermeable.

DISCUSSION

- What is the first word that comes to your mind when you see this sculpture?
- What do you think the sculpture is made from? Is it made from one piece or from many pieces joined together?
- Look at the surface of the piece, is it rough or smooth, regular or irregular?
- The inside surface is flat and the outside is ridged, why do you think the artist chose to design it this way? Would it change the feel of the sculpture if it were the other way around?
- What sort of look does the surface give to the piece: does it seem modern, ancient, sharp, cruel, gentle? Find some words to describe the surface.
- Is it bigger than you? Does it feel comforting or scary to be beside it?
- Can you stand inside it? How does that feel? If the piece were half this size would you feel different about it? How? What if it was twice as big?
- Does the form remind you of anything? Have you seen a form or an object like this before in a bigger or smaller size?
- Do you think the artist might have taken her ideas for the sculpture from a natural object; does it look like a natural shape or a mechanical shape?
- What colour is the sculpture? Is this a colour you see in nature or a man made colour?

- The sculpture is in the courtyard, is this a good location? Why do you think so? Does the sculpture look as though there might be more under the ground?
- We see new and unusual shapes and structures around us all the time, how do you feel when you come across objects that are completely new to you?
- Do you sometimes see shapes in nature and buildings and objects that you think are amazing and beautiful? What have you seen like this?
- What do you think the title *Each Day* could mean?
- Do you think this is a very new or very old piece of sculpture? What seems new? What seems old?

In the gallery look in the display case for these objects from the Gibson Bequest, would some of these forms make interesting sculptures?

How big should they be and what colour, material, texture?



HANDS ON

Go on a nature walk and gather some objects such as seedpods, greenery, pine cones, nuts which have an interesting form.

Back in the classroom you can get some clay and model the shapes and forms that you find most interesting.

Sketch your modelled piece and then add on to this drawing to create a new idea for a sculpture.

Trace or photocopy your drawing and draw small people beside it to see how it would look as a large-scale sculpture.

ST BRENDAN AND THE UNHAPPY JUDAS

Harry Clarke RHA (1889-1931)

Harry Clarke was born in 1889. He was the son of a Dublin craftsman and he worked with his brother in the family studio from an early age. At a time when medieval-style stained glass was enjoying a revival, Clarke was one its greatest innovators. He was a member of **An Tur Gloinne**, a studio established by Sarah Purser which raised the standard of stained glass design in Ireland.



Clarke won many awards and commissions for both clerical and secular work. The windows of the Honan Chapel in Cork and *The Eve of St. Agnes* are just some of the one hundred and thirty glass pieces he created. As well as stained glass, Clarke also illustrated six major books.

St. Brendan and the Unhappy Judas shows St. Brendan and his men in their boat just as they encounter Judas. Judas is being punished for his betrayal of Jesus. Part of Clarke's technique was to make the leading (this joins the pieces of glass together) become part of the drawing. The strong painterly look of the panel, the texture of the waves and intense colours show Harry Clarke's skill.

DISCUSSION

- The heavy lines in stained glass are made of lead. These lines hold the individual pieces of glass together. How many individual pieces of glass with hands on them, can you find?
- The best place to look at stained glass is in front of the light, what do you think would happen to this piece with strong light behind it?
- What are the two main colours in this stained glass panel?
- With stained glass, when the light shines through the glass, the light in the room glows with the colours of the glass. How do you think this would feel?
- Stained glass windows are often to be found in buildings such as churches and cathedrals where they create an atmosphere different to the outside world. Have you ever seen stained glass in other places?
- Where in your school or town would you like to see stained glass?
- In this panel St. Brendan and his men have just come upon Judas as he stands on his rock in the middle of the ocean. Look at their faces, how would you describe their expressions?
- Which man on the boat is St. Brendan? Why did you pick this one?
- Judas is on the rock as part of his punishment for betraying Jesus, how can you tell that he is suffering?
- What do you think the flames on his body represent?

- Is it calm or stormy at sea? How can you tell?

In the gallery there are drawings and paintings by the artist Harry Clarke. These are designs for one of his most famous stained glass windows called *The Eve of Saint Agnes*. Do the pictures look very like the stained glass?

From the paintings, can you find the finished panels in the poster of the completed window? Do they look similar? How do they look different?



HANDS ON

The *Pit and the Pendulum* is a drawing that Clarke made to illustrate a book of poems. Spooky poems by the poet Edgar Allen Poe. He draws in pen and black ink and uses decorative swirls, celtic spirals and patterns. The figures are elongated and skeleton-like.

Harry Clarke designed many of his stained glass pieces and drawings to illustrate stories and poems. Think of a story or poem you like, then think of one very important part of the story. Plan a drawing that tells as much as possible; try to get all the action in. Draw in black pen to get a look similar to that in *The Pit and the Pendulum*.

