

STIR



Issue Number Thirteen

COMEDY & HUMOUR

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ST/R

*The only arts magazine made by
prisoners for prisoners in Scotland*

COMEDY & HUMOUR

Editorial

Welcome to issue 13 of STIR, the only Scottish arts magazine by prisoners for prisoners, a mixture of creative writing and visual art with a splash of Comedy & Humour.

We would like to start by saying thank you for all your entries. STIR would not be what it is today without all of the outstanding work submitted by the prisoners. We enjoyed the process of selection, however we had a challenging time choosing from such a good pool of work.

We have had lots of positive feedback about how STIR encourages emerging artists to develop their creativity and inspiring others to develop skills they often had forgotten or never knew they had.

We would like to thank the co-ordinators and lecturers in all seven prisons for their work. Helping the prisoner's submissions to be placed in STIR is invaluable and encourages everyone to keep sending in visual art, creative writing and poems.

Our themed pages include historical geniuses of comedy, from Charlie Chaplin to Billy Connolly, a fantastic review of William McIlvanney and the journeys of adventurer Brian Wilson, who met with the editorial team telling us about his travels, poetry and creative writings. We also have paintings by Emerging Artists, images of David Bowie and Angelina Jolie and a spread dedicated to the Koestler Trust exhibition in Scotland.

Our next issue will cover 'Fantasy and Fairy Tales' and we are looking forward to reading all your submissions. We hope this theme will bring in more artwork and creative writing than any of the previous issues of the past.

Edited by David, Dennis, Eddie, Jas, John, Jok, Shy and Stuart.

*The views expressed in STIR are not those
of the Scottish Prison Service.*

Cover Art

**DO YOU THINK I'M
FUNNY**

Brian Greenock

Pastel and Digital Media



Old Dogs... New Tricks?

The true sign of good comedy is how it can maintain its audience over generations. Some comedy shows have fallen by the wayside, such as *The Army Game*, *Bootsie and Snudge*, *It ain't half Hot Mum*, but in fairness, even at the time they were never in the classic category.

What differentiates a classic from an also ran? It is very difficult to say, but maybe the story lines were timeless, and they all included someone who the viewer could associate with.

Most viewers know a Hyacinth Bucket, and a Richard, in the same way we all know an Onslow and a Daisy. How many of us know a hapless bank manager such as Captain Mainwaring, or grew up with a corner shop the same as Arkwright's store? Audience association is the key, and all the classic sitcoms have that.

The same cannot be said about *The Army Game*, or *The Likely Lads*. Those shows were aimed at a particular audience, as was the *Liver Birds*. To their target audience, no doubt they were good comedies, but a classic spreads across the whole spectrum.

It's very much the same with stand up comedy, some acts, Les Dawson, Morecombe and Wise, Tommy Cooper are timeless. Again their comedy was aimed right across the board.

Serving up Porridge for Dad's Army at Fawlty Towers and the Vicar of Dibley and Hyacinth Bucket always Keeping up Appearances with Del Boy Open All Hours for Only Fools and Horses, has comedy gone backwards from its halcyon days?

Remaking new comedies from the old classics generally does not work. Why? The reason is, as in the case of *Still Open All Hours*, you can replace the characters at the time or recreate the scene. However, corner shops have not been around since the seventies, there are no longer any Arkwright's and dodgy tills.

There are still dodgy bed and breakfast houses, but health and safety regulations have stopped any new Basil Fawlty from taking up residence. Could they ever remake *Only Fools and Horses*? Yes they could, but would it ever be the same? No chance.

Fifty years from now, they will still be classics, but what about today's comedies, will they be classics?

Edward Glenochil



1

JESTER

Garry Shotts

Acrylic on Canvas

2

THE ANGRY SCOTSMAN

Jimmy Dumfries

Pen on Paper

COMEDY

'AM' NEXT



Parole

My Darling wife the time has come
I've got my parole, I'm coming home

This 15 years has taken its toll
But there's some things you need to know

I lost my eye in a jailhouse fight
And lost all my teeth by eating sugary shite

Diabetes has stricken me
And all I do is bloody pee
When I wake in the morning it's already too late
I've pissed the bed and I'm soaking wet

My once 32in waist is now 46
And I've ended up with big man tits

My darling wife
If you can see past
These minor afflictions

Meet me at the gate
And don't be fucking late

Eddie Shotts

3

TOMMY

Benno Shotts

Oil on Canvas

JOKES

Kerry Cornnton Vale

How do you
kill a circus?
Go for the
juggler.

Why did the duck go to rehab?
Because he was a quack addict.

What did the ocean say
to the beach?
Nothing, it just waved.

What do you
call a teacher
who's late?
Mr Bus.

Where are
pirates from?
Arrrgentina!

&

3



Comedy

It is a sad fact that we humans have a great propensity for laughing at the misfortunes of others.

One of the best examples of this must surely be the sitcoms on television. Take “Only Fools And Horses” for instance. The episode with Del-boy leaning on a hinged bar flap was classic. He lifted his arm to take a drink at the precise moment that the publican raised the flap. Del leans back, and in one fluid movement, goes crashing to the floor! Or, what about the one with the hang-glider? Del, of course, had absolutely no intention of ever leaving terra firma, and thought that he had convinced brother Rodney to extricate him without loss of face. Rodney, however, sees a chance for revenge on his brother.

“Is that our mobile phone I hear, Rodney?”
“No Del,” replies Rodney.
“Are you sure Rodney?”
“Oh yes, we ain’t got a mobile phone, Del.”

