


A Little Book of Brigid

*For All The Women Forgotten In History,
And For Every Young Girl
Who Dreams Of Greatness.*



Blueway Art Studio is a hub for art workshops and art projects that harness the energy of creativity, traditional skills, and Ireland's compelling stories for the benefit and enjoyment of individuals, communities, and wider audiences. They collaborate with artists and communities who reimagine ways to communicate climate and system changes through creativity.



A Little Book of Brigid is a collaboration between founder Angelina Foster and Emily Rainsford. It is a collection of 28 illustrated poems, curated and published by Blueway Art Studio and funded by Kildare County Council.






Intention

Our intention is to celebrate the role of women in various aspects of life through Brigid.

As patron of poets & printers, this collection of illustrated poems celebrates Brigid as the female force in ordinary lives.

Brigid 1500 celebrates and commemorates the life and legacy of St. Brigid.

We feel Brigid means different things to different people. We are lucky in Ireland that Brigid has survived through the centuries through the duality of Brigid as both Goddess and Saint. Traditionally associated with fire, she has become a powerful symbol of female endurance and women's empowerment. Christian and non-Christian customs and beliefs often overlap.






Purpose

The purpose of the project is to recognise women throughout 2024 whilst commemorating 1500 years since the death of our matron saint, Brigid of Kildare. The books will be gifted to 100 inspiring women or institutions who have campaigned for women's rights or support women in their communities in Ireland and worldwide.

Our intention is to celebrate the role of women in various aspects of life through Brigid. As patron of poets & printers, this collection of illustrated poems, celebrates Brigid as the female force in ordinary lives, in our past and living present.

Letterpress printing has a strong connection with women's activism historically, we intend to spread the voice of Brigid and women by reconnecting the public with this age-old art.



Background & Inspiration

This book was inspired by the project War Widows and exhibition Ag Fanacht (Waiting) by Angelina Foster and by how few records exist of women's stories through the centuries.

We are lucky in Ireland that Brigid has survived through the centuries through the duality of Brigid as both Goddess and Saint. Christian and non-Christian customs and beliefs often overlap.

While we might tend to have an image of early Christian writers as men and monks, it is worth remembering that saints like St Brigid wrote some of the first illuminated books in Ireland in her gender-balanced abbey where monks and nuns lived and worked side by side.

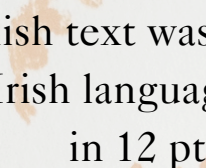
St Brigid wrote and made her mark in her centre of arts at the Church of the Oak monastery in
Kildare

Processes

To honour our indigenous past, we aligned the front matter of the book with Celtic rituals by renaming the introduction as Intention and acknowledgements as Gratitude. Setting Intentions for Imbolc or St Brigid's Day is still practiced today, whilst Gratitude is associated with Lughnasa, and Autumn equinox is a time for reflection and giving thanks to the Earth and our families. The oak leaf (always associated with Brigid) floats throughout the book from the cover to the end as Brigid walks away.

Poems were selected from an open call in 2023; 160 entries were received from all over the world with 24 English language and 4 Irish language chosen for the final edit. With no *fadas* on English language type, the Irish language poems presented an added challenge as they could not be typeset, however, we were determined to find a way to print Brigid's native tongue.

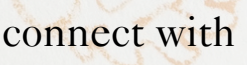
This edition was set by hand and printed by Emily Rainsford & Angelina Foster on an Adana letterpress in Blueway Art Studio in the small sustainable village of Narraghmore, Co Kildare, Ireland.




The English text was composed in 14 pt Caslon LF; the Irish language text was screen-printed in 12 pt Caslon font.

We wanted the book to be bright and colourful.

Seven invited artists added their diverse interpretations through drawing, mark-making and collage, using true grain drafting film using lithography crayon and tusches. Illustrations were screen-printed by hand with sustainable Lascaux Gouache & printed on 160g Madrid Litho paper.



To connect with Brigid's era & elements of Weave, bindings were done with Coptic stitch using French linen thread. We acknowledged St Brigid's ancestral roots by using foraged heather from peatlands in Co. Kildare, to dye Irish linen for a Brat Bhride in each book. The archetypal Weaver is the maker of opportunity, the weaver of fate with the weaver's distaff a symbol of power. Women as weavers of community, weave intentions and fate.



Illustrators

Most of the illustrations were created by
Emily & Angelina.

We are thankful to the following invited artists
who have contributed their diverse art:

Pamela de Brí
Rachel Fountain
Clare Hartigan
Ciara O’Keeffe
Ann McKenna
Claire Murphy
Lucina Russell

Artwork by Ann McKenna

Ann McKenna

Titles of pieces: Woven I, II and III

Brigid as the pre-Christian Goddess is my inspiration. The symbols and customs that survive hold glimpses of a past that was heavily dependent on nature, harvests and seasons. Weaving, the woven willow, or thread is the foundation of all forms of constructions. I see the Brigid's cross as a blueprint the basic essence symbolising millennia of craftsmanship.

