

BLIP

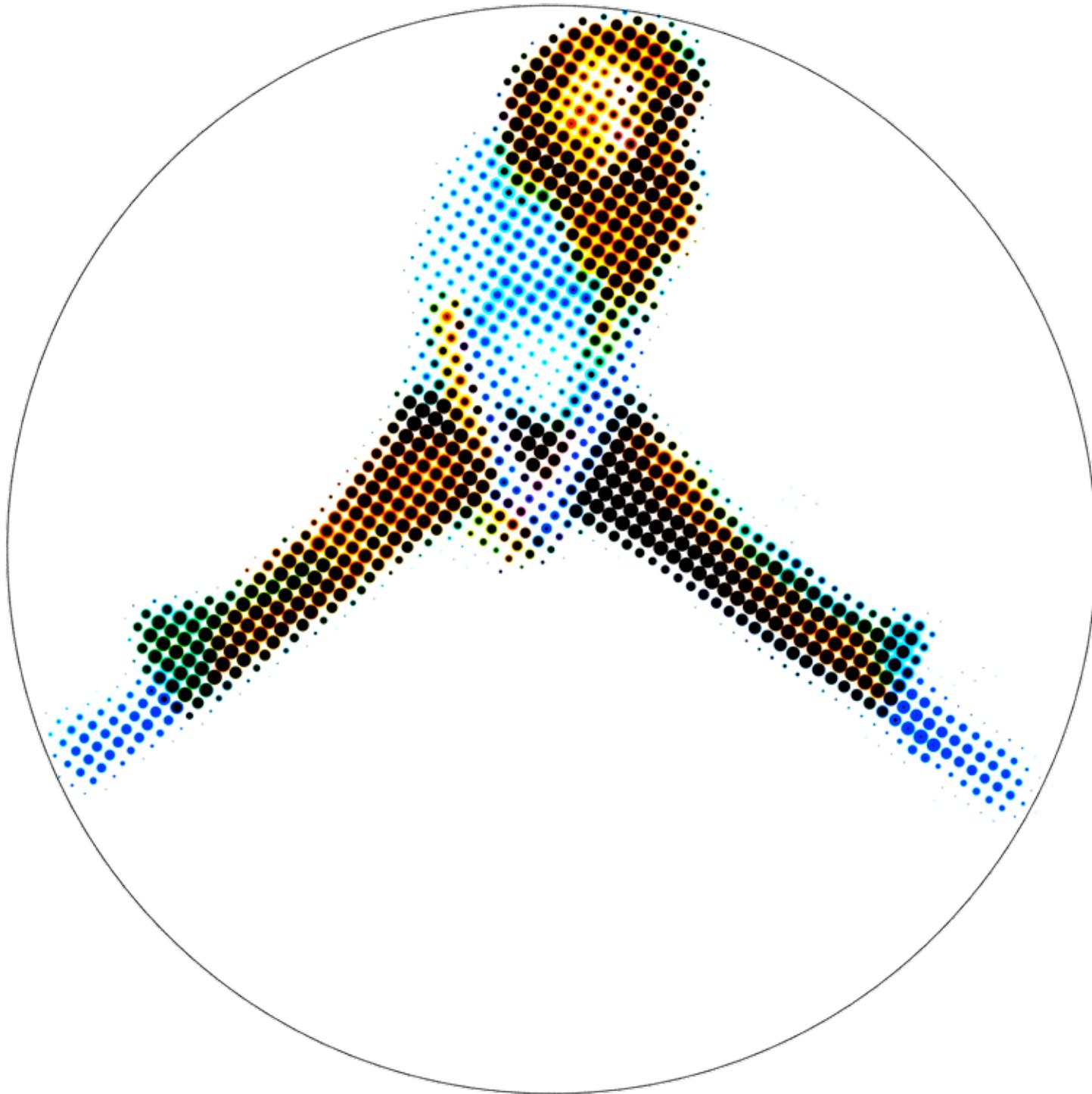
an artwork by Cleary & Connolly
with the children of Gaelscoil Bheantraí

Inspired by the poem Blip

by Derry O'Sullivan

Per Cent for Art Gaelscoil Bheantraí

This project is financed by the Department of Education and Skills through the Percent for Art Scheme



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Uaidh seo domhan dubh thú,
Na tíortha,



Burla



Introduction

The word “ blip “is onomatopoeic. In electronics, it signifies a spot of light, usually accompanied by a sound on a radar screen, indicating the position of an invisible plane, submarine or such. In Swedish, “ blipp”; in Finnish, “ plipaus”; in Spanish, “pitido”. In my poem “Blip” in Irish, published in 1987, I joined astronauts on a voyage of discovery, a search for who we are. Looking back at our receding world, hoping to avoid cosmic boulders, parallel Earth-bound mathematical discoveries become blurred: pyramids, cathedrals shrink to new configurations, indecipherable, needing some kind of “pocket Rosetta Stone”, a reincarnate Champollion, to crack the code. By coincidence, the solar- powered European Space Agency comet-probe, launched in 2004, 17 years after my poem, was named “Rosetta”, put to “sleep” to save energy and, according to the BBC website, reawoken in January 2014, at the time my 1987 poem with “Rosetta” was reawoken with our Gaelscoil “Blip” project! My Irish “astronaut” was on a “bóthar conaire matamaiticiúla”, “meaning a “mathematical path” or “Pádraic Ó Conaire” who probed Ireland in a book in Irish, “M’Asal Beag Dubh”, on a cart drawn by a little black donkey.

The history of humanity can be summed up as the quest to reduce complexity to simplicity, to an algorithm, to achieve the maximum result with a minimum of energy, the origin of economics: in Greek, “the laws of our dwelling place or home”. Le Verrier discovered Neptune through maths, with a pencil! From the wheel to the atom. Our Earth becomes a blipping point of light on an astronaut’s screen! Thanks to two brilliant Irish artists, Anne Cleary and Denis Connolly, to the Irish government, to the energies of the Gaelscoil children and staff.

The pupils and the Irish language have hitched a life-long ride on a merry-go-round of cosmic light as the sun, moon and stars wheel through the Gaelscoil’s stained windows drenching our bodies and walls with the cosmic light of our leaping childhood. The wheels of Ó Conaire’s cart wheels join those of our youth, his little black donkey grazes on sunbeams, here where knowledge expands and contracts to a blip in childhood eyes.

Derry O’Sullivan 2014

Blip

Uaidh seo domhan dubh thú,
Na tíortha, na haigéin ar fuaid fad a chéile
Iairglifí gan chloch Rosetta phóca againn chucu
Pirimidí, ilstóraigh, ard eaglaisí – cá bhfuilid?
Burla iad ar asal beag dubh
Ag iníor feadh bóithrín conaire matamaiticiúla!

Uaireanta crochtar eadrainn cuirtín meitéar;
Ansin bíonn eagla orainn go scriosfaí ár saoilít
Faoin gcith phíosáí cosmais ar saorthitim trín spás!

Anuraidh, ar chúrsa timpeall Véinis lorgaíomar thu
Le fada in aisce go bhfaca thú ar preabadh trasna scáileáin:
Blip!

© 1986, Derry O'Sullivan

From: Cá bhfuil do lúdas?

Publisher: Coiscéim, Dublin, 1987

Blip

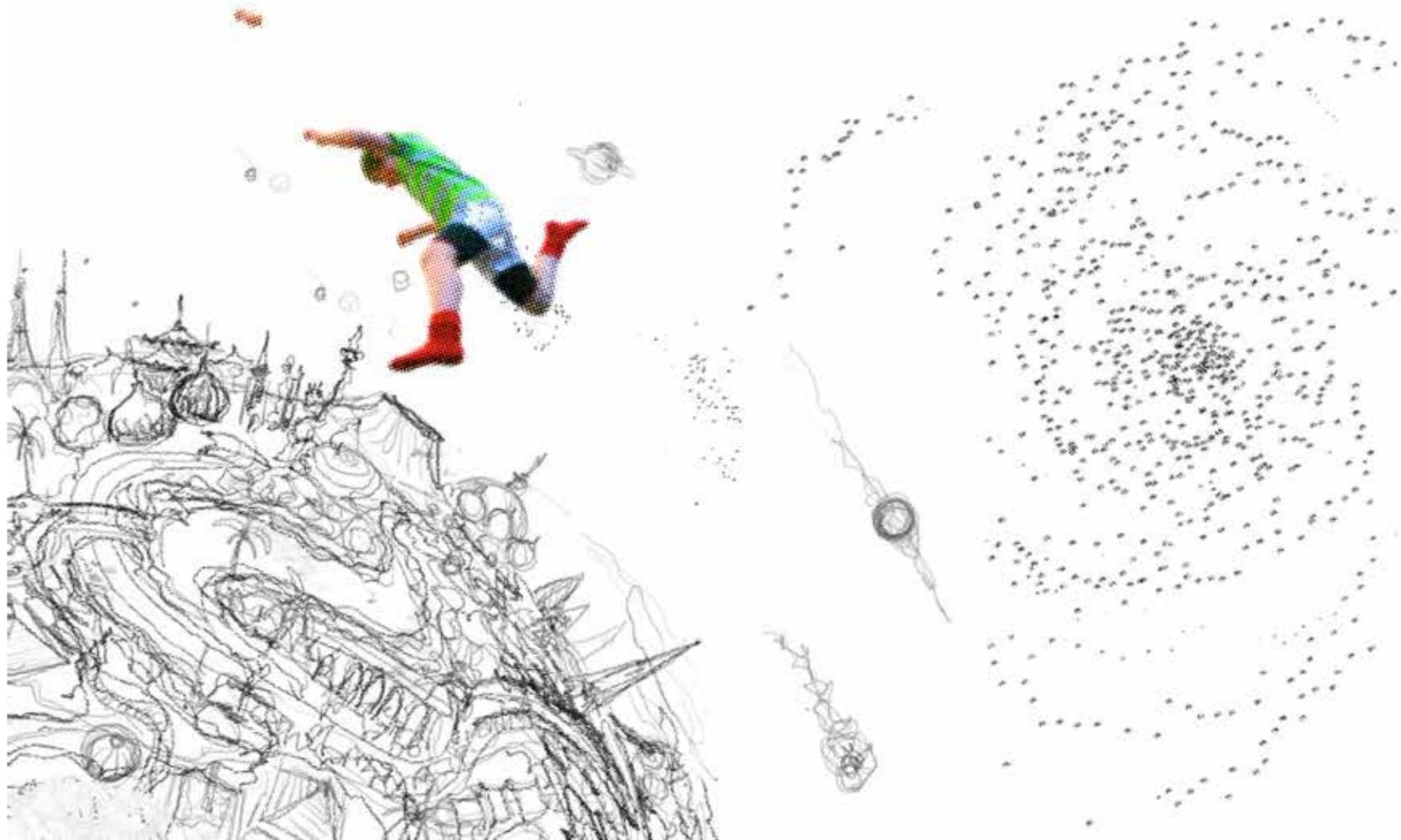
From up here you are a black world,
Countries, oceans all higgledy-piggledy,
Hieroglyphics for which we lack a pocket Rosetta Stone.
Pyramids, skyscrapers, cathedrals – where are they?
They are a bundle on a tiny black donkey
Grazing a boreen on a mathematical path!

