

THE NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN

TITLE

A STUDY OF THE TEMPLE BAR GALLERY AND STUDIOS

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO:

THE FACULTY OF HISTORY OF ART AND DESIGN & COMPLEMENTARY STUDIES

AND

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE

FACULTY OF FINE ART

DEPARTMENT OF PRINTMAKING

BY

ANNRAUI WVEQ

APRIL 1986

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INTRODUCTION

Until recently in College it was my experience that there had been much talk about assessments and tutorials, timetables and deadlines. There was little talk about the Post College situations. Universities and Colleges in general have career guidance sessions to help their students find a place to work on completing their studies. What this project is interested in is not so much the job prospects of Art Graduates but more a look at the sort of space available to them, in this city to follow up on their own work. While it mentions various Art Centres it is particularly based on the Temple Bar Gallery and Studios the largest and most diverse of the Centres.

Over the last two years I researched the various fine Art as opposed to Graphic Design Studios, in the City, in which groups of people worked. It should be mentioned that there are some artists who also work as designers, as in the case of the Temple Bar Print Studio. There are also the occasional designers who rent space to make prints or to paint. Over the last five years four new studios have been founded. Before this happened there was really only the Dublin Graphic Studio. A very small print studio which was located in the basement of 18 Upper Mount Street.

Chapter One deals with how the studio got off the ground and sets it in the context of other studios. This chapter also looks at some of the facilities at the Temple Bar. It examines the Project Arts Centre, now over twenty years old and also mentions the latest plan for a new Dublin Studio called the City Centre. In a wider context it views the situation of similar studio spaces abroad.

The Second Chapter looks at the Gallery and Cinema and examines some of the exhibitions which have taken place. The Final Chapter examines the Studio space and some of the people at work there. There are several separate studio areas. Apart from giving just an account of what's there in terms of space I attempted to find out what it is the artists find useful about working there by means of interviews.

Over forty artists have used the Studio space at Temple Bar. Theatre productions, as well as exhibitions from Ireland and abroad have taken place. There is also a Print Studio and a Cinema. The Studio is self financing, in so much as all the people who use it, whether to work or exhibit, contribute towards the running costs. For example the Gallery Space costs £10 per day to rent plus electricity and heating costs. The Arts Council does give a grant towards the studio, £5000 of which goes on the administrators salary. It should also be said that the Council has given aid towards some of the exhibitions which have taken place as well as bursaries to some artists.

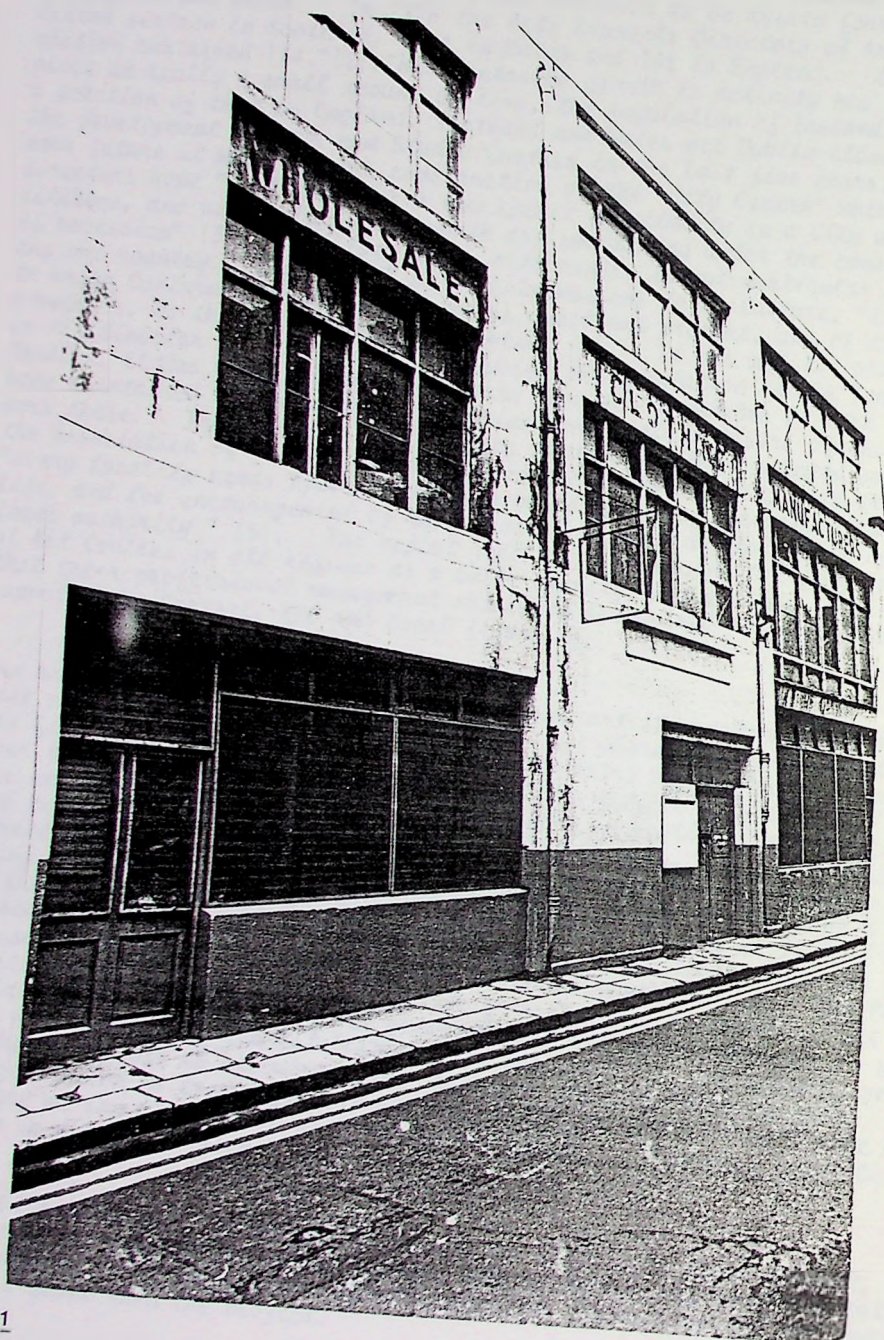
The intention of the thesis is to look at a working Studio in this City. It's establishment, development and usefulness to the artist as a place to work. It should help those who wonder where they can follow up their own work on leaving College.

