



Artist: Anonymous



Artist: Anne

SCRAPPY BUT HAPPY 4



Dublin
Simon
Community



Artist: V.J.

A priceless limited edition expressed in words
and pictures by people using Simon services.

"EVERY CHILD IS AN ARTIST. THE PROBLEM IS STAYING AN ARTIST WHEN YOU GROW UP."

(Pablo Picasso, 1881-1973)

SIMON

Foreword

"Scrappy but Happy 4" is the fourth edition in our well established *Scrappy but Happy* series. This collection of art, craftwork and creative writing is once again testament to the often surprising talents and eloquence of the people who access Dublin Simon Community services. It is also a mere sample of their wonderful creativity as this year we had an unprecedented number of entries.

This edition embraces an even wider range of decorative and visual arts including clay work, crochet, découpage, mosaics, paper craft, photography, pyrography, stained glass and wire work, in addition to drawing, painting, and sketching. Using the "Free Writing" method, the creative writing encompasses personal reflections, poems and prose. The poems are a mix of Cinquains, Haikus and Limericks alongside the more traditional rhythmic forms.

Our diverse provision of meaningful activities combines the creative with the therapeutic, providing an avenue for participants to engage with others, with learning and with their development. Meaningful activities foster increased wellbeing and confidence, interpersonal and independent living skills, a sense of accomplishment, emotional release and most importantly, an opportunity for people to shine!

A new dimension to this year's collection is the inclusion of work created by people that weren't participants of our creative workshops. This work showcases their individual imagination and artistic flair! Examples include Anne's crocheted throws and Vincent's stained glass designs.

We would like to thank a number of people for the success of this book. Firstly, our staff and volunteers for their involvement especially those that delivered workshops: Christina Beattie, Kim Coffey, Emma McGarry, Christina Mooney, Angela Shepherd, Niamh Smith, Anna Wallace and Gráinne Weldon for Crafts of all kinds; and Ailbhe Creane for Creative Writing. Secondly, the tutors: Cormac Browne for Photography; Gráinne Dunne for Art; Róisín Keane for Creative Writing; John O'Malley for Art Therapy; and Sandra Popovaite for Découpage; and finally of course, the participants without whom this book would remain a nice dream.

Enjoy our collection!

Dublin Simon Community

September 2014



Artist: Joyce

TRY

For as long as I can remember, my life has been full of rain
Rainstorms never ending. A life full of ups and downs with pain.
For as long as I can remember, I've tried endlessly to put it right.
But the rainstorms just get longer and so do the lonely nights.

I remember sleeping under the stars, at 18 years of age!
Bottle of wine and a sleeping bag, hoping to take away the pain.
The Gardaí kicking our legs, "Come on, it's time to wake up".
Be half six or seven in the morning, but to them we were only dirt.

Remember the Soup Run, the staff and how nice they were
The fact you had nothing or nobody, they really didn't care.
Never looked down on you or made you feel like you were nothing
Never looked around at you and walk way in disgust.

The endless support groups, Focus Ireland, Fáilteú, the Ana Liffey
Staff were a breath of fresh air and it was God sent they were there
Whatever you need done, they'd always do their best
But to really, really make it you need to do the rest.

Try and try and try, instead of letting the world pass you by.
Try as hard as you can, for yourself and the like you want to have.
Try knock down every barrier that might get in your way
And hope when you wake tomorrow, it will be a better day!

Louise

MY IDEA OF A PERFECT SOCIETY

Equality for all men and women.
Respect others and ourselves.
Gratitude, be grateful for things we have.
Appreciate nature and help to look out for it.
A place where no one or things should be hungry or thirsty.
A place where no one looks down on others.
A place we all feel we are part of and belong to.

That people of all walks of life would get on irrespective of their religious or political status. That everyone would have enough money, food and water to survive. That Diageo, Smirnoff and the people who make Druids Cider would go bankrupt at 6 o'clock this evening and we would all live happily ever after.

Creative Writing Group:
Brian, Gavin and Martin C.

A more open government where everyday people have a say not just the odd vote. To refurbish old buildings and finish ghost estates to help with the homeless problem. More opportunities for young people so to cut down on emigration. To focus on the Irish language so to not lose it. Harsh prison sentences for sexual offences.



Artist: Anonymous



Artist: Mark O.

