

Christina Kinsella, who pointed out that the proportion of male to female visual artists, although more balanced than in other art forms, favours men by approximately thirty per cent (Kinsella, Appendix A, pp. 4–8).

In 2010 the General Assembly was held in Armagh in acknowledgement of Aosdána's long tradition of cross-border collaboration. CATHERINE MARSHALL

SELECTED READING Victoria White, 'Banville yields Aosdána seat to needier artist', *IT* (13 December 2001); Ryan, 2003 and 2006; Kinsella, 2008.

**ART MARKET.** Around 1900 the Irish art market, while modest, chiefly hinged upon the sale of antiques and Old Master paintings. Dutch genre scenes and Italianate landscapes, collected by grand tourists, provided the focus of trade, alongside eighteenth-century portraits and nineteenth-century hunting scenes. Better-known artworks and collections were usually sent to London for sale, while antiques, decorative art, and paintings by lesser masters remained in Dublin. Consequently, art market reports were generally confined to accounts of the London salesrooms. A notable exception to this pattern occurred in 1906, when Bennett's on Ormond Quay sold a Frans Hals painting to a London dealer for £3,650. The *Irish Times* journalist believed this figure would 'impart a pleasant thrill of excitement to the ordinary citizen, and may, perhaps, inspire the civic Philistine with a new respect for art as a profession' (*IT*, 7 April 1906). 'Ordinary citizens' had little chance of attending fine art auctions, since sales took place on weekdays limiting the clientele to trade buyers and those of independent means.

Living artists had few opportunities to present their work to the public outside the context of jury-selected group exhibitions organized by the Royal Hibernian Academy (RHA) (qv), the Watercolour Society of Ireland, and regional art societies whose functions were educational and promotional, rather than commercial. Purchases from the RHA were largely dependent on the fund-raising efforts of such bodies as the Art Union of Ireland, which between 1874 and 1902 purchased 754 works from the RHA at a cost of £17,523 (*IT*, 21 April 1902). Art unions existed well into the twentieth century and partly compensated for desultory patronage by an aristocracy struggling to maintain their estates and a middle class as yet uninformed about fine art.

Artists had to organize their own exhibitions. Those few with well-furnished studios issued invitations to private viewings; others hired public halls, defraying costs by charging admission. In 1901 Sarah Purser (qv) generously arranged a loan-exhibition of work by John Butler Yeats and Nathaniel Hone, while George Russell (qv) and Count and Countess Markievicz held joint shows in Dublin's Leinster Hall. In 1911 Dermot O'Brien (qv), newly elected president of the RHA, formally opened the Irish Art Companions Gallery, run by Charles Tindall Gatty, at 23 Clare Street, Dublin, proclaiming it the only venue where a representative selection of work by living Irish artists could be viewed outside of the Academy's annual shows ('New Picture Salesroom', *IT*, 20 November 1911).

Despite the efforts of Purser, Hugh Lane, Ellen and James Duncan, Sarah Celia Harrison and others to promote the

production of Irish art and crafts, artists struggled to find support. The early years of the Irish Free State inaugurated a period of official neglect of the arts. Addressing the RHA in 1928, President W.T. Cosgrave 'discouraged the idea that the State should become a direct financier of the arts' since it would lead to 'dependence on the part of the artists' ('Art in Ireland', *IT*, 2 April 1926). Lack of patronage (qv) was coupled with a protectionist policy, which imposed a tax on imported artworks, including printed reproductions. The result, as Arnold Marsh bemoaned, was that artists had no models by which to judge their work. In the absence of Irish artworks to show students, educators such as Marsh had to apply to the London, Midland and Scottish Railway for posters featuring Paul Henry's (qv) work (Marsh, 'Art in a Free State', letter to the editor, *IT*, 7 December 1933).

A handful of Dublin picture-framers, such as Combridge's, Daniel Egan and James Joseph Gorry, displayed the work of living artists alongside older works left in for framing or cleaning. Combridge's gave Paul Henry several exhibitions in the 1930s and '40s and specialized in images of rural Ireland, appealing specifically to overseas visitors. Gorry's son, James Adolphus, showed the work of artists he had befriended while studying at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art (DMSA) from 1920 to 1923. His son, another James, took over the business in 1967 and, while specializing in older Irish paintings, has exhibited the work of several contemporary artists in the academic tradition. Joseph Egan, son of Daniel, opened a salon at 38 St Stephen's Green in 1925, instituting regular exhibitions of Irish art and renting the space to artists and groups such as the New Dublin Art Club. The Daniel Egan Gallery rapidly expanded, with an art supplies shop opening in Molesworth Street in 1931, and a second hire-venue, the Angus Gallery, at 36 St Stephen's Green in 1932. However, Egan's diary reveals the vicissitudes of dealing in art during this period; he recorded each sale as a small miracle, and despaired, 'I don't think I will ever shake the sleep from Dublin' (Egan, *Diary of My Art Activities*, 1915–36, p. 63, NIVAL). Egan sold up and moved to London in 1937.

The main dealer of contemporary art during the early years of the Irish Free State was Victor Waddington, who opened a gallery on the first floor of 28 South Anne Street, Dublin in 1925 and a picture-framing business at 19 Nassau Street in 1939. This arrangement lasted until 1942, when the original gallery was given over to framing and print-selling, and new premises for exhibitions were opened at 8 South Anne Street. Waddington targeted 'buyers of moderate means', exhibiting the work of artists such as Seán Keating, Frank McKelvey (qqv), Moyra Barry and Douglas Alexander, well known from their regular appearances at the RHA ('To interest USA in Irish Art – Dublin Expert's Plan', *Dublin Evening Mail*, 13 March 1939). Waddington promoted his artists by touring their work nationally and internationally (sending exhibitions to the USA in 1939 and 1950), enlisting the press to publicize his shows, printing catalogues for each exhibition, and in 1940 publishing a colour-illustrated monograph, *Twelve Irish Artists*. He also placed their work with other galleries such as the Goodwin Gallery in Limerick, thereby boosting the reputations and sales of these artists outside Dublin. In 1943, at the suggestion of his assistant, Leo Smith,

Waddington gave Jack B. Yeats (qv) an exhibition. Seven further shows followed during Yeats's lifetime, and Waddington became known as 'the Yeats man'. At the same time he began to show the work of younger experimental artists, such as Gerard Dillon, Colin Middleton and Daniel O'Neill (qqv), offering them the support of a guaranteed income in return for first refusal of their work. He used the profits from sales of the work of more conservative artists to subsidize his support of those who were more challenging and less commercially rewarding. In 1957, following Yeats's death, Waddington moved to the family's current gallery in Cork Street, London.