The Temple Bar area of Dublin is named after the Temple family. They owned a house and gardens whose lands "embraced much of the area between Anglesea Street and Eustace Street in the early 17th Century" (1).

In 1609 Sir William Temple had been Provost of Trinity College, Dublin. During the 1840's the area was very popular and active. Trade ships then had further access up the river into the City and the Temple Bar is fortunate to run parallel to the river. There were provision dealers, carpenters, dairies and various other artisan's working in the area. What is now the Temple Bar Studios was once a Warehouse and clothing factory. Today the building is owned by the National Transport Company, C.I.E. and is on lease to the Studios.

To give it it's correct title, the Temple Bar Gallery and Studios is a professionally organised Arts Centre based as I explained, in one of the oldest and most central parts of Dublin. It was founded in the Autumn of 1983 with a view to making space available to artists for use as studios. A gallery and Cinema area were also developed and it had its first exhibitions with two Irish Artists, Patrick Graham and Brian Maguire, from the 9th to the 21st August 1984. The Temple Bar is administered by Jenny Haughton who was one of the founding directors of the Centre. The other directors are R. Armstrong, C. Bond (American), C. Carment, G. Farrell, J. Gogan, P. Graham, A. Groemer (Dutch), J. Hanly, T. McAdam, M. O'Hagan and M. Verdon. The Gallery and Studios, which are grant aided by the Arts Council are located at 4 - 8 Temple Bar, Dublin 2 and can be contacted by Phone on 01-710073. Other direct phone lines are 710612 for the print studio, 710568 for photography and typesetting and 776113 for film viewing and productions.

Rather than looking at the Temple Bar in total isolation, I feel it will be useful to look at some other centres. This should help to set the Temple Bar within the framework of a studio.



In May 1967 a United Kingdom Arts Centres Survey by the National Council of Social Service reported : there are believed to be thirty four centres in England and Wales. In 1976 the Arts Councils Directory of Arts Centres listed sixteen in Scotland, nine in Wales and 108 in England. the 1981 edition contained 174 "(2). This fantastic growth in activity has taken place in really a small amount of time, the population of Ireland is only a fraction of that in England, Scotland and Wales yet Dublin alone has seen the development of four new Studio Centres in the last five years. In the near future it will see the construction of the 'City Centre' which its directors hope "will engender a new spirit of vitality in a City whose citizens, and particularly its youth are smothering under the consequences of recession" (3). The idea of an arts centre is not particular to any one country. The French have their Maisons de la Culture, "intended to bring Cultural wealth of all orders, past and present, and of the highest standards, to the widest possible public" (4). It was not the arts Council or the Minister for the Arts who proposed the foundation of the Temple Bar Studios, it was born out of a desperate need for somewhere to work and has been maintained by the energy, enthusiasm and endless desire of those who work there. The need for more similar studios has been pointed out by the Association of Artists in Ireland in their 1984 report, they say, "every locality needs opportunities to build its own distinctive cultural life, and the encouragement of that process is the responsibility of the local authority" (5). The report goes on to recommend the further creation of Art Centres in all regions as a basic amenity in any area. The AAI says that their professional management should be recognised and financially supported by Central, EEC and local financing.

"An Arts Centre is a place where not just one art is practiced, as in a Concert Hall or a Theatre or a Sculpture's Studio, but where different artistic activities can find a home". If this is so the first centre of its type was born in Dublin over twenty years ago. In a 1975 Irish Times article it was noted "there is the new Project Gallery, physically the finest in Dublin if not in all Ireland". The Project began in an attic in Abbey Street in 1966, then moved across the street into a large basement. It's exhibitions offered an outlet to several young painters. The Project had an element of idealism which gave a freshness to the commercialism of the time. Throughout the Sixties in Ireland there was a growing dissatisfaction with the established annual exhibitions and general art scene which was very much a watered down internationalism. The Project in its day helped some artists to break free from the stalemate. That 1975 article also noted that "the new generation it helped to introduce is now a fair way to becoming the establishment in its turn"(8). Now twenty years on the Temple Bar is allowing young artists a place to work and show. A whole new generation is emerging. In the recent Bursary Show in the Temple Bar Gallery we saw a selection of that new generation. They will be mentioned again in a later section.

In 1974 another Arts Centre was formed in the city. It had a gallery, space and held various community based activities such as dance, alternative theatre and performances. Although grant aided by the Arts Council it was on a much smaller scale than the Project.

Pto/.....



The Project developed a theatre space alongside its gallery but had no facilities for studio space. The Grapevine did from time to time provide limited studio space for artists but neither the Project nor Grapevine compare well with the Temple Bar in terms of different artistic activities finding a home. It must be said that the new Grapevine or 'City Centre' will be a very ambitious move. However, the 'City Centre' will be community orientated and there it will be different to the Temple Bar which is at the moment helping professional artists. The 'City Centre' will have a policy of openness offering facilities to the population at large as a means to express themselves. There are as I have already mentioned other shared studio spaces in the City these will be looked at more fully later, in the context of studio space at Temple Bar. These studios are 'New Arts Studios Limited', the Black Church Print Studio, The Visual Arts Centre and the New Dublin Graphic Studio.

Over the last five years there has been a major increase in the amount of shared studio space in the city. The general increase in the number of people coming from the Art Colleges, needing somewhere to work and the cheaper economics of sharing space have been influential. There have been nearly a hundred fine Art graduates each year for at least the last two years in this Island. The commercial galleries in Dublin are continuously approached by artists attempting to have a show. According to one Gallery Director, Ciaran McGonigal of the Grafton Gallery he has been confronted by at least three or four new artists each week. The Gallery at Temple Bar as well as the studio space has grown out of a desperate need for artists to exhibit and work. It seems that this need will continue to grow as the amount of people applying for places in the Colleges is also on the increase. In 1981 when I entered College there were just over a hundred portfolios presented for the thirty available places. This year for the same course there have been nearly four hundred.

It should be pointed out that when you leave College or even if you've never been to a school or college in your life that you should not expect to stroll into a fantastic studio setup with lots of light, whitewashed walls and new equipment. It's up to you to make it work and the setting up of a new studio is not easy. The following information is condensed from an interview I did with Jenny Haughton administrator and Director of the Temple Bar.