THE BOOK

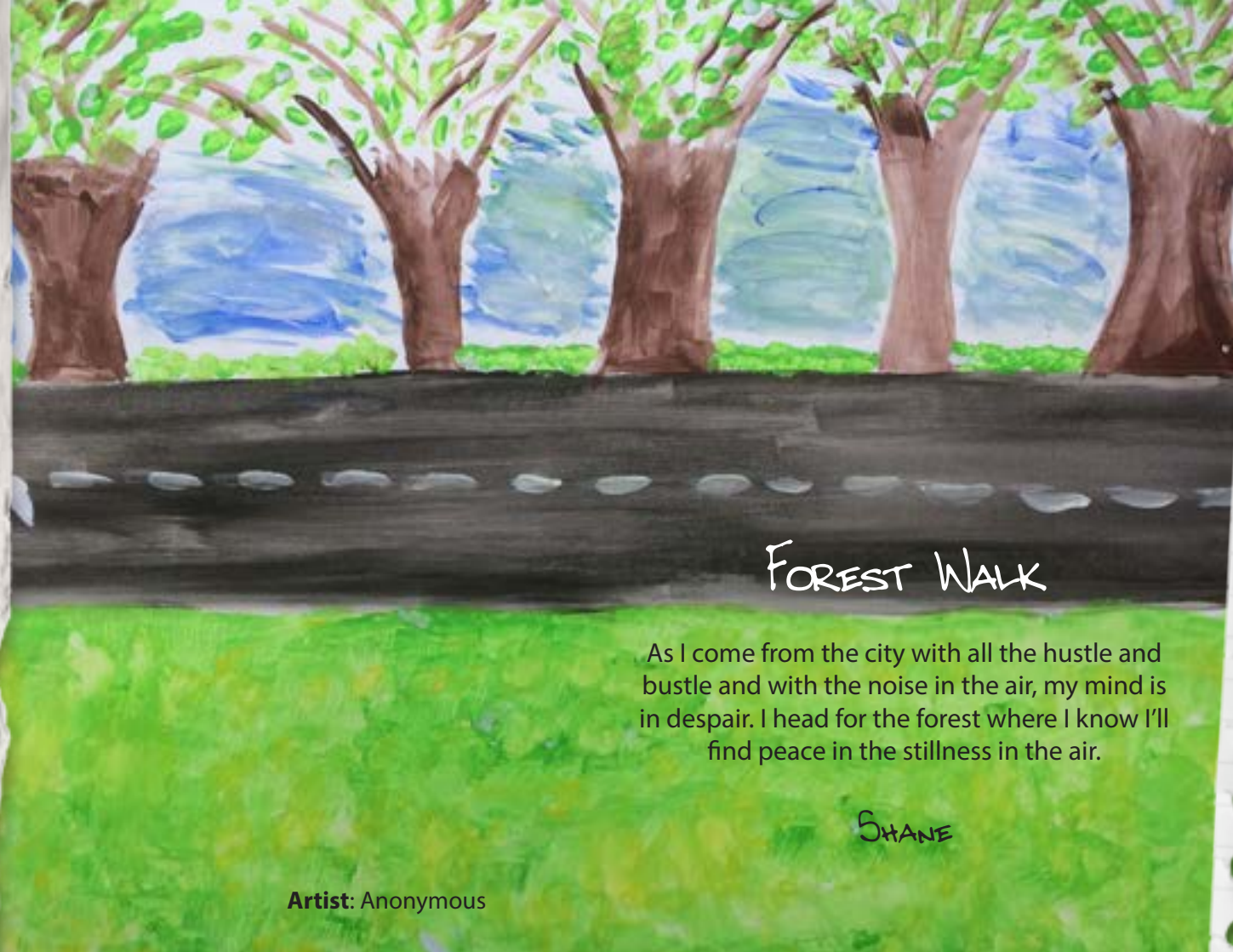
Books have no future. Pish posh! The legacy of Gutenberg and his printing press will stretch for millennia to come, because books, real books, books you can thumb through, books you can smell, books you love, books some people burn, books that are worth lumping around with you because you know that pain in your back will be worth it when you get to the next chapter.

“Use your Kindle for kindling!”, that’s what I say. “But I have four hundred books on my Kindle”. Well done you! You can still only read one at a time. You won’t ever have that feeling of satisfaction and excitement as you look at your bookcase, happy with the memories of books read and the angst at looking at books yet to be read as they silently mock you.

I have a relationship with my books that I couldn’t have with a bunch of transistors, resistors and microchips. Some say, “As long as the content, the words are read, isn’t that what is important?”. And yes it is but people are missing out on the full sensory delight that is the 400 year old technology, the Book!

James

Artist: Anonymous



FOREST WALK

As I come from the city with all the hustle and bustle and with the noise in the air, my mind is in despair. I head for the forest where I know I’ll find peace in the stillness in the air.

SHANE

Privileged

Last week I went for a walk alone in the woods. I felt good listening to nature, the birds, the cows, the sheep. Then a fox appeared at the top of the road and I stopped to look at him. I walked slowly towards him and he just froze and looked at me. I got to within 20 yards of him and 2 cubs came out of the bushes.

I remember feeling so privileged to see such beauty.

Martin J.



Artist: Michael D.

CINQUAINS AND HAIKUS

Cinquains are unrhymed poems of five lines with a unique, symmetrical shape created from interesting, descriptive words.

| | |
|--|---|
| Books | Moon |
| Educational, delusional | Yellow, bright |
| Liberating, informing, freeing | Flowing, growing, overseeing |
| A book is the tool of the mind | Its light gives us shadows that give life to the night! |
| Paper | Mysterious |
| Tree | Women |
| Green, Brown, | Powerful, feminine |
| Flowing, growing, blowing, | Intriguing, frustrating, alluring |
| The holiday season is not the same without a Christmas tree! | Sweet is the heart of a woman |
| Joyful | Abandon! |

***Haikus** have
5 syllables in the first line,
seven in the second line
and 5 again in the third line!*

A walk in the park
Football, kites, playing, running
The park oh so busy.