Primarily a painter, I have recently expanded into sculpting. I am interested in exploring new materials and mediums in my work. I examine literary and mythological themes with a focus on Irish legends. I have a keen interest in archaeology and early Irish manuscripts where I find much inspiration.

Lifelong learning is an essential part of my art practice and I regularly attend workshops in order to develop and widen my understanding of materials. Some of the recent workshops/masterclasses I have attended are wood sculpting, stone carving, willow weaving and woodblock printing.

I am a graduate of the National College of Art and Design.

I am attending honours graduate study and professional research at Maynooth University with a focus on Celtic Studies, Archaeology, and Irish Cultural Heritage.

My work is in state collections including DIAS, HSE, OPW and Kildare Municipal Art Collection as well as private collections in Ireland and abroad.

www.annmckenna.ie

Instagram: @annmckennaartist

Pamela de Brí

Title of artwork: Stones

Background: I am passionate about history, language and early Irish culture cultural and environmental landscape, and how objects and images from the past embody cultural memory and characterise the future.

This screenprint is based on an earlier large-scale etching which was informed by the earliest markings - standing stones, left on the land by our ancestors.

My work explores social and demographic changes in rural Ireland. Being project based, I focus on a particular aspect of society, research it, engage with relevant people, explore the location, to build up a body of documentation which inspires the resulting artwork.

I work in a variety of media: painting, printmaking, photography, audio and video.

My current visual inquiry focuses on Ireland's offshore islands, painting them as seen from the mainland.

A founder member of Leinster Printmaking Studio (LPS) I curated national and international projects on behalf of the studio, currently "Project Babel", Ratamo, Finland, 2023-24. As part of Sult Artists Collective I organised and participated in two collaborative projects, most recently an International Open Call exhibition marking the death of Brigid in 1500ad.

<https://www.instagram.com/pameladebri/>

<https://www.facebook.com/PameladeBriArtist>

www.pameladebri.com

Rachel Fountain

Light evokes the mood in any setting be it portrait, urban or landscape and it is this moment that I enjoy capturing through visual arts such as painting, print, mixed media and charcoal. Light captures the landscape, whether it's overcast, brilliant, stormy or the setting sun evoking different effects and emotions, always different, always inspiring. When painting portraits, my preferred medium is watercolour or charcoal. The delicate transparent layers of watercolour flow and settle in pools of colour to capture a fleeting moment. Painting wet on wet in watercolour is magical as the pigments settle together unpredictably on beautifully textured papers. Whether building texture through brush strokes, mark-making in the print room, my art journey has always been a form of exploration and expression. My illustration of young and older hands represents intergenerational traditions with the name Brigid carried through female lineage.

www.instagram.com/rachel_fountain_art/

Clare Murphy

Claire Murphy is a visual artist based in County Kildare, and a graduate of NCAD. She is mainly interested in figurative art and portraiture, which she explores through a variety of medium and styles.

She has completed several community based street murals, and has initiated and run socially inclusive portrait projects. She has received funding from Kildare County Council's Arts Service and Creative Ireland for these projects, and was the recipient of an Arts Council Agility Award in 2022.

www.instagram.com/clairemurphyart

www.facebook.com/clairemurphyart



Ciara O'Keeffe

Ciara O'Keeffe is a ceramic artist from Athy, Co Kildare, Ireland. Ciara, graduated from Limerick School of Art and Design in 1999 with a B.A. Degree in Ceramics. For the past twenty five years, she has been working and teaching from her studio in Athy. Ciara has worked on numerous private commissions and been awarded many commissions including, Dublin City Council, President of Ireland Mary Mc Aleese, and the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs. Ciara has exhibited throughout Ireland, Europe and the United States, including Dublin, London, Barcelona, Philadelphia and New York.

To have been asked to include a piece of my artwork for this artist book was a huge honour. This book will forever be a reminder of the power of Brigid, the power of women and the power of creativity.

www.ciaraokeeffeceramics.com

Ciara O'Keeffe

Lucina Russell

The Little Book of Brigid to me, represents how the relatively small contribution of many can, collectively, become so powerful. I was delighted to have my artwork 'Dealán Dé'paired with Mae Leonard's homage to nature 'An Domhain'.

Lucina Russell studied Textile Design at undergraduate level, where she honed her skills in analytical drawing and where her arts practice is centred, often taking inspiration from her home environment and unkempt garden. She has participated in a number of collaborative visual arts projects nationally. Holding a PG Diploma from LSAD and a Masters Degree in Art Education from NCAD, she currently lectures in Teacher Education in LSAD. Previously she worked as Arts Officer in Kildare County Council for over two decades, leading on arts policy and devising a wide range of interdisciplinary arts programmes, while supporting and mentoring artists.

Instagram @lucinarussell

LinkedIn @Lucina.Russell

Lucina Russell

Clare Hartigan

Art Work Title : Of The Land

Clare Hartigan has been involved in creative activity since she was a child growing up in Castleconnell, County Limerick. She studied printmaking at the Limerick School of Art and Design.