At times a curtain of meteors is hung between us;
Then, we are terrified our satellite will be smashed
Under a shower of cosmic boulders free-falling through space!

Last year, as we circled Venus we sought you in vain
Until I spotted you crossing our screen:
A blip!

© Translation: 2013, Derry O'Sullivan

First published on Poetry International, 2013



The Competition

Our project involves developing material for two permanent printed works on glass through a workshop and a drawing project with the schoolchildren

Poem

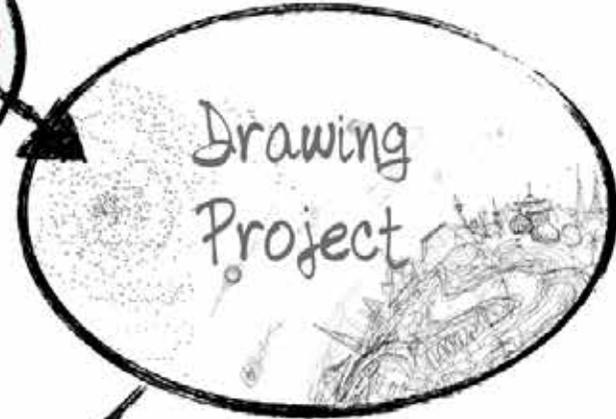
*taraidh, ar chuir
timpeall Véini's
lorgaimar thu. Le fada
in aisce go bhfaca thu
ar preabadh trasna*

Process

May
2013
(one
day)



May
2013
(one
month)



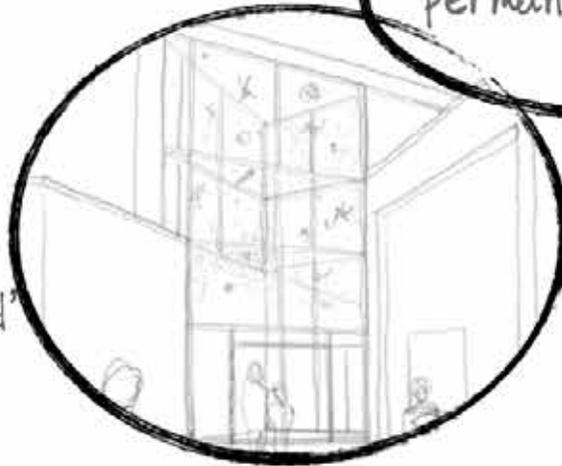
participative process completed
before summer break

Composition of
permanent artworks on
glass

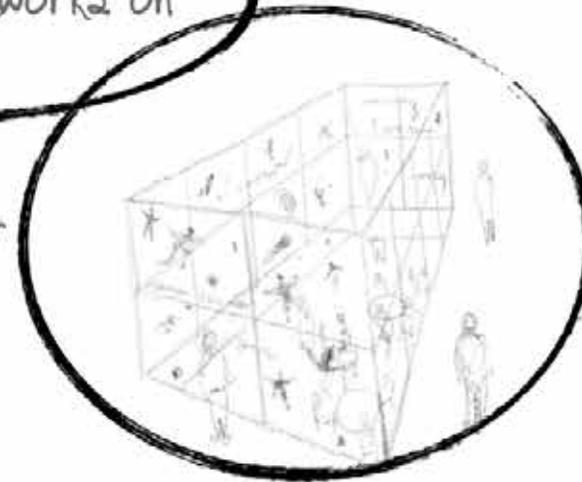
Summer
2013

composition/production of
works during summer break

Entrance
'The Launch-Pad'



October
2013



Interior
'The Hollow-Deck'

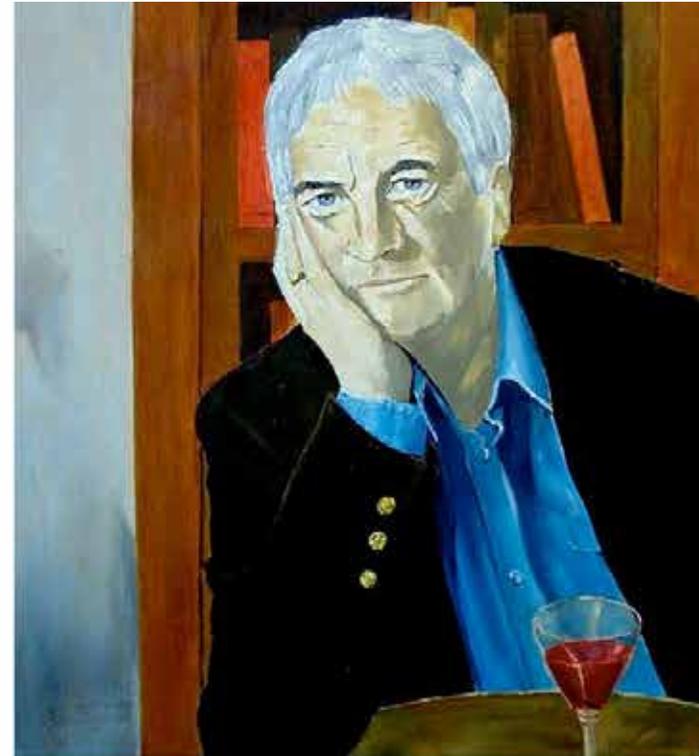
Blip

Uaidh seo domhan dubh thú,
Na tíortha, na haigéin ar fuaid fad a chéile
Iairiglíff gan chloch Rosetta phóca againn chucu
Pirimidí, ilstóraigh, ard eaglaisí- cá bhfuilid ?
Burla iad ar asal beag dubh
Ag iníor feadh bóithrín conaire matamaiticiúla !

Uaireanta crochtar eadrainn cuirtn meitéar ;
Ansin bíonn eagla orainn go scriosfaí ár saithlít
Faoin gcith phíosfaí cosmais ar saorthitim trín spás !

Anuraidh, ar chúrsa timpeall Véinis lorgaíomar thu
Le fada in aisce go bhfaca thú ar preabadh trasna scáileáin :
Blip !

Derry O'Sullivan, 1987
Cá bhfuil do Iúdás?
Coiscéim

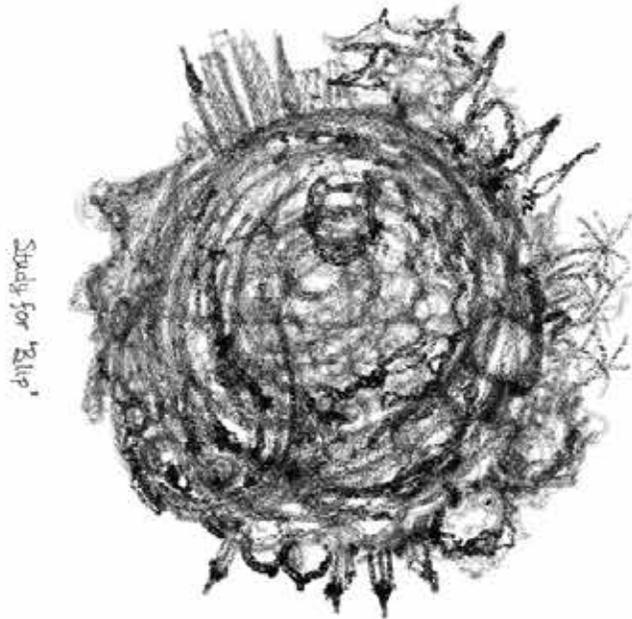


Portrait of the Poet by Reginald Grey

Born in Bantry in 1944 and living in Paris, Derry O'Sullivan is among the foremost Irish language poets alive today. He has won four Oireachtas Literary prizes and published 3 collections of poetry as well as appearing in numerous anthologies and collections. We became friends with Derry and his family several years ago but this is the first time we have had the opportunity of working together.

What immediately struck us about Derry's poem was the space-age imagery, surprising in a language so rooted in the history and culture of our island. But of course a living language can evoke past, present and future with equal eloquence, as well as what might be, what could be, what should be...