Walking through the sea
With the sand beneath my feet
Sunset so tranquil.

Creative Writing Group:
John D., Joyce, Niall, Paul,
Tara and Ultan.



Artist: Anonymous



Spring

New life beginning, things come to life,
Time to ring changes, let go of strife.
Fresh winds blow to help clear the mind,
Days getting longer, darkness left behind.

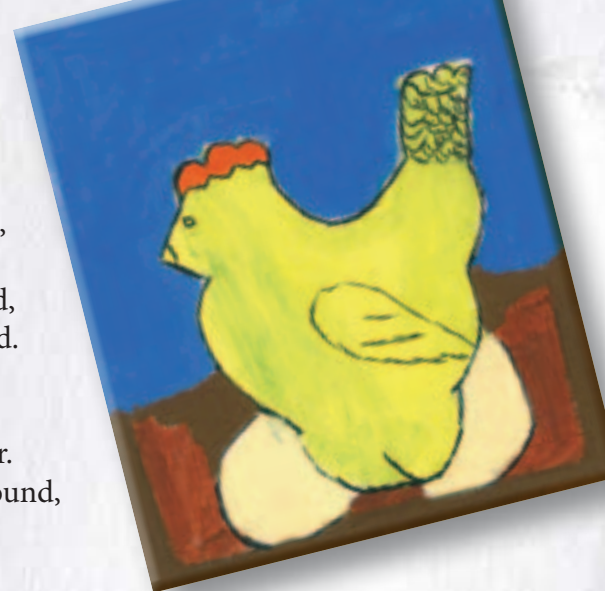
Walks in the park, dafs start to appear,
Explosions of colour to add to the cheer.
Animals come out of hiding and scurry around,
Winter sleep over, food to be found.

Spring tides riding, seas are still high,
Roaring and crashing with a high pitched cry.

John C.



**Easter Craft
Group Project:**
Respite Residents



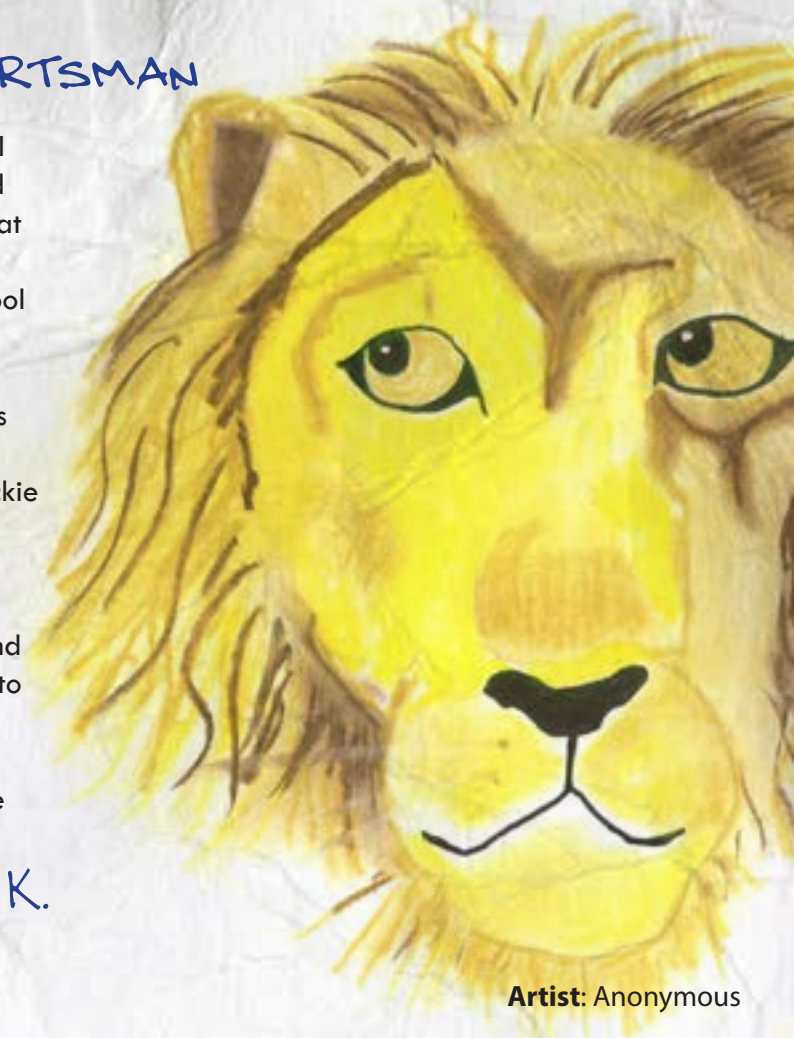
My Favourite Irish Sportsman

My favourite sportsman of all time is Packie Bonner. I thought he was a great goalkeeper. I really admired him for the famous save he made in Italia '90. Now, at that time I had no interest in sport whatsoever; I was only 15 years of age. I was going to secondary school back then.

