



Patrick Ireland (alias Brian O'Doherty, born 1934)
Drawings Around the Idea of a Book
 12 drawings

Patrick Ireland is, quite literally, a legend in his own lifetime. In 1972, Irish artist, novelist, critic, medical doctor, photographer and performance artist, Brian O'Doherty, changed his name as a visual artist to Patrick Ireland in reaction to the Bloody Sunday killings in Derry that year. He vowed not to change it back until the British troops left Northern Ireland.

In his art, Patrick Ireland has addressed issues of politics, experimental psychology and personal identity. Since the 1950's he has created sculpture, drawings, paintings, and documentary material that encourage the viewer's intellectual participation.

In 2006, UCC acquired a set of twelve Patrick Ireland drawings from the Fenton Gallery titled, *Drawings Around the Idea of a Book*. The drawings have been mounted on the walls of the new Quadrangle Reading Room on the ground floor of the refurbished Boole Library. As the title suggests, they work well in a library setting.

In the drawings, Ireland continues to explore the theme of boundaries expressed by lines, spatial play, and geometry. They recall the rope drawing installations he has executed in museums and galleries

throughout the United States and Europe. They also reflect his preoccupation with the cube as a certifier of multi dimensional space. The colours are muted and playful, the lines and shapes pleasingly geometrical and acrobatic, the forms themselves almost weightless. As a study on the idea of the book the set acts as a prism through which to view the codex form, to explore its many dimensions and roles.

For those who may be interested, the Patrick Ireland story – or legend – concludes soon. Now that "...the British military presence was removed from Northern Ireland and all citizens given their civil rights..." Brian O'Doherty is formally terminating Patrick Ireland's existence.

"We are burying," O'Doherty says, "the hatred that gave birth to Patrick Ireland in a ceremony of reconciliation celebrating peace in Northern Ireland". The burial will take place in an assigned plot near a graveyard on the grounds of the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin. The ceremony will involve the removal of Patrick Ireland's coffined effigy from the Gordon Lambert Galleries to the burial ground.

John FitzGerald, Librarian