While a printmaking student, Hartigan was inspired by the bitumen that she used to draw with to create etchings. It gave her a dynamism that she couldn't achieve with the traditional use of oils and ultimately inspired her to experiment with a more carefree line in her paintings. The seemingly spontaneous application of paint seen in her work reflects the paint-dripping technique associated with the work of Abstract Expressionist, Jackson Pollock.

Hartigan takes inspiration from this technique which was utilized exclusively for abstraction and truly makes it her own by creating semi-representational art; drawing inspiration for her paintings from personal experiences as well as current affairs. Hartigan's paintings are ignited with excited animation and emotional intensity, as delicate bands of colour dance across a white, monochromatic backdrop. A recurring theme in her work is the image of a young girl. Whether dancing, jumping, or simply standing, the figure is always rendered through energetic lines, mimicking the carefree nature of the subject, and conjuring up a sense of childhood nostalgia. Hartigan describes the recurring figure of the young girl, as representative of the inner child for herself but most importantly everyone, male or female.

<https://www.facebook.com/clare.hartigan.artist/>

Instagram: [clare_hartigan_artist](#)

www.clarehartigan.com

Dee Mc Kiernan ~ Threshold

Dee McKiernan is an artist who works in painting, poetry and photography. She has exhibited in many solo and group exhibitions, including in Athlone's Luan Gallery and Manhattan Arts International Exhibition By Women Artists. Her paintings were also selected as projections to illuminate Dublin's National Convention Centre, General Post Office Dublin, Kildare Cathedral, Hill of Uisneach and Athlone Castle. Dee's poetry has featured in printed, broadcast and spoken formats, including the Athlone Poetry In The Park Anthology. Dee lives and works in rural South Roscommon, Ireland, and is influenced by ancient myths, Irish stories and legends, sacred sites, ancient monuments and bogland.

*“In the liminal space
Between one world and the Other.”*

It is said that Brigid's mother gave birth to her upon a threshold. Both Goddess and Saint are considered to straddle thresholds between this world and the other. She was also known as a person who could resolve conflicts between opposing sides or parties. Brigid is known as the patron saint of midwives and has strong links with birthing. These are some of the aspects of Brigid which influenced my poem



deemckiernan_art

Artwork by Angelina Foster

Siobhan McMahon ~ Be With Us, Holy Midwife

Siobhan Mac Mahon (MA Creative Writing UCD) is an Irish Poet and 'Word Witch' whose poetry speaks of the return of the Sacred Feminine and of our deep connection to the earth. She has been creating magic, mayhem and mischief with her words for over twenty years, collaborating with other artists to combine poetry with music, dance and with film. Twice awarded Arts Council funding for her work, she has performed her poetry widely in the UK and Ireland. Some highlights include: The Brigid of Faughart Festival, Festival Mná, the Southbank Centre, London, Stanza Poetry Festival, Wicklow Arts Festival, Mountshannon Arts Festival, University of Vienna, Artemis International Festival - Spain, 100 Thousand Poets for Change, Italy. A Hennessey New Irish Writing winner, publications include: The Irish Times, Headstuff.org, Skylight 47, We'Moon and many anthologies including - Hallelujah for 50 Foot Women (Bloodaxe), Bloody Amazing and Pride Poets."

*“opening and opening through the
darkness
of her body to birth the light
of our remembering.”*

Artwork by Emily Rainsford

Erin Darcy ~ The Spell

Erin Darcy is a multi-disciplinary artist and author living in rural Galway. Mainly painting imagery of women and the multi-facets of motherhood. Erin's most notable work is the grassroots project she started; 'In Her Shoes - Women of the Eighth', that she later went on to illustrate and publish, helping to de-stigmatize taboo subjects like abortion while keeping women's stories alive. Erin is the co-founder of a small artist collective, Mother Maker Studios with the aims of supporting mothers in the arts.

*“Fire churns in the belly
Infusing, concocting, brewing
Convection.”*

This poem is about folk medicine of the land, and the wisdom carried by women for centuries before modern medicine.

Recipes handed down by oral tradition from woman to woman, midwife to lay person. Within this spell, you'll find herbal remedies that St. Brigid would have used in 650 AD as one of her miracles, and Ireland's first written account of abortion.



edarcydesign ; www.edarcydesign.com

Artwork by Emily Rainsford

Emily Rainsford

Ailish de Búrca ~ Her Story

Ailish is a writer from Kildare town, Ireland.

*“Hold you dear
under my cloak-
Manifest your artful, yellow light.
You warrior star.
You are.”*

Ailish wrote this after being inspired by the life and death process. She firmly believes that our energy simply transfers when our bodies die. Brigid's soul is alive in everyone. "His story" is every story that forgot women. We can remember them by manifesting our best lives and by taking care of each other.