Then I remember 4 years later in USA '94, which was when I took a great interest in the soccer and I was really tuned into USA '94. But the only way I felt Packie Bonner let us down was in the last match before the Quarter Final. Ireland was playing against Holland and Packie went to save the ball but it was a damp, wet evening and the ball was slippery and mucky and Packie accidentally let the ball slip off his hand and into the net.

Having said all that I still think Packie Bonner was the greatest of all time.

Dave K.



Artist: Anonymous

FIRST LOVE

When first I saw your little eyes
How could my heart not melt?
And all your little fingers I lovingly felt
Your skin so smooth and soft
I felt deep within my heart
Nothing would ever keep us apart.

The hours, days and months flew by
Before I bought your first toy
Oh how to see you full of joy!
You are more wondrous than the sky
Just like the blue moon passing by
And as each birthday passes by
You'll always be the apple of my eye!

Creative Writing Group:

John D., Joyce, Niall, Paul, Tara and Ultan

Dedicated to their children

First LOVE



you will ALWAYS
BE THE
APPLE OF MY EYE

Artist: Tara

When I Walked Through the Door of Rehab

When I walked through Simon's door
I was literally on the floor
I didn't feel like talking
I really felt like walking!

I was under a lot of stress
I didn't care less!
But when I settled in
The counselling then began!

When the groups began
I thought I would have ran
There was a lot of rules
But we were no fools!

The future is looking bright
We know we are doing things right!
So we'll continue with the fight!

Rehab Creative Writing Group

The Meaning Of Being A Pauper

“Our reaction to people with poverty is visceral”

This statement reflects an attitude which is common. Emotions are stirred by witness of utter defeat. However, the resilience of just about all of us, given extreme pressure, is extraordinary. Darkness exists within us all and, for so many, light is mere illusion. Yet this does not stop us going on and on and on!

Being alone is a fact of life for so many; some of us would complain that we have nobody but we should be mindful that for so many this really is true. We may be down but look at those who really are out.

The first thing to go is respect, but there are those who show us that dignity is something quite different and that it somehow remains.

The complexity of life, being a fundamental truth, is so often a beautiful mystery, yet alas this complexity

can also exist in a warped state. Those of us who have received help can never be too grateful for some of our people on earth had little or nothing to begin with; that they are often viewed as being stupid, mad or bad makes the blood boil.

Being poor is not primarily about lack of money for food, clothes or shelter, rather it is about social exclusion and social leprosy; it is literally the state of being disenfranchised and dispossessed. When ranting, whatever is said, the pauper is really just yelling, “I have a right to be here”. Every human being has a right to the earth, and the land, in truth, belongs to us all.

“The spirit of homelessness is indomitable”

Few people ever give in, gratuitously, but those who are really up against the wall somehow scale a complete height; that is to say they are free in the way few of us are. I do not wish to romanticise, rather to describe.

It really would be some world if we all had what we did need; that this is not the case and that it will hardly ever be is not to despair but to realise the world is a given, despite all inadequacies; that it is something to celebrate, each life to love, each life being unique.

Of course, there have been atrocities committed throughout history; one remaining atrocity being the exclusion of so many. Yet the strength to dream, even the dream of a perfect world, however unrealistic, is an illusion which can, paradoxically, sustain.

People will say that idealism is dangerous and this view is certainly politically accurate, yet if all we are is realistic - will we ever risk? The beauty of the world, no matter how terrible at times, is its complete unpredictability.

Donal

Thoughts

Mesmerised by the crashing waves, I made my way to the fringe of the cliff, not thinking about the consequences; just a sense of peace.

Ray



Artist: Anonymous

BOARDWALK BLUES No MORE

Seen a homeless man on the boardwalk
with a spring in his step, a can in his hand
and holes in his shoes. He said, with a
smile, "You can't beat a bit of sun to take
away the homeless blues".

"I've spent many a night", he said, "turning
blue with the cold, fearing the frost and
the snow, and now everything the blasted
winter killed,
is suddenly starting to grow.

You see when I woke this morning I could
smell the spring in the air, and I'm sure I
seen two pigeons, a bit of bread they did
share".

Tommy

Artist: Anonymous

Burnt Dinner

Burnt dinner, bedsit, one ring working, no control, knob full on, full time.
Stolen dinner, who cares, tastes better, no money, no drink, no light, bulb gone.
Eat burnt dinner by light of silvery moon, spilt tea, pillow wet, don't care, turn it over.
Fish and chips sounds good, no money again. Fuck it!
Carpet burned and stained, curtain poles broken, stumbled and grabbed it. Crash! Fuck it!
Walls close in and it's not teatime yet. I hate dark evenings and burnt dinners and her!!
Get her out of your head. She won't go. Stay there if you want. Burnt dinner.

Mark S.



Artist: Anonymous

- LIMERICKS -

There was a man called Terry
He always was very merry
Unfortunately for us
He left us on the bus
When he went to get a ferry!

