

## **The Thin Places**

'*The Thin Places*' installed during 2002 at Annagh Head, plus Doonamoe, north Mayo were two projects worked together as the '*thin places*' in which '*time past is part of time future, & time future is time past, & time now is encompassing all.*' Doonamoe construction encompassed an enormous blow - hole where the sea shoots up to one hundred & twenty feet. [\[iv\]](#)

'*The Thin Places*' were inspired by early monastic beehives. The project was '*a refuge on one hand but also a vista that celebrates the peninsula's eating of the sea!*' One may sit in meditation in this landscape which is interrupted by the rusted steel frames looking out to the sea. [\[v\]](#)

## **Vault of Heaven**

The '*Vault of Heaven*' 2004 at Scott's Port, Belmullet was a shrine processional dedicated to the children of Erris. [\[vi\]](#)

The structure was designed along a series of lines with stainless steel pipes positioned to exaggerate '*time's long past & forever future*' with a small stacked stone temple to sit or reflect that provides '*a powerful moment of timeless memory.*' [\[vii\]](#)

'*The Vault of Heaven*' is now a processional walk along boulders that brings one to a wall of stone with steel rods at thirty feet in length, twelve feet in height. At one end of the wall large loosely fitted boulders enable viewing spaces while the other end is a solid construction. [\[viii\]](#)

## **The Children of Lir**

During 2005 '*The Children of Lir*' at Ceathrú Thaidhg represented a tale of nine hundred years told in sculptured land produced to provide voice to the Children of Lir in literal architectural form. Installation relied upon sound or song both artificially created with the design of steel chimes in tune with the natural based sound between the sea surf with the wind. [\[ix\]](#)

One key feature in north Mayo is '*The Children of Lir*' loop - walk sculpture. It is one of a series from the '*Spirit of Place*' sculpture trail that centres on culturally distinct, historic also isolated areas of the world. [\[x\]](#)

'*The Children of Lir*' sculpture has significance to an area that thousands of people have emigrated to all parts of the world whilst they brought with them a strong '*Spirit of Place*' as several never returned. [\[xi\]](#)

Images of '*The Children of Lir*' loop - walk in Belmullet may be viewed at this link:  
<http://www.docbrown.info/docspics/irishscenes/ispag82b.htm>

## **The Temple of the Tides**

'*The Temple of the Tides*' was to be a place of remembrance for those coming back. It was a place to yearn for them after their departure as well as beckon them back home. It was to be a place to mourn those who will never return. It was to be a place to welcome them home when they come back.' '*The Temple of the Tides*' constructed during 2007 at Belmullet Harbour was designed along a series of lines that used steel pipes positioned as to exaggerate '*time's long past & forever future*' with a small stacked stone temple to sit or reflect that provides '*a powerful moment of timeless memory.*' The pipes stand vertically on polished black granite. Longitude: -9.9959973, latitude: 54.2262974. [\[xii\]](#)

## **The Crossing**

*'The Crossing'* 2014 at Dhún Phádraig evokes the struggle & sublime slipstream between the mystical & material, between cultural history & the eternal sacred. [\[xiii\]](#)

The celebrated *'The Crossing'* of 2014 at the remote blow hole of Downpatrick Head in north Mayo is an architectural & landscape installation. [\[xiv\]](#)

The 2014 *'The Crossing'* was a quiet restorative project with a thunderous architectural & landscape installation that commemorates the natural power & richly - layered historical tales of that site. The metaphor of *'The Crossing'* evokes the border where folklore & spoken traditions reflect on the lion's den of lives past or yet to arrive also the unspeakable moment when two totally divergent realities collide with the despair of Loss or celebration of joy from the past fifteen hundred years of Irish heritage. This site features amazing sketches or images from Down Patrick. [\[xv\]](#)

A video of the north Mayo project *'The Crossing'* is available at this link: <https://spiritofplace-design.com/spirit-of-place/>

### **Procession of the Souls**

The *'Procession of the Souls'* 2015 Installation at Swinford is one of twenty - four projects that forms the *'Spirit of Place'* programme. It incorporates a staggered stone path with high walls that exemplifies the struggle through a turbulent tragic journey. A light - filled structure of illuminating ascension overlooks the graveyard with Dr. Michael Henry's burial site at the culmination of the passage. (*It also is reminiscent of the High Stone Walls of a Workhouse*) A table under a steel etched - glass roof hosts religious services. This installation has won two American Awards for its design: in 2005 the Washington DC American Institute Chapter Design also the National AIA Faith & Form IFFRA during 2016. [\[xvi\]](#)

The *'Procession of the Souls'* installation was produced during 2015 within the famine & paupers graveyard in Swinford. It is a dedication to Swinford's history of the Great Famine. Dr. Henry's Gravestone within the graveyard was repaired by the students. This poetic imagery guided the project; *'Trudging midst cradled shadows Snarled beneath shrouded tumult Drenched in malevolent deceit Writhing anguished, scarred & fractured into eroding masses Echoing glimmers of unsung brilliance beckons.'* [\[xvii\]](#)

Information on the Swinford project may be assessed at this link; <https://swinfordtidytowns.com/spirit-of-place-swinford-begins/>

A video of The *'Procession of the Souls'* project at Swinford features at this link: <https://swinfordtidytowns.com/spirit-of-place-swinford/>

This Swinford project is referenced on this site: <https://swinfordtidytowns.com/spirit-of-place-swinford-2015/>

An usual image of Swinford project features at this site: <https://architecture.catholic.edu/academics/study-abroad/spirit-of-place/index.html>

One may view an article of *'The Procession of the Souls'* at this site: [https://spiritofplace-design.blogspot.com/p/about-spirit-of-place-spirit-of-design\\_26.html](https://spiritofplace-design.blogspot.com/p/about-spirit-of-place-spirit-of-design_26.html)

### **Tale of the Tongs - The Gathering**

The 2014 'Spirit of Place' installation titled 'Tale of the Tongs - The Gathering' on Inishturk Island 'represents centuries of cultural gathering on Inishturk as a shrine, a respite, a viewing also resting place. It is a spiritual & cultural focus point representing the global Irish diaspora.' [xviii]

Professor Travis Price produced a documentary during 2014 entitled 'Tale of Tongs.' [xix]

This documentary premiered at the environmental during Spring 2014 at the Washington D. C. Film Festival. [xx]

Another trailer at the project features at this link: <https://vimeo.com/102775287>

### **About Fishers of Men**

'About Fishers of Men' installation was designed & constructed by thirty architectural students from the Catholic University of America in Washington D. C. under the stewardship of Travis Price, professor of architecture, along with five mosaic artists. Peter Hynes, Chief Executive of Mayo County Council stated at the launch that 'I would like to compliment Travis Price and his team for delivering this stunning Spirit of Place project for Cong. Everyone who contributed to this project can be immensely proud of their achievement knowing that they have provided a valuable asset to Cong and the surrounding area.' [xxi]

The Cong 2019 installation celebrates the 'Fishers of Men' understanding of the Gospel of Matthew in concert with the mysterious sun boat God, Manánnan Mac Lir who commands the boat passages between the sun with the underwater voyages into the underworld. [xxii]

The 'Fishers of Men' during its installation in 2019 was an earthly sanctuary grounded with abstracts of earth, land & sky with a rugged beauty at Cong, Co. Mayo according to Katherine B. Bell on her blog. The design metaphor is largely about being submerged under water, caught in the net then rising to the light. It celebrates the intertwined Celtic & Christian traditions of the region with the palette of nature also nature - inspired materials & colours. The square imposing form provides gentle enclosure on the forested site: planes slide past each other thus makes a solid yet dynamic structure. These material palettes echo the Neolithic pagan stone monuments with the nearby ruined abbey. Intricate embedded mosaic of blues & greens are inspired by the twin sacred ocean themes of Matthew's gospel with the Celtic lore figure of Manánnan Mac Lir. Thirty thousand pieces of stone with glass were used in the construction of the three hundred & ninety panels. [xxiii]

### **Footnotes**

[iv] Spirit of Place (<https://www.spiritofplacemayo.com/copy-of-the-thin-places-doonamoe>) [Assessed 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020]

[v] Spirit of place (<https://www.spiritofplacemayo.com/>) [Assessed 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020]

[vi] The Vault of Heaven (<https://www.mayo.ie/visit/soul/spirit-of-place>) [Assessed 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020]

[vii] Ibid

[viii] Spirit of Place (<https://www.spiritofplacemayo.com/the-vault-of-heaven>) [Assessed 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020]

[ix] Children of Lir (<https://www.spiritofplacemayo.com/children-of-lir>) [Assessed 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020]

[x] Carataige (<https://www.discoverireland.ie/>) [assessed 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020]

- [xi] Ceathru Thaidhg Loop Walks (<https://www.wildatlanticway.com/>) [Assessed 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020]
- [xii] Spirit of place (<https://www.spiritofplacemayo.com/temple-of-the-tides>) [Assessed 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020]
- [xiii] Spirit of place (<https://www.spiritofplacemayo.com/the-crossing>) [Assessed 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020]
- [xiv] Mayo has become home to (<https://www.mayo.ie/visit/soul/spirit-of-place>) [Assessed 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020]
- [xv] About Spirit of Place (<https://spiritofplace-design.blogspot.com/>) [Assessed 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020]
- [xvi] Procession of the Souls (<https://www.mayo.ie/news/the-procession-of-the-souls-famine-memorial-wins-2-national-awards/>) [Assessed 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020 ]
- [xvii] Pride of Place Swinford (<https://swinfordtidytowns.com/spirit-of-place-swinford/>) [Assessed 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020]
- [xviii] Sprit of Place – Spirit of Design (<https://www.spiritofplacemayo.com/>) [assessed 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020]
- [xix] Spirit of Place – Spirit of Design (<http://spiritofplace-design.com/travis-price-2/>) [Assessed 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020]
- [xx] Spirit of Place –Spirit of Design ( <http://spiritofplace-design.com/public-speaking/>) [Assessed 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020]
- [xxi] Spirit of Place (<https://www.mayo.ie/news/spirit-of-place-project-unveiled-in-cong/>) [Assessed 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020]
- [xxii] Spirit of Place Project (<http://www.mayonews.ie/news/30449-spirit-of-place-project-unveiled-in-cong>) [Assessed 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020]
- [xxiii] Spirit of Place – Spirit of Design (<https://network.aia.org/blogs/>) [Assessed 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020]