Leo Smith, Waddington's former assistant, opened the Dawson Gallery in 1944. Smith championed a number of artists whose work Waddington had overlooked, including William Leech and Mary Swanzy (qqv), both of whom were then living in England. He also showed the work of artists closely associated with the Irish Exhibition of Living Art (IELA) (qv), such as Evie Hone, Norah McGuinness, Patrick Scott, Camille Souter, Louis le Brocqy (qqv) and Jack Hanlon, who switched from Waddington's to Smith's stable in 1962. After Smith's death in 1977, le Brocqy moved to the Taylor Galleries, opened in 1978 by John Taylor, who had worked for Smith since 1964 and who, with his brother Patrick, continues to run the Taylor Galleries in Kildare Street. Thus a strong lineage of dealers was created, from Waddington to Smith to Taylor, spanning eight decades.

Ireland's neutrality during World War II attracted artists from abroad such as Kenneth Hall and Basil Rákóczi (qqv), while Irish-born artists were confined at home by the conflict. Consequently, artistic activity increased and, with it, the pace of art dealing ('Ireland's increased interest in art', *IT*, 11 December 1944). By 1944 the Waddington and Dawson galleries were joined by a number of more short-lived commercial ventures such as Deirdre McDonagh and Jack Longford's Contemporary Pictures Gallery, established in 1938 at 133 Lower Baggot Street; the Picture Hire Club, which operated out of Trueman's art supplies shop, 24 Molesworth Street, from 1941 to 1944; and Arts Limited, where contemporary art hung amidst 'Barbola Mirrors, Wedgwood Vases, Exquisite Glassware, Old and Modern China and a host of rare and lovely things', at 19 O'Connell Street, from 1944 to 1945 (advertisement, *IELA*, 1944, n.p.) [13]. More significantly, 1943 saw the advent of the IELA, while a number of regional galleries mushroomed throughout the 1930s and '40s, increasing opportunities for artists to exhibit and sell their work.

Yet while shortages in the supply of gold, silver and furniture during the Emergency caused their prices to increase exponentially during the later 1940s, art remained a relatively cheap commodity, despite the scarcity of painting materials. Exhibition catalogues from these years list few works priced above £50, and in 1953 the *Irish Times* could assert that most Irish paintings sold for between thirty and a hundred guineas ('Pictures in the home', *IT*, 23 May 1953). These were gallery prices; works fetched considerably less on the secondary market at auction. Irish women artists fared worst, charging prices that were a fraction of those of their male colleagues. For instance, Estella Solomons (qv) usually priced her landscapes at no more than twenty guineas, while Paul Henry and Seán Keating charged more than five times this amount (Miller, 1973a, p. 44). This



13. 'Wherever did you get that lovely thing?', advertisement for Arts Ltd from the *Irish Exhibition of Living Art* catalogue (Dublin 1944)

price discrepancy increased later in the auction rooms, so that by the 1990s museum-quality works by women artists, such as Mainie Jellett (qv), rarely fetched more than £20,000, while works of similar quality by male artists, such as Yeats, fetched sums in excess of £200,000.

Nevertheless, the *Irish Times* reported in 1949 that 'about fifty people in Ireland ... live exclusively from the sale of paintings, or drawings', and another sixty or more supplemented their incomes by working as 'commercial artists, art teachers, architects and window display designers' ('Painting is becoming profitable', *IT*, 26 August 1949). The same report claimed that the salaries of the thirty-six best-selling artists were on a par with those of doctors or higher civil servants, and that while 'the rest hardly do as well ... they are far from starving'.

In the 1950s and '60s the market softened after its wartime high. Few galleries existed other than the Dawson and the Hendriks, established by David Hendriks in 1956. Where the Dawson represented mainly older, 'school of Paris', artists, the Hendriks showed the work of younger artists working in a highly subjective, expressive manner, such as Basil Blackshaw, Patrick Collins and Barrie Cooke (qqv), and those who experimented with hard-edge pop and abstraction (qv) such as Robert Ballagh, Cecil King (qqv) and Erik van der Grijn. A small pool of collectors existed, notably Sir Basil Goulding, principal patron to several artists, and Gordon Lambert, who later donated the

greater part of his collection to the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA).

Corporate collecting (see 'Private and Corporate Collecting') made a tentative start around this time when tobacco manufacturers P.J. Carroll's began sponsorship of the IELA in 1964, and shortly thereafter started to form a collection under the guidance of architect Ronald Tallon. Chairman of the company, Denis Carroll, was also on the Bank of Ireland's board of directors and, in 1971, upon completion of its headquarters on Baggot Street, authorized the bank to begin buying contemporary art (O'Kane, 39–42). Allied Irish Banks began collecting art in 1980 and, after an initial period spent gathering a collection representative of Irish art since the late nineteenth century, switched its main focus to contemporary Irish artworks. These corporate collectors boosted confidence in the market, encouraging both government and private collectors to follow suit.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s keen interest in Irish art was demonstrated in the auction rooms, although prices remained modest. Most Irish paintings were sold in Dublin through the James Adam Salesrooms. Established in 1887 as a firm of house-contents auctioneers, at 17 Merrion Row, Adam's shortly thereafter opened a fine art salesroom at 19 St Stephen's Green, whence was sold period furniture and paintings (Brian Coyle, 'A century of experience and service', *IAR*, Autumn 1987, 60–62). In 1968 the firm expanded into new premises at 26 St Stephen's Green and began conducting specialist sales of Irish art. At one of the earliest of these sales, several oils by Nathaniel Hone sold for between £100 and £250, an Evie Hone gouache fetched £21, a Gerard Dillon watercolour made £10, and a Nano Reid (qv) watercolour £9 (Jonathan Fisher, 'Modest prices paid for Irish paintings', *IT*, 22 July 1968). A notable exception to this pattern of low prices occurred at Adam's in 1973, when Nesbit Waddington bid £15,500 for Jack B. Yeats's *A Palace*, which had formerly hung in Jammet's restaurant. While nostalgia for the legendary restaurant (closed in 1967 after some sixty years of business) may have contributed to the price, the record was in line with others being set internationally, as investors globally began speculating in art as a hedge against inflation, during the 1960s, and as an alternative investment during the oil crises of the early 1970s.