The expression on Del’s face as he rushed down the hill and became airborne was priceless! And when he eventually returned, swathed in bandages and in a wheelchair, well, I was helpless with laughter.

Then, of course, there was the “Last Of The Summer Wine”, the tales of three old codgers in the Yorkshire dales. The hilarious scrapes that Compo got himself into, more often than not including battleaxe Nora Batty, are legendary!

For people in prison laughter can often help to relieve tensions. Prison inmates, while finding moderate misfortune funny, very seldom laugh at the more serious mishaps, at least in my experience anyway.

I remember a mate saying, “Don’t mind me, I’m half daft,” to which I replied, “Aye, and the other half’s just plain stupid!”

Another amusing incident was when a guy was recalling a dream he’d had to my mates and me. It seemed that my mate and I both figured prominently in the dream. The guy said that the dream really worried him.

“You were worried”, exclaimed my mate.
“What about us? We were in the bloody thing!”
But perhaps the funniest comment came from a fellow inmate sitting in his cell, grumbling.

We were really getting hacked off with his moans until he came out with the following description of his cell:

“I’m sick of sitting here in this bloody down-market bedsit!”

Jokes can also be a great source of light relief and can help to bear the burden of prison life. There are always new jokes in circulation, sometimes real-time jokes at the expense of fellow inmates, and sometimes old-timers that just never cease to be funny. Good old Englishman/Irishman/Scotsman jokes like this one, often do the rounds:

Mick and Paddy are stranded in Ayr with no way of getting home as it is past midnight. “I know,” says Mick, “We’ll steal a bus!” He gets Paddy to keep watch outside the bus station while he goes in to nick the bus. After a loud series of bangs and crashes, Mick finally emerges with a bus.

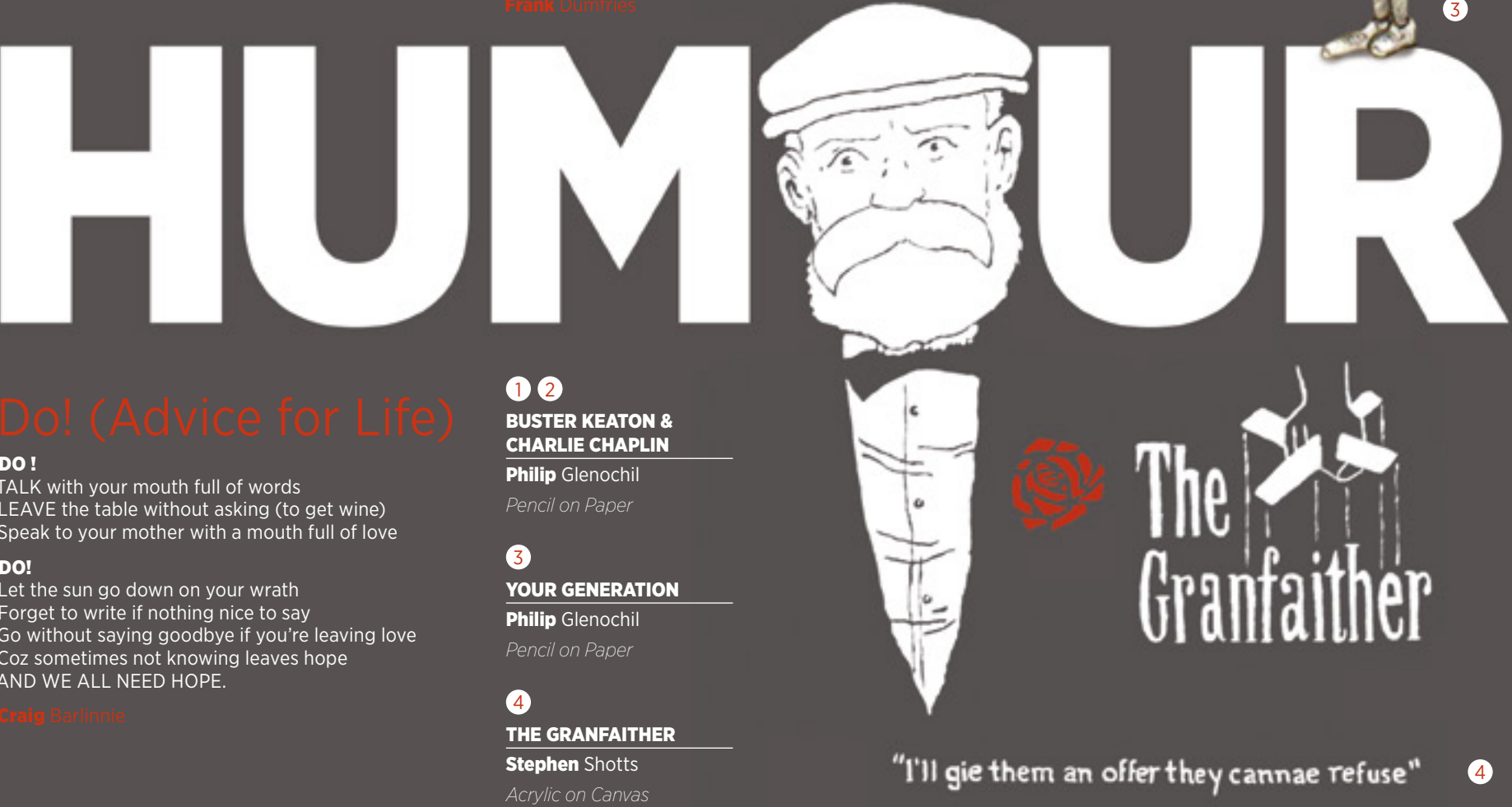
“What the hell was that all about?” asks Paddy.
“Can I help it if the Kilmarnock bus is away at the very back?” quips Mick.

