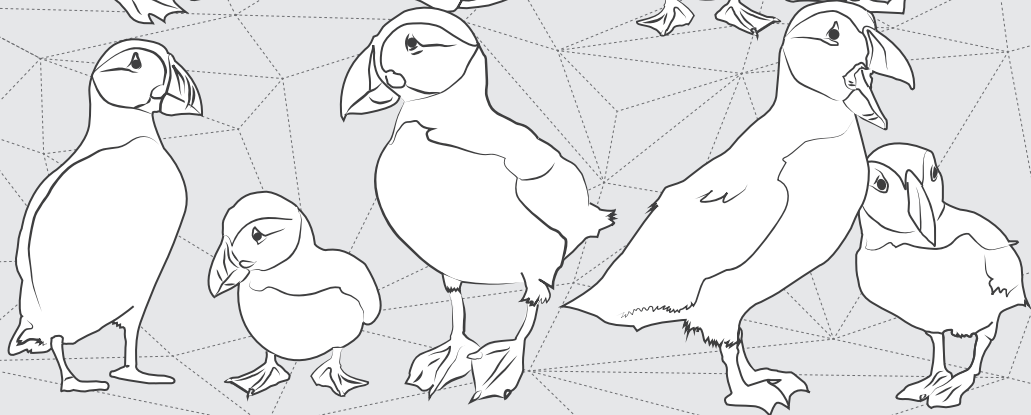
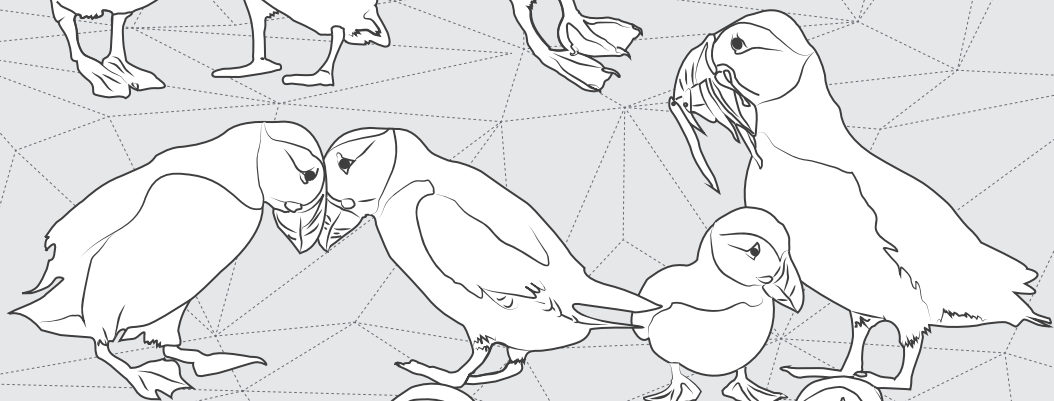
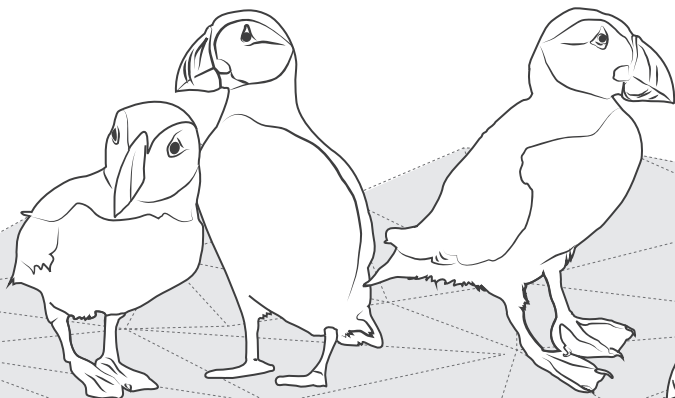


GATHER



# NI MENTAL HEALTH ARTS FESTIVAL

9-15 May 2022 — [www.nimhaf.org](http://www.nimhaf.org)

Did you know that a group of puffins is called a ‘Gathering’?

The cute little buggers decide to make Rathlin their home for a few months every year to breed, eat, squabble and clown about, before off they go back to sea without even a thought about putting the bins out or turning off the immersion.

How wonderful it is to have the freedom to be with others. To spend time with those you love, to argue with those whose opinions differ to yours, to avoid those that hurt you and to forgive those that you can tolerate.

I’m not going to do the whole ‘Oxford English Dictionary defines ‘Gather’ as...’ thing. I’ll allow the contributors to this publication to give a much more creative and interesting response to the theme than that.

Instead I want to dedicate these pages to all those who do not have the ability to gather in safety – be that in protest, in war, in persecution or in health. It is a privilege to have the physical and mental health to get about in this world safely and without fear, the time and space to gather one’s thoughts – a privilege we seldom appreciated until it was gone.

The world keeps turning, we will gather way and the puffins will return.

Thank you to the festival team and our funders.

*So long, and thanks for all the fish!*

Dawn Richardson / Creative Director

Jonathan Brennan / Design

## GATHER UP YOUR THINGS AND GO

Brian Coney

Please, gather up your things and go.

Do you hear gentleness in these words? Maybe a hint of annoyance? Is *please* pointed or kind? Does *your things* sound dismissive or matter-of-fact? And *go*.

Eyes beaming above a full-hearted smile. ‘*Please, gather up your things and go.*’ A young primary school teacher gently ushers a stream of small heads away.

At the risk of spelling out the glaringly obvious, in life as with language, we’re hardwired to project certitude onto ambiguities. As there’s rarely an obvious reward in not knowing, we fill in the blanks whether we’re aware of it or not.

The vast majority of published writing that doesn’t indulge in at least some ambiguity is good journalism. But can you imagine the totality of literature without it? The Linen Hall Library would be a Starbucks. Belfast Central Library: a multi-story car park. CS Lewis? I can’t quite place the name.

Of course, as with figurative language generally, the magic of ambiguity in literature — of sourcing solace and escape in make-believe — is almost always relational. Without something at either end of it, a clause will falter, demoted to mere word. Yet there’s no shame in a mere word thriving out on its own.

Augur.

Murmurous.

