

Places Matter

What happens when we invest in the arts?

Conference Programme

Thursday 12 January 2017

The Conference Centre, Dublin Castle

A welcome from the Arts Council and Local Government

This conference is the first in a biennial series being held under the auspices of the Arts Council / Local Government agreement, *A Framework for Collaboration*.

It is an important and timely opportunity to demonstrate the unified approach the Arts Council and Local Government are taking to supporting and developing the arts across Ireland.

The title '*Places Matter: what happens when we invest in the arts*' speaks to a key common purpose; that we believe the arts contribute directly to building cohesive and sustainable communities and to enhancing quality of life.

Following the centenary year, when cultural expression and citizenship were critical to the national response and programming of the commemorations, the conference has placed the citizen and our cultural future at the heart of its focus.

We welcome new national developments such as *Creative Ireland* and *Culture 2025* and look forward to continuing the conversations required to ensure the future artistic vitality of Ireland.

Our new biennial series of conferences will offer an important national platform for discussion, learning, understanding and reflection.

We hope you enjoy this day and we welcome your thoughts and ideas for the next edition.

Sheila Pratschke
Chairperson, Arts Council

Joe McGrath
Chairman, Country and City Management Association

We have produced this agreement to make clear our respective commitment to arts development and, in particular to strive for equality of access to and engagement in the arts by all those living in Ireland.

A Framework for Collaboration

“Cultural projects have the potential to enable communities to capture important insights about their environment which can be used to evoke a change. The arts have successfully been applied to social exclusion issues, homelessness, disability, cultural diversity, criminal justice and regeneration.”

Jeni Burnell, Oxford Brooke University



Programme

WELCOME TO PLACES MATTER

- 09:15** Registration, refreshments, networking and music
The Chronicles of Meath composed by Vincent Kennedy and performed by The Meath Harp Ensemble; commissioned by Meath County Council under the Per Cent for Art Scheme
-
- 9:45** Conference Introduction:
ORLAITH McBRIDE, Director, the Arts Council
ANNA MARIE DELANEY, Chief Executive, Offaly County Council
-
- 9:55** Opening address from **SIMON COVENEY TD**, Minister for Housing, Community, Planning and Local Government
-
- 10:10** Welcome from Conference Chair **Dr. FRANCES RUANE**
-

SESSION ONE: WHY DO THE ARTS MATTER? THREE PERSPECTIVES

- 10.20** **Keynote**
PROF GEOFFREY CROSSICK
Understanding the value of arts and culture in communities
-
- 10.45** **Keynote**
PROF JOHN O'HAGAN
The challenges of measuring the impact of the subsidised arts on societal outcomes
-
- 11.10** Panel discussion and questions from the floor
-
- 11.30** **EMMET KIRWAN**, actor, writer and social observer
-
- 11.50** **Comfort break**
-

SESSION TWO: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE INVEST IN THE ARTS?

- 11.55 Case studies on impact, people and places, introduced by Dr Frances Ruane
-
- 12.00 **LOUISE LOWE, ANU Productions**, on site-specific theatre with communities
-
- 12.15 **KIM WIDE, Take A Part Plymouth**, on making art in the public interest
-
- 12.30 **ANNE McCARTHY, Mayo County Council**, on IGNITE arts and disability commissions
-
- 12.45 **MARGHARITA SOLON, McAuley Place**, on wellbeing and the arts
-
- 13.00 Panel discussion and questions from the floor
-
- 13:15 Performance by the **PAST TIMES COMMUNITY CHOIR (McAuley Place)**
Followed by a hot lunch
-

SESSION THREE: WHAT IS THE PLACE OF THE ARTS IN IRELAND'S FUTURE?

- 14.15 Effective future planning and the arts, introduced by Dr Frances Ruane
-
- 14.25 **DEIRDRE CULLEN, Senior Statistician CSO** on future demographics and places
-
- 14.40 **DR EMER SMYTH ESRI** on Growing Up in Ireland and cultural participation
-
- 14.55 **DIARMAID LAWLOR, Architecture and Design, Scotland** on why places matter
-
- 15.10 **ALMA WALSH, National Planning Framework** on planning for Ireland's potential
-
- 15.25 Panel discussion and questions from the floor
-
- 16.00 **Dr FRANCES RUANE**, closing remarks
-
- 16.15 **NOELINE KAVANAGH, Macnas**, a creative reflection
-