Get some coloured plastic gel sheets and hold them up to the light to see how the colours look, overlap the sheets and see how the colours combine to make new colours. You are going to make a stained glass window so decide what colours you want to use. (If you want a warm look use warm colours like reds, yellows, oranges. Blues and greens will give a cooler look.)

Draw your pattern on paper and cut out your colour gels to fit the pattern. Join the gels with thin pieces of tape and put a strip of tape around the outside edge. Hang in front of window.

OFF THE DONEGAL COAST Jack B. Yeats (1871-1957)

Jack Butler Yeats was born in England but spent most of his childhood in Sligo with his grandparents. He was the son of the painter John B. Yeats and brother of poet and playwright William B. Yeats. Ireland and in particular the West of Ireland and the people of the West were his favoured subjects. He painted fishermen and horse dealers using these subjects to deal with larger issues of nationality and humanity. In later years, he developed a more loose painterly style. His late paintings are a riot of expressive colour slashed on with a palette knife, with the subject emerging from the shimmering surface of the canvas.



Off The Donegal Coast is based on one of Yeats' favourite subjects, the West Coast of Ireland. Here the sailors in their little currach are being rocked by giant waves, the fear clearly showing in the sailors' eyes. The unusual diagonal composition gives a sensation of displacement, and places the viewer on the side or above the rescue ship. The painting style is vigorous with strong outline drawing showing in the boat and the figures. The figures are painted in muted tones. Yeats uses energetic brushstrokes, and blues and purples to capture the

movement and texture of the sea. One of his great talents is to capture the moment of greatest tension, and here Yeats takes us immediately to the heart of the story.

DISCUSSION

- How many sailors can you see? Might there be more outside the painting?
- The boat they are in is called a currach. It was made in the West of Ireland from a wooden frame covered with animal skin. It is a very strong and seaworthy vessel but do you think it is strong enough for this sea?
- Why do you think there is a rope being thrown to the sailors? Where is the rope coming from?
- What colour is the sea, do you often see this colour at sea, why do you think the artist has painted the sea this colour?
- The brush marks are rough and vigorous; do you think the artist painted very quickly? Do the loose brush marks help make the sea look wilder? How?

IN THE GALLERY



What do you think has just happened in this painting?

Would a boxing match be a quiet place to be? Does the crowd in the painting seem quiet or noisy?

The people in the crowd are painted with just a few strokes of the brush, yet we can still tell a lot about them. Describe one or two of them.

The Small Ring (1930)

Describe what is going on in the painting *Returning From the Bathe, Mid-Day?*

The donkey is looking at the children and this takes our eye to them also, what other lines draw us to them?

In the painting, the artist has applied the paint using a knife, how does this make the surface of the canvas look different?



Returning From the Bathe, Mid-Day (1948)

HANDS ON

Look in books and magazines for photos, artist's impressions, drawings etc...of different images of the sea. Pick the most calm and the most wild sea images. Use paints to get the feeling and movement of the sea. Experiment using paint mixed with lots of water, unmixed paint with a dry brush, paint dabbed on dry paper, paint mixed on the paper. Try using a 2 cm strip of cardboard as a brush. When you are ready, work on the two paintings side by side.

PORTRAITS OF BARRY AND BURKE IN THE CHARACTERS OF ULYSSES AND HIS COMPANION FLEEING FROM THE CAVE OF POLYPHEMUS James Barry (1741-1806)

James Barry was a protégé of John Butts in Cork when the Statesman, Edmund Burke, spotted his talent. Burke became the young artist's patron and helped him travel and study in London, Paris and Rome. He took his inspiration from the colours of Titian and the composition of late classical works that he had studied in Rome. Barry believed he could combine the high ideals of history painting with contemporary issues to revive history painting for a new time. Despite the fact that history painting was out of fashion. His greatest work was a series of neo-classical paintings, *The Progress of Human Knowledge and Culture*, for the Royal Society of Arts in London. Barry was appointed Professor of Painting at the Royal Academy in 1779. His paintings were hailed, but he was expelled in 1799 for his radical political views and his disagreements with the Academy. He died in 1806 and was then honoured for his life's work by his old adversaries.



Portraits of Barry and Burke in the Guise of Ulysses and his Companions Escaping from the Cave of Polyphemus is a complex work. It shows in beautiful detail the classical tale of Ulysses, who hides under a sheep, to escape from the cave of the blinded Cyclops. Barry wanted to comment on the political situation in England at the time; America was pushing for independence and England was forcefully retaliating. Both Barry and Burke were against the British response, but in this portrait Burke is cautioning the more outspoken Barry.