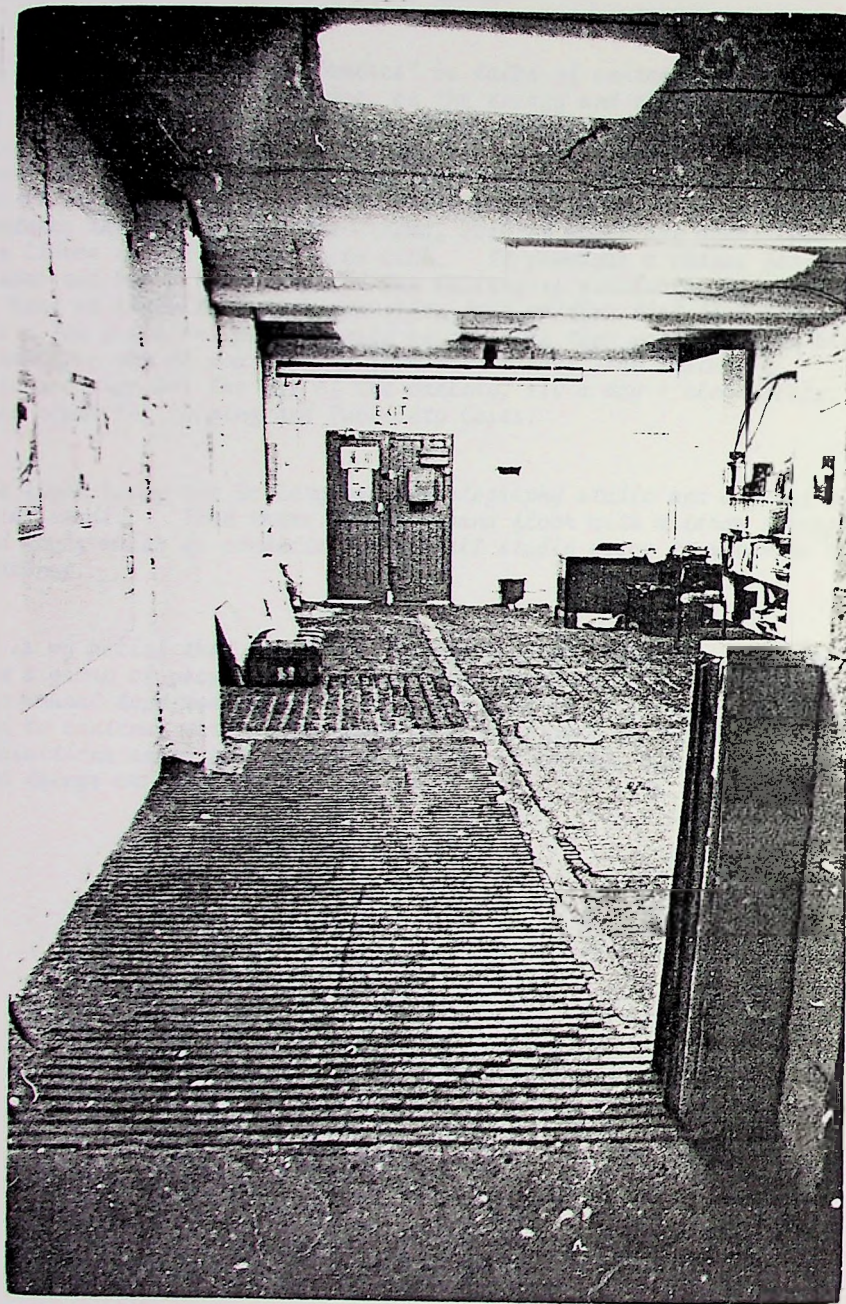
Having found a suitable building to use as a studio and workspace it was necessary to spend four months just cleaning out what was a disused clothing warehouse. The owners CIE had to be convinced not to charge rent for that period and the artists had to be convinced to pay for rubbish skips. There was no plumbing, no electricity and very little money. They were a new group and they were artists so with difficulty the studios negotiated a small loan from the bank and managed to get off the ground.



Depending on the size of space people are paying between £8 and £20 a week. This does not include heating or electricity or insurance against theft or damage to their work. A lot of people have shared space, for example, Anita Groener, a painter teaches for part of the week so during that time another artist uses her space and helps to cut Anita's costs.

With a small amount of money from the Arts Council the studios set themselves up as a Company. They did this as quickly as they could and bought the name to an already formed company. Through contacts they saved around £700 on legal and accountancy fees. Since then they have spent £500 changing their original company into a limited company, which shows they are non-profitmaking to a larger extent.

Artists have access to their space seven days a week, 24 hours a day. The lease from CIE is renewable every two years and the entire Temple Bar area is due to be demolished as part of Dublin Corporations road-widening proposals. In the long run CIE intend to build a large bus station in the area. I put the question to Jenny 'that this must be a constant worry?' : "We just have to work from day to day and try to survive".



The dramatic growth and continuing vitality of the Temple Bar Gallery and Studio is evidence enough that such a centre was and still is needed by the various artists who choose to work there.

In John Lane's book "Arts Centres" he talks of centres "which have depended, at least in the first instance, on the energy and entrepreneurial abilities of one person. Like great trees which grown from tiny seeds most of these have modest, even lowly beginnings" (10). So too has the Temple Bar grown and developed over the last few years. The top floor of the building houses several painting studios and a photographer. The floor below this contains the gallery and the Cinema, both of which are accessible to the public. The Cinema is the $\frac{1}{2}$ penny film club. It provides a chance for artists to show slides and 8mm / 16mm films. The Gallery is available for anyone who wants to have an exhibition although there is a waiting list of a few months. There are a few questions people would be asked if they wanted to exhibit, for example, - why do you want to show here rather than elsewhere. There is also a charge for the use of the Gallery, £10 a day + electricity. You must also cover the opening and Publicity Costs.

The floor below the Gallery has a photography studio and a large painting and print studio. Then there is the ground floor with a large storage space and foyer which is connected by a small studio space to a larger sculpture workshop.

It is my belief that the Temple Bar Gallery and Studios is a good example of how a group of people, although diverse, have managed to maintain and develop a communal type workspace. It proves that it is possible to find studio space and to continue work. The quality of that work or the quality of the exhibitions shown has been argued over by critics but at least its not stagnant and things are happening.

