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## INTRODUCTION

Nano Reid<sub>1</sub> (1900 - 1981), a native of Drogheda, Co Louth, is deservedly considered as one of the foremost Irish Artists of the modern period. Reid first came to prominence during the late 1930's and is one of a number of artists who contributed to the vitality of the Dublin Art Scene in the 1940's and 1950's. While, as Brian Kennedy has observed, Reid was not a pioneer of the modern movement in the sense that Mainee Jellett and Evie Hone were, she took an active part in its advancement. She was a founder member of the Irish Exhibition of Living Art 1943 and exhibited annually with the group until 1970, when its committee members of more than 20 years relinquished their positions to a younger group of Irish Moderns.

As an artist Reid was a 'brave and lonely individualist', not committing herself to a specific movement or stylistic trend. As a student in Paris during the late 1920's Reid resisted seduction by Cubism, the prevailing artistic phenomenon of the period, choosing instead to absorb and adapt other influences relevant to her own needs and thus create her own and original brand of modernism. Throughout her life she continued in what Seán Ó'Faoláin calls 'her wide-eyed search, her purely instinctive exploration of her innermost possibilities', a search which culminates in her inimitable mature style.

It is remarkable to consider that Reid, while living practically as a recluse in Drogheda in her later years, was working in the mainstream of international modernism.

This essay deals with Reid's development as a painter, which must be considered against a background of inadequate sources, firstly in the lack of an established tradition in the visual arts in



Ireland and secondly in the absence of general enthusiasm for the modern movement. A brief historical outline of the state of art in Ireland precedes a consideration of the origins and development of modernism in this country. Then it is possible to assess how Reid's art education, her early influences, the artistic climate of Dublin during a period of uncertainty in the wake of independence, reaction against the academy, the emergence of specific groups and Reid's association with these, results in the development of her own style. Reid's development as an artist of substance came about through three interconnected phases and these are recognised and assessed. The final section consists of a list of work by Nano Reid which I have seen during the course of my research. In order to compile this catalogue it was necessary to locate and view as much work as possible by the artist, and to record details of title, date, medium, measurements, whether signed, provenance, date and circumstances of acquisition.

Reid's paintings are elusive as is her subject matter at times but when her work is actually viewed it yields up special qualities which are essential to an understanding of her achievement. This research has necessitated travelling to Belfast, Cork and Drogheda in order to view both public and private collections. Likewise in Dublin public galleries and institutions as well as private individuals have been contacted in order to see paintings, record details and where possible photograph the work. In attempting to trace the provenance of the works listed, exhibition catalogues have been consulted both of one man shows and group exhibitions in which Reid's work was included. Many of these were available in the National Library Archives and in the files of the National College of Art and Design. Others were obtained from private individuals and gallery Curators. The Arts Council kindly provided the 1974/75 Retrospective Exhibition Catalogue.

The National Library Archives also allowed access to journals and periodicals of the period 1900 - 1970. These included Dublin Magazine, Envoy, Horizon, The Bell, Irish Times, The Leader.

Also available were books which Reid illustrated. These titles and the articles consulted above are documented in the Bibliography. An interesting part of the research was talking to many individuals concerning Nano Reid and her work. Among these were James White, Brian Fallon, Brian Kennedy and John Taylor.

Letters too were a primary source of information. It was fortunate that a number of letters written by Reid to Jeanne Sheehy at the time of the 1974/75 Retrospective were made available. These gave a valuable insight into Reid's character as well as revealing her attitude towards her own work. Equally interesting were the letters to Sean McCrum, Curator of the Ulster Museum at the time, concerning the provenance of the three paintings by Reid in the museum collection, and those concerning the purchase of Reid's work by the Haverty Trust.

During the past 14 months many individuals and institutions were requested for information. These include Hilda Van Stockum (artist, fellow student, and friend of Reid), Camille Souter (artist), Declan Mallon (Drogheda Arts Centre), Brian Kennedy (Ulster Museum), Sean McSweeney (artist), Patrick Collins (artist). Institutions included the Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin (Eithne Waldron, Curator), An Comhairle Ealaion/The Art's Council (Mehb Ruane), Drogheda Library and Arts Centre, Sligo County Library, and the Crawford Municipal Gallery Cork.



CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND THE ORIGINS OF MODERNISM  
IN IRELAND

- (1) The context - no tradition in visual art in Ireland.
- (2) The origins of the modern movement in Ireland.
- (3) The prominence of women

## CHAPTER I

### (1) The context - no tradition in visual art in Ireland.

Artists and critics in Ireland have until recently laboured under the widely held supposition that there existed in this country no tradition in the visual arts to equal or indeed to compare favourably with the achievements of our great writers.

Irish culture was understood to exist in terms of the spoken and written word whereas the visual arts were largely regarded as inconsequential.

While it is widely recognised that Ireland in the eighth century created a rich visual culture in her manuscripts which Ruskin suggests was, 'in many qualities quite without rival and seeming that it might have advanced to the highest triumphs in painting'. Thomas Bodkin in his discourse The Importance of Art in Ireland (delivered 24th June 1935, Dublin), refers to the 'long period of stagnation in the Art of Ireland', due in his opinion to centuries of oppression, turmoil, dissension, and economic disability.

This allegation is further borne out by the fact that in the closing years of the 18th century when Ireland enjoyed a brief period of prosperity and comparative liberty, a sudden and vigorous revival of art ensued with the figures of George Barrett, Nathaniel Hone (the elder), James Barry and Martin Archer Snee to the forefront.



During the 19th century the fine arts once again fell victim to prevailing adverse political, social and economic conditions brought about by the act of union which came into effect in 1801. Irish artists from this era inevitably looked abroad to France, Italy and England, driven into exile in order to seek adequate opportunity to develop their talents and achieve status as artists. Daniel Maclise and James Arthur O'Connor featured prominently among this generation of Irish exiles. Later the so called 'Irish Impressionists'<sup>3</sup> chose France, the village of Barbizon and the environs of Grez-sur-Loire south of the forest Fontainebleau and later Brittany (Pont Aven, Quimperlé, Finistéré), as the source and inspiration of their work in the latter half of the 19th century.<sup>4</sup>

Hone spent 17 years in France, Roderic O'Connor spent his life there.

The essential pattern for an aspiring young artist to follow from the middle of the 19th century onwards was firstly to engage in a period of intense drawing in the Dublin Society Drawing School - initially copying engravings and copying from the antique before advancing to study of the life model. Then it was usual to spend some time in the Royal Hibernian Academy School painting from life; after which followed a period of study abroad. The usual route was London - Antwerp (to the Academy) - Paris (to the École Des Beaux Arts or alternatively to one of the Private Ateliers which were rapidly growing in popularity). Finally they would mingle with the most celebrated and influential artists of the growing modern movement in the artists colonies outside Paris and later in Brittany. This fact is of importance when considering the development of an awareness in Ireland of contemporary international trends.

This tradition in studying abroad was still quite fashionable in the early 20th century and Paris remained the fulcrum for study.

The great literary renaissance and Arts and Crafts revival of the turn of the century was paralleled with equal vitality in the areas of the fine and applied arts in Ireland - Orpen, Hone, Osborne, Hughs, Lavery, John Butler Yeats, and later Paul Henry, Jack B Yeats, and Harry Clarke.

Equally significant was the introduction of Sir Hugh Lane to the Irish art world (1901 Hone/Yeats exhibition),<sup>5</sup> marking the beginning of a life long commitment to Irish art. His aim was to foster a distinctively Irish school of painting, best achieved in his opinion by exposing emerging artists to the best of international modernism. The subsequent founding in Dublin in 1907 of the Municipal Gallery of Modern Art to cater for the renewed general interest in the visual arts in Ireland, largely generated by the creative energies and generosity of Sir Hugh Lane and by his gift of a substantial collection of modern European paintings to the state,<sup>6</sup> coupled with the establishment of Sarah Purser's 'An Tur Gloine' an institution which revolutionised the arts and crafts in Ireland - must surely indicate a vital if not equal renaissance in the area of the visual arts.

The extraordinary achievement of Jack Butler Yeats now ensures that he is recognised as the undisputed founder of modern Irish art.<sup>7</sup> His creativity and originality in pigment provided a stimulus for generations of younger Irish artists.

Brian Fallon describes Nano Reid, Patrick Collins, Tony O'Malley et al as to a large extent post Yeatsian. While acknowledging their individuality and originality as artists, - their work rarely if ever resembles that of Yeats - he suggests the likely influence of Yeats in that he lived, worked, and exhibited in Ireland. His paintings could be seen regularly in the Victor Waddington Galleries, which had close associations with many of the Living Art artists in the post war years.



## (2) The Origins of the Modern Movement in Ireland

Because of its particular content it is necessary to define exactly what is meant by modernism in Ireland. The modern movement was international in character and embraced all the arts. Within the visual arts, many sub-movements have been identified under the main heading of modernism which begins in France in the latter half of the 19th century with realism.

Brian Kennedy in his introduction to Irish Art and Modernism (1920 - 1949), suggests a possible definition of the modern movement.

'In essence the Modern Movement was the antithesis of the 19th century naturalism and by acknowledging the inherent properties of their materials - the flatness of the picture plane, properties of pigments, media shape and support ... and by ceasing to use them descriptively after nature the artists who embraced it enriched our understanding of the artistic process.'<sup>8</sup>

Of what relevance was it to Ireland? Who were its exponents and equally important, how was the modern movement received in Ireland?

Irish artists were not immune to external influences nor indeed isolated from general happenings abroad. If they had relied on the insular attitude of the 1922 Freestate Government and the equally stagnant views of the Royal Hibernian Academy (the ruling artistic body of the day) the case would have been different. As early as December 1884, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Dublin Sketching Club, an exhibition of avant garde art was held at Leinster Hall, Molesworth Street.<sup>9</sup> It included work by James McNeill-Whistler and John Singer-Sargent among others.

While hardly influential the show, was significant in that it was the first of its kind and served to strengthen the argument of the enlightened minority namely that the most effective way of raising the standard of Irish Art was to 'expose it to outside influences and not to insulate it against them'<sub>10</sub>. Again in April 1899, a representative collection of modern French, Dutch and English modern paintings was held at the same venue. Reviews were enthusiastic thus marking another triumph for the exponents of modernism in Ireland. In the catalogue introduction of the 1901 Hone/John B Yeats exhibition, Sarah Purser suggests the existence of 'An embryonic school of painting', a view sustained by AE. Russell. In January 1911, Ellen Duncan organised an exhibition of Monet and the Post Impressionists at the United Arts Club, Dublin, 44 St Stephen's Green. || During March 1912 the Irish public witnessed cubism for the first time with a show of modern French paintings exhibited at the United Arts Club, once again arranged by Ellen Duncan. It was not until January 1922, a decade later, that avant garde paintings would again grace the walls of an Irish gallery. An exhibition entitled 'Some Modern Paintings' organised by Paul Henry and Arthur Power was held at Mills Hall, Dublin. The intervening years had been fraught with unrest and uncertainty, and paradoxically the formation of the Irish Freestate in 1922 signalled the beginning of a period of artistic paralysis largely due to 'Governmental pursuit of a Policy of Nationalist inspired isolation'<sub>12</sub> as a vehicle towards national identity.

The paintings of Sean Keating and Paul Henry best exhibit the vision of Ireland, in the words of the Historian Terence Brown, as 'a rural Gaelic civilisation that retained an ancient pastoral distinctiveness...'. Henry's idyllic landscapes of the west suggested 'a kind of Nirvana for which Keating's patriots would gladly die'<sub>13</sub>.



Nationalism, romanticism, idealism, Catholicism were the order of the day! The journals of the day give proof of the flavour of the times.

This general attitude of insularity was to persist well into the 1930's. Even as late as 1940 Anne Treanor, Fashion Editor, Hibernia Magazine writes - 'as if to forestall crippling modernism... fashion seems to have taken 50 paces backwards'<sub>14</sub>. Short stories even tended to be didactic compounding Catholic ideals.

The outbreak of war in 1939 with its resultant economic and social disorders together with Irish neutrality resulted in economic emergency. Fr Thomas Lynch writing in Hibernia clearly reflected the introversion of the age considering foreign influence synonymous with anti Catholic influence.

'The European War is Catholic Ireland's opportunity to review every social and economic question and though other nations have joined issue in a struggle for power and greedy material gain we must see that our cause is greater and higher than this'<sub>15</sub>.

Despite the separatist attitude of De Valera's Freestate Government and the Royal Hibernian Academy's refusal to recognise the tide of modernism which had swept Europe since the time of the Impressionists, a new generation of artists were brought up with the advantage of earlier exhibitions. More significantly they studied abroad and thereby became accustomed to current trends and practices in art. The period from c.1920 through to the 1950's marked the growing ascendancy of the modern movement in the visual arts in Ireland, and the subsequent decline of the Academy.

### (3) The Prominence of Women

The pioneering efforts of certain individuals notably women and namely Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone cannot be over looked. Despite opposition, scathing reviews, ridicule, the emerging artists of the period were to soldier on and achieve if not a distinctive Irish school, recognition as independents of great originality and individuality. This period was also to witness the emergence of distinct groups who set themselves up in direct opposition to the Academy. Most notable among these were The Society of Dublin Painters, The White Stag Group, and The Irish Exhibition of Living Art.

In 1924 Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone held their first joint exhibition in Dublin, of works influenced by cubism. Having studied under Andre l'Hote in his Academy in Paris, and later under Albert Gleizes at his studio at Puteaux outside Paris, Jellett and Hone were the first exponents of cubism in Ireland. The reception of the work shown in 1924 was hostile and mocking!<sup>16</sup> A similar reception greeted two cubist paintings exhibited by Jellett the previous year at The Dublin Painters Show . By the early 1930's Mainie Jellett was increasingly engaged in lecturing and making broadcasts for Radio Eireann on the subject of modernism - this was apart from her private teaching. The 'walls of prejudice' were beginning to come down.<sup>17</sup> Jellett and Hone were also the driving forces behind the Irish Exhibition of Living Art which was established in 1943.<sup>18</sup> Jellett was Chairperson of the organisation committee of its first show held in the Autumn of that year.<sup>19</sup>

It is perhaps for her charisma and for her remarkable contribution in educating the Irish public in the ways of modernism rather than for her paintings that Mainie Jellett is best remembered, and in the case of Evie Hone for her



contribution in the area of stained glass design. While their 'legacy' is evident in the work of Norah McGuinness and to a greater extent in that of Rev. Jack Hanlon, (Reid suggests that he was the most directly influenced by Jellett), it hardly explained the work of the more individual members of the Living Art Group. Among these Nano Reid features strongly. Kenneth McConkey refers to Hone's and Jellett's 'watered down cubism'<sup>20</sup> as hardly constituting a distinctively Irish art. This may well be, however it cannot be denied that their experiments in the cubist manner had a liberating effect on young emerging artists of the period.<sup>21</sup>

The prominence of women artists in the development of modernism does not end with the persons of Jellett and Hone. Norah McGuinness was also a central figure in the Irish art world from the time of her return to Ireland with the outbreak of war in 1939. Following the death of Mainie Jellett, McGuinness was elected Chairperson of the Irish Exhibition of Living Art in 1944. She was an energetic woman whose qualities as an organiser and a leader earned her a central position in the Irish art world of the day. Nano Reid was a shy and very private individual who did not feel at home in the sophisticated world of the Living Art.<sup>22</sup> However, she was a founder member of the Irish Exhibition of Living Art, took an active part in its activities, and exhibited annually with the group until it was taken over by a new generation of Irish moderns in the early 1970's. In 1950 with Norah McGuinness, she enjoyed the joint distinction of being selected by the Government to represent Ireland in the Venice Biennale. As a painter Norah McGuinness developed very little after the late 1940's and from the start of the new decade a growing conservatism is evident in her work. Reid is remarkable in that, 'she never stood still and some of her most original work was done in middle age'.