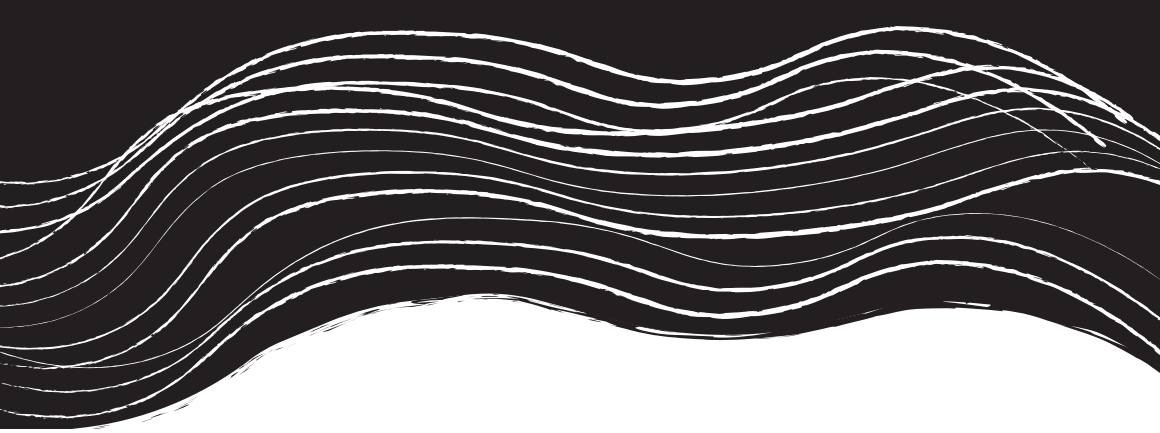
Purl, altar and sarcophagus.

Coo, arable, preen, blimp and imbroglia.

Like you, countless mere words just do it for me, yet few words carry as much warmth and vague altruistic oomph as *gather*.

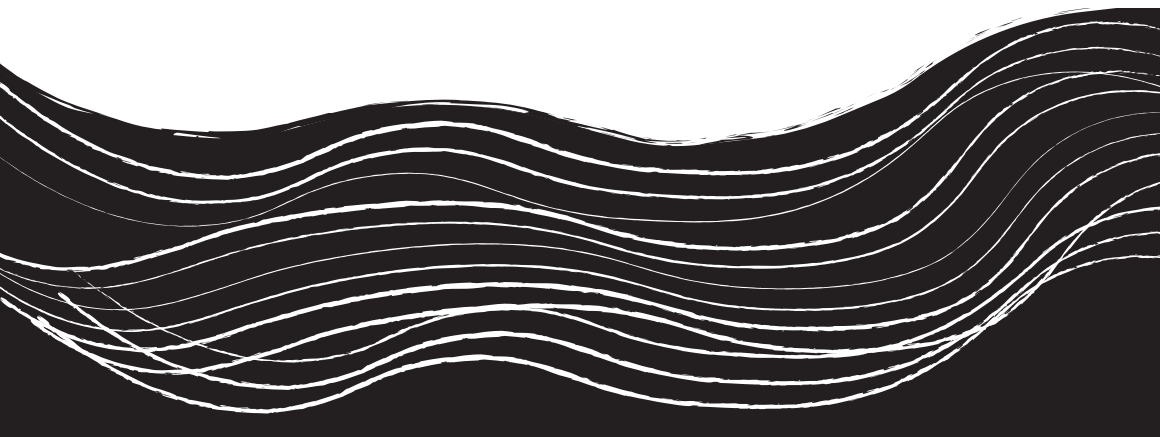
GATHER

Whether wildflowers or thoughts, friends or oneself, it embodies a curious calm. A kind of meditative deliberation even. Where’s the hurry in *gather*, after all? That’s grab and grasp’s job. Seize’s, too. Picture a gathering storm. Cumulonimbus may frantically form, but from down here — where we have time to gather loved ones if needed — muted peace often wins out over worry.



The publication you're holding in your hands is its own kind of gathering. A coming-together of disparate voices from overlapping worlds, in which you, too, are part. Different times, different places, but all here. That voice chiming in your head — *please, gather up your things and go* — has an important seat at the table.

Like a beam cutting through a prism, the words between these pages bring out all kinds of brilliant light. Reverie, repartee and the wonderful ebb of ambiguity, too. But beyond the covers, I firmly believe good living to be like the aforesaid good journalism, where candour, clarity and compassion win out and reign supreme. From what I can gather, at least.



## CHORUS AFTER CHORUS

*Colin Dardis*

There's a reunion of the flesh,  
a handshake, re-entry,  
a comfortable extension  
of eye contact  
between two stations,  
both tuned into the same beat,  
broadcasting solely to each other.  
Blindfold off, headphones on;  
surrounded by sound,  
marooned together in old fashions,  
happy to repeat.

We don't want this song to end,  
adding codas, sitting down  
to craft new verses  
to a melody easily hummed;  
taking a pact to forever  
bell out the choruses.

May every chorus surge  
and resurge the blood as our calling  
to revel in days owned together;  
for we can never own time,  
but we can possess  
the echoes of energy  
spent passing time in union.

## OVERHEARD IN THE PARK

*Colin Dardis*

i.  
Overhead, the rustling  
of unseen birds taking off,  
squirrels skittering branches  
as berries spill to the ground.  
Perhaps it is just the wind,  
everything invisible,  
the leaves, a conspiracy.

ii.  
A boy beats a basketball  
over madescent tarmac,  
each slap, a declaration  
that he is ready to play.  
The tennis courts are empty,  
the bandstand without music,  
everyone away for tea.

iii.  
A young father swings his child  
on the exercise machine;  
her shoes fit neatly inside  
where one adult foot should be,  
pressed together as daddy  
fulcrums this pendulum,  
memories of the cradle.





# THE YARD

*Cathaoir Cassidy*

Our yard is in Toome  
at the top of Lough Neagh  
on the banks of the River Bann  
where generations of people  
fished the eels and dug the sand.

My great grandfather Thomas  
started a hardware and grocers merchant  
on this same site.  
His business became a vocation  
that he worked hard at and attended to  
for the rest of his life.

Next in line was his son John  
and his daughter Mary  
and then my father  
also Thomas.

I first visited when I was only wee  
on Saturdays when I'd no school  
I'd go to work with my father:  
a small, shy, blue-eyed nuisance  
that followed him everywhere.

Sometimes he gave me 50p for the shop  
or told me to stand in out of the rain  
and on the day of the grand national  
I picked the same horse he did.