Artwork by Pamela de Brí

Lara Coady ~ Legacy of Her Lot

Lara Coady is an emerging writer, poet, and theatre-maker. Her interests are in multidisciplinary performance, spoken word, immersive theatre, and feminist storytelling. Selected poetry includes *Woman Much More* and *Recognition* performed in the 2024 M.FEST Galway installation *i carry you with me*. Lara screened her first poetry film during the 2023 film residency, Kino Guarimba in Calabria, Italy. With support from Kildare County Council, she developed the play *i lack pearls*, presented as a work-in-process at Platform 2023. Lara regularly writes for theatre in a creative duo, selected work; *Awaiting M.FEST 2023*, and panopticon *Samuel Beckett Theatre 2022*.

*“Nature sees what she cannot,
The legacy of her lot.”*

We do not always see when our actions have an impact on the future. Brigid encompasses many roles for us; the saint, the mother, the soldier, the child, the immigrant, the artist, the list goes on. She is a symbol of the multifaceted roles women have taken throughout history. Did she realise what her legacy would be? Do we realise the impact we have? Only the nature around us will live to see our legacy.



lara_coady ; www.laracoady.com

Artwork by Emily Rainsford

Martina Kearney ~ Room for All Brigids

I have been writing for over 13 years and continually attend writing workshops. Dec. 2020 a poem included in a short animation film for Dublin City's Winter Lights Festival. May 2022, with Richmond Barracks Writing (Dublin). I've had 2 poems published in an anthology "Illuminations", published by Dublin City Council. I meet regularly with a small group of local writers in Malahide. Dec 2023, I featured on the Christmas edition of EattheStorms. March 2024. As part of the Silver screen Critics group for DIFF, a film review published online www.filmireland.net

*“Until the safe scent of Spring brushes our breath,
And we are drawn out, like silvery green seeds
from the dark below”*

I wrote the poem on the last day or two in January 2023. I had returned from a few hours in the Bog at Ring Commons in North Co Dublin. I had met some singing friends to gather rushes to make Brigids Crosses. We sang a song or two while gathering and had tea and sandwiches in one of their houses and afterwards I wrote the poems. Gathering rushes, singing and chatting over tea gave a great feeling of community and the poems were based on that lovely morning.

Artwork by Emily Rainsford

M.A. Waslow ~ The Explorer

M.A. "al" Waskow is a transplant from the desert of America to rainy Galway. Their poetry is largely personal, processing emotions and distilling experiences into meter and rhyme, and their poem "Bellview" was recently published in the inaugural volume of The Dark Corner magazine. Outside of creative pursuits, they write poetry for computers (also known as coding), solve inconsequential puzzles, and work very hard at befriending stray cats in their area.

*“Amidst the ivy-laden oaks she weaves
Her way, damp ground beneath a
gentle thread”*

For my poem, I wanted to focus on Brigid's role as an explorer, a wanderer, and a lover of nature.



@al.meowski

Artwork by Claire Murphy

Dylan Brennan ~ The Suthering

Dividing his time between Mexico and Ireland, Dylan Brennan writes poetry and prose. He is a recipient of the Ireland Chair of Poetry Bursary award. In 2022 he won the inaugural Drumshanbo Written Word Weekend Poetry Film Award for 'Four Attempts at Making a Human', a poetry film in collaboration with Jonathan Brennan. He has read at literary festivals in Colombia, Nicaragua, Mexico, Italy, Ireland and USA and has twice been recipient of a Culture Ireland Travel Grant. Most recently he was awarded an Arts Council literature bursary. His second collection *Let the Dead* (2023), is available now from Banshee Press.

Suthering:

**the sound of wind through leaves or bird feathers*

*“oak leaves
(wind
pollinators)
rustle you
from sleep”*

Artwork by Emily Rainsford

Michael Farrell ~ Brigid The Emigrant

Based in Carlingford, Co Louth. Member of Dundalk Writers Group. We meet every fortnight where we write and workshop our poems. We hold an open mic with Poetry/Music every month. My poems have been published in Brigid's Songs (an anthology of local poets and The Little Book of Brigid.

*“from open hearts
to helping hands
to Boston’s cultured kitchens.”*

I did some research on the background to the Brigid story: The myth, the Saint, the modern feminine appropriation. I had already written a poem entitled Brigid , where can I find you, published in Brigid's Songs - a poetry collection. In writing Brigid the Emigrant, I focused on one aspect - knowing a lot of Irish people would be aware of these trailblazers.



farrellmichael52

Artwork by Angelina Foster

Seighin O Ceallaigh ~ Iron and Oak

Séighin Ó Ceallaigh is a writer from County Limerick, with a BA in History and Gaeilge from the University of Limerick. A former politician who served as the first Chairman of Limerick's Arts&Culture Committee, which he helped establish, he now writes political thrillers set in Ireland and the USA.