The introduction of both the Wealth Tax and the Capital Gains Tax in Ireland in 1975 caused the dispersal of many valuable collections and heralded the golden age of the big house sales. Conditions were ripe for the arrival of the leading international firms, Christie's and Sotheby's, both of which had expanded outside the UK in the late 1960s. Christie's first Irish sale was held in May 1976 at Malahide Castle, where the Talbot family's 800-year-old collection was auctioned to pay death duties. Christie's, represented by Desmond FitzGerald, the Knight of Glin, and working in conjunction with Keane Mahony Smith, totalled receipts of £529,173. Gabrielle Williams later recalled the sale for both its 'splendour and ... sadness' ('Fine Arts', *IT*, 28 December 1979). Between January 1978 and September 1983 Christie's, working with different Irish partners, sold the contents of Senator Edward A. McGuire's Newtown House, Blackrock, for £318,018;

Clonbrock, Ballinasloe, raising £278,640, plus a further £265,000 for the library; Charleville at Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow, totalling receipts of £290,000; Belvedere House near Mullingar, fetched £146,000 in a sale of just thirty-nine lots; and the contents of Adare Manor, Co. Limerick, owned by the Earl and Countess of Dunraven, sold for £945,000. Their largest sale was the contents of Luttrellstown Castle, in September 1983, when the collection of mainly eighteenth-century furniture, portraits and trinkets amassed by the Guinness heir Eileen Plunkett, was sold for £2,955,119.

Meanwhile, in October 1975, Sotheby Parke Bernet appointed Gertrude Hunt and Mary Boydell as consultants and began seeking consignments, primarily of silver and glass. The following year the firm announced its association with Keane Mahony Smith and the appointment of Lord Mount Charles as their representative in Ireland, with an office at Slane Castle, Co. Meath (Gabrielle Williams, 'Sotheby moves into Irish market', *IT*, 23 October 1976). Twelve months later Mount Charles became 'an international representative', and Nicholas Nicholson took over the Irish position, continuing to act from Slane Castle. While Sotheby's secured several country house sales, their main activity in Ireland was the staging of five sales of fine and decorative Irish art at Slane between 1978 and 1981. The first of these raised £245,674, with record prices being set for Paul Henry (£3,600), Erskine Nicol (£13,000) for *An Ejected Family* (NGI collection), William Brocas (£7,400), William Orpen (qv) (£9,000) and Andrew Nicholl (£1,500). However, interest lay mainly in the decorative arts and antiques, which attracted largely British and American collectors. Sotheby's second sale in Ireland, in June 1979, raised an impressive £328,665, but subsequently they saw a tailing off in prices: in May 1981 they raised £239,803, and at their final sale, in November 1981, they made just £217,064, of which the paintings totalled only £102,401.

Economic recession in the early 1980s meant that Sotheby's reported losses of £2,121,000 worldwide for 1982, as opposed to profits of £4,060,000 in 1981, and their total sales in the UK and Ireland in 1982 were £31,080 million, as opposed to £36,632 million in 1981 (Gabrielle Williams, 'Sotheby's make light of losses', *IT*, 22 January 1983). The recession brought about a temporary cessation of activities in Ireland between 1982 and 1985 on the part of the London houses, although Sotheby's opened an office in Dublin in 1984, and Christie's retained Irish representatives.

In 1982, to counter the economic recession, the Irish government cut taxes and lowered interest rates, marking the start of that buoyant consumer culture that became known as the 'Celtic Tiger'. Alan and Mary Hobart of the Pym's Gallery, London, were prescient enough to begin specializing in Irish art at this time. They arranged a series of high-profile exhibitions such as *The Irish Revival* (1982), *Celtic Splendour* (1985) and *Irish Renaissance: Irish Art in a Century of Change* (1986), which, with their lavish catalogues, helped generate interest in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Irish art beyond the confines of the small circle of collectors who tended to buy mainly from the Cynthia O'Connor, Neptune and Gorry galleries in Dublin. By the mid-1980s prices for twentieth-century Irish art



began to rise. In 1986 Sotheby's raised £590,000 at a sale at Mount Juliet, while Christie's did likewise at Belfast Castle in 1988, selling John Luke's (qv) *The Bridge*, estimated at £10,000–£15,000, to Pym's Gallery for an unheard of £176,000. In 1989 Christie's held two sales in Belfast and two in Dublin, and in 1990 repeated this pattern, selling £2 million worth of art in Ireland. Significantly, fine art now outsold antiques and decorative art at auction.

Local auction houses enjoyed a similarly rising tide. John de Vere White entered the market in 1985, holding sales in conjunction with the Taylor Galleries and specializing in contemporary Irish art, largely neglected by both Adam's and the London houses. In annual reports de Vere White proselytized on the financial benefits of investing in this undervalued field. However, the highest prices throughout the 1980s were paid for 'traditional' art, both in terms of subject matter – such as McKelvey's nostalgic paintings of women feeding chickens

– and in terms of long-established 'blue-chip' investments, resulting in Michael Smurfit paying a staggering £280,000 for Yeats's *Harvest Moon* at Adam's in 1989. Indeed, that year saw a peak in the number of Irish records broken at auction, with many records set then remaining in place until 2006 (Burns, p. 36). The desire of collectors to create 'the semblance of a heritage' fuelled the demand for west of Ireland imagery (The Polly Devlin Collection, Adam's, 15 December 1999, p. 7). Market analysts predicted that the market for Irish art would be the successor to that of the Scottish Colourists; both largely overlooked up until the 1980s, both dependent on newly buoyant economies, and both appealing primarily, but not exclusively, to local collectors, reflecting a desire for the work to be considered independently of British art, under which category they had previously been subsumed (Kirk-Smith, 24–25; Gertrude Prescott Nuding, 'The Year in the Art Market', *IAR*, VII, 1990/91, 244).