Soon I was big enough to lift a bag of cement  
and there was no turning back.  
I learned so much  
from the builders and farmers and comedians  
who'd send me for a long stand  
or bubbles for a spirit level.

I'd meet joiners who'd whistled while they worked,  
and sincere people who'd quote the bible,  
and old men who told me  
they knew everyone belonging to me  
on the Mackle side.

A child in a world of adults —  
all I did was listen.  
I learned that the yard was a melting pot  
of all people of all ages,  
who had to sweat for their bread;  
I learned about the goodness in people and  
that I wouldn't be young forever;  
I learned about loss  
and how to run a business;  
and I am still learning,  
still here.





## GATHER

Christopher Martin



## SEASONS

Eunice Yeates

I

Sfiso rambles through the Ormeau Park wishing he had a dog on a lead like the other walkers. A sweet pup to fuss over and cuddle, not the black dog that wears him down daily. It pains him to leave his room, but he knows he must take the air. He must go where people gather. He enters the park from the Ravenhill Road. Passing the tennis courts, a young couple argue and raise their voices. Love fifteen. Near the bandstand, he smiles at a woman walking a spaniel. She averts her eyes and quickens her step, gathering speed. Sfiso looks at the trees in blossom. Pretty, but he aches for home. For bougainvillea, for jasmine, for jacaranda. The air is biting. The wind is cold.

II

Sorcha dreads the sunny months because of the gatherings. Every gobshite wants to have a gathering. *Let's all meet up! Let's get together!* Barbeques on patios, picnics on beaches, pints in beer gardens, and Christ-the-night, weddings; all the feckin weddings. It's a mission to keep inventing excuses. Worst are the ones who won't take no for an answer. Awk, drop in anyway. Come for a wee while, sure. They are relentless. Sorcha can't explain why she is so withdrawn and, anyway, nobody would understand. In North Belfast, they'd think her head was cut. In West Belfast, they'd be suspicious. When there is no alternative to turning up, her chest tightens, her stomach churns, her head pounds. She labours to gather herself together.

### III

Aubrey stands on the Albert Bridge at dusk wearing loneliness across his thin shoulders. These evenings the starlings gather to choreograph their mad murmurations, and Aubrey shows up for the spectacle. The autumn light fades fast, and he keeps a reflective band around the sleeve of his father's wool coat. His harsh and unaccepting late father. The chill doesn't bother him as long as the birds are swooping and dipping, rising and reeling. Aubrey has long favoured the company of creatures over people. By day, he walks the grounds of the Stormont Estate watching grey squirrels gathering snacks. He's heard that red squirrels are to be reintroduced. Aubrey stops by the statue of Lord Carson and wonders how grey and red will coexist.

### IV

Wisla works three cleaning jobs in South Belfast: two in offices, one in a big house on the Malone Road. The husband is awkward. He speaks too quickly, but his eyes are kind. His English wife lectures at Queen's and treats Wisla like a half-wit. "I gather you will finish the silverware when you return! Several pieces have not been polished," she shouts, pointing at the sideboard. Wisla doesn't mind. She gathers up her cleaning supplies, grateful for any time away from the bully she married. His cruel words, a slap whenever she doesn't quake. She hides everything from him, including her anxiety. She's glad to earn money she can send to her mother in Warsaw. She has no friends. The winters are long.

## WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY

*Paul Butterfield Jnr*

God screaming at a willow tree  
Birds shitting on a flower  
A book drowning  
An angel singing down to a poet  
All wrapped up in one man's heart  
We are just a soul searching for our own truth  
And it comes in many forms



## YOU'RE DOING YOUR BEST

Fiona McDonnell



## GATHER – COLOUR ME IN!

Francois Got Buffed





## FLUOXENTINE

Holly Foskett



Sometimes it's hard for me to describe what I feel. It just all gathers inside and shows itself to others when I let it or I can't contain it anymore.

## GATHERING

John Blair

*"How hard it must be to live only with what one knows and what one remembers, cut off from what one hopes for!"*  
The Plague, Albert Camus

Few people in the spring of 2020 could have imagined gigs and nightclubs being shut almost two years later and yet that's the reality we are faced with. Ironically, we lacked the inability to imagine the pandemic and its restrictions carrying on indefinitely because we greatly underestimated just how lacking in imagination our political elites are. Over the past 40 years the idea of any radical change in society, directed by anything other than the needs of the market, has been so undermined that western states have been unable to deal with the Covid pandemic in any coherent and collective manner.

Two years on and we have seemed to have caught a small break: omicron, while extremely infectious, has turned out to have a much lower hospitalisation rate. Yet lockdown measures remain for nightclubs, theatres and live music venues. Necessary as such restrictions are in the face of an immediate threat to health services, when this wave eases it seems reasonable to question at what stage does lockdown to protect the NHS become essentially lockdown to cover for chronic under resourcing endemic to the health service even prior to the pandemic?

Lockdown to prevent thousands of deaths is one thing, removing social freedoms of millions because you want to maintain a threadbare health service with no spare capacity is quite another. 20 months ago, they were showing off the Nightingale hospitals and emergency military cover. By this stage surely this extra capacity should be integrated into the NHS, there should have been massive recruitment campaigns and wage incentives for NHS staff. There hasn't.

Most reasonable people understand the need for some restrictions to prevent the NHS collapsing, but the NHS's capacity is a political decision and people's freedom to gather is in part being played off against the government's commitment to a low wage, under resourced health service. This failure to even imagine a health service different from the one before Covid is emblematic of how governments desire to keep "business as usual" perversely bars any return to "normal". On a global level, this plays out in the maintaining of patents on vaccines, where even an existential crisis mustn't be allowed to impact on profits and dividends.

If we are to get through Covid, let alone climate change, we're going to have to imagine, hope and ultimately fight for a very different day to day, one in which our many needs are fulfilled rather than pitted against each other.



