

TBG+S WRITING COMMISSION 2018

Temple Bar Gallery + Studios Writing Commission 2018

The TBG+S Writing Commission aims to expand ideas around writing about art by inviting Irish authors to create a series of pieces inspired by the exhibitions at Temple Bar Gallery + Studios. In 2018, TBG+S has commissioned Doireann Ní Ghríofa to write a piece of short fiction inspired by each of the exhibitions in the gallery programme.

Previous TBG+S Writers have included Gavin Corbett (2017), Claire-Louise Bennett (2016) and Sara Baume (2015).

Each written piece is available to download from www.templebargallery.com.

Doireann Ní Ghríofa is currently Commissioned Writer for Temple Bar Gallery + Studios, 2018. She writes both prose and poetry, in both Irish and English. Her next books are 'Lies' (drawing on a decade of her Irish poems in translation), and '9 Silences' (a collaborative book with artist Alice Maher). Among her awards are the Rooney Prize for Irish Literature, a Seamus Heaney Fellowship, and the Ostana Prize (Italy).

Doireann Ní Ghríofa

Poem #3

[Not here. Here]

This poem was written by Doireann Ní Ghríofa after 'Send!' by Stephen Loughman.

It's near: the dark forest of trees, where
branches creak in the hum of oak leaves.
Not here. Here, the DJ thuds a new pulse
in our ears and the beats rise high 'til the whole
crowd cheers. Yes, the bass soars, yes,
the audience roars and still, I grow bored.

I turn to go, dropping my smoke into beer
at my heel. The floor here is filthier
each week, but tonight it sticks to my feet,
turns a path under trees, grown murky,
grown wet, yes, it clings like a *geis*, as though
it can't let me leave, not now, not yet,

as though there's something else that needs to be
seen, or said. In that moment, the club trembles
vivid, gold-light speckling in brittle reds, and I see
it, then, a sapling lit in flecks of fluorescence –
and it's you I'm seeing for the first time, it's you,
drunk, grinning, conjured in the background

of a film which someone else is leading.
I watch you sway, your cheekbones lit
in strobe-glow, bottle tucked into your elbow,
as you lift a pouch of tobacco to pinch and lick
and lighter flick, leaving a thin shred of leaf
on your lip – one warm fleck – when I

walk over now, that's where I'll press my mouth.
I'll take your hand in my fist and never want
to let go of it – but for this one moment I am alone,
still, with one foot in a club and one in a forest,
watching you glance up suddenly and see me,
my sapling, my love, my forest, my tree.