The Poem

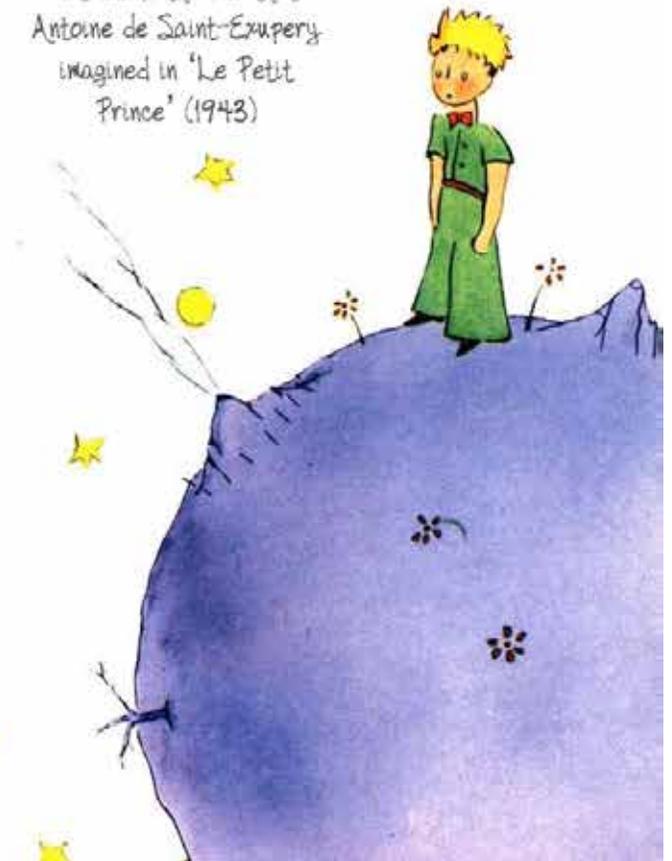


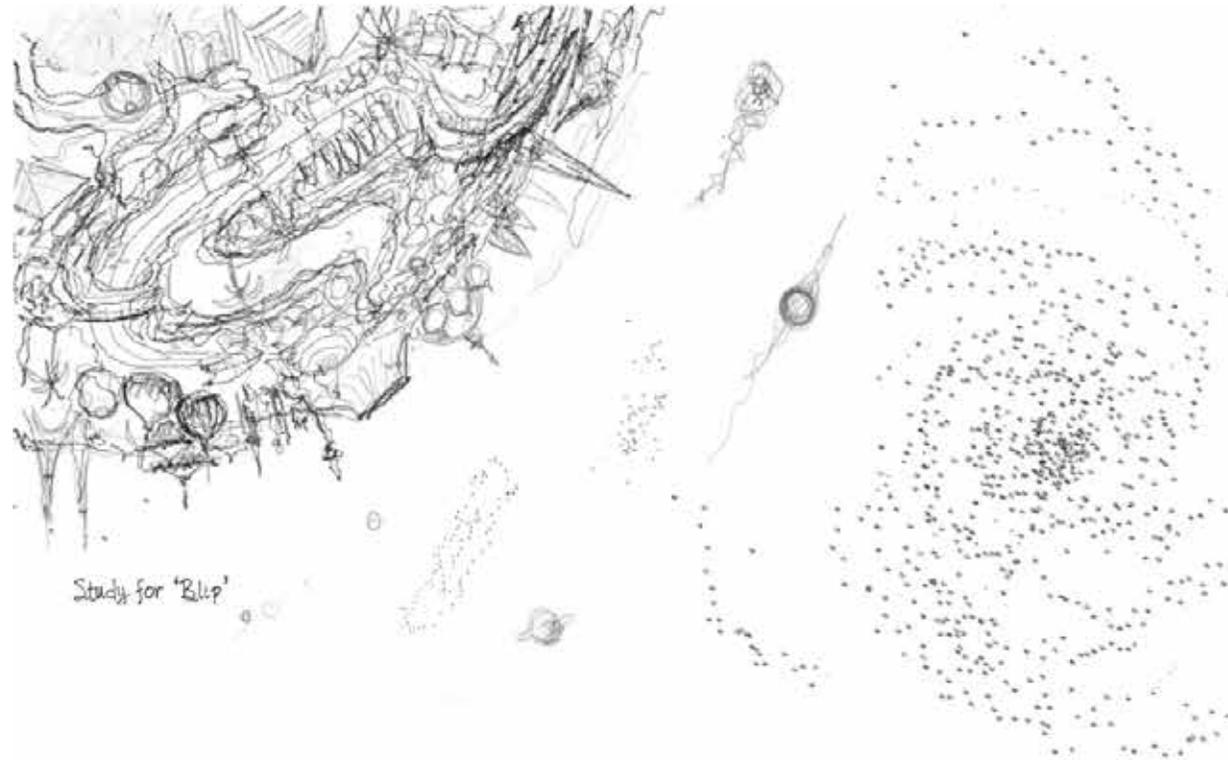
Study for 'Zlip'

Uaidh seo domhan dubh thú,
Na tíortha, na haigéin ar fuaid fad a chéile
*From up here you are a black world,
Countries, oceans all higgledy-piggledy*



The poem evokes a universe not unlike the one that Antoine de Saint-Exupéry imagined in 'Le Petit Prince' (1943)





Drawing Project

We will work with the children on the images from Jerry's poem. We will ask them to draw the infinity of space, to imagine planets, comets, spaceships, nighttime skies... We will ask them how to make simple, clear drawings like the ideograms that make up hieroglyphics.

Iairiglí gan chloch Rosetta phóca againn chucu

Pirimidí, ilstóraigh, ard eaglaisí- cá bhfuilid ?

Hieroglyphics for which we lack a pocket Rosetta Stone.

Pyramids, skyscrapers, cathedrals - where are they?

The Rosetta Stone, discovered by Napoleon's army in Egypt in 1799 gave modern scholars their first key to deciphering hieroglyphics.



Two
drawings
from our
project
with
children
from
Sallins
National
School,
2012.



*As adults, we dismiss space as a place where we can never go and that will never effect our lives.
But for children it is a vast theatre of possibilities, limited only by their imagination.*

A Children's Universe

*Uaireanta crochtar eadrainn cuirtín meitéar ;
Ansin bíonn eagla orainn go scriosfaí ár saithilít
Faoin gcith pháosaí cosmais ar saorthitim trín spás !
At times a curtain of meteors is hung between us;
Then, we are terrified our satellite will be smashed
Under a shower of cosmic boulders free-falling through space!*

Trampoline Workshops

Burla iad ar asal beag dubh

Ag iníor feadh bóithrín conaire matamaiticiúla !

They are a bundle on a tiny black donkey

Grazing a boreen on a mathematical path!



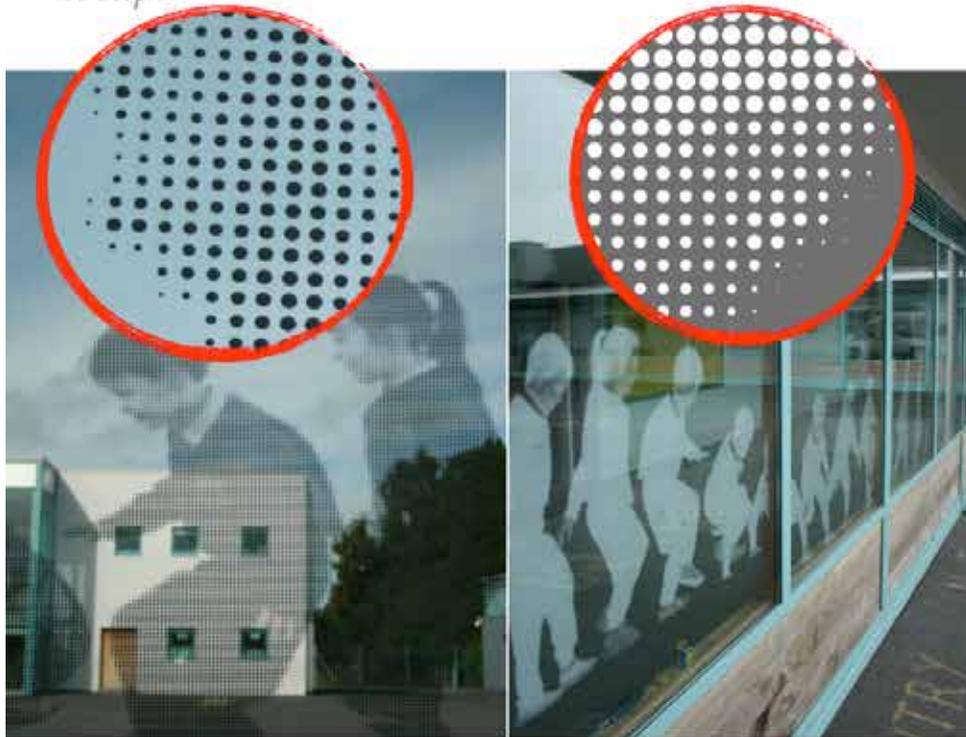
Detail



The Sky is the Limit, St Patrick's College, Cavan (2013)