# MAPPING THE UNKNOWN

*Helen McDonnell*



# GATHER

*Laura Gray*





# FOOL'S SPRING

Niamh Roberts

Welcome, welcome  
I'm welcoming you

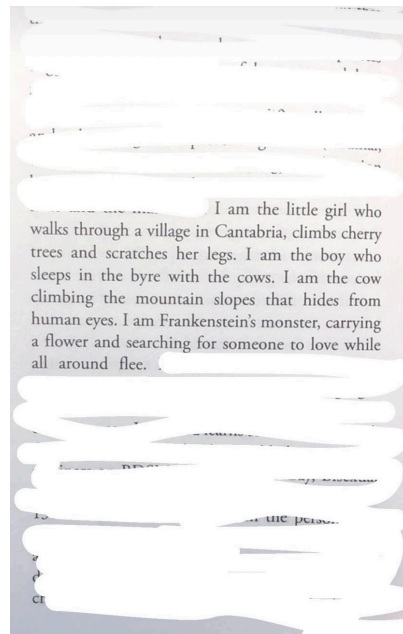
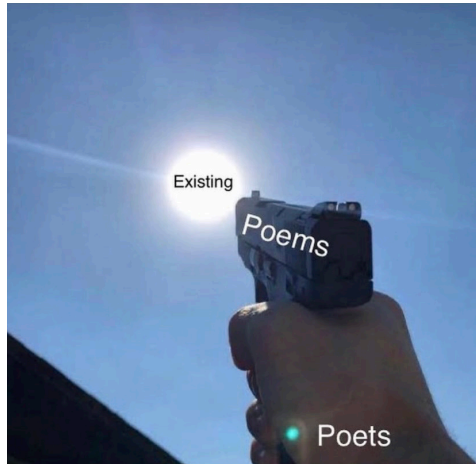
Thursday is  
-work  
-home  
B out w-work club  
No drink  
For you!

Friday begins  
-11 am call  
-writing exercise  
-therapy 40  
-walk / get photos developed  
-I send the exercise off

Sat  
Sun  
Work again

You have  
a hot cup of coffee  
I have  
7 days left of my inside

\*every one thing kept the other thing up  
until each thing I wanted  
or needed  
fell down



No Other Child feeling  
Not this again – A great first date – So gullible then  
And she agreed with me  
how clever!  
that makes me think she is  
Cos we agreed

Dull, red wax, 21 nails (that I can see)  
Grey-brown sock  
Orange bleach stain with worn soles.  
It's a handheld weapon  
and part of a bigger thing  
a collection of handheld weapons.  
When I look at it I know  
how to hold it – and swing it –  
slapstick violence

The kind that is so sexy and

Why is the work so important to me anyway?

The dull, red wax, the sock and the 21(ish) nails,  
all together it's what they had at home.  
It's economic  
and it's  
effective.

It's so caring.

A gift from 1 to another – it says IN EXCITED SPEECH *this is for you, while I'm gone I'll be back to yourself*  
I'll give you this for now  
keep me and yourself in mind – to do both things at once then –  
I'll give you myself later.

I hardened my sharp edge  
when I mistook you for a soft thing to sit beside Ok. I was wrong -  
the one that I was thinking about,  
that got to hear everything  
or was it even anything?



*They*

They looked at me every day,  
they looked at my luck  
and had pity.

I thought I would write a novel  
one that was unconditional and dreamlike,  
but I got to 14 lines and the whole thing was here-say.

My From Here to Eternity Favourite was the guys with bikes

The men in vans

taking turns blowing off  
locks

Will I be next?

I got back with no money

Spent all my money getting home

So I walked From Here to Eternity and it took just under 2 hours

Saw someone I knew

Some great photographs

I walked to pimlico to be fed,

I asked for a belt,

I got one from their childhood uncle or family friend

my right hand

made an upside-down heart

for a buckle

for my blue 501's

bigger now than before

but 5 years strong and only got

their first hole now.

On my way home

I thought about if this was bad luck

*Eve,*

*listen to me,*

*I'm saying all the wrong things*

Get out of work and  
No one has text me  
No one to text

This is a lonely poem  
The rhythm of the worker  
Easy to fall into –  
less desirable and more alone when you're in  
I miss the rhythm of the tower  
Easy to fall into –  
or under and ever-new when you're in

I'm saying that This city is dead  
I go out to see it  
and it's not there  
I wear my friend's t-shirt  
2 girls pass by my window they're hot  
and maybe it's not

I  
tear from  
a  
bone  
I  
wish  
it  
was always to  
show how many more birthdays there will  
be-  
but  
I'm  
not  
the  
dog here.

The dog doesn't know either.  
Only knows if  
it tastes good or not, and  
it mostly does, cos it's meat.

I'm both sides of the coin  
I am rich and I am open

The cycle racks outside of Haggerston with the flash on  
\*Remember to take that picture  
but it's gone sour now and I wannae forget the moment

You are exactly who I wanted to see today!  
You were exactly who I wanted to see that day.  
You're at the back of mind now  
and I think in this evening  
my life is changing  
I didn't bring a jacket and I didn't need de,  
because this is the Fool's Spring.

and I am The Fool,  
skipping out *my* train and I skip up *my* stairs thinking in *my* workers rhythm  
how I love my stupidlittlejob for now.  
I'm up here and I'm listening,  
because I can hear cathedral bells dripping through alleyways,  
and a man in South London shouting at a dog named *Dalston*.

CANCER SZN will bring me back in time to get back to Earth.  
I have to go see mey doctor.  
I don't know what to say but I just feel like I don't have a lot of money.  
I think it was just a wee message from the Sun  
and it said that I would have to do  
something else  
for a while.  
I'm okay.  
I'm so excited for the future  
and the next time I go see the river I will know how to do something like this for  
me.  
To come back and go.  
to be green  
and black  
and blue.