There was an old dog called Poppy
Her ears were long and floppy
She likes to dress up
Ever since she was a pup
And she was sometimes so stropky.

There was an aul crook called Enda
He took everyone's money and spent it
Now we're so broke
And the country's a joke,
And it's all thanks to aul Enda!

CREATIVE WRITING GROUP:
ALAN, CHRISTINA AND TERRY

Artist: Anonymous

Moving On

It's Wednesday night and he's about to give flight

Mick's way, the road is a light

Six months he has been here to stay

As the dawn breaks there is no allay

Songs are sung and jokes abound

But reality strikes and truth is sound

You guys and girls love and hate

But Mick is here and doesn't slate

The future is not set in stone

And Mick is never again to be alone

So farewell to all our friends

Our hearts and love will never end.

Mick

Artist: Declan

IN 1988

It was on a Saturday morning in 1988; we got up out of bed to get washed and have some breakfast. My mum told me and my brother to not leave the area because we were going into town to do some shopping. We went into the field onto the horses and jockeyed it up and down. Then I showed my brother how to do it as he had no idea how to do it. I put him on the back of the horse; I showed him how to hold the mane and to tip the pony at his left side. I showed him how to move the horse but the horse wouldn't move, so I hit him with a bit of a branch as a whip and the horse took off up the field at 100 miles an hour. So he fell off and broke his arm but he saw the funny side of it and then my mum had to bring him to the hospital to get his arm fixed.

MICHAEL



Artist: Anonymous

First Day

I am afraid. I don't want to be without my mum. She ushers me in alongside one of my friends. I am crying. I am on my own. This is all new to me. I don't have a brother or sister to help if I am in trouble. I open the door and there's a weird indescribable odour to which I am unaccustomed to. Later I realise it's the "Jacks". They stink, everyone stinks, even the teachers. The quality of light is there for all to see; 16 windows in the room. It's OK, but I think I would like to be outside, anywhere but here. The corridor is so loud, every kid screaming, shouting – wanting to be heard. Then there's the quiet ones who just swagger around giving all us small kids dead arms, dead legs. In the classroom is my teacher, Mr. Kenny – ill-fitting suit, 4 days of growth on his face, reeks of cigarette smoke, and possibly whiskey. On the blackboard is one word, "EDUCATION"!!

The room smells of packed lunch, silent farts, and some not so quiet. I feel afraid when asked to write something creative.