CHAPTER I FOOT NOTES

- ¹ John O'Sullivan, Dublin the Temple Bar Area, A Policy for its Future.
P.3
- ² Harold Baldry, The Case for the Arts, P. 135
- ³ Sandy Fitzgerald, Circa Arts Magazine, Feb '86, P. 46
- ⁴ Andre Malraux, Quoted in, The Case for the Arts P.138
- ⁵ Association of Artists in Ireland, A Crisis in the Arts, P.12
- ⁶ H. Baldry, The Case for the Arts, P136
- ⁷ Brian Fallon, Irish Times 24.7.75
- ⁸ IBID
- ⁹ Jenny Haughton, Interview with Annraoi Wyer
- ¹⁰ John Lane, Arts Centres P. 23

CHAPTER II : GALLERY & CINEMA

In September 1984 the Gallery opened with an exhibition of work by Patrick Graham and Brian Maguire. Since then exhibitions have come in from France and Holland and works have been sent from the studios to New York, London, France, Holland, Denmark and Germany. Next September there will be an exhibition of Cuban graphics with the possibility of a larger Cuban show to follow. The Gallery has shown the work of many Irish Artists and this will be the third year it has shown the National Graduate exhibitions.⁽¹⁾

"We are proud to be able to announce the opening of the new Temple Bar Gallery, situated in the centre of Dublin, close to the Ha'penny Bridge. We hope that you will become an interested participant. It already has a full programme of exhibitions into 1985."⁽¹⁾

The first exhibitions proved a success both for the two artists and the Gallery. I first met Brian Maguire in October 1982 when he was a part time painting lecturer. At first I found his work very dull and nasty. But he deals with nasty subject matter such as in "Mother with Head of Dead Hunger Striker" or "Young Man with Submachine Gun 1983". His colours are gloomy and depressing but they describe a similar scene. Both Brian Maguire and Paddy Graham have been linked to the New Expressionist movement. Sometimes by themselves although they try to avoid saying so. Brian calls himself a realist as he deals with real situations often coming from personal experience. For example his painting "Hester got the Sack and Died, Was She Murdered?", deals with the death of a person who worked with Brian's Father. Unemployment was too shameful and the person was found dead. The figure in the painting is alone, faceless and swallowed up by the dark surroundings of the environment. The persons name "Hester" is written in large red letters across the bottom of the work almost acting as a silent scream.

Patrick Graham also deals with subjects based on personal experience. His audience he says are "Certain great artists like, Montegna, Van Eyck, and Munch. Its a sence of playing your work against great work"⁽²⁾. When I taked to him he said his work was a reaction to refection, of society, of the church, sexuality and the art system itself. In his painting "Gift" a female figure appears abused and tied up. A victim. The figures face has the look of despair I have seen in only very old and dying people. But her face is young. To call the painting "Gift" is another cruel twist as the word usually summons up the expectations of something pleasant.

PTO/....



5

B. MAGUIRE



6

GALLERY

orum

Both of these artists had studios at Temple Bar. Patrick Graham still works there but Brian has moved out. For them to have had the first show together in the Gallery, associated the studio for a while with the new expressionism. Although the Studios contain many of the artists who have also been linked with expressionist style I believe their work to be diverse enough so as not to label the Studio with a particular style or group.

Since showing together in August 1984 Maguire and Graham have exhibited between them in Berlin, Boston, San Francisco and London.

The Exhibition which followed was the French Show, Lauka, Seamus Farrell, Aidan O'Reilly and Guala knew each other since April 1983 when they worked together in Paris until 1984. Lauka, Aiden, Guala and Stephen O'Reilly are now working in different parts of Paris. Seamus Farrell is currently working in Milan. Their exhibition opened on August 29th and continued until September 21st. It was the first time they had showed as a group and if it were not for the new Temple Bar Gallery it is unlikely that they would have been able to exhibit with such short notice in this Country. At the moment Lauka is designing the largest Autoroute monument in Europe for the Architect Manolo Nunez. Seamus Farrell works for himself in Milan and as an assistant to various artists. He also works for a number of Art Galleries. Stephen O'Reilly makes Sculpture, Collage and Etchings. Guala is a painter. The so called French show was the first show the new Gallery took in from abroad but it was not to be the last.

the exhibition which followed was called the October exhibition of 16 Irish Artists. The show coincided with the Rose Exhibition and the ComtemporEire festival. In January 1984 Jenny Haughton wrote a letter to the Director of Contempore Eire, Mike Murphy, saying " we plan to take part in the various arts activities which coincide with Rosc '84 and are preparing for a large painting and sculpture exhibition "(3). Amongst the artists being considered were Paddy Graham, Brian Burke, Michael Cullen and Michael Kane. That is, professional artists broadly associated with the independent artists and the 'making sense' exhibition in the 'Project Arts Centre' in 1983. Between that letter in January and the following October the list of names grew to 16 and sponsorship had been found. The Arts Council gave £3000 and Abbey Life Insurance gave another £3500. With this money a very professional exhibition of contemporary Irish Art was put on. Artists were assisted on the transportation of their work. A good catalogue was printed along with posters for the show. Even adverts were taken in Flash Art and Art Form. The show was excellent and provided a necessary platform for a contemporary art which had been neglected by the larger and more international Rosc exhibition.



7

P. GRAHAM



8

B.MAGUIRE



The work of Robert Armstrong, Brian Bourke, Cathy Carmen, Michael Cullen, Paddy Graham, Joe Hanley, Michael Kane, Patrick Hall, Mick Mulcahy, Tadhg McSweeney, Brian Maguire, Gwen O'Dowd and Michael Verdon was shown. To quote the Irish Times "The Temple Bar Exhibition is I suppose intended to partly show how the other half paints". In other words it is something of a challenge to the Rosc Exhibition. (4). It was built up around those artists who go back with the dissident tradition to the independent artists of 25 years ago. And also of group 65 almost twenty years ago.

The Gallery at the Temple Bar never seems to rest. November 1984 saw an exhibition of Ten Limerick Artists and included work by Vivienne Bogan, Charlotte Cryer and Christine Bean. The Gallery offers and alternative and larger exhibition space than the project and is able to host large scale exhibitions. 1985 started with an exhibition of drawings and paintings by Donald Hovnam (Jan 18th - 31st 1985). The show was titled "obsessive actions and Religious Practices". The painter himself appears frequently in his work thus implicating himself in it, usually as the male partner in a couple who are not real people in a real situation, but rather visual motifs, coded elements in a purely visual field. I feel there is a strong influence of the Cinema and Media advertising in Hovnam's work.

