

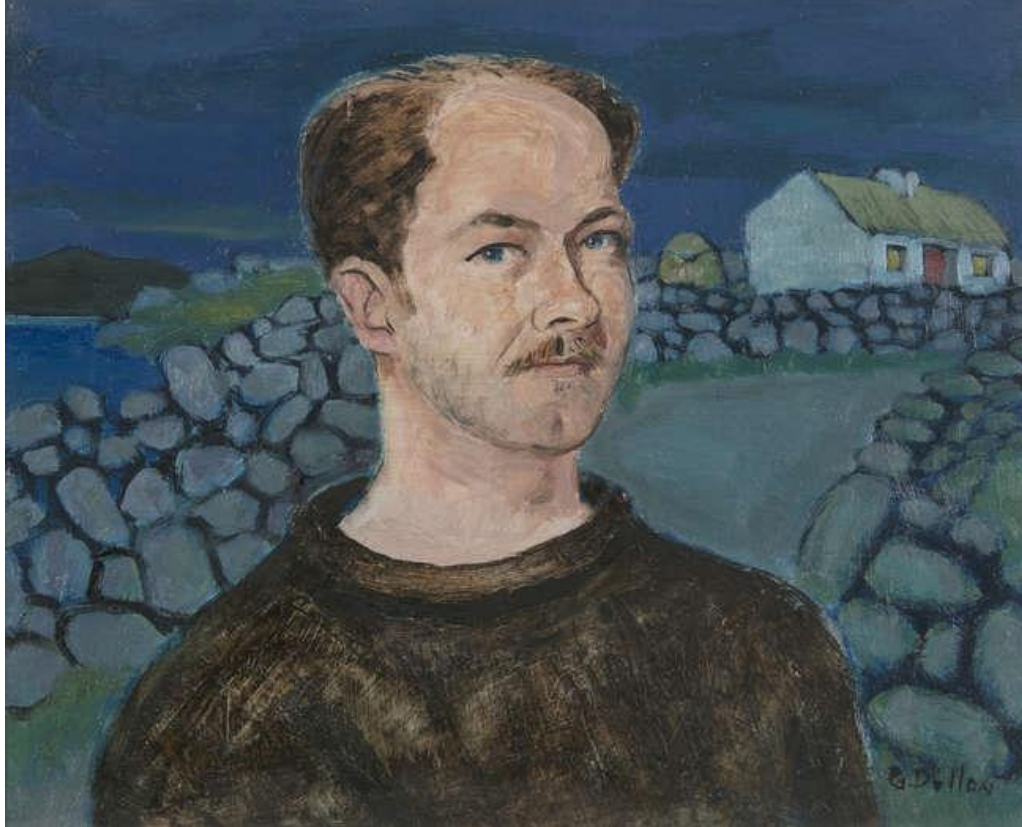


# Art Unwrapped Gerard Dillon Innishlacken couple

The Artist, Local Hero.  
Presentation by Anya Nicholl



# The artist and background: Gerard Dillion



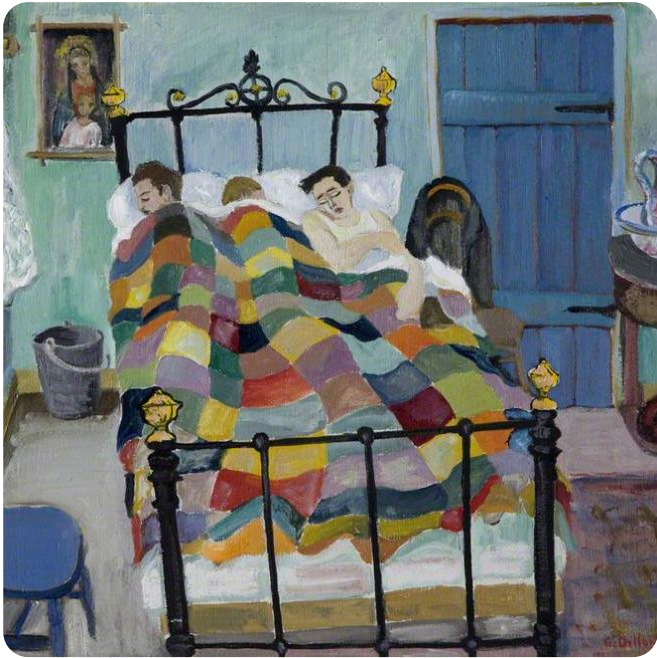
Painting: Self in  
Inishlacken n.d

Gerard Dillion was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1916. Dillion was a landscape artist who had a great fascination with art at a young age, leaving school at 14 years old to become painter and decorator.

Dillion went on to pursue his painting career at Belfast Collage of Art before moving to London. In London he used his skills he had learnt as a decorator to fund this art materials and gallery visits to assist him to move forward in his learning and abilities.

His artwork at this time illustrated the life and experiences happening around him and his observations. As at this time, he travelled back and forth from Dublin, Belfast and London. Soon after he Left London to escape the Second World War.