It’s true that laughter can help all of us, whether we’re imprisoned or not, but sometimes it’s also used to mask underlying fears. It’s maybe a way of side-stepping an issue or making light of something that in fact is quite serious. Often in situations where people don’t know what to say or how to behave, laughter crops up. Sometimes it’s more cynical than funny, or even embarrassed, but it always seems to normalise the situation somehow, to bring everyone present back to the here and now.

In whatever form, a sense of humour helps to get us through the day, and while we’re in the company of others, things are fine and time passes in a comfortable enough manner. It’s when that heavy door slams shut at lock-up that a slight despondency can set in. That’s when it’s good to remember that laughter buoys us up, and that we would be far worse off without it. Laughter, after all, is the best medicine.

I’m sure there’ll be plenty in this issue to make you chuckle from jokes to stories, cartoons to reminiscences, slapstick to stand-up. Enjoy!

Frank Duffries



Do! (Advice for Life)

DO !
TALK with your mouth full of words
LEAVE the table without asking (to get wine)
Speak to your mother with a mouth full of love

DO!
Let the sun go down on your wrath
Forget to write if nothing nice to say
Go without saying goodbye if you’re leaving love
Coz sometimes not knowing leaves hope
AND WE ALL NEED HOPE.

Craig Barlinnie

1 2
BUSTER KEATON & CHARLIE CHAPLIN
Philip Glenochil
Pencil on Paper

3
YOUR GENERATION
Philip Glenochil
Pencil on Paper

4
THE GRANFATHER
Stephen Shotts
Acrylic on Canvas



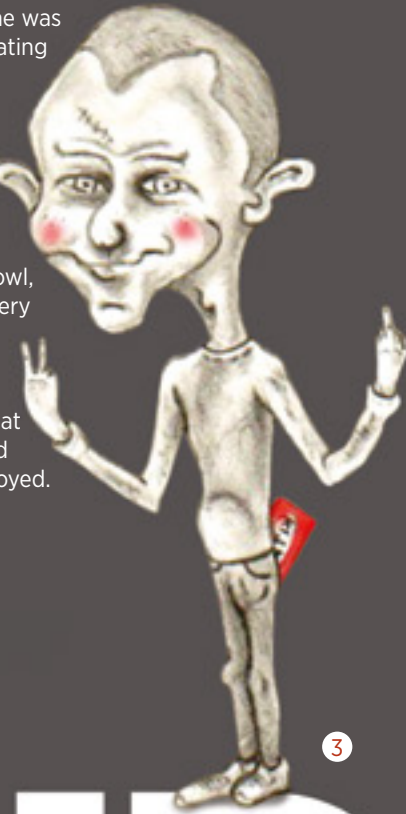
1

2

Silent Comedy

The early form of comedy that I know and like, is the silent movie, with no speaking whatsoever and loads of slapstick. The best of these were Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin and the Keystone Cops. The one that I remember best with Charlie Chaplin was when he was on a ship: He was eating soup as the boat rocked back and forth. The bowl of soup slid on the table as he tried to eat. Each time it passed, the soup spilled out of the bowl, so he was getting very little, if any of the soup. This was one of the very earliest forms of comedy that I can remember, and one that I really enjoyed.

Willy Dummies



3

Wages Day

Friday wis always the same, my Ma would march me and my two big brothers along Kidston Street, turn right into Crown Street, then walk doon a bit to the Waverly pub, I'd meet awe my pals there every Friday, cause that's were awe oor mammies went to get their wages aff oor Da's. When my Da paid my Ma we'd cross the road tae Galbraiths and my Ma would get her messages and we'd get a sherbit lolly each (mmm), I love a Friday because my Ma's always happy and sings songs to us and we get a full half fish and chips (mmm), then aboot eight a clock we hear my da shouting up tae the windae for me and my brother to go down and help him up the stairs, cause he's got bad asthma, so we help him up tae the first landing then he has a puff on his inhaler then up to the next landing and another puff, then up the last flight and intae the hoose, we help him to his favourite chair then take his working boots aff, then it's time for oor beds.

5
WASTE DISPOSAL
Derek Barlinnie
Pencil on Paper

6
THE BIG YIN
Stephen Shotts
Acrylic on Canvas

7
OFFICER 3
Fern Cornton Vale
Acrylic on Canvas

8
OFFICER 2
Fern Cornton Vale
Acrylic on Canvas



5



7



8

9
HIGHWAY TO HELL
Marc Glenochil
Acrylic on Canvas

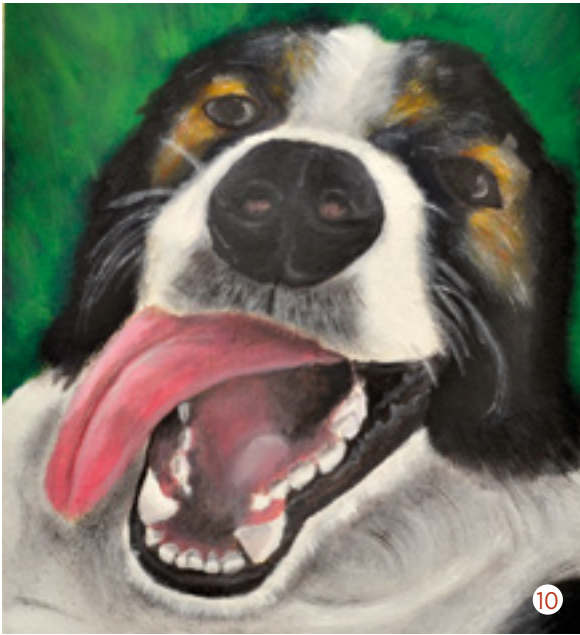
10
LOVEABLE ROGUE
Craig Shotts
Oil on Canvas