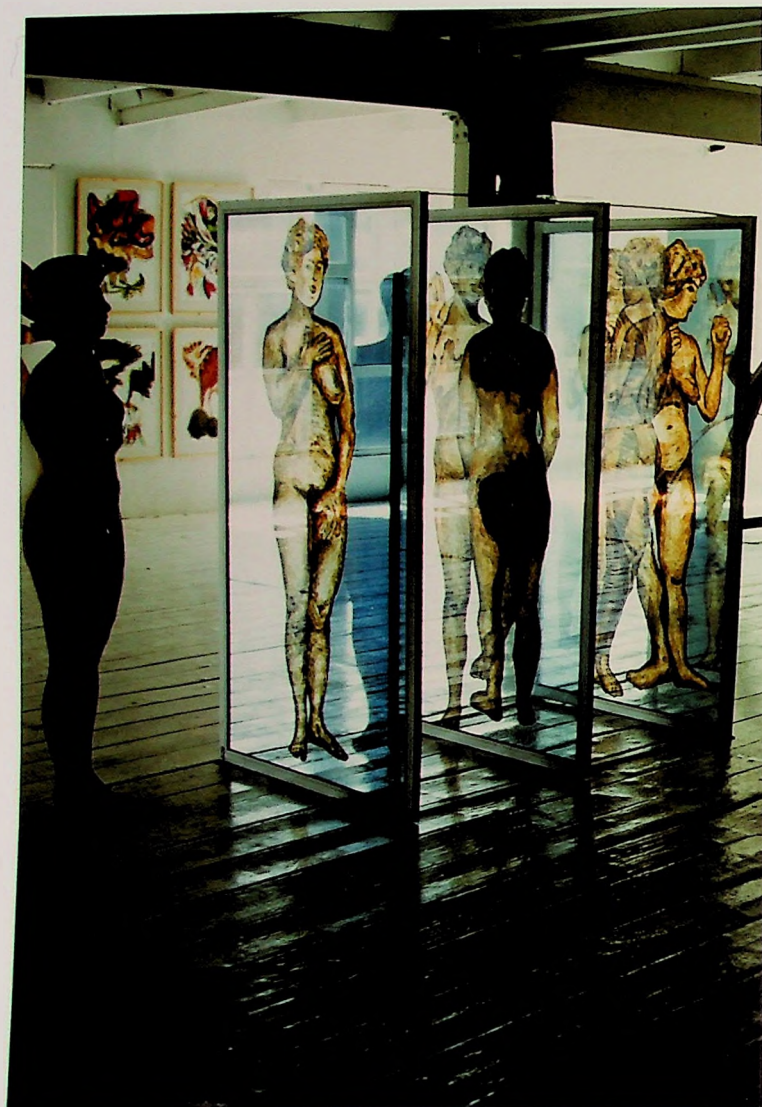
From the 25th of February to the 2nd of March 1985 the Gallery showed the work of a group of second year students from the National College of Art and Design. This was in keeping with the Gallery policy of giving a forum to all works. However, it was not a very strong show. There were some well executed pieces, some experimental and some not so good. I think Stephen Robinson can draw and his work jumped out from some of the more conceptual pieces. It was said that the show had been a courageous gesture.

Dreams and Lies was the title of an exhibition by Henry Sharpe of 16 large dark paintings and smaller lino cuts. The painting portraits broke up the overall feeling of the show. They had a directness which I felt was missing. The prints did not allow the same sort of freedom for expressions. The exhibition was full of symbolism of old age and decay but I felt it lacked the breakthrough from thought to image. The Show was in the Gallery from April 25th - May 19th 1985.



We have already seen how the gallery has shown various sorts of work by various artists at very different stages in their artistic lives. The summer began with a photographic exhibition called Viewpoint by Siobhan Maher. In this we see through her eyes the various moods and feelings of the Countries and Continents she visited. The exhibition before Viewpoint was made up of ten huge paintings by Patrick Hall. In it he examined the flaying of Marsyas. Patrick Hall believes that there is something in classical references which touches us. These myths are formulae, he says, "They've a dimension for our consciousness which takes us out of isolation", what he sees in the flaying of Marsyas is "the energy vested in the violated and the victim." (7).

From the 10th June until the 3rd of July the Gallery was invaded by film, video, installations, sculpture, photography and paintings in the form of an exhibition called 'of Desire'. This show represented work by Nigel Swan, Michael Arbuckle, Donal Ruane, Vikki Adams, Eilish McCarrick, Eamonn O'Hanrahan and Julie Murray. This was followed by the second Graduate Show Hosted at Temple Bar showing the work of a selected group of final year students from Colleges all over the country. Jeffery Dears painting "Room" was at the far end of the Gallery as you entered and for a second it seemed to be an extension of the Gallery. The Construction of the painting made the figure seem uneasy as if ready to hide or run away. The colours of the painting were pleasing but in conflict with then tension of the piece. Jeffery was in College with me and I think you would have to know him to see just how much of himself is tied into that "Room". The key to all the various bits of this show was the large life size figures by Ann Timony wich were placed in a see through, walk through glass box. The viewer became the viewed. They were well placed and they had the space they needed to work in. Both Ann and Jeffery are currently working towards separate exhibitions at the Temple Bar Gallery during 1986.



12

A. TIMONY



13

J.DEAR



14

A.TIMONY

In September 1985 there was a major exhibition of Dutch Artists in the Gallery. It was organised by Anita Groener a Dutch Painter who has worked in the Temple Bar since 1983. Anita's work has changed since I first met her two years ago. Her colours have become stronger and her imagery has a definite Irish taste to it. She paints her Cat in Monkstown, and the birds she sees coming in from the sea. Piet Dirkz work consists of small areas of colour making an installation. Rober Hack, Dominic, Anneke Hekke, Paul Kleizne, Selma Van Tartwijk, Roos Theuws and Nees Voorbraak also took part. "All the Dutch artists are between 25 and 32 and they would simply not measure up at all against a selection of 10 Irish Artists "(8). It is quite possible that one bunch of artists may or may not stand up against another. But at least we are allowed the chance to see what sort of work is going on abroad. Without the Temple Bar this show would not have taken place. When I was talking to some of the Dutch artists they were amazed at how lucky we were to have such a large studio and gallery space located so near the centre of the city.

When I asked Anita about her work she admitted that an Irish influence had come into it both by living here and also by working in proximity to a lot of Irish Painters at Temple Bar. "I have something to say first of all, I have to be content - does it say what I want it to say visually. One Person may get nothing from it another may get a lot". (9).