## GATHER

Trina Hobson

# THE SAUL YUSBIE MUSEUM – ARTEFACT CATALOGUE AND TOUR DESCRIPTION

- reproduced with kind permission of Wilson Samuels, curator

## Entrance Hall

1. **Coat Stand (*mahogany*); Oilskin coat (DO NOT TOUCH); blue coat (*wool*).**  
This distinctive oilskin coat is the same that can be seen being worn in the last seven photographs ever taken of Saul Yusbie (between 1971 and 1975) which includes the famous 1972 picture of him disdaining Susan Sontag at a publishers dinner in London.  
Careful inspection of the pockets revealed a toothpick and mint (both wrapped), 57 pence in change (including a 50 pence piece minted in 1969) and an uncollected doctor's script (illegible).  
The blue coat likely belonged to Saul Yusbie's mother (1891 – 1965) who also lived in this house (years as above).
2. **Miniature Ornamental Harp (*oak, in the 'Celtic' style*).**  
Although Saul Yusbie would never have taken any interest in playing an instrument as whimsical as the harp, an instrument much like this one appeared in his fourth novel. It is distinctly possible that it was based on this same piece.
3. **Weighted Clock (*oak, early 20th Century, Bavarian Origin*).**  
Like all other clocks in the house this was notably stopped at 6:16 (theories on this will not be entertained).
4. **Crucifix (*mahogany and brass*)**  
This likely belonged to Saul Yusbie's mother and was left in place after her death out of familial respect. Saul Yusbie was a committed rationalist, as can be seen in even the most shallow reading of his work.
5. **Painting (*oil on canvas*)**  
This daubing was clearly an attempt by Saul Yusbie's mother to hop onto whatever eccentric 'modernist' bandwagon happened to be fashionable in the art world at the time of its painting. The literary world is fortunate that Saul Yusbie was clearsighted enough to see through his mother's flimsy 'tastes' and establish a vision that was more sensible and dignified. A signature of sorts reading 'Margaret Yusbie – 1919' shows that it was painted by Saul Yusbie's mother a year before his birth.

## Sitting Room

6. **Piano (*Wagner brand, rosewood*)**  
Saul Yusbie is believed to have played piano with an understated brilliance. It is a loss to music that no recordings of him performing exist. Very few people ever claim to have heard him perform and it is a shame that the most well known mention of his playing comes from an embittered Philip Larkin who described Yusbie's technique as 'so clumsy it made you envy the deaf'. Like all comments and criticisms of Saul Yusbie by Larkin this can be dismissed as merely professional rivalry and jealousy.  
Manuscript on stand is believed to be a published work composed by Saul Yusbie's mother, dated 1918, likely 'experimental' in style.  
(PIANO MUST NOT BE PLAYED)
7. **Globe (*wood – type unknown, paper & plaster. London, 1950s*)**  
This object is an astonishing addition to both this museum and the wider cosmos of Saul Yusbie scholarship due to amendments made across the surface map in pencil which are believed to trace Saul Yusbie's personal travels to various cities in promotion of his works. Destinations marked include New York (USA), Sydney (Australia), Johannesburg (S. Africa), Tel Aviv (Israel), Berlin (West) (Germany) and Madrid (Spain).  
Careful study suggests these routes were sketched by Saul Yusbie's mother rather than by her son, Saul Yusbie. Saul Yusbie, while forced to attend promotional launches and literary festivals by his publishers, openly and rightly loathed travel of any kind.  
The markings omit Paris, which Saul Yusbie only finally visited in May 1968, 13 years after his mother's death. He had, of course, asserted in the decades before that he believed the French to be 'every one an absolute bastard'.  
The markings on the globe, however, do include an extended trip through some territories it is known that Saul Yusbie never visited, including Persia (now Iran), Berlin (East) (now Berlin) (now Germany) and Moscow (Russia), most of which would either be outside of Saul Yusbie's interests or impossible due to the political conditions at the height of the Cold War. As with most irregularities in this museum's study of Saul Yusbie this can be explained by the eccentric hand of Saul Yusbie's mother.
8. **3 Collage Works (*signed Margaret Yusbie, 1918 & 1919*)**
9. **Record Player (*Panasonic, Japan, 1960s*) & Record Collection (*wax & vinyl*)**  
Few writers have ever managed to mirror the grandeur of the great



composers through the written word as well as Saul Yusbie. The classical period's devotion to balance and purity was an obvious inspiration to his own pursuit of elegance in his prose.

It will be a surprise to many, then, to note there are very few classical records in this collection. It is possible that he donated most of his records to a respectable cause. This would also explain why the records that are available to us here mostly fall on the side of the unrespectable.

While much has been made, in certain quarters, of Saul Yusbie's assorted notes on 'Jazz' music (published without the approval of this museum in *Saul Yusbie: The Unpublished Writings* (Lagan Press, 1996)) it remains beyond doubt that these were either part of a mere academic exercise or, more excitingly, character building for the anti-hero of a never completed novel.

The records visible on the top shelf add credence to this theory as they are particularly unlistenable examples of the 'Jazz' form that would never have been approached with any seriousness by a man of Saul Yusbie's tastes. They even hint at the sense of humour revealed in Saul Yusbie's writing upon the very closest of readings.

The records include works by Art Blakey, Ornette Coleman, Pharoah Sanders, Dave Brubeck and Thelonious Monk, as well as seven albums by American trumpeter John Coltrane's widow which were most likely an ill-chosen gift.

**10. Empty Oval Picture Frame (wood – type unknown & black paint)**

Possibly another indulgent attempt at experimental art by Saul Yusbie's mother. Notable marks on the wall and the worn edges of the frame suggest it was removed frequently and handled. A certain theory that its black background indicate it to be a 'scrying mirror' such as those used in bizarre and sick occult practices have been raised by members of previous tours, and, I can promise you, those tours ended there and then.

**11. Samuel Beckett in Company (Photograph, photographer unknown, B&W, London, 1950s)**

While Mister Beckett's oddball writing never approached the elegance of Saul Yusbie's steady-handed prose it is known that the two men did meet more than once. Although we cannot see the face of the man closest to the camera the haircut matches Saul Yusbie's from the same period. It is clear from the particular tilt of the head that Saul Yusbie – if it is indeed him – finds Mister Beckett's personal company as boring as his attempts at literary inventiveness. It is likely that this picture was hung purely to satisfy

the tastes of Saul Yusbie's mother whose flamboyant taste for pointlessly odd trends will surely have made Mister Beckett's work something to latch onto.

**12. Cigar Box (containing assorted correspondence)**

Anyone with even a passing knowledge of Saul Yusbie scholarship will already be familiar with *Dear Greatness, Sincerely Saul Yusbie: The Collected Correspondence of Northern Ireland's First Great Novelist* (The Saul Yusbie Museum, 2001) (copies available at front door, £27.99). The letters in this particular collection had no place in that vital publication as they offer little to no further insight into Saul Yusbie's life or works. They might best be described as 'junk mail' and are only included as part of this tour at the behest of our funders. They do give me the chance, however, to address some speculation in the gutter press and cowboy academia. The bizarre suggestions that Saul Yusbie became somehow embroiled in radical politics or esoteric practices in his later years have no grounding in truth whatsoever. The letters in this box have been held up as 'evidence' by some who clearly have no grasp of the term.