Notnif



Artist: Anonymous





Artist: Anonymous



Artist: Anonymous

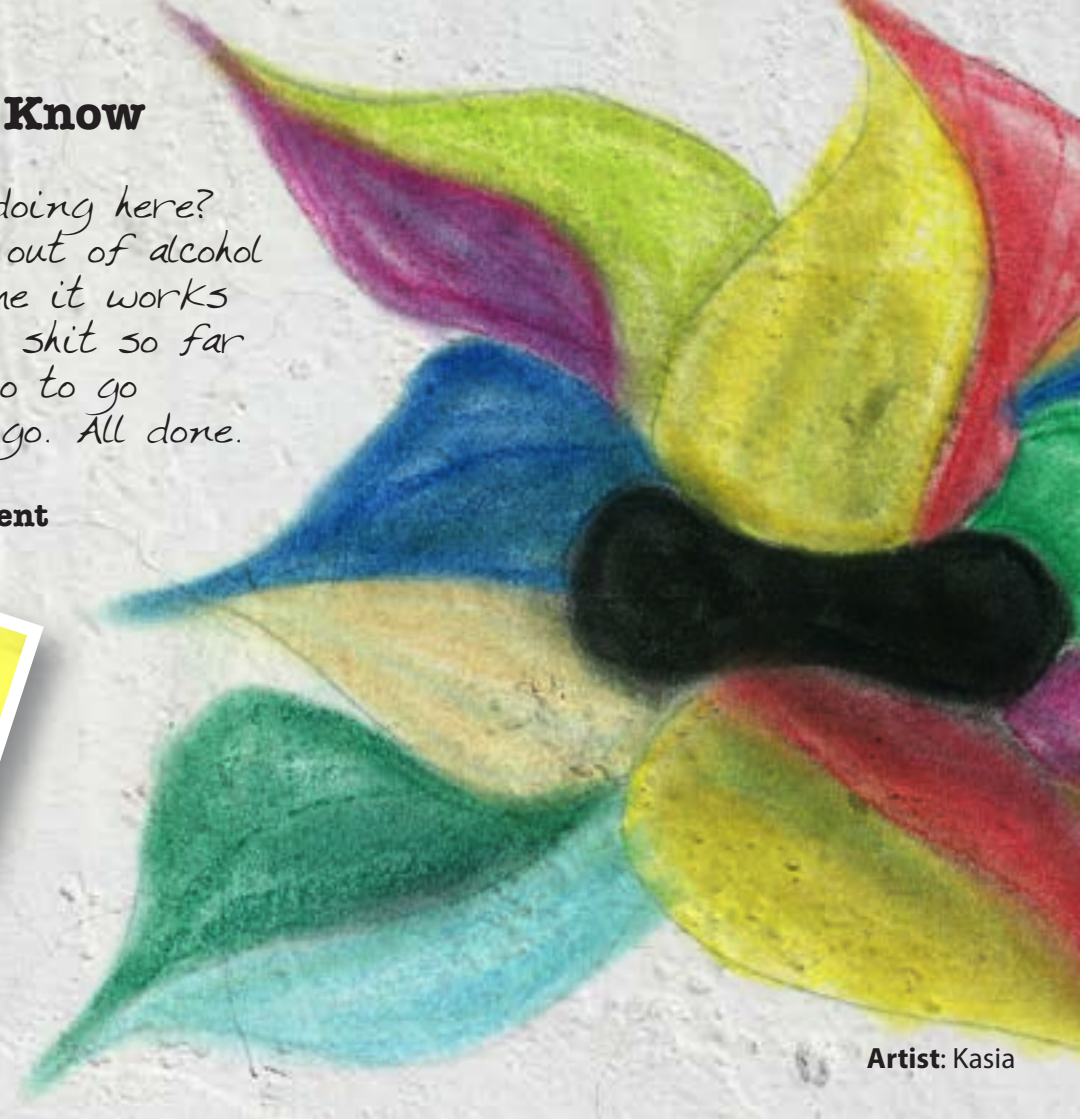


Artist: Ultan

I Don't Know

*what am I doing here?
Trying to get out of alcohol
Hope this time it works
Life is being shit so far
Only two to go
Now none to go. All done.*

Vincent



Artist: Kasia

Let Yourself In

It has to be said and I feel obligated to be the one to say it. You may already know it and that is, “That this world is in a sorry and cruel state”.

In short, it's fucked. But we can start to do something about it. A great deal of beauty and humanity still exists. Mahatma Gandhi said, “We must become the change we want to see in the world”. That's a good start, but the set up here has to be somehow kick started into us all individually, and collectively it will, if we will it to be done, become slowly unstoppable. Be obedient to the disobedience within your conscience towards the obscene actions of others. I hope this is not pontificating. I needed to let this slide off my mind tonight and give the other thoughts a room of their own. I used to drown this for nobody to see as it collided with the sickening whiskey and strong lager, leaving me mute and imprisoned once again as the dark side laughed itself to impure death. But I'm learning to wrestle it under the full hot glare of sobriety.

So the readers of this piece (if indeed it makes out of the privacy of my typed thoughts and on to the printed page

like Andy Dufresne from Shawshank Prison) will be of differing lifestyles, thought patterns and backgrounds. Possibly some of you, like myself, will be in the equally terrifying and ultimately liberating walls of recovery; yet to be demolished in order to be free. Some of you may still be imprisoned within the despicable terror of addiction. Some will reside relatively safely in the moderate space I've never known outside of my addictive extremes. Not everyone is going to appreciate it as much as I would hope, but I'll not allow worry or fear to contradict a growing faith and give the dark side a key to murder my potential and life. All construct and no destruct unless it's a dismantling of bullshit.

So here lies my point and thought stream for the night, calmly cascading through a cleansing brain and mind. You have the ability, yeah you, reading this piece of either a decent waste of five minutes or five you may have spent reading some scornful journalist filling you in on some spoiled celebrity on a current meltdown, possibly for publicity, or about the good or bad state of their face on a damn morning “Selfie”. You can make a difference. The very space you stand in is yours. The very breath you breathe is a gift. The eyes that see this as a work of dogshit, decent or mediocre trash are an

astonishing gift, whether you're a believer or an atheist. And God knows where I'm at and he has me, a walking marvel of surreal survival, like all of the eyes and minds toiling through this piece. Defy the negativity of the dark side and you may just be tempted to somersault in the street. Us Irish are sometimes afraid to shine. Let's at least try to drop that bollocks and have respect for the life that's here on this sphere. Just lay aside the accepted way and though an opposition will rise, you'll begin to find your beautiful feet.

So start clamping the clampers and enjoying the refreshing pelt and spray that falls so often on our breathtaking shores. Anticipate the colours that will follow. The waves are not afraid to smash up against the rocks, shaping them over all history. Let us not be afraid to kick up against the pricks of evil in the world and our own hearts.

Don't mimic the destructive ones that are passed off as leaders of your day. Take a look at yourself now. YOU ARE SOMEONE. YOU ARE IMPORTANT. NOBODY ON EARTH IS SUPERIOR TO YOU. NO WORLD LEADER, PRIEST, POPE, POLITICIAN OR ANY HIGH FLIER IN A BANK BUSTING SUIT. NO

PRESIDENT, MOVIE STAR, ROCK STAR OR POP STAR. LOOK AT THAT FACE ... THAT'S YOU, YOU!! YOU ARE EQUAL TO ONES CONSIDERED LOWEST IN SOCIETY AND THOSE IN SO-CALLED HIGH SOCIETY. ALL EQUAL. PITY TO THE ONES THAT SEE IT OTHERWISE. MY UTMOST SYMPATHY.