*“The kindling still scalds the cauldron,
Filled with new lamb and roots,
To satisfy a hunger grown from the
chasing
of the Cailleach.”*

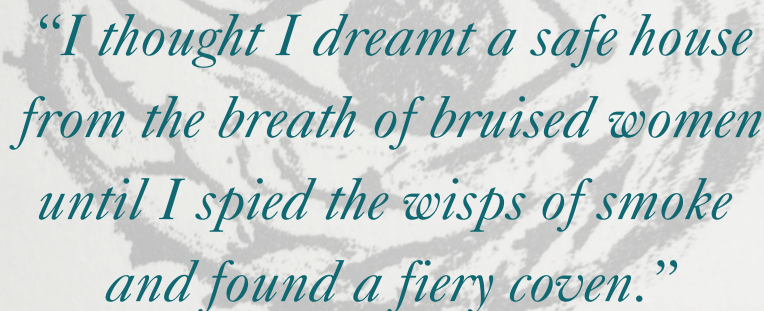
This piece 'Iron & Oak', is a brief look at Brigid, or rather the Brigids of Ireland. The Goddess Brigid who brought Spring every year, and Saint Brigid who helped establish the Christian faith in Ireland.

Artwork by Emily Rainsford

Lauren Lawler ~ The Flamekeepers

Lauren Lawler is a poet living in Baldoye, Co. Dublin. Her poems have appeared in Poetry Ireland Review and Irish Independent, New Irish Writing.

She holds degrees in poetry, library studies and law. Her pamphlet "Physical Education" was published in 2022 by Green Bottle Press. She is a 2023 recipient of the Irish Writers Centre National Mentoring Programme. Outside of poetry, she works as a research librarian in the Houses of the Oireachtas.



*“I thought I dreamt a safe house
from the breath of bruised women
until I spied the wisps of smoke
and found a fiery covenant.”*

Artwork by Angelina Foster

Máire Sinclair ~ Mo Bhríd

I am living in Co. Kildare for over thirty years with my husband and two daughters. I am from Co. Galway originally. I have always enjoyed poetry and have a love for the Irish language so I decided to marry the two together a few years ago after joining local Irish language classes with Sult na Sollán.

Is breá liom mo chuid dánta a roinnt le mo chlann, mo cháirde is mo phobal Gaeilge.

“Éiríonn sí gach maidin Coimeádaí an tinteáin”

Mo Bhríd was written in tribute to my mother, inspired by St. Brigid (with whom she shares same name) and the idea of "keeper of the hearth", "coimeádaí an tinteáin", sparked a connection for me to the caring, protective mother figure. I am delighted my poem was picked for this special book alongside so many beautiful pieces of poetry. Is mór an onóir domsa é.

Artwork by Ciara O' Keffe

Ciara O' Keffe

Chris Jones ~ Tercet

Chris Jones was born in New York, grew up in Co. Kerry and now lives in Dublin. His work has appeared in the anthologies

Writing Home:

The New Irish Poets and The Book Of Life, Poems to Tide You Over by Dedalus Press, The Irish Independent: New Irish

Writing, Responses

to Pale Blue Dot: Pilot Press London, The Maternal Gaze: Irish Museum of Modern Art. Recent commissions include

responses to Pay No

Attention to That Man Behind The Curtain an exhibition by Eleanor McCaughey and Lucy Sheridan at The Complex Gallery, Dublin.

He was shortlisted for the Aesthetica Creative Writing Award 2022.

*“The early snow reveals her land
Spring has opened.”*



chrisjones_.....

Artwork by Clare Hartigan

Bernadette Gallagher ~ Let Brigid In

Bernadette Gallagher is the author of *The Risen Tree*, (Revival Press, 2024) her debut poetry collection. She has received awards from the Arts Council of Ireland and Cork County Council.

A selection of her work has been recorded by the University College Dublin Poetry Archive and the Words Lightly Spoken podcast and published in numerous literary journals including *Crannóg*, *Agenda*, *The Stinging Fly*, *The North*, *Stony Thursday*, *The Frogmore Papers*, *Dreich*, *Southword 41* & *New Isles Press*. She has been invited to read her work in Ireland, UK, US, and at the *Sahitya Akademi* in New Delhi, India.

*“Three times she knocked.
Three times she called.”*

I was born near the village of Burtonport in County Donegal. My parents participated in the rituals of the Catholic Church, for example, saying the rosary at night. As children we were used to kneeling for prayer and I have vivid memories of celebrating the yearly devotion to St. Brigid. My poem, ‘Let Brigid In’, intimates the story of this ancient ritual as I remember it from my childhood.

bernadettegallagher.blogspot.ie
[instagram.com/bernadettegallagherwriter](https://www.instagram.com/bernadettegallagherwriter)
[facebook.com/BernadetteGallagherWriter](https://www.facebook.com/BernadetteGallagherWriter)
twitter.com/Cornagcat

Artwork by Emily Rainsford

Lisa Gannon ~ The Hopeful

Lisa is a behavioural psychologist (by day)
and aspiring poet (by night) from Co. Roscommon, currently
living in Co Galway.

Lisa has a passion for poetry and a penchant for echoing her
poetry's message through the universal voice of nature.