This outline of early modernism in Ireland bears upon the development of Reid's art. The place of Reid's art within the context of Irish art; what had gone before and where she had to look for inspiration and direction.



## CHAPTER II

### NANO REID ... EARLY INFLUENCES AND ASSOCIATIONS

- (1) Footprints
- (2) Early Associations.
- (3) Influential Groups.
- (4) The Impact of the Irish Exhibition of Living Art.

## CHAPTER II

### (1) Footprints

Nano Reid left Dublin for Paris in 1928 accompanied by three colleagues from the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art: Doreen Dickie, Kathleen Cox and Molly Maguire. She was following in the footsteps of Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone, and indeed in the tradition of many Irish artists of the previous century. Reid studied at La Grande Chaumiere but as instruction was only occasional and offered in French she did not find the teaching very beneficial. She later regretted not having studied under one Master as Jellett and Hone had done in the early 1920's, or as Norah McGuinness was to do in 1929.<sup>23</sup> However, she undoubtedly benefited from her contact with other young artists of various nationalities. Paris was at this time the undisputed capital of the art world, and a centre which attracted young artists from many nationalities, creeds and social strata. In Paris Reid was introduced to and impressed by the work of Antonio Berni, an Argentinean artist who she met at the studio of a friend.

I first met him in Paris. Then I was only just out of the school of art, and I had only seen representational paintings. When I saw his it was a revelation. It was not passionate painting.<sup>24</sup>

Elizabeth Curran, writing in The Bell in November 1941 remarks on how Miss Reid 'can still get enthusiastic when she remembers how her Latin and South American fellow students lashed their glowing paint onto their canvases with a free and easy recklessness'<sup>25</sup>

On quitting Paris having spent approximately nine months there, Reid returned to Dublin for a brief period followed by



a short term of study in London, initially at the Central School of Art, South Hampton Row. Here she studied drawing and painting from life under Meninsky and was encouraged by his insistence that her work had strength.<sup>26</sup> Apart from Meninsky's classes she did not find the course very engaging and in the Autumn of 1929 she moved to the Chelsea Polytechnic where she undertook a three hour a week course in that term, followed by a 20 hour per week course in the Spring of 1930 before returning to Dublin later that year.<sup>27</sup>

Prior to her sojourn in Paris and London, Nano Reid had studied art at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art c. 1923/4 - 1928).<sup>28</sup> Hilda Van Stockhum remembers 'Nano Reid from Drogheda, a fierce redhead, stared with keen green eyes from behind spectacles. She was uncompromising, blunt, and desperately looking for truth'.<sup>29</sup> The method of instruction at the Dublin Metropolitan School was highly academic, in the tradition of Orpen with a strong emphasis on draughtsmanship. Reid remembers her period of study there as 'one long period of drawing, drawing in the life class and drawing anything and everything that helped her to explore the possibilities of line'.<sup>30</sup>

This system of teaching was perpetuated right into the 1960's by individuals such as Sean Keating, Leo Whelan, and Patrick Tuohy who were Reids teachers in the Dublin school.

Harry Clarke ultimately impressed her most - 'How wonderfully he drew' she said, 'It was a joy to watch him work'.<sup>31</sup> Her earliest exhibited works (R.H.A. 1925) were illustrations executed in the Harry Clarke style. These included such titles as:- 'The Poet's Song' (Tennyson); 'Celtic Fairytales' - 'The Earth Shapers', and 'An Enchanted Nightingale Sits'.

## (2) Early Associations

In June 1920 Paul Henry and his wife Grace formed The Society of Dublin Painters, their aim being to offer young Irish artists an alternative venue to the Royal Hibernian Academy in which to exhibit their work. The significance of this move cannot be over stressed. The Dublin Painters were the first group to establish their own premises and operate a Gallery in direct opposition to the Academy. The members of the group in the words of Brian Kennedy 'exposed no common aesthetic but rather sought to foster a spirit of broadmindedness and sympathetic understanding in young artists of promise'.<sup>32</sup>

The Gallery Number Seven St Stephen's Green, was to become an important venue for young artists in which to show their work, and the annual exhibitions of the Dublin Painters' an important event on the Irish art calendar.

When in 1934 membership was raised to 18 members Nano Reid joined the group. Records show she exhibited seven paintings, titles as follows;<sup>33</sup>-

The Little Maid	Cat.12
Dukinella Achill	Cat.19
Slieve Mor Achill	Cat.20
A Rocky Shore	Cat.31
Gweedore Donegal	Cat.33
Menaun Cliffs Achill	Cat.35
Kerry Labourer	Cat.39 <sup>34</sup>

Reid was to exhibit with the group on a regular basis thereafter.



In 1942 Stephen Rynne writing in The Leader exclaims;-

If a person wanted to make an annual checkup of Irish art and had few opportunities of seeing exhibitions then he would best achieve his end by attending The Dublin Painters. Here are the liveliest of the living painters, the explorers and experimentalists. They paint what they will and for the most part their touch is light, airy, deft. They are the moderns, not caring to commit themselves to a creed or school, individual and independent ...<sup>35</sup>

This glowing review marks the pinnacle of critical acclaim for the Dublin Painters. Paradoxically it also coincided with the beginning of the end, as the Society sadly declined into conservatism. Significantly the artists Rynne most admired were Mainie Jellett, Ralph Cusack and Nano Reid. He considered the latter's work that of 'a genuine creative artist'.<sup>36</sup>

1934, the year of her election to the Society of Dublin Painters, was in more ways than one a significant year for Nano Reid. It was in this same year that Reid's attitude to painting was to change dramatically, on viewing an exhibition at the Gresham Hotel Dublin, of watercolours, which was the fruit of two years work along our Atlantic coast by the Belgian artist, Marie Howet. Elizabeth Curran writing in The Bell in November 1941 claims that for many who saw this exhibition, Howet remains the most individual painter of Irish landscape.<sup>37</sup> These paintings were likewise to have a profound effect on Reid's developing style. She saw in Howet's work 'the possibility of a free and expressive use of paint'.<sup>38</sup> She describes the sensation on seeing the work as, 'Having a veil torn from my eyes', and credits the experience with having given her 'A new lease of life'.<sup>39</sup>

To quote once again from Elizabeth Curran's article of November 1941;-

Marie Howet sought to express the dramatic implication of what she saw - the melancholy flowering curves of the bog covered hills and the rich rhythm of the cloud heavy skies, linked up for her with the life and lore of the people. Her painting was not so much an impression of the facts she saw, as an effort to convey the feelings they gave her.<sup>40</sup>

Howet's work in its fresh, original and novel approach to a somewhat tired subject matter was a 'revelation' to Nano Reid, indicating possible direction rather than exerting a tangible stylistic influence. Reid was to seek out unhackneyed locations in Ireland such as Ballyferriter and the area surrounding Belmullet, and work there for long periods during Autumn and Winter. She sought to imbue her work with the same expressive quality and spontaneity which she had admired in the work of Howet. Her watercolours shown in Daniel Egan's Gallery in 1936 according to Elizabeth Curran -

'Conveyed a deep psychological understanding of her landscape subjects with such economy of her medium as to mark her independent merit. With a simple use of wash and a lively brushed-in line she reached a balance between obvious visual aspect and any undue intrusion of her own personality'.<sup>41</sup>

Though Howet's paintings were to have a significant impact on Reid's developing style, there can be little doubt as to which of these artists was the better painter. While Patrick Swift writing in Envoy in March 1950 acknowledges that at her best, Howet 'Could invest a landscape with a strongly personal mood and convey deep feeling',<sup>42</sup> Desmond MacAvock writing in the Sunday Tribune shortly after the death of Nano Reid suggests that 'With the possible exception of her Irish paintings, Marie Howet was not really a very original painter'.<sup>43</sup>



### (3) Influential Groups

The Contemporary Picture Gallery 1938 - 1944 also played a prominent role in promoting modern painting in Ireland, being most 'influential and adventurous' in its activities until c. 1944.<sup>44</sup> As Stephen Rynne puts it 'Art stepped out when Jack Longford launched his great educational shows at contemporary pictures'<sup>45</sup>

Kenneth Hall also claimed that it was 'The only modern Gallery that made any attempt at advanced ideals in Dublin' until the early 1940's.<sup>46</sup> By then of course The White Stag Group had been established and the Irish Exhibition of Living Art had come into being, both offering alternatives for young and avant garde artists in Ireland.

Before the emergence of such modern groups the dominant body in the Irish art world was the ruling Royal Hibernian Academy expounding its essentially traditionalist aesthetic. Perhaps it was an attitude of jealous ignorance which allowed the members of the Academy to discount or ignore the contemporary developments and excitement of international modernism. Despite the tireless pioneering efforts of a few enthusiasts, the general public with certain exceptions remained sadly if not oblivious of the more recent trends abroad, then certainly indifferent to them.

Overall quality of art criticism was poor, being for the most part of a pedantic descriptive nature and this contributed little towards improving the situation. Mediocrity was accepted both in terms of art work and in written criticism. This prevailing artistic climate was to undergo dramatic changes in the 1940's as the war years and our then controversial neutrality provided Ireland with the opportunity to begin to reassess her political,

social and economic situation, and to emerge with a greater degree of self confidence as a nation. Margot Moffett writing in Horizon April 1925<sup>4</sup> notes a general mood of optimism, an air of enthusiasm and an increased interest in art in the 1940's despite the adverse economic circumstances of the period.

Believing as I do, in the immense power for creative good that a few individuals of responsibility and initiative may wield within a community, in spite of unfavourable conditions, it is not altogether surprising that there should be a feeling of things happening in Dublin now. The consistent activities over a number of years of a few open minded people, creative artists in the main, must surely create pressure which affects at least the intellectual minority of a community. 47

At this time there was also an intensified interest in concert music with the debut of Brian Boydell, 'A young composer and conductor of adventurous spirit'<sup>48</sup>. New theatre groups were flourishing. A new vitality in Irish writing is cited, while with regard to cinema a developing taste for continental films is apparent. To quote Brian Kennedy 'The war years saw the tacit acceptance of many of the ideas which had evolved during the previous two decades'<sup>49</sup>. A spirit of openness and a willingness to consider new ideas characterised the 1940's distinguishing this decade from the cultural introversion of the 1920's and 1930's.

Living through the 'emergency' in Dublin and the 26 counties, and coping with 'The War' in Belfast and the surrounding northern counties amounted to quite a different experience. Despite economic recession, life seemed to go on as normal (on the surface at any rate) in our southern Capital according to Robert Greecan, while life in Belfast, as in London, was coloured by fear of attack from the enemy ranks.<sup>50</sup> The 'Emergency' saw the return of many Irish artists working abroad on the continent. Among these were Ralph Cusack, Norah McGuinness and Louis le



Brocquy. There was also the arrival on our shores of many 'new imports', refugees, notably English, in search of a tranquil haven, an idyllic retreat, an escape from the rigours of war. These 'blow-ins' added atmosphere to wartime Dublin. More significant for artists in Ireland was their impact on the Irish Art scene. Margot Moffett refers to these imports as being 'of real wealth'. While predicting their dispersal after the war she also realises their importance to future generations of artists in Ireland. 'There will no doubt be a general dispersal during the aftermath, but the work of these artists has certainly radiated a strong and I am convinced, a lasting influence'.<sup>51</sup>

The White Stag Group 1940 - 1946 was a loosely bound and shortlived though tremendously influential and controversial group of rebel moderns of various nationality, creed and indeed of mixed abilities. The original White Stag Group 'a brotherhood for the advancement of subjectivity in psychological analysis and art', was founded in Bloomsbury, London, by Bazil Rakoczi and Kenneth Hall. On their arrival in Dublin they re-established the group. The first meeting of the group was held on April 26th 1940, at the studio of Rene Buhler in Lower Baggot Street. As non-nationals these foreign visitors were uninhibited by the social and other prejudices of their Irish counterparts resulting in 'a fundamental freshness and originality of treatment' in their work.<sup>52</sup> The first exhibition held by the group was also in April 1940 at the same location. Press reviews were favourable, one critic noting a 'variety of concept and technique' in the work shown.<sup>53</sup>

Bazil Rakoczi and Kenneth Hall, the founder members of the original Bloomsbury Groups, were joined in their activities by Dublin friends and other interested parties. Among these sympathisers were artists Brian Boydell, Bobby Dawson, Thurloe Connolly, Ralph Cusack, Patrick Scott, Paul Egestorff, Doreen Vanston (1942 at the invitation of Rakoczi), and others Rene

Butler, Georgette Rondel, Noel Moffett and his wife Margot, Patricia Griffith and Nigel Heseltine. May Guinness, Evie Hone, Mainie Jellett and Nano Reid exhibited occasionally with the group - Reid was at this time living in Dublin and was part of the literary and artistic bohemia of the time.

The popularity of The White Stag Group can be judged by the significant number of artists involved. This interest in avant garde art, highlighted the need for a forum unfettered by any conditions or limitations in number, as was the case with the Dublin Painters, in which to show their work. It was the precedence of The White Stag Group, stimulating an interest in modernism, coupled with growing dissatisfaction with the Royal Hibernian Academy, which encouraged and caused respectively the founders of The Irish Exhibition of Living Art to establish that forum in 1943. Criticism of the Academy had reached an all time high in 1942 with outrage at its continuing indifference to international modernism, and more specifically at its rejection of work by Nano Reid and Louis le Brocquy in the previous year.