6



9



10

An exhibition of artwork from prisons, secure hospitals, secure children's homes, immigration detention centres and community justice services across Scotland.

1 2 3

**183 MORE SLEEPS:
THE KOESTLER
SCOTLAND EXHIBITION**

Photos courtesy of
the Koestler Trust

4 5

183 MORE SLEEPS

Tricia Greenock

Recycled Fabric

183 More

The Koestler Scottish Exhibition



1



2



3

183 More Sleeps

The display has been selected by artist Ruth Ewan from entries to the 2015 Koestler Awards.

The exhibition features an extensive range of artwork including painting, sculpture, needlecraft, nail art, printmaking, woodcraft, audio, animation and writing, highlighting the range of categories to which entrants can submit their work for the Awards.

This year the Koestler Awards received over 8,500 entries, with Scotland's entries at an all time high. Since the first Koestler Scotland exhibition in 2009 with Filmhouse, Edinburgh, and through a three year partnership with Tramway, Glasgow, the number of Scottish entries has risen yearly from 287 in 2009, to 1,788 in 2015.

A booklet of creative writing, Home of the Soul, was produced for the exhibition, in collaboration with STIR magazine – featuring writing and artwork by prisoners in Scotland, edited by a team in HM Prison Shotts. The booklet showcases Koestler Award-winning poetry and prose from Scotland and is available in the exhibition.

The Koestler Trust

The Koestler Trust has been supporting the arts in criminal justice and secure settings for over 50 years.

The Trust runs the Koestler Awards, a prestigious annual fixture across the UK's criminal justice system, to which entrants can submit artworks across 61 different categories.

These include painting, mixed media, poetry, film and drama, as well as traditional prison crafts such as matchstick modelling and soap carving. The 2015 Awards attracted over 8,500 entries – with a total of 1,788 entries submitted from Scotland.

Artworks from these annual entries to the Koestler Awards are selected for prestigious exhibitions across the UK. The 2015 annual UK exhibition of arts by offenders – Re:Form, is open at London's Southbank Centre until 29 November 2015. Since 2009 the Trust has also developed exhibitions in Scotland, the North West, Wales, the West Midlands and the North East. Every Koestler Awards entrant receives a participation certificate, and many receive written feedback about their artwork from a judge or a member of the Koestler arts team. Around a third of all entrants receive an award, ranging from Commended to Platinum, and many of these are named by supporters of the Koestler Trust. The higher awards carry a cash prize. Each year the prize money totals around £30,000.

The Koestler Trust was founded in 1962 by the newspaper proprietor David Astor and the writer Arthur Koestler. Koestler (b. 1905 – 1983) was a political prisoner and wrote the classic prison novel Darkness at Noon.

Ruth Ewan

Artist Ruth Ewan studied Drawing and Painting at Edinburgh College of Art and now lives and works in London.

Her work takes many forms including events, installations and printed matter. Her practice explores histories of radical, political and utopian thought, bringing to light specific ideas in order to question how we might live today. Often engaging with others, her projects involve a process of focused research and close collaboration.

Ruth has been a judge for the Mixed Media category of the UK Koestler Awards since 2010.

'When selecting the exhibition for Summerhall it didn't feel right to favour one medium over another, allowing watercolour to sit next to matchstick models and sugar craft next to portraiture. I wanted to show the breadth of creative practices the Koestler Trust embrace and create an exhibition which is inclusive and perhaps surprising in form. Upon seeing the work from Scotland sorted and installed in one room, ready for selection, certain themes or categories became clear: escape, visions of another distant time, dinosaurs, Vikings or the alien landscape; nature, seen as watercolours from the prison window or ladybirds as nail art; tributes, Leonard Nimoy, Terry Pratchett and Robin Williams; the diagrammatic flow of life, pathways and choices.

There is a sense that these works had to be made, these stories need to be told, and the Koestler Trust allows us as viewers to listen to these voices we otherwise cannot, or will not hear.'

One night of freedom.... well it wisnae really as I had 3 members of staff following me about... This was back in November at the Koestler Exhibition at Summerhall in Edinburgh. It's an old vet's building, where experiments were done and people studied animals. It is a huge building, with so many different rooms to look in.

Sleeps

7 - 29 November 2015
Summerhall, Edinburgh

Never did I think that I'd get to go. I'm nearing the end of a 3 year sentence, with a couple of reports for being a naughty lassie, but amazingly I got to go. My quilt had been chosen as the lead piece for the exhibition and my art teacher thought let's just ask if she can go, and represent the jail.

When the night came, I didn't know what to expect, I've never been to anything like that before, I don't tend to spend my time going to an Art Gallery on a Saturday night... but it was a good night, even though I couldn't have a drink and it was free (the drink I mean). I saw some really good stuff, but it was strange... loads of people were shaking my hand and saying I'm an artist - maybe a piss artist, more like - all I did was make a quilt cos the hall was freezing. It was strange, but in a good way.

There were loads of different pieces, all kinds of art, things that I wouldn't expect to have been art, but also really good things. I really liked a model of someone's cell and also photos of painted nails, and some really good paintings too.

I didn't like getting my photo taken in front of people, I got so embarrassed at stuff like that. I didn't see or meet any other prisoners, just college folk and people who organised the event. I felt a bit out of place, most people were wearing black, but I had my bright red trousers on! Everyone was really nice though, they made me feel so welcome.

On the way home, or back to the jail I felt knackered and freezing cold...but I felt quite proud of myself, it was such a good experience. I never thought that would happen to me. Once we got back we had to phone the Governor to tell him that I hadn't run away. It took me ages to get to sleep that night, I needed my quilt to keep me warm.

The next deadline is coming up for the Koestler Awards in April, now that I've been part of it, I would advise everyone to submit work, there are so many different categories. Even if you don't think it's any good, you never know...

Tricia Greenock



4

"It took me ages to get to sleep that night, I needed my quilt to keep me warm."



5



Home of the Soul

This year the Koestler Awards received over 8,500 entries, with Scotland's entries being at an all time high.

To highlight the quality of work Koestler approached us, the STIR editorial team, to collaborate, create and design this booklet to celebrate and showcase the writing coming out of Scottish prisons.

With such a high standard, judging was a difficult but exciting process in deciding who would feature within these very pages. After much deliberation 'Home of the Soul' came to be; a wonderful collection of the talented and creative voices who represent Scotland.

My Wee Maw

She's a navvy workin' down a hole
She's the twenty pack of consulate menthol

She's ma wee Maw

She's the Johnny Walker blended whisky
She's the china tea set and the green tea cosy

She's me wee Maw

She's 'my Yiddish mama' on an old 78
She's the best leg of lamb on the perfect plate

She's ma wee Maw

She's that extra fiver to see you alright
She's 'Dave Allan on Saturday Night'

She's ma wee Maw

HM Prison Shotts

HE LOVES ME,
HE LOVES ME NOT
Craig Shotts
Oil on Canvas

WHO AM I?

Who am I? I cannot tell
My body and my mind just don't gel
I look like a man all sinewy and strong
But when I speak, it sounds so wrong
'Effeminate' is what they say
Others ask me if I'm gay
Truth be told, my mind's a mess
If I had a choice, I'd wear a dress
Though I'm not a man dressed in drag
It's not what I am when I get called fag
I feel I'm different in my heart
Me and men, we're poles apart
If only they'd see - I'm not a bender
I realise now - I'm transgender
I need to release the woman within
And shed off this defective skin
So that everyone can truly see
That I am me
I am free
Now I am She
Charlene Cornton Vale



WILLIAM MCIIVANNEY

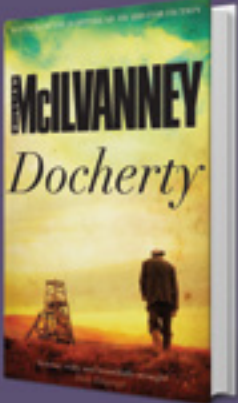
Due to the recent passing of William McIlvanney, The team at STIR would like to pay our own tribute to a great Scottish writer.

Author

A Tribute To William McIlvanney

25th November 1936 - 5th December 2015

McIlvanney was born in the Ayrshire town of Kilmarnock, the son of a miner, William, who was 'educated below his ability' and his mother Helen, who had four children. William's elder brother Hugh is the renowned sports journalist. The family was 'comparatively poor', but at school William was seen as 'a brilliant pupil', taking classes in Latin, Greek and French as well as other subjects. By the time his first novel, 'Remedy Is None' was published in 1966 McIlvanney had embarked on a career as a schoolteacher. McIlvanney's teaching career spanned the years 1960-75, during this period he married and had two children, Siobhan and Liam who both became academics.



The decision to give up teaching in order to write full time was made after the publication of his novel "Docherty" which won the Whitbread prize. It was however, the Glasgow-based crime novel "Laidlaw" published two years later, which caught the fancy of the broader reading public, and for which he came to be known as the "Godfather of tartan noir" the term for Scottish crime fiction.

In 1990 his novel "The Big Man", about a Glasgow prize-fighter was made into a film starring Liam Neeson and Billy Connolly. William McIlvanney's work will live on in the literary world for many years to come. We at STIR urge you to pick up some of his novels and treat yourself to some great reading from this great Scottish author.

Eddie Shotts

Visit

Journeys

A talk with adventurer Brian Wilson

We recently had a very interesting visit in the Shotts Learning Centre from a well-known explorer/writer called Brian Wilson. He is the author of several books which may be available from your prison library.

These books are based on his many adventures and travels around the world, which in itself may not be that unusual, however, Brian's journeys were carried out using an eighteen-foot kayak as his mode of transport.

He had many stories to tell, including describing how he travelled around the coast of Scotland in his kayak and the sense of freedom this gave him, but also the sense of solitariness travelling alone gave him. He could be on his own for weeks at a time but in his opinion travelling on his own made him more approachable to others.