Conference contributors



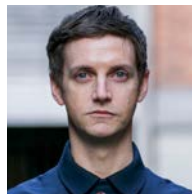
PROFESSOR GEOFFREY CROSSICK is a historian and Distinguished Professor of Humanities in the School of Advanced Study at the University of London. He was previously Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, Warden of Goldsmiths, and Chief Executive of the UK's Arts & Humanities Research Board. He was Director of the AHRC's Cultural Value Project, which explored the benefits of cultural engagement to individuals and society, and the methods by which those can be understood. Its report, *Understanding the value of arts and culture*, was published in April 2016. He is Chair of the Crafts Council in England. A member of various boards in the higher education and cultural sectors – including The Courtauld, Guildhall School of Music & Drama and the Horniman Museum – he speaks in the UK and internationally on higher education and research strategy, the importance of the arts and humanities, and the creative and cultural sectors. He is Chair of the Board of the Trinity Long Room Hub at TCD, and a member of the Science Advisory Council of the Department for Culture, Media & Sport in England.



DEIRDRE CULLEN is a career statistician who joined the CSO in 1983 having graduated from Trinity College Dublin with a BA Mod (Maths and Geography). She is presently a senior statistician on the 2016 census project with specific responsibilities for project management, recruitment of over 5,000 field staff, publicity and the publication and dissemination of census results. Full publication of the 2016 census results will begin in April 2017.



NOELINE KAVANAGH is a graduate of Drama and Theatre Studies, Trinity College Dublin. She has worked as a director, artist, facilitator and writer. She is currently Artistic Director of Macnas, an award-winning performance and spectacle company. She has worked with Welfare State International, Liverpool Lantern Company, Rough Magic Theatre Company, Abbey Theatre, Woodford Folk Festival, BBC Northwest, Southbank London, Walk the Plank, Els Comedients, Carlow Youth Theatre, and Fatima Mansions. Her work spans a variety of contexts to include professional theatre shows, outdoor spectacle, large-scale parades, film, script-writing and facilitation.



EMMET KIRWAN is an actor, playwright and poet of Irish theatre, film and television. His first full-length play, *Dublin Oldschool* has had a series of sell out runs at Project Arts Centre, toured internationally and is about to open in the National Theatre London in the New Year. He is also the recipient of The Stewart Parker Trust New Playwright Bursary 2014 for *Dublin Oldschool*, it was also nominated for the First Fortnight Award and The Bewley's Cafe Theatre Little Gem Award 2014. He wrote and starred in the Irish Television comedy series *Sarah and Steve* for Accomplice Television and RTÉ. Short Films include *Escape Plans* and (Calipo films) *Outside* (Still Films). Other Plays include *RIOT* for This Is Pop Baby (2016). His plays for young people include *Half 3 Heroes* and *This Hit Parade* both for Dublin Youth Theatre. Emmet is a participant in the Irish Theatre Institute's 'Six in the Attic' programme.



DIARMAID LAWLOR is Director of Place with Architecture and Design Scotland. An urbanist, with a multi-disciplinary background, he has almost 20 years' experience of helping clients make well informed decisions about complex, connected urban policy and investment challenges. He is an educator, communicator and collaborator who writes and speaks on creative approaches to making better places.



LOUISE LOWE is the Artistic Director of ANU Productions, her recent work includes: *Last Words* and *PALS* (National Museum of Ireland, Winner of two Irish Times Theatre Awards 2016), *Reflecting the Rising* (RTÉ), *Rebel Rebel* (National and International Tour), *Beautiful Dreamers* (Limerick City of Culture), *Vardo* (Dublin Theatre Festival), *Angel Meadow* (Winner Best Production and Best Ensemble, Manchester Theatre Awards Nominated for Best Director Award, UK National Theatre Awards / HOME Manchester), *Thirteen* (Winner of Irish Times Irish Theatre Award), *Dublin Tenement Experience*, *The Boys of Foley Street* (Dublin Theatre Festival, Dublin City Council Public Art Commission, Winner Best Theatrical Production of the Year Award, Nominated for two Irish Times Irish Theatre Awards), *Laundry* (Dublin Theatre Festival 2011, Winner of Best Production Award, Irish Times Irish Theatre Awards and Nominated for Best Director Award).



ANNE MCCARTHY is an honours graduate from NCAD, who has worked in the fields of education, disability, arts and project management. She has initiated the design, management, facilitation and implementation of developmental training programmes and, as a consultant, generated strategic plans and designed service level agreements. As Arts Officer for Mayo County Council she leads the provision of strategic supports for artists, high quality arts programmes and arts infrastructure, all underpinned by an inclusive agenda. Through successful partnerships and networks, Mayo County Council's Arts Service has gained an excellent reputation, pioneering ground-breaking initiatives which have become models of best practice, particularly in the areas of Arts & Health, Arts & Disability, Public Art, Arts in Community Contexts, and through the Music Generation Programme.



