



Aug. 2005

The Circus Art of Jack B. Yeats

by Brian Witt

“The true artist has painted the picture because he wishes to hold again for his own pleasure —and for always— a moment, and because he is impelled... by his human affection to pass on the moment to his fellows, and to those that come after him.” – JACK B. YEATS

Jack B. Yeats is inarguably Ireland’s most famous painter and an artist who loved his country with a rare passion, one that shines through his paintings. It was the everyday life of Ireland which fired his imagination – fairs, circuses, race meet-ings, sailors and farmers, tramps and beggars, trams and city streets – and in all his work he expressed an intense sympathy for the individual, the underdog, the outsider. Particularly, he drew upon the memories of his boyhood, spent in Sligo on the remote west coast of Ireland.

The son of John Butler Yeats, a portrait painter and son of a clergyman, and the brother of William Butler Yeats, the most famed and prolific Irish poet ever, Jack Yeats was raised in a climate of Irish nationalism and artistic revolution. His parents encouraged the boys to be free thinkers about all of life. Both were intrigued by mysticism, and it played large in the writings of W.B., and the paintings of Jack.

Jack B. Yeats was born in London in 1871. Educated in County Sligo, he moved to England where he studied art under Frederick Brown at the Westminster School of Art. Jack Yeats did magazine illustration in England, as well as set design for the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, established by his

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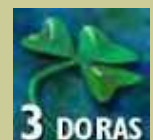
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brother. He worked in pencil, ink, and later on, oil. He liked to focus on the individual, the odd, and the offbeat. He contributed to several newspapers and journals including the Manchester Guardian, the Daily Graphic, The Sketch, Cassell's Saturday Journal and Punch Magazine, where he used the pseudonym, W. Bird. He also edited and illustrated two monthly publications, Broadsheet and Broadside.

Jack Yeats was a part of Irish Modernism, and a member of the group known as the Dublin Painters. Early works were realistic. In the 1920s, however, Yeats' style became more Expressionistic and Romantic. From this time forward, his works became increasingly more colorful and mystical. Additionally, his brushwork grew bold and impasto became a key element of his compositions.

The circus in Ireland fascinated Yeats. Over the course of his entire career, he sketched, painted, and drew the traveling acts that crossed Ireland, especially those that stopped in Sligo. The color, the bathos, the individual quirkiness of the people who worked, lived and acted in them gave him the focal point for many of his pieces.

All aspects got his attention. Whether it was the clowns, who were the subjects of many pieces, or the crowds themselves, whose rapt attention was given to the action in the center ring, it was all fodder for his pencils and brushes.

Early on, Yeats was an illustrator and drew with a cartoonist's sensibility, producing the first cartoon strip version of Sherlock Holmes in 1894. In the early 20th century he began to work regularly in oils. His early paintings and drawings are distinguished by an energetic simplicity of line and color, his later paintings by an extremely vigorous and experimental treatment of often thickly applied paint.

The color of the circus itself was the perfect expression for Yeats. Many of the paintings were apparent slapdash approximations of the human form. The bright colors brought forth the surface joy, the high expectations of excitement were all seen in his slashing brush strokes. Oftentimes, he abandoned the brush altogether, applying paint in a variety of different ways.

Some paintings, such as "The Showground Revisited", a shadowy, ghostly group standing where the Big Top had stood, or "They Come, They Come", as the performers spill into the ring, wraith-like spectres in their presentation, are both done with heavily applied paints. "The Clown Among the People" focuses on a sad looking character in painted face,

almost isolated in the midst of a swirling sea of people.

On the other hand, “The Circus Dwarf” and “The Daughter of the Circus” were straight forward renderings, the one a brightly red-shirted man standing backstage, the other showing a young acrobat hung upside down, flanked by a ringmaster and a clown. Although both full of brilliant coloration, they still held to the traditional design of human form.

In spite of his position as the most important Irish artist of the twentieth century, and maybe because of it, he took no pupils and allowed no one to watch him work. Ultimately, no one really understood if his portrayal of the isolated and insular character was just his extension of his own personal isolation. He died in 1957.

Whether it was center ring, side ring or the back of the house, the Irish circus was all on display in Yeats’ work.

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Rock County

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **SEPTEMBER 13** – Board Meeting; Tom and Mary Kennedy residence; 2012 Bond Place, Janesville; 7 p.m.
- **SEPTEMBER 20** – Monthly membership meeting; Janesville Senior Center; 69 S. Water Street; 7 p.m.

All members are welcome to attend the Board meeting, at which time we will be making plans for the coming year. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please come to this meeting.

