



A report on a day-long event on Tuesday 19 November 2013, supported by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation ArtWorks Special Initiative.

Prepared by curators Sarah Tuck and Caragh O'Donnell.

ArtWorks Northern Ireland

Executive Summary

1	Introduction	4-5
2	Funders and Commissioners	6-7
3	Arts Organisations	8-9
4	Artists	10-11
5	Arts Education	12-14
6	Key issues and challenges	14-16
7	Recommendations	16-17
8	Conclusion	17-18

Appendices

1	Delegate List
2	Programme with speakers' biographies

Executive Summary

ArtWorks, a special initiative of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, funded a one day event in Belfast on Tuesday November 19, 2013 to explore some of the range of practices and concerns for participatory arts practice in Northern Ireland.

The following report sets out the main themes that emerged in the panel discussions – Funders and Commissioners, Arts Organisations, Artists and Arts Education – with each panel discussion expanded upon in a section of the document, including specific quotes and comments from the panellists and the audience who gave generously of their time and their insights.

The event, conceived as a series of conversations, brought together artists, funders, arts organisations and academics from across art forms to discuss some of the challenges and issues for participatory and public arts practice in Northern Ireland. While this report provides a summary of the day, it is hoped that this is not confused with a summative account of participatory arts in Northern Ireland, but instead understood as signposts for future collaborative events, partnerships and critical thinking.

Throughout the report italicised text is used to indicate either a direct quote from the day or the written brief circulated to panellists and panel chairs in advance.

Sarah Tuck and Caragh O'Donnell
Curators

1. Introduction

The day-long event at the Ulster Museum on Tuesday 19 November was hosted in response to a call by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to develop an event that *would bring together artists, HE and FE providers, employers and commissioners and policy makers to consider the practice in Northern Ireland*. To open a conversational space for a consideration of this practice is also to question how over the last 20 years the terms ‘participatory arts’, ‘socially engaged’, ‘new genre public art’ and ‘collaborative arts practice’ have replaced the earlier term ‘community arts’ even while the principle features of this practice, the process of an artist making work in collaboration with community, remain the same. However, these other terms have only partially concealed the term ‘community’ as discussion moves between the fields of practice – community of interest and community of place.



So we began the day with the provocation of ‘community.’ Author Glenn Patterson in his keynote The ‘C’ Word asked *how did a word that has its roots in commonality end up one of the most vexed –and vexing – in our lexicon?* Patterson’s keynote asked us to acknowledge the need to keep testing the language to ensure that it is right for the time and place where we find ourselves and reminded us how in Northern Ireland the plural form of community, rather than provide a critical energy that supports equality and recognition of diversity as most plurals do, actually divides. Aware of all the connotations of meaning that the words community and communities contain in a Northern Ireland context, Patterson asked *how and through whom do communities speak, or who takes it upon themselves to speak for them?*

Opening the vexed and vexing question of community and its multiple iterations in policy documents and political announcements, Patterson traced the emergence of its use as a substitute for other labels; a substitution that has sought to emplace and fix its meaning and contemporary usage.

The labels Catholic and Protestant were first diluted by the addition of ‘community’ and then effaced almost completely as the Protestant and Catholic Communities became just the Two Communities.

But here is the curious thing, as soon as the Two Communities model was established the singular form itself was altered: it became the fragment rather than the thing greater than the sum of its parts.

The ‘C’ Word keynote set out some of the difficulties of the task of participative arts in the circumstance where the word community, in both its aggregate and plural forms, is used to mask its roots in commonality. This dissemblance has its physical counterpart in the 30.5km of ‘peaceline walls’ within Belfast and in the continued residential segregation of the lives of people in Northern Ireland. How then might an

event exploring some of the issues and challenges for participative arts practice in Northern Ireland subvert these determinations and restrictions, or more precisely speak of community, while testing this word so that it yields meaning beyond what it is that it masks or substitutes so that we are able to do more than *turn a blind eye, or at best raise a sardonic eyebrow, to what in certain of these instances the word community connotes?*

The provocation of Patterson's keynote The 'C' Word threaded through the panels of the day as a cautionary note against expending energy on defending participatory arts rather than on genuine self-reflection. Proposing the demanding question *what will the legacies of our own era be?* not only stretched the time of focus from the present to ask what are we doing, or bringing into being, that will continue to benefit the citizens in the future, but also brought into focus the need for greater precision about what it is we are attempting to do and what meanings the shared experience of arts making has both for artists and participants. A provocation for us to consider is how participatory arts in Northern Ireland might provide a more enabling way for us all to reconnect and reclaim the C-word, not in its euphemistic guise but as possibility and aspiration where *stretching yourself means more than reaching out to 'the other side'.*

In taking a cue from Patterson's keynote and counting how many times the word 'community' was spoken during the day, it is worth noting that 'local people' and the 'public' were used with equal frequency when describing the practice of arts organisations and artists. For the purposes of consistency, this report has used the term 'communities' while acknowledging the complex uses and abuses of this 'C' word.

The following report provides an overview of the four panels: Funders and Commissioners, Arts Organisations, and Artists and Educators. In each panel the emphasis was on the speakers telling their own story to unpack some of the key issues and provocations of participatory and public arts practice. Some of these issues will resonate for practitioners, commissioners and funders elsewhere, while others are responsive to and informed by the contested histories of Northern Ireland as place and context. It is this latter aspect of the specificities of place that gives rise to a consideration of the ethics of this practice, which is also to speak of the impacts of participatory arts practice and its meanings for artists, participants and audiences, both real and imagined. Seeking to establish trust with participants in order to maintain a dialogic approach is repeated across the panel discussions with equal emphasis placed on the need for artists to be given the space to be playful and cause friction.

It is hoped that this report is of interest for people working in Northern Ireland as well as our peers elsewhere. It is a snapshot of some of the present critical thinking about participatory arts in Northern Ireland and is, therefore, shaped by present day needs, policy and funding initiatives and interests.

2. Funders and Commissioners

The first panel of the day had a brief to consider *specific policy, strategic and funding initiatives that aim to support the development of participative arts either in terms of artists working collaboratively with communities of place and/or interest, or in terms of a public engagement with the arts; and to address the question of what the panel understood to be the challenges for this area of practice and its future sustainable development.*



The panellists were Deirdre Robb, Arts Development Officer (Visual Arts), Arts Council Northern Ireland; Janice Smith, Culture and Arts Development Officer, Belfast City Council; and Ruairí Ó Cuív, Public Arts Officer, Dublin City Council. The session was chaired by Orla Moloney, freelance arts consultant and writer.