Whilst travelling he met many friendly and interesting people, but what really grabbed the audiences' attention was the tale about a dolphin that followed him off the coast of Ireland. He was paddling along at his cruising speed of four knots per hour, looking for dolphins or other marine animals to photograph with his waterproof camera, when he suddenly became aware of something following him. He turned around to see a dolphin swimming alongside him and he described the feeling of connection he had with the animal.



1

VERDENT VALLEY

Joe Barlinnie

Oil on Canvas

2

EMBROIDERED DRESS

Paul Barlinnie

Oil on Canvas

1

At one point Brian turned his kayak upside down in the water to get a better look and to his amazement the dolphin proceeded to turn itself upside down to match him.

We all found this entertaining but on a more serious note Brian talked about how this made him think about the animals in the sea, and how pollution affects them. He also described nature being in a state of constant transformation where features change over time due to the elements.

The journeys Brian undertook were not without their risks, he encountered large waves and whirlpools. He described a massive whirlpool at Corry Vreckan, just off the Isle of Jura where if it was not avoided, would result in certain death. If his kayak got too close to this whirlpool, it would have sucked him under water and dumped him five miles out to sea.

In prison a lot of the time is spent thinking about the future and it is similar to going on a journey, in Brian's own words 'You're not the same person at the end of a journey as you are at the start'. This is undoubtedly true, but this could be viewed as positive, and again in Brian's words when talking about his journeys, 'Around every corner, there is something new'. Whereas his journey was a physical adventure, our journey, whilst in prison, can also have something new around the corner, it's up to you to decide.

Brian Wilson's talk was interesting, informative, positive and thought provoking and if you would like to know more about his interesting adventures then his books are a good place to start.

James Shotts



2

The Ghost Ship

In May 19th 1845 two ships took sail HMS Erebus and HMS Terror an expedition under the command of Sir John Franklin and second in command Francis Rawdon Crozier.

The two ships departed from Greenhithe, England to find a northwest passage through the Arctic and if successful to be claimed by Britain. They expected the expedition to take approximately three years and the ships were acquitted with up to date technology, tinned food and other essentials to last their time at sea. Both ships had reinforced beams in the hull so it would be able to stand the pressure of the freezing ice and declinatoris to provide fresh water from the sea. The need of fresh water was important as they used a metric tonne every hour to have the ship sailing. Hot water was pumped through pipes and used as a heating system in the cabins for the 134 crew on board.

In August 1845 the ships passed two whaling vessels, The Enterprise and Prince of Wales, unbeknown at the time this would have been the last ever sightings of HMS Erebus and HMS Terror and their crew. It wasn't until 1848 when the ships never returned, Lady Jane Franklin put up posters for information and rewards. This sparked so many false leads, and the papers were printing stories about possibilities of what might have happened but all leads proved to be hoaxes. There were several searches for the ships but nothing was ever found but the most recent search was done by the Canadian government who after intense investigations and more information about the whereabouts of HMS Erebus and HMS Terror that there would be some kind of a closure after all these years.

Some local people said that they even passed many foreigners pulling boats, they couldn't understand them so had given them some whale meat and carried on.

CR

When arriving where Franklin's and Crozier's ships were last seen they came across three headstones propped up in the icy cold snow. It was the bodies of Franklin's crew. According to the writing on the headstones they had died only six months into the expedition, so what went terribly wrong? After further investigations on the bodies they were found with high levels of aluminium but not enough to kill them. This was caused by eating out of the tins.

When investigating they found that witnesses had seen the ships stuck in the ice and this information was passed through generations by telling stories. Some local people said that they even passed many foreigners pulling boats, they couldn't understand them so had given them some whale meat and carried on.

Piecing together all the information and returning to the area where the men were sighted dragging the boats proved successful. Lying upside down, the boats were being used for shelter, there were even bodies lying preserved by the freezing ice, but the horrifying discovery was the human remains scattered about a make-shift camp site that had been set up. The crew had resorted to cannibalism to prolong their existence but eventually all lost their lives to the freezing Arctic.

HMS Erebus and HMS Terror both were lost to the Arctic ice and in 2014 HMS Erebus was found sitting upright at the bottom of the Arctic Ocean. This site is now a historical site. We know the remaining crew who abandoned the ships got lost in the Arctic and eventually lost their lives but we have yet to learn why Franklin and some of his crew died as it still remains a mystery.

Carole Greenock



1
HAY BALES
Craig Barlinnie
Acrylic on Canvas

3
I SEE MAGIC IN YOUR EYES
Benno Shotts
Oil on Canvas

2
A VIEW BEYOND THE DOOR
Joe Barlinnie
Oil on Canvas

4
I THEN UNDERSTOOD THE NATURE OF THE SITUATION, AND MY FEARS SUBSIDE
Craig Shotts
Oil on Canvas

Food Bank

Sitting hungry at about mid-day watching my kids hard at play

Now it's time to prepare the lunch but there is no food nothing to munch I can see my kids run and stumble I know their bellies will start to rumble

My children are hungry I feel shame, although I know I'm not to blame

I know my children need to eat; I know I must find some meat

Supermarket adverts are on the telly but there is still no food in my babies' belly

I'd avoid charity if I could, wouldn't take hand-outs even though I know I should

I have a choice to rob or steal just to provide a family meal

Adam Brilinnie

EATIN

RITIN



Autumn Sensed

Nature's dimmer switch is set to burnished hues
Scarecrows scatter redundantly across patchwork fields
Whose labours are wearily gathered and squirreled away
Leaves succumb to her ghostly breath and depart their woody scaffolding
Avian departure lounges are filled with excited travellers
Feathered offspring tweet incessantly from 'the cloud'
Their frantic soundtrack soon to be replaced by mournful melody
As they pursue the warmth of distant lands
The musky aroma of decay hangs heavy in the air
But from this death new life shall issue forth
The tired soil absorbs its rank odorous antidote
In anticipation of future yields to surrender
Temptation of thorny fruits beckon from hedgerows
Game covers nervously among the bracken
In fear of being peppered by seasoned stalkers
Who hide in wet misty veils to conceal their intent
The sum of all these transitions are
The bountiful fruits of the land
The savoury sweet sensations of flora and fauna
A reward for labours unwillingly given.