At our regular meeting, we are hoping for a great turn out so we can get the year off to a good start. If you have any ideas and could not get to the Board meeting please bring your ideas to this meeting.

– **Tom Kennedy**

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Milwaukee President’s Message

It is a long, long time from May to September and what a

summer it's been. We are still trying to catch our collective breath to begin the fall activities. Let me begin by stating what a privilege it was to meet President Mary McAleese. To have the honor of representing the Shamrock Club and all of you was a once in a lifetime event. If you ever thought of becoming a board member, this kind of perk cannot be matched. Thanks to all of you, the Shamrock Club Milwaukee Chapter represented the state.

Congratulations to the new LaCrosse Irish Fest in August. The organizers are experienced at planning other municipal attractions. The founder is Pat Stephens, and wouldn't our mom have been proud of her favorite child. I also am aware that every member of his immediate family has been pressed into service just like always. May there be many more successful fests.

Can't go one more sentence without singing the praises of our picnic in Lake Park. Dawn and Pete Fleming make this event fun for all generations. Visits from our leprechaun, St. Patrick, and even regular members by the hundreds, make you realize why the expression "green with envy" came along. My thanks to Joe Hughes for the golf set-up, Karen and Denis Donohoe for the games assistance, Kathy Donovan for the food setup, and the entire Donovan family for their grilling skills. Dawn and Kathy presented us with a raffle extraordinaire to assist in paying for our expenses. We had our Shamrock Club Color Guard, Pipes and Drums, the Fire and Police pipers and drummers, music by Atlantic Wave, and Glencastle Irish Dancers plus others who entertain just by being there.

Irish Fest 25th anniversary festival was incredible. We thank Noreen Barclay for the tremendous effort in our retail sales booth and all members that volunteered at the booth. Kris Pluskota for the work at the Club's membership area in setting up an anniversary display, and thank you to Daryl Pluskota for his support in the area. Our members are found throughout the grounds, and start with Ed Ward the Festival's founder. Our Color Guard, Pipes and Drums looked and sounded great, and represented us in a special way both in performances, marching in the parades, and at the Sunday Mass. Thanks to each and every one of you for the time you spend doing this. So many members hold the title of coordinator, board member, area supervisor, and key volunteer that you would soon realize very few of our members are just there to enjoy the weekend with nothing to do. Your pride in heritage and your hard work should be congratulated. Thank you for the service to the Club and the community itself.

Never a group to sit back and rest, we spent the next

weekend at the golf outing with co-chairs Pat Fitzgibbons and Kris Pluskota. We have enjoyed the visit to Edgewater Golf Course in Grafton for the third year now, and the wonderful camaraderie of all in attendance. Some golfers are more experienced than others, but we welcome anyone wanting a very inexpensive, fun filled day. If you couldn't make it this time join us at the next event even if you just come for the dinner, you are welcome. Be sure to thank the donors and sponsors for the door prizes.

See you at the next meeting.

– Julie Smith, President

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Milwaukee Fiscal Report

The Shamrock Club's fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30; for the fiscal year that just ended the Club had income of \$29,610.17 and expenses of \$37,863.81 for a difference of -\$8,253.64. This left us with assets of \$36,346.74 on June 30. The recent raise in dues is a result of this shortfall and will do much to offset it. Looking forward, it becomes more important than ever for us to grow our membership. If each of us brings in one new membership we will have a surplus at the end of fiscal 2005-06.

– Pat Fitzgibbons

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Shamrock Club of Wisconsin Dinner Dance

Sunday, October 2, 2005

You are cordially invited to the 45th Anniversary Dinner Dance of the Shamrock Club. In addition, we will be honoring the Irishman of the Year Ed Mikush, Irish Rose Noreen Barclay, and Parade Marshal Richard Stover.

American Serb Hall,
5101 West Oklahoma Avenue, Milwaukee, WI

Cocktails 6 pm • Dinner 6:30 pm • Dancing 8 pm

RSVP With Dinner Choice (Filet of Sole, Mandarin Chicken, Stuffed Pork Chop) by September 23 to Kristine Pluskota – (414) 768-8876 or dkplus@tds.net or mail to:

Kristine Pluskota,
1209 N Chicago Avenue, #B
South Milwaukee, WI 53172

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Set Dancing News

Irish Set Dancing returns to O'Donoghue's Pub in September. The Milwaukee Set Dance Club will offer an Introductory Set Dance Class, beginning on Wednesday, September 21, and running for eight weeks. From 7 until 8 p.m. each Wednesday the floor is reserved for newcomers and beginners. A flyer with full information is available at the Milwaukee Set Dance Club web site: [setmke.org].