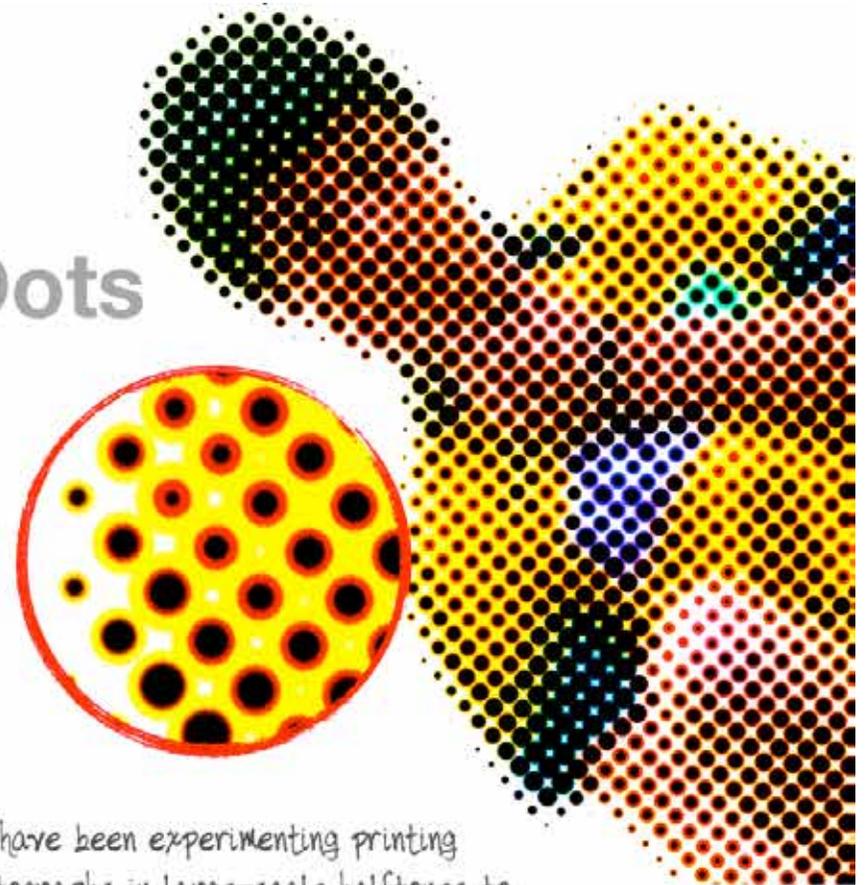
Since 2009 we have been exploring the idea of weightlessness with a series of school projects in France, the UK and Ireland, focusing our interaction with the school community on light-hearted workshops with trampolines, taking photographs of students suspended in space.

Anuraidh, ar chúrsa timpeall Véinis lorgaíomar thu
Le fada in aisce go bhfaca thú ar preabadh trasna scáileáin :
Blip !
*Last year, as we circled Venus we sought you in vain
Until I spotted you crossing our screen:
A blip!*



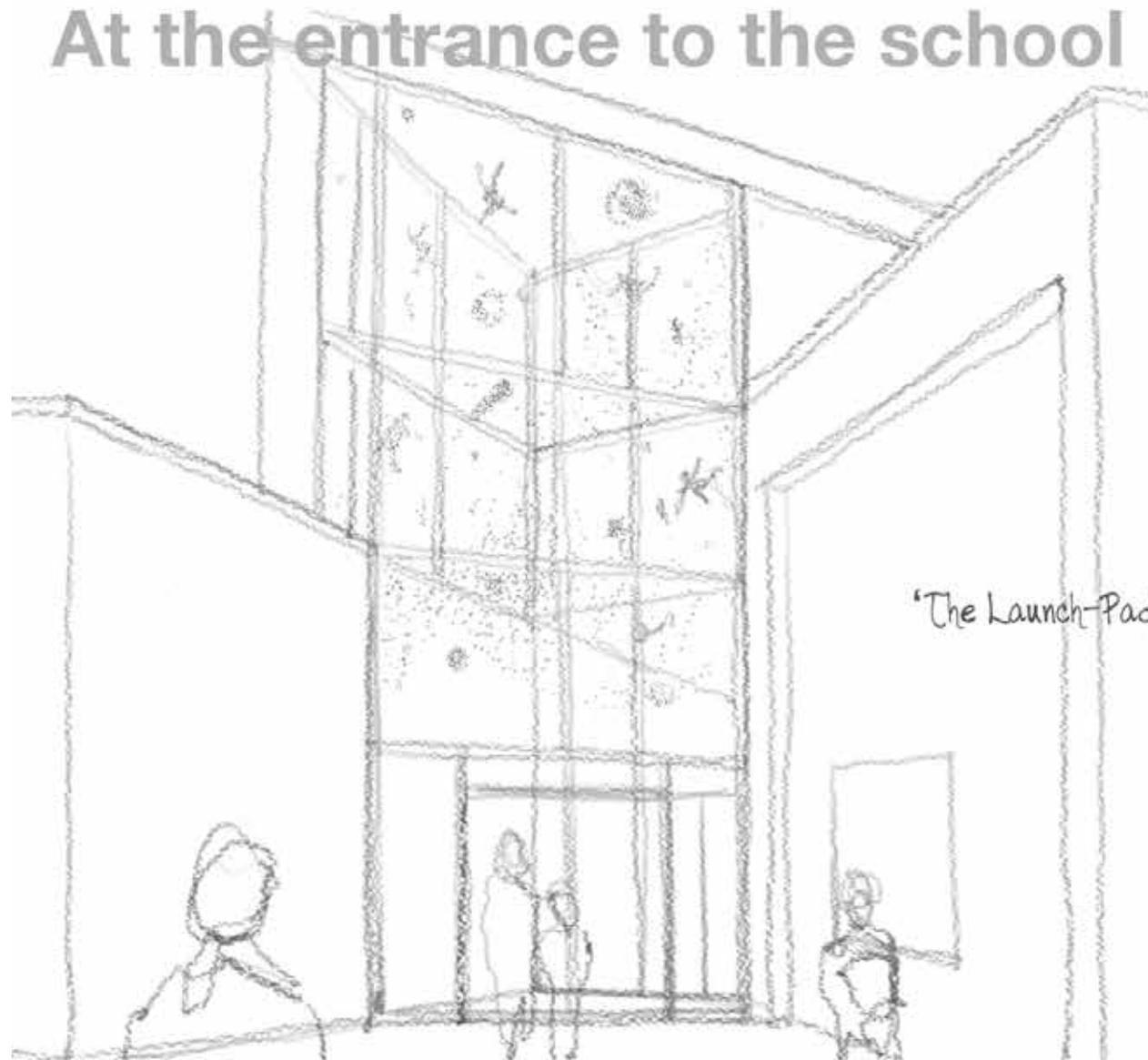
'One Small Step, One Giant Leap', 2013, Sallins National School. A play of inside/outside, positive/negative, as the opaque white dots read as dark against daylight.

Dots



We have been experimenting printing photographs in large-scale halftones to generate an image that flickers between abstraction and realism. For 'Blip' we will work with photographic images from the trampoline workshops, printed as dots on glass: white for the entrance work, and introducing strong chromatic hues for the interior work.

At the entrance to the school

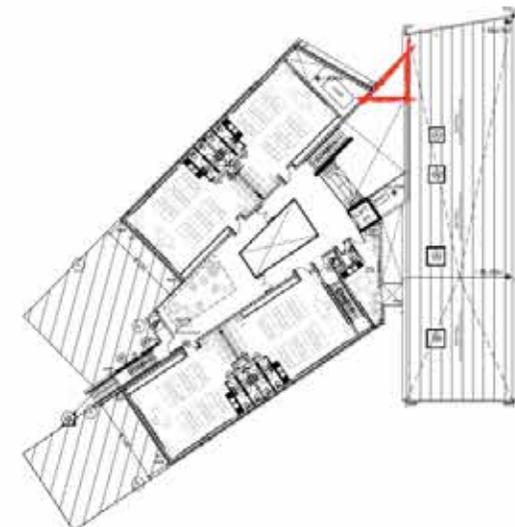


'The Launch-Pad'

This swirling spatial composition will inhabit the glass prism above the school entrance: floating figures, stars, planets, galaxies, all printed in white dots - but reading as black from inside, against daylight - on optically clear film laminated onto the inside of the glass.

The work will be made up of:

- photographs of floating schoolchildren (from the workshop) printed in white halftones.
- drawings by children of imaginary planets, comets, stars and galaxies.



First Floor Plan

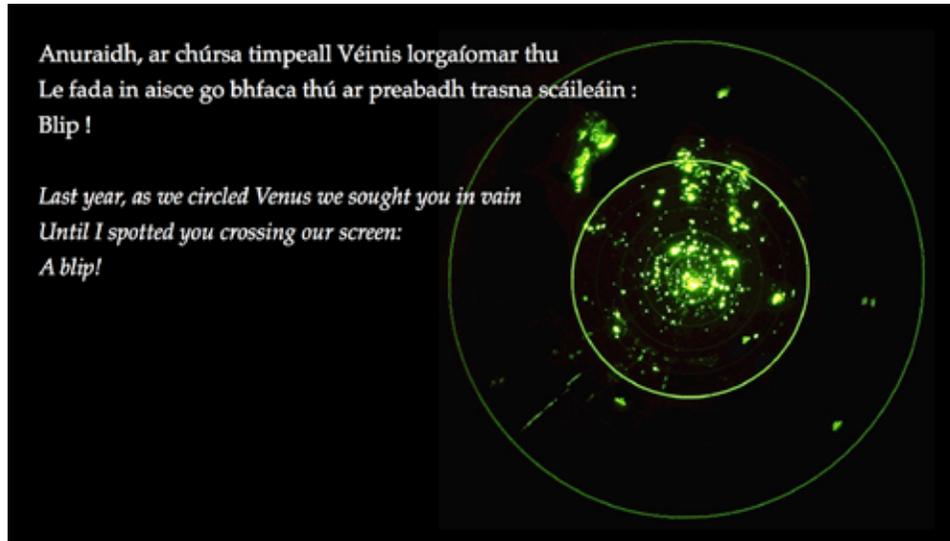


Denis Connolly and Derry O'Sullivan during a workshop with children from Gaelscoil Bheantraí in February 2014.

