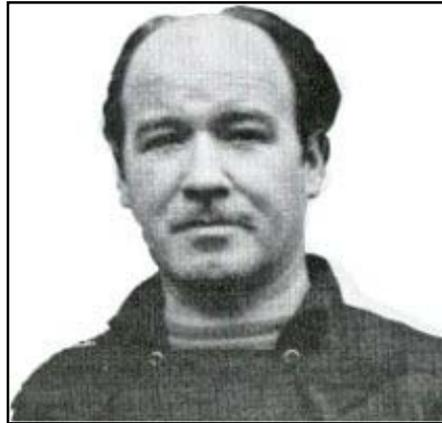


HIDDEN GEMS AND FORGOTTEN PEOPLE



FRANCIS GERARD DILLON

Francis Gerard Dillon was born on 20 April 1916 at 26 Lower Clonard Street, Belfast, the youngest of eight children. Educated at Raglan Street Public Elementary School and the Christian Brothers' School, Hardinge Street, he left school at fourteen to be apprenticed to the painting and decorating firm of Maurice Sullivan. He went to London, working as painter and decorator, labourer, boilerman, and night porter and using his earnings to buy art materials and visit art galleries.

Connemara, which he first visited in 1939, provided inspiration for his painting. In 1941 he went to live in Dublin and in the following year Mainie Jellett opened his first exhibition at the Country Shop, St Stephen's Green. In 1943, with Daniel O'Neill he exhibited at the Contemporary Picture Galleries, Dublin. Dillon and O'Neill participated in the Golden Jubilee Exhibition of the Gaelic League in Belfast in 1943.

In 1943 he showed his first work at the Royal Hibernian Academy and in the same year he began exhibiting at the Irish Exhibition of Living Art, Dublin, becoming a regular contributor and a valued member of the committee for twenty years. He was also a member of the Dublin Painters. He was among the group of Irish artists who showed in 1947 at the Associated American Artists' galleries, New York. Between 1958 and 1971 he contributed twenty-one pictures at the RHA.

In 1958 Dillon was one of the artists chosen to represent Britain in the Pittsburgh International Exhibition of Contemporary Art. He was in Paris in 1960 for the opening of his exhibition at the Raymond Duncan Gallery.

In October 1963 Dillon traveled to the USA with an Irish Trade and Culture delegation, contributing to an exhibition of twelve Irish artists at the New School. He wrote and illustrated several articles for the magazine, *Ireland of the Welcomes*. His work was included in the 'Ulster Painting '68' exhibition at the Arts Council of Northern Ireland gallery.

In 1969, he lectured at the Municipal Gallery of Modern Art and at the National College of Art. In the last year of his life he took up etching at the Graphic Studio, Dublin.

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Dillon died at the Adelaide Hospital, Dublin, 14 June 1971. He is buried in Belfast.

In 1972 the Irish Post Office issued their fourth stamp in the series on Contemporary Irish Art, featuring the painting *Black Lake* by Dillon.

Patrick Devlin