DISCUSSION

- Ulysses told the cyclops that his name was 'No body'. When Ulysses blinded him the cyclops shouted "Nobody has hurt me! Nobody has escaped! and his people did not come to rescue him. Can you think of a good way to escape the cyclops?
- Why do you think Ulysses has his hand to his lips?
- What is the cyclops Polyphemus doing?
- What do you think has happened to the man closest to the cyclops?
- Is the cyclops very big? How can you tell?
- Ulysses has travelled all over and he has had many adventures, describe what sort of land he is in right now.
- All the textures in the painting are made to seem so real, we can almost feel the wool on the sheep. What other textures seem real? Does the skin? The hair etc...?

- The men and sheep at the front (the foreground) of the painting are painted in a very detailed way, we can see the designs on their clothes and look into their eyes, what other close-up details can you see?
- The man he painted as Ulysses was a friend of his that he sometimes disagreed with, do they look like they are friends or enemies? Why do you think so?
- The artist believed art should teach us, what do you think we might learn from this painting?
- If you were to paint yourself into this painting, who or what would you be? (If you want to be the sheep, please remember you have to go back into the cave with the cyclops.)

IN THE GALLERY

Find the painting *The Prince of Wales in the Guise of St. George* by James Barry (It may be right behind you).

Is the dragon in this painting painted as clearly as the sheep in the first painting? What detail can you see?

How can you tell it is painted by the same artist?

What sort of stories does James Barry seem to be interested in?

HANDS ON

Imagine a scene of you escaping from the cyclops, use old magazines, paper, fabric and whatever you can find to do a mixed-media picture of this.

Find lots of fabrics and textures around your classroom such as wool, metal, cotton, velvet etc. Look at the fabrics and see what the surfaces are like, smooth or rough. Arrange them on your table and have a go at creating these textures with paint. Try putting on the paint really smoothly in some places, dab wet paint over dry paint, paint with your brush straight up, paint with your brush almost flat. Experiment to see what you can create.



VIEW OF CORK John Butts (1728-1765)

John Butts was born in Cork. He was a talented painter of the local landscape. He spent much of his youth sketching and painting scenes of Cork and copying romantic scenes from local works. He taught art in Cork and two of his pupils were Nathaniel Grogan the Elder (to whom this painting was for some time attributed) and James Barry. James Barry later described John Butts as an inspirational teacher. In 1757, Butts moved to Dublin but was not met with success. He had a large family to support and found he had to work at sign painting, copying and any jobs he could find, to sustain himself. He worked as a forger for a time and produced excellent forgeries, but his own, signed work is very rare. He died young and poor in 1765. His work is to be found in Tate Britain and in the Crawford Art Gallery.



View of Cork is a panoramic view of the city seen from an elevated position to the north of the River Lee. It was painted in the later half of the eighteenth century. It is actually an amalgamation of two separate viewpoints and it is a measure of the artist's talent as a landscape painter that he managed to weld them together in a convincing way. Two travellers look down at the prosperous city, one pointing out the landmarks and drawing our attention to St Ann's Tower in Shandon. The painting is an important

record of the city's history, of a time when Cork played an important role in trade with the influential Dutch in the North Atlantic. The Dutch appearance of the quayside houses was echoed in New York and other towns of New Netherlands. On the left we see one of the waterways that coursed through the marshy land over which the city expanded in the eighteenth century. We can trace its route by the broad curves of the city's main street. In the centre of the painting is the Old Custom House, now the Crawford Art Gallery.

DISCUSSION

- Look at the two men in the foreground of the painting, what sort of clothes are they wearing? How can you tell they have been travelling?
- What do you think they are looking at and talking about?
- Do you think they are happy to see such a city? Why do you say this?
- How would you describe the landscape around the city? Is the area around Cork still like this?
- What landmarks really stand out? Do you recognise any of the places in the painting? What are they?
- When you first look at the city in the painting, does it seem to be a nice place? Why do you get that feeling even before you look closely at the detail?
- This painting was made in the artist's studio, how do you think he managed to get so much detail in the painting, without having the scene in front of him?

- The main route through the town is the river and the boats can go right up to the quayside houses. Can you describe these houses? Who do you think lives here?
- How are they different to the houses on the right hand side of the painting? Who do you think lives in those houses?
- The artist has created a sense of great depth (distance) in the painting by having the colour get lighter towards the background, how else has he created depth?
- What are the main colours in the city itself? Are these the colours you would have in a city today? How would you describe the colours he uses, are they warm or cool, harsh, dark, light... What words would you use?
- The artist has created beautiful textures in the painting, the fuzzy gorse, the flat brick buildings, and the smoky hills, what other textures can you see?

WORK IN THE GALLERY

Find this James Barry painting. Barry was a student of John Butts, can you see anything here that is painted in a similar way in *View of Cork*?

Do you think Barry's painting is a view of Cork?
Where do you think these characters are?

In Barry's painting, the colour gets very light towards the background, what does this add to the painting?



HANDS ON

From memory, draw the route you take to school most days, put in as much information as you can think of: buildings, trees, rivers, bridges etc... The next day you are going to school, take a notebook and sketch or note what you see on the way and compare this information with your original drawing. How close were you?

Imagine you are a bird looking down on your town or village; draw (imagine the bird has a pencil!) what the bird sees. Draw in or paint where you live and everything important to you.

GROUP OF POTS John ffrench (Born 1919)

John ffrench helped to shape the field of design in Ireland and was honoured by the Crafts Council of Ireland in 2007 with a lifetime achievement award. ffrench was born in Dublin to Irish and



Italian parents. He lived in Castlefrench in Galway as a child and cites the colourful imagery of birds and symbols from his home as a constant inspiration in his work. He studied in Dublin and Italy. When he returned from Italy the loose, playful style that he had developed was in total contrast to the dun coloured pots being produced in Ireland and England. ffrench worked with fellow ceramicist Peter Brennan in Kilkenny, where his pots were hand built and had a Mediterranean feel. Bright colours and playful patterns were constant features. Travelling and living in India informed both his design and work ethic. In 1962, he founded Arklow Studio Pottery and also worked with Kilkenny Design Workshops as part of an initiative to advance design for industry. Currently, ffrench divides his time between studios in Massachusetts in America and Galway, Ireland.

This *Group of Pots* shows the unique characteristics of ffrench's style. They are hand-built rather than thrown, they are irregular and brightly coloured. We see the influences of Matisse and Miro in the colour and design. Pattern is important, showing influences from India, from the modernist style he encountered in Italy, from ancient Ogham scripts and his childhood home. Fifty years on, this eclectic group of pots look as fresh and cheerful as ever.

DISCUSSION

- What words can you think of to describe these pieces by John ffrench? What is the first word to come into your head?
- Pots and bowls usually have a job or function, what are some of these functions? What do you think these pots are for?
- Do you think the function is what the artist was most interested in? What else was he interested in?
- Do you think these pots are artworks? Do you think they have the elements that make up an artwork? What do you think these are?
- When you make or 'throw' pots on a wheel, the pots are smooth and even all over, when you build clay pots by hand they are more uneven and roughly finished. Which way do you think was used to make these pots?
- Why do you think John ffrench liked to have his pots rough and uneven?

- Do you think the artist had fun making the pots? Why do you think this?

- Would you like to have some of these pieces in your house?
- Would it make breakfast more fun if you got to eat from one of these bowls?

- Describe the plate or bowl that you use usually at home.

- Choose one of these pots and pretend you are on the phone to your friend. Tell your friend all about the pot.



IN THE GALLERY

Do you see patterns that he uses again and again? What are they?

Do any of the patterns remind you of designs you see in nature, do other patterns remind you of anything else?

HANDS ON

Pinch pots.

Get some clay about the size of your fist and roll it into a ball shape. Hold it with both your hands in front of you. Press both thumbs into the centre of the clay and squeeze the clay gently between the thumbs and the next finger on both hands,. Squeeze gently as you work your way all around the pot. You will notice that your pot gets thinner and bigger as you go around so be sure not to let it get too floppy.

Make three pots like this and decorate them.

On the first one, find objects that you can press into the clay to make marks. The end of your pencil, a match stick, crumpled up paper all are good.

For the second one stick pieces of clay on to your pinch pot, dots, swirled 'snakes' of clay, spikes.

On the third one use both these styles or come up with your own designs.

Decide on the look you want for your pot and chose colours and a pattern, use whatever type of colouring material – glazes or paint – is suitable for your clay.

LAOCOON AND HIS SONS. The Canova Casts (Presented 1818)

In 1818, the gift of the Canova Casts from the Prince Regent to Lord Listowel was a catalyst for the foundation of the first School of Art in Cork. Pope Pius VII had originally gifted the casts to Britain in gratitude for British help with the return of Vatican treasures taken by Napoleon. Some two hundred pieces cast from the finest sculptures in the Vatican arrived in Cork to inspire future artists such as Daniel Maclise, Samuel Forde and John Hogan. The famed Italian sculptor, Antonio Canova, had overseen the return of the treasures and supervised the casting of the masterpieces. Some of his works are included in the collection. The casts have had an eventful and chequered history and a number of the finest remain in the Crawford Collection.



Laocöon and His Sons is a cast made from an original marble sculpture found in Rome in 1506. The find was made in the ruins of the palace of Titus and was one of the major discoveries of the Italian Renaissance. The piece is believed to have been carved in Greece by three sculptors; Hagesandros, Polydoros and Athenkodoros, the original is in the Vatican Museums. The scene of the Trojan priest Laocöon and his sons being strangled by sea monsters is vigorously depicted by writhing, twisting figures. Laocöon had incurred the wrath of the Gods when he tried to warn the people of Troy of his suspicions about the Trojan horse. The God Apollo, who favoured the Greeks, sent the serpents to attack Laocöon and his sons, as they were making a sacrifice at the altar of Neptune.

DISCUSSION

- Who are the people in this sculpture? (The title will help)
- What do you think is happening?
- Look at the expressions on the three faces, what do they tell you?
- Can you tell if the snake has already bitten Laocöon or if it is biting him right now? Show how your face would look if a snake was biting your ankle!
- Does any other part of the bodies show how they are feeling? How?
- Artists often practice drawing sculptures to help them draw real people, would this sculpture be good to practice with? Why?
- Although sculpture does not move, an artist often wants to get a feeling of movement into a sculpture. Do the people in this sculpture look like they are moving? What gives the sculpture this feeling of movement?

- Stretch yourself into the position of each of the people in the sculpture and imagine what they are feeling, does the position feel real? Do you feel like a frozen statue?



- When this sculpture was found it was in many pieces, like a jigsaw, over the years it has been put together in different ways. In this picture the arm is different. Try the two poses, how different do they feel? Do you like this sculpture or the other version best? Why?
- This sculpture is a cast made from plaster, a cast is an exact copy taken from a sculpture. Why do you think casts are made?
- The original sculpture is made of white marble. Is there anything in your school or

home made of marble? What does it look like? What does it feel like? How would a marble finish change the look of the sculpture?

- In the gallery, do the curves of the snake make you want to follow him around the back? What do you see from the back? Is the back view as interesting as the front?
- Do you think the artist wanted you to look at the front view or all around?
- Look at the curly hair of Laocöon, it is a very different texture to his skin, what other textures can you find within the sculpture?
- Look in the gallery for sculptures made of bronze, of stone or of wood. How are the surfaces different to plaster?

HANDS ON

With a square of soap and a plastic knife or carving tool, make a carving inspired by *Laocöon and his Sons*. You could use the image of snakes, the facial expressions you tried out, the ideas of struggle, or any other ideas you get from the sculpture.

Press a coin into a flat piece of clay, carefully remove the coin. You now have a 'mould.' Mix a little plaster (following the instructions) and pour into the mould. Leave to set, then remove your 'cast'. This can be painted with acrylic paint. Experiment with casting other flat objects.

COMPOSITION Mainie Jellett (1897-1944)

Mainie Jellett studied at the Metropolitan School of Art in her native Dublin and at the Westminster Art School in London. It was here that she met her life-long companion, Evie Hone, and together they went to study at the studio of Andre Lhote. The cubist style taught by Lhote encouraged the study, rather than the rejection of the works of the Old Masters. Lhote introduced Jellett to the cubist theorist Albert Gleizes and the three artists met to work together and exchange ideas. Jellett's abstract style was greeted with horror in Ireland; she was described as having been infected with the "malaria" of abstract art. Because of her international acclaim she was eventually accepted as a leader of the modern art movement in Ireland. A fervent exponent of abstract art, Jellett wrote, lectured, and taught art throughout Ireland. She exhibited at home and internationally throughout her life. In 1943, she was a founding member of the Irish Exhibition of Living Art.



Composition, painted in 1935, can be seen as an interpretation of the holy family. Jellett was deeply religious and spiritual, and much of her work was inspired by religious themes. The shapes and colours suggest three figures rising from a central base. The golden arcs around the figures, and the use of colour is reminiscent of medieval icons. Jellett's particular style of cubism did not require the rejection of either nature or representation, but the delving deep into the subject to find its inner rhythm and harmony. She believed the symbolic power of colour and shape to be universal and to resonate with all. She sought to extract from her original naturalistic drawings the shapes and colours that spoke clearest on the subject and then, by repeating these elements, to create a work of art complete in itself.

DISCUSSION

- First, the artist painted objects and people, then she looked for shapes and colours that she liked in her painting. Then she started a new painting where she just used the shapes and colours but she used them all over the painting. What shapes mostly make up the painting? Do the shapes help to create the mood?
- What colours mostly make up the painting? Do the colours help create the mood?
- What do you think this painting is about?
- Have you ever seen gold paint used in paintings before? Where? What type of painting?
- Gold paint is found most often in paintings about religion, gold was used to make the paintings more special. Do you think the gold in this painting makes it more special for you?
- The colours are darker at the bottom of the painting and get lighter as they get towards the top. Do you think this was done for a reason, what could that be?
- When strong colours are placed beside light colours, our eye jumps over and back from one to the other. When very different colours such as yellow and purple are side by side the

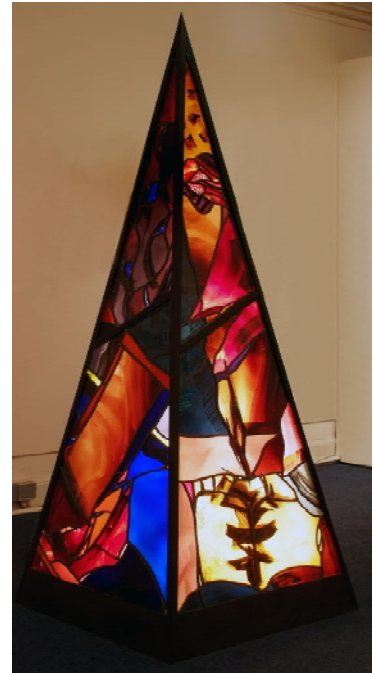
colours seem to dance too. This gives the painting a sense of movement, Can you see this happening in this painting?

In the gallery, find this abstract, stained glass sculpture by Cork artist Maud Cotter.

The artist enjoys words and poetry, and she gave this work an unusual title. It is called *Straight as Lemons Meet Fish* and was made in 1987.

Stained glass was traditionally used in churches to create a special atmosphere. Here the artist has used stained glass to create a sculpture piece, which is lit from inside.

This artist also works in an abstract way, and she has decorated the glass with lots of marks, colours and shapes.



HANDS ON

Close your eyes and imagine the colours that go with being happy, then imagine the colours that mean 'sad' to you. Try to remember one really special day that meant a lot to you and decide what colours could show how you felt then. Think of how you might draw a picture of this. Use shapes instead of realistic people and objects in your drawing and try different ways to arrange them so that you get the mood of your special day. When you have created your picture, ask your friends if they can tell what your day was like.

Make two abstract collages on the same page. For the first, choose colours that are dark and sad, cut or tear these into shapes that go with that mood and arrange them. For the second artwork, choose colours that feel bright and happy, arrange these and glue them down. Compare your two works.

ROY KEANE WITH RAVEN'S HEAD Murdo Macleod (Born 1963)

Murdo Macleod was born on the Scottish Isle of Lewis, leaving the island for the first time to go to college in Edinburgh. As a boy he had a great interest in stories and pictures. He saved up for a mail-order Russian camera and taught himself to process film from a library book. He now works as a freelance photographer for the Observer, Guardian and other newspapers and publishes his work in magazines and online. One of his most powerful series of photographs documented the Foot and Mouth outbreak in the UK.



Cork's own Roy Keane is portrayed here holding the skull of that most nightmarish of birds, the raven. Murdo Macleod was aware of Roy Keane's reputed 'dark side' and took the opportunity to use the skull. The portrait sets up an interesting dynamic. Roy Keane looks straight ahead, one eye seen through the beak of the dead bird, we, the viewers look straight back, but are drawn also to the empty eye socket of the bird. It is though we are all held, suspended in this triangle of looking and trying to see.

DISCUSSION

Who is the man in this photograph?

Can you look at this portrait and see it as a man holding a skull, or do you have to see it as Roy Keane holding a skull? Try not to know who it is, is it possible?

Why do you think there are no soccer boots or jerseys to tell us who he is? What does this portrait want to tell us about Roy Keane?

The skull in the image is of a raven, what do you know about the raven? How would you describe the personality of the raven?

Roy Keane is looking directly at us but his eye is framed by the beak of the bird, how does this affect the way we look at Keane? Or even how he looks at us?

The background of this portrait is black and empty, so we focus on the two heads. Are there any colours or shapes that connect the heads? What do you see?

What do you think about when you look at a skull? Is it possible to look at a skull and not have any thoughts or associations about it? Why?

How does Roy Keane look? Can you tell a lot by the expression on his face? What do you think his expression could mean?

One of the reasons people have their portraits painted or photographed is to tell the world about themselves in some way, perhaps about their lives and interests or to show the things that they love. What do you think Roy Keane is telling us about himself here?

What do you think of this image of Roy Keane with the skull of a raven? Is it funny, scary... how does it make you feel?

The photographer Murdo Macleod said he photographed Roy Keane with the skull because he knew that Keane had a 'dark side'. Do you think the skull gets this across? What else in the photograph gives this impression?

Is an art gallery somewhere that you might expect to see a photograph of Roy Keane?



COMPARE AND CONTRAST

This picture shows a very different kind of portrait. It is a painting is called *Portrait of James Joyce* by Louis le Brocqy.

Do you get a sense of James Joyces' personality from this portrait? What can you tell?

How is a painted portrait different to a photographic portrait?

HANDS ON

Think of a friend of someone in your family with very strong characteristics; maybe they are very serious or funny or unusual in some way. Think of an object, toy or even animal that has in some way the same characteristic. Sketch a few possible ways of composing a picture using both of them as a subject. If possible, photograph your best composition, or perhaps you can use a photograph of the person and make a photo-collage with other images.

Share a disposable camera between your classmates and draw names to chose pairs. The photographer gets to choose the pose and props used. (Be kind!) Plan the composition, lighting and theme for your photograph. Take turns.

RIVER TO THE SEA Norah McGuinness (1901-1980)

Norah McGuinness was born in Derry but worked for much of her career in Dublin; she represented Ireland in the Venice Biennale of 1950. McGuinness was a versatile artist who worked in costume and theatre design, window design for major shops in Ireland and the America, as well as book illustration. But, her main love remained painting. She painted landscape and figurative work that developed in style from representational and naturalistic to cubist and semi-abstract. She was influenced in France by the cubist style of Andre L'Hote and by the strong colours of the Fauves. She developed her own very personal style of semi-abstract painting through her still life studies, and her studies over many years around the docklands of Dublin.



River to the Sea from 1959 has all the vibrancy and colour of McGuinness's mature work: the strong diagonal in blue and green dissects the painting and the use of outline further fragments the image. Strong contrasts of orange and blue, purple and yellow sing out to us from this magical setting. The familiar landscape with its traditional thatched cottage becomes a new world under the inquiring eye of the artist.

DISCUSSION

- What is the first thing that strikes you about this painting?
- What do you think the figure in the painting is doing?
- Do you think the artist is painting the scene exactly as she sees it or has she changed it? Why do you think this?
- Can you follow the river through the painting? Can you tell where it goes?
- If Norah McGuinness is not interested in showing things exactly as she sees them, what is she interested in showing?
- Can you tell a lot about the place from this painting? Do you get a good feeling of what this place is about?
- If you look first at the orange area on the right side of the painting, where does your eye go to next? How do the colours carry you around the painting?
- Why do you think the artist outlines different areas?

- In some of the painting, the background is pale blue; in the rest it is dark blue, which part looks further away?
- Orange and yellow are warm colours used in the painting, green and blue are cool, does the painting seem warm or cool to you?
- Orange and blue are called opposite or 'contrasting' colours, so are purple and yellow, red and blue. Can you see in this painting what happens when any of these opposites meet?
- Cubist painting wants to show more information about the subject than showing how it looks just from one spot. It wants to show the structure of objects from different points of view. Often cubist paintings are like jigsaws with each piece giving us some new piece of information on the subject. Do you think this is a cubist painting?



COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Look at *The Ripe Field* by William Crozier.

See how bright the field is, and how dark everything around it has been painted, why do you think the artist did this?

The artist is really looking at one place here, the field, so the field is big and the edges are really clear. In *River to the Sea*, the artist also outlined her shapes and made them very clear, is this how you draw or paint? Do you think doing this helps make a painting? How?

HANDS ON

Try this cubist exercise, find a bottle or cup and place it on the table in front of you. Look carefully at the object and draw the curves and lines that make up the structure. (Don't bother with any patterns or labels.) Now turn your object so that you are looking directly into it. Draw these shapes in a different coloured pencil on top of your first drawing. Next turn the object so you are looking at the base and change colour again. Build up your drawing like this, this style of drawing can look very interesting and it can show lots of information.

Paint a scene from somewhere you know in the country, use the strongest colours you can for everything in your painting to get across the feeling of the place.

MEN OF THE SOUTH Sean Keating (1889-1977)

Sean Keating studied art in Limerick before winning a scholarship to study at the Metropolitan School of Art in Dublin. He studied painting under the artist William Orpen and Orpen found him an excellent pupil. He painted in a similar realist fashion to Orpen and developed his skills in this area, even at a time when abstract painting was becoming popular in Ireland. A traditionalist, he believed in strong drawing skills and an academic approach to painting. Keating went to London as Orpen's assistant and sometimes model, but as a nationalist, he felt his mission was to help define what nationhood meant through his painting. A trip to the Aran Islands in 1914 greatly inspired him; here was the noble islander who represented the ideal strong independent type of man needed for the new nation. For Keating he became the image of national identity.



Men of the South shows a group of IRA men. They are waiting for a British military group to pass. An ambush is imminent but as we see from their staunch profiles these men are not concerned for their own safety, but for the principles they hold. Keating portrays these six men as a coherent group. Strong drawing underlies the figures and the neutral tones create an earthy wholesome attachment of the men to the landscape. Keating has made heroes of these men; this painting is not about the grime and pain of war, but about the idealism

and patriotism behind it.

DISCUSSION

- The men in this painting seem to be waiting for something or someone, what do you think they are waiting for?
- Does the group look happy and relaxed?
- What do you see in the background of the painting? Does it look like a quiet or busy place?
- What do you think will happen when they see what they are waiting for?
- Only some of these men are wearing army outfits, do they look like soldiers or regular men? Why do you think this might be?
- It seems to be a warm day, are their clothes good for this weather? Why do you think they are wearing such clothes?
- Do you think there is a leader in this group? Who do you think this might be?
- Look carefully at his face, how do you think he is feeling? Do the other men look worried or confident?
- The artist, Sean Keating painted some of the men from photographs. Some of the men came and sat in his studio for him to paint. Would it be easier to paint someone from real life or from a photograph? How would it be different?

- Can you tell which men in the painting might have been painted from real life?
- In your opinion, did the artist make the men look like solid, real people? What makes them look real?
- How does the artist make the men fit in so well with the background?
- Do you think they could hide easily?



In the gallery can you find this painting? It is called *Economic Pressure* and is also by Sean Keating. What do you think is happening in this painting?

Look at the brush marks and the paint textures on both paintings (imagine you are a detective on a case). Can you tell the work is by the same painter? What are the clues?

HANDS ON

Choose a photo of some of your family and make up a story about what is going on in the photo. Try to give them really unusual jobs and things to do. You could make your mum a rocket scientist and make your baby brother a rock star. (If your mum really is a rocket scientist make her something else!) Write your story out for the class, or draw a picture of your story adding costumes and props.

Camouflage

Find a picture of an animal or insect with a strong pattern. Stick, trace, photocopy or draw your creature onto paper. (Or use this one.) Using paints, markers or pastels, disguise your creature by filling in the background with the same pattern markings.

Try to make your creature completely disappear.



TIME FLIES William Gerard Barry (1864-1940)

William Gerard Barry came from Carrigtwohill in County Cork. He studied at the Crawford School of Art from 1881 to 1883 and then went to the study at the Academie Julian in Paris. The tradition of Irish artists painting in France and Belgium was by then well established.

Artists came from all over Europe and the United States to paint in Brittany and Fontainebleau. Here they painted in the open air, shared ideas and developed techniques in an atmosphere of solidarity. Barry sent a painting back to Ireland and won the Taylor Award. (It may have been this painting *Time Flies*.) He left what seemed like a blossoming career in Europe for travels in the Americas and the South Seas. He paid his way by painting portraits and landscapes, eventually settling in France.



Time Flies was painted in Grez-sur-Loing, a village in Fontainebleau which has a strong tradition of landscape painting; Corot had painted there in 1863 and an artists' colony had grown in the area. The painting shows the influence of French Realism: such themes of youth and age were popular means of exploring the change in seasons, life cycles and figures in the environment. In the painting the soft evening sunshine permeates the glade and settles on the group of children. The matron contemplates the idyllic scene, enjoying this moment with the bittersweet realisation

that her time is quickly passing. The barefoot children are too happily engaged in their game to be bothered with such things.

DISCUSSION

The name of this painting is *Time Flies* does this mean:

- (a) A time machine will land on the grass
- (b) Someone is about to throw an alarm clock
- (c) Time goes by very quickly

Look at the shadows, what time of day is it when shadows are so long?

Do you think the artist is saying that days go by, or childhood goes by, or seasons go by too quickly?

The old lady in the painting sees that time is going by quickly, do the children notice? Why?

The colours in this painting are mostly yellows, browns, oranges. Do the colours make you feel warm or cold?

The colours give a certain feeling and mood to the scene, what sort of mood do these colours create?

Look at the light coming through the trees, the artist hasn't painted flat areas of the same colour, instead he has placed dabs of different colour close together. How does this look different to flat colour?

Do the children look happy? How can you tell?

What do you think the children are talking about?

Have you had sunny days like this with your friends? Did those days have the same feeling this painting gives you?



Compare and Contrast

Look at the painting *The Breadline*, 1916, by Muriel Brandt, what are the children doing in this painting?

Here the artist has painted using flatter areas of colour, how does the way it is painted look different to *Time Flies*?

HANDS ON

Does the grass where the children are lying look soft? How did the artist paint it to make it look like this? Look carefully, does he paint every blade of grass?

Using crayons or pastels, mix the colours that you see on the grass. Try putting thick blobs of the colours beside each other to get the same look as in the painting. Rub thick layers of crayon or pastel on different coloured paper, scratch and draw into the crayon with the back of your pencil.

Try using your pastels in different ways. Stab them on the paper to get different textures. Draw colours over each other. Draw colours side by side and blend them together with a little squished up piece of paper. Draw very lightly on different coloured and textured paper. Experiment with your own techniques.

Draw a picture of one of your favourite things to do on sunny days, put friends or toys or pets in the picture if you want. Use some of the techniques you have experimented with, pick the techniques that best suit the mood of your picture.