The discussion opened with a question about which strategies and initiatives have been particularly effective in allowing artists to collaborate with communities. The panel outlined the variant strategies of each of their respective funding bodies and how these have been developed in recent years.

Pressures from local government to demonstrate value for money and the impact of funded arts programmes were said to have increased by all the panel members. The difficulty of balancing these demands whilst maintaining quality of artwork and integrity of practice was discussed alongside the need to assess artistic quality and use of public monies.

The need for meaningful consultation with communities, longer lead in times and flexibility were identified as being central to the success of participatory arts practice. The challenge of matching artists or arts organisations with community partners was identified as one which continues to present difficulties and hinder the initiation of new programmes of work.

Deirdre Robb spoke about changes in the process of developing work for the Reimaging Communities Programme, a public art programme associated with the removal and replacement of sectarian murals. She emphasised pre-project consultation with communities and their involvement in the recruitment of artists as being critical in engendering confidence in the process and constructing collective authorship and ownership.

Janice Smith outlined Belfast City Council's continued commitment to supporting the arts, explaining how the arts have the potential to contribute to economic development and social cohesion. As an example of the value placed on arts

programming by the City Council, she cited the recent increase of circa 25% allocation to the arts budget despite an ongoing austerity agenda. She stressed that intrinsic value, quality of ambition and high quality artistic experiences are intuitively understood to be central to successful arts project. She acknowledged that the evaluation of arts outcomes continues to be problematic for funders and needs to be addressed collaboratively with the wider sector in order to demonstrate and evidence the ways that the *Arts are unique, it's not another industry*.

Ruairí Ó Cuív explained how the Dublin City Council public art programme recognises Dublin as both an international and capital city, and a city of multiple communities. He spoke about how a strategic rethinking of definitions of 'public art' had been critical in allowing for imaginative non-permanent public art commissioning across art forms within Dublin. In contrast, public art practice and commissioning in Northern Ireland for the most part is understood as visual arts practice, a point evidenced by the absence of applications from any other art form to the Arts Council's Re-imaging programme over a four year period. The panel discussed some of the reasons that public art is assumed to mean permanent sculpture, proposing that this has arisen not simply because of a history of public art commissioning but because permanent artworks provide a tangible outcome that can be asserted as value for money. This reinforced the need for more longitudinal evaluation of participatory arts practices and for more visibility for the practice.

Questions from the floor were invited, with audience members raising questions and concerns about open submission versus limited competition processes and what impacts this has on the quality of work commissioned. Whilst open submissions were said to create opportunity, the potential for not attracting high quality local artists was acknowledged. It was agreed that open submission is effective when managed in tandem with a range of artist support including information sessions and structured research and development opportunities.

The conversation concluded with a discussion about how communities can be meaningfully engaged with the following quote from the Without Us mural sited in the Shankill area of Belfast: *"Nothing about us without us is for us."* The panel was asked whether 'gatekeepers' hinder wider community engagement or broker relations with communities. It was agreed that this could not be generalised. There are circumstances where either could arise, and this question reflects broader issues about how participatory arts practice is understood in terms of its aesthetic and social/political value and whether these values are predetermined or prescribed in advance.

3. Arts Organisations

The panel of arts organisations considered *socially engaged and participative arts practice with communities of place and/or interest and how this area of work is mainstreamed within an arts organisation.*

The panellists were Peter Richards, Golden Thread Gallery Belfast; James Kerr, Verbal Group, Derry-Londonderry; Sara Greavu CCA, Derry-Londonderry; Sarah Murphy, Wall 2 Wall Music; and Pauline Ross, Derry Playhouse. The panel was chaired by Declan Gorman, freelance playwright, performer and theatre director.

Discussions made apparent the personal investment that arts managers, administrators and directors make in securing an arts infrastructure to support the sustained development of arts practices across art form and modes of presentation. Many of the panellists described their own history as artists and their direct involvement in founding organisations in response to the needs of artists and communities. In introducing the panel the chair commented that sometimes *we forget that arts organisations are a kind of collective in themselves.*

Peter Richards talked about the establishment of the Golden Thread Gallery in Belfast, which had originally been based in an area described as an epicentre of civic unrest in the North of the city. The organisation had reflected on why people living in close proximity to the gallery didn't visit and in response to this determined to *take art out into public spaces.* This strategic decision to align programming to the interests and issues of neighbouring communities resulted in an exhibition and project programme curated with participation as a core element. Peter described how a recent exhibition considered whether stories gathered from communities by artists over the years had represented a genuine voice, and provided a moment for organisational reflection on the ethics of representation.



Sara Greavu spoke about the importance of stressing the equality between CCA's socially engaged programme and the other strands of practice that the centre exhibits. She explained how an integrated approach furthers their aims of becoming embedded in the local community, opening new dialogues and creating opportunities for artists. In order for these artist opportunities

to be meaningful Sara highlighted the need to provide the space for artists to develop ambitious and critically engaged work that was not constrained by predetermined outcomes.

Pauline Ross described how the Playhouse in Derry/Londonderry was established in a city rich in culture, but with limited opportunities for access. She spoke about how research in the late 1980s into the feasibility of opening a community based arts

centre had identified a clear desire for arts that were relevant and meaningful. At the time of the Good Friday Agreement the centre focused on peace and reconciliation work, urban regeneration and job creation, priorities that reflected community needs at the time. She described the work of the Derry Playhouse as responsive to the changing needs and priorities of the city and commented on the importance of time to undertake collaborative planning to embed new initiatives within the organisation and with the community.

Sarah Murphy identified herself as a musician, educator and organiser of arts projects and how these multiple roles overlap in the development of Wall2Wall as a community interest company. She spoke of the current City of Culture year for Derry/Londonderry and the importance of sustaining and building on the opportunities that the designation provided while acknowledging that the process of project realisation is complex and multi-layered, requiring a combination of artistic leadership, pragmatism and flexibility.

James Kerr explained how the Verbal Group has adopted a new funding model by acquiring a publishing company, allowing the organisation greater freedom and critical autonomy. He described the role of an arts administrator as a mediator and an enabler, whose primary task is to create space for artists and projects. This aspect was demonstrated by the diverse range of the Verbal Group's current programme including publishing projects, reading groups, a graphic novel about Bloody Sunday to Crows on the Wire a Northern Ireland wide tour of script readings about the transitioning from the RUC to the PSNI.