The Corofin Plain set from County Clare (think Burren) will give participants a foundation in Clare footwork for jigs, reels, and polkas.

Sets are danced in squares of four couples. Previous dance experience is not necessary. You need not come with a partner. Shoes which slide on a wood floor are suggested. A class fee of \$30 is requested for the eight weeks. Space is limited; please register in advance.

To register or for more information, please call 414 258-3370 or write [class@setmke.org].

Open dancing begins on September 7 at O'Donoghue's, 13225 Watertown Plank Rd., Elm Grove.

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St. Rose Spaghetti Dinner

The Milwaukee Chapter of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, in cooperation with St. Rose Parish, will again host the annual Irish Mass of Remembrance and William Ryan Drew Scholarship Spaghetti Dinner, at St. Rose Catholic Church, 544 North 31st Street, Milwaukee on Saturday, October 8,

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ICHC Celtic Arts and Crafts Sampler

Sunday, October 2*

Noon – 5 pm

Come sample any or all of the ICHC's Celtic Arts and Crafts classes. Each class (Calligraphy, Design, Knitting,

Quilting & Straw Weaving) will be taught every hour, so you can visit each or stay for an extra hour with the one of your choice. The sampler will help you decide what class or classes you wish to take when they are offered in the Fall. To register for the sampler or for any questions please call the ICHC at 414-345-8800.

* Packers play Monday night!

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Schooner Fare In Concert

Yankee folk music will return to Milwaukee on Saturday, October 1, when Maine's Schooner Fare performs at Alverno College's Pitman Theater, 3401 S. 39th, Milwaukee. Tickets for the 8 p.m. show are \$20 and \$17 for adults and \$8 for ages 18 and younger.

This will be the second Pitman Theater concert that brothers Chuck and Steve Romanoff will do without their good friend, Tom Rowe, who died in January, 2004. In the web site introduction to their soon-to-be released recording, "And Both Shall Row," the Romanoff brothers said, "We will always hear Tom as we hope you will too." The duo's concert, like the new album, "...will sound a little familiar and a little different..." As always, the concert will showcase the exquisite songs, exhilarating harmony and Down East humor for which Schooner Fare is known.

Proceeds from a raffle held the night of the concert will benefit the Down Syndrome Association of Wisconsin which provides educational programs and support.

For tickets and information, call Kathy Schultz at (414) 332-8521.

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Celtic Women: First Friday Lecture

Sept. 9, 2005

Topic: Modern Education in the Highlands of Scotland

Speaker: Peggy Ruetz

Peggy spent the summer teaching at an elementary school in the village of Killin, near Ben Lawers, at the bottom tip of Loch Tay, followed by seminars at Edinburgh with other teachers. Her real life back home has her teaching special education in Wisconsin's largest elementary school, Gifford in Racine. Peggy has degrees from Marquette and UW-Whitewater, studying education, emotional disturbance, and psychology. Recently she has succeeded John Alley as the State Commissioner of Clan Donald. (Note: This lecture is on the second Friday of the month).

Lectures are held from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. at the ICHC, 2133 W. Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee. Admission is \$5 for all. Everyone is welcome including men and non-members as well as Celtic Women members. Tea and biscuits are served. Please join us for a delightful few hours of Celtic education and entertainment. You may call the ICHC at 414-345-8800 for more information.

Parking Note: Please observe the parking areas surrounding the ICHC and follow the posted signs designating the lots where parking is allowed for the ICHC. Thank you.

– **Jean Bills**

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Young Members

Congratulations to Colleen Jaskulski for two first place finishes at the Badger State and Cream City Feiseanna in solos of

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ICHC to Offer Evening of Flu Shots

The Irish Cultural and Heritage Center will be offering flu shots again this year.

The evening is sponsored by Covenant Home Health and will take place on Thursday, October 6, 2005 from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. in Parlor A at the ICHC. The cost is \$25. Persons under Medicare may bring their Medicare card and the vaccination will be provided free of charge.

The ICHC is providing the venue free of charge as a service to those in the neighborhood, Shamrock Club members, and any others who might be using our building that evening. It is the night of the Shamrock Club October meeting.

– **John Maher**

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Color Guard News & Notes

Where has the summer gone? By the time you read this, Irish Fest will be over as well as our parade season (almost). I'm sure you, the members of the Shamrock Club, have seen us either in a parade or at the crossroads at Irish Fest. The Shamrock Club Color Guard, Pipes and Drums wishes to thank everyone who came out to see us. There have been a few members on the injured list and even a few that have gone missing, if you're one of these people please contact me or come to practice. Also missing is my briefcase but that's another story. My sincere thanks to Richard Stover for his help with this unit, YOU, my friend will be hard to replace.