Lost
In Conversation

Paintings

by

PATRICIA KELLY



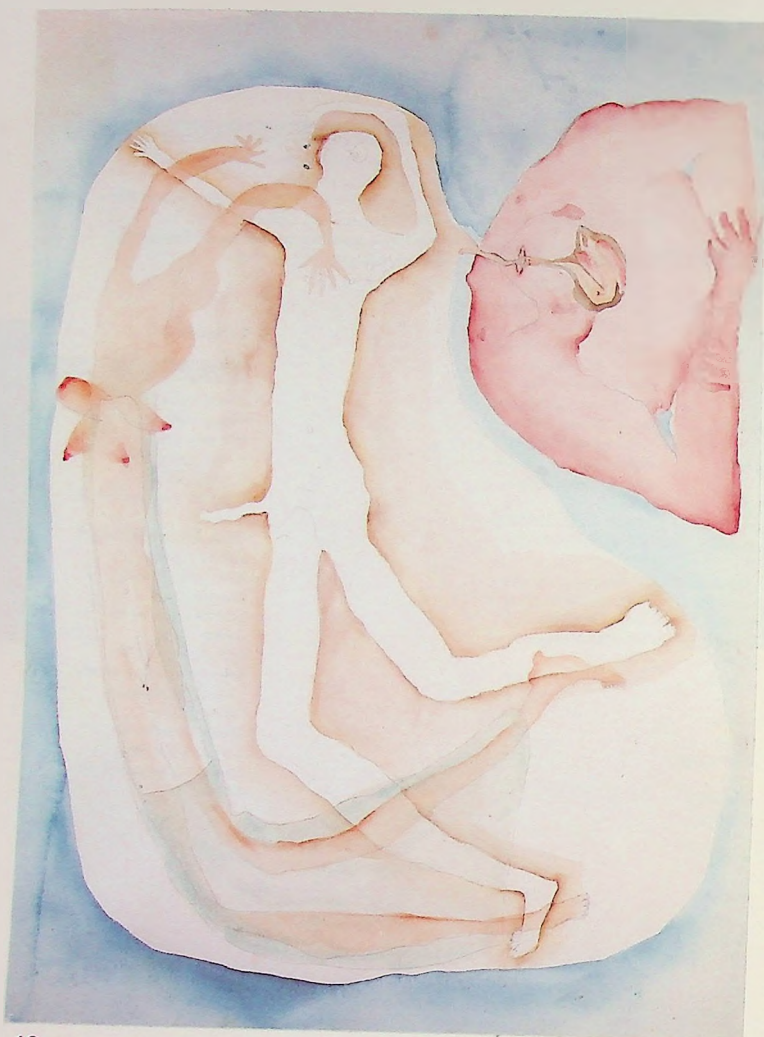
1986
Dublin

Temple Bar Gallery

There have been a number of other exhibitions and plays in the Gallery space. These include an exhibition of paintings by Billy Kinnarney, July 1985. "Looking in Looking out". An exhibition of paintings by Arne Hartigan, October 1985. "Four women at Temple Bar". An exhibition of paintings, drawings, and sculpture by Val Bogen, Anne Wilson, Rachel Parry and Antje Pia Gottschalk. November 1985. "Old Times" a play by Harold Punter, presented by Trademark theatre company, directed by Matt Skinner, March 1985. "The Shores of Bohemia" a new play by John Farrell, presented by Horizons, directed by Bill Wortz, Feb. 85. "Moving Statues" written and directed by Brighid McLaughlin. "Hamlet" by Icon Productions, December 1985. "Art of New Nicaragua" a lecture by American Historian David Craven, Feb. 1985. Tim Maul - Performance Artist from the United States. "Bhopul to Ballydine" an exhibition of photographs organised by the Alliance for Safety and Health, Dec 85. "Feminist Book Fortnight" a series of discussions by women involved in publishing - June 85. "Poets hooked on Sex and Death" dublin writers workshop - Sept 85. A more recent exhibition in the Gallery was the Bursary Show. This was a selection of artists who had one Arts Council bursaries in the last ten years.

At the opening it was said that the show had cost £5000 to put on but that it was considered good value as the artists had sold about £3000 in works. It was also said that it was "vital to support the indivisual artist" (10), and how by setting up studio centres artists were making the best use of the limited amount of funding that was available. I would question if spending £5000 on a show for seven artists was making the best use of funding. If you remember that the administrators annual salary is the same amount. I feel it a slightly less glossy catalogue had been produced several shows could have been mounted for the same costing.

The show contained the work of Cecily Brennan, Jackie Cooney, Kathy Prendergast, Paul O'Keefe, Samuel Walsh, John Burke and Felim Egan. I felt Kathy Prendergasts dream like water colour was very weak in comparison to her drawings of a couple of years ago. However her bronze sculpture, although lost in the huge Gallery, seemed a lot more sure and mature. Cecily Brennan's "Gurden Drawing" could have been taken from her solo show of 1982. I felt there was little progression. Her ground painting was more interesting but it seems to me to be at a halfway stage to becoming something.



16

K. PRENDERGAST



17

C. BRENNAN



18

C. BRENNAN

The Gallery is only part of the activity on that floor of the studio. There is also the Cinema. The Ha'penny film club was opened October 1983. It has been running since on a weekly basis with two showings every Thursday and special shows at weekends. The film club was established both as a viewing area for films of an exceptional or experimental nature not normally shown in Dublin Commercial Cinemas and as a facility for new film makers both foreign and local to show their films. It is hoped that this will both act as an encouragement to local production in audio visual, video, super 8 and 16mm medium. It is also hoped to educate film makers and the general public on the wide variety of film type in extance.

The film club is run by Jane Gogan, Trish McAdam and Johnny Gogan. Seasons are run on a three monthly basis with a 50p. membership per season plus £2 or £1.50 unwaged per film. The average membership per season is 350.

The club is also available for hire both for film events and meetings. At present the seating capacity is 70. Equipment includes a 16mm projector, super 8 projector and a double slide projector with dissolve unit.

We have looked at the Gallery, its development over a short period and some of the exhibitions held. We have also looked briefly at the independently run Cinema. But all of this is only one half of the activity. Having examined where the work is shown let us look where it is made and at some of the people who work within the studios at Temple Bar.

CHAPTER II : FOOT NOTES

- ¹ Jenny Haughton Press Release - August 1st, 1984
- ² Patrick Graham Interview with Annraoi Wyr
- ³ Jenny Haughton Letter to Mike Murphy, Jan 1984
- ⁴ Brian Fallon Too Much is Plenty, Irish Times Oct 5, 1984
- ⁵ Harriet Cook Irish Arts Review, 1985
- ⁶ B. Fallon Irish Times, 1st March 1985
- ⁷ Patrick Hall Interview
- ⁸ Dorothy Walker Irish Independent, Sept 7th, 1985
- ⁹ Anita Groener Interview with Annraoi Wyr
- ¹⁰ Dr. Muire dePaor Arts Council Member, Opening Temple Bar Gallery Bursary Show.