In conclusion, it was acknowledged that not all organisations have sufficient capacity to make work in public or with communities. While participatory arts practices could support an organisation's relevance and meaning at a local level, it was noted that the choice to programme participatory arts was *because it makes for better work* and contributes to an understanding of arts practices. Perceived tensions between participatory arts practices and other forms of practice were described as false and unhelpful to the understanding and development of the arts and the need to develop funding models and alternative funding streams to support work into the future.

4. Artists

The panel was asked to provide examples of *working collaboratively with communities of place and/or interest and to consider some of the challenges involved in the work and the supports needed to develop this area of practice in the future.*

Panellists were Dan Shipsides, Visual Artist; Charlotte Bosanquet, (Prime Collective) Visual Artist; Rachel Brown and Brighdin Farren (Brown&Bri), Curators and Visual Artists; Jo Egan, Theatre Practitioner; Ciara O'Malley, Visual Artist; and Anne-Marie Dillon, Community development worker (Ballykinlar)/Visual Artist. The panel was chaired by Emma Campbell, PhD Researcher and Photographer.

The discussion began with reference to an ongoing high profile debate on a recently commissioned public land art in Belfast. The Belfast Festival commission, Wish, led by international artist Jorge Rodríguez-Gerada, has been debated both online and in local media. Criticism of the work centred on the inaccessibility of the land art, since the scale of the work is only visible from the air, and the quality of engagement of the local community in its conceptual design and realisation.



The panel commented on the need for more critical debate about contemporary participatory arts

practices in order for the practice to develop. It was felt that this would assist how and which projects are funded and would also enable more reflection on what should be expected of artists working in public and socially engaged projects. The matrix of current expectations was felt to actively inhibit more challenging work, often presupposing that the role of the artist and socially engaged practice was to 'manage' social discontent. Dan Shipsides suggested that this quasi management role neglected the ways in which artists critically engage with questions of the public and publicness considering that they are *endlessly flexible and are able to work with and within difficult situations and contexts.* He spoke of the challenge of maintaining artistic integrity and the space for criticality when asked to deliver positive outcomes. He raised concerns that, whilst the vibrancy and value of the arts was supposedly lauded, strategy did not seem to always reflect this.

Charlotte Bosanquet spoke about the nature and importance of artist networks in Northern Ireland. She described these as offering vital support to artists who are increasingly expected to fulfil a multiplicity of roles. Amongst the benefits of connecting with a wider group of practitioners locally and internationally, she spoke of the insight into alternative models of funding that can be gained from a broader

view. She suggested that Belfast presented a specifically challenging environment and that education has a role to play in raising awareness of what art is and can be, enabling artists and arts projects to be understood more expansively.

Jo Egan introduced her work on Crimea Square, a recently completed community theatre project which was performed during the Belfast Festival and won the Festival Audience Award. The play was co-written and performed by a mix of members of the Shankill community and professional actors. Jo spoke of the challenge of creating a working structure for the participants to tell their story while ensuring that the work is theatrically challenging and innovative. Jo noted that misunderstandings about the nature and purpose of artists working in communities persist, despite the history of this practice in Northern Ireland.

Rachel Brown and Brighdin Farren described their hybrid and trans-disciplinary curatorial practice. Illustrating how artists can play a role in public spaces and urban development, they spoke of a recent curatorial project where they opened a café *to dramatise certain dynamics and problems in a particular city, where a space for public action has been radically curtailed by sectarianism, segregation, private regeneration projects and economic recession.*

Ciara O'Malley spoke of her extensive experience of working as an artist in the UK, Ireland and internationally. She gave examples of two recent projects: Streets, a five year project in Dublin which sought to represent the collective voice, histories and traditions of 27 local communities; and a recent residency in HMP Maghaberry during which she created a mobile art space for use in the prison and in other contested spaces. She emphasised the critical importance of time to gain and build trust to create successful projects.

Anne Marie Dillon, whose practice combines artists and community development workers in Ballykinlar, a small rural village where an army base is sited, described the complex dynamics of place, collectivity and civic activism. She described an ad hoc and responsive practice, with projects including the transformation of a caravan into a community space for older people; the formation of a mother and toddler group; and an irreverent and inventive project with young people to customise and create their own vehicles. She illustrated how a key relationship with Belfast based gallery ps2 and curator Peter Mutschler had provided a mechanism to leverage funding and build connections with artists internationally, some of whom have visited the village.



The panel concluded with a series of comments and questions from the floor, which revisited the relations between funder and artist, artist and participants and artist and place.

5. Arts Education

The final panel of the day set out to *consider how education across design and the arts can assist and support the learning needs of participative and collaborative arts practice and the specific educational challenges that this area of practice presents in the context of Northern Ireland.*

The panellists were Dr Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, Professor of Iconology, Belfast School of Art, University of Ulster; Aoife McGrath, School of Creative Arts, Drama, QUB; Ciaran Mackel, Belfast School of Architecture, University of Ulster; Prof. Philip Napier, Head of Fine Art & Sculpture, NCAD, Dublin and Professor Cahal McLaughlin, Chair of Film Studies, QUB. The panel was chaired by Sarah Tuck, arts and cultural practitioner, writer and researcher.

The panel commenced with discussion on how the introduction of tuition fees has systematically altered further education through the dynamics of student debt and its effect on student expectation, access and participation. The question of discipline was challenged by the panellists, who noted the infrequency at undergraduate level for institutions to provide opportunities for students to engage in trans-disciplinary research. This lack of opportunity was considered not only to restrict the possibilities of institutional learning across faculties but also to impoverish a depth of enquiry and knowledge. It was considered to hinder the development of participatory arts practice and scholarship since this work methodologically and practically engages questions that extend beyond the boundaries of traditional disciplines to include durational, embodied, social, spatial and relational art and a critical understanding of the specificity of different social and cultural histories.

Aoife McGrath spoke about how dance provides a vital site of transformation and innovation in performance practices. Dr Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes linked the concerns of artists with teachers and spoke of developing constructive strategies to enhance learning and instil critical debate. She spoke of the need to develop self-organised hubs of learning and *collective meaning making* that can translate across disciplines and gave an example of a weekly colloquium that she facilitates which is open to anyone to attend.