The workshops



Derry O'Sullivan during a workshop with children from Gaelscoil Bheantraí in February 2014.



We looked at mankind's age old desire for flight... from Icarus to the space race... We looked at Renaissance paintings, ceilings full of spinning angels, and astronauts free floating in space.

We asked each child to illustrate Derry's poem.

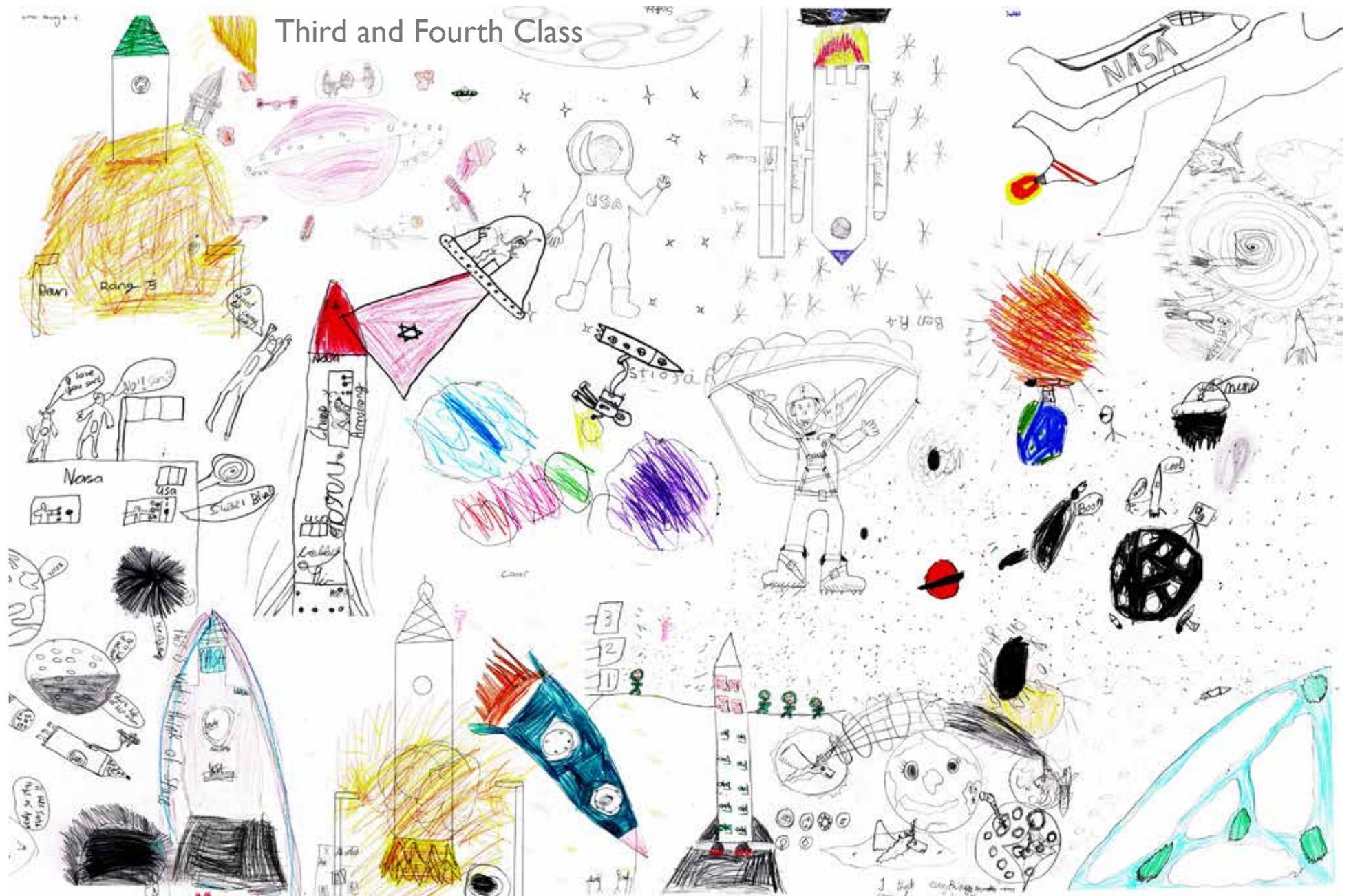


Junior infants



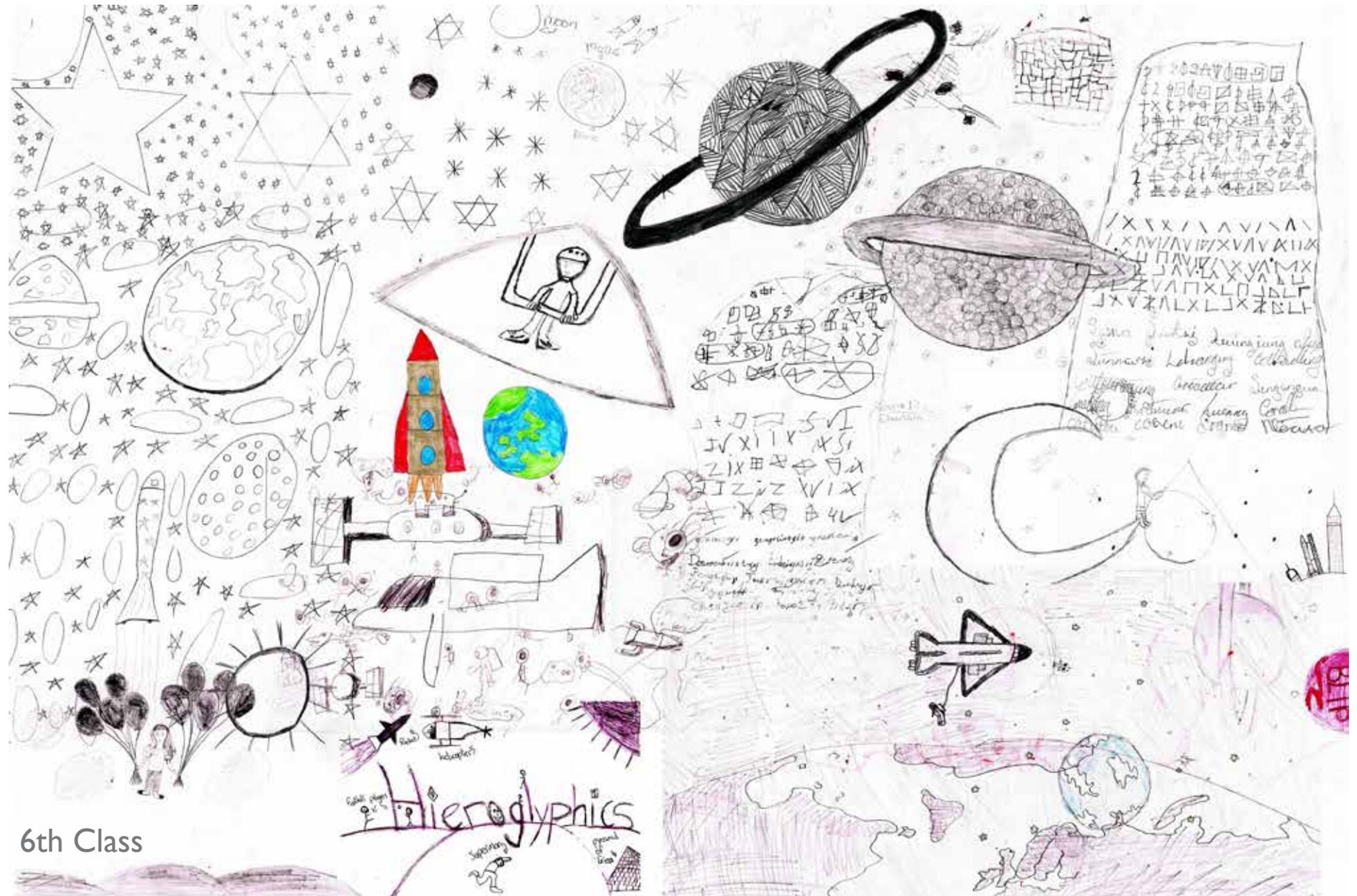
Senior infants

Third and Fourth Class





5th Class



6th Class

The trampoline workshops



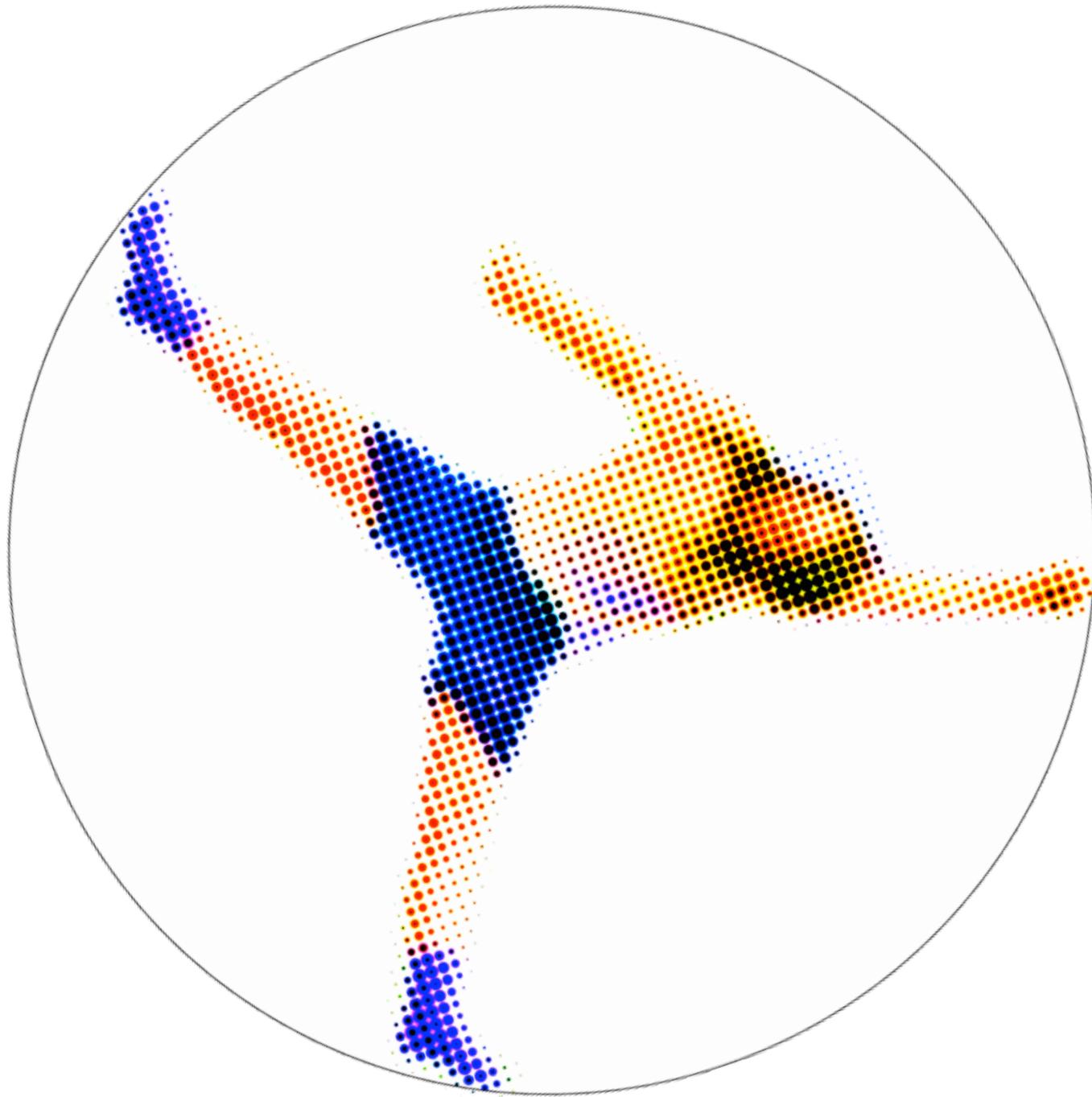
A deich, a naoi, a hocht, a seacht, a sé, a cúig, a ceathair, a trí, a dó, a haon...



Denis Connolly during a workshop with children from Gaelscoil Bheantraí in February 2014.



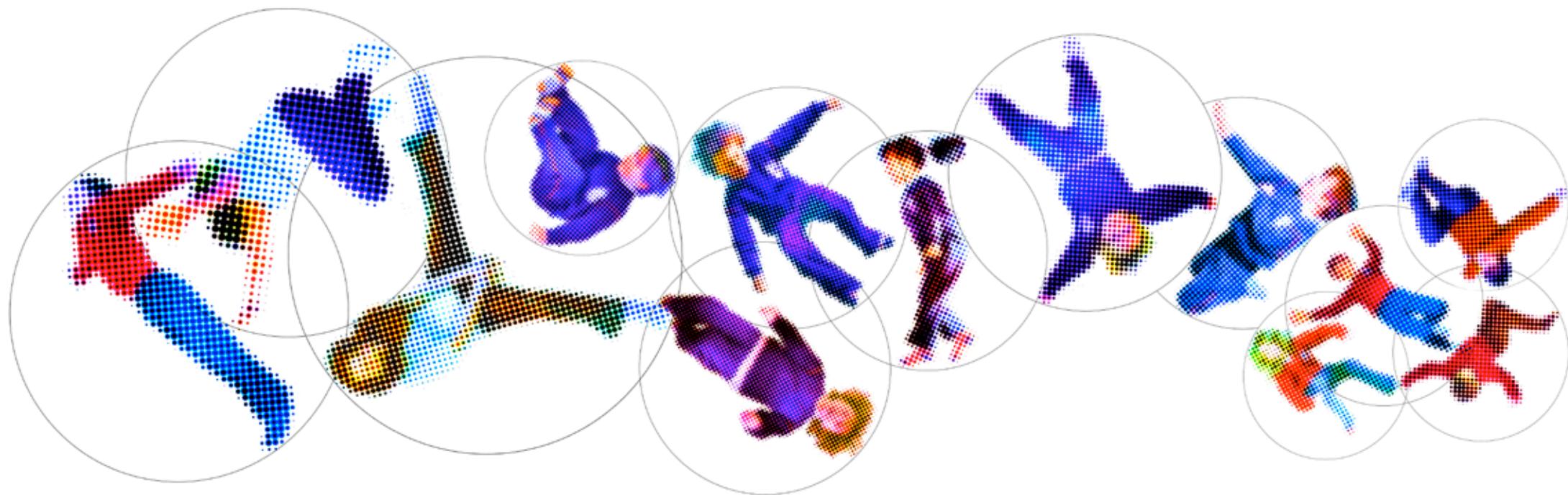














