

BUTLER ■ GALLERY

Kilkenny Collective for Arts Talent - **KCAT**

WORKS ON PAPER

June 21 – July 27, 2008

The Butler Gallery is delighted to host an exhibition of works on paper by Kilkenny Collective for Arts Talent, otherwise known as KCAT.

KCAT is a vibrant organization located in Callan, Co. Kilkenny, where creativity exists in abundance. It is a special place to work and also to visit. The artists, the mentors and the energy that filters through this building are a dynamic force. Such a source of creativity could not be overlooked, and it was time that the impressive work of this collective was acknowledged and honoured by the Butler Gallery. While there is remarkable painting on canvas at work in the studio, most notably from the talented Thomas Barron, ultimately it was decided to concentrate on a selection of works on paper—the immediacy of this output proving so fresh and joyful in nature.

The work of eight KCAT artists included in this exhibition displays enormous confidence, with an inventive use of pure colour. The prolific nature of **Karl Fitzgerald's** practice provided a rich resource from which to choose from. Intimations of landscape and seascape are accomplished through the beauty of his fluid brush strokes and fantastic lyrical colour. **Declan Byrne's** celebratory paintings, realised in a kaleidoscope of colour, are rich with detail and steer the viewer to far-flung destinations. These complicated intricate paintings are worked on over long periods of time employing a private visual vocabulary that is remarkable.

Andrew Pike displays a wonderful sense of fun and humour in his painting. Currently at work on his second animation, his narrative drawings are perfectly woven in this medium. In his self-portrait *Stop Go Mad*, his left eye acts as his memory, a channel of ideas spilling forth onto the paper. In addition, he captures an essence of some of the great painters of the 20th century in portraits of Vincent Van Gogh, Salvador Dali, Frida Kahlo and Pablo Picasso, an artist he greatly admires. One also finds great humour in **Sinead Fahey's** jubilant paintings - her animated colours bold and tropical in nature. Sinead possesses a very assured sense of graphic line and her landscapes are alive with exotic birds and elaborate pattern.

Mary Cody illustrates her own distinct view of rural Ireland. The scale and order of the small buildings, the caravans, the order of the landscape reminding me of an Inishmór native who once said to me “if you took a stone off the wall, I’d miss it.” They are wistful with great presence of place. **George McCutcheon**, the Daddy of KCAT artists, has exhibited widely and was the first artist from the collective who gained attention from the general public. In this group of works, George begins with a central circle from which pattern and intense colour radiates, reminiscent of Buddhist Mandalas. The connection is appropriate as Mandala is Sanskrit for circle and community, a container of essence, and is considered to have great power. **Lorna Corrigan** is masterful in her use of the brilliant washy inks she uses in her paintings on paper. She skillfully captures both a celebration of nature and the liveliness of urban life with beauty and intensity. In *All Kinds Of Everything* animals, people and fauna co-exist as if preparing to enter a party on Noah’s ark.

A wonderful series of twelve portraits of **Francis Casey’s** teachers are included, from his first teacher Miss O’Sullivan when he was age four, right up to his twenty-third year at Clonmel Rehab. The unsmiling teachers are recorded in their respective classrooms with a notation of Francis’s age at the time. Francis only features in one of the drawings *Mrs. Costello 1976 1977 1978 when I was 8, 9, and 10*. Mrs. Costello, clad in a bright green jumpsuit, propels a ruler towards wee Francis, standing in the corner with hand outstretched with a text bubble coming out of his mouth. The voice simply proclaims “ow” - a memory never to be forgotten.

A full-colour catalogue published by Kilkenny Collective for Arts Talent, 2008 and funded in part by an Arts Act Grant from Kilkenny County Council’s Arts Office and the Butler Gallery will accompany this exhibition.

**Butler Gallery
The Castle
Kilkenny
Ireland**

t: + 353 56 7761106 **f:** +353 56 7770031
e: info@butlergallery.com
www.butlergallery.com