Cahal McLaughlin spoke of the need to *work against the tightening of the public sphere* by working within the institution to slow down the monetisation of the value of education. He introduced the ongoing Prison Memory Archive: a participatory arts practice, research enquiry and archive. Its collection of interviews and films with prison staff, prisoners, visitors, teachers, chaplains and probation officers who passed through Armagh Gaol and the Maze/Long Kesh Prison (available online at

<http://prisonsmemoryarchive.com/>), has been forwarded as part of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) for the university. Cahal described how it provides a model of practice based learning and research and a method through which the Queens University Belfast links to communities within Northern Ireland.

Philip Napier described these processes of institutional engagement as isometric,



insisting that the *institution is an equal learner in the process*. He gave the example of an annual undergraduate programme for art and design students at NCAD (National College of Art and Design) in Dublin where student artists are supported to develop and realise an arts project with a community of place and/or interest.

The practice based learning programme is facilitated with the support of a national arts organisation (Create) and leads to a final 'exhibition' of work. While the programme had initially been offered as an elective course for students, it has since become a core module to ensure all students develop an understanding of participatory arts practice as a component of arts education.

Ciaran Mackel critiqued the dominant model of architecture education and public procurement practice, which de-emphasises issues of trust, consultation and engagement about how people use space and the built environment. Ciaran identified short courses as being more adept at building partnership and engaging with civic questions.

Placements were highlighted as a key area where universities could take a lead and strategically redefine their relationship with community and place. However, the panel considered that this potential remains largely unrealised and was symptomatic of how the value of education has been monetised, representing a bias that links education with future employability and favours partnerships and placements with business. Similarly, despite the model of practice based PhDs which provide the opportunity for artist led engaged research with communities, there was a general sense of discontent with the limited public dissemination of the research, particularly given how this scholarship broadly relates to social co-ordination and organisation and, in Northern Ireland, often critically engages with questions of truth and reconciliation.

This opened out to the broader question of ethics, both relating to how research participants are acknowledged within a research process, and the ethics approval process that all PhD research students undertake. It was felt that the current ethics approval process that is in place for PhD researchers can stifle an understanding of ethics as an iterative process within participatory arts practice.

The panel concluded with a discussion about who studies art and design subjects, both in terms of gender and socio-economic class. It was suggested that the reason for a gender bias toward women working as participatory arts practitioners might be attributable to the evolution of this practice from grassroots models of organising and the women's movement.

6. Key issues and challenges

The following section provides a summary of some of the key issues and challenges that emerged throughout the day - some of which cut across all panel conversations and some more specific to an area of practice and/or artist support. The issues and challenges, while wide ranging, reflect a more persistent theme of how contemporary participatory arts practice can share learning across art form and context, improve visibility and develop evaluative tools that place equal emphasis on process and outcomes. In particular, the question of outcomes was the more persistent and problematic, reflecting the range of perspectives in how outcomes are adjudicated, legitimised, desired and funded. This also pointed to a concern over an assumed consensus that this practice is aligned to the management of social unrest, providing a curative response. In contrast the question of critical autonomy and the radical subversive potential of participatory arts to reimagine the local and the 'C' word was proposed. Across all areas of discussion, it was apparent that there was a need for more opportunity for exchange and for trans-disciplinary learning in order for this area of arts practice to develop, including how it is critiqued.

The issues and challenges have been clustered into three groups: Artist Support, Partnership and Dissemination. Many of the comments are inter-related, providing an overview of some of the pertinent issues and challenges for the development of participatory arts practice and practitioners.

i) Artist Support

Artist support included informal mentoring and networking and the need for these networks to be more visible across all art forms to support artists and curators at all stages of their career – emerging, mid-career and established.

Time was understood as a significant resource in how a project can become embedded in a local community since *Trust is built slowly and is earned* and that this need should be reflected in the commissioning processes and timeline of projects. Artists spoke of the need for projects to be conceived as long term to counter the short termism of arts as a form of social management. It was acknowledged that there are specific challenges to working collaboratively with communities in Northern Ireland, given the density of contested histories, and that this feature places more emphasis on the need for durational long term contextual

practice. It was felt that the commissioning process, in particular the development of an artist's brief, needs to draw on the expertise of artists as well as communities to ensure that a brief is sufficiently open and flexible for an artist's response and is equally responsive to the local context.

It was recommended that commissioning processes provide scope for funded Research and Development in order for artists to test out ideas with a community and ensure that the community is a partner in the realisation of a project. This brought forward the related question *What kind of support is being considered for communities to work with artists?* as well as the ways in which communities might exchange information and insights about working with artists and how this could be supported.

The critical learning that has accrued across projects and across time is insufficiently realised as a resource of knowledge and this could be supported by greater access to scholarship and improved visibility of projects in Northern Ireland.

Artists and curators welcome the opportunity to consider their practice in a broader international context, in order to draw out points of comparison and enhance understanding of alternate models of practice, funding and sustainability.

ii) Partnership

The complex matrix of partnerships that inform participatory arts practice – community, arts organisation and artist – constitutes a challenge and provocation about ideas of the 'public' and the 'civic'. Again time was understood as a valuable resource to build trust and competency to work effectively and agree on outcomes. Partnership was also understood as brokerage between artists and arts organisations, communities and artists and communities and arts organisations.

It was felt that Further and Higher Education provided a vital means to support critical scholarship of contemporary arts practice which would be strengthened by a placement programme for undergraduate arts students (in line with the example of Dublin) to embed an understanding of this practice and to assist early stage professional development of artists.

This scope for more partnership approaches to student artist education would also provide a critical momentum to the development of the participatory arts sector and the transition from student artist to professional artist post-graduation.

There was also scope for more awareness and dissemination of post graduate research in this area, which would benefit from a public platform.

Partnership was seen as crucial to the future development and sustainability of practice and a means through which a more nuanced critical vocabulary about the

nature of this work could be advanced. It was acknowledged that partnership approaches could assist the articulation of the successes and challenges of this practice, whether between local authorities within Northern Ireland or between Northern Ireland and the Republic, in particular with the strategic rethinking of public art practice and commissioning developed by Dublin City Council.

An area which was expressed as being undeveloped was trans-disciplinary enquiry both in terms of the need for more exchange across art forms and contexts and also to the largely unrealised potential of inviting other subject areas and knowledge, such as Human Geography, Transitional Justice and Politics, to critically consider participatory arts practices.

iii) Dissemination

Given the range of contexts within which artists work and the range of art forms and models of practice, it was felt that this broad ecology should be reflected in any discussion and presentation of contemporary participatory arts practice in Northern Ireland. The question of dissemination touched on issues about the visibility of the work, how a project's successes can be evidenced and how information can be more effectively shared. Dissemination also touched on the challenges of evaluation and the need for models to be developed that assisted artists and communities to critically assess learning. There was also a sense of disquiet that, despite the history of this practice, the need persists to challenge some of the misunderstandings about what this practice is. Challenges which include the need to speak about artistic quality and artistic ambition as central to the practice and central to how this practice is understood. It was felt that, in the absence of speaking about artistic quality and ambition, the metrics used to evaluate and critique work impoverish an understanding of participatory arts practice as an arts practice.