STUDIOS : CHAPTER III

The Chapter workshops and Arts Centre was founded to provide "A Centre that contain ed studios where artists working in all fields could rent space on the same basis on which they rented space at St. Katherine Dock at a halfpenny a square yard" (1). Part of this building in Cardiff is rented to painters, sculptors, designers, film makers and musicians. Chapter workshops have been operating in a converted Edwardian school rented from the South Glamorgan Council since 1971. One of its early aims was the provision of "much needed inexpensive studio space for local artists" (2). That same need for inexpensive space built up in Dublin until it was eased by the establishment of Studios such as the Temple Bar. There are two other studio spaces in the City where various activities take place. There is the 'New Art Studios' located at 2/3 Mary's Abbey, Dublin 7, phone 730617. And there is the 'Visual Arts Centre' Strand Street, Dublin. Both of these are on a much smaller scale to the Temple Bar and neither have a gallery space. The Visual Arts Centre was the first group formed specifically for sharing studios. Now it is in its fifth year and the Studio is still going strong. It was originally located in South King Street but then moved to Strand Street. According to founder member Theresa McKenna - "the building was in a shambles when we got it. It needed plumbing, electricity and had to be generally renovated to be useable. Our rent is private really, because as a group of people we organise ourselves" (3). The space for each artist is large but the lighting on the upper floor is better. There are currently 9 artists working there. The New Art Studios have only been in existence for under three years yet "we've had a large turnover of people. There's only four original members in the place" (4), according to Mary Burke, founding member and Director of the Studio. I asked Mary about the sort of problems they ran into when they first looked for a space. It took them a year just to get going, it started almost 4 years ago. A group from the National College of Art thought it would be a good idea to club together before leaving and look for studio space, went along to the Arts Council basically looking for a space for 8 people with a rent between £3,000 and £5,000 per annum, they wanted to see how much the Council could give them.

I asked if they had looked around for other buildings : "Yes this was the sixth building we came to. A lot of landlords would not be happy at the thought of Artists being in their building, this is the sort of thing you're up against. We however, were lucky and we met an openminded landlord. And it also helped us that on this side of the City businesses are moving out" (5).

Mary's Abbey is in good condition and has space for another 12 Artists. It has attracted a mixed group of Artists and Designers. The rooms are fairly small but the natural light on the top floor is very good.



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A.GROENER

Apart from these two studios Dublin also has two large print Studios. The Dublin Graphic Studio was formed in 19861 and is one of the oldest studios of its type anywhere in the world. It started in the basement of a house at 18 Upper Mount Street. There were two rooms which together were only about 850 sq. ft. The Studio now has about 3.200 sq. ft. and has been relocated on the Quays. There are thirty people working there at present.

The other Print Studio is called The Black Church and it developed out of a split with the old studio when it moved from Mount Street. The Studio opened its doors in November 1982 and 35 people made prints. The Arts Council would like to see the two studios come together. According to Sara Horgan, Director of the Black Church "they would like to see one centre for printmaking which they could fund".(6). This would act as the printmaking centre for the Country. Which is an understandable attitude, but there are counter arguments. Most Print Studios around Europe tend to be small, but there again if they're too small they do tend to become closed shops. They try to get a spectrum of work, and are establishing contacts outside the Country. Sending work out etc.

The Dublin Graphic Studio has two etching presses, two litho presses and one Wood Block Press. It also has a steel facing facility for plates. The day I went there it was sunny and the place was well lit naturally. However, I could imagine it needing more artificial light for the winter.

The Black Church commenced a printing service lastsummer which I was involved in. That is when the artist in this case "Barie Cook" came into the Studio and we produced an edition for him. At the moment the Black Church is building a darkroom facility. There are two litho presses, two etching presses and one vacuum press for screenprinting.

Having looked at these studios as well as the Temple Bar in terms of establishing themselves, administration and general aims it is obvious that a lot of dedication, clear thinking and practical organisation is needed to get a concept off the ground. It is hoped that a good idea of the difficulty of establishing a studio has been formed and a more general idea has been given as to the sort of space to be expected and the costs of using a studio. Although all these other studios are much smaller than the Temple Bar they share a general feeling of struggle. A struggle to give an ever increasing amount of artists the basic space they need to operate in. Apart from the financial and logistical element of a shared studio space. It is important to keep in mind the other elements present. "Its good having people around, its good to know that someone is behind that wall having the same kind of struggle. We do'nt really talk a lot about that even though you can sense it. (7)

Anita Groener is a Dutch painter who has been working in The Temple Bar Studio since 1983. I asked her what were the advantages in being there.



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J. HANLEY

"Well, first of all its an advantage to have a studio space, the space is the main thing. Its not so much the point that you can work in a co-operative or with a group although it can be very stimulating. Before Temple Bar I worked at home. My bedroom was my working area so I noticed the paintings I made looked big in my bedroom but when I brought them into the studio they were so small. The actual area I have in Temple Bar is 12 metres by 6 metres, quite big. The work started to grow". Our conversation continued - "If you work at home, after a while you might find you would like to let other people see your work. A good thing in a co-operative, even though you don't have to talk to people its just the fact that people are working and that you see work, it sometimes gives you a spark".

AW "Maybe somebody would just say a word ?"

AG "A word, or a colour you see or a brush stroke and you think, thats it" (8).

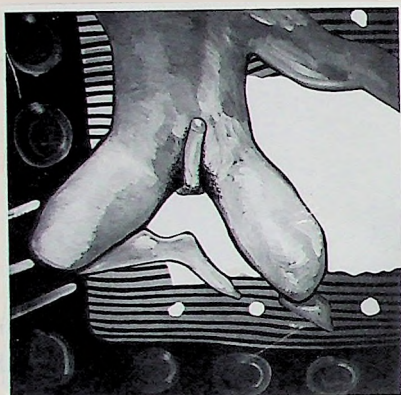
This line of thought, i.e., that the atmosphere itself can be stimulating seems to be backed up by most of the Artists I talked to. Rob Smith, Visual Arts Centre - "We don't really work as a group, there are nine of us here but we are all in at different times and different days. So really most of us get into our areas and get on with the work. Its a space to work and people have other jobs to make money. I'm in teaching. So the amount of time we've got here is just work". (9). The situation seems to be common to people who work in Art Centres. "Few of the people who rent the studios can make a living from it and most of them have to supplement their income by doing other jobs, like lecturing in Colleges" (10). Anita Groener teaches to support herself as do many of the other artists at work in the Temple Bar. Paddy Graham who jointly shared the first exhibition in the Centres gallery also has a painting studio on the top floor. Paddy sells relatively well compared to most of the Artists in the Studio but he also finds it necessary to teach on a part time basis. I talked to him about working in the Temple Bar.