Anne Cleary, Denis Connolly and Derry O'Sullivan during a trampoline workshop with children from Gaelscoil Bheantraí in February 2014.



Installation of the artwork at Gaelscoil Bheantraí in April 2014.

The Artworks



mhann

obh thù,
Na tíortha

na haigéin a

fu

idí

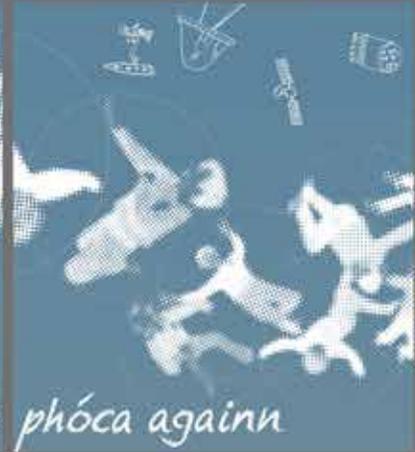
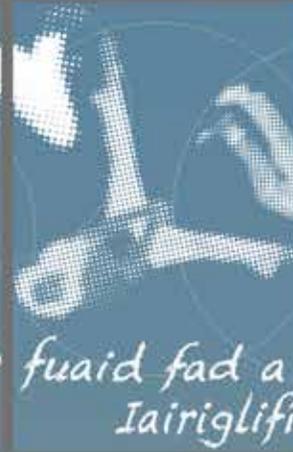


bhfuilid

Uaireanta croc



Uaidh seo domhan dubh thú,
Na tíortha, na haigéin ar fuaid fad a chéile
Iairiglifi gan chloch Rosetta phóca againn



Pirimidí,

ilstóraigh,

ard eaglaisí

- cá bhfuilid ?





Uaireanta crochtar eadrainn cuirín meitéar;



insin bíonn eagla orainn go scriosfaí ár saitéilít

*Faoin gcith phíosáí cosmais
ar saorthitim trín spás!*

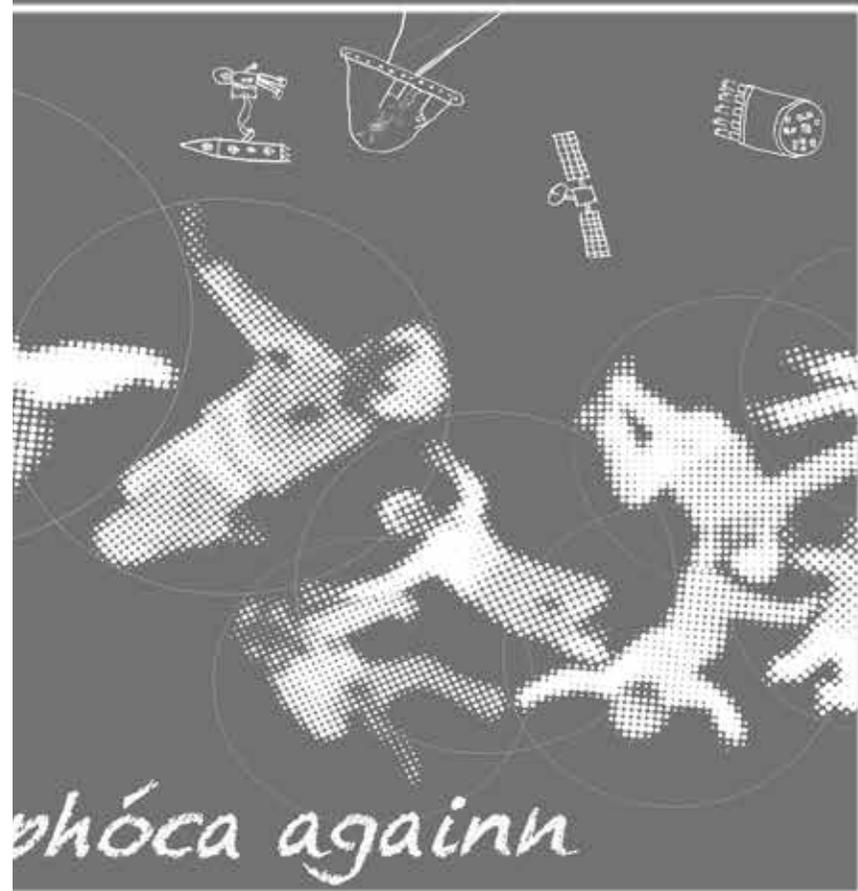


*Anuraidh, ar chúrsa timpeall véinis lorgáomar thu
Le fada in aisce go bhfaca thú ar preabadh trasna scáilleáin:*