The complex dynamics that underpin the processes of participatory arts practice require a more complex approach to dissemination, one that reflects the investment of time and energy of participants, artist and arts organisations, and one which makes *all voices heard*.

This aspect of many voices presents specific challenges regarding future dissemination of a project both in its articulation of learning and collective meaning and in terms of methodological approaches to the evaluation of participatory arts practice.

7. Recommendations

The following recommendations are presented as possible action points to assist the continued development of participatory arts practice in Northern Ireland. While there

is no funding currently ring-fenced for the specific development or implementation of these action points, they are included in this report in direct response to the needs addressed on the day.

- **Networking**

Currently this is managed by artists at an informal level and could be enhanced by a twice yearly event with the opportunity for artists, curators, arts organisations and communities to share practice – across contexts, place and artform – and for organisations in partnership with artists to provide critical momentum in putting together networking/PechaKucha events.

- **Critical Hubs**

Opportunity for more PhD research to be shared through the development of critical hubs to support the development of critical thinking and visibility of the range of participatory arts practice

- **Research and Development**

Commissioning processes for public art and participatory arts projects could provide funded research and development phases to assist development and testing of ideas with communities (as provided by Dublin City Council and the Arts Council through the Artist in the Community Scheme in the Republic of Ireland)

- **Long term durational projects**

Need for time to be understood as a vital aspect of the work to assure quality of community engagement and project outcomes could be recognised by specific funding allocations for long term projects

- **Trans-disciplinary**

Opportunity exists to develop partnerships across subject specialisms to provide greater depth of enquiry and consideration of participatory arts practices specific to some of the challenges and issues of working in Northern Ireland

8. Conclusion

In a day-long event it is not possible to do justice to the full range of participatory arts practices in Northern Ireland, nor is it possible to provide a more considered view on the specifics of artists working in prisons, healthcare contexts, urban or rural communities or working with young people or older people. The numerous ways in which artists work collaboratively with communities to realise arts projects, both in terms of the specificities of context and artform, reflects the exponential increase in

this area of contemporary arts practice. Crucially, in the day-long event there was no panel of community development workers with experience of brokering partnerships with artists or arts organisations. Similarly, the voice and experience of participants was absent. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the event marks the beginning of a conversation about how participatory arts practice and practitioners can be supported and equally speaks to some of the challenges that this practice presents in Northern Ireland.

Appendices

1. Delegate List

Glenn Patterson	Writer
Susanne Burns	Project Director, ArtWorks, Paul Hamlyn Foundation
Orla Moloney	Freelance researcher/arts consultant
Deirdre Robb	ADO Visual Arts, Arts Council Northern Ireland
Ruairi O’Cuiv	Public Arts Manager, Dublin City Council
Janice Smith	Tourism, Culture and Arts Development Department Belfast City Council
Declan Gorman	Writer/Theatre Director
James Kerr	Director, Verbal Arts Group, Derry
Sara Greavu	Artist/Curator, CCA, Derry
Sarah Murphy	Musician, Wall2Wall Music, CIC, Derry
Peter Richards	Director, Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast
Emma Campbell	Photographer/Researcher
Anne-Marie Dillon	Visual Artist
Charlotte Bosanquet	Visual Artist/Prime Collective
Rachel Brown and	
Brighdin Farren	Brown&Bri, Curators/Visual Artists
Ciara O’Malley	Visual Artist
Dan Shipsides	Visual Artist/Lecturer University of Ulster
Jo Egan	Theatre Director/Writer
Pauline Ross	Director, Derry Playhouse
Mia Lerm-Hayes	Belfast School of Art, University of Ulster, Belfast
Aoife McGrath	School of Creative Arts and Drama, QUB, Belfast

Ciaran Mackel	Architect/Lecturer Belfast School of Architecture, University of Ulster, Belfast
Philip Napier	Head of Fine Art and Sculpture, NCAD, Dublin
Cahal McLaughlin Project	Chair of Film Studies, QUB/Director of Prison Memory
Pauline Hadaway	Belfast Exposed
Tracy Marshall	Belfast Exposed
Alissa Kleist	Prime Collective, Belfast
Ciara Hickey	Belfast Exposed
Mervyn Smyth	Belfast Exposed
Shaun Hannigan	Director Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny, Donegal
Anne Stewart	Curator (Fine Art) Ulster Museum
Elise Taylor	Curator (Applied Art) Ulster Museum
Eileen Black	Curator (Fine Art) Ulster Museum
Heather Floyd	Director, Arts For All, Belfast
Niamh Flanagan	ArtsEkta, Belfast
Niamh O'Connor	Visual Artist (Arts and Health), Sligo
Willis McBriar	Broadcast Technologist/Trainer, View Digital
Peter Mutschler	Director, pssquared, Belfast
Breandán Clarke	Draw Down the Walls/North Belfast Interface Network, Belfast
Connal Parr	Freelance writer and PhD candidate at Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformation and Social Justice, Queens University Belfast
Adam Wallace	FabLab, Ashton Centre, Belfast
Mags Byrne	Dance United, Belfast
Samantha Porciello	The MAC, Belfast
Siún Hanrahan	Researcher/Lecturer, Belfast

Sinead Breathnach Cashell	Artist
Katy Radford	Institute of Conflict Research, Belfast
Billy Thompson	Dunmurry Community Association
Sarah McBride	F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio, Newry
Anne Delaney	New Lodge Arts, Belfast
Colin Darke	Visual Artist, Belfast
Declan Hill	Forum For an Alternative Belfast
Caroline Healy	Freelance artist, ArtsEkta.
Feargal O'Malley	Northern Ireland representative, Visual Artists Ireland
Jacqueline Wylvie	Researcher/Artist, Belfast
Catherine Devlin	Digital Arts Studios

2. Programme

ArtWorks Symposium, Northern Ireland

Date: Tues Nov 19

Venue: Ulster Museum, Lecture Theatre

Schedule:

10.15 -10.30 registration

10.30 - ArtWorks introduction and welcome - Susanne Burns

11.00 – 11.30 **Keynote: ‘The ‘C’ Word’ – Glenn Patterson**

Glenn Patterson is the author of eight novels and two works of non-fiction. His plays and stories have been broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and Radio 4 and articles and essays have appeared in the Guardian, Observer, Sunday Times, Independent, Irish Times and Dublin Review. He is the co-writer of Good Vibrations (BBC Films), based on the life of Belfast punk impresario Terri Hooley. A new novel, The Rest Just Follows, will be published in February.