JOHN O'HAGAN is Emeritus Professor of Economics at Trinity College Dublin. One of his main research interests is the economics of the arts, in terms of demand, migration and clustering of artists, and public funding issues related to the arts. He chaired the working group which led to the 2015 report *Value for Money and Policy Review of the Arts Council*. His recent paper in the UK journal, *Cultural Trends*, on the societal objectives of the publically-funded arts sector and their measurement will form the basis of his paper to the Conference. He is co-editor, with colleagues in Italy and Spain, of a book on *Cultural Participation in Europe*, to be published by Springer (Berlin) in 2017.



EMER SMYTH is a Research Professor and Head of the Social Research Division at the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) in Dublin, Ireland and is adjunct Professor of Sociology at Trinity College, Dublin. She has published extensively on her main research interests of education, school to work transitions, gender and comparative methodology. She has conducted a number of studies looking at young people's experiences of the schooling system. She is on the management team of the Growing Up in Ireland study and has recently used GUI data to look at arts and cultural participation among children and young people. She has a strong interest in comparative research on education issues, and is currently involved in the education and stratification strand of the UK-based Applied Quantitative Methods Network, conducting comparative research on the influence of school curriculum on labour market outcomes.



FRANCES RUANE is former Director of the ESRI, before which she was Professor of Economics at TCD. She is currently an Honorary Fellow at TCD, and a Research Affiliate at the ESRI. In the 1970s, she studied at UCD (BA, MA) and at University of Oxford (MPhil, D Phil). Her research interests are in economic development and planning and globalization. While at TCD, Professor Ruane chaired the Board of the Douglas Hyde Gallery and was Director of the TCD Policy Institute. She has served as a member of the board of the Irish Writers Centre and the Abbey Theatre, and has participated in various arts and architecture fora in Dublin in recent years. Frances Ruane is currently President of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland, and a member of the Council of Economic Advisors in Scotland, the European Statistical Advisory Committee (ESAC) and the Royal Irish Academy.



MARGHARITA SOLON is Vice Chairperson of Nás na Riogh Housing Association, McAuley Place, Naas. She is a graduate of the Mater Hospital School of Nursing, Dublin, and of The Royal Marsden School of Cancer Nursing and Rehabilitation, London. She was awarded a certificate in Housing Management from the National College of Ireland and is a member of the Naas City Centre Doctor project. Her vision 'to bring older persons to the heart of a vibrant community' was inspired by the wisdom, knowledge, insight, and love she received from the many of the older people that she nursed in residential care settings. Her vision has been brought to life at McAuley Place, Naas, where the emphasis is on ability rather than disability, on wellness rather than on illness and on the use of the arts and creativity as tools to enhance wellbeing. McAuley Place is now recognised as a Positive Ageing Centre and has been recommended as a national exemplar by President Michael D. Higgins.
www.mcauleyplace.ie

ALMA WALSH joined the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government in April 2016 as a Planning Advisor within the Forward Planning section specifically dealing with the preparation of the new National Planning Framework. Having worked for over 11 years within Local Authorities, Alma has worked in a number of policy areas where her responsibilities have included regional planning guidelines, development plans and local area plans in addition to project based work such as green infrastructure planning, master planning and transport planning. Alma has also previously worked with the Midland Regional Authority as well as beginning her career with the private sector. She holds a degree in Sociology with Politics and Human Geography from NUI Galway and a Masters in Regional and Urban Planning from UCD.



KIM WIDE is a curator and producer, based in the South West region of the UK. Interested in communications, engagement, access to arts and culture and impacts of social practice, Kim has worked both nationally and internationally to engage communities and the public directly in sustainable, engaging, educational, risk-taking and fantastic projects about people's lives and communities. Educated in Canada, Kim came to the UK in 2003 and has worked for ArtSway, Kaleido Arts and currently at Take A Part, where she has established an innovative co-commissioning public realm curatorial process developed and managed by communities themselves. Kim has developed the project from a pilot to a city wide organisation, supporting the strategic regeneration of the City of Plymouth. She shares her methodology and approach with organisations nationally and internationally

THE PAST TIMES COMMUNITY CHOIR is an inter-generational choir that supports people living with dementia, their families, carers and communities. The choir is a strategic partnership between Kildare County Council's Arts and Health Programme, the HSE and musical director Sharon Murphy, to demonstrate the proven effects that community choir membership has on an overall sense of well-being. It is open to all ages and provide supports for everyone to participate in the choir regardless of mobility, ability and communicative impairments. The choir meets weekly in McAuley Place, Naas to develop their repertoire, singing skills and harmonies. While there is currently a waiting list for new community members, the group provides immediate opportunities for those living with dementia and their families to engage with the choir. For more information contact Carolann Courtney on:

083 1709589 / carolanncourtney@kwaras.ie

THE MEATH HARP ENSEMBLE are based in Nobber, Co Meath, the birthplace of the internationally renowned blind harper Turlough O'Carolan. Formed in 2003, the members are all past and present students of the Meath Harp Academy. Past engagements include the National Concert Hall, Dublin Castle, University College Dublin, O'Carolan Harp Festival, Drogheda Arts Festival, Slane Castle, Derbyshire Harp Festival and Turin, Italy. The ensemble is directed by Grammy Award winner Dearbhail Finnegan. In 2012, Meath County Council commissioned Vincent Kennedy to compose a new suite of music for the ensemble entitled *The Chronicles of Meath*. The work is in seven movements and each of the movements depicts a different time in the history of County Meath. The world premiere was performed in the Solstice Arts Centre, Navan in March 2013, and at the O'Carolan Harp Festival in October 2013. Following the premiere, the Meath Harp Ensemble was invited to perform the work at the World Harp Congress in Sydney 2014 and at an official reception in the Irish Embassy in Canberra. The small community got behind a fund-raising campaign which involved local businessmen, farmers, residents and other organisations who saw this as an opportunity to support their young people, validate the work of the Harp School and Ensemble and to establish Nobber as the Home of the Irish Harp. The Ambassadors performance was recorded live and broadcast on ArtSound FM, the Australian equivalent of Lyric FM.



Open Circle House Kilkenny, photo by Sheila Jordan

Open Circle: Kilkenny

Open Circle Community Arts Collective is a community-based, for-impact organisation whose mission is to inspire interest and maximum participation in the arts both locally and nationally for Kilkenny women.

The project has been developing since 2003 and renamed Open Circle in 2012. Since then, over 400 women have been involved and the project now has a home; Open Circle Art House, a former council house in Kilkenny city which has anchored the project more firmly in the community.

Led by Kilkenny County Council in partnership with Kilkenny and Carlow Education Training Board, the Open Circle membership are involved in high quality projects such as literature, printmaking, textiles, environmental awareness and much more. These opportunities have allowed the women to be active in their community, creating a sense of solidarity and possibility.

The members have developed strong and lifelong friendships, given and received support through good times and bad times, laughed and cried. Many have started businesses, returned to college, changed their lives or indeed their outlook on life.

The project has proven over and over, the power of community cohesion, the power of 'finding your tribe' and the enormous physical and mental health benefits to this sharing of experiences through art, culture and creativity. According to its participants, it has had real impact on their everyday lives. One member is currently studying law, as the creative support and encouragement she received as a member of Open Circle affirmed her belief in herself and her need and capacity to help others.

Open Circle has given so many of the women the impetus and confidence to make these life changes. When we invest in the arts, we invest in people and their lives flourish and change for the better; overall, society benefits.

"Open Circle permeated the rest of my life and it gave a different view of lots of different things that you mightn't have noticed before, even at this stage of my life!"
Ann, Open Circle member

"Before all I could see was misery and I was very depressed at what had happened in my life and who I had become. I can remember walking through the Castle Park and the world went from a kind of greyish sepia into Technicolor. To the point I had to sit on a bench and rub my eyes, wondering if I needed medical attention – but I've seen the world in those colours ever since then."
Amanda, Open Circle member

www.opencirclearts.ie



Welcoming the Stranger, photo by Dominick Walsh

Welcoming the Stranger: Kerry

“Welcoming the Stranger” by Catherine Young is a moving and compelling dance performance inspired by the stories of migrants and refugees from Gaza, Iraq, Syria and Africa who have made Kerry their home in recent years.

It formed part of Fearghus Ó’Conchúir’s ‘The Casement Project’, funded by the Arts Council under ART:2016 and was co funded and supported by Kerry County Council through their Dancer in Residence project. The intergenerational, multi-ethnic dance performance premiered on July 23rd on Banna Strand at Féile Fáilte, as part of the 1916 centenary commemorations.

In light of the on-going migrant crisis, with stories of refugees being washed up on shores, Catherine wanted to create a performance that explored how Ireland could be, if there was real understanding and inclusion between communities. If Roger Casement were to wash up on Irish shores 100 years later, what kind of Ireland would he want to see? Catherine brought together a team of professional dancers, musicians, local dancers in Kerry and members of the refugee community with the support of the Tralee International Resource Centre and over the summer of 2016, they came together to share their stories, their culture and their music; to move and be moved.