14. Jack B. Yeats, *Tinkers' Encampment: The Blood of Abel*, 1940, oil on canvas, 91.5 x 122 cm, private collection





15. William Conor, *Picture House Queue*, 1930–34, oil on canvas, 90 x 70 cm, National Museums Northern Ireland, Collection Ulster Folk and Transport Museum



16. Louis le Brocquy, *Tinker Woman with Newspaper* (also known as *Travelling Woman with Newspaper*), 1947–48, oil on gesso-primed hardboard, 127 x 89 cm, private collection



Another recession forced Christie's to cancel two of its four Irish sales in 1991, when it sold only £186,000 worth of Irish art, as opposed to £2 million the year before. Robert O'Byrne characterized it as a difficult market, while Prescott Nuding warned of the susceptibility of the market to the presence or otherwise of just one or two major collectors (O'Byrne, 'Art sales in Ireland', *IAR*, ix, 1993, 259; Prescott Nuding, 'Irish art in the London salerooms', *IAR*, ix, 1993, 258). By way of example she listed the Trinity Gallery, Jersey, which had purchased approximately twenty of Yeats's late works at high prices in 1988 and offered them unsuccessfully for resale, before Sotheby's brokered a discount deal to sell them to a consortium headed by Sir Anthony O'Reilly (Prescott Nuding, 257; Burns, p. 37).

In the mid-1990s prices again rose. Despite his emphasis on contemporary art, de Vere White made headlines in 1994 by setting a new record for Yeats, whose *Tinker's Encampment: The Blood of Abel* [14] sold for £505,000. In 1995 Sotheby's instituted its annual Irish Sale in London and Christie's followed suit the following year. Phillip's also secured the occasional good picture and set some briefly held records. The record for Yeats was broken again in 1996, when Sotheby's sold *A Farewell to Mayo* for £730,000 sterling. In 1997 Christie's set record prices for Harry Clarke (qv), Louis le Brocquy and John Luke. That same year Sotheby's did likewise for William Leech, whose *Les Soeurs du Saint-Espirit, Concarneau* fetched £254,500, and William Scott (£117,000), and nearly trebled the previous record set for Sir John Lavery (qqv), selling his *Playing Golf at North Berwick* for £727,500. Christie's set the most impressive records in 1998, with Orpen's *A Mere Fracture* fetching £716,500 (previous record £290,000) and a Walter Osborne making £370,000 (previous record £271,000). In December that year Sotheby's sold Lavery's *The Bridge at Grez* for IR £1,321,500 – the first 'Irish' picture to break the million pound barrier (though it should be noted that Lavery is claimed equally by the British, Scottish and Irish markets). In May 1999 Sotheby's again broke the record for a Yeats (£1,233,500), while also setting records for Paul Henry (IR £210,500) and William Conor (qv), whose *Picture House Queue* [15] fetched IR £89,500. This litany of records was roundly capped in May 2000 when Sotheby's set a new record for le Brocquy, with his *Tinker Woman* [16] fetching £1.1 million sterling – the highest price then paid for the work of a living Irish artist.

Over the century the Irish art market witnessed considerable change and expansion, although, even at the turn of the millennium, little support existed outside state-run galleries for installation, Conceptual (qqv) or performance art. Some galleries, such as the Kerlin, Green on Red, Rubicon and Fenderesky, attempted to create a broader market for Irish work by participating in international art fairs. The auction trade saw an increasing demand, and consequently soaring prices for Irish art, enticing firms such as de Vere's and Whyte's to enter the fray in 1985 and 1999 respectively. As was the case with art markets across the globe, the greatest growth was in contemporary art, even if it remained orientated around traditional media. By 2000, when a work by le Brocquy became the first by a living Irish artist to fetch over a million pounds, the market for Irish art had, at last, come of age. JANE ECKETT

### Afterword – artists’ incomes

This essay on the Art Market summarizes the story of the artwork’s passage from the artist’s studio to its acquisition by a collector, the various agencies and individuals (artists, agents, dealers and auctioneers) who engage with it along that journey, and the history of the rising market for Irish art, nationally and internationally, as it has developed over the twentieth century. Since the economics of the visual arts in Ireland involve wider forces, a little more information might also be useful here.

While there is little in the way of scientific data about the early years of the century, the fact that no state body had responsibility for the arts provides a strong indication of the hardships artists faced (see ‘Arts Councils’, ‘Commercial Galleries’, ‘Artists’ Support Groups’). In debating the 1951 Arts Bill, which led to the founding of the Arts Council, the Taoiseach, John A. Costello, noted that the £20,000 budget proposed for the new organization represented spending of only one and a half pence per person in the country, yet while this was small it represented a step in the direction of support for the arts (*Dáil Debates*, cxxv, 24 April 1951, col. 1290). In fact, the actual amount the new Council had to spend when it took up office in 1951 was a mere £11,100, and this sum had to last until March 1953. It was not until 1959/60 that the budget of £20,000 was realized, although this figure increased within two years to £30,000, and when Charles Haughey, as Minister for Finance in 1967, announced a grant-in-aid of £60,000, state funding for the arts at last began to become a reality. The most flamboyant gesture towards artists was made in 1969 when the minister announced a tax exemption on artists’ earnings. While this benefited a small number of high-earning writers and artists, the vast majority were unaffected financially since their earnings did not meet the basic threshold for tax payments. By 1982 the Council’s annual grant had risen to nearly £4 million, and it became nearly £10 million a decade later, reaching over £47 million by 2002. Other financial benefits to the visual arts accrued from the 1984 Finance Act which offered tax benefits in return for sponsorships, and Section 1003 of the 1997 Act provided for tax exemptions in return for donations of artworks and other items of heritage value to the national cultural institutions. Of more direct benefit to artists was the introduction of Per Cent for Art Schemes by the Office of Public Works in 1978 and the Arts Council in 1985.

Trends in the distribution of the largesse described above are important to note also. The AC/ACE showed a marked preference for assistance to artists and arts events in the Dublin area in the early decades. A review of spending in twelve counties in 1961/62 revealed that nothing at all had been spent in five of them, while five years later, seven counties out of the twelve received nothing. It was not until the 1970s and ’80s that this began to change (see ‘Regional Developments’). Furthermore, while the government spent £17,000 on *Rosc* ’71 alone, less spectacular events were relatively ignored; for instance, the Project Arts Centre received a mere £3,000 to support its entire multi-disciplinary programme from 1969 to 1973.

Arts-Council assistance for the visual arts initially took the form of support for purchases and exhibition opportunities, but by the 1970s this had expanded to include direct bursaries and grants (see ‘Patronage and Awards’), aided by growing

grants-in-aid from government and increased attention to audience growth through formal and informal education initiatives. The Richards Report to the AC/ACE in 1976 paved the way for the funding of arts organizations, and two reports on the living and working conditions of artists provide an indication of how artists fared in the prevailing economic climate from the 1970s to the early twenty-first century. The Irish Marketing survey of 1980, commissioned by the Arts Council, found that 75 per cent of Irish artists were obliged to take up other employment in order to live, and almost the same figure had no pension and claimed that their income was volatile. A frightening 23 per cent received no income at all for at least one month per year. The report found that 50 per cent of the money spent on art went to only 18 per cent of artists.

The AC/ACE and the ACNI jointly commissioned another report, *The Living and Working Conditions of Artists in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland* (2010) by Clare McAndrew and Cathie McKimm. This detailed even poorer working conditions despite greater state provision over the intervening years. This study showed that most artists had to spend one-third of their working time on non-creative work in order to make a living, and that only two out of five visual artists could work as artists full-time, while most worked a minimum of forty hours per week, and many regularly worked fifty-five hours per week. Twenty-three per cent of artists in 2008 were registered as unemployed, most artists lived in the Dublin area, and while 52 per cent of working artists were female, they earned considerably less than their male counterparts. Fifty-six per cent of artists needed the support of the AC/ACE and ACNI to continue. Stability of employment and pension provision had remained unchanged since 1980, while, significantly, one-third of artists did not request written contracts for work undertaken. Many cited financial difficulties as the main impediment to their careers.

Most disturbingly, a comparison of working conditions between the two reports reveals falling incomes for artists relative to other workers, with artists in 2008 earning less than half what those with equivalent levels of education received.

	1978	2008
Artist earned	£4,636	€25,085
Average worker	£3,674	€38,916
Administrative Officer in Civil Service	£4,139	€32,558
Principal Officer (entry level)	£8,272	€84,066

Despite this negative picture, four out of five artists questioned said that they would make the same career choice again. Overlaps with other sectors, such as health, science, education, technology, community and youth organizations, were all seen as positive.

The report also revealed that between one in six and one in seven artists in Ireland now work in collectives all the time,



two-thirds do it some of the time, while 73 per cent in the Republic of Ireland and 85 per cent in Northern Ireland have a dedicated studio space.

Artists' reproduction rights were protected by the 2000 Copyright Act, and Visual Artists Ireland (VAI), the professional body set up at the same time to represent them, established the Irish Visual Artists Rights Organization to assist artists in collecting their copyright entitlements. A year later, the 2001 Artists Resale Rights, through which artists are entitled to royalty payments on sales of their work beyond the first one, became law, while VAI's regular programme of professional practice workshops does much to advise artists of their rights.

Writing about the arts in general, in 1994 Joe Durkan pointed out that the arts benefit the country's economy, citing a sum of €225–250 million generated through arts activities and employment figures of 14,200, but cautioned against evaluations of the arts based on economic impact studies alone. He claimed that the 'real benefits of the arts accrue to those who produce or avail of the arts, and it is this that is the prime justification for public expenditure in relation to the arts' (Durkan, introduction, *The Economics of the Arts in Ireland*, Dublin 1994). Whatever the positive outcomes of artistic endeavour for the country, the words of one artist ring true for all: 'The Irish market appears to be very small, and it is difficult to make a living out of it. I think we need to become part of a truly global market in order to make a living.' (McAndrew and McKim, 2010, p. 173).

CATHERINE MARSHALL

SELECTED READING Kirk-Smith, 1990; O'Kane, 2000; Eckett, 2004; Burns, 2008.

**ARTISTS' STUDIOS AND RESIDENCIES.** The availability of studio space is essential to the development of the visual arts. In Paris in the early twentieth century, a former factory converted into studios, and nicknamed *Le Bateau-Lavoir*, became not only a workplace for Picasso, Juan Gris and other artists, but also a meeting place, facilitating the exchange of new ideas. In contrast, for the greater part of the twentieth century artists in Ireland worked in relatively isolated conditions rather than in collective studios contained within larger buildings. From 1980 onwards, however, studio collectives, where groups of artists rented buildings and divided them into individual working spaces, were established in various Irish towns and cities. While most of these collectives were initially self-financing, with artists paying commercial rents for spaces in run-down warehouses, during this period government support for such initiatives began to increase. The relatively straightforward provision of studio space differs greatly from residencies; these can take many forms and are generally offered to artists by host organizations. Residencies may or may not include elements such as living quarters and studio space. The majority of residencies within Ireland was funded by local authorities and by the Arts Council (AC/ACE) (qv) and saw artists working in a variety of locations, such as schools, hospitals and prisons.

However, for most artists the need for long-term working space remained an acute reality of life. In 1976 an Arts Council report, *Provision for the Arts*, by J.M. Richards, made no mention

of artists' studios, while six years later another Council report, *Living and Working Conditions of Artists*, although identifying in its summary the need for adequate studio space, repeated the omission of this fundamental requirement, dealing instead with issues such as membership of trades unions, access to social security, and attitudes of the public to the role of the artist in society. In spite of this seeming indifference, the Arts Council did begin to recognize the need for artists to have working spaces. Arising from an initiative of Oliver Whelan and Gabriel Murray, the Visual Arts Centre (VAC) was first established in 1979 by Eithne Jordan and Cecily Brennan (qqv), in a building on South King Street, Dublin, close to the corner of St Stephen's Green. This was the first in a series of artist-led initiatives which included New Art Studio and Temple Bar Studios. These initiatives received Council funding and, in the years following, state support for artists' collectives began to increase substantially (Burke, 1).

By the early 1990s, it was evident that while initiatives in Dublin, such as Temple Bar Gallery and Studios (TBG+S) (founded in 1981), were receiving substantial developmental support, many of those outside the capital city were less fortunate, and survived mainly through subsidies from local authorities. There were over 300 artists working in collectives throughout Ireland, signifying a flourishing demand, yet in most cases these studios offered limited facilities. The Backwater Studios in Cork, founded in 1990, was initially located in a disused warehouse on Pine Street, and differed little from its equivalent in other cities, such as Galway's All+10 Sorts, or the World's End Studios in Dublin. Housed in old warehouses, the tenancies were limited, and lasted only until more commercially attractive options presented themselves to the owners of the buildings. Recognition of these realities led directly to the Arts Council's development of long-term projects such as the Fire Station Artists' Studios, the Black Church Print Studio and Temple Bar Studios, all of which received substantial state aid, in the form of capital grants, to bring their buildings up to a reasonable standard as professional workplaces.

In Dublin, the Graphic Studio, founded in 1961, and the Black Church Print Studio, established in 1982, were two of the earliest artist-led co-operatives. Originally based in Upper Mount Street, the Graphic Studio moved first to Hanover Street in the Dublin docklands, and then to a renovated building on the North Circular Road. As well as providing printing facilities, and displaying and selling important art, a valuable aspect of its support was storage for artists' work. The Black Church Print Studio, named in anticipation of its occupying a disused church of that name in the north inner city, found more suitable accommodation in Ardee Street, but was relocated to Temple Bar when that premises was destroyed by a fire in 1990. The print co-op, Cork Printmakers, started to research and to provide facilities for 'green' printing, using less toxic materials, prompted in part by a perceived risk of cancer to printmakers from using nitric acid to etch metal plates.

In 1981 Jenny Haughton, a freelance curator, founded Temple Bar Gallery and Studios in a former textile factory in Dublin's city centre. Numbering among its members Brian Maguire, Cecily Brennan, Patrick Graham (qqv), Robert

Yeats held solo exhibitions with the SDP (1946, 1948), the Dawson Gallery, Dublin (1963, 1968), Belfast (1967), Sligo and Dublin in the 1960s, 1980s and 1990s, also participating in group shows in the USA, Canada, Germany, Monaco and Scotland. In 1949 the Haverty Trust acquired *Woman Watching*, followed in 1954 by *One Room*, which was presented to the UM in 1957.

Associated from inception with the IELA (qv), Anne Yeats exhibited annually with the organization, acting as its secretary from 1943 to 1973. A founder member of Graphic Studio Dublin (1960), her exploration in her paintings of a technique using cloth, string and fluid oil later entered her etchings, monotypes and lithographs (see 'Printmaking'), which remained figurative, despite the growing popularity of abstraction (qv), and which were represented in Graphic Studio Sponsor Portfolios (1963/64, 1966, 1968, 1970). She revived her aunt's Cuala Press during the 1970s, and in 1981 became a founding member of Aosdána (qv).

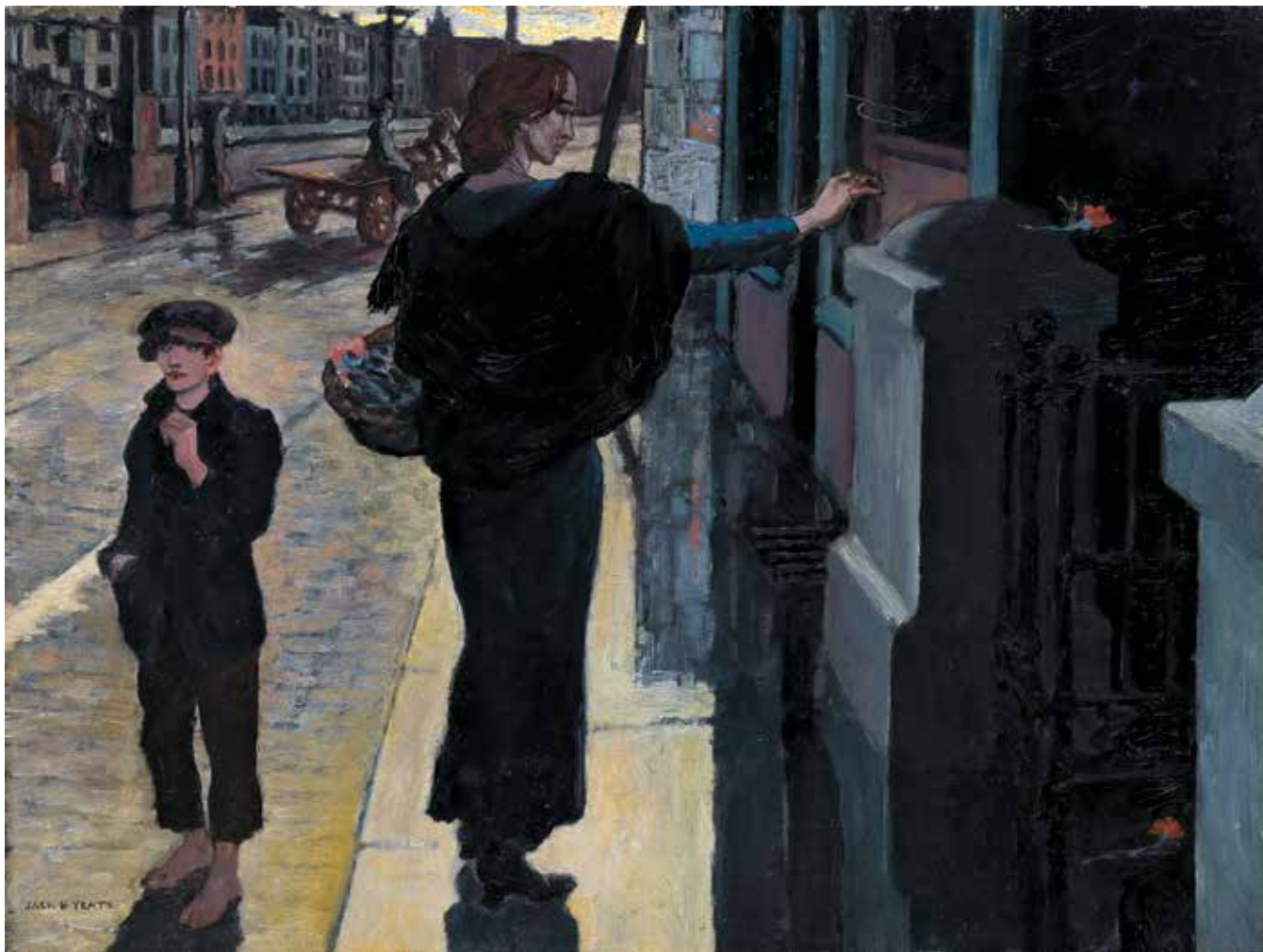
Yeats was commissioned by TCD to paint a tribute to her father for the Samuel Beckett Theatre in 1992. In 1995 a retrospective of her work was mounted at the RHA. Her death in 2001 was followed by a tribute exhibition at the NGI (2002).

MARIE BOURKE

SELECTED READING Hilary Pyle, *Yeats: Portrait of an Artistic Family* (Dublin 1997); Hilary Pyle, *The Horn of Plenty: A Tribute to Anne Yeats 1919–2001* (Dublin 2002); Valerie Alexander, *Anne Yeats (1919–2001): Out of shadows*, MPhil thesis (TRIARC, TCD, 2009); Lalor, 2011, pp. 41–48; National Gallery Yeats Archive.

**YEATS, JACK B.** (1871–1957) [510], painter, illustrator. Born in London, Jack Butler Yeats spent his childhood with his maternal grandparents in Sligo. In 1887 he rejoined his parents, the artist John Butler Yeats and his wife Susan Pollexfen, in London where he attended art school at Chiswick, South Kensington and Westminster. He quickly began a successful career as an illustrator (see 'Illustrations and Cartoons') of London magazines such as *Vegetarian*, 1888–92, and *Ariel*, 1891/92. From 1910 to 1948, Yeats contributed cartoons to *Punch* under the pseudonym W. Bird, which provided him with a regular income. The artist's individual style is not evident in these drawings, which are primarily commercial in nature, but they demonstrate an awareness of popular culture and current affairs, as well as a sense of humour.

In 1894 Yeats settled in Devon after his marriage to fellow art student Mary Cottenham White. He began making watercolours



510. Jack B. Yeats, *Bachelor's Walk, In Memory*, 1915, oil on canvas, 45.7 x 61 cm, on long term loan from a private collection to National Gallery of Ireland



of English country life, in addition to his illustrations and cartoons. From 1899 Yeats painted and exhibited watercolours of the landscape (qv) and peasantry of Ireland in both London and Dublin. These reveal his understanding of Post-Impressionism and its impact on contemporary graphic art, in their use of strong colour and asymmetrical compositions, but above all by a primitive handling of form, which accentuates the exotic nature of Irish rural life. Yeats's novel depiction of the Irish peasant as stalwart, humorous and exuberant was based on scenes witnessed on his visits to the west of Ireland and recorded in his sketchbooks. This new representation was admired by figures in the Literary Revival and by Irish art critics and commentators. His understanding of the west of Ireland was deepened by his travels through Galway and Mayo with John M. Synge in 1905, whose articles on the Congested Districts Board for the *Manchester Guardian* and book, *The Aran Islands* (1907), were illustrated by Yeats. From 1908 to 1915, he worked with his sisters, Lolly and Lily, on the production of *A Broadside* [47], published by the Cuala Press, for which he supplied the illustrations and provided ballads and poems from his collections (see 'Book Art'). His interest in the theme of the West culminated in the 1912 book, *Life in the West of Ireland*, which reproduced forty black-and-white drawings and sixteen of his recent oil paintings (see 'Drawings').

In 1910 Yeats returned to Ireland permanently, settling initially at Greystones, Co. Wicklow, before moving to Dublin in 1917. At the same time he began painting in oils. His early oil paintings share the realism (qv) of his graphic work and concentrate on scenes of rural and urban life, as in *The Liffey Swim* [511]. His depiction of Irish life provided a positive image of Irish society and culture at a crucial period in the country's history. Memorable paintings of this time relate to the War of Independence and the Civil War, such as *Communicating with Prisoners* (1924, Model and Niland Collection, Sligo) (see

'Politics in Irish Art'). Yeats himself linked the role of the artist to the nationalist cause in 1922, when he wrote: 'When painting takes its rightful place it will be in a free nation, for though pictures speak all languages the roots of every art must be the country of the artist, and no man can have two countries.' (Yeats, p. 4) However, Yeats's 1929 comment that 'a painting is not a vehicle for anything except itself' is indicative of a more sceptical attitude to political art (*Daily Express*, 12 October 1929, quoted in S.B. Kennedy, 1991, p. 28).