11.30 – 12.30 **Conversation with Commissioners/Funders**

Chair: Orla Moloney

Panel: Deirdre Robb, Arts Council Northern Ireland; Janice Smith, Belfast City Council; Ruairí Ó Cuív, Public Arts Officer, Dublin City Council

12.30 – 1.30 Lunch

1.30 – 2.30 **Conversation with Artists**

Chair: Emma Campbell

Panel: Dan Shippides; Charlotte Bosanquet; Brown&Bri; Jo Egan; Ciara O'Malley; Anne-Marie Dillon

2.30 – 3.30 **Conversation with Arts Organisations**

Chair: Declan Gorman

Panel: Peter Richards, Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast ; James Kerr, Verbal Group, Derry-Londonderry; Sara Greavu CCA, Derry-Londonderry ; Sarah Murphy ,Wall 2 Wall Music, CIC; Pauline Ross, Derry Playhouse

3.30 – 4.00 Tea and Coffee

4.00 – 5.00 **Conversation with Educators**

Chair: Sarah Tuck

Panel: Prof Dr Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, Professor of Iconology, Belfast School of Art, University of Ulster; Aoife McGrath, School of Creative Arts, Drama, QUB; Ciaran Mackel, Belfast School of Architecture, University of Ulster; Prof. Philip Napier, Head of Fine Art & Sculpture, NCAD, Dublin; Professor Cahal McLaughlin, Chair of Film Studies, QUB

5.00 – 6.45 **Discussion and Plenary**

Chair: Susanne Burns

Orla Moloney; Emma Campbell; Declan Gorman and Sarah Tuck

7.00 Dinner at Café Conor

Panel Biogs

Susanne Burns is currently the Project Director for ArtWorks – a Special Initiative of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. A senior arts leader, freelance management consultant and trainer with 28 years of senior management experience in the cultural sector, her work has encompassed dance, theatre, music and the visual arts.

She has led several major evaluation projects including the longitudinal evaluation of In Harmony Liverpool, Arts and Health programmes for Merseyside PCT and a youth arts programme at Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art. She has carried out major research programmes including the recent Dance Mapping work for Arts Council England.

She has extensive experience of working in Higher Education as she was Head of Management at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts from 1994 -2001 and continues to work in HE across the UK. She has a doctorate from Middlesex University.

Orla Moloney is an independent Arts Participation Consultant with extensive experience in arts research, policy development, project management and evaluation. Formerly Director of the Bealtaine Festival and Regional Development Manager with Music Network, her most recent position was with the Arts Council/ An Chomhairle Ealón, where she was Head of Arts Participation from 2007 to 2013.

Deirdre Robb is an artist and a founder member and former Chairperson of Creative Exchange Artist Studios and the former Director of The Engine Room Gallery. Deirdre is the Arts Development Officer Visual Arts for the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

Janice Smith is the Culture and Arts Development Office for Belfast City Council.

Ruairí Ó Cuív is Public Art Manager with Dublin City Council. Previously he was an independent curator specialising in public art, exhibition curation, evaluation and research. He was director of Temple Bar Gallery and Studios (1991-96), curator of exhibitions at the Douglas Hyde Gallery (1989-91) and Royal Hospital Kilmainham (1987-89). In 1982 he co-founded Ireland's first professional art installation and transport company. He began his career as a History of Art lecturer. His writing has been widely published and publications include *A Review of the Per Cent for Art Scheme in Cork City, 1986-2003*, published in 2006. He was appointed to the board of the Folklore Council of Ireland in 2013.

Emma Campbell studied Documentary Photography at Newport until 2000, after which she relocated to London to work in the photographic industry for over a decade. Recently relocated home, Emma gained a Masters of Fine Art in Photography from the University of Ulster under Paul Seawright, Donovan Wylie and Kaylynn Deveney in 2012. The study continues at U.U, with a practice-based PhD researching the impact of women's collectives on documentary photography in the UK.

Emma deals with gendered themes in her personal work and has previously explored the portrayal of female adolescence, the diary as an exploration of sibling identity, the masquerade of gender in photography, and social and political issues that directly affect women.

Dan Shipsides is the former co-director at Catalyst Arts, Belfast and is now an artist based in Orchid Studios. He also teaches at the Belfast School of Art. He was awarded the ACNI Major Artist Award in 2004, following the Nissan Art Award IMMA (Bamboo Support) Dublin in 2000 and the Perspective award, OBG, Belfast (The Stone Bridge) in 1998.

He has exhibited nationally and internationally, including: ACCA, Melbourne (Desire Lines); The MAC, Belfast (Still not out of the woods); Aliceday Gallery, Brussels (Vigil | Star); South London Gallery (Games & Theory); Castlefield Gallery, Manchester (Radical Architecture); Wings Project Art Space, Switzerland (Performance); Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol (Elastic Frontiers); Konsthall C, Stockholm, Sweden (Under plattan, ängen!); Platform Guranti, Istanbul (Hit & Run); Confederation Gallery, PEI, Canada (Beauty Queens); HEDAH, Maastricht (Rochers à Fontainebleau); Riga Sculpture Quadrennial, Latvia (European Space); Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast (Beta); Temple Bar Gallery, Dublin (Pioneers); Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (Sporting Life); Smart Project Space, Amsterdam (Endure); and Melbourne International Biennial, Australia (Signs of Life).

Charlotte Bosanquet is an artist and curator living and working in Belfast. She graduated from Glasgow University in 2004. From 2004 to 2007 Charlotte co-curated Cabin Exchange in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Melbourne. Since moving to

Belfast in 2008 Charlotte has continued her practice as a curator, was selected for the Curator in Residence in PS2, 2011, and curated FieldWork for the Niland Gallery Galway and Tock Tock in the Craft Collective. She was a Catalyst Art Director from 2009-2011. Charlotte also works as a community artist for the Upper Springfield Road Development Trust and The Golden Thread Gallery and is one of the founding members of Prime Collective, alongside artists Alissa Kleist and Tonya McMullan.