The aim of the Irish Exhibition of Living Art was 'to make available to a large public, a comprehensive survey of significant work, irrespective of school or manner by contemporary artists'.<sup>54</sup> It therefore sought not only to act as a refuge for the non academic artist but also to educate artists and public alike to current trends in Europe and abroad by exposing them to the best of international modernism. The first exhibition of Living Art was held in the College of Art, Kildare Street, from September 16th until October 9th 1943, with Mainie Jellett as its first Chairperson. Laurence Campbell RHA, Margaret Clarke RHA, Elizabeth Curran, (Secretary), Ralph Cusack, Evie Hone, Louis le Brocquy, Norah McGuinness, and Rev. Jack Hanlon formed the organising Committee.<sup>55</sup>



While Margot Moffett regards this first show 'as a genteel attempt to form a Salon des Refusse'<sup>56</sup>, she acknowledges the activities of the group as further proof of increased interest in contemporary modernism. The exhibition contained a total of 168 works by 76 artists including four by Nano Reid -

Donkey Scratching	Cat.109.	price	7. 7.0
Reading in the Hayfield	Cat.110.	price	15.15.0
Paquita	Cat.111.	price	20. 0.0
Adventures of Ideas	Cat.112.	price	30.10.0

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The final title of this foursome suggests the influence of Mainie Jellett or perhaps of the experimentalists of the White Stag Group. However while acknowledging the value of Jellett's work in its liberality and in its consequent liberating effect on the work of young Irish artists, Reid liked neither the work of, nor the methods employed by Mainie Jellett considering them too 'cold and intellectual'. Reid had come into prominence in the late 1930's and was an important contributor to the annual Living Art shows.<sup>58</sup>

#### (4) The impact of the Irish Exhibition of Living Art

The extent of the achievement of the Living Art can best be measured by the quality of the artists it produced or 'fostered' - that generation of artists which first came to prominence during the 1940's and 1950's, and continued to maintain a freshness and originality in their later mature work. Among the best of the emerging artists were Thurloe Connolly, Colin Middleton, Gerard Dillon, George Campbell, Dan O'Neill and Nevill Johnston, and it is these artists together with Nano Reid, Norah McGuinness, Rev. Jack Hanlon, Patrick Scott, Louis le Brocquy, and Ralph Cusack who were 'to determine the course of the most innovative Irish painting until the late 1950's'.<sup>59</sup> Of these Nano Reid is perhaps the most markedly individual.

Another area in which the success of the Irish Exhibition of Living Art can be measured is in the upsurge in the years which followed in the number of independent professional commercial galleries which were willing to accommodate the work of young artists of talent. Among these were The Victor Waddington Galleries, Eight South Anne Street, and Leo Smith's Dawson Street Gallery, the nurseries of many artists in the post war decade. Furthermore by way of ensuring education in the ways of modernism a series of films and lectures delivered by James White was to become a regular feature of the annual show following the success of the series in its introductory year in 1951.

The progressive quality of the work of the Living Art Group undoubtedly owes some debt to exposure of the young artist to the work of the best modern painters. In the 21st Anniversary Catalogue 1964, R. Kyle Knox (Secretary), in tribute to the successes of the group proudly notes that - 'It would be difficult to name many major European artists since Monet who have not shown at the Irish Exhibition of Living Art exhibitions'.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore in the Living Art show of 1963 exhibits were included by all the great Americans of the time, De Kooning, Robert Rauschenberg, Robert Motherwell, Georgia O'Keeffe, Mark Rothko, Jasper Johns, Sam Francis, Stuart Davis and Morris Graves. Likewise in 1945 the annual show included work by English and French Artists Andre l'Hote, Edward Burra, Victor Pasmore, Venessa Bell, David Jones, Jean Lurcat, William Scott, Henry Moore, Ivan Hitchens, John Piper, Graham Sutherland, and Jaques Gailliand. For Nano Reid the inclusion of work by Ivan Hitchens was of some importance. Hitchens was also to feature in the 1950 exhibition, showing two paintings, one on loan from a private collection.<sup>61</sup>

Ivan Hitchens (1893 - 1979), himself the son of a painter, had studied at the Royal academy schools in London. In 1940 he went



to live in Surrey. His main subject matter was the richly wooded landscape around his home ( - note a parallel to Reid's preoccupation with her native Boyne Valley), which he expressed in non-naturalistic almost abstract and tachiste terms. 'Tachisme' or 'Art informal' re-emerged on an international scale in c. 1945.<sup>62</sup> This style of painting is characterised by a sensuous manipulation of paint resulting in a strong meaty textured surface. The abstract compositions of Nicolas de Stael (1914 - 1955), in that the motif retains its importance and indeed its presence - his works of the early 1950's though quite abstract were recognisably landscapes, still lifes or other real objects -hardly constitute action painting or tachisme though still depending upon a sensuous use of paint and gestural brushwork. I would suggest a possible parallel between Reid's work and that of de Stael during this period of the early 1950's - Reid tends to retain a certain figuration within the richly woven tapestry like quality of her work. One wonders could the work of Hitchens therefore have inspired this development in Reid's landscapes of the 1950's.

We know Nano Reid certainly had great admiration for the work of Ivan Hitchens (she owned a lithograph by him).<sup>63</sup> Another fact worthy of note is Hitchen's partiality to a long rectangular format. Reid was also to make use of this format in paintings such as *Ross-na-ree*, exhibited 1955 Living Art. One wonders if Nano had seen any of his work prior to the Living Art shows, while as a student in London perhaps, or while visiting friends Patricia Hutchins and Robert Greecan who lived in Kensington during the years immediately following the end of the second world war.<sup>64</sup>

The Irish Exhibition of Living Art shows were to enjoy great critical attention. Significantly the quality of published art criticism in the 1940's and 1950's was to improve dramatically

with Thomas McGreevy and James White writing in The Irish Times, Arland Usher and Edward Sheehy in Dublin Magazine Elizabeth Curran in The Bell, and Stephen Rynne in The Leader, each offering informed opinion and considered criticism on current art practice.

In Dublin Magazine (January - March 1945), Edward Sheehy was harsh in his criticism of the 1944 Living Art show, describing the exhibition as 'living and partly living'.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore he goes on to say:-

It clutches the academic robes firmly in its right hand while its left welcomes a wide diversity of fauves like Nick Nichols, Bazil Racozi, Naifs like Paatrick Scott and Kenneth Hall, and plain entrepreneurs in paint like E. A. Maguire'.<sup>66</sup>

However, he justifies its liberation, 'as against the sometimes quite inexplicable intransigence of the academy', in the work of Louis Le Brocquy, Thurloe Connolly and Nano Reid. In the October - December issue of Dublin Magazine, Sheehy's review is more favourable judging the 1945 exhibition 'far more pleasing than that of last year'.<sup>67</sup> He praises the show's inclusion of work by contemporary European modern painters and suggests, 'the possibility of its outdoing the academy in significance if not in popularity'.<sup>68</sup> By the late 1940's The Living Art had realised Sheehy's prediction. Recognised by then, as the main salon of the year in Dublin, the Irish Exhibition of Living Art had in effect secured victory for the moderns over the academicians in the battle for supremacy which had characterised the Irish art world from c. 1920. Norah McGuinness describes the annual Living Art shows as, 'the excitement of the year' for young artists, 'they all painted for the exhibition' which 'cleared the decks' of academic restraints.<sup>69</sup> In 1948 Edward Sheehy was to write 'the Living Art exhibition has become an institution and is today a far more artistic event than the Academy'.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore R. Kyle



Knox ends his anniversary review of the groups achievements on an optimistic note suggesting that 'with an appreciative general public and younger artists well aware of international movements we should soon see the development of an Irish School of Painting'.

71  
Could the 'visionaries' of the poetic genre perhaps constitute such a school? Indeed does it much matter if no recognisable group is discernible among the independents of this period?

It is important to realise that the Irish Exhibition of Living Art was not an isolated phenomenon. It rather grew 'out of a rich manifestation of art', the way for its inauguration being paved by the consistent activities over a number of years of various individuals and organised groups most notably by those of The White Stag. Bruce Arnold quotes Brian Kennedy, referring to his recent catalogue tribute to Kenneth Hall and the activities of The White Stag, (a ten year retrospective of the work of this artist opened on Wednesday 6th March 1991 in a new Gallery in Clare Street), 'Kenneth Hall' he writes,

Had a penetrating awareness of life around him, as is clear from his work ... at a time when independent galleries were few in number, by arranging their own exhibitions the group helped to break the dominance of the establishment in art matters and, no doubt, they also helped to pave the way for the inauguration of the Irish Exhibition of Living Art in 1943. 72

### CHAPTER III

#### REID'S DEVELOPMENT AS A PAINTER

- (1) Early period.
- (2) I send my love along the Boyne ...
- (3) Watercolours
- (4) Later work
- (5) Illustrations and drawings



### CHAPTER III

#### Reid's development as a Painter

In 1942, which is relatively early in her career as an artist, Nano Reid was hailed by Thomas McGreevy as 'a born painter and a born stylist'. By this time Reid's reputation was firmly established among the intelligent and perceptive, if not among the general public.

Earlier in 1937 she had received considerable recognition as an interesting and rapidly improving painter 'with a distinctly modern outlook'. Her watercolours were especially praised for their spontaneity and freshness. Her portrait of Carl Hardebeck was likewise commended for its bold direct approach. In 1939 Liam O'Flaherty praised the 'quality of livingness' in Reid's work and Elizabeth Curran writing in The Bell 1941 referred to her work as 'growing in solidity and interest'.

Reflecting the vitality of the Irish art world in the 1940's, Reid was to reach the height of her achievement during these years and continue to produce work of great strength and originality well into the 1950's. Much of the work of this period is characterised by a gay lyricism which is best exhibited in her poetic evocations of her native Boyne Valley. During this period Reid was also to paint a number of portraits remarkable for their 'forceful expression of character'. By the opening years of the 1960's Nano Reid was still very much in her prime, producing work in a bold expressionistic nature which tended increasingly towards abstraction.

### (1) Early Period

For those who are familiar only with the mature work of Nano Reid, the highly representational even academic nature of her early work of the late 1920's and early 1930's may come as a surprise. During this time Reid painted landscapes, portraits (usually of family and friends) and still-life pieces. The treatment was straightforward, quite literal with a strong emphasis on drawing and close attention to detail. Her portraits of Cathleen Green (cat.1), Cathleen McCann (cat.2), Brendan McCann (cat.3) and Jenni Reid (cat.4), all dating from the middle to late 1920's, are tentative pieces. Paint is applied very thinly, and while careful modelling and a sensitive approach render them pleasing to the eye, they lack the force and strength of character of the later portraits. Her Galway Peasant (cat.5 fig.1), is a splendid example of the bold simplicity of Reid's early style, revealing extraordinary insight into the character of the sitter.<sup>74</sup> The painting is reminiscent in terms of both subject matter and treatment, of Paul Henry's Western Peasants of 20 years earlier. The Lilter (cat.6 fig.2),<sup>75</sup> painted in 1933, while still quite directly representational, in its heavy dark outlines and looser brushwork predicts the bold gestural treatment of the later portraits. This tendency towards a broader gestural handling of paint is further evident in Portrait of a Man (cat.12 fig.3). The Fauvist Little Maid and Portrait of Carl Hardebeck both date from the early 1930's and combine the strong linear emphasis with sensuous paintwork which characterises Reid's portraits of the 1940's and 1950's.

Exhibition catalogues dating from this early period suggest that Reid had 'already embarked on an involvement with the wilder Irish countryside',<sup>76</sup> (Donegal, Achill, Connemara), and indeed her native Boyne Valley, which has so earnestly engaged her throughout her painting career. Titles such as Dawross Point,



Connemara (exh. RHA 1931), Mennaun Cliffs, Achill (exh. RHA 1934), The Boyne at Mornington (exh. RHA 1934) bear witness to this early association with landscape. Crumphan, Achill (cat.6 fig.4), with its sombre muted tones enriched with patches of blue and bright red is a characteristic example from the early period, while Chord Road Garden (cat.13) and Cruisetown, Clogherhead (cat.14 fig.5), though still largely representational paintings, display a looser handling of paint and a lightness which heretofore was not evident in Reid's landscapes. This maybe a response to the spontaneity and quality of 'expressiveness' which Reid had admired in the work of Marie Howet. Still Life (cat.9 fig.6) is a rather pedantic piece though interesting for later reference.

It is interesting to note that Reid was at this time exhibiting regularly at the Royal Hibernian Academy Annual Shows, while also showing work with the Dublin Painters from 1934 onwards.

(2) I send my love along the Boyne... 77

I send my love to the very fields and trees along the Boyne from Drogheda to Slane. Sometime for my sake, go out to Dowth alone, and go up to the Moat and look across the Boyne, over to Ross-na-ree to the Hill of Tara and New Grange, and Knowth and Slane, and Melifont and Oldbridge, and you will see there the pictures that I carry for ever in my brain and heart ...

(John Boyle O'Reilly)

Nano Reid could so easily have been the author of these haunting words. Reid loved her Boyne Valley with a passion perhaps unknown to the person of a lesser sensibility. It was her home, the place of her birth, the cradle of many childhood and later memories, and the source of and inspiration for so many of the richly evocative landscapes of the great middle period of her art.

Reid was living in Dublin during this middle phase of her development as an artist, and was an active participant in the excitement of the current art scene. While she was to paint some very fine portraits and figure studies at this time, she came to rely increasingly upon her native Boyne Valley and the hinterland of Drogheda to feed her imagination. Coupled with this preoccupation with landscape, we witness Reid's exceedingly personal and distinctive approach to genre and history painting.

The Boyne Valley landscapes are almost always imbued with 'a brooding celtic mysticism'. This is particularly evident when the paintings involve portrayal of an ancient monastic ruin or one of the many pre-christian archaeological sites which are dotted throughout the Boyne Valley region. Visiting Slane 1947, (cat.47 fig.7) with its hieroglyphic indications of ancient stones, leaning crosses and curious ghost-like figures is one such painting. Melifont Abbey of the same year is an equally haunting piece. Other examples of this celtic theme include Brugh Na Boinne (exh. Living Art 1955), King Cormac's Burial Place (exh. Living Art 1951), Tower and Cross Monasterboice (exh. Living Art 1949) and Where Oengus Og Macificantly Dwells (exh. Living Art 1969). To quote Brian Fallon, 'there is something swirling, dark and almost daemonic in her oils, something which seemed to be a direct emanation from the Irish landscape and from the mythic historic past'. Ancient Land (cat.55) and Legende (cat.43.) also point to this historical or celtic influence. In that the composition is divided into compartments Ancient Land is reminiscent of the sculptural plaques on celtic crosses. Gerard Dillon was likewise influenced.

This ability to evoke atmosphere is not confined to her landscape paintings. It was during this middle period of her development as a painter that Reid began to paint the town of Drogheda itself. In Old Town Walls (St. John's Gate), (cat.42 fig.8),



Reid used fluid paint in a combination of dark tones with broad sweeping brush work to create a mood recalling the ancient historical associations of the old town. A curious view point and flattened perspective (which becomes a feature of Reid's work) contributes to the air of enchantment which this painting exudes. To Drogheda (exh. Living Art 1949), a view of Drogheda from a hill, displays Reid's increasing tendency to view a scene from an eminence. This adoption of a 'bird's-eye-view' often creates the illusion of a purely abstract composition, distorting the scene into 'a swirling pattern of flattened buildings amidst a maze of lanes and trees'.<sup>78</sup> James White suggests that Reid, in her deliberate distortion of reality is 'following a compulsion to express herself in a way which had little to do with the appearance of nature, but which follows rather her own instinctive feeling for colour and form'.<sup>80</sup>

Reid possessed a special talent for genre painting. Street Players (cat.36), a lyrical painting in a combination of soft shades of blues and pinks, vividly captures the gay atmosphere of this typical scene of life in a country town. Likewise in Loafers (cat.44 fig.9), which is more sombre and muted in tone Reid admirably captures the relaxed effortlessness of the scene. These paintings display Reid's acute awareness of the expressive qualities of colour. Rubbish Dump (cat.47 fig.10), Hanging Out the Washing (cat.37 fig.11) and Backyard (cat.51 fig.12) suggest the ritual of daily life while Card Players<sup>81</sup> (cat.63 fig.13) and Ballads in the Bar (cat.64 fig.14) reflect a Pub's convivial atmosphere.

There is an extraordinary intimacy attached to Reid's work. As Frances Ruane observes, 'Reid is not interested in the big vista. She prefers to depict subjects which are close to her',<sup>82</sup> such as her cats, Cats in the Kitchen (cat.39 fig.15), her immediate surroundings, her friends as is evident from Through the Door (cat.24 fig.16) a painting of George Campbell in the studio.<sup>83</sup>

It is in her composition and in her colour that Reid is at her most individual. Quayside Strollers (cat.72 fig. 17) is perhaps her most successful piece compositionally. The composition is perfectly balanced and a remarkable sense of movement is conveyed through the sweeping rhythmic line which dominates the piece. Reid considers composition to be the most important feature of a painting.<sup>84</sup> Her use of deliberately distorted perspective, a flattened picture space, and her use of line to delineate form combine to give an overall decorative quality to the work. Farm by the River (repr. Envoy 1950 p.33) and the extremely evocative Sea Voices (repr. Irish Times, Oct. 2nd 1965), display this quality admirably while in Hanging out the Washing (cat.37 fig.11) an interesting formal concentration is achieved through the unusual perspective chosen. In addition the abbreviated drawing and perspective combined with intense patches of colour suggest a debt to fauve painting of the opening years of the 20th century.

Figure by a Well (cat.57 fig.18), is an excellent example of Reid's ability to bind her composition together through a subtle repetition of shapes, colour and brush strokes. The attitude of the figure in complete harmony with its surroundings, a harmony strengthened by the subtle colour combination of greens, greys, blues and soft browns, is particularly effective. Nano Reid is often seen to express a preference for sombre muted tones, (undoubtedly a reaction to the dull misty nature of the Irish climate). However she invariably relieves their sobriety with flicks or patches of bright yellow, orange, rose, blue or white, or some such bright hue. The patches of bright yellow and blue in Figure by a Well prove most effective as do the flicks of bright red, white, pale blue and yellow in the later Sheltered Grazing (cat.77 fig.19) in rescuing these paintings from possible tonal monotony. Likewise Edward Sheehy praised her 'play with lively colour against a base of browns and umbers' in Quiet Room.



During the 1940's and 1950's we find Reid using colour more vivaciously. Farm in July (exh. 1950 Victor Waddington) and Bathers at Mornington (cat.30 fig.20) are successful examples of Reid's ability to evoke a mood of summer gaiety through imaginative use of colour. These works in their intense colour, gestural brush work and simplification of form are reminiscent of the fauves or of Kandinsky's landscapes of 1908 and 1909. Equally, the lyricism of paintings such as The Hanging Gate (exh.<sup>86</sup> Living Art 1945) and Friday Fare (cat.22), recall the art of Dufy while Girl with a Scarf (cat.47 fig.21) is reminiscent of Matisse.

Germanic influence is also apparent in Reid's work of the 1940's and 1950's. West Cork Mountains (c. 1945, repr. Retrospective Catalogue), and Forest Pool (cat.26 fig.22) with their harsh angular forms and heavy black outlines recall the Die Brücke artists.<sup>87</sup> Bathers and nude studies were common subjects for these Dresden based artists. The prints and woodcuts of the Die Brücke artists were particularly impressive and influential. Reid would have seen work by Max Peckstein exhibited in the 1941 White Stag show, an exhibition to which Reid also contributed. Reid's Forest Pool is also remarkably similar to the work of Alfred Lehmann.<sup>88</sup> However, since Lehmann only began producing his 'bathers' during the 1950's it seems unlikely that there is any direct connection.

During the 1940's Reid was to paint a surprising number of portraits (mostly of artist and writer friends), remarkable for their forcefulness of expression and for their uncanny penetration of the subjects' personality. These qualities coupled with a fluent use of paint and imaginative use of colour result in paintings of great originality, strength and beauty.

As Patrick Swift, writing in Envoy March 1950 noted 'her portraits are always deep psychological studies, full of meaning

but their real value lies in the fact that they are beautiful paintings'.<sup>89</sup> Swift was alluding in particular to a striking portrayal of John Frazer as a young man.<sup>90</sup> This portrait was again to earn special praise from Edward Sheehy in June of the same year. He wrote 'In Reid's Portrait of a Young Man, a strong and expressive calligraphic framework provides the structure for a fluent and tonally subtle use of paint'.<sup>91</sup> James White likewise considered this a successful piece particularly for 'the rather disturbing insight' it gave into the sitters character.<sup>92</sup>

Portraits of Patrick Hennessy and Patrick Swift, also painted during this period possessed these same qualities of sound structure, vital paintwork and forcefulness of expression. Edward Sheehy, for these qualities, considered Reid's Patrick Swift as 'one of her best pictures',<sup>93</sup> while Pearse Hutchinson writing in Cyphers 1981, considered these rich portraits in oil not merely as strongly expressive of the sitter but also of the artist herself.<sup>94</sup>



### (3) Watercolours

Nano Reid's watercolours are 'poetic' in their lyrical portrayal of Irish life. They possess the strength of her oils while retaining a wonderful freshness in colour, and immediacy in execution.

In her exhibitions of the late 1930's through those of the 1940's, watercolours frequently outnumbered her works in oil. In 1937 her show at Daniel Egan's Gallery, 38 St Stephen's Green, (6 - 17th October), consisted of 76 paintings, 53 of which were watercolour pieces. These direct colourful expressions of her landscape subjects earned her special praise and attention: -

Her pictures were slight but significant, her method of shorthand expression of the linear pattern before her. Hill contours, the edges of rock, the striping of fields, cuts in the bog - all played their part in flowing design that so stretched beyond the limits of the frame that any closed composition or central focal point was absent.<sup>95</sup>

- while E.A. Maguire writing in Studio Magazine observes 'In watercolour she is particularly happy. They are bold direct colourful statements clearly and unhaltingly expressed'.<sup>96</sup>

The watercolours of the middle to late 1940's and 1950's while retaining their clarity and directness, are characterised by a certain lyricism. During this period we also see her using colour more vivaciously especially in her watercolours.

Brian Fallon suggests that 'perhaps her watercolours are her most personal and typical achievement, and in them she certainly showed that when she wanted to do so, she could be as transparent and lucid in her handling as Norah McGuinness'.<sup>97</sup>

The Head Clogherhead 1940 (cat.16. fig.23) is a very competent

early piece. It is painted with verve, a characteristic of her watercolour pieces, but it is more 'factual' in detail than the later work - like a scene first discovered. Nano herself held it in high esteem.<sup>98</sup> The earlier Clogherhead Harbour 1933 (cat.11. fig.24) with its free brushwork and harmonious blend of sienna, ochre, olive green, grey-blue and rich bright red is a delightful work. Thomas Mc Greevy's comment, - 'with a few strokes of her brush she can make boats at rest seem funny and beautiful at once - a vivacious and touching poetry of effect which recalls the art of Raoul Dufy'<sup>99</sup>, could equally well apply to this watercolour. The lyricism which characterised her work from the mid forties onwards is richly evident in her portrayal of her Uncle's Horse and Farmyard c. 1946 (cat.23 fig.25). The approach is one of directness and simplicity with an emphasis on linear concerns and vivid colour. The treatment of the horse is particularly admirable. A fluid line and deft brushwork combine with subtle colour to reveal an immediately familiar shape. This painting both in subject matter and style recalls Farmyard, a watercolour from the same period by Gerard Dillon, suggesting that the two artists were working together at this time in the areas surrounding Drogheda.<sup>100</sup> Harvest Time c. 1946 (cat.29 fig.26) - an interesting and very beautiful watercolour by Reid also dates from the mid 1940's. Reid it seems was particularly pleased with this piece. The<sup>101</sup> subtle colour combination of umber, ochre, sienna, prussian blue and that delightful touch of magenta combines with careful drawing to produce a work of great strength.

Crabapple Tree (cat.31 fig.27) Little Waterfall (cat.32) and Gate on the Lane I<sup>102</sup> (cat.33 fig.28) in their titles reflect the intimacy of Reid's world. All three date from the late 1940's and reveal the directness of approach, sensuous use of paint and richness of colour which characterises the work of this period. Crabapple Tree is a particularly successful piece. Reid's strong



sense of line and movement is conveyed with unmatched spontaneity in this little watercolour.

My personal favourite among Miss Reid's work in watercolour is the small yet delightful 'Sea lament' (cat.34 fig.29). This swirling composition, a vital combination of rich sienna, magenta, ultra marine and prussian blue, softened by a touch of umber and olive green, was singled out for praise as 'one of the most exquisite and highly imaginative papers which please the eye while puzzling the mind' by James White in his review of Reid's work at the Victor Waddington Galleries 9th - 20th March 1950. River Boyne c. 1955 (cat.40 fig.30) and Gate on the Lane II c. 1950 (cat.35 fig.31) convey a rhythmic sense of line and movement in association with vibrant colour.

That Arland Usher writing in Dublin Magazine January - March 1957, considers Reid's watercolours less interesting than her oils, faulting them on 'opaque colour and texture', is both interesting and surprising. However, he goes on to assert that two paintings in watercolour, Farmyard c. 1956 and River Landmark and Bird (cat.41 fig.32) of the same year, are 'indeed as exhilarating as the best modern primitives'. Later in that same year Usher was to admire West Galway School Boy, a portrait in watercolour, for its 'delicate palette and deft brushstrokes'.<sup>103</sup>  
<sup>104</sup>

As the lyricism of the 1940's and 1950's gives way to the more abstract quality of her later work, Reid's watercolours, though more sombre and muted in tone and often characterised by a flattened perspective are no less engaging. Mud Banks c. 1960 (cat.53 fig.33) and Rivers Edge dating from the same period are fine examples of Reid's emphasis on line, movement, flattened perspective and a sombre low key palette. In Knowth c. mid 1960's (cat.61 fig.34) Reid again makes use of this unusual perspective or 'birds-eye-view'. Here the colour is lively (with

a rich yellow dominating), and this, combined with a myriad of curious calligraphic marks, gives an overall decorative quality to the piece which is altogether very successful. Sea Bird and Landmarks c. 1960's (cat.62 fig.35) is in essence quite abstract, as is the case with the curious Song by the River c. 1961 (cat.58) in which two little birds encircle a large white central area.

With Bathing on the Dodder (cat.66), Towny Hall (cat.67 fig. 36), and On the Road c. early 1970's (cat.84 fig.37), we witness a return to the lyricism of the mid 1940's and 1950's. On the Road (cat.84 fig.37) is especially attractive, displaying the ebullient chatty style of the earlier pictures.

Nano Reid excelled in watercolour and in the sensuous handling of paint. For the most part her work is characterised by an extraordinary freedom and individuality in terms of both composition, choice of colour and handling of paint.

#### (4) Later Period

From the late 1950's through the 1960's Reid's art becomes more expressionistic and tends increasingly towards abstraction. Reid's work of this period was undoubtedly influenced by the free and powerful brushwork of the later Jack Yeats paintings. And like Jack Yeats' mature work Reid's seemingly abstract compositions gradually yeild up their figurative content. Tinkers among Ruins (cat.46 fig.38) is an example of how Reid's subject 'emerges' from the paint. Similarly Tinkers at Sleive Brach shows how her work speaks directly out of the paint.<sup>105</sup> Dorothy Walker suggests that the work has 'an abstract expression of its own conveyed by the colour of the paint, the thickness of the paint, the movement of the paint, absolutely direct from



brush to viewer with no intrusion or curtain of illustrative idea'.<sup>106</sup>

Reid is an intuitive painter - she has no formula. Her work reflects her method of working, its spontaneity resulting from her practice of direct painting without any preliminary sketches or drawings. However her sound grounding in the area of draughtsmanship lies behind the success of her painting. This are of her work therefore merits consideration.

#### (5) Illustrations and Drawings

Nano Reid's drawings are totally individual. Whether in pencil, charcoal, or in ink and brush, Reid's exercises in line are usually executed with absolute economy and childlike simplicity. As Neil Monaghan observes 'In Reid's drawing, line is used with fluency and individuality to search out form, reflect on structures and exult in discovery'. In the brush and ink study Nude (cat.45 fig.39), Reid uses line fluently yet with extraordinary economy, disregarding all but the essential contours, to produce a drawing of great strength and elegance. Likewise in the charcoal drawing Pearse Hutchinson (cat.29 fig.40) a fluid line combines with a sensitive approach to portray the young poet in pensive mood.<sup>107</sup>

Nano Reid also illustrated a number of books, as well as illustrating poems and contributing to articles in The Bell. In each case the drawings are characterised by a strong linear emphasis and a directness and simplicity in style. Though the early drawings by Reid exhibited in the R.H.A. in the late 1920's bear striking resemblance to the work of Harry Clarke, Reid's later drawings are totally her own.

In 1941 Reid illustrated Eileen Ó'Faoláin's King of the Cats, and in 1946 Ivan and his Wonderful Coat by Patricia Hutchins.

Elizabeth Hickey's I send my love along the Boyne... was published in 1966 with impressive illustrations in black and white by Reid. These illustrations (lino cuts or wood block prints) are notable for their shorthand simplicity, clarity, directness, and strong rhythmic line. They are full of life and movement while also succeeding in being decorative. They are very much Nano Reid and strongly expressive of her attachment to the Boyne Valley Region.

Reid's murals are equally engaging. Unfortunately an impressive scheme of twelve murals begun by Frances Kelly and completed by Nano Reid, was destroyed as recently as 1988 with the demolition of the Television Club in Harcourt Street, which was the property of the Bakers Union of Ireland. These murals which depicted scenes from Irish labour history, had been specially commissioned by the Irish Bakers, Confectioners, and Allied Workers Union in the early 1940's. Those executed by Reid included: James Connolly speaking in Belfast Docks, James Larkin addressing a crowd in College Green Dublin 1913, Procession of Dublin Trade Societies, and Co-Operative Experiment at Ralahine. The murals are characterised by strong composition and a direct style so typical of Reid's work in the early 1940's. The mural paintings of 1945 executed in the Reptile Pool in Dublin Zoo are likewise no longer in existence. Fortunately two impressive murals by Reid still remain and may be seen in Donegan's Pub, Monasterboice (appropriately a celtic theme), and a pub scene in Clarke's Pub, No. 1, Fair St., Drogheda.



## CONCLUSION

Nano Reid was a phenomenon in her time in that she continued well into the 1970's to produce work in a fresh ambiguous, semi-abstract style despite the fact that her early years were clouded by the influence of the propagandist Freestate Government and its advocacy of nationalist insularity.

From about the mid 1940's onwards Reid attacked her canvases with the energy and forcefulness of the post war European painters. Her approach, in these years, was not however entirely abstract, based as it always had been, in reality. As Jeanne Sheehy pointed out she was a realist, but chose to represent her particular reality in vaguely abstract or 'tachiste' terms. In choice of subject matter and in this tachiste approach Reid recalls the painter Ivan Hitchens. Like Howet she retained a strong linear emphasis in her work, favouring in her later years a calligraphic treatment of her subject matter which is reminiscent of the work of Morris Graves. The watercolours of the 1940's and 1950's display a lyricism akin to that of Dufy, while her bold expressionistic landscapes and exotic paintings infer a debt to the Die Brücke artists.

Despite these attributions Reid was far too independent and too aware of her abilities as a painter to merely adopt a pseudo expressionist style or imitative form of painting. As Brian Fallon observed 'Reid never stood still as an artist, rather pursued her life long quest of discovery until the end'.<sup>108</sup> Her paintings likewise avoid any passive tendencies - they rather 'live and breathe'.<sup>109</sup> Her energy and determination are an example to all succeeding generations of artists. Reid could so easily have been a representational painter. She chose instead to

follow her instincts 'to create' rather than to succumb to the lure of the safer more generally acceptable approach of the academy.

Reid's intuition is expressed in strong painting. Her often half-concealed images seem to emerge from the luscious swirls and dabs of sensuous paint in tones which are at once subtle and rich. Though her watercolours are perhaps her most typical achievement the lucidity of the medium complimenting the excitement, directness and immediacy of her style, her oils must remain her most individual and powerful, their rich, exuberant textural surfaces and expressive writhing forms demanding more than a passing glance. Reid is original most notably for her composition, her arrangement which at first might seem chaotic resulted from her partiality to a 'bird's-eye-view' of things. This yields up its subject matter and basic order gradually to the delight of the discerning viewer. When Thomas McGreevy praised her as 'a genius' early in her career he undoubtedly foresaw her continual growth and development as an artist of significance.

The words of Walter Pater can so easily apply to Reid's attitude to life, indicating her ultimate achievement 'To burn always with that hard, gem-like flame, to retain its ecstasy, is success in life.' Reid retained a child-like excitement, curiosity and sense of wonder, an enquiring mind, an ability to adapt and grow, and thereby achieved this state of fulfilment. The legacy of her work and the example of her unyielding spirit inspire us to realise our dreams.



## NOTES ON THE TEXT

1. **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:** Nano Reid, christened Anne Margaret, was born on 1st March 1900 at No. 1, Fair Street, Drogheda, Co Louth. She was the second of four children of Thomas Reid and Anne (nee Downey). The Reid family ran a pub in Drogheda until c. 1970. Nano was educated by the Dominican nuns at Siena Convent in Drogheda. She started painting on her own at home, 'It was'nt a case of being recognised and encouraged at school or anything like that'. (Marion Fitzgerald Interview, The Irish Times 1965).

According to records Reid was accepted to the Mater Hospital, Dublin as a student nurse on November 29th 1920, (recommended by Mon. Segrave), and left on January 26th 1921 (reason for leaving recorded as 'her own wish'). Reid then thought of a career in shorthand and typing 'that was a time when I thought I should be practical. But I never got the length of it. Instead I went to the Technical School in Drogheda and learnt something about the mechanical side of painting ...' (ibid). In c. 1923/24 Nano Reid with her mothers encouragement, went to the Metropolitan School of Art in Dublin having won a scholarship. Reid spent approximately four years at the School of Art where she studied drawing and painting under Sean Keating, Patrick Tuohy, Leo Whelan and Harry Clarke. In 1928 she left for Paris where she enrolled at La Grande Chaumiere. The following year Reid studied in London, firstly at the Central School of Art South Hampton Row, continuing her studies in Spring of 1930 at the Chelsea Polytechnic. She returned to Dublin later that year. In May 1934 her first one man show opened at The Gallery, St. Stephen's Green. However Reid considers this show to have been premature and therefore of little consequence. It was later in that year that she

visited an exhibition of water colours by a Belgian artist Marie Howet at the Gresham Hotel, Dublin. This was a turning point in Reid's career as an artist, and the work she showed in her second one man exhibition in Daniel Egan's Gallery, St. Stephen's Green, in 1936 reflected the more gestural expressive style of Howet. By 1942 Reid's reputation as an artist was firmly established. From then on she exhibited regularly both by herself, in a series of one man shows, and in group exhibitions including the annual show of the Royal Hibernian Academy from 1925 onwards, Aonach Tailleann exhibitions in the 1920's and 1930's, with the Dublin Painters from 1934, at the annual Oireachtas exhibitions (where she won the Douglas Hyde Gold Medal and Arts Council Award in 1972), with the Irish Exhibition of Living Art from its first show in 1943 annually until 1970, with the Watercolour Society of Ireland, and with the Independent Artists.

She also exhibited abroad and in 1950 with Norah McGuinness represented Ireland at the XXV Venice Biennale. She again represented Ireland at the Biennale in 1952 and at XV Mostra Internazionale di Bianco e Nero Lugano in 1956. Reid lived in Dublin from the time of her return in 1930 at various addresses - No. One Fitzwilliam Square; 'Charleville', Newtown Park Avenue, Blackrock; and in a flat in Pembroke Rd, until during the mid 1960's when she moved to Drogheda to live with her two sisters. In 1974 she was honoured by an Arts Council Retrospective Exhibition held in the Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin (27th November - 30th December 1974), and the Ulster Museum, Belfast (17th January -16th February 1975). She continued to paint and to exhibit (though less frequently) well into the 1970's.

Nano Reid died at the Cottage Hospital, Drogheda, on 17th November 1981. She was 81 years of age at her death.



2. National Library Archives, Thomas Bodkin, The Importance of Art to Ireland, (a lecture, delivered Dublin 24th June 1935).
3. See Julian Campbell, The Irish Impressionists - Irish Artists in France and Belgium, 1850 - 1914. National Gallery of Ireland Exhibition Catalogue 1984.
4. The following artists went to France during the latter half on the 19th century - approximate dates given - 1870's Augustus Burke, Aloysius O'Kelly, Frank O'Meara; 1880's Sarah Purser, Henry Jones Thaddeus, Nathaniel Hill, Walter Osborne, Joseph Malachy Kavanagh; 1889 Roderic O'Connor.
5. Hone/Yeats Exhibition, 21st October - 3rd November 1901 held in the rooms of the Royal Society of Antiquarians, No.6 St. Stephen's Green.
6. Later a source of bitter controversy. See literature regarding 'Lane Gift', National Library Archives.
7. Thomas Bodkin, The Importance of Art to Ireland, Dublin 1935 p. 20/21. 'In Mr Jack B Yeats we have an artist whose rare and original talent undoubtedly amount to genius of a high order'.
8. S. B. Kennedy p. Irish Art and Modernism 1920 - 1949 (P.H.D. Thesis 1987) Introduction.
9. Ibid Part I Chapter (1) Tin de Siecle till the 1920's p.5.
10. Ibid Part I Chapter (1) p.8.

11. Exhibition of Monet and the Post Impressionists at the United Arts Club Dublin (25th January - 14th February 1911). This exhibition was an off-shoot of Roger Fry's London show of same in November 1910.
12. S.B. Kennedy Thesis Part I Section I p.19.
13. Kenneth McConkey, A Free Spirit - Irish Art (1860 - 1960) p. 65.
14. National Library Archives, Anne Treanor Hibernia April 1940, p. 21.
15. National Library Archives, Fr. Thomas Lynch, Hibernia October 1939, p.2.
16. National Library Archives, Bruce Arnold - Introduction to catalogue Mainie Jellett 1879 - 1944, Neptune Gallery, Dublin (no date supplied) Post 1962 (pages not numbered).
17. Ibid
18. The first Living Art Exhibition was held at the College of Art, Kildare St., Dublin 16th September - 9th October 1943.
19. Mainie Jellett died 16th February 1944 at St. Vincent's Hospital, Dublin. She was succeeded as Chairperson of the Living Art Committee by Norah McGuinness.
20. Kenneth McConkey, A Free Spirit Irish Art 1860 - 1960, p. 81.



21. Interview July 1974 Jeanne Sheehy - Nano Reid; - Reid disliked the work and method of Mainie Jellett while she admitted that Jellett's teaching had a liberating influence on young artists.
22. Brian Fallon letter 30th January 1990 to the present writer '...she was shy and touchy, and did'nt feel at ease in the fashionable art world.'
23. Reid interview with Jeanne Sheehy 1974. Information courtesy of Jeanne Sheehy.
24. National Library Archives The Artist talks to Marion Fitzgerald, Irish Times 26th September 1965 (microfilm).
25. National Library Archives - Elizabeth Curran The Art of Nano Reid, The Bell November 1941 p. 128. (The Bell was a literary and Art magazine edited by Sean O'Faolain).
26. Jeanne Sheehy, Nano Reid (an essay on the Artist's life and work). Catalogue of the Arts Council Retrospective Exhibition 1974/75, Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/Ulster Museum, Belfast.
27. Letter of 18th September 1974, Michael Southcott of Chelsea Polytechnic to Jeanne Sheehy.
28. Reid won a scholarship to attend the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art c. 1923/24.

- 29a. Hilda Van Stockum (Marlin), a Dutch fellow student and friend of Nano Reid remembers 'Nano' as 'a careful student who worried about keeping to the rules and for her everything was very difficult, she was then 24 and I was 17. She was brought up in a narrow Catholic atmosphere which chaffed her spirit...' - letter to present writer 4th January 1991.
- 29b. Hilda Van Stockum Dublin Art School in the 1920's Irish Times November 1981.
30. National Library Archives, Elizabeth Curran The Art of Nano Reid, The Bell November 1941 p. 128.
31. Patricia Hutchins remembers life in Dublin with Nano Reid. Information courtesy of the Taylor Galleries, Dublin.
32. S.B. Kennedy Irish Art and Modernism 1920 - 1949 Part I Chapter II. The Society of Dublin Painters, p.31.
33. The initial group comprised 11 members - Paul Henry, Grace Henry, E.M. O'Rourke Dickey, Countess Sonmarokov Elston, Lititia Hamilton, Clare Marsh, Sir Frederick Moore, James Sleator, Mary Swanzy, Jack Butler Yeats and James M. Wilcox - National Library Archives - Catalogue to 1st Exhibition June 1920.
34. National Library Archives Catalogue of Pictures by the Dublin Painters Society at the Gallery St. Stephen's Green, 1st - 14th February 1934.
35. National Library Archives, Stephen Rynne The Leader 21st February 1942 p. 66 & 68.



36. Ibid
37. National Library Archives. Elizabeth Curran, The Bell, November 1941 p. 128.
38. Ibid
39. Jeanne Sheehy interview July 1974.
40. National Library Archives. Elizabeth Curran, The Bell, November 1941 p. 128.
41. Ibid
42. National Library Archives, Patrick Swift Envoy March 1950, p. 29 & 30.
43. Desmond McAvoock, Nano Reid: A Tribute, Sunday Tribune November 1981 (date unavailable).
44. For further reading see Brian Kennedy's Thesis of 1987 - Irish Art and Modernism 1920 - 1949, p.153.
45. National Library Archives, Stephen Rynne The Leader, 23rd September 1944. p. 12.
46. S.B. Kennedy p. 156.
47. National Library Archives, Margot Moffet, Horizon, April 1945 p. 261 - 267.
48. Ibid
49. S. B. Kennedy: P.H.D. Thesis Part II 'The Emergency and After' (Section IV p.159)

50. Interview January 1991, Declan Mallon with Robert Greecan, Writer/Publisher, and husband of Patricia Hutchins, friend and former flatmate of Nano Reid.
51. National Library Archives - Margot Moffet Horizon April 1945 p. 261 - 267.
52. Irish Times Review 16th April 1940.
53. Ibid.
54. National Library Archives - Irish Exhibition of Living Art 1944 Exhibition Catalogue.
55. National Library Archives - Irish Exhibition of Living Art 1943 Exhibition Catalogue.
56. National Library Archives - Margot Moffet Horizon April 1945, p.261 - 267.
57. Irish Exhibition of Living Art 1943 Exhibition Catalogue.
58. Jeanne Sheehy interview July 1974.
59. S. B. Kennedy. P.H.D. Thesis 1987, Part II Chapter V, 'The Irish Exhibition of Living Art' p.259.
60. Irish Exhibition of Living Art 1964 Exhibition Catalogue. R Kyle Knox. He continues ' .. I firmly believe with an appreciative general public and young artists well aware of international movements we shall soon see the development of an Irish School of Painting'.
61. Irish Exhibition of Living Art 1945, 1950, and 1963 Exhibition Catalogues.



62. Kandinsky had formulated his theories on abstract art and was working in a 'Tachiste' manner prior to the 1st World War.
63. Jeanne Sheehy 1974/75 Retrospective Catalogue.
64. Interview, January 1991, Declan Mallon with Robert Greecan.
65. National Library Archives - Edward Sheehy Dublin Magazine (January - March 1945), p.52.
66. Ibid.
67. Edward Sheehy Dublin Magazine (October - December 1945), Art Notes, p.39.
68. Ibid.
69. S. B. Kennedy Irish Art and Modernism 1920 - 1949. Part II, Chapter V., The Irish Exhibition of Living Art (notes 102, Page 293).
70. Edward Sheehy Dublin Magazine (October - December 1948), Art Notes, p.51.
71. National Library Archives, Irish Exhibition of Living Art Exhibition Catalogue 1964.
72. Bruce Arnold, White Stag Group's Contribution to Art, Irish Independent, Monday 4th March 1991.

73. National Library Archives, E. A. Maguire Studio, p. 163.

74. Ulster Museum, Belfast, letter 25th March 1977, Nano Reid to Sean McCrum, Department of Art, Ulster Museum, Belfast in reply to letter of 16th March requesting information on provenance of the three paintings by Reid in the Ulster Museum Collection.

'The Galway Peasant, was painted in 1929 as far as I can remember and she belonged to a place near Letterfrack, Co. Galway. Inver was the name of it which means "Inlet" and is beside the sea. At that time I was very interested in heads, and portraiture was my interest along with landscape, but types were very interesting. I stayed in Mrs Conboy's (Galway Peasant) cottage for two months and painted other portraits. This woman had 16 children and all left for USA or elsewhere. Husband also had a job away and only a servant boy left...'

75. Ibid

'The Lilter was painted in 1933 and belonged to Blacksod near Belmullet, Co. Mayo and was a native Irish speaker. His townland was called Fallmore and his name was Stíophán Pháidí ... If the Haverty Trust donated it to you then they must have purchased it from me and also the other one Galway Peasant, but I can't remember'.

76. Jeanne Sheehy, Retrospective Catalogue 1974/75.

77. Elizabeth Hickey, I send my love along the Boyne, Allen Figges & Co. Dublin 1966.

\* Illustrations by Nano Reid

The book was written at the suggestion of a friend.



Reid had executed a number of black and white illustrations with the intention of incorporating them into a book about the Boyne. However she had had little success. When it was suggested that Elizabeth Hickey write the book, Reid 'reluctantly perhaps, handed over the portfolio of illustrations'. Elizabeth Hickey then set about writing a book around these illustrations.

The illustrations included: Waterhen at Rivers Edge, Entrance of Brugh-na-Boinne, Knowth overlooking Boyne, Entrance of Mound at Dowth, Donaghmore, Hill of Slane, Hollow Circular Fort, Dexter Castle, Carrickdexter, Slane, Cannistown (near Navan), Townly Hall, Dunmore Castle on the Boyne, Stones and Thorn Tree at Dowth.

78. Brian Fallon, 'Irish Women Artists in the 1950's', Irish Women Artists from the 18th Century to the present day p. 48.
79. James White, 'review Hanover London, Autumn 1952 (date not available).
80. Ibid.
81. Reminiscent of work of Ivan Hitchens both in genre theme and in format.
82. Frances Ruane, Introduction to The Delighted Eye (catalogue 1980) p.7.
83. The Campbells stayed at Reid's Fitzwilliam Square flat during the mid 1940's - Reid painted Through the Door (George Campbell in his studio) at this time. This

painting was included in the selection for the 1950 Venice Biennale. Other paintings shown were Neglected Farm, Friday Fare, Nude, Forest Pool, Malya (Nude), Tarring a Shed, Canal in Autumn, Portrait of John, Farm by the River, Derelict Garden and Wife of the Farmer.

84. Marion Fitzgerald, 'Interview' Irish Times October 2nd 1965.
85. Edward Sheehy, 'Art Notes', Dublin Magazine, 1947, p.49.
86. Kandinsky had exhibited with the Fauves in the Independents in 1907 and was therefore familiar with their work. He had great admiration for Matisse. Until 1910 Kandinsky was working towards a more powerful design and the release of colour from its subservience to the object - patterns and values more assertive than the subject matter. For further reading see George Heard Hamilton Painting and Sculpture in Europe 1880 - 1940, 'Kandinsky in Munich 1896 - 1914' p. 206.
87. The Die Brücke group of artists (1905 - 1914). Formed in Dresden in 1905, Die Brücke conceived itself as a living community, a freely evolving social and spiritual organism (attempting to realise the kind of artists' community which Van Gogh and Gauguin had dreamed of). It was largely due to the Die Brücke group that the term 'expressionist' (which as early as 1911 had been used to describe all modern art) came to mean specifically German art. The work of the Die Brücke artists was a psychological rather than a descriptive statement of particular experience. Members of the group included Erich Heckel, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Otto Muller, Emil Nolde, Max Pechstein, Karl Schmidt Rottluff - their early woodcuts were particularly influential.



88. Alfred Lehmann (1899 - 1979) based in Stuttgart, began painting figure compositions c. 1950, attended the Ecole de Paris during the 1950's, was influenced by cubism, also by the work of Gezanne.
89. National Library Archives, Patrick Swift article Contemporary Irish Artists (4) Nano Reid - Envoy, March 1950 p.35.  
Portrait of John Frazer reproduced p.32 as Portrait of a Young Man.
90. Reid also considered the portrait a successful piece. In the letter to Jeanne Sheehy (25th August 1974) she wrote. 'The portrait was reproduced in the Biennale Catalogue and was a good one'. (Copies of correspondence between Reid and Sheehy, courtesy of Jeanne Sheehy).
91. National Library Archives, Edward Sheehy, Art Notes, Dublin Magazine April - June 1950, p.39.
92. James White review (date not known), received from James White.
93. National Library Archives, Edward Sheehy, Art Notes, Dublin Magazine October - December 1950, p.42.
94. Pearse Hutchinson article Nano Reid, Cyphers, 1981, p.46.
95. National Library Archives, Elizabeth Curran, The Bell, p. 261.
96. National Library Archives, E. A. Maguire, Studio, p. 163.

97. Brian Fallon, Essay, Irish Women Artists in the 1950's, Irish Women Artists from the 18th Century to the present day, p.48.
98. This painting was given in payment to a taxi man in 1979, 'I did this when I was in me tips!' (Nano Reid).
99. National Library Archives, Thomas McGreevy, Irish Times, 26th September 1942, p.7.
100. Both paintings in Private Collections, Drogheda.
101. Reid later regretted having parted with this painting according to present owner.
102. Gate on the Lane I (cat.35) and Gate on the Lane II (cat. 35) depict the entrance to 'Carntown' Reid's uncle's farm outside Drogheda. The place had a history attached to it -the house was built onto an ancient medieval castle. It was also here that Farmyard and Horse (cat. 23) was painted.
103. National Library Archives, Arland Usher Dublin Magazine, January - March 1957, p. 43.
104. National Library Archives, Arland Usher Dublin Magazine, July - September 1957, p. 45.
105. Dorothy Walker, 'Irish Women Artists 1960 - 1975' Irish Women Artists from the 18th Century to the present day, p. 53.
106. Ibid.



107. Neil Monaghan (catalogue) 'Drawing Towards ...' - An Arts Council of Ireland Touring Exhibition June 1981, p.6.
108. Brian Fallon Irish Times, November 1981 (exact date not available).
109. Hilda Van Stockum, letter to present writer 4th January 1991.

## CATALOGUE

List of Works by Nano Reid which I have seen during the course of my research.

1.           **PORTRAIT OF KATHLEEN GREEN**  
              **PORTRAIT OF JAMES REID (on reverse)**  
              1925  
              Oil on canvas  
              Signed lower right 'Nano Reid'  
              Exhibited: ---  
              Private Collection - Inherited
  
2.           **PORTRAIT OF CATHLEEN McCANN**  
              1928  
              Oil on canvas  
              Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
              Exhibited: ---  
              Private Collection - inherited
  
3.           **PORTRAIT OF BRENDAN McCANN**  
              c. 1930  
              Oil on Canvas  
              Signed lower right 'N Reid'  
              Exhibited: ---  
              Private Collection - inherited
  
4.           **PORTRAIT OF JENNI REID (The Artist's**  
              **Sister)**  
              c. late 1920's early 1930's  
              Oil on canvas  
              Signed lower left 'N. Reid'  
              Exhibited: ---  
              Private Collection - purchased Gorry Gallery  
              c. 1986



5.

**GALWAY PEASANT**

1929

Oil on Canvas 41 x 31.7 cms

Signed lower right 'N. Reid'

Exhibited: Aonad Tailteann 1932 (cat.17/a)  
Haverty Trust, Dublin 1935 (cat.21)  
Paintings from British Museum and  
Art Gallery, Lurgan 1961 (cat.23)  
Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.3)  
Lent by Ulster Museum

Literature: Belfast Telegraph -  
6th December 1935  
17th January 1936  
Collection Ulster Museum, Belfast  
Haverty Trust acquisition 1936

6.

**THE LILTER**

1933

Oil on Canvas 51.2 x 40.6 cms

Inscribed lower right 'Nano Reid'

Exhibited: RHA 1936 (cat.128)  
Haverty Trust (second Quinquennial  
exhibition 1940 [cat.31])  
Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.9)  
'A Vision of Ireland' 1989  
(Herbert Gallery & Museum,  
Coventry)

Literature: GPA Irish Arts Review Year Book  
1990/91  
Collection Ulster Museum Belfast  
Harvey Trust acquisition 1936





10. **CLOGHERHEAD HARBOUR**  
c. 1933  
Watercolour 22.2 x 28.5 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.6)  
Private Collection - inherited (Purchased c.  
1934 from the artist)
11. **CLOGHERHEAD FIRE STATION**  
c. 1935  
Watercolour  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection
12. **PORTRAIT OF A MAN**  
Mid 1930's  
Oil on canvas 66.5 x 58.5 cms  
Signed lower right 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Collection: Municipal Gallery Modern Art,  
Dublin, presented by M Fridberg Esq. 1973
13. **CHORD ROAD GARDEN**  
Late 1930's  
Oil on canvas 29 x 39 cms  
Signed lower right 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection - Purchased 1981

14. **CRUISETOWN, CLOGHERHEAD**  
Late 1930's  
Oil on canvas board 29 x 40 cms  
Signed lower right 'N Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection - Purchased privately 1981
15. **CARRAROE GIRL (Freda)**  
c. 1940  
Oil on canvas 50.8 x 40.6 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: The Gallery 1941 (cat.1)  
Arts Council of Northern Ireland  
1964 (cat.10)  
Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.14)  
Private Collection - Purchased from the  
artist c. 1950
16. **THE HEAD CLOGHERHEAD**  
c. 1940  
Watercolour 21.5 x 28 cms  
Signed lower left 'N. Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection
17. **WOODS AT ARDNAGASHEL**  
c. 1942  
Oil on board 30 x 38 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Collection Municipal Gallery Modern Art,  
Dublin - presented 1982 through the  
Friends of the National Collections of  
Ireland.



18.           **'ANSTY'**  
c. 1944  
Drawing, pencil on paper 43.5 x 34.2 cms  
Signed lower right 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Dublin Painters 1944 (cat.54)  
            Arts Council Belfast 1964 (cat.3)  
            Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                    Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                    Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.16)  
Collection Crawford Municipal Gallery, Cork  
Gibson Fund acquisition 1980
19.           **IVY FESTOON**  
Mid 1940's  
Oil on board  
Signed lower right 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Victor Waddington Galleries 1950  
                    'Ivy Festoon in a Stream'  
                                    (cat.20)  
Private Collection
20.           **BOYNE FIELDS**  
Mid 1940's  
Watercolour  
Signed 'N Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection - purchased late 1940's
21.           **TOWNLY HALL WOOD**  
c. 1945  
Oil on canvas board 29 x 39 cms  
Signed lower right 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection - purchased privately

22.           **FRIDAY FARE**  
1945  
Oil on canvas 50.8 x 60.9 cms  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Dublin Painters 1945 (cat.34)  
              Venice Biennale 1950 (cat.13)  
              Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                  Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                  Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.23)  
Literature: Dublin Magazine January - March  
              1945 (p.46)  
              Dublin Magazine April - June  
              1946 (p.50)  
Private Collection
23.           Title not known - 'Farmyard and Horse'?  
c. 1946  
Watercolour  
Signed lower right 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection - purchased c. 1952
24.           **THROUGH THE DOOR** (George Campbell in the  
Studio)  
c. 1945  
Oil on canvas 50 x 40 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: 'Living Irish Art' (Group show)  
                  October 1946  
                  The Leicester Galleries, London  
                  (cat.55)  
                  Venice Biennale 1950  
Private Collection - inherited



25. **HARVEST TIME**  
1946  
Watercolour 25.4 x 35.5 cms  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.25)  
Private Collection - purchased mid 1960's  
from the artist.
26. **FOREST POOL**  
1946  
Oil on canvas 50.8 x 60.9 cms  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Venice Biennale 1950 (cat.15)  
Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.26)  
(Lent by Gerard Byrne, Dundalk)  
Private Collection - purchased 1989 - Taylor  
Galleries.
27. **VISITING SLANE**  
1947  
Oil on Canvas 41.8 x 57.2 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Irish Imagination Rosc 1971  
(cat.13)  
Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.29)  
(Lent by Dr Eileen McCarvill,  
Dublin)  
Private Collection - purchased 1987,  
O'Connor Gallery.

28.           **GIRL WITH A SCARF**  
1947  
Oil on canvas 60.9 x 76.2 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Venice Biennale 1950 (cat.17)  
              Hanover 1952 (cat.1)  
              Arts Council Belfast 1964 (cat.1)  
              Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                  Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                  Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.33)  
              Taylor Galleries 1984 (cat.4)  
Private Collection
29.           **PEARSE HUTCHINSON**  
1947  
Drawing - soft pencil/charcoal on paper  
              53.3 x 40.6 cms  
Signed centre right 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                  Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                  Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.32)  
              Taylor Galleries 1984 (cat.49)  
Private Collection
30.           **BATHERS AT MORNINGTON**  
1948  
Oil on board 30 x 50 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection - inherited



31.           **CRABAPPLE TREE**  
c. 1949  
Watercolour 25.4 x 36.1 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                    Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                    Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.40)  
Collection Municipal Gallery Modern Art -  
                    Purchased 1975 Dawson Gallery
32.           **THE LITTLE WATERFALL**  
C. 1949  
Watercolour 25.4 X 16.5 cms  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Arts Council Northern Ireland,  
                    Belfast 1964 (cat.7)  
                    Dawson Gallery 1966 (cat.22)  
                    Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                    Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                    Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.41)  
Private Collection
33.           **GATE ON THE LANE I**  
Late 1940's  
Watercolour 25 x 30 cms  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Waddington Galleries 1950  
                    (cat.38)  
Private Collection - purchased 1968 from Nano  
                    Reid.

34.           **SEA LAMENT**  
c. 1949  
Watercolour 27.3 x 38.1 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Waddington Galleries 1950  
                  (cat.31)  
                  Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                  Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                  Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.42)  
                  (Lent by the Dawson Gallery)  
Literature: Irish Times March 1950 - James  
                  White review.  
Private Collection - purchased January 1991,  
                  Taylor/De Vere
35.           **GATE ON THE LANE II**  
1950  
Watercolour 35 x 25 cms  
Signed lower right 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection - purchased privately  
1966.
36.           **STREET PLAYERS**  
C. 1950  
Oil on board 38.1 x 60.9 cms  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Living Art 1950 (cat.82)  
                  Dawson Gallery 1956 (cat.24)  
                  Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                  Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                  Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.43)  
Private Collection



37. **HANGING OUT THE WASHING**  
c. 1950  
Oil on panel  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Victor Waddington Galleries 1950  
(cat.6)  
Literature: Dublin Magazine April - June  
1950  
Art Notes - Edward Sheehy p.39  
Private Collection - Purchased 1968 from the  
artist.
38. **BOYNE AT DROGHEDA**  
C. 1950  
Watercolour  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection - purchased Adams 1980
39. **CATS IN THE KITCHEN**  
c. 1952  
Oil on board 39.3 x 58.4 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Hanover 1952 (cat.15)  
Living Art 1953 (cat.7)  
Dawson Gallery 1956 (cat.7)  
Friends of the National  
Collections of Ireland  
Exhibition 1964  
(Dublin & Belfast)  
Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.46)  
Collection Municipal Gallery Modern Art -  
presented by Anne S. King Harman through  
Friends of the National Collections,  
Ireland, 1957.