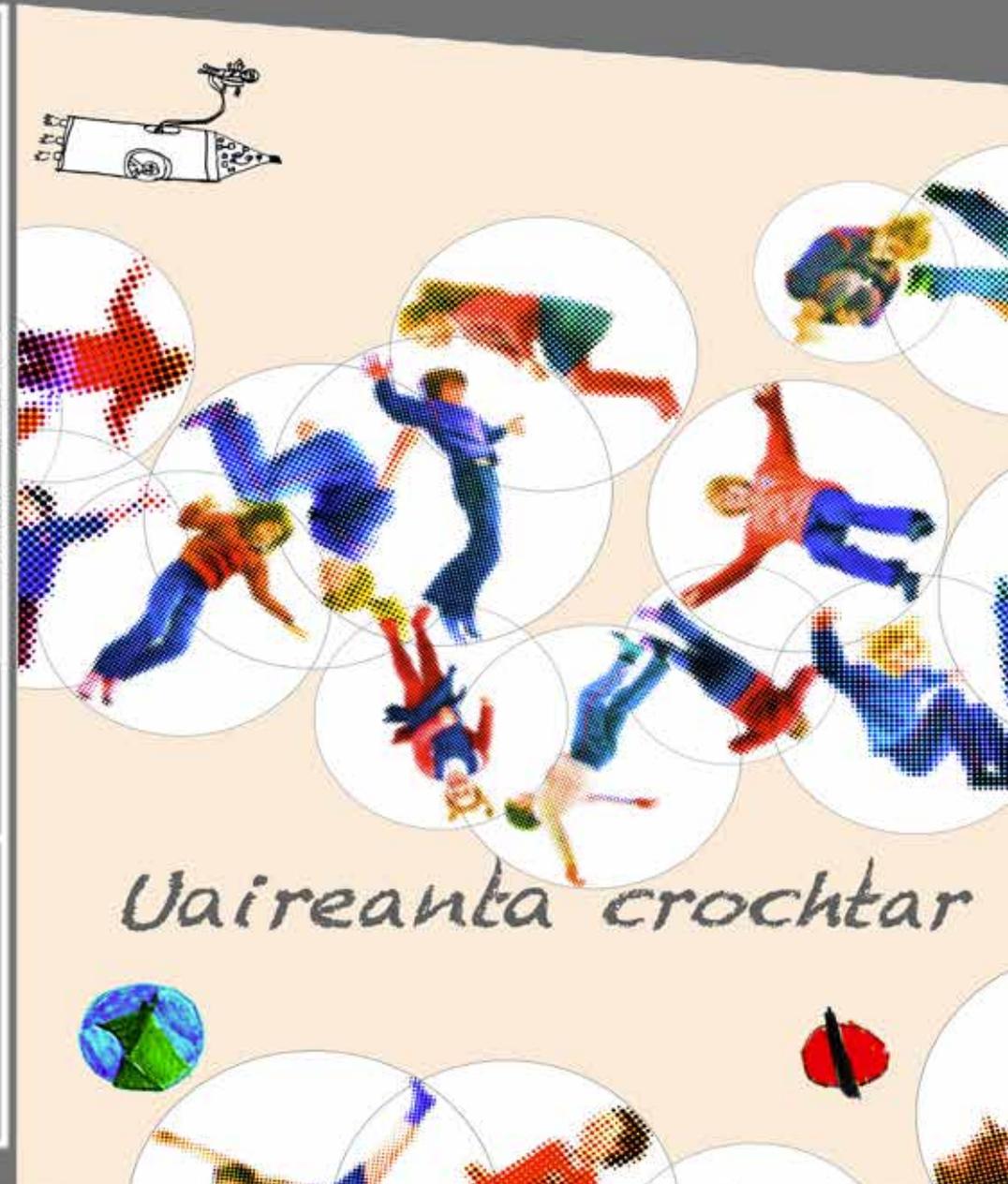
Blip!

Cleary Connolly 2014  Terry O'Sullivan, 1997





- cá bhfuilid ?





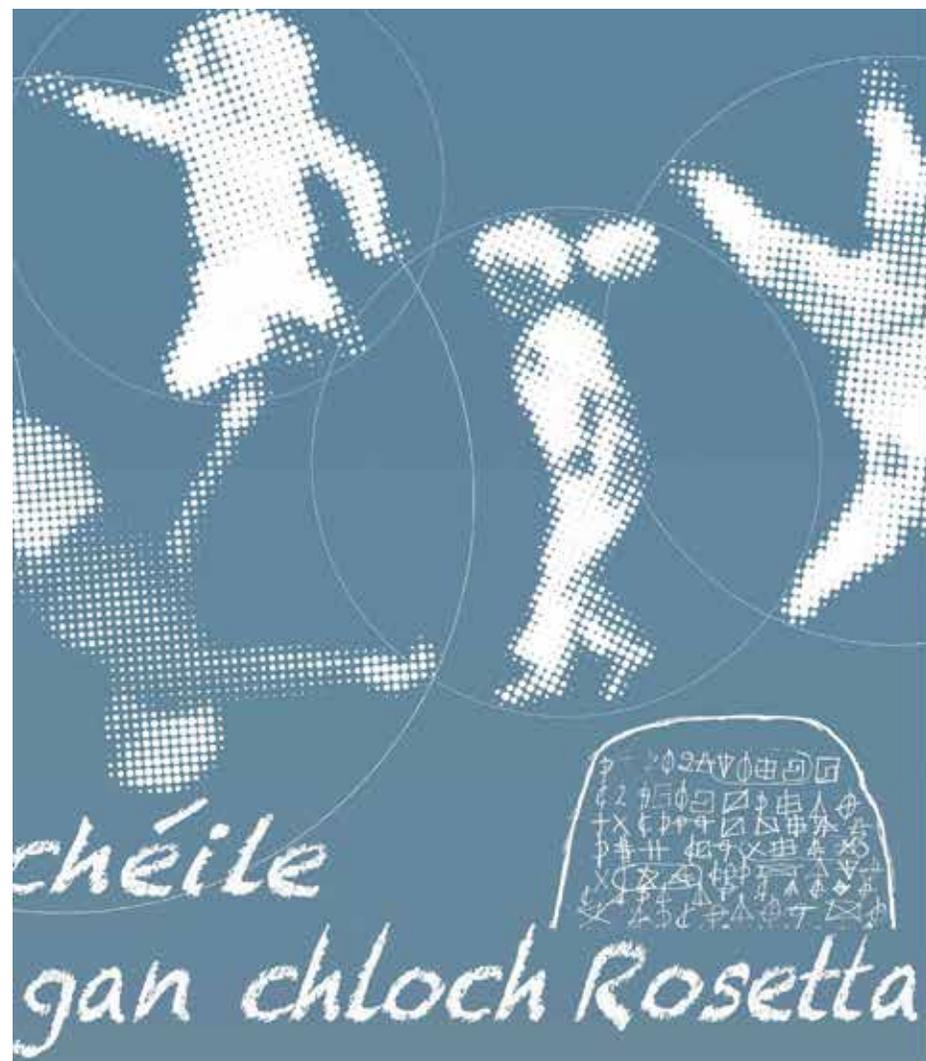
cá bhfeiliú?

Uaireanta crochtar eadrainn cuirín meibear;

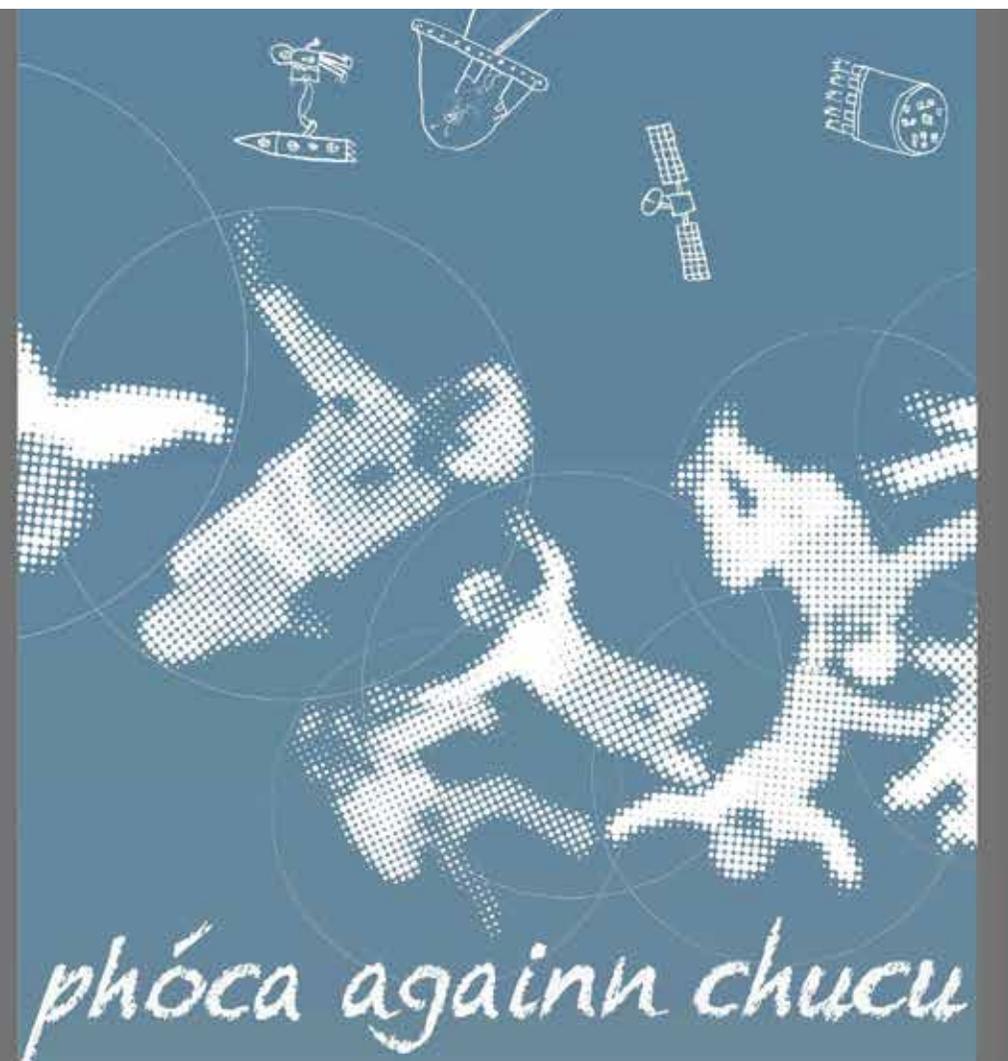
Ansin bíonn eagla orainn go scriosfaí ár saithilít

Faoin gcith phíosáí
cosmais ar saorthitim
trín spás!

