

ANDIPA STAGES SHANE MACGOWAN'S FIRST EXHIBITION

*** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ***

Andipa
162 Walton Street,
London
SW3 2JR

Exhibition Dates: 12 — 29 October 2022



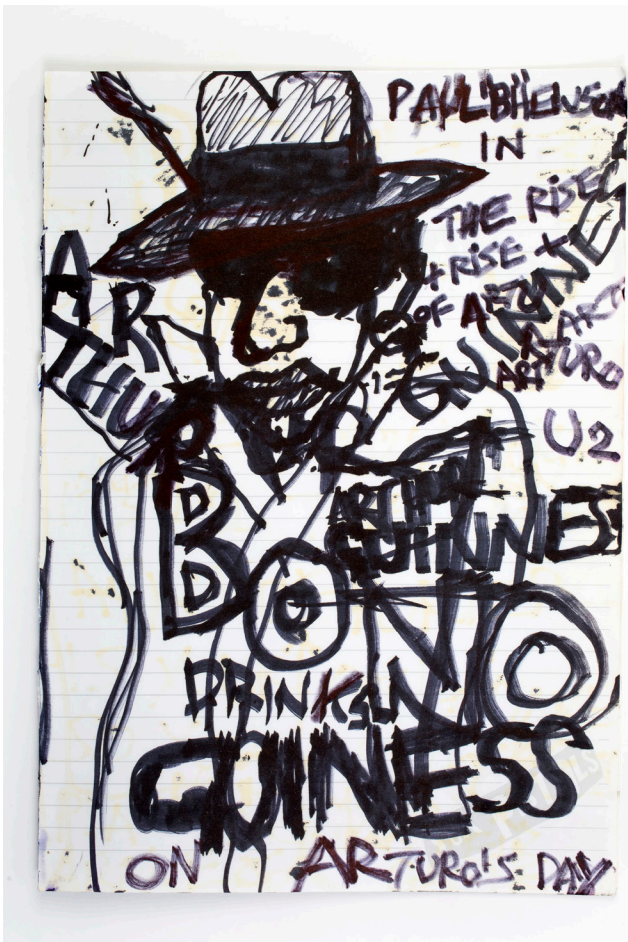
Woman with Bottle (The Measure of my Dreams), Pen and ink on paper, Double-sided work, The Measure of my Dreams verso, 29.7 x 19.3 cm.

Andipa is delighted to present *The Eternal Buzz and the Crock of Gold*, an exhibition by the acclaimed singer-songwriter Shane MacGowan. His work, which has been described by the art critic, Waldemar Januszczak, as possessing a 'demented, wild, fascinating, scabrous kind of energy', will be represented by twenty-one small-scale drawings mostly dating from the 1980s.

Dubbed by Januszczak as the 'Jackson Pollock of the biro', this survey, which has been curated by the artist's wife Victoria Mary Clarke, is drawn from a body of work that has never been shown in public before. Executed in a variety of media, predominantly coloured felt tip and biro, these highly idiosyncratic and sometimes disturbing drawings are scrawled and scribbled onto sheets of paper torn from foolscap jotter pads, hotel stationery and aeroplane sick bags, and were created largely whilst he toured the world with his band, The Pogues.

Das Boat depicts a figure in a deep sea diver's suit floating in inky black water in front of a submarine and spiked sea mine. A note of danger is struck by the airline having become detached from the oxygen supply to the diver's helmet. This sets the tone for the majority of the featured works, many of which were produced while MacGowan was intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, stimulants that lend a wild unpredictability to the artist's hand.

Some of the drawings directly refer to Pogues songs, such as *Hell's Ditch*, the name of the band's 1990 best-selling album. *New York City Sky* brings to mind the poetic Christmas ballad, *Fairytale of New York*, and *Thai Boxers* and *Thai Teenybop*, the band's single, *Summer in Siam*. *Anger is an Energy*, a refrain from the PiL song, *Rise*, appears to ape the circular marks made by a Spirograph, albeit in a more irregular fashion. Another, *Bono Drinking Guinness* is a portrait of



Bono Drinking Guinness, Black marker on writing paper, 29.7 x 21 cm.

the lead singer of the band U2, a long-time friend of MacGowan, and *Grace*, a rendering of the model and singer, Grace Jones.

