

Art auction preview comes to Punches Hotel this weekend

AS Irish art reaches an all time high internationally, more opportunities are presenting themselves to Limerick people who wish to get in on the act, writes Aine de Paor. Following hot on the heels of the ongoing Art Now exhibition at the Hunt Museum, where almost €100,000 worth of artworks sold in the first hour, comes a chance to take part in a massive auction of contemporary Irish art.

It will feature several pieces by renowned Janesboro artist John Shinnors—a rare treat as his work so rarely comes up for auction. Also in the catalogue are works by Louis le Brocquy—perhaps the hottest Irish art property at the moment. A painting by the artist recently fetched ten times its guide price at Sotheby's in London, netting a cool €229,000. But if you're serious about the

sale then you've got to be prepared to travel. Only a sneak preview of the works will be provided in Limerick with the auction itself at the Marriott Hotel in Galway on November 20. The viewings, on November 11, 12 and 13 in Punches Hotel, promise to whet the appetite of the city's art lovers. The collection features significant works by established artists

Sean Keating, Paul Henry, George Russell and Cecil Maguire, along with Louis le Brocquy and John Shinnors. Of special interest are five works by Mr Shinnors as well as Louis le Brocquy's 1946 watercolour 'Tinkers Enter the City'. This work is making a welcome return to Limerick following its showing in the 'Louis le Brocquy 'Allegory and Legend' Exhibition in the Hunt

Museum earlier this year. Run by Dolan's Auction House, the sale is now in its second year. Dr Niall Dolan said: 'I am delighted to be bringing this collection of art to Limerick. I am especially pleased to be presenting five important early works by John Shinnors.' He also spoke of the investment opportunity presented at the moment by the rocketing prices

Irish art is starting to make. Those flush with SSIA cash should consider ploughing it into paintings, he added. "In these times of low interest rates on deposit accounts, anyone with disposable income to invest has to look further than traditional institutions in which to invest their money. Irish people now have the confidence and the income to view a piece of art and buy it if they like it."

Band is playing on in Mary Street hall

By MIKE DWANE

TWO stalwarts of St Mary's Fife and Drum Prize Band who between them have clocked up over a century of service have been honoured at a ceremony to mark the re-opening of the band hall on Mary Street.

Following the annual remembrance mass for deceased members at St Mary's Church a plaque was unveiled to mark the contribution of the band's honorary secretary Colum McGrath and longest-serving member Paddy "Whacker" Casey. Now into his eighties, Paddy has been whacking his drum with the band for since he was 11 years old.

"My uncles and my father were in the band. It was always very much a localised thing and we were in it for enjoyment as well as the music. It's a proud tradition here and somebody has to keep it going," said Mr Casey, who is also the founder of St Mary's RFC. Mr McGrath, who has



At the re-opening of the St Mary's Prize Band Hall in Mary Street, Jack McGrath, President, Dereck Mulcahy, Bandmaster and Aidan Hurley, Vice President (LL)

been secretary of the band for over 40 years, was unable to attend the ceremony due to illness but his wife Theresa was on hand at the plaque unveiling. Founded in 1885, St Mary's is the oldest con-

tinuously-playing ensemble in the country. It practised in several locations in the parish, including Nicholas Street, Fish Lane and Barrington's Mall before its permanent premises were opened in 1922. In its early years the

band was in part financed by members who emigrated to New York. That spirit lives on today as the renovation of the band hall and museum recently completed was entirely self-financed.

The renovation has recreated the atmosphere of the 1920's and includes new fixtures and fittings and paintwork as well as the restoration of four paintings by a Limerick actor/celebrity named Bert Duval in the 1920's. Band president Jack McGrath paid tribute to local artist Davy Sheehan for his work in restoring the paintings.

"Michelangelo may have painted on his back but Davy painted on his side after we got the stepladders in," Mr McGrath joked.

The ceremony was attended by Deputy Mayor John Gilligan, former mayor and TD Frank Prendergast, former Irish rugby international Brendan Foley and local writers Maureen Sparling, Patrick J. McNamara and Criostóir Ó Floinn, whose father Danny was the guest conductor when St Mary's won several All-Irelands in the early part of the last century.

Currently about 25 members strong, St Mary's Band are looking for musicians to join and anybody can try out by coming along to the band hall from 7pm on Wednesdays and 12 noon on Sundays.



Joan Hickey, Ballinacurra Gardens and Rita Hurley, Corbally (LL)



Robbie Stakelum, Dooradoye and Ciaran Mulcahy, Munget (LL)

Doras programme opens doors to refugee women

By AINE FITZGERALD

DORAS Luimni, who came together to respond to the refugee situation in Limerick, are furthering their

for those seeking asylum and refuge and to inform and involve the local community in dealing with issues of asylum-seekers, multiculturalism and racism. The Women's Empow-

violence. "Many of the women would have low self esteem and our aim is to build it up. We have people in from Adapt House who work with them and through various forms of

missed my family," explained Aminah. Within six months however, she became involved with Doras and since then she has not looked back. "Even though it was



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