Anuraidh, ar chúrsa timpeall
le fada in aisce go bhfaca thú ar
Deary Connolly 2024



chéile
gan chloch Rosetta



phóca againn chucu

ard eaglaisí

- cá bhfuilid?



na haigéin a fuaid fad a chéile

Pirimidí,

ilstóraigh,

ard eaglaisí

- cá bhfuilid?



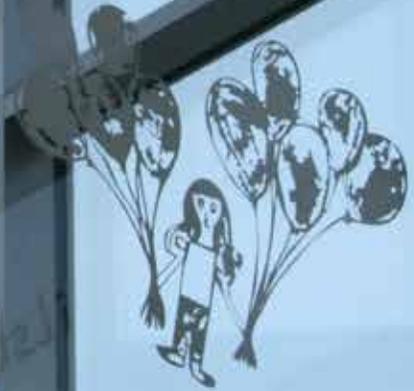
dubh thū,
Na tíortha

ar

beag

dubh

feadh



Faoi gcith phíosaí
cosmais ar saorthitim
trín spás!



anuraidh at
da in aise

chúrsa timpeall
go bhfaca thú ar

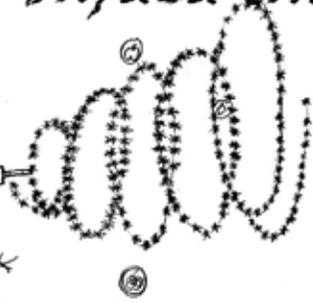
véinis/locaíomar
preabáid trasna

thu
scáileáin

Blip!

Derry O'Sullivan, 1987

Anuraidh, ar chúrsa timpeall Véinis lorgaíomar thu
Le fada in aisce go bhfaca thú ar preabadh trasna scáileáin :



Cleary Connolly 2014

Derry O'Sullivan, 1987



aidh seo

Burla

han dubh thú,
Na tíortha

na haigéin a

fuaid fad a
Iairiglit

chéite
gan chloch Ro.

beag

Ag

feadh

thrin

Pirimidí,

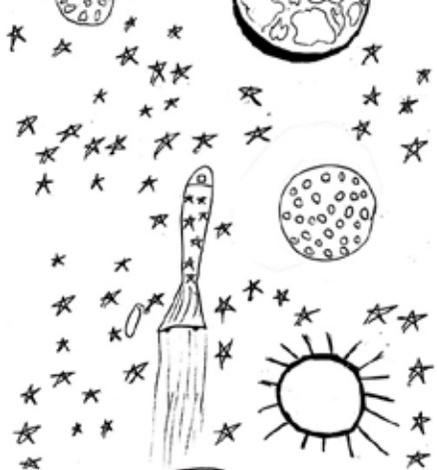
ilstóraigh,

ard eaglais

saitilít

Faoin gcith phíosaí
cosmais ar saorthitim
trín spás!

Anuraidh, ar chúrsa t
Le fada in aisce go bhfac
O'Leary Connolly 2014



ar



asal

beag

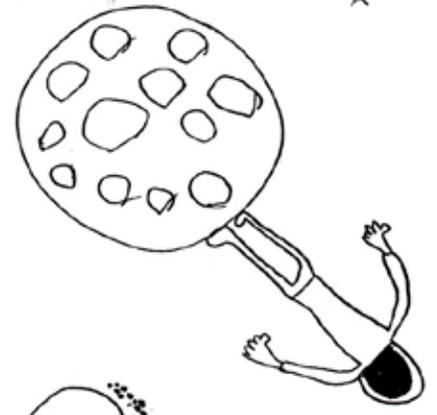
dubh



Ag



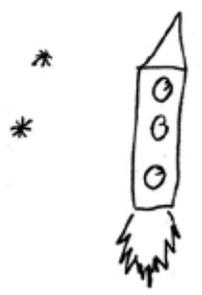
iníor



feadh

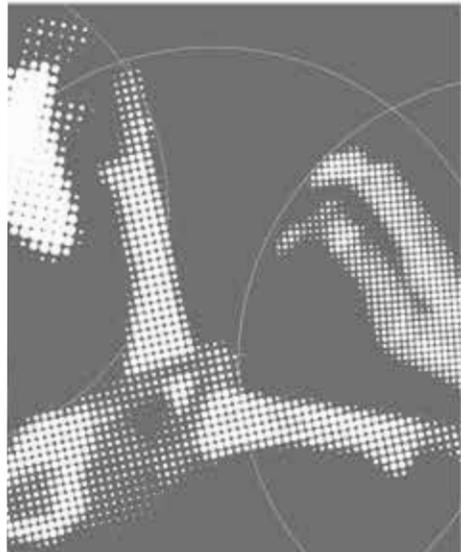


bóithrín



conaire





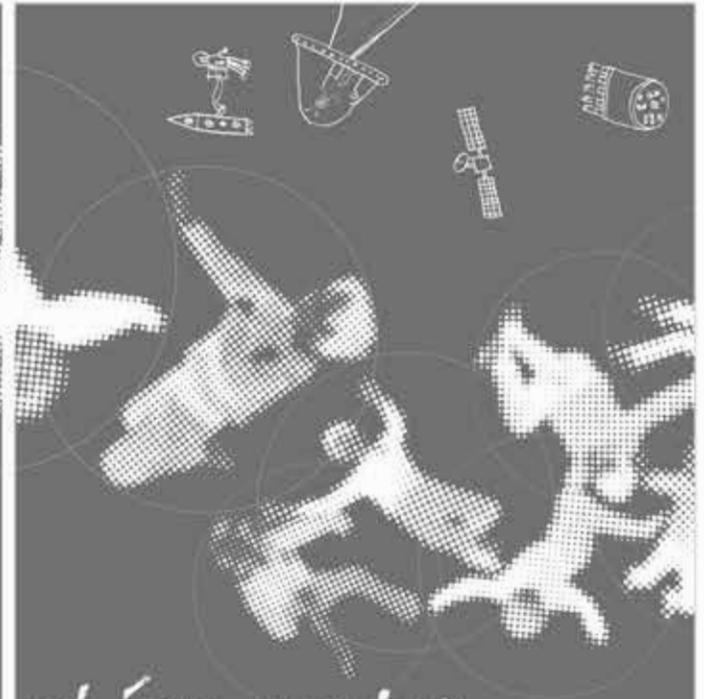
*fuaid fad a chéile
Iairiglifí*

ilstóraigh,



gan chloch Rosetta

ard eaglaisí



phóca againn

- cá bhfuilid ?

us ! aorthitim



Le

r eadrainn cuirteín meitéar;



makamaiticiūla





Acknowledgements

Our thanks to

Cristín Ní Chróinín, Don Cronin, Aidan Cullinane, Stephanie Donovan, Rita Kearney, Aine Ni Luasa, Ian McDonagh, Paud O'Mahony, Derry O'Sullivan, Mairéad Uí Chéadagáin, Brian Westlake, the staff and pupils of Gaelscoil Bheanntaí, and the Department of Education and Skills.

Cleary & Connolly

AIB award winning artists Anne Cleary and Denis Connolly live and work in Paris. They are exhibited worldwide, and are the only Irish artists to have had a solo exhibition in the Pompidou Centre in Paris.

They are Ireland's foremost new-media artists, easily incorporating innovative new technologies into their work, to produce art that is both engaging and significant. Much of Cleary & Connolly's work is collaborative, and they work frequently with young people and in schools.

Exhibitions include: Irish Cultural Centre, Paris (2013); Farmleigh Gallery, Dublin (2012); The Barbican, London (2010); The Pompidou Centre, Paris (2009); Sesc Pompéia, Sao Paulo (2009); Yokohama Triennial, Japan (2005).

They have 2 daughters: Lotti and Salamambo.

Derry O'Sullivan

Derry O'Sullivan was born in Bantry. He is the eldest of 11 children. He attended St. Finbarr's, Rochestown College and has a B.A. in Latin and philosophy from UCC.

He took 4 years of Theology and Canon Law followed by an M.A. on Irish Toponymy in Yeats. As a teacher he was Director of the Anglo-American section at E.I.E.P. He taught American and British Constitutions at the Sorbonne, taught literary analysis at the Institut Catholique de Paris and was Head of English at the Electronics Institute in Paris.

He has Four Oireachtas Poetry awards, including the Seán Ó Riordáin Prize and the Times Stephen Spender Prize with Kaarina Hollo.

He has been married for 31 years to Jean O'Sullivan. He has three children: Dekin, Isolde and Derval.