Publications to date include 'Moonflowers' (Strokestown
International Poetry Festival, 2012), 'The Shell' and 'Morality
with 'T'' (Trinity College Dublin's Icarus, 2013, 2014), as well as
'Eloping Inhumanity' and 'War or Peace' (Smashing Times, 2022).

*“Flickering lowly as she tames,
then thins.*

*Yet the flames continue to ebb and
flow”*

Artwork by Rachel Fountain

R. Fountain

Mae Leonard ~ An Domhain

Born into The Parish, Limerick City. Living in Co.Kildare for over 50 years. A long-time contributor on Sunday Miscellany and A Word in Edgeways. Published in Irish Times, Ireland's Own, Limerick Leader. Folklorist. Local Historian. Listed Writer in Schools and Libraries.



*“Tar isteach le sonas an Erraig
Is tusa Lus an Chromchinn”*

Artwork by Lucina Russell

Lucina Russell

Mae Leonard ~ An Domhain

Éiríonn sí gach maidin
Coimeádaí an tinteáin
Caitear amach na luaith

She gets up every morning
The ashes are thrown out

Lastar an tine
Glantar an tinteán
Cuirtear ar fiuchadh an citeal

Fire is lit
Heart is clean
The kettle is boiled

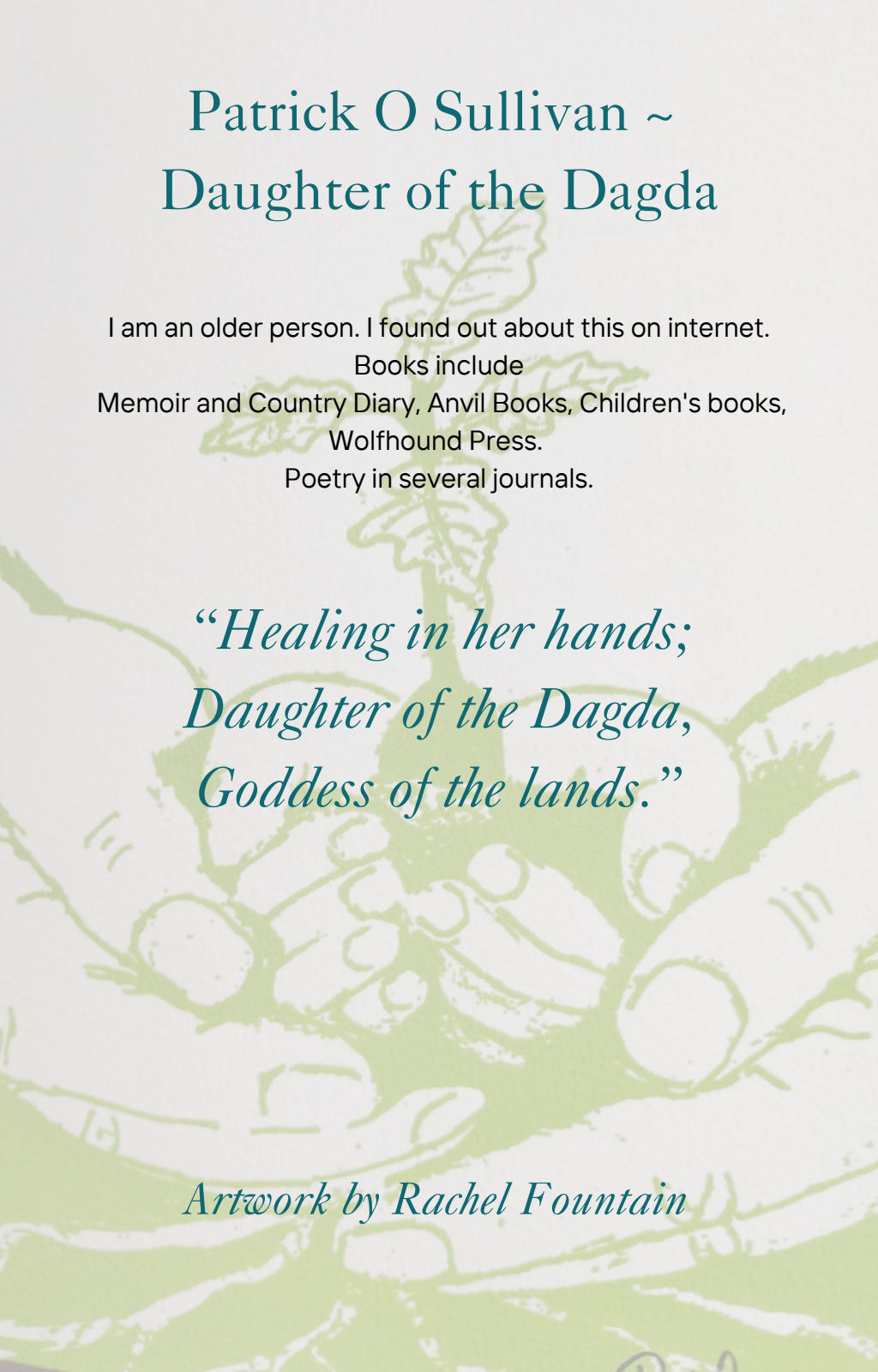
Tosnaíonn sí arís
Lá i ndiaidh lae
Coimeádaí an tinteáin

She starts again
Day after day
The keeper of the heart

Coimeádaí mo chroí

The keeper of my heart





Patrick O Sullivan ~ Daughter of the Dagda

I am an older person. I found out about this on internet.