We only take different routes and some never really accept the kiss of life and in its place accept the slow kiss of death each day. Stamp it out. Reject it. Your life is not to be a constant spectator, but a partaker. As Bob Marley sang, “Don't let them change ya, or even rearrange ya, oh no”. Bono from U2 sang, “You know that your time is comin' around, so don't let the bastards grind you down”. Martin Luther King said, “Human salvation lies in the hands of the creatively maladjusted”. This is from me; a man still in a battle to practice what I preach, “I could be Gandhi in a boxing ring here! Shock yourself into life today. Defeat the enemy. Laugh fully into the face of fear. Put a jackhammer to it and wreck your brick wall. Obliterate it and shower the enemy with masonry. All of this by way of peaceful and passionate aggression, non violence and one more thing, LAUGH YOURSELF TO LIFE”.

Liam



Paper Craft Group Projects:
Chester House, Rehab
and Respite Residents



Mosaics Group Project:
Canal Road Residents

Découpage Group Project:
Chester House and
Dorset Street residents



MR HOWELL

I remember one day after the school holidays we went back to school and on our desk was a sheet of paper. On the paper was written a song; it was called "Spanish Hill".

Our teacher, Mr Howell said to us that we will be learning to sing this song by learning the words of it and then we will learn to sing it. So that morning we started to learn the words and after he put on a tape and played it for us. When I hear the song getting played I can remember thinking to myself, what a beautiful song.

After that I looked forward to going to school every morning just to hear that song. To this day I can remember that day like as if it was yesterday. It brings me back to a good time in my life when I was happy the most. Mr Howell was one of the best teachers I ever had who motivated me to music and sports or had time for me when all was not going well in my life. Today I do wonder how he is or is he still alive. I would like to have thanked him. But who knows.

ANTO



Artist: Michael C.

Harcourt Street

I'm in Harcourt Street hostel
I'm loaded with my pistol
The sky is grey and black
Can't see my way back
Up comes the girl Liz
Yo, she is a wiz
Cools down the hot heat
Gets the girls and boys on their feet
TV room out of bounds
Too many rounds
But air is abundance out back
Get up and give life all that!

Anthony



Artist: Anonymous



**Photography
Group Project:**
James, Margaret,
Neil and Peter



MY BODY

My body is always fighting me in one way or another. Sometimes I'm overweight and the next I'm underweight. Then there is my meds. If I don't take my meds my body really lets me know; turn - pain or lack of sleep. I'm having a constant battle with my body. I started this battle myself when I was younger by taking drugs. I didn't know at the time that I would have any withdrawals. But I soon got a wake up call that would change my life forever.

After some years of taking drugs I got a doctor that said he would help me stay off drugs by giving me methadone.

And still to this day I'm taking it. If I miss a day my body is quick to let me know true discomfort, pain and sickness. So that's where the battle with my body starts. If it's not one thing, it's another. At present I'm fighting my body through trying not to lose anymore weight.

I've been keeping an eye on my weight and try to eat more because I've lost a lot of weight. I wouldn't mind if I could put it back on as easy as it comes off but it's not as easy as that, meaning more battles with my body.

Paul

The Party Is Over

I woke up Friday with a sore throat. I was drinking very heavily. I started drinking vodka and cider to ease the pain. Saturday and Sunday I started seeing people who weren't there. I was giving them cans of cider. I was also talking to them. It was madness. I was so sick, I didn't know I was sick.

On Monday morning, I felt terrible. I went downstairs and I collapsed and was taken to A&E. All I remember was throwing up blood. I was told afterwards I had a few seizures. Everything after that is a blank.

When I came around I was in the ICU on Wednesday night. I was taken to a ward. For two days it felt so strange – as if I was in transition from the past to living for today without alcohol. It's not easy but I'm taking one day at a time. But for me, the party is over.