AW "Do you feel your work has been affected by working within a group".

PG "Obviously only in a limited way there might be a kind of affectation in the sense that you see Artists doing certain things and they become part of your language, after that you have to be careful. If you are working in close proximity you do have to watch out."

AW "So that you don't start borrowing too much".

PG "Yes thats one of the problems. But I feel that if you are confident in what you do anyway you can actually take something and use it. No artist is unique, its fed off one to the other. If something grabs your imagination, technique wise grab it. Its been very good in the sense that it sharpens the philosophical edge to the approach towards my own work. Something I have found about a particular group of artists, in fact we may have different types of artistic solutions to a generally held philosophy". (11)



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P. HALL

"They haven't got anywhere to work in their own homes and they work here, but although these people work here individually in the building there is a strong community feeling between everyone" (12). This same community feeling is present in the Temple Bar. People help each other. During 1985 for example the Studios were faced with a huge rates bill and were as close to death as they have come. To raise money the Temple Bar opened its doors to the public and held a "Rates Bonanza". Artists donated paintings, drawings and prints for an exhibition. There was a special film season, a raffle, jumble sale and other activities. The under the surface feeling of "we want to keep this studio" materialised into action.

Other artists who have made use of studio space at Temple Bar include Joe Butler who lectures in the sculpture department at NCAD. Cathy Carmen who uses a large sculpture area on the ground floor. Gerry Farrell has a photography studio on the first floor. Martin Folan who has a small studio on the ground for sculpture. Triona Ford decided to take a year off teaching to paint, "I was fortunate to find a studio in Temple Bar working in a professional environment was an undoubted asset to the development of my work". Patrick Gillen concentrated on design work until he found a painting space in the Temple Bar in 1985. Patrick Hall has also made use of the studios. Barb Henry says "the time and workspace afforded me the chance to develop my interest in portrait work. I found it useful to have the space both to experiment with working on a larger scale and to avoid living with my subjects". Mo Leney who has also worked in the Black Church says of the Temple Bar "I'm still trying to adjust to having some space to myself". Mo works in paint, plaster and plastic. Catherine McCormack works in bronze and plaster at the Temple Bar. Donal Moloney has been working in Temple for three months, but already is working on advertising projects through photography. Apart from the Gallery, the Cinema and studio space for painting print and sculpture the Temple Bar allocated a space for a group called "New Art Murals". This consisted of Catherine McManus, Caroline Byrne and Eileen Lewis. "The room was used as a base for our work which included Mural painting around the city, sign writing and batik". The print studio at Temple Bar has been operated by Joe Hanley and Robert Armstrong. They have produced numerous posters and designed Catalogues for various exhibitions including the 25th anniversary of the Independent artists. Joe Hanley makes screenprints and paintings while Robert Armstrong does a lot of design work and paints. Their studio space is one of the largest and the day I visited one of the darkest.



Yet their work is full of vibrant and exciting colours. Michael Timlin who works in a stained glass workshop in Dublin has been associated with Temple Bar Studios since December 1984. Ronan Walsh has a large painting studio on the first floor of the studio.

"Whatever our assessment of the studios individual or collective value they are doing the best they can in difficult circumstances". (13)

The Temple Bar by the evidence given by those who have worked there is doing extremely well in difficult circumstances and is providing a creative place where artists can produce work in the space they need.

I would advise any student on leaving College to at least have a go at working in a Studio. I believe the professionalism and sense of general struggle would be an inspiration in an uncertain and dangerous time in a career.

FOOTNOTES : CHAPTER III

- ¹ John Lane Arts Centres P.58
- ² IBID
- ³ Theresa McKenna Interview with Annraoi Wyr
- ⁴ Mary Burke Interview with Annraoi Wyr
- ⁵ IBID
- ⁶ Sara Horgan Interview with Annraoi Wyr
- ⁷ Rob Smith Interview with Annraoi Wyr
- ⁸ Anita Groener Interview with Annraoi Wyr
- ⁹ R. Smith Interview with Annraoi Wyr
- ¹⁰ John Lane Arts Centres P.58
- ¹¹ Patrick Graham Interview with Annraoi Wyr
- ¹² John Lane Arts Centres P.58
- ¹³ J. Lane Arts Centres P.86

SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

It is too early to say how long the Temple Bar Gallery and Studio will last but it has already touched the lives of many artists by giving them somewhere to work and share ideas during a financially repressed time in the Arts in Ireland. Although the studio and gallery have much going for them, both they and the artists who use them are living on the edge of a cliff. Between balancing grants and income with increasing costs of materials, rent and electricity. And the ever looming possibility that the lease may be withdrawn, things are not easy. For example if someone wanted to improve their studio area by installing a new darkroom there is no guarantee how long they would be able to use it for. In general there is an air of hard work and enthusiasm at the Temple Bar but there is also one of uncertainty as to what the future may bring.

The Studio and Gallery have touched a wider public by holding exhibitions of both Irish and international art, as well as showing regularly films the commercial Cinemas would not touch.

Some of the opinions of the artists at work in the various Studios give a clear view as to the benefits in sharing an Arts Centre. I hope this study has been of use to you, I may have inadvertently left out bits and pieces of conversation I had with people which I thought unimportant but which you would have considered useful. If you have any further interest in the studios mentioned I have listed their phone numbers and the people to contact for information.

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USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Temple Bar	710073	Jenny Haughton
Temple Bar	776113	Film Viewing & Production
Temple Bar	710568	Photography & Typesetting
Temple Bar	710612	Print Studio
Black Church Print Studio	784345	Sara Horgan
Dublin Graphic Studio	772288	
	712388/Gallery	James McCreary/Jane Power
New Arts Studio	730617	Mary Burke
Visual Arts Centre	742078	Rob Smith
Project Arts Centre	712321	Sian Dempsey
Grapevine Arts Centre	728721	Sandy Fitzgerald