

## THE PEOPLE WHO INSPIRED:



### EMER O'KELLY

Greatness and inspiration are never ephemeral, so we probably need the perspective of history to judge them. But they always share certain qualities if they are to inspire people, and indeed to live on after them: integrity in their own field, generosity, a world vision that sees the stars from the gutter, high standards that refuse to accept the shoddy in life, art and thought. Greatness may not be made of a common touch, but it is universally awe-inspiring and uplifting, qualities of which we stand in dire need in this terrible year of 2010.

## PATRICK SCOTT

Standard-bearing work which challenged arts establishment



Julien Behar

**P**AT Scott was a rallying point for Ireland's modernist movement when it barely existed. His association as a very young architect/painter with the White Stag group ensured that he would carry the standard for challenging work even when that loose association of modernist painters, many of whom were only temporary residents here during the Second World War, evaporated. He first exhibited as early as 1944, and in 1960 he achieved major international eminence when he won the Guggenheim award. The purity and transcendence of his work has stood the test of time, despite the antagonism it aroused in his early years, much of it from the then arts establishment which was presenting an often idealised version of what Ireland meant and was, a kind of academic nationalism didactically opposed to any international influence. Scott's work continues to be a beacon with its unflinching dedication to the power of calm and serenity, and the steadfast integrity of the artist's vision, which continues to this day. He has also made a huge contribution to corporate design in Ireland, having been part of the architectural design team for buildings such as Busaras, and having designed the CIE company livery at a time when such niceties were not highly regarded.



## LOUIS LE BROCQUY & ANNE MADDEN

Pair have never shirked artists' duties to speak out and aim for excellence

**A**S individuals, they are hugely eminent nationally and internationally. Both are uncompromising in their commitment to their art, and have been equally uncompromising over the years in their determination to fight on behalf of art and their fellow artists.

As artists married to each other, they make an even more formidable force, and have always advocated the duty of the artist to speak out on causes that affect what is called 'the soul' of the nation. Nor are they prepared, individually or together, to condone the shoddy or second-rate. Even during the 30 years they lived in France, they were always passionate advocates for high artistic standards here in Ireland, and have been in the forefront of pointing out something that has only latterly been accepted by official Ireland — that a country's reputation depends on the way it values its artists, and promotes its fine as well as its folk art. People in Ireland sometimes seem to believe that if our art does not have metaphorical mud on its boots it is not part of what we are; Madden and Le Brocquy continue to be driving forces for art that soars.



Tony Gavin

## MARTIN & CARMEL NAUGHTON

Couple who have shared their success through investment in Irish arts world

**T**WO of the most generous patrons of the arts Ireland has ever known. Martin Naughton and his wife Carmel have "paid back" the success of Glen Dimplex, which began as a family company and is now one of the world's leading heating companies, by investing massively in the future of Irish art. They have an enviable art collection of acclaimed modern masters, but also invested in nurturing talent by purchasing the work of younger artists and sponsoring awards and organisations that cater for artists. Nor is their interest limited to the visual arts; they have been equally generous to writers and theatre artists, as well as to State institutions such as the National Gallery, which depend increasingly on private donations for the survival and expansion of their collections. Their commitment and generosity to the world of the arts has been phenomenal — a supreme example of inspiring citizenship.

## DR VERONICA DUNNE

Champion and 'battering ram' for young singing talent

**V**ERONICA Dunne is possibly the most selfless person the world of Irish music has ever known. Her opera career was dazzling, and began with Opera Ireland (then the DGOS) in 1948. She made her Italian debut in Teatro Nuovo in Milan in 1952, and immediately went on to Covent Garden, where she sang roles with Joan Sutherland and Kathleen Ferrier. She uncomplainingly abandoned her singing career in 1973 for family duties, but she had already established herself as the leading voice teacher in the country from her base at the Dublin Institute of Technology. Now in her 80s, she is still capable of being a battering ram on behalf of young singers, championing them fiercely, and inspiring blind devotion among most, as well as affection and respect from everyone dedicated to the progress of Irish singing. Her generosity to other artists is legendary. A lifetime ambition was realised in 1992 when she saw the Veronica Dunne International Singing Competition established, which has been responsible for setting several young singers on what are now international careers. (Orla Boylan was its first winner.)



Frank McGrath

## DESMOND O'MALLEY

Genuine republican whose integrity is in contrast to so much cronyism



Tom Burke

**A**RARITY among politicians, Des O'Malley has consistently displayed a huge level of dogged integrity. He was probably the first Irish party politician to find the courage to step away from mindless inherited party loyalty when he thought the principles he believed in were being betrayed. He is also a rarity in an even wider sense — an absolutely genuine republican, a quality which brought down major recriminations on his head. He proposed that references in the Constitution to specific religions or denominations were unjust and divisive; it was his hope that we would remove the preamble to the Constitution, which invokes the name of the Trinity, and "humbly acknowledges all our obligations to Our Divine Lord Jesus Christ". It probably gave him no pleasure to discover that the people who shouted loudest about Ireland being a republic proved in their reaction that it was no such thing. He also shouted 'stop' to the cosy cronyism between big industry and politics by setting up the Beef Tribunal, and it has not been his fault that the overwhelming nature of Irish cronyism continues to defeat his principles.