Yeats's style changed radically in the later 1920s when he applied paint more loosely and showed a greater interest in the expressive qualities of colour, experimenting by juxtaposing complementary and contrasting hues. This coincided with a move away from realism, the reasons for which are unclear. He saw contemporary European Expressionist art in London and later corresponded with Oskar Kokoschka, whose work shares an emotional and subjective understanding of reality (G. Tallarico in Foley, pp. 103–08). But Yeats's development came out of the experimental and isolated nature of his own practice. Memory and the impact of dreams and the unconscious had a profound effect on his choice of imagery. Arguably the more unruly nature of his painting was also prompted by an increasing disillusionment with Irish life. Despite the seemingly avant-garde nature of the later work, its themes are closely linked to Yeats's early oeuvre. While the subject matter of the later paintings is more obscure, the work remains figurative.

As a young man, Yeats had written and produced plays for the miniature theatre from 1901 to 1903, and from 1930 to 1947 he wrote and published both novels and plays for an adult audience. This literary activity had a profound impact on his later paintings and is seen most obviously in the prevalence of theatrical settings and dramatic scenarios of such works as *This Grand Conversation Was Under the Rose* [512] or *About to Write a Letter* (1936, NGI collection). The literary titles encourage the viewer to see the paintings as poetic and often ambiguous, in contrast to the realism of the earlier work.

Yeats was a founding member of the SDP in 1920 but did not participate in its exhibitions after 1921. Like the majority of Irish artists, he did not confine his work to one exhibition forum, showing regularly at the RHA (qv) of which he became a member in 1915, and from 1943 he participated in the IELA (qv). In addition, he took part in various exhibitions in Britain and the USA throughout his career. In 1943 the art dealer Victor Waddington took on Yeats, holding seven one-man shows in his Dublin gallery between 1943 and 1955 and publishing Thomas MacGreevy's monograph *Jack B. Yeats: An Appreciation and an Interpretation* (Dublin 1945). This emphasized Yeats's representation of modern Ireland and showed a preference for his early realist style. Samuel Beckett challenged its narrow interpretation, arguing that the tracing of a national heritage was irrelevant to an understanding of the 'desperately immediate images' found in Yeats's paintings (Beckett in McHugh, pp. 75–76). The publication of MacGreevy's book coincided with the *Yeats National Loan Exhibition*, held at the DMSA in the summer of 1945. Attended by 20,000 people, the exhibition of 180

511. Jack B. Yeats, *The Liffey Swim*, 1923, oil on canvas, 61 x 91 cm, National Gallery of Ireland







paintings spanned Yeats's entire career. Its popular and critical success established his reputation as Ireland's leading modern artist, whose work combined both national and universal themes. The catalogue essay, written by the former IRA activist and writer Ernie O'Malley, noted how closely Yeats's painting reflected the peculiarities of the Irish landscape, climate and vernacular culture. He praised the artist's unique handling of paint through which he was able to express his intense responses to these elements (O'Malley, 'The Paintings of Jack Yeats', in McHugh, p. 7). Yeats's reputation with the public had already accelerated as a result of a joint exhibition with William Nicholson, organized by Kenneth Clark, at the National Gallery, London, in January 1942, which received wide critical coverage in the English press. The sympathetic reception accorded to Yeats's later work further raised its standing at home.

Yeats was a prolific painter in the last two decades of his life when he increasingly reused earlier compositions and themes to create highly evocative works. In these the figures are often placed in landscapes or settings that suggest

nostalgia, dislocation or euphoria. A central feature of these timeless and uncultivated vistas is the traveller or vagabond, a reincarnation of the circus performers, travelling players and itinerant ballad singers of his early watercolours and drawings. To the Irish bourgeoisie, they signified freedom, and their utopian connection to the land was in contrast to the negative realities of Irish cultural and economic life (Cusack, 1998, 201–18).

The figure of the traveller resonated with Republicans, who were now part of the political establishment and looked with nostalgia at the freedom and optimism of Yeats's figures (Brian O'Doherty, 'Jack B. Yeats: Promise and Regret', in McHugh, pp. 77–91). Ernie O'Malley felt that Yeats's preference for the outsider showed the artist's rejection of bourgeois respectability in favour of those on the margins of society. Hilary Pyle argues that the emotional content of these late works indicates Yeats's detachment from politics into more subjective concerns. His own mortality and the loss of his wife and siblings had a profound impact on his choice and treatment of subject-matter in the final years of his life.

512. Jack B. Yeats, *This Grand Conversation was under the Rose*, 1943, oil on canvas, 36 x 53 cm, National Gallery of Ireland



The handling of form and colour in these late works adds a significant dimension to their content. Through the use of thick impasto or barely covered canvas, Yeats draws attention to the physical creation of the painting. While his pictures are always representational, parts of the paintings are deliberately ambiguous and difficult to decipher, a Yeatsian strategy to draw the viewer into an engagement with the work and to recognize its artifice. It inhibits, or at least makes problematic, the otherwise sentimental nature of the subject matter.

Yeats died in Dublin on 28 March 1957, Ireland's most widely acclaimed visual artist of the twentieth century. His romantic images of Irish life and landscape have encouraged many to see him as the archetypal national painter. The English critic John Berger, who visited the artist just before his death, placed his work against the political and geographical peculiarities of Ireland (Berger, *Selected Essays and Articles – The Look of Things*, London 1972, pp. 57–60). However, the ambiguous and

poetic juxtaposition of subject and form in his works suggest that their meaning extends beyond national boundaries. They can be understood as explorations of universal themes of memory, experience and creativity.

His work is included in the collections of the NGI, the Model and Niland Collection, Sligo, IMMA and Tate. Many of his personal papers and sketchbooks are held in the Yeats Archive, NGI.  
RÓISÍN KENNEDY

SELECTED READING Yeats, 1922; Roger McHugh (ed.), *Jack B. Yeats: A Centenary Gathering* (Dublin 1971); John W. Purser, *The Literary Works of Jack B. Yeats* (Savage, Maryland 1991); Hilary Pyle, *Jack B. Yeats: A catalogue raisonné of his oil paintings* (London 1992); Bruce Arnold, *Jack B. Yeats* (New Haven and London 1998); Cusack, 1998; Yvonne Scott (ed.), *Jack B. Yeats: Old and New Departures* (Dublin 2008); Declan J. Foley (ed.), *The Only Art of Jack B. Yeats* (Dublin 2009).