Amongst these are bawdier offerings; drawings containing phalluses with spiralling testicles entering the mouths of purple-haired and befringed females. The word 'GLORCH!' appears around each of their heads and these Basquesque flourishes appear in many of the works. The show also includes portraits: *Lady Victoria* features a pair of pale pink lips surrounded by hundreds of interlocking bubbles. Within this are love hearts, a ringed planet and a solitary crucifix can be found. *Carolan sees the Angel* possibly refers to Turlough O' Carolan, the 17th century blind Celtic harpist and has echoes of the German Expressionists. *Woman with Bottle (The Measure of my Dreams)* are softer works, in which MacGowan picks out the subject figures in black ink.

Of MacGowan's artwork, the actor and musician Johnny Depp, says: '*Shane's visions will speak for themselves. Sometimes they will invoke wonder, sometimes they might appear decidedly threatening, but, regardless of medium, his work will always be full of poetry.*'



Thai Boxers, Biro and felt tip markers on hotel writing paper, 29.7 x 21 cm.

MacGowan's artworks have been brought together in a 502-page, limited edition monograph. Entitled *The Eternal Buzz and The Crock of Gold*, it includes a critical essay written by the *Sunday Times*' art critic, Waldemar Januszczak, along with contributions by Victoria Mary Clarke, Johnny Depp and Shane himself, as well as unpublished lyrics by the singer and photographs and essays by MacGowan written while he was a schoolboy. For more information, please click [here](#).

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Notes to Editor:

About Shane MacGowan written by Victoria Mary Clarke:

'Like Jesus, Shane was born on December the twenty-fifth. As the first Christmas baby of Tunbridge Wells 1957, he became famous instantly when the local paper carried a photograph of him. Later, he would write 'Britain's favourite Christmas song,' Fairytale of New York with his band The Pogues. He was educated at Westminster, but expelled for selling drugs and spent his 18th birthday in Bedlam, a mental home, before discovering Punk. He became the 'Face of 1976' when his ear was bitten off at a Clash gig, and he formed his band the Nipple Erectors, who had a number one in Italy and immediately broke up.

With The Pogues Shane made five albums, Red Roses for Me, Rum, Sodomy and the Lash, If I Should Fall from Grace with God, Peace and Love and Hell's Ditch. He also acted in several films including Straight To Hell, directed by Alex Cox, starring Dennis Hopper, Joe Strummer, Grace Jones and Courtney Love. After falling out of a bullet train in Japan, Shane was sacked from The Pogues, went to LA to open Johnny Depp's Viper Room and started a new band, The Popes, with JD playing guitar on their first album, The Snake, and also directing and starring in the video for their first single, That Woman's Got me Drinking, which they played on Top of the Pops. Johnny and Shane filmed a TV chat show called A Drink With Shane at the Viper Room, with Chris Penn, Sy Richardson and Traci Lords, which was commissioned by Waldemar Januszczak for Channel Four, but unfortunately deemed not suitable for broadcasting. Everyone was smoking.

The Popes made a second album The Crock of Gold before disbanding, whereupon The Pogues reformed and toured America, Australia and Europe, filming a live concert at the Olympia in Paris. In 2001 Shane published the best-selling A Drink With Shane MacGowan, a conversational memoir co-written with me, which Lyn Barber described 'as the best thing since sliced bread.' A documentary about Shane also called The Crock of Gold, directed by Julien Temple and produced by Johnny Depp was released in 2020 and won awards at San Sebastian, ZFF and Rome Film Festival.

