

# Eyeing up Limerick's artistic face

By JESSICA QUINN

All art is quite useless, well that's what Oscar Wilde thought anyway. With the annual EV+A exhibition on all over the city, I had the perfect opportunity to see if he was right.

The three month exhibition opened in Limerick earlier this month. Twenty Irish artists and 19 international artists are featured in the exhibit, held not just in the gallery but all over the city.

The first exhibit on my tour of EV+A was in a rather unusual spot. The Rugby Shop on Rutland Street is currently housing Sean Taylor's Anthem II.

Parked away behind rows of Munster jerseys, three television sets sit on what can only be described as a wooden scaffold.

According to one shop assistant, the exhibit is supposed to be a scrim machine.

He admitted though that he had no idea what it was until he had been told. Originally he thought it was to hold up televi-

sions to show matches in the shop.

Unfortunately though I couldn't see the scrim machine in action because the televisions weren't turned on. So much for art getting in touch with the people.

Next stop on my tour was just across the road to City Hall. Inside the door is a large table with fingerprints on the wall behind. This work is by Tadej Pogacar, a visiting artist from Slovenia.

This exhibit wasn't really a crowd puller, and got some strange looks from people coming in to renew their car tax.

Poking my head around a door to see if there were any other exhibits, I thought I'd stumbled on a part of City Hall that was closed.

The room was empty except for one man and one wall was covered with graffiti.

I was about to leave when I saw another television which wasn't plugged in. This had to be another part of the exhibit. Maybe videos and televisions that don't work have some deep artistic symbolism that I don't know about.

It turned out the graffiti cov-

ered wall was titled "Blackboard jungle plants". The wall was turned into one big blackboard full of school yard scribbles and childish scrawls. 'I love Debbie', 'Marion woz ere' and the ominous 'Art is a pile of dry shite' were just some of the messages left on the board.

But the most unusual piece of 'art' I came across on my EV+A tour was in the Furze Bush Bistro.

Above the bar are two more televisions (I'm beginning to see a recurring theme), but these were actually working.

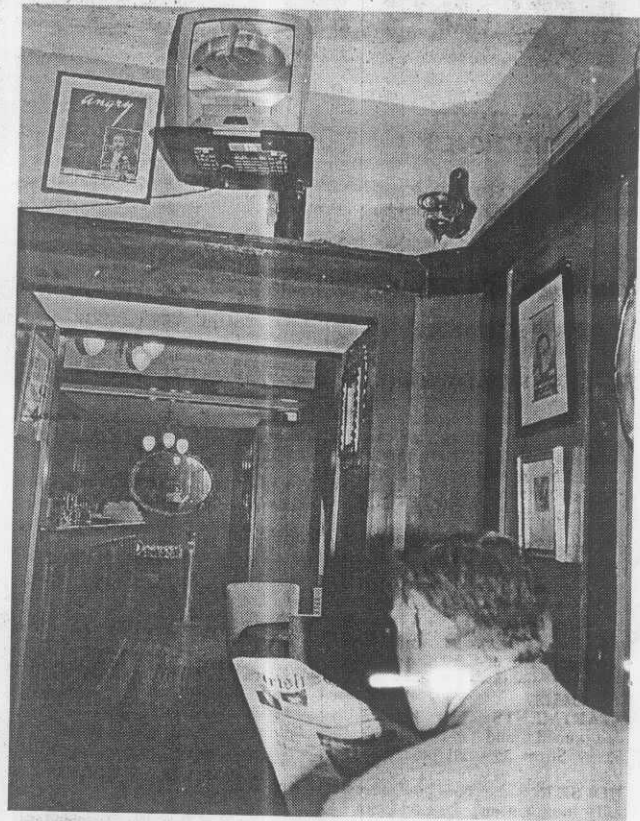
One shows what looked like pink cream being mixed in a bowl, the other, some chocolate liquid poured into a bowl.

According to Vincent O'Connell, from the Furze Bistro the piece has proved popular but confusing. "Some find it very relaxing, others think it's the kitchen behind and others don't know what it is," he said.

So was Oscar Wilde right, is all art quite useless?

From this little trip into the art world it now seems you can put a title on anything and call it art.

I'll stick with the old masters from now on.



ABOVE: Having a cup of coffee at The Furze Bush, Glentworth Street with EV+A video showing (B1)

BELOW: Looking at Deirdre Morgan's work at City Hall Gallery (B1)

