

## PRESS RELEASE

### Field-notes

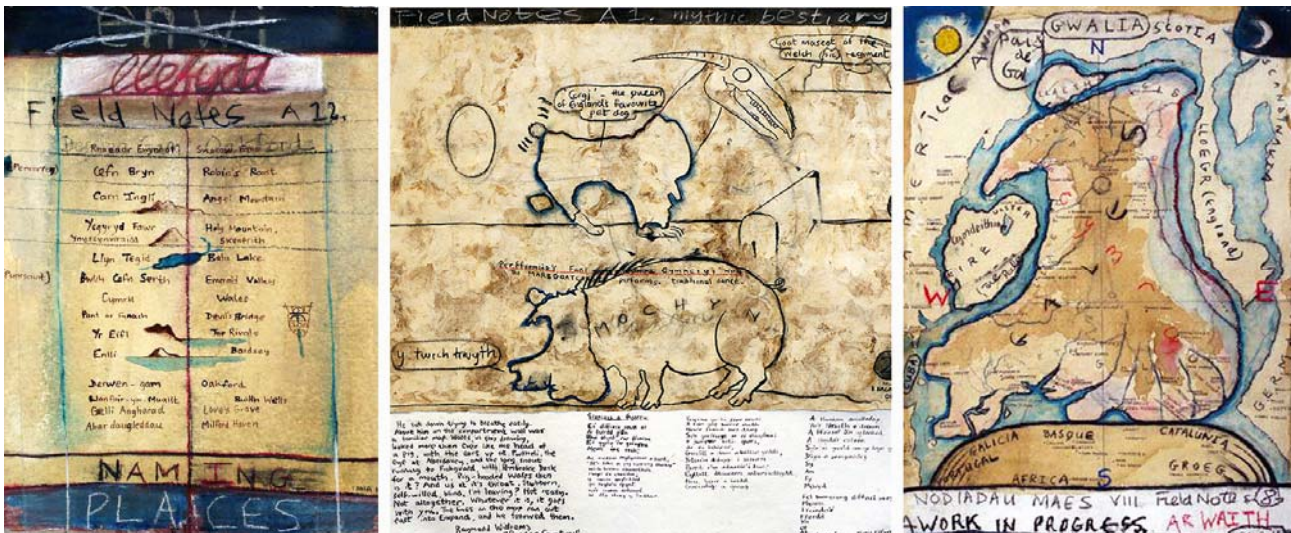
Iwan Bala & Menna Elfyn

14<sup>th</sup> January – 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2013

Opening launch: Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> January at 4pm

Guest speaker: poet and gallery owner Denis Collins

Featuring a reading by Dr. Menna Elfyn



The exhibition *Field-notes* originated from the Oriel Myrddin Gallery in Carmarthen, Wales and was inspired by the shared interests of artist/writer Iwan Bala and poet/playwright Menna Elfyn. Working closely, they endeavoured to bring words and images together in a creative dialogue that explores their interest in language, identity and place. Bala finds the combination of words and images fascinating; he views maps and diagrams as didactic learning aides and works of art in their own right. Despite their implied certainty often there is a subtext, an error in translation, gaps, omissions which are open to interpretation. This is an issue which holds some contention in Wales and other marginalised cultures as the names of places; towns, villages, farms and houses are translated or lost by re-naming. Both artists explore and respond to the common bond of understanding that can potentially be irretrievably eroded through our use of language.

On this exhibition, Dr. Menna Elfyn commented: "*Writing is all about field-work and the act of digging deep to unearth mysteries. We know too well that we are only passing through as we sub-consciously make our personal field-notes. Two artists seeing 'something down there to smile at in the dust' share the fascination of lifting and sifting through cae hir (long field) ...*"

Artist and writer Iwan Bala is currently senior Lecturer at the School of Creative Arts and Humanities, Trinity College, Carmarthen. Group Exhibitions include *A Propos Ceri Richards* at the National Museum and Gallery of Wales, curated by Mike Tooby (2003-04); *Welsh Painting for the 21st Century* at the Mall Galleries, London; *Wales; Unofficial Version* at the House of Croatian Artists, Zagreb curated by Alex Farquarson; *Myth and Modernity* - Welsh painting exhibited in Hong Kong; *'Strata*, site-specific work, Strata Florida, Wales and Kells, Ireland (2006) curated by Dr. Anne Price-Owen. Bala's works are held in many public and private collections including the National Museum and Gallery of Wales (Derek Williams Trust), the Contemporary Art Society for Wales, Newport Museum and Art Gallery, Brecknock Museum, Y

Tabernacl (Museum of Modern Art, Wales) A Fundacion Casa Museo "A Solaina" de Pilono, Galicia, Spain, The University of Glamorgan and The National Library of Wales. He won the Gold Medal for Fine Art at the National Eisteddfod of Wales in 1997. Publications include *Certain Welsh Artists*, (ed) Seren (1999) and *here+now*, Seren (2005), *Groundbreaking: The Artist in the Changing Landscape* (ed) Seren (2005) and *Hon, Ynys y Galon*, Gomer (2007).

Menna Elfyn is an award-winning poet and playwright who writes with passion of the Welsh language and identity. She is the best known and most translated of all modern Welsh-language poets. Author of over twenty books of poetry including *Aderyn Bach Mewn Llaw* (1990), winner of a Welsh Arts Council Prize; the bilingual *Eucalyptus: Detholiad o Gerddi / Selected Poems 1978-1994* from Gomer and her previous collection, *Cell Angel* (1996) from Bloodaxe, children's novels and educational books, numerous stage, radio and television plays, she has also written libretti for US and UK composers. In 1999, she co-wrote 'Garden of Light', a choral symphony for the New York Philharmonic Orchestra which was performed at the Lincoln Centre in New York. She received a Creative Arts Award in 2008 to write a book on 'Sleep'. Menna is Director of the Masters Programme in Creative Writing at Trinity University, Carmarthen and is Literary Fellow at Swansea University.

This exhibition is funded by Coracle – connecting creativity between South West Wales and South East Ireland which is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the Ireland Wales Programme (INTERREG 4A).

*Field-notes* will run in Wexford Arts Centre from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> January to Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2013. For further information on the exhibition please contact Catherine Bowe, Visual Arts Manager on 053 9123764 or email [catherine@wexfordartscentre.ie](mailto:catherine@wexfordartscentre.ie). For further information on the Coracle project please visit [www.coracle.eu.com](http://www.coracle.eu.com).

*Gallery hours:* Monday – Saturday: 10.00am – 5.30pm.

Workshops and talks can be arranged upon request and tailored to suit the requirements of your group. Our new Saturday Art Club running in the galleries from 11am-12pm, will give older children the opportunity to explore the work on display in the galleries and learn about the technical aspects of art-making while working with practicing artists.

Wexford Arts Centre  
Cornmarket  
Wexford  
Tel.: +353 (0)53 9123764  
Web: [www.wexfordartscentre.ie](http://www.wexfordartscentre.ie)

Images by Iwan Bala (from left to right):

*Enwi Llefydd / Naming Places*, mixed media on Indian Khadi paper, 2011

*Mythic Bestiary (The Shape of Wales)*, mixed media on Amate and Khado papers, 2011

*A'r Waith / In Process*, mixed media on Indian Khadi paper, 2011