40. **RIVER BOYNE**  
c. 1955  
Watercolour 22 x 28 cms  
Signed lower right 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection purchased privately 1966
41. **RIVER LANDMARK AND BIRD**  
c. 1956  
Watercolour  
Signed lower right 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Dawson Gallery October 1956  
Arts Council Belfast 1964 (cat.1)  
Literature: Dublin Magazine, January -  
March 1957 Art notes (p.43).  
Private Collection
42. **OLD WALLS (St John's Gate)**  
c. 1956  
Oil on board 50.8 x 60.9 cms  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Living Art 1957 (cat. 61)  
Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.52)  
(Lent by the Dawson Gallery;  
Owner - Molly Reid, Drogheda)  
Private Collection - purchased 1988 - Adams



43.

**LEGENDE**

c. 1956

Oil on panel 50.8 x 60.9 cms

Signed 'Nano Reid'

Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1956/57 (cat.17)

Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal

Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/

Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.50)

(Lent by Anne S. King Harman,  
Kildare).

Literature: Dublin Magazine - January -

March 1957 (p. 43).

Collection Drogheda Library

Presented 1979 by Friends of the National

Collections of Ireland (Anne S King Harman  
bequest).

44.

**LOAFERS**

C. 1956

Oil on board 50.8 x 60.9 cms

Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'

Exhibited: Living Art 1957 (cat.71)

Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal

Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/

Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.51)

Collection Drogheda Library - presented 1960

(Thomas Haverty Trust)

45.

**'NUDE'**

c. 1957/58

Drawing - ink and brush on paper

Signed lower centre 'Nano Reid'

Exhibited: Living Art (Prints & Drawings)

1958 (cat.16)

Arts Council 'Drawing Towards...'

June 1981 (cat.16)

Private Collection

46.           **TINKERS AMONG RUINS**  
c. 1958  
Oil on Board 60.9 x 91.4 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Living Art 1958 (cat.50)  
            Dawson Gallery 1962 (cat.13)  
            Twelve Irish Painters New York  
                    1963 (cat. 37)  
            Irish Imagination Rosc 1971  
                    (cat.70)  
            Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                    Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                    Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.54)  
Collection Municipal Gallery of Modern Art,  
            Dublin, presented by the Contemporary Irish  
            Arts Society 1962.

47.           **RUBBISH DUMP**  
c. 1958  
Oil on board 45.7 x 60.9 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Living Art 1958 (cat.77)  
            Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                    Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                    Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.55)  
                    (Lent by Miss S. R Kirkpatrick,  
                    Dublin)  
Collection Municipal Gallery Modern Art  
            Kirkpatrick bequest through The Friends  
            of the National Collections of Ireland 1982



48.           **BATHERS ON A TIN STREWN BEACH**  
 c. 1958/59  
 Oil on Board 60.9 x 45.7 cms  
 Signed 'Nano Reid'  
 Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1959 (cat.2)  
               Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                   Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                   Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.60)  
 Private Collection
49.           **RESTING IN THE SQUARE**  
 c. 1959  
 Oil on pressed wood 50.8 x 60.9 cms  
 Signed 'Nano Reid'  
 Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1959 (cat.14)  
               The College Gallery (T.C.D.)  
                   Belfast 1963 (cat.25)  
               Aspects of Landscape, touring  
                   exhibition 1970 (cat.18)  
               Irish Imagination Rosc 1971  
                   (cat.67)  
               Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                   Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                   Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.57)  
               Douglas Hyde T.C.D. 1980 (cat.47)  
               Women Artists in Ireland,  
                   Municipal Gallery of Modern  
                   Art, Dublin 1987  
 Literature: The Modern Art Collection,  
               T.C.D. (cat.114)  
               David Scott  
 Collection: The College Gallery T.C.D.  
               Purchased 1960

50.           **A WILD DAY**  
1959  
Oil on board 45.7 x 60.9 cms  
Signed: 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1959 (cat.9)  
          Modern Paintings from a Private  
          Collection, Dundalk 1969  
          Irish Imagination Rosc 1971  
          (cat.68)  
          Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
          Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
          Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.58)  
          (Lent by Cecil King)  
          Women Artists in Ireland,  
          Municipal Gallery of Modern Art  
          1987  
Private Collection

51.           **BACKYARD**  
1959  
Oil on board 51 X 61 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1959 (cat.1)  
          Twelve Irish Painters, New York  
          1963 (cat.41)  
          Contemporary Irish Art on loan  
          from Industry Dun Laoghaire  
          1966 (cat.32)  
          Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
          Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
          Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.61)  
          (Lent by Sir Basil Goulding,  
          Co. Wicklow)  
Collection: Allied Irish Banks Collection  
          of Twentieth Century Irish Art.



52. **TINKERS GATHERING FIREWOOD**  
 c. 1960  
 Oil on board 50.8 x 61 cms  
 Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
 Exhibited: ---  
 Collection Crawford Municipal Gallery, Cork  
 Source and date of acquisition unknown.
53. **MUD BANKS**  
 c. 1960  
 Watercolour 25.6 x 35.5 cms  
 Signed 'Nano Reid'  
 Exhibited: Living Art 1960 (cat.122)  
 Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
 Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
 Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.65)  
 (Lent by Gladys McCabe, Dublin)  
 Private Collection - purchased 1988 Taylor de  
 Vere
54. **SEABIRDS WATCHING WAVES**  
 c. 1960  
 Oil on pressed wood 50.8 x 76 cms  
 Signed 'Nano Reid'  
 Exhibited: Living Art 1961 (cat.55)  
 College Gallery T.C.D. Belfast  
 1963 (cat.27)  
 Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
 Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
 Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.66)  
 Douglas Hyde T.C.D. 1980 (cat.45)  
 Literature: The Modern Art Collection,  
 T.C.D., David Scott (cat.115)  
 Collection: College Gallery Collection  
 T.C.D. - purchased Living Art  
 1961

55.           **ANCIENT LAND**  
c. 1960  
Oil on board 50.8 x 60.9 cms  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Living Art 1962 (cat.7)  
            Twelve Irish Painters, New York  
                    1963 (cat.40)  
            Arts Council Belfast 1964  
                    (cat.27)  
            'Ireland Creates' Dublin 1969  
                    (cat.15)  
            Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                    Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                    Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.68)  
Collection    'An Comhairle Ealaíon'/The Arts  
                    Council - purchased Living Art  
                    1962

56.           **TINKERS AT SLEIVE BREAGH**  
c. 1960  
Oil on board 60.9 x 76.2 cms  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1962 (cat.19)  
            Modern Irish Painting 1969/70  
                    (cat.31)  
            Irish Imagination Rosc 1971  
                    (cat.69)  
            Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                    Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                    Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.67)  
Collection    'An Comhairle Ealaíon'/The Arts  
                    Council.



57.           **FIGURE BY A WALL**  
c. 1960  
Oil on canvas 68 x 40 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1962 (cat.7)  
                  (Lent by Miss Mary Gaynor)  
                  Living Art 1966 (cat.46)  
Private Collection - purchased 1980
58.           **SONG BY THE RIVER**  
c. 1961  
Watercolour 25.5 x 35.5 cms  
Signed lower right 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1962 (cat.26)  
Private Collection
59.           **OLD STABLES**  
early 1960's  
Oil on hardboard 45.7 x 61.1 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Arts Council Belfast 1964  
                  (cat.18)  
                  Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                  Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                  Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.75)  
Collection Ulster Museum Belfast
60.           **SCHOOL BOY OF GALWAY**  
early 1960's  
Drawing, pencil on paper  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Arts Council Belfast 1964  
                  (cat.4)  
Private Collection

61.           **KNOWTH**  
early 1960's  
Watercolour  
Signed lower right 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: An Comhairle Ealaíon Graphic  
                    Art 1964 (cat.122)  
Private Collection
62.           **SEABIRD AND LANDMARKS**  
c. 1965  
Watercolour 26.6 x 37.7 cms  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1966 (cat.25)  
                    Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                            Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                            Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.86)  
                            (Lent by Miss Cathleen  
                            Sheppard)  
Collection Municipal Gallery Modern Art -  
                    Cathleen Sheppard Bequest 1986
63.           **CARD PLAYERS**  
c. 1965  
Oil on board 60.9 x 121.8 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1966 (cat.12)  
                    Irish/Dutch Exhibition,  
                            Dublin 1968  
                    Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                            Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                            Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.81)  
Private Collection - purchased 1989 Taylor de  
                    Vere



64.

**BALLADS IN THE BAR**

c. 1965

Oil on board 60 x 75 cms

Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'

Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1966 (cat.13)  
Twenty Paintings, Belfast 1968  
Modern Irish Paintings 1969/70  
(cat.32)  
Irish Imagination Rosc 1971  
(cat.71)  
Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.82)  
(Lent by An Comhairle Ealaíon)  
Rosc Chorcaí 1980 (cat.88)  
Collection Municipal Gallery Modern Art -  
purchased by the Gallery in 1976

65.

**WRECKAGE NO. 1**

1966

Oil on board 60.9 x 50.8 cms

Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'

Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1966 (cat.1)  
Twenty Paintings, Belfast 1968  
Paintings and Sculptures by  
Irish Artists, Listowel 1973  
(cat.15)  
Irish Imagination Rosc 1971  
(cat.72)  
Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
Ulster Museum, Belfast  
Collection 'An Comhairle Ealaíon', The Arts  
Council

66.           **BATHING ON THE DODDER**  
mid 1960's  
Watercolour 24 x 27 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Collection Drogheda Library - presented by  
the Artist.
67.           **TOWNLY HALL**  
mid 1960's  
Watercolour  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection
68.           **SUMMER REFLECTIONS**  
mid 1960's  
Watercolour  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection - purchased Adams c. 1980
69.           **POND AT ST. STEPHENS GREEN**  
mid 1960's  
Watercolour  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection
70.           **RIVERBIRDS**  
c. late 1960's  
Watercolour 20 x 42 cms  
Signed lower right 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection





74.           **FOOTBALL INTERRUPTED**  
c. 1970  
Oil on board 45 x 59.5 cms  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Oireachtas 1971 (cat.53)  
              George Dawson Collection at the  
              Douglas Hyde Gallery T.C.D.  
              1983 (cat.59)  
Literature: The Modern Art Collection  
              T.C.D.  
              Catalogue compiled by David  
              Scott (cat.116)  
Collection the College Gallery T.C.D. -  
              purchased mid 1970's Dawson Gallery
75.           **CAVE OF THE FIR BOLG**  
c. 1971  
Oil on board 60.9 x 76.2 cms  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Oireachtas 1972 (cat.43)  
              Dawson Gallery 1973 (cat.19)  
              An Comhairle Ealaíon Collection,  
              Belfast 1974 (cat.23)  
              Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
              Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
              Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.95)  
Collection An Comhairle Ealaíon/The Arts  
              Council



76.           **BIRDS ON THEIR MINDS**  
c. 1972  
Oil on board 45.7 x 60.9 cms  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1973 (cat.3)  
              Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                  Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                  Ulster Museum, Belfast (cat.93)  
Private Collection
77.           **SHELTERED GRAZING**  
early 1970's  
Oil on board 50.8 x 60.9 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1973 (cat.2)  
              Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
                  Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
                  Ulster Museum Belfast (cat.100)  
                  (Lent by Gerard Byrne, Dundalk)  
Private Collection - purchased 1987 Taylor  
              Galleries
78.           **MAKESHIFT GATE AT WILD GOOSE LODGE**  
1973  
Monotype 41 x 51 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Dawson Gallery 1973 (cat.22)  
Collection 'An Comhairle Ealaion'/The Arts  
              Council

79.           **MEALTIME**  
c. 1973  
Monotype 37 x 42 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Taylor Gallery 1984 (cat.18)  
Private Collection
80.           **VIEW FROM THE ARTIST'S WINDOW (James' St.)**  
c. early/mid 1970's  
Watercolour  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection - purchased from the  
Artist mid 1960's.
81.           **VIEW FROM THE ARTIST'S STUDIO**  
mid 1970's  
Oil on canvas board 50 x 40 cms  
Signed lower left 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: ---  
Private Collection - purchased Gorry Gallery  
1988.
82.           **BATHERS ON A DESOLATE SHORE**  
(Also called 'Stony Beach and Bathers')  
1974  
Oil on board 48.3 x 91.4  
Signed 'Nano Reid'  
Exhibited: Retrospective 1974/75 Municipal  
Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin/  
Ulster Museum Belfast (cat.107)  
(Lent by Dawson Gallery)  
Dawson Gallery 1976 (cat.9)  
Roscaí 1980 (cat.91)  
(Lent by Bank of Ireland)  
Collection Bank of Ireland, - purchased from  
the Taylor Galleries