Shane began drawing as a toddler after first reading James Joyce and My Fight For Irish Freedom. As a devout Catholic in a religious home, he was surrounded by pictures and statues of Jesus, the Madonna and saints like St Martin De Porres. He started drinking alcohol and hallucinating at a very early age, and began seeing aliens and talking to animals, as well as meeting leprechauns. He was heavily influenced by the older members of his family and their activities on the farm, including strangling geese and hurling and telling stories about the IRA, all of which began to show up as recurring themes in his art.

He manages to combine drugs and religion and eroticism in many of his pieces, such as The Last Supper, in which Christ is depicted as drunk, and Saint Catherine being tortured on a burning wheel, and St Paul being crucified. Throughout Shane's musical career, he continued to draw and occasionally to paint (if paints were accessible). Often he would combine words and pictures, sometimes in the form of speech bubbles, sometimes just snippets of poetry or words and images layered together, such as in 'I'm Gonna be a Wheel Someday'.

He drew on many surfaces and objects including a box of Sominex sleeping pills, airplane sick bags, a hurley, hotel notepaper, charge sheets from recording studios, a timber company notepad, bills, bank statements, Victoria's diaries and shopping lists, the inner sleeves of records, magazines, newspapers, Pogues itineraries, setlists, books, an OPW bag, business cards, restaurant menus, CDs, along with doors and walls. 'Sickbag Jesus' is just one example of these, combining some actual vomit with the drawing of Jesus.

Violence shoots out in every possible way in his artistic journey, as a young child he got into drawing gangsters and incorporating mafia style iconography and cartoon mobsters. Hanging around Hollywood, using crystal meth and watching gangster films all informed this. He draws upon characters from the London punk scene of the 70s, such as a made up band called No Pity. He made up many characters who are fictional but inspired by real people he met along his way.

His first spell in rehab started a fascination with madness and the exploration of it as a mental state. You can see this clearly in his unpublished lyrics such as Fucking Nutters, and drawings like Brain Death and the written story of Fucking Lunatic. There is also the clear attempt of regaining sanity through art. Jung said if you draw a mandala every day you get in touch with your soul, so Shane would draw mandalas every day on tour. Psychedelics such as acid, mushrooms and ketamine inspired Shane to draw more abstract pieces such as Squid Out of Water, Lady Victoria, Squid Pro Quo, Infinity, Hello Boys I've Been Away. While on DMT he met and drew the Devil, Satan himself, which became a combination of image and words.

Travelling with the Pogues meant going to places such as Italy, Germany and Spain, where exploration of pornography inspired his experiments with drawing fornication in all its forms, lots of penises, vaginas and breasts. Shane is a lover as well as a fighter, and while there are pieces such as Anger is an Energy, inspired by John Lydon, there are also plenty of unseen love poems and love songs in this book, as well as love notes combined with drawings of Victoria and Kirsty (although the Victoria drawing is not so flattering!). Graffiti inspired many of the characters, including Kilroy and the Shithouse Poets. Heroin use motivated In a Blue Vein, One Orange B Works and a gram of Smack and She Doesn't Want To Watch Me Dying.

The subsequent rehabilitation inspired drawings of rehab. Crack, smack, acid, pills, DMT, ketamine, crystal meth and alcohol use all had different effects on his art and are often used in combination. Sayonara and other Thailand pieces are clearly influenced by his trips there, and opium and Mekong whiskey. Thailand was a very productive time, all of Hell's Ditch was written here, and he incorporated many colours into the art of this time.'

About Andipa Gallery:

Andipa is a leading Modern & Contemporary Art gallery based in Knightsbridge, London and established as private dealers in 1967 in the same townhouse they occupy today. It is still owned and operated by the founding family who were first recognised in fine art in 1593. Andipa is a reputable dealer in the Banksy market, exhibiting the artist's works from their private collection since 2006. The following year, Andipa produced the first major secondary Banksy solo exhibition from its own collection which received 36,000 visitors in 6 weeks. It has been responsible for placing many of the artist's important works into international private collections.

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162 Walton Street,

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Opening times: Tues — Fri, 9.30am — 6pm

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