



Nick Miller and the Studio of Edward McGuire

Edward McGuire is probably best known for his portrait of the youthful Seamus Heaney, which hangs in the National Gallery of Ireland. McGuire's widow Sally donated the contents of his studio to the Irish Museum of Modern Art, and the current show provides us with glimpses of the painter's working environment. We see his colour dictionary, his jazz records (Bill Evans and Oscar Peterson), his books (Walt Whitman), his numerous stuffed birds and many of the props he used in portraiture, including a wizard's outfit. Nick Miller has responded to a number of McGuire's portraits by doing contemporary

versions of the same sitters, including the writers Anthony Cronin and Paul Durcan. We see a youthful and rather foppish Garech de Brún posed beside a harp, *above*, and next to it is Miller's version which captures cruelly the whips and scorns of time. The contrast is heightened by the fact that McGuire's formalised and highly artificial portraits have the immutability of still-lives while Miller's seem to be decomposing before our eyes — pictures of Dorian Gray.

John P O'Sullivan

Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Tue-Fri 11.30am-5.30pm, Sat 10am-5.30pm, Sun noon-5.30pm, 01 612 9900