Books include

Memoir and Country Diary, Anvil Books, Children's books,
Wolfhound Press.

Poetry in several journals.

*“Healing in her hands;
Daughter of the Dagda,
Goddess of the lands.”*

Artwork by Rachel Fountain

Liam Regan ~ The Protector

I am a published poet and my first collection of poetry was published last year. I am currently working on my second collection. I live in Stradbally, Co. Laois.

*“Her spirit reaches out
Like an eternal mist
Over her sacred land.”*

Artwork by Emily Rainsford

Emily Rainsford

Julie Duane Luttrell ~ Haiku 1

L.G.S.M CERT, CHEM TECH, PGDIP CUR STUS,M.ST .(Drama in Education)

Writer,Visual Artist ,Actor, Singer ,Story-teller,Lecturer, Educator.

A multidisciplinary , multimedia artist who has spent her whole life fighting for, establishing and inhabiting a valued place in her community as a creative , writer, artist , teacher, educator, singer, storyteller .

Her current work is informed by this backdrop and a lifelong love of learning.

She has published stories and poetry had solo and group visual art exhibitions .She worked professionally in the fields of science, drama, theatre, television and radio.

She lives in Monasterevin, surrounded by family and friends.

“Enflame my Creativity”

Artwork by Ciara O’ Keeffe

Anne Casey ~ Brigid Goddess of Light

As an Irish poet living in Australia, Anne is actively involved in reclaiming and proliferating the Irish language and culture Down Under. Annually, to celebrate Brigid's Day, she performs custom-written poetry for Australian audiences, sponsored by the Government and Consulate of Ireland.

*“Swathed in a cape of sunbeams,
your footfalls bloomed to plant our
path”*

Anne's poem entitled 'Brigid, goddess of light' draws on the rich traditions and mythology surrounding Brigid. She wrote this poem especially for 'A Little Book of Brigid'. A previous poem Anne wrote to celebrate Brigid entitled 'Season of Brigid' was set to music by world-renowned medieval chamber music composer, David Yardley and recorded with the Sydney Chamber Choir.

Facebook: @1annecasey

X/Twitter: @1annecasey

Instagram: @1annecasey

LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/anne-casey/62/986/aa9>
www.anne-casey.com

Artwork by Angelina Foster

Mary McCarthy ~ The Weaver

Mary Mc Carthy holds an MA in Creative writing from the University of Limerick, where she graduated with First Class Honours in 2020. She was shortlisted for the Patrick Kavanagh Award in 2022. Her poetry has appeared in The Galway Review, SWERVE magazine, Crossways Literary Magazine, Skibbereen Historical Journal, Riverbed Review, Spirituality, The Southern Star, The Echo and in the anthologies: Washing Windows 111, Chasing Shadows and A World Transformed and was displayed on posters by the Cork County Council. She has completed four poetry collections.

*“Go to the bog to gather rushes,
surrender to silence,
yield to musings of your soul”*

Artwork by Ann McKenna

Aisling Ní Choibheanaigh Nic Eoin ~ Featherbed

Aisling is bilingual writer from Galway and a recent graduate of the Modern and Contemporary Literature and Culture master's programme in the University of St Andrews, where she studied minority-language preservation and regional environmentalism. She is the Irish Language Editor at Channel magazine, as well as the co-founder and co-editor of a multilingual literary journal called Aimsir, which publishes writing and visual art focused on ancient Irish seasonality and seasonal traditions.

*“ You touch that quiet mouth of
hers*

*Dirt against dirt,
hand against hand”*

Artwork by Emily Rainsford

Emily Rainsford

Neville Sexton ~

Footprints in the Snow

Neville Sexton is a 47yr old writer living in Gorey, Wexford. He is previously published with Gill (Craig The Boy Who Lives) and Mercier Press (There's No Place Like Home At Christmas). Neville's 6 year old son, Craig, passed away in 2006 from a brain tumour. During that period of illness, Craig - every night in bed - would say a prayer to St. Brigid with her green scapular in his good hand, before placing it beneath his pillow. Ever since, St. Brigid has held a special place in Neville's family's heart.

