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DID YOU KNOW.....

By Deirdre McKiernan-Hetzler

That the IACI logo was designed by Northern Ireland artist Brian Ferran?

Born in Derry in 1940, **Brian Ferran** trained as an art teacher at St Joseph's College of Education, Belfast and taught art from 1963 to 1966. Graduating with a BA Honors degree in Art History from the Courtauld Institute of London University and a post-graduate Diploma in Business Administration from Queens University, Belfast, he then spent a year at Brera Academy of Fine Art, Milan, Italy.

Ferran served on the staff of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland for a number of years before a bit of anti-Catholic discrimination backfired, leading to his appointment as its Chief Executive. He has lectured at universities and public galleries in the United States on aspects of contemporary Irish art.

In 1965, he designed the logo of the Irish American Cultural Institute, a unique intertwining of the American eagle and a figure from the Book of Kells. In 1972, four of his works were reproduced on the covers of the cultural journal Eire Ireland. In the 1990s, Brian served briefly on the IACI Board.

Among his myriad accomplishments, he completed three large stained glass windows for a church at St Patricks College, Haghera, County Derry and a mural 10 feet high by 15 feet long for the entrance to St Columbs College Derry. Brian Ferran has been awarded too many prestigious awards to mention, and his work can be found in many major collections in Europe and America.

Brian is married to artist **Denise Ferran**. Born in Saintfield Co. Down, Denise grew up in Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh and trained as an art teacher at St. Mary's University College, Belfast. She taught at St. Dominic's High School, Belfast before serving as Head of Education at the Ulster Museum.

She has a BA with honors in the History of European Art from the Courtauld Institute, a Diploma in Advanced Studies in Education from Queen's University, Belfast, a Ph.D in Art History from Trinity College, Dublin and an Hon. MFA from the University of Ulster. Her paintings are also in major collections and grace several Irish establishments. A few years ago, Denise was a Fulbright Scholar on a satellite campus of the University of Minnesota.

The Ferrans tell a humorous story about the IACI's founder. Many years ago, on a lazy Sunday morning, Denise saw a large coach pull up outside their Belfast home, and begin disgorging passengers. When she recognized their friend, Eoin McKiernan, she realized what was up. He

had forgotten about the Sunday closures in Northern Ireland, and the folks traveling on his tour needed a rest stop! Denise provided hospitality, the group got to visit with a real Irish family, and everyone enjoyed the unplanned stop.

As a tribute to Dr. McKiernan, the Ferrans spoke to the Rochester, NY chapter about the connection between art and the political events of 20th century Ireland. They now live in Malin Head, on the breathtakingly beautiful Inishowen Peninsula in Donegal.

Even less well known is another Irish artist, **Michael Augustine Power**, who was born in Dungarvan, County Waterford, Ireland in 1877. He reportedly studied at The Metropolitan School of Art in Dublin. After the death of his father, he adopted the name O'Malley, in honor of his much loved stepfather, and became known in art circles as Power-O'Malley.

Emigrating to New York at the turn of the century he did book illustrations and covers for *Life*, *The Literary Digest*, *Harpers* and *Puck*. "Moving to the west coast, Power-O'Malley advised John Ford on film settings and is said to have painted sets for Cecil B. de Mille's epic "The King of Kings." However, he made regular painting trips to the land of his birth, being particularly drawn to Achill Island in County Mayo. Among the many exhibits of his paintings are those at Iona College (New Rochelle, NY 2002-2003) and St. John Fisher College (Rochester, NY 2010), the latter having been arranged by Ivan Lennon of the Rochester IACI chapter.

Thank you to Ivan Lennon for contributing content for this article!