

# Head start in the style stakes



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It was a case of heavy on the French dressing at the fabulous French ambassador's residence in Dublin on Monday night as Hennessy joined forces with the Design Centre to launch the forthcoming Best Dressed competition that will place at the Hennessy Gold Cup on February 12, 2012, in Leopardstown.

To mark the launch, a special salon fashion showcase was hosted on the evening, featuring some of the hottest designer looks for winter.

Special guest at the event was international fashion commentator Godfrey Deeny, who had jetted in from Paris especially for the evening. The event showcased looks from a selection of budding Irish designers including Umit Kutluk, Catherine Deane, John McCormack and Caroline Kilkenny.

Apart from the French Ambassador Emmanuelle D'Achon and her husband Jean-Eudes, other guests present included Ashling Kilduff, Caroline Sleiman, Anne-Marie McManus, designer Paucic Sweeney and TV presenter Aisling O'Loughlin.



At the French ambassador's residence for the launch of the best dressed lady competition at the Hennessy Gold Cup were, above, Siobhan Carnegie and Wayne Murphy; below, Sean Byrne and Grainne Walsh.

Picture: Kieran Harnett



Godfrey Deeny and the French ambassador, Emmanuelle D'Achon.



At the launch were, left, Caroline Noone and Fiona Grant; right, Sarah Geraghty.



Also at the Gold Cup competition launch was Annemarie McManus.



## Turning it on for a good cause

THE management of radio station FM104 joined forces with the ISPCC last weekend to host a special charity gig at the Olympia.

The music event had a blockbusting line-up headlined by English singer-songwriter Olly Murs, who took a break from presenting the Xtra Factor to jet into Dublin. Also there were members of Irish band Aslan and music man of the moment Bressie (aka Niall Breslin).



At the ISPCC charity gig at the Olympia were, left Ciara O'Halloran and Alison White; right, Barry O'Sullivan and Lauren Connolly.

Picture: Brian McEvoy



## Out and about



Lailli & Eamon de Buitléar at the Doorway Gallery in Dublin for an exhibition by Val and Roland Byrne titled *Father & Son*.

Picture: Fusion



Derek Landy and Dave O'Callaghan at the opening of the Artemis Project Children's Experience at Eason in Dundrum.

Picture: Kieran Harnett



Aedin Curtin, Noelle Carter and Caitriona O'Sullivan at the opening of the new Roxy nightclub on South Main Street, Cork.



Eamonn Lawlor, Julia Knight and Alan Ryan at the Irish Freemasons Young Musician of the Year final at Freemasons Hall, Dublin.

Picture: Brian McEvoy

## Cover girl picked from thousands

HOME shopping company Simplybe.ie hosted a special event earlier in the week to announce Tara Callanan from Waterford as the new cover girl of their plus-size catalogue.

The 34-year-old had been selected from 18 finalists at a star-studded event in Johnstown House, Enfield.

This marked the fifth year of the competition, which received thousands of entries from curvy ladies all over Ireland.

Among the familiar faces present was TV host Sinead Desmond, fashion photographer Lili Forberg, and model agent Celia Holman Lee.



Overall winner Tara Callanan from Waterford on the catwalk in the final of Miss Simplybe Curvy.

Picture: Brian McEvoy

Ed Power

## reviews

### Theatre

#### Spring Awakening

EVERYMAN PALACE THEATRE, CORK

★★★★☆

PRODUCED by the Granary Theatre, this rock musical, based on a 19th century German play, pits the younger generation against the established order. It's a case of the oldies being authoritarian and insensitive while the young folk grapple with burgeoning sexuality and try to make their way in a hostile world.

The show deals with social issues such as parental pressure, abuse, abortion, homosexuality and suicide. But while that may sound grim, the musical ends on an uplifting note, despite the tragedies that threaten to make the whole thing terribly gloomy. There is a real sense of injustice here, with the authority figures portrayed as cruel and hypocritical.