Yes, one of these letters, to a German solicitor, makes some mention of the 'Red Army Faction' and later discusses a financial transaction but it should not need pointed out that Saul Yusbie had business with publishers in the region and the nasty business of literary publishing sometimes requires paid promotional work. Saul Yusbie's mention of the Baader-Meinhof gang was merely polite chit-chat about current events.

Similar claims about a letter from a supposed member of the 'Black Panther Party' can easily be dismissed as miscommunication. This letter has been examined by me and destroyed to avoid further confusion.

*Living Room/Library*

**13. Portrait of Margaret Yusbie by Saul Yusbie (pencil sketch, date unknown)**

We can see that Saul Yusbie left his mother's features indistinct as a clear intentional artistic choice here. The statement is clear: it is not the subject that matters, it is the artist. We can glean, however, that both Saul Yusbie and his mother were in their younger years when this piece was completed. The early raw talent defies critical appraisal but suggests that one avenue of the Arts was robbed of a talent just as another was enriched. Saul Yusbie approached his writing as a craft and every worthy craft demands singular attention.



**14. Mirrors on Opposing Walls (Wood, glass, each covered with black cotton)**

It is unclear why these mirrors – the only two in the house including the bathroom – were covered but we have been assured that this was done before Saul Yusbie's disappearance and not, as first assumed, by investigators. The black material pinned at both top and bottom suggests that they were intended to remain covered for a period of time. Perhaps Saul Yusbie intended to have them professionally cleaned.

**15. Historic Maps of Belfast: 1780, 1840 & 1921 (paper)**

DO NOT TOUCH! DO NOT LEAN ACROSS TABLE! REMAIN OUTSIDE OF TAPED AREA ON CARPET!

The first thing many visitors notice when presented with this display is the unique shape (some call it a symbol) drawn on each of these maps and how it corresponds quite accurately to the same area of each, with the central lines crossing at the exact location of this house. The lines do not seem to represent walking routes, crossing the Lagan river at numerous points and passing through buildings. Attention has been drawn, from some dubious quarters, that the lines traverse certain areas of historic and sacred resonance. To this, I say, draw me a line in Belfast that does not!

We may simply assume that this was further groundwork for a new work, possibly one that related to a trip around the city. Comparisons to that dreadful literary mess *Ulysses* are redundant here as we know that Saul Yusbie famously declared that if he ever met Mister Joyce he would stamp on his silly little hat.

Note: discussions about 'psycho-geography' or that disgusting literary hoax *The Hidden Spectacle*, attributed by bad faith actors to Saul Yusbie, will not be tolerated in this museum.

**16. Saul Yusbie's Glasses**

DO NOT TOUCH

A particularly precious and poignant artefact. It is not believed that Saul Yusbie owned another pair of glasses at the time of his disappearance.

**17. Fireplace and Mantelpiece**

The scorch marks on the floor, mantelpiece and surrounding walls were of particular interest to police upon the discovery of Saul Yusbie's disappearance, as was the faint shape of a man's silhouette on the opposite wall. However, no further investigation or speculation was deemed necessary by investigators and, as such, is unnecessary to us.

**18. Bookshelves (oak)**

The personal library of any writer is a special thing, almost worthy of something akin to sacred devotion. Saul Yusbie's library is especially compelling.

The name Saul Yusbie on the spine of a book makes a strong statement: one that takes the reader's mind to a place of pre-modern elegance, a realm of surer literary footing – something that was already so hard to find by the time Saul Yusbie ever put pencil to paper. His work is calm, level and dependable and free from any of the obscene mutilations of language that were so popular throughout the Twentieth Century.

It will be no surprise then to see his bookshelves reflect that same dignified spirit through works by luminaries such as Trollope, Fielding, Richardson, James, Tolstoy and Stevenson.

Works by a few of his lesser colleagues and contemporaries such as Amis, Green, Greene and even Heaney can also be found here, no doubt gifts accepted out of professional consideration.

Of course we also have a shelf dedicated to Saul Yusbie's own work.

Note: questions regarding the removal of a copy of *The Hidden Spectacle* from this shelf will neither be answered or tolerated. Its presence to begin with was unquestionably another step in the elaborate hoax and wider attempt to smear Saul Yusbie's name with allegations of radical, esoteric inclinations and the embrace of 'post-moderism'. An insult to the great man.

Lower shelves containing works by 'Modernists' and 'Situationists' were clearly stocked by Saul Yusbie's mother. We can also see here some works by women writers.



## Kitchen

### 19. Kitchen

At some point in his life – likely the moment of his mother's passing – Saul Yusbie was forced to learn to cook. As such, this room was used continuously throughout Saul Yusbie's time in the house but in a strictly functional way. It also remains one of the only rooms that is still in use regularly – by me – and therefore has none of the same historical authenticity or importance as the other rooms.

However, it will not need to be pointed out to scholars that Saul Yusbie never produced another work after his mother's passing. This kitchen, it can be reasonably deduced, stands testament to the reasons why. A man who spends his time cooking and cleaning can no longer devote himself to writing in the way the craft demands.

This kitchen, then, is a symbol of a tragedy born of necessity and circumstance.

## Upstairs

### Saul Yusbie's Mother's Bedroom

#### 20. Saul Yusbie's Mother's Bedroom

In the same way that most of this house has been preserved exactly as it was left by Saul Yusbie at the time of his disappearance, Saul Yusbie's mother's bedroom is believed to have been left completely untouched by Saul Yusbie following her death.

We can deduce that this was a mark of respect by a man that knew the importance of etiquette and decorum, and nothing more.

Speculation that Saul Yusbie was affected by his mother's passing in any abnormal way has been dismissed again and again by the principle researcher and curator of this museum.

There have been suggestions (also dismissed) that Saul Yusbie attempted to fill some sort of void left by his eccentric mother's death by delving into the woman's interests in the stranger avenues of human thought, and even in the occult. These suggestions are the slanderous result of quackery.

### Saul Yusbie's Bedroom

#### 21. Bed (*mixed wood and fabric base, sprung mattress, nylon sheets, feather duvet w. nylon cover, 1 x feather pillow, 1 x foam pillow*)

It is often the things that are easiest to overlook or dismiss that can speak the greatest volumes about a person's life. It is one thing to search through someone's correspondence for opinions on political matters (Saul Yusbie was, thankfully, above politics) or cultural connections but if you really

want to learn something about their identity, their personality, something like the knot of a tie or the order in which they kept kitchen drawers can be much more revealing.

