

Works from the Cottage

-The images of John Philip Murray

Cottage Evolution

-The music of Cormac McCarthy

As both a practitioner and a receiver, I have been bound to both Painting and Music since I was a small boy.

In 1992 I had my 6th solo exhibition. It was called *Improvisations for the Gentle Skimmer*. In it I explored links between the two forms. I gave the works titles such as: *Space for Miles, Echoic, Dissonance for Gil, Colour Chord*, etc., indicating the process of connecting musical ideas to visual form.

At this stage in my life, I'm unsurprised, that *sources* for my work tend to be literary, or musical, rather than visual. When I'm painting, visual imagery bears the same relationship as the alphabet, or the dictionary, to verbal language. In verbal language these are tools that we use in order to communicate the idea or the knowledge. So by extension, if music is a source, it is the *music*, the melody, the ideas, not the notes, that are the valid means of triggering visual ideas into paintings, or drawings.

In 2013, I was introduced to Cormac McCarthy via an old friend, Guitarist/arranger, Dave O'Rourke. Picture the scene to which Dave introduced me after he had been visiting my studio to see paintings: Bank Holiday Monday afternoon, at the Crane Lane Theatre, trombonist/bandleader/composer/arranger, Paul Dunlea organises an End-of-Festival Jazz Improv session around a quartet of wonderful musicians, including himself, Cormac McCarthy (piano) Dave Duffy (Double Bass) and Davie Ryan (Drums). The audience is heavily weighted with musicians, who are invited to take the stage. I played two numbers with them and really had a great time. Following this introduction, I became an habitué at the Tuesday night sessions, that run throughout the year.

In August 2014, Cormac, knowing my work as a painter, asked me if I'd be interested in making the artwork for an album that he was in the process of recording. I was delighted to be asked and said yes. My previous interpretations, in 1992, were responses to music already made. Here was an opportunity to interpret music that was in the process of *being* made. So, loosely, the process was: Cormac would send me recordings in their early stages and I would become familiar with the sounds of their melodies, harmonies and rhythms – sometimes he would tell me a little background story and on occasions, that would give me a path into a piece. I ended up making pieces in response to every track on the album. Some of these came in one go, others came out of a process. The whole project has been

satisfying on several levels; Cormac has been a joy to work with, extremely gifted musically, very supportive of my ideas and a warm generous person.

Cormac's compositions and arrangements have their roots deep in his musical psyche and as a consequence, they have a freshness and honesty that crosses effortlessly between what could loosely be called Jazz and traditional Irish genres. – This honesty, in turn, allows easy access for visual interpretation.

John Philip Murray,

Lissardagh, 2016.

To be officially opened by Cormac McCarthy, on 30th September at Ionad Cultúrtha, Baile Mhúirne, Co. Chorcaí: - "**Works from the Cottage**" is an exhibition of 19 of the original paintings and drawings made by John Philip Murray in response to the CD "**Cormac McCarthy's Cottage Evolution**", including the ones used for the cover and the CD. "Giclée" prints of the works will also be available for purchase.

The opening will be followed by a concert from Cormac McCarthy, (piano), Eoin Walsh (bass) Davie Ryan (drums) Lucia MacPartlin (violin) and Maria Ryan (violin) – all of whom played on the record Cottage Evolution. Copies of the CD will be on sale.