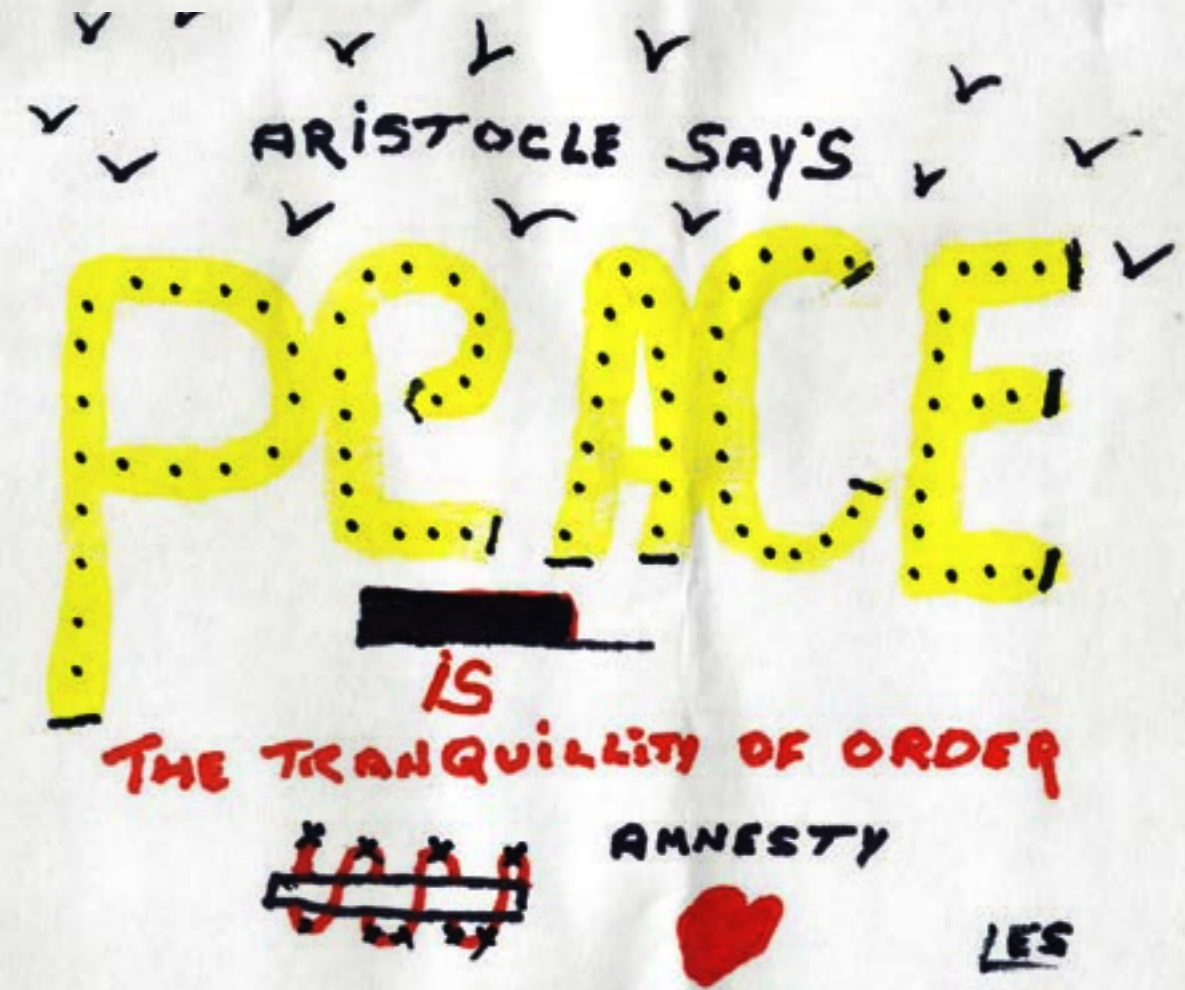
Miles



**Photography
Group Project:**
James, Margaret,
Neil and Peter



Artist: Anonymous



Artist: Les

POEM OF REMEMBRANCE

Remembering the laughter and the tears
Working through worries and fears
The joys that we had
Loving, amazing and sad
And the memories we'll always have.

As we walk through life
Families, friends, loved ones
Walking together through happiness and strife
Thinking of all the times we had.

Now that you're gone
it makes us feel sad
But the memories we have
Make us feel glad
I know that you're gone
But our love is still strong.

We see you in the seasons
The nights and the days
We cherished you so much, in so many ways
As the days continue on, and the birds fly by
Even though we are apart, you are deeply in our hearts.

Creative Writing Group: Allison, Clive, Martina and Pat



Sculptural Art Group Projects:
Canal Road and Chester House residents



Artist: Declan



DRIMNA CASTLE

Fae the road, ye canny see
Such natural beauty, behold thine e'e
So serene an' picturesque
This granite fortress does impress

In days gone by when knights of old
The damsels in distress did hold
To comfort them and keep them from the cold

But the finest feline you can behold
Struts about the castle bold
Fine black coat that shines, like satin in the sun
Watching till the work is done,
Then the maidens, they do fuss her some

Our feathered friends, you will encounter
O' what beauty, what splendour
The wild life they do roam
Around this strange river they call home
Seasons come, seasons go
What wondrous colours, us she does show

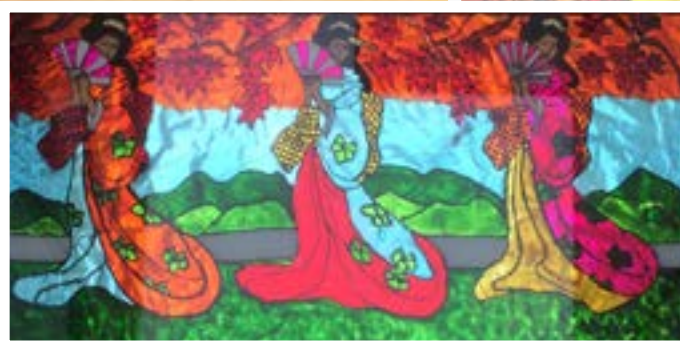
Now times moved on, the knights long gone
Many battles won and lost,
And tales be told, that did unfold
For ever will remain
Within these castle walls

- TO MY FRIENDS AT DRIMNA CASTLE -
DAVID MC.



Artist: Anonymous

Artist: Vincent



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