Stephen Barlinnie

VE

Key Ideas

If I had a key, to open a doorway of talking and seeing my son,
I would tell him I love him and hold him tight. To be able to watch him grow up the way he was meant to. First tooth, first steps, first laugh.
I would visit him every day. To just spend time with him would feel amazing. Sometimes I wonder what he would have looked like now at eleven years old. Would he have dark hair or would he be blond like me? I wouldn't have to wonder anymore. I would know that he's ok and that he knows I love him very much. To push him on a swing while he is screaming with laughter, to hold his hand, while we walk along and talk about absolutely nothing, would feel like being in heaven.

All alone just me and my son.
If I could lock away the addict in me, for it never to be opened again, my life would be so much better. No more cravings, no more "fuck it" thoughts. I would slam the door shut, never to be opened again. All my negative thoughts about how I can't cope without using would go along with the slamming of the door. Never again would I wake up knowing I'll have to go score. No more needles or foil, black marks on the wall. Have money to spend on things that I used to enjoy and take pride in, before this monster came out in me. To lock that monster behind a door, never to be looked upon again would be the best thing in the world.

Cheryl Cornton Vale



POETRY CORNER

Chai Gone Wrong

From sun-drenched slopes of India
Levelling classes like utopia
Thirst quenching qualities of tea
Brings generations closer to me

Water pours releases simple pleasure
Sugar and milk in rough measure
a brew's prepared observing a wall
abandoned to a door's rapping call

amid wires that tangle in a fray
and ash escaping its guardian tray
the cup's forgotten its meaning lost
like papers surrounding acting as host

time passes through various tomorrows
joys of chai come sight of sorrows
now a dirty dish long gone cold
its life-giving property turned to mould

Ritchie Barlinnie

Human Nature

Creative concept to conceal
Labelled behaviour hidden ideals
Inherent need to feel
Substitute, subvert the real
Fired with desire
Burn it down build your pyre
Shelter what we love
Raised white flag released white dove
Heavens divine military
Smite with dark noble ability
Hells dastardly denizens
Hoped release from tormented internment
Conflict of will
Moral medication duel pill
Both poison and cure
Risk or repress to endure
How civilised
The cages we have devised
Divided by our supplied lies
Insistently chasing the implied prize

Drew Greenock

Unconquerable

Out of the dark that envelopes me
Black as the midnight skies
I thank whatever gods I'll see
With imperturbable eyes

In the fell clutch of chance
I have not flinched nor cried loudly
Under the hammering of providence
I hold my head high, very proudly

Beyond this world of pain and tears
Looms but the terror of nothingness
And yet the sorrow of the years
Finds, and shall find me, fearless

It matters not how long the wait
How punishments take their toll
I am the master of my fate
I am the captain of my soul

Kieran Low Moss

What a Difference a Day Makes

Sad and lonely just crawling about
This poor little caterpillar
Doesn't know what life's about
Entombed in this chrysalis
Away from all the pain
Today is the day
He'll start his life again
Feeling so much different
And good about outside
A butterfly emerges
No longer wants to hide
Rainbow coloured wings
That flutter in the breeze
The change inside is evident
For once he feels at ease
No longer feeling vile
He floats up in the sky
Now this beautiful butterfly
Slowly waves goodbye.

Debbie Cornton Vale

Wake Up in the Morning

Wake up in the morning, rise from my bed
Stagger into the bathroom
Wash that old head.

Look in the mirror, what do I see?
Grey hair and wrinkles, is that really me?
Pinch of the nose, pull at the skin
I cannot believe that double chin!
Look at those eyes! Facelift maybe?
On second thoughts, a full MOT.
The years they catch up, no matter who.
Take a look in the mirror -
is it happening to you?

John Dumfries

Rocking Chair

I hope that I'm your favourite
As we get comfy by the fire
I am the route to your relaxation
Which is also my desire.
Hear the boards creak gently below us
As we travel to and fro
And lose yourself within me
While to the land of nod you go.

Paul Glenochil

1 2

BRUSH BIRD

Andrew Shotts

Watercolour



Life on a Boat

Hundreds of migrants trying to escape,
Crossing deep water for a new place.
Frightened of the terror
Of getting stopped.

So they're sent back to the old base
With faces showing sadness and disgrace.
But all they want is to be free
To get on with their lives like you and me.

So let the people help them
By letting them sail free,
Because all they want is a life
Where they can be happy and free.

Andrew Dumfries



Bring Back Robin Hood

Those politicians who steal from the poor
Can go back to their crack in the sewer
All of yous are a pack of rats
Born with a silver spoon in yer arse
Yous think yous are better, above the rest
But you're as low as a damp, dark rats nest
People are struggling and you make life harder
Leave the poor be and take from the rich
Stop passing daft laws - it's an immoral fix!