The show is almost too black and white, with its stereotypical cruel school teacher and an embarrassed mother who fails to tell her teenage daughter the facts of life. This leads to an unwanted pregnancy for Wendla. Well played by Aoife Moore, Wendla is a naive character who falls for Melchior, a "radical" who doesn't believe in God or in the rules laid down by the adults. Played with sensitivity by Michael O'Toole, Melchior constantly questions the status quo. Meanwhile, Moritz (Matthew Williams) is a casualty of the strict unforgiving society.

This production disappoints on sound. The on-stage band has an overly dominant bass sound. Also, it's difficult to understand the lines of the actors' songs, belted out in an often shrill manner with microphones held too close to the singers' mouths. Directed by Tony McClean-Fay, this production had its first outing in the Granary Theatre in March. It worked better there as a more intimate drama.

Colette Sheridan

### Comedy

#### Demetri Martin

VICAR STREET, DUBLIN

★★★★☆

IF stand-up is about offending as many people as possible, then Demetri Martin is a visitor from another planet. With his pudding-bowl hair and scrawny frame, the New Jersey native looks like a computer science undergraduate, while his sweet, mannered one-liners emphasise verbal dexterity over expletives. He is the anti-Tommy Tiernan.

Martin could pass for a decade younger than his 38 years. His youthful appearance belies a glittering CV. He spent a year writing gags for Conan O'Brien, briefly had his own Comedy Central sketch revue and was young person's correspondent on the satirical Daily Show. He's branched into acting, with a turn in Steven Soderbergh's upcoming *Contagion*.

While he's performed at Kilkenny Cat Laughs, this is his first visit to Dublin. He starts with amusing observations about our exit signs ('the guy looks like he's escaping gravity — in a hurry'), segueing into lightly-spun riffs about the absurdity of modern life. Some of his gags fare better than others — but they are delivered at such a clip you hardly notice when one doesn't come off.

He breaks the stand-up routine with visual puns delivered via flip chart, and a short interlude in which he plinks a keyboard, straps on a guitar and toots a harmonica (Dublin stand-up David O'Doherty joins him for a musical encore). The impression is of watching a character from a Wes Anderson movie who has decided to try his luck as a comedian. Too many stand-ups are storm and fury. Martin shows us less truly is more.

### Art

#### Familiar Spaces

THE BURREN COLLEGE OF ART, CO CLARE

★★★★☆

THE photographers in the Familiar Spaces exhibition are recent MFA graduates of the University of Ulster, Belfast. Their work is arranged in unusual groupings, and hung at different heights. Several themes emerge, ensuring coherence.

Robert Ellis's large-scale photographs were taken among the homes of the alternative community along the New Line, a road outside Kinvara, Co Galway. He doesn't photograph the people, but records how they live; in one image, the window of a bedroom opens on the landscape of the Burren; in another, a vegetable garden is glimpsed through hedges.

What looms large in Ellis's enthralling images is what drew these people to the New Line; the natural world in all its frugal beauty.

Two of the artists are pre-occupied with mourning. Tim Doak spent a year photographing the pigeons kept by a young man in Dublin. After his wife's death, this individual's pastor suggested he build a pigeon loft in their church. Doak's images reflect on the cathartic nature of the task.

Laura Curran's images deal directly with grief. After the death of a friend, she asked her family and friends to write to the deceased, then photographed them composing or reading their letters. Their hurt is palpable, but so too is the process of healing.

Christine Redmond has produced a series of photographs of the swimmers at the Forty Foot in Dalkey. One image, of a stooped elderly lady, is probably the most memorable in the show, capturing the human spirit triumphing over the limitations of old age.

Marc O'Sullivan

## Socialites for Bóthar



Niamh Mulqueen and John Schofield at the Bóthar lunch. Picture: Bryan Brophy

SOME of Ireland's most glamorous women turned on the style at Harvey Nichols in Dublin for a fashion lunch in aid of Bóthar. Guests, who included socialites Annette Rocca, Louise Loughman and hairstylist to the stars Gary Kavanagh, enjoyed a cocktail reception in the store's first-floor bar followed by lunch and later there was a best dressed competition.

All funds raised at the event will go to help fund a new creamery in Zambia.