There is very little in this museum that speaks to me more than Saul Yusbie's bed. Saul Yusbie's single bed.

It is common knowledge that Saul Yusbie never married but, believe me, there were plenty of other so-called artists of his generation that never married but who rarely slept alone either! I do not believe it a coincidence that not one of these people, then, achieved anything even close to Saul Yusbie's calibre of work. Vulgar lives lead to vulgar creations. It took someone with the purity of spirit of Saul Yusbie to create writing of such dignity, simplicity and decorum.

#### 22. Saul Yusbie's Writing Desk (*oak*) & Typewriter (*Imperial brand*)

Here we come face to face with the holy of holies, the origin point of a host of literary masterworks, the very desk at which was written the timeless novels *Ripe to Bursting*, *Supple to the Tender Touch*, *The Heat of Breath* and, of course, *Stood to Full Attention*.

It is known that Saul Yusbie drafted extensively in longhand at this very desk before banging out his pristine material on this typewriter.

So much could be said about this single artefact that I believe we can only do it justice through silent reflection. We will now observe four minutes of silent contemplation.

#### 23. Bedpan (*porcelain*)

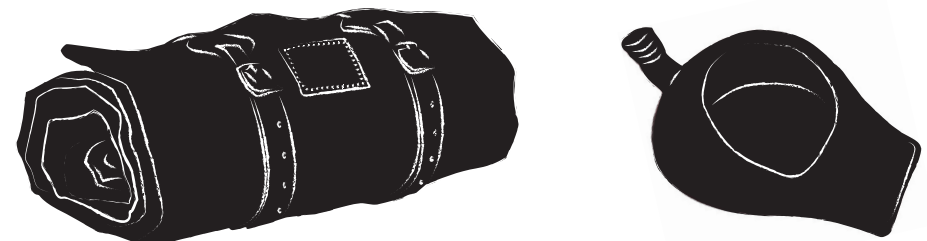
DO NOT TOUCH

Please note: sleeping bag and bedroll beneath bed and behind bedpan belong to museum curator and are not part of the display.

#### 24. Wardrobe (*pine*)

Contents: 6 x wool suits, 6 x cotton shirts, 6 x ties (navy, grey, blue and black), assorted undergarments. 1 x black hooded robe.

DO NOT OPEN





## Attic

### 25. Attic

It is my personal preference that the tour concludes before entering the attic. However, demands have been made by this museum's funding body – based on petitions by bad faith actors and irresponsible so-called scholars – that I make this room accessible to anyone who wants to see it. I do urge you to bear in mind that I have already, repeatedly, dismissed all rumours regarding Saul Yusbie's supposed fascination with occult practices, radical thought and esoteric experimentation. They have no place in Saul Yusbie scholarship.

The entrance to the room remains curtained off like so, just as Saul Yusbie seemed to prefer it. It is also my preference that this curtain is not drawn back, however, I am forbidden to forbid it.

Many possible explanations have been offered in attempt to explain the irregularity beyond this curtain but I disagree with all of them. Our funders insist that I include an overview of these explanations but, instead, I direct you to our web-site if you so insist on hearing them. I refuse to sully the name and memory of Saul Yusbie by uttering them here.

In any instance, I do not believe any of these explanations fit with what we see here. In fact, I do not believe there is an explanation at all.

Anyone who wishes to peer behind the curtain may do so.

I, for one, do not.

## Entrance Hall

The canonical works of Saul Yusbie are all available to buy from beneath the hall table as are Saul Yusbie Replica Glasses (non-prescription). All donations are welcome and will assist in the upkeep of this museum. Please remember to rate us with the trip advisor!



Paul Doran

## CARRAGEEN & WILD SORREL PUDDING

*A recipe for Irish panna cotta made using foraged and gathered wild ingredients by Phillip McCrilly*

50g dried carrageen moss\*  
200ml water  
1 jar of locally sourced honey  
6 egg yolks  
3 egg whites  
500 ml double cream  
100g castor sugar  
wild sorrel leaves  
spinach leaves  
1 green apple  
1/8 teaspoon xanthan gum

*\* Carrageen Moss is a seaweed which can be gathered off the south and west coasts of Ireland. It is rich in iodine and trace elements and is full of natural gelatine. Carrageen means 'little rock' in Gaelic.*

*There are two very similar varieties of Carrageen Moss, Gigartina Stellata, and Chondrus Crystus. Both are widely distributed. They are brownish-black or dark green and 3 - 6 inches long. They grow abundantly on the rocks at low tide line.*

*Pick in early summer at low water during spring tides. Bleach in the sun. Wash occasionally in plenty of cold water then lay out to dry again. When quite white and well dried, bring indoors and store in a jute bag. It will keep for one or two years. You can also buy it dried from most good health food stores and I'm pretty sure the lady that sells seaweed in St George's Market has it too.*

- In a small saucepan, heat the carrageen with water and simmer gently for 25 minutes.
- Pour the contents into a sieve and press the jelly like carrageen into a bowl with your fingers or a spoon.
- Warm the honey in a pot and on a low heat for a minute or two to loosen.
- Whisk the cream and half the sugar until stiff and keep aside.
- Meanwhile, whisk the egg yolks with the other half of the sugar and beat until pale and thick.
- Mix the warm honey and carrageen together and pour slowly into the egg yolk mixture.
- Whisk the egg whites to a stiff peak, fold into the mixture with sweetened cream. Cover and put into the fridge to set for minimum of four hours.
- To serve: Juice a handful each of wild sorrel and spinach plus a green apple. Add some lemon juice if it needs more acidity. Blitz a 1/8 of a teaspoon of xanthan gum into the juice (this will brighten and thicken juice). Serve the Honey Carrageen Mousse with sorrel juice and edible flowers.



## WHAT IF WE'RE GOOD?

*Rebekah McCabe*

We're living in a moment that calls us to gather. To come together to expand ourselves, our generosity, our empathy, and our willingness to tell a new human story. To gather in a spirit of repair – of ourselves, our planetary systems, our hearts, and our democracy.

These are profoundly political acts, and they demand a new kind of politics.

