



“We use the creative art process to facilitate personal well-being”

October Day Meeting

Registered Charity No.

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On-line Home page:

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Patrick Brumskill was invited to the October meeting to start the day off with Circle Dancing. Most of us had never experienced anything like it before, but with Patrick’s expert instructions, he led us through eight different dances from around the world ----- and all this before lunch time!



Many of NIGAT’s meetings begin in a circle for introductions and this proved to be a circle with a difference.

National Poetry day was earlier in the week and I had selected a number of October poems in honour of this, many of them old favourites remembered from my schooldays. I found this image in the midst of my searching and gathering.

Autumn Leaves had been gathered, apples nuts and seeds were set out along with the traditional art materials for the art making session.

Everyone shared their thoughts about the day in smaller groups.

By the end of the day when I photographed the centre piece I discovered a heart.

Margaret Dunlop, Chair Person, NIGAT



Robert Frost, October

Thy leaves have ripened to the fall;
O hushed October morning mild,
 Tomorrow's wind, if it be wild,
 Should waste them all.
The crows above the forest call;
Tomorrow they may form and go.
O hushed October morning mild,
Begin the hours of this day slow.
Make the day seem to us less brief.
Hearts not averse to being beguiled,
Beguile us in the way you know.
Release one leaf at break of day;
 At noon release another leaf;
One from our trees, one far away.

George Cooper, Octobers Party

October gave a party;
The leaves by hundreds came-
The Chestnuts, Oaks, and Maples,
And leaves of every name.
The Sunshine spread a carpet,
And everything was grand,
Miss Weather led the dancing,
Professor Wind the band.

A Summary of the Art Therapy Summer School 2007

As member of NIGAT and former (Msc) Art Therapy Graduate, I was fortunate to be awarded a bursary to attend this year's 15th Art Therapy Summer School. This is a brief summary of my time spent there.

After taking some time-out with birth of baby and relocating to Kent, England. I felt this was a wonderful opportunity to grow in a personal and professional way. This gave me a chance to find out about recent theory and practice plus re-engage with personal experiences through the art making process. I re-connected with old friends/colleagues and was introduced to some new ones.

I found the presentations to be very en-lighting, especially that of Dr Caryl Sibbett who explores the use of Metaphor "mirrors and windows" and how they can "reflect back who we are while simultaneously suggesting new horizons". This presentation was thought provoking and aspects of it resonated into my art-work over the week and since.

Biggi Hoffmann's intro and workshop on Psychodrama was a new experience. I took part in a group re-enactment of artwork in physical time and space. As someone who suffers from stage fright and lacks confidence at times, I found this challenging and empowering. This is an area I shall pursue in future for personal development.

The creative workshops directed by Frank Holmes, looked at journeys, past, present, and future. I was very touched by the journeys shared within the group and I felt nurtured and protected throughout. Art Therapy for me is a bit like 'expect the unexpected'. What I mean by this is that I had to question some personal assumptions and re-evaluate. We all have weaknesses and it was good to be in touch with mine.

I would like to thank NIGAT and everyone involved. This was a brilliant learning and supportive experience.

Yours sincerely

Tonita Askin BA (hons) Msc Art Therapist.

Summer School 2007 Exhibition!



Northern Ireland Group for Art as Therapy Summer School 07 Exhibition

In 2007 this art exhibition was made possible by the hard work, creativity, and generosity of NIGAT's members who donated artwork, so a BIG THANK YOU.

The idea was born in 2006 when I attended my first Summer School; although a fantastic experience I felt there was room to exhibit the creativity outside of the workshop spaces and lecture area. I felt that the only non-verbal interaction in communal areas was the colourful display of the bookstall in the eating area that was much appreciated. I put the idea to the Summer School Committee

about hosting a Members Exhibition at Summer School 07 and they were keen to take this on board.

We made a call for art works and the response was encouraging we received between 20-30 art works of which most were created during our NIGAT Summer Day Meeting that was held in the countryside near Newtownards, and facilitated by Duncan Wallace. We were delighted also to be supported by our founder member Rita Simon, who donated five artworks to our exhibition.

The exhibition was proudly displayed throughout the week in the eating area for all Summer School participants to view, enjoy, discuss, and gain inspiration from while they relaxed in between presentations and workshops.

I felt that the exhibition was an indication of the many ways in which people use their creativity to communicate to themselves and to others non-verbally. I believe this is what NIGAT is all about. I felt that we have received a positive response to the exhibition, people remarked how colourful the display was and that it was a focal point in the room. Due to this response I would like to expand on our art collect in the future.

Since leaving the Summer School our exhibition has been on its travels, and with the help of Duncan we were able to exhibit our members work in the Arts Care Gallery at Musgrave Park Hospital during the month of September. There may also be a possibility for the work to travel to Donegal in the future, but we would like to bring it home first and have it on display at our AGM in November.

I hope you all enjoyed the exhibition...?

Frank Holmes

NIGAT Vice Chairperson

Member Meeting at Knockbracken (BBQ)

NIGAT Members Celebrated Summer Solstice with music, dance and food!

On Wednesday 20 June 2007 NIGAT held a Member's *Noisy Night* at the Centre for Psychotherapy, Shimna House, Knockbracken Healthcare Park. There was a great energy to the evening and the weather was certainly smiling down on us. All those who came along were greeted by the smell of barbeque wafting through the air! Everyone gathered round 'Chef Gerard' who served up a delicious selection from the BBQ – the vegetarian sausages proved especially popular!