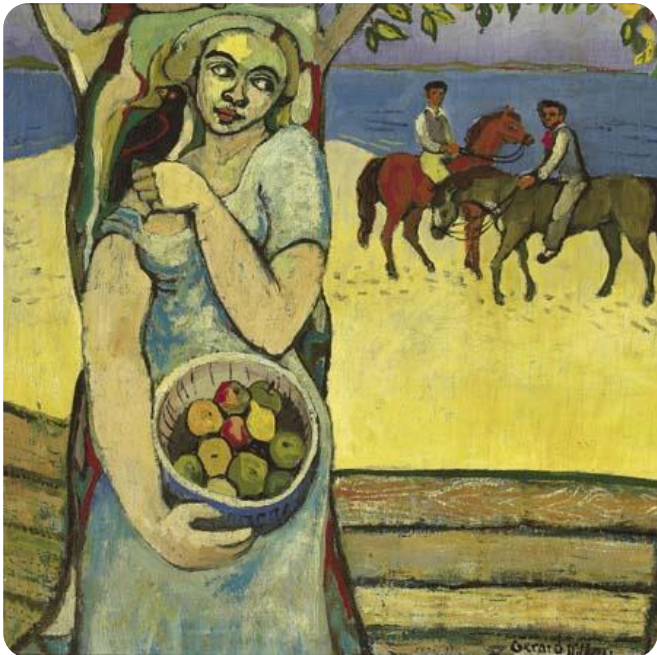
The most influential place although, was the West of Ireland where he resided due to his enthrallment of the striking landscapes and the locals who inhabited it.



# Dillion's work and Influence:

Gerard Dillon had his first solo exhibition at the Country Shop, St. Stephens Green in Dublin 1942, who was opened by his friend and artist Mainie Jellett. Throughout his artwork Dillon Celebrated Rural Irish life focusing on Working Women and Men who looked after the land, growing crops and the animals who occupied it.

Dillon's work has a very 2D distorted visual appearance, taking influence from the Celtic Medieval carvings in Newgrange and monasterboice. In his paintings you can see how his way of painting changes the perspective, to look as if you are looking at the scene at a very bent angle. Which creates a slightly unnatural feeling. He also outlines many of his figures in black to make them stand out even more so, to the background, adding to the focus on the angle.