Things feel bleak right now. I'm not going to lie. Exhausted from almost two years of a pandemic, facing the existential threat of climate collapse, all while witnessing widening polarisation, deepening poverty, the rollback of rights and the erosion of democratic norms. In the face of such an uncertain future, it can be hard to have hope.

When things are uncertain, we tend to turn to stories to ground ourselves, to give meaning to the present and conjure something of a future.

Stories are ways to remember and ways to imagine.

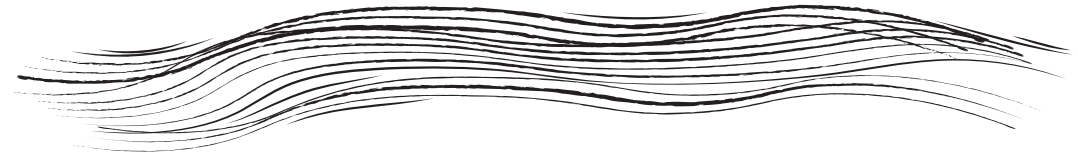
Stories, narratives, histories. They are what give us our logics of power, justice and value. They are constitutive of so much; we live in and through stories. Societies, institutions, politics – they are all made of stories.

Stories are powerful; they are devices of power, things that can be deployed. Because they are powerful, they are controlled. They are managed, contested, and policed. They are what defines the obvious, the inevitable, the legitimate, the realistic, the possible; the norms that constrain who we are and what we do.

We don't always have access to the stories we need.

Some stories live in deep time. They connect into an ancient and pernicious architecture in our thoughts. The most persistent and pervasive of these stories are the ones that define some immutable and inescapable human nature. We see these stories everywhere, from ancient biblical texts to contemporary social policy – the idea that humans are innately selfish, exploitative, irrational, violent or cruel and that civilisation is a thin veneer that protects us from our own excesses. These stories give rise to ways of relating to each other that are defensive, divisive and punitive. They dampen and diminish our innate desire for connection, solidarity, cooperation, and our capacity for love.

Living through extraordinary moments, as we are now, can compel a retelling of these stories. Rebecca Solnit writes in 'Hope in the Dark' that an aspect of depression is the feeling that nothing can or will ever change and, she says, there is a public equivalent to that private experience – a feeling that change at the political or social level is impossible. Coming out of that public depression doesn't need a revolution or a perfect alternative, it just needs small daily practices of expansion and repair. The Haitian anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot writes that humans live in history as both actor and narrator, in constant negotiation between what happened and what we say about what happened. Little acts of kindness, love, or simple refusal, can become daily practices of retelling the stories about who we are. That is enough for change to happen and for new possibilities to open up.



My work involves a lot of gathering. Several times a year, we gather hundreds of people from all across these islands and ask them to learn and think about important things that affect everyone. We ask them to come as who they are, but to keep their minds and their hearts open to possibilities they hadn't considered before. All of them start their journey by opening a letter, asking them to give up their evenings and weekends to help solve difficult and complex problems. They say yes, and for a while they collectively, through the act of gathering, become a citizens' assembly.

For a citizens' assembly to work, for many people from different places, backgrounds, ideologies, and circumstances to come together, and for that gathering to produce detailed and considered recommendations for political action, requires us to create spaces that are safe, conversations that are inflected with care, hospitality, and the simple undervalued act of humans taking other humans in good faith.

In some ways we are asking people to become something other than an individual. To be a citizen, you have to leave a little bit of yourself behind. Being a citizen demands that we think more collectively and less transactionally, that we put collective interests ahead of our own. For people to be able to do that, they need to feel informed, respected, welcomed, and safe.

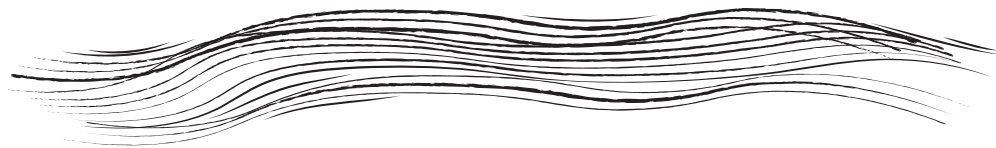


Deliberative democracy, of which citizens' assemblies are just one tool, is the idea that society can organise itself around the principles of cooperation, solidarity, equality and make political decisions for the good of each other. It's often talked about as a close copy of Athenian democracy, but I think it resembles much more ancient and egalitarian arrangements, the stories of which have been mostly suppressed or forgotten.

We've organised ourselves for centuries now around the implicit idea that we are not inherently good. We use this threadbare idea of electoral democracy as a bulwark against ourselves and each other. To tolerate its failings, its corruptions and abuses, we have to convince ourselves that only worse alternatives exist, that we can't do any better. If we collapse that foundational lie, if we defiantly choose to believe we are good, and build a system based on that, what would it look like? Deliberative democracy is, for me, a political arrangement based on the contention that we ARE good, and that makes it possible for us to BE good in the most expansive of ways. Its revolutionary power is the fact that it isn't a utopia – it's not a perfect vision of an ultimate destination – it's a process that calls us all to participate in a daily practice of citizenship, to face each other and our needs and to work together to so that we all have the things we need to thrive.

There's a book I read with my daughter. It's called 'The Monster at the End of This Book'. In it, the Sesame Street character Grover, terrified to learn of a monster at the end of the book, begs and pleads with the reader not to turn another page, because with each page, we get closer to the monster. Grover tries desperately to tie the pages together, to build walls and barricades to prevent the pages turning, to avoid the inevitable confrontation with the monster, only to discover on the last page that the monster is him.

Maybe in the story of humanity, we have been frightened of turning the page into an unknown story because we've been convinced that there's a monster waiting for us. We've built walls and defences and we've stopped ourselves mid story in a space of fear. But if we keep going, maybe all we will find is our own lovable selves.



## GATHER

*Tony Moore*





*Check out our 'Gather' Music Playlist by Drink More Water:*



*To find out more about any of the contributors featured in this publication,  
and the festival in general, visit: [www.nimhaf.org](http://www.nimhaf.org)*

*If you have been affected by any of the issues raised in the  
NI Mental Health Arts Festival, there are resources available at:  
[www.mindingyourhead.com](http://www.mindingyourhead.com)*



Mental Health  
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