Martin Barlinnie

EMERGING ARTISTS



A Pulse

How do you function?
From day to day.
No regular adrenal jolt.
Where's the stimulation for the system?

Such a mediocre existence.
Soul servitude.
Fragile approval junkies.
Could you make a change?

Could you risk it all for a little sense of self awareness?
How radical are you prepared to be?
Throw caution to the wind for a glimpse,
My little pat on the back monkeys.

The enlightened reminder.
Not the knowledge of your sins.
But that rude awakening.
Sudden realization that what you need-
You already have.....

Drew Greenock

7

BOWIE

Laura Greenock

Pen on Paper

3

BOAT ON A BEACH

Craig Barlinnie

Pastel on Paper

4

SAMMY

John Shotts

Acrylic on Canvas

5

BERNIE

Gurnham Dumfries

Oil on Canvas

6

ANGELINA

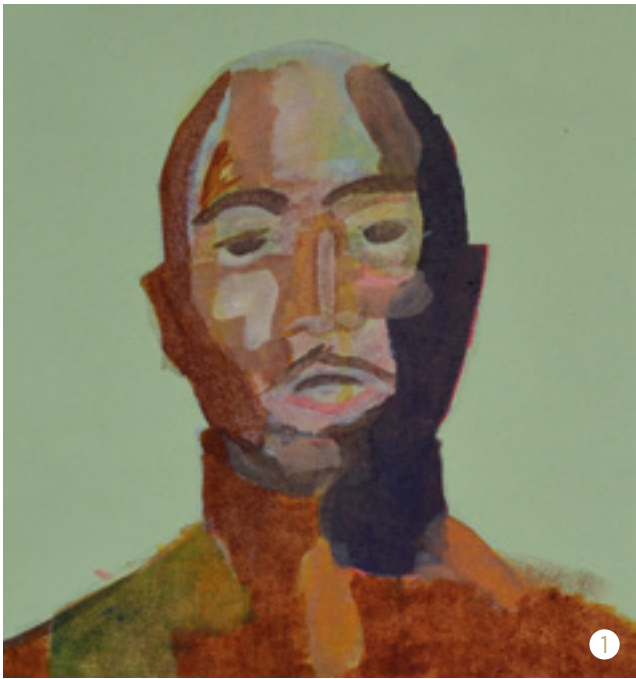
Robert Greenock

Pencil on Paper

Mum - A Snapshot

You're at home on the couch
Laughing on the laptop
Cream jumper and jeans
Cup of coffee with one Sweetex in one hand,
Richmond fag in the other
Cream wallpaper, leather couch, wooden table
Smiling, happy, showing all your teeth
Reeko and Chelsea lying next to you
Dimmed light,
Music and strange noises from the TV and laptop
You're shouting, laughing, tell me to look
At a funny video on You Tube.

Erin Cornton Vale



1



2



3



4



7



5



6



8



9



10



11

Artists' Commentary

2 MY SON

Olu Greenock

It is special to me, as it reminds me I shouldn't be here... I should be with him. What a waste.

7 NO EXPLANATION NECESSARY

Neil Shotts

Everywhere I played as a kid there was a police camera being put up til all my streets were covered with cameras and my friends and I could no longer play without someone watching us.

Winning Artwork for Issue Ten

Visual Art

Craig Barlinnie – *Tinned Dolphin*

STIR very much enjoyed Craig's environmental response to art and protest. His use of graphic design tackled a relevant and current world issue, that should be highlighted more often.

Written

Andrew Barlinnie – *In the Name of Your God*

A very hard hitting truthful reality on the wars around the world.

In the Gallery

1

TUPAC

Sam Shotts

Acrylic on Canvas

2

MY SON

Olu Greenock

Acrylic on Canvas

3

CHECKMATE

Marc Glenochil

Acrylic on Canvas

4

OFFICERS 4&5

Fern Cornton Vale

Oil on Canvas

5

THE FOUR WEE RASCALS

Carole Greenock

Textiles

6

COURTING COUPLE ARE SHOCKED

Jimmy Dumfries

Pencil on Paper

7

NO EXPLANATION NECESSARY

Neil Shotts

Oil on Canvas

8

CASTLES

Tim Glenochil

Ceramic Sculpture

9

GAMES

Dean Shotts

Acrylic on Canvas

10

SASSY SALLY IN SWITZERLAND

Joanne Greenock

Textiles

11

PAUL WELLER

Andrew Glenochil

Acrylic on Canvas

ST/R

Today, a young man on acid realised that all matter is merely energy condensed to a slow vibration, that we are all one consciousness experiencing itself subjectively. There is no such thing as death, life is only a dream, and we are the imagination of ourselves. Here's Tom with the weather.

Bill Hicks

Call for submissions for Issue Fifteen

The theme for Issue 15 is called **What's Happening** as it will be about the projects that took place in your local prisons.

Please continue to send us your poems, prose, reviews and visual art to help us highlight all the work taking place in your learning centres.

Please send in your submissions by 15 July 2016.

CONTACT

Submit your work to your New College Lanarkshire Learning Centre through the following contacts:

ROSEANN MCNAMARA
HMP Barlinnie

ROSEMARY TAYLOR
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EM STRANG
HMP Dumfries

RACHEL WEBB
HMP Glenochil
TESSA DUNLOP
HMP Greenock

SARAH MCKEE
HMP Low Moss

IÑIGO GARRIDO
HMP Shotts



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