BROWN&BRI is our collaborative curatorial practice. We work with individuals, collectives, institutions and sometimes by ourselves to realise projects. We often operate within diverse spheres of interest, adapting curatorial, artistic and business models to develop a hybrid practice with the language and functions to fit our needs and whims.

For the past six years we have been based in Belfast and much of our recent work has been about the city, including commissioning new work in response to the 'troubled' photographic archive at Belfast Exposed, establishing and running a café-bar on a barge and a presentation of our failed attempts to live in the city centre, both performative actions made in response to the trailing dysfunctions of a city emerging from conflict.

We've become increasingly interested in the concept of staging and theatre in art and are currently developing a theatrical study of the moon, based on the lives of astronomers William and Caroline Herschel.

Jo Egan currently works as a freelance professional/participatory theatre practitioner, playwright, dramaturge, oral archivist and producer. A graduate from TCD, she has a Masters in Fine Art (playwriting). She is currently under commission by Green Shoot Productions as part of their Flesh & Blood series of work by women playwrights. In summer 2009 she worked as dramaturge/producer on ex combatant/prisoner Robert Niblock's comedy A Reason to Believe, and went on to assist in the creation of etcetera theatre company which creates new works facilitating the protestant/loyalist voice. As Creative Producer with Kabosh Theatre she was responsible for creating the business plan that had as its mission to question "what theatre is and where it takes place". As Development Director she ran the Creative Writers Network, and was Director with Lyric Drama Studio 2005 - 2006. In 1999 she was Artistic Director/Producer on the award winning, peripatetic site-specific production of The Wedding Community Play. As a practitioner of Open Space Technology, she has twice facilitated Theatre Forum's annual arts gatherings and has also used the conferencing tool with Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN) with their conference looking at the National Spatial Strategy.

Ciara O'Malley, born Newtownhamilton, Northern Ireland, is a multi-media artist working within the field of socially engaged practice for many years. In 2013, she completed a Masters in Art in Public at the University of Ulster, Belfast. She is

currently living in Belfast and working freelance in both the North and South of Ireland.

As an installation artist, she is interested in creating site-specific pieces that explore art in an ethical context as it relates to ownership, authorship and participation and against a background of ethnographic and socially engaged practice. As demonstrated in her 2009 collaboration with Sven Anderson and the people of north Dublin, the Luas Line Commission 'Streets,' at Connolly Street Station, as well as her 2013 Masters Project 'Clink' Exhibition and Mobile Space in H.M.P. Maghaberry, Lisburn, she utilises technology to create interactive public art installations.

Ciara has received many awards, including Artist in the Community, Fire Station Artists 'Studios '03/'05 and the Ron Halward Award, 2010. Commissions include the recent Luas Line, Dublin, the Arts Council NI and Government NI. She has taken part in residencies in Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Annamakerrig, Co. Monaghan and Sim, The Association of Icelandic Visual Artists, Reykjavik, Iceland and has exhibited throughout Ireland, UK and internationally in Iceland, China, Australia and Japan. Most recently she exhibited at the Radius of Art Conference, Cultural Potentials for Social Transformations, Berlin, 7th-10th February 2012 and Art on the Eastside Billboard Project 2013.

Anne-Marie Dillon is an artist and activist and lives in Ballykinler. With a large family to look after, she studied Art as a mature student and completed an MA in 2009. Her socially engaged work is centred round the small rural community of Ballykinler, Co Down, where she organizes events, from mother and toddler meetings to Bingo for pensioners. With no community centre, she started weekly coffee mornings in the open and later converted a caravan into a much used mobile community centre. Actions which seem like practical community work are turned into happenings and performances through her politically provocative, practical and poetic artistic vision.

Declan Gorman is a freelance playwright, performer and director, having most recently directed The Hijabi Monologues, Ireland (Axis, Ballymun and Belfast Festival). From 1997 to 2010 he was Artistic Director of Upstate Theatre Project, Drogheda, involved in researching and pioneering new approaches to socially-engaged and intercultural theatre. His own Border Chronicles Trilogy 1997-2007 (Hades; Epic & At Peace) is a fictional study of border counties society during the first 'post-conflict' decade. Other work for Upstate included directing The Countrywoman by Paul Smith (adapted by Elizabeth Kuti); Two Houses (for children) by John McArdle and his own adaptation of Patrick Kavanagh's The Green Fool. He was also writer facilitator on several Upstate community programmes including The Crossover Project and The Louth International Theatre Project. Previous to Upstate he was Theatre Director at Dublin's City Arts Centre and a co-founder of Co-Motion Theatre. Freelance work has included directing The Dublin Disability Pride Parade; Feile Failte, an anti-racism street performance for Calypso Productions and The Common People, a cross-border, intercultural project for Artswell in Castleblayney.

Formerly chair of City Arts Dublin and the Abbey Theatre Outreach Education Group, he has taught with New York University (Devising and Writing for Community-Engaged Theater) and NUI Galway (Applied Film, Writing and Performance). Declan also regularly tours with his one-man show *The Dubliners Dilemma*, based on short stories by James Joyce.

Peter Richards works as an artist and curator. Born Cardiff in 1970, he has been based in Belfast since 1994. He completed an M.Phil 'Re-presenting Representations of Representations', at the University of Ulster, Belfast in 1998. Whilst working as a co-director of Catalyst Arts from 1996-8, he began sharing his time between a studio practice, and creating contexts and opportunities to work with the works of other artists, a way of working that he continues to this day.

He became Gallery Director at the Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast, in 2001, and has devised its artistic programme since. Richards has worked closely with many of the region's leading artists, alongside their international peers, and has realised 120 plus exhibitions for the Golden Thread Gallery including international projects in China, the USA and across Europe.

James Kerr is the Chief Executive of the Verbal Group, which is made up of Lagan Press, one of the main literary prose, poetry and cultural history publishers on the island of Ireland, Sevensgate, a digital publishing production company, and the Verbal Arts Centre, the main centre for literature, language arts and storytelling in Ireland.

Sara Greavu is the Public Programmes Coordinator at Centre for Contemporary Art Derry~Londonderry and an artist, curator and facilitator. Recent curatorial credits include Santiago Sierra Veterans/Psychophonies (co-curated with Jonathan Cummins) and Jeremy Deller's Local Artist in Void Gallery, Derry. She has exhibited locally and internationally, with recent shows held in the Kao Yuan Art Center, Taiwan; The Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast; The Burren College of Art and Scope Art Fair, New York. Greavu has worked widely as a facilitator over fifteen years with a broad range of groups. She holds an MFA and PhD from the University of Ulster, Belfast.