fig. 1 Galway Peasant





fig. 2 The Lilter



fig. 3 Portrait of Man





fig. 4 Crumphan, Achill



fig. 5 Cruisetown, Clogherhead





fig. 6 Still Life





*fig. 7 Visiting Slane*



fig. 8 Old Walls St. John's Gate





fig. 9 Loafers



fig. 10 Rubbish Dump



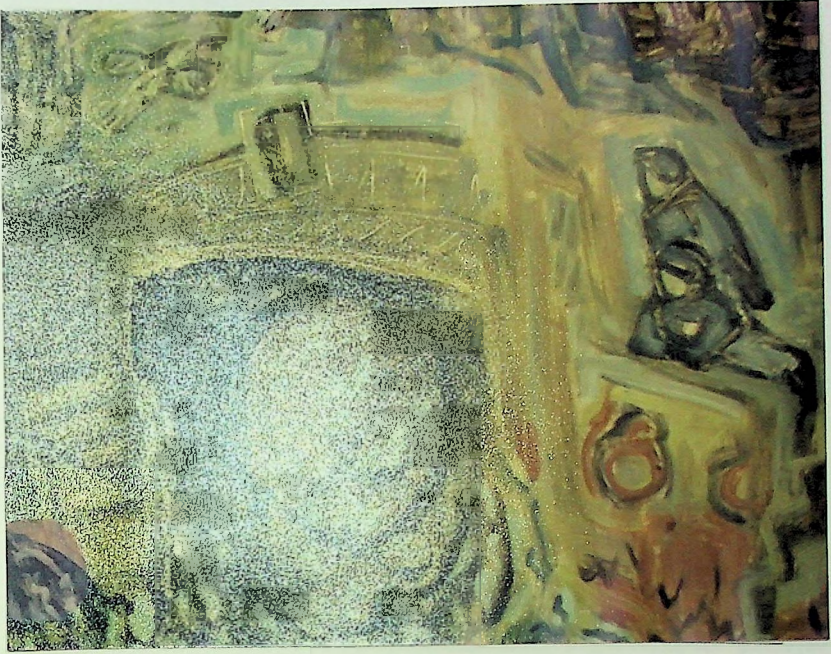


fig. 9 Loafers



fig. 10 Rubbish Dump





fig. 11 *Hanging Out the Washing*



*fig. 12 Backyard*



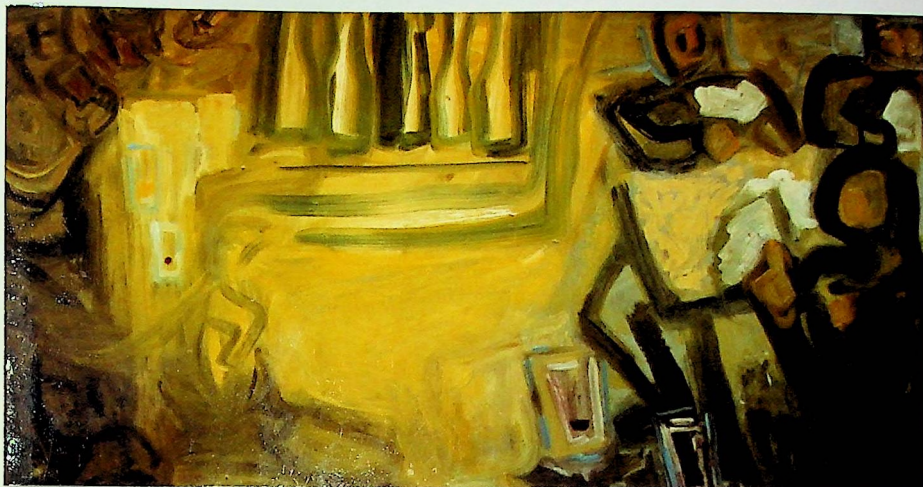


fig. 13 Cardplayers

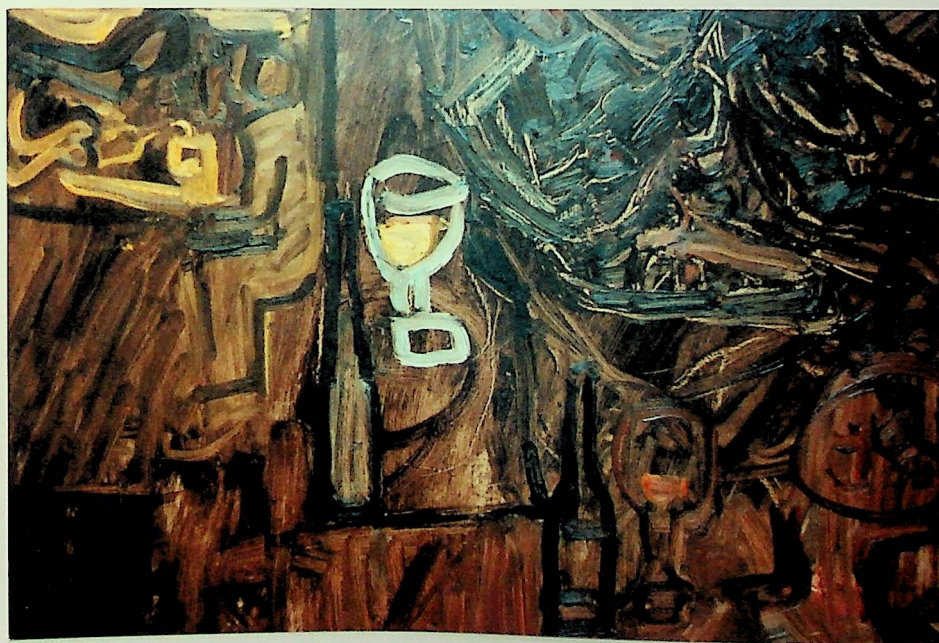


fig. 14 Ballads in the Bar



fig. 15 *Cats in the Kitchen*





*fig. 16 Through the Door*



fig. 17 Quayside Strollers





fig. 18 *Figure by a Well*



fig. 19 *Sheltered Grazing*





*fig. 20 Bathers at Mornington*



fig. 21 Girl With a Scarf



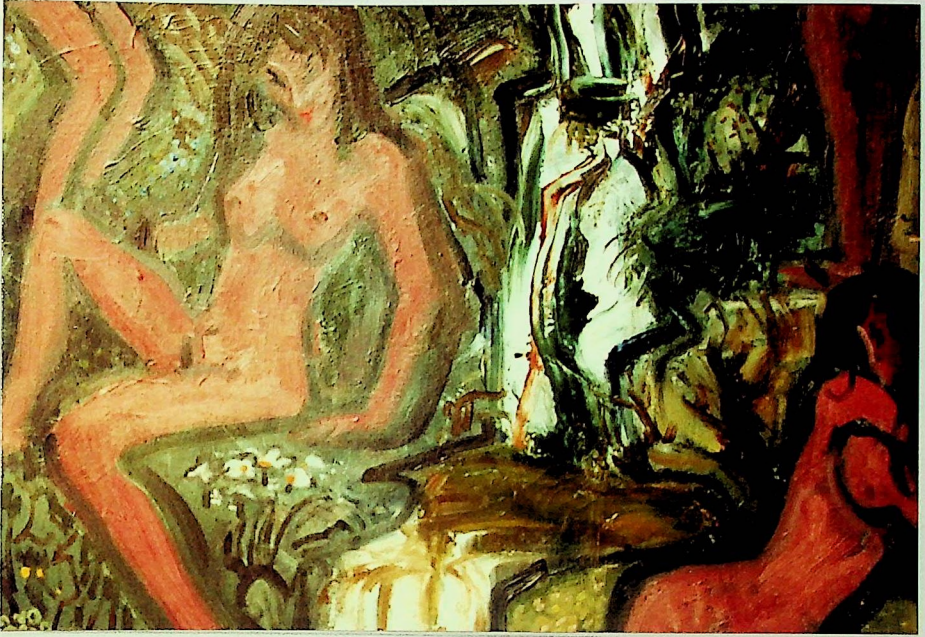


fig. 22 Forest Pool



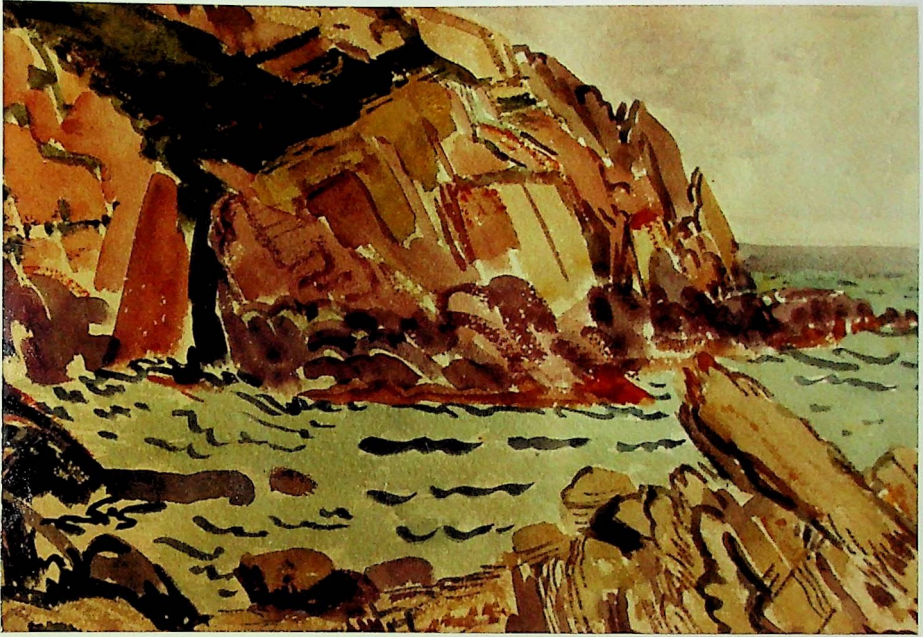


fig. 23 *The Head Clogherhead*



fig. 24 *Clogherhead Harbour*





fig. 25 Farmyard and Horse

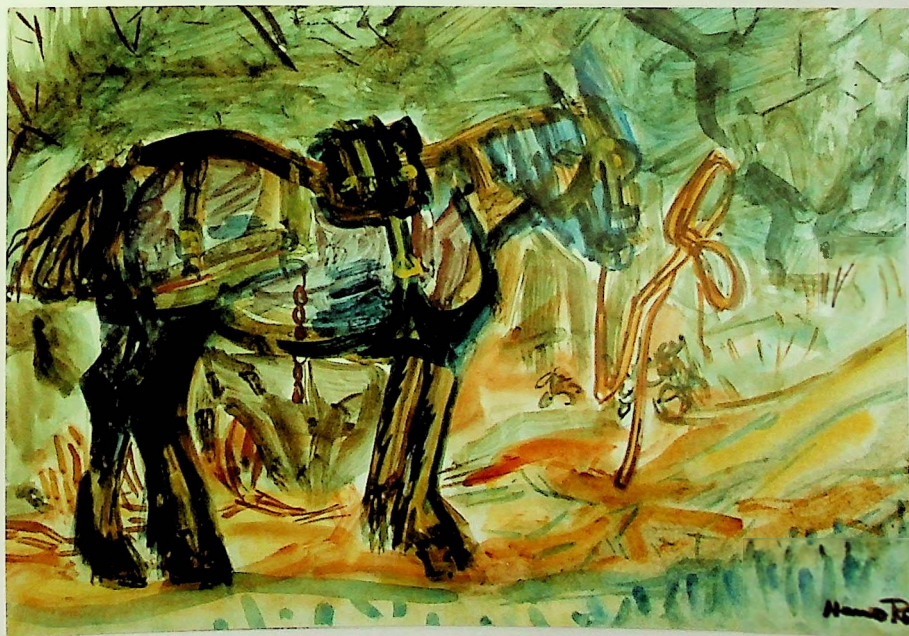


fig. 26 Harvest Time





fig. 27 Crabapple Tree

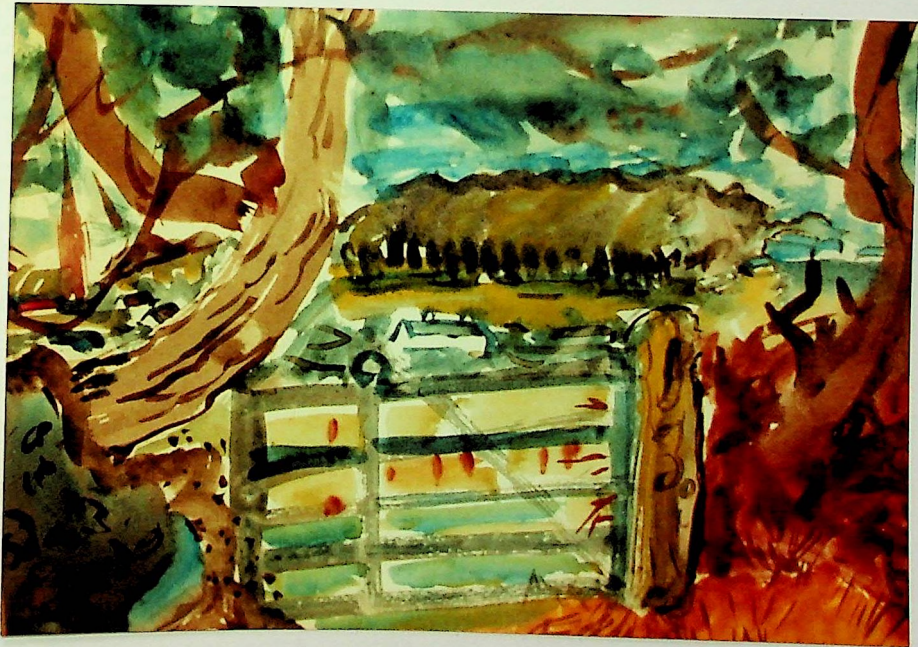


fig. 28 Gate on the Lane I





fig. 29 Sea Lament



fig. 30 River Boyne



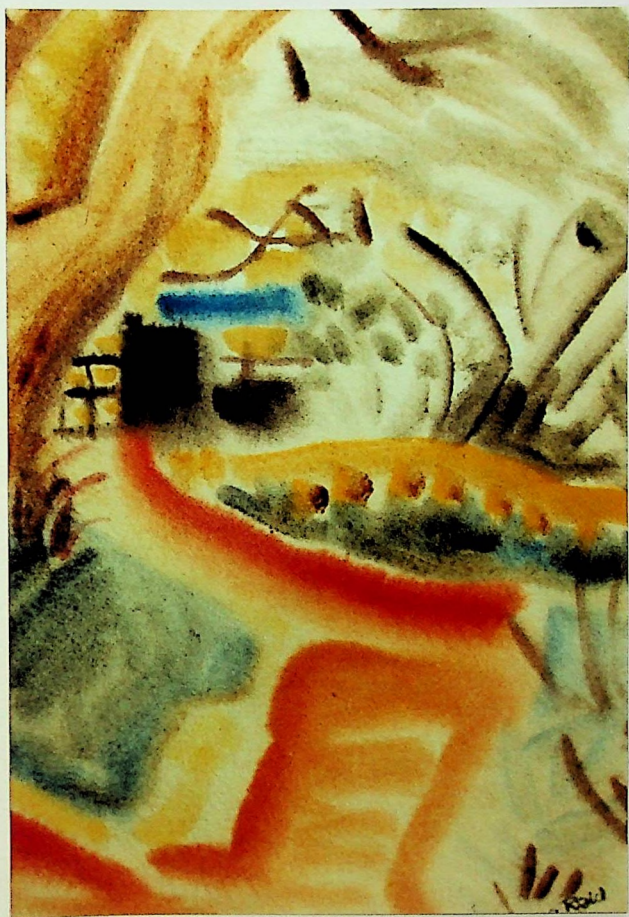


fig. 31 Gate on the Lane II





fig. 32 *River Landmark and Bird*





fig. 33 Mud Banks



fig. 34 Knowth





fig. 35 Seabird and Landmarks



fig. 36 Townly Hall





fig. 37 On The Road





fig. 38 Tinkers Among Ruins



fig. 39 'Nude Study'





fig. 40 Portrait of Pearse Hutchinson

POST SCRIPT

A Retrospective exhibition is due to be held at the newly established Drogheda Arts Centre from April 5th - May 31st 1991. This exhibition will include 48 works (oils, watercolours and drawings) by the artist illustrating the development of her work from the early representational period, through the more lyrical style of the 1940's and 1950's, and culminating in her mature semi-abstracted compositions of the later years.

This is a unique opportunity to see such a wide range of work representative of each stage of Reid's development.

It should prove interesting.



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