Paintings:  
Girl Hiding

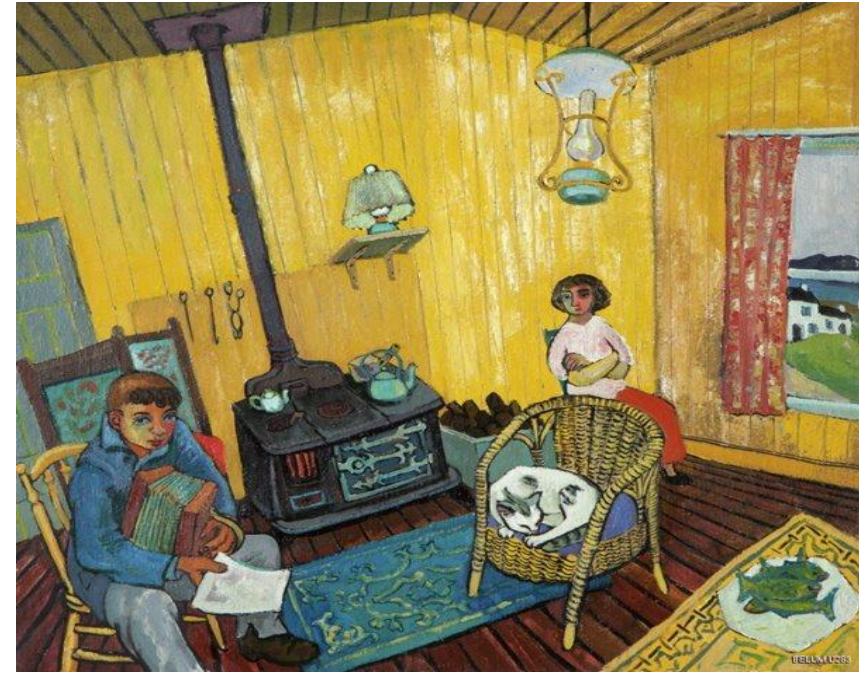
Medical  
Students  
1949



Gerard Dillion took influence from European modernist such as Chagall (you can see this influence in Dillions figures and brush movements) , Keating's illustrations for Synge's Playboy of the Western World and Van Gogh. You can see these artists prominently as an inspiration through his work. Epically in the technique of the painting, perspective and the bold vibrant colours used.

Dillion's colour platte in the 'Yellow Bungalow' uses similar colours to the Van Gogh's chambers, although being inspired by the layout and perspective of Chagall's La Chambre Jaune (1911). They have a juxtaposing feel to them due to where the colours have been placed. There is unsaid symbolism in much of their work, uncovering segments of life.

In Van Gogh's painting we can see that blue is a prominent, repeating theme, being used on the walls, clothing, doors and objects sitting on the table. This indicates the feeling of sorrow and coldness residing in the room. Apart from little accents of yellow ochre showing areas of warmth and comfort. This is translated over to Gerard Dillion's work also, as the blue painted objects such as the carpet, accordion and oil lamp correspondingly holds yellow details. Creating a bond of the same feeling between these paintings in the small details. Although, here the room is filled with yellow ochre, placed on most of the eye catching features of the room. Indicating a homely feeling as well as joy, more so than Van Gogh's Painting. Although the people are quite distant showing some tension of opposing wants in life. This points back to the small occurring blue pieces which indicates this feeling of differences into he piece more.



Gerard  
Dillon's  
work:  
*Yellow  
Bungalow  
(1954)*



Van Gogh's  
Work:  
Vincent  
van Gogh  
La  
chambre  
de Van  
Gogh à  
Arles, (188  
9)



# A look into 'Innishlacken Couple'

In 1951 Gerard Dillon rented A cottage on the Island of Inishlacken, close to Roundstone, Connemara. He adapted to small Island life and illustrated the life of the islanders who lived there. He then invited two fellow artists George Campbell and James MacIntyre to visit him here. Where they studied the life there.

The 'Innishlacken Couple' presents a woman and a man sitting in chairs away from each other in their cottage. Dillon demonstrates the use of shadows and light reflection in this piece. Showing a blockage of some sort, maybe a pillar from the cottage that is obstructing the sun, creating two strips casting a large shadow on the people seated. This gives a hint of the weather, even though we can not physically see it, as well as a symbolic view point.