The Shamrock Club Color Guard Pipes and Drums is doing some fund raisers. One is a portrait sitting for anyone from the club with a portion donated to the Unit. Please watch for an ad as well as posters. The other, is an E-bay store that will sell anything you would like to donate and a portion also will go to our group. These monies are for our trip to Texas in 2006.

As always, please check our web site for any updates: [www.sccgpd.org]. There you will see our schedule and can even leave a message for us.

UPCOMING DATES

- **SEPT. 5:** St. Francis Labor Day Parade; K.K. & Howard Ave; 10 a.m. / 11 a.m.

- **OCT. 2:** Mayville, WI

- **OCT. 8:** A.O.H Mass & Dinner; St. Rose's Church 4 p.m. / 5 p.m.

- **OCT. 14-15:** Sister Bay Festivals; Door County, WI; 10:30 a.m. / 11 a.m.

If you would like to have the Shamrock Club Color Guard, Pipes and Drums appear in a parade, special event or family occasion – or you would like to join the Unit as a banner carrier, color guard, piper or drummer, please contact:

Richard Pfeiffer, Director
Shamrock Club Color Guard, Pipes and Drums
Telephone: (414) 769-1250
E-mail: milwpiper@cs.com

– **Richard Pfeiffer**

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Hurling Standings

The Milwaukee Hurling Club entered the semifinals of August with the Shamrock Club Griffins pulling into the playoffs. The Griffins faced McBob's in a 12:30 p.m. match. Following that was the 2 p.m. game of Packy's vs. Tracks. Packy's is owned by long time Shamrock Club member Packy Campbell. The Griffins came back from a 2-4 midseason record in order to qualify to be one of the best final four teams. Good showing all around.

The Shamrock Club Griffins lost in the semi-finals on Sunday, August 7 to McBobs. Overall, it was a good showing by the Griffins, having started at 1-4.

The Shamrock Club is happy to announce that we are giving temporary Shamrock Club memberships to the members of the Shamrock Club Griffins, who represented us in the

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The Milwaukee Irish Fest School of Music

Register this month for the fall semester (Sep. – Dec.) classes in traditional Irish music sessions, banjo, bodhran (Irish drum), bouzouki, button accordion, fiddle, flute, guitar, keyboard and tin whistle. All ages welcome, flexible lesson times. Visit [www.irishfest.com] for class program or call Kristina at (414) 372-3060 for details.

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Members of the Milwaukee chapter recently enjoyed a trip

to Mineral Point. Everyone had a wonderful time even though we lost track of four of our members for two hours! (photos by Dawn Fleming)

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Fall 2005 Hallamor Concert Series

Tannahill Weavers

Friday, September 16, 2005

The ICHC opens their fall concert series with old friends. The “Trailblazers of Scottish music” have received world wide acclaim consistently over the years for their exuberant performances and outstanding recording efforts that seemingly can’t get better... yet continue to do so! The range and variety of their material, the reflective ballads to the foot stomping jigs and reels are matched only by their enthusiasm and lively Celtic spirit. They were the first to use full sized Highland pipes in their on stage performances The penetrating sound of the Highland bagpipes is a thread of ancient memory running through it all. The Tannahill Weavers personify Celtic music, and if you are given to superlatives, you have to call their talent “awesome”!

8 pm Concert

Doors open at 6:45 with a brief opening act at 7 pm

Tickets: \$19 advance, \$21 day of concert

– Gwen Sisk

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St. Patrick’s Help Fund

St. Patrick’s Help Fund is in desperate need of non-perishable foods. Please place in container at each meeting. However, donations can be brought to the ICHC any time during the week. Questions? Call Katy Voss (414) 352-6479.

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New Members

NOTE: Please send your dues to your Membership Chairperson in your chapter. All names and addresses are listed in Emerald Reflections.

Milwaukee – Justin and Erin Lange; Jim Newhouse.

Membership Report Milwaukee Chapter:

- June: 30 memberships up for renewal, 2 paid, 7 dropped for nonpayment.
- July: 27 memberships up for renewal, 19 paid, 8 due.
- Aug.: 94 memberships up for renewal.

Membership 2004

One year ago August, our membership was:

Single Memberships: 327

Family Memberships: 244

Membership 2005:

Single Memberships: 287

Family Memberships: 224

– Tom Smith

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