*“And though winter stole you from
our sight
to take you to the hidden light”*

Artwork by Angelina Foster

Dolores Martin ~ Sí Mo Laoch

Born and raised on the Dingle Peninsula in South West Ireland, Dolores Martin marvelled at the beauty of the natural landscape from an early age, leading her to wonder where we have come from, where we are going and what is the meaning of life. Throughout her years as a photographer, primary school teacher and film maker, she combined her love of the natural environment, astronomy, science, music and philosophy, by writing and making films with her students to deepen respect for themselves, others and our home planet all the while encouraging their natural curiosity by looking deeper into the cosmos, and ourselves, to wonder about our place in the Universe.

*“Laoch ár dtíre
Grá ár gcroí”*

Artwork by Angelina Foster

Caroline Bracken ~ Brat Bhride

Caroline Bracken's poems have been published in Poetry Wales, New England Review, the Irish Times, Howl, The North, Belfield Literary Review, Poetry Jukebox, Gutter Magazine, Skylight 47, the Honest Ulsterman and elsewhere.

*“Spread
your cloak
on the eve
of Imbolc”*

This poem is written in a syllabic form called a Double Tetractys based on the sacred triangle invented by Pythagoras which his followers believed had mystical powers. This form seemed appropriate for a poem about Brigid and her magical, healing cloak.

Twitter (X) @CarrieBracken

Artwork by Angelina Foster

Mary Burke ~ I am of the Curragh

In Autumn 2023 Mary participated in a course titled Writing Our Way to Brigid, which provided the inspiration for her poem I am of the Curragh. She was delighted that the poem was selected for inclusion in the Little Book of Brigid. In 2019 Mary was placed first in Ireland's Own Beginner Short Story Competition with a story titled The Lost Photograph and was also shortlisted for the June Fest Short Story Competition 2020 for her story Gioraíonn Beirt Bóthar. She has also contributed chapters to two historical county publication series Kildare (2006) and Westmeath (2023). Her love for, and interest in, the local natural environment provides the stimulus and inspiration for her writing.

*“I am the footstep of all women who
travelled here*

I am Brigid keeper of the flame”

Having worked as a teacher in the heritage town of Kildare for many years Mary developed a keen interest in the history of Brigid and, in particular, the work of the Brigidine Sisters in Solas Bhríde. Living on the edge of the Curragh and, as a regular walker on the Curragh, she has a deep appreciation and love for the unique landscape of the Curragh.

Artwork by Emily Rainsford

Autumn Newman ~ Brigid Heals Me

Autumn Newman writes poetry and book reviews. Her work has appeared, or is forthcoming, in CALYX Press, Pleiades, Cider Press Review, and River Heron Review, among others. She has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. Her chapbook, *A Flower Burst Open*, is forthcoming from Finishing Line Press in 2025. You can find her on Instagram where she discusses poetry: @autumnnewman36

“The oak tree beneath me is breathing”

Autumn’s poem “Brigid Heals Me” is about Brigid transforming a traumatized woman into a whole woman.



autumnnewman36

<https://disabled-poet.com/>

Artwork by Angelina Foster

Éire Ní Fhaoláin ~ An Bhean Rúndiamhair

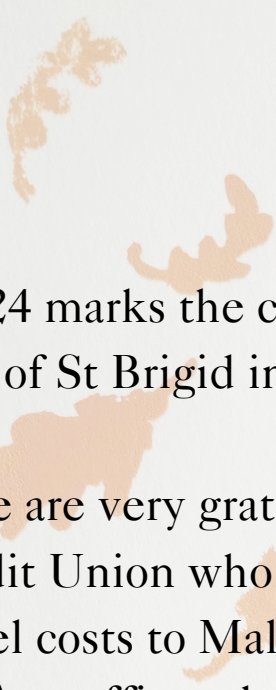
Éire Ní Fhaoláin is seventeen years of age and is a 6th year student at Meánscoil Gharman in Inis Córthaidh, Loch Garman. She is enjoying developing her love of writing in both the English and Irish language and is currently working towards publishing her first poetry collection. Éire's style of writing is heavily influenced by her observations and connection to nature, people and place. She also draws her inspiration from the well of folklore & traditions encapsulated in our Irish and Celtic Heritage. Éire's poem 'Loinnir' was recently published in The Irish Times. A selection of her poetry and songs in both English and Irish have been published by Fighting Words and various literary magazines. Éire was recently invited to write a new poem in the Irish language for the Cosán na mBan programme on Raidió na Gaeltachta. The programme was aired in July 2023. Éire is also one of eleven young writers selected in Ireland for the new Youth Advisory Panel with Fighting Words, where she encourages young writers to write poetry and incorporate the Irish language in their creative work. Éire plays the fiddle, the harp, and continues to develop her passion for our sean nós and traditional song heritage. Éire recently won the All Ireland title in Comhrá Gaeilge at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2023 where she recited her Irish language poem 'Loinnir'.

*“Gluaiseann an ribín,
An bhean rúndiamhair”*

Artwork by Angelina Foster



Artwork by Ann McKenna



2024 marks the centenary of the death of St Brigid in Kildare, Ireland.

We are very grateful to Kildare Credit Union who part-funded our travel costs to Malmo; and Kildare Arts office who funded the production of the ezine.