Everyone attending was asked to bring their own music – so after the food the musicians gathered to play. The array of instruments was quite dazzling - if at times the playing was not!! Some of the more musically gifted played the harp,

guitar, trumpet, violin but there was plenty of percussion for the more musically challenged amongst us! But great fun was had by all as instruments were passed around the circle to try out something new.

Then the evening drew to a close as darkness fell with a quick demonstration of Poi – a traditional Maori dance prop from New Zealand. So while some NIGAT members, who shall remain nameless, managed to tie themselves up in knots twirling the poi ribbons, the real experts Kate and Emma put on a great show of fire twirling outside!

By the end of the night those of us gathered had certainly generated some music, movement and laughter to Celebrate the Solstice!



Fiona Chapman

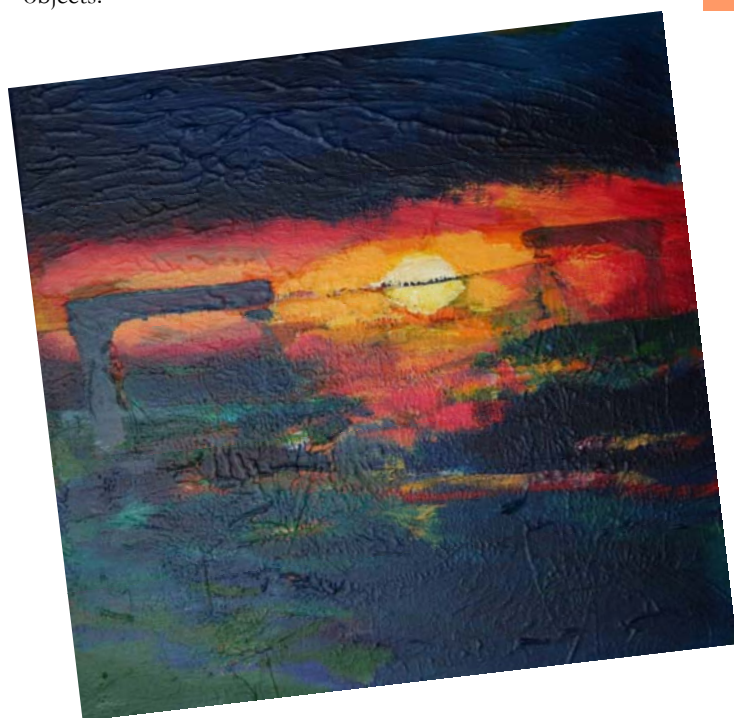
NIGAT Committee Member

“4 Artists” - Clotworthy Art Centre

There was no set theme for this exhibition, we were four artists who came together to celebrate the 15th Anniversary of Arts Care by exhibiting our own personal artwork at Clotworthy Art Centre. We are Arts Care artists in residence working in the Co. Antrim Area. Helen Bradbury is based in Antrim Area Hospital (North Trust), Ciara O’ Malley works in Holywell Hospital (North Trust), Kathryn Nelson works throughout the Causeway Area (North Trust), and myself Frank Holmes based in Muckamore Abbey Hospital (Belfast Health & Social Care Trust). Although the majority of our time working within the Trust is with staff and patients, we felt that we wanted to focus on the artist in this exhibition rather than the artist working with the patient or staff.

“4 Artists” outlines the various ways that we creatively express ourselves. Ciara as an installation artist uses themes or stories that act as similes for personal experiences bringing them to life through light, sound, film, and movement. Ciara exhibited her personal work through photographs hanging on the wall and projects were viewed on a lap top. She also exhibited a large body of patients work from Holywell Hospital.

I feel Kathryn’s paintings can work on many different levels, on an ideas level she is exploring visually the concept that everything on this planet is interconnected through cosmic recycling, “every object has a relationship with everything else.” In one of her paintings from a distance I see blades of grass, but on closer inspection the grass was in fact fingers growing out of the ground, and one of the fingers’ tips morphed into a butterfly. On a painterly level her work is rendered quite realistically and she flattens space by placing everything on one surface, each object is pushed to the foreground of the painting. I found Kathryn’s paintings both interesting and complex objects.



When talking to Helen she said that her poppy paintings were influenced by a project that she was asked to create in the Hospital, which then followed through into the body of her own work that she has created for this show. Her work for me holds a sense of beauty and growth that draws me to the work and makes me want to explore the poppies organic patterns more closely. On looking closely it is their simplistic quality that holds my attention and the quality of the painted surface. On viewing the exhibition a visitor likened the materials used in the poppies to tissue paper, this for me shows how Helen has captured the delicate quality of the poppy in this fine body of work.

In my own work I was drawn to the subject of the Belfast cranes that have been in my skyline since birth. I chose the cranes because of different connections. As an artist I feel they are objects of beauty, and on a personal level I was raised in the east side of the city and my Father worked as a cooper smith for most of his life in the shipyard, so they hold many memories. I had not exhibited for over three years and I was happy to choose a subject that I felt connected to. I became totally immersed in the application of the paint. I used cardboard and wood to create a tactile surface to work on, this was an important part of my process. After the surface was prepared I would then begin to use brushes to add finer detail to the paintings. Most of my images are representations of memories that I have collected over the years, these landscapes only exists in my reality.

Frank Holmes

What would you like to see/read?

This is the beginnings of a new style of newsletter! We are hoping to publish several each year and make these available to members of NIGAT. If there is anything that you feel is missing or would like to see in the future editions we would love to hear your ideas! Please contact Gail at:

stewartgail@hotmail.com.

The next Day Meeting will be on the first Saturday in February 2008.

We hope to see you there!