We can see that the people in the photo have a sombre expression and look very withdrawn which the shadows add to, in darkness. This feeling is also shown through the colour palette due to the cold tones of blue, brown and grey. Both of their body language is very different to one another.

The woman is closed off with legs and arms folded and her body is pointed inwardly while her gaze looks off in the distance. Almost in a day dreaming state. While her body is quite withdrawn and reserved.

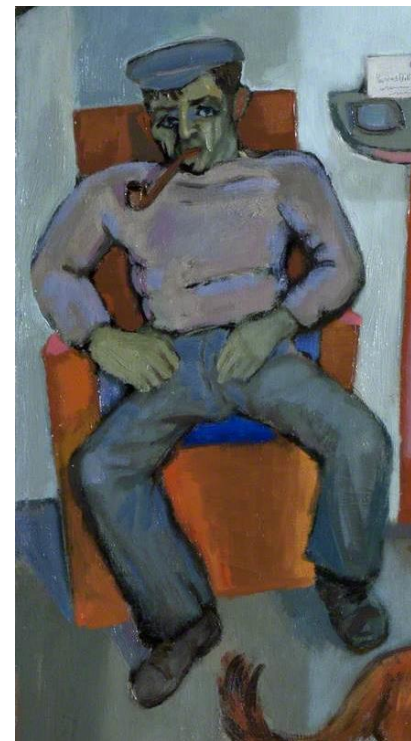
The man on the other hand has a very comfortable, outward stance with both legs, arms, feet and hands more open. He is also smoking a pipe which indicates comfort. His gaze is quite different as if he is looking in the opposite direction but with a slightly curious expression.





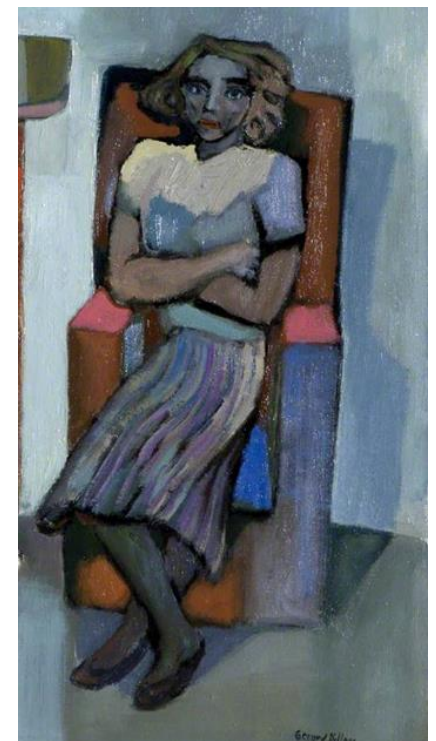


I noticed also that the kettles on top of the fire and the dog are pointed in her direction. Even the cross is not positioned in the middle of the fireplace but on the woman's side where she is sitting. Every other object on top of the fireplace although is facing forward, creating a sense of divide. The woman's chair is also multiple colours indicating, having various decisions to make or being pulled in numerous ways in everyday life. The fireplace is the main centre piece of the room, it catches your attention straight away and shows the divide between the couple visually.



### **The sofa chair positions matches their body language:**

- Wide chair
- Looks quite flat due to the use of the one main colour, one dimensional (the rusted orange.)
- His seat is situated higher, the base is taller than the woman's
- He has more seat to sit on (room to spread out)
- Sofa hand rests are facing away.
- Narrow chair, not very much room left when she is seated. Not as wide as the man's chair.
- Sofa hand rests point more inwardly
- Toned back Rusted orange colour with more black accents, complex feelings.
- Not all one colour (Orange, black, red and blue.
- More dimensional looks 3D



# Work shop activity-

## Colour

Task: One colour, different tones:

Draw a picture of a landscape and fill it in with one colour but using different tones like Gerard Dillion. E.g If you choose blue you will use light, blue, dark blue, royal blue, baby blue etc.. To fill in the image.