Rhythm became the common language as Arabian refugees danced African dances, Africans learned Dabke dance and Irish dancers beat out traditional African rhythms with their feet. The refugee community gained confidence in their English and Irish participants learned Arabic in order to make each other feel more at home.

The work has moved people profoundly and a second performance took place on Culture Night in Siamsa Tíre, Tralee to a full house and a sustained ovation. The piece has subsequently been invited to the Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival in Palestine in 2017.

The project demonstrated the value and richness of cultural diversity in Ireland, revealing that we are more similar than we think with a lot we can share and learn from each other. With limited opportunities to get to know new communities in our daily lives, projects such as this break down barriers, bring people together in a shared way and form strong bonds of friendship and solidarity. So strong has this bond become, the collective now meet every Saturday and are working towards a new project together with the support of Kerry County Council and Siamsa Tíre.

“When I came to Tralee I didn’t have any friends, when I started working on the project I made new friends, Arabic and Irish and I felt like we were one family. I felt something I never felt before, this feeling of community. And I felt respected and welcome by everyone. I didn’t speak English very well but slowly I learned a little more day by day. And now I have friends that I would not have met if not for this project. I feel we are better together. It changed my life.”

Ahmad Norasi (Syria)

“One of the best examples of real inclusion; emotional, passionate and uplifting; we need to reflect and learn from this approach.”

Ann O Dwyer, CEO, Kerry Education and Training Board

www.thecasementproject.ie



Students from Timahoe National School, County Laois

Places Matter: Laois

“Come to our little school any Wednesday and you will see kids walking in the gate with a hurl in one hand and a violin in the other.

I live in a town that often gets bad press; unemployment, ghost estates, two prisons, drug abuse and so on, and yet, it is one of the wealthiest towns in the country, not in the traditional sense but, richer than rich in the arts.

The Dunamaise Arts Centre many years ago appealed to people to give £1 from their weekly wage to get the building started. It gave the strongest possible message that the arts are for everyone. The theatre when built would not be for posh ladies in fur coats, no, it would be for everyone.

Laois School of Music was set up shortly after. Looking back I often wonder how the County Council did it. They addressed the deficit of music education in our locale, obstacles were overcome, tuition from top level tutors became available in affordable form in everything from Kindermusic to keyboard, violin to cello, singing to saxophone... the list goes on. Junior and Senior Orchestras were established and now with Music Generation Laois, our young musicians have appeared on the international stage.

As a primary school teacher in a small rural school, the ways in which my school has benefitted from these initiatives are simply too long to list. Our school has set up an instrument bank with parents' council funding and together with a Laois School of Music tutor, more than a decade on; we have almost 50 music students. We also have a parents group taking violin lessons during the school day, for the tiny fee of €6 a week. Our students are now prouder than proud to be feeding into the Laois School of Music Orpheus Orchestra. As a parent, my children have attended writing workshops, art, dance and drama workshops, are members of junior and senior orchestras with trumpet and violin respectively.

I live in Laois and I feel like the luckiest person alive. We don't live in Dublin 4, we don't live on the Dart line but thanks to the Trojan efforts of the above named treasures I feel enriched. My teenage children and my students are equally as enriched, and we now have the research of the ESRI to back that up!

We often hear that house prices rise if near a good school. How about house prices rising because of proximity to the arts? Thank you for enriching my life, the lives of my children and the lives of my students.”

Martina Mulhall, Vice Principal, Timahoe National School, County Laois

Acknowledgements

Places Matter is the product of many hours of brainstorming, planning, collaboration and coordination. The Arts Council and County and City Management Association wish to acknowledge the contribution of the members of our Management Liaison Group and Working Group in the development of this programme. We extend our appreciation to conference chair Dr Frances Ruane and all of our speakers. A special word of thanks to Annette Moloney artistic curator and our performers the Past Times Community Choir and Meath Harp Ensemble; we also wish to thank the conference focus group which included Mary McCarthy, Annette Moloney, Ailbhe Murphy, Ali Fitzgibbon, David Teevan and Anna Walsh.

The conference has been managed by Abbey Conference and Events and hosted by Dublin Castle. The screen graphics are provided by the Project Twins.



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Bainistíocht na Comhdhála: Abbey Conference & Events

Iomhá an chládaigh: Cóipcheart íomhá Rhona Byrne ón Umbrella Project
le Rhona Byrne, arna coimisiúnú ag Fire Station Artists' Studios
agus le tacaíocht ó Chomhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath