



Storekeeper and (right) Plague of Frogs by Jim Collins



EXHIBITION

The mixed media collage works of American artist Jim Collins are on show at the Blackbird Gallery in Kilkenny. In the exhibition, *Irish Encounters*, Collins – known primarily for his large-scale, colourful sculptures – approaches collage with vivacity, combining discordant textures and imagery to create

small, abstract visual stories.

According to the artist, each collage is intended to engage the viewer like a form theatre, in which “the viewer writes the play”. Collins feels the piece remains unfinished until the viewer finds a story within the assembled elements. The collages incorporate seemingly mismatched photographs, old signs and various ephemera of faded colour, conjuring a bygone Americana feel.

Collins, from Tennessee, is a frequent

contributor to public art projects internationally. He was commissioned in 2004 to create a series of 32 brightly coloured animal sculptures displayed along the N7 and N21 motorways, titled the *Limerick Herd*.

Irish Encounters runs until June 26 at the Blackbird Gallery, 18 William Street, Kilkenny, Wednesday to Saturday, 11am-5pm, tel 056-7762050, www.theblackbirdgallery.com.

Susan Morrell