Sarah Murphy is a flautist and animateur, the Artistic Director of Wall2Wall Music and the Northern Ireland Co-ordinator for Musical Futures. She is interested in playful exploration of music and ideas both with groups and as an individual artist.

She has performed throughout Europe as a chamber musician, and works regularly with the Ulster Orchestra. In 2013 as part of UK City of Culture celebrations Sarah collaborated with the Maiden City Festival to bring together the Flute band, traditional Irish and classical flute traditions performing as a soloist in St Columb's Cathedral for a special commission of Shaun Davey's "Relief of Derry Symphony" arranged for 80 flutes.

During 2013, with Wall2Wall Music, Sarah led the community engagement At Sixes and Sevens in conjunction with Verbal Arts Centre. This was a ground-breaking poetry and music response by 120 Derry-Londonderry post primary children to a new commission from Mark Antony Turnage and Paul Muldoon to mark the 400th anniversary of the unique relationship between the City of Derry and the City of London. She also created the Once in a Blue Moon Band - a creative performance project for amateur adult musicians; supported classroom music teachers to deliver engaging practical music making for 11-14 year olds using Musical Futures; and led Stroke Odysseys in conjunction with Rosetta Life and composer Orlando Gough - a community project to create new songs and films about and with stroke patients in the North West and the people who care for them. She has had a wide and varied musical life as a soloist, chamber musician, orchestral musician and teacher. As the Artistic Director of Wall2Wall Music and the Northern Ireland Co-ordinator for Musical Futures, Sarah is interested in playful exploration of music and ideas both with groups and as an individual artist.

Pauline Ross is Director and Founder of the award winning Playhouse Community Arts Centre. After graduating from the University of Ulster with a Hons Degree in Media Studies, Pauline became the Arts Education/Community Liaison Officer with the Orchard Gallery and became its Acting Director in the early 1990s. In 1992 with a grant of £300, she founded The Playhouse in two derelict “B1” listed buildings on Artillery Street, Derry. Since then the award winning Playhouse has grown from strength to strength becoming one of the best known and loved community art centres in Ireland, making “arts accessible to all” and having a positive impact on peoples’ lives not only in the city but also throughout Ireland and further afield.

In 2009, The Playhouse buildings won the “Royal Institute of Town Planner – Sustainability & Regeneration Award 2009”, the first time that this prestigious award was won by an Arts Centre in Northern Ireland as well as the prestigious BURA (British Urban Regeneration Association) Awards for “Best Practice in Regeneration”; the first time this award was made to a Northern Irish building. In 2010 The Playhouse won The William Keown Trust “Prestige Access Award” for the County, in recognition of The Playhouse’s contribution to an accessible, user friendly environment.

Pauline was awarded an MBE for her services to Arts and The Community in Northern Ireland in 2000, and was the sole recipient of the Londonderry Chamber of Commerce Business Achievement Award in 2012, in recognition of the contribution that the Playhouse Theatre has made to the city.

Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes is Professor of Iconology, teaching History and Theory of Art at the University of Ulster, Belfast. From 2007 to 2011 she was Head of the Research Graduate School of the University’s Faculty of Art, Design and Built Environment. She studied at the Universities of Heidelberg, London (UCL, Courtauld), Bonn and Cologne, where she gained her PhD in 2000. It was

researched with a James Joyce Foundation Scholarship in Zurich and followed by an Irish Research Council Post-Doctoral Fellowship at UCD.

Her research focuses on word and image studies (she organized an IAWIS conference “Displaying Word and Image” in 2010), particularly the visual legacies of Irish writers (Joyce, Beckett, Sebald), while also considering performance, the historiography of art (Warburg, Giedion-Welcker) and curation. Rooted in Joseph Beuys studies, she has an interest in sculpture, performance, and committed multi-disciplinary practices, as well as post-war histories.

Her publications include the books *Post-War Germany* and ‘Objective Chance’: W.G. Sebald, Joseph Beuys and Tacita Dean (Steidl 2008, 2011), *James Joyce als Inspirationsquelle für Joseph Beuys* (Olms 2001), and *Joyce in Art: Visual Art Inspired by James Joyce* (Lilliput 2004). This book accompanied her exhibition on the theme, Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin. She has curated for: Goethe Institut, Dublin; Tolstoy Estate, Russia; MoA, Seoul National University, Korea; Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast and LCGA, Limerick. She is member of the Board of CCA, Derry.

Dr Aoife McGrath is a lecturer in the School of Creative Arts, Queen's University Belfast. She is a dancer and choreographer, and the convener of the Choreography and Corporeality working group of the International Federation for Theatre Research. She has published several articles and book chapters about dance as well as a recent monograph called ‘Dance Theatre in Ireland: Revolutionary Moves’ (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). She is currently working on an edited collection of critical dance scholarship for Palgrave and a dance education strategy and policy document for the Irish Arts Council.

Ciaran Mackel is a Senior Lecturer in Architecture at The Belfast School of Architecture, University of Ulster. Ciaran has been architect-assessor on a number of high profile architectural competitions in recent years following his role as Arts Council Lottery panel member, Architectural Policy panel member, and as creative advisor on the built environment to the Imagine Belfast 2008 project, Belfast’s bid for Capital City of Culture 2008.

Ciaran is actively involved in PLACE and also serves on the Boards of a number of community and arts organisations. He is also founder member of the think-tank/ do-tank, the Forum for an Alternative Belfast, which aims to facilitate the development of workable ideas about how Belfast can be developed for all its citizens as well as for visitors. It aims to encourage debate about how we can influence and affect changes to the built environment. It seeks to explore how the mistakes of the past can be addressed and it wants to look imaginatively at opportunities for the future.

Professor Philip Napier is an artist and educator. Currently he is Head of the Fine Art Faculty at the National College of Art and Design, Dublin.

Napier has worked through art practice in a variety of challenging environments, where a negotiation of the situation, as content, has had a significant bearing on the work engaged and produced. He has developed works within gallery contexts and through time based and permanently sited public projects.

Napier works both individually and collaboratively. He is a former Rome scholar, and has represented Ireland at the XXII Sao Paulo Biennial, Brazil, Great Britain at the inaugural Kwangju Biennial and Northern Ireland in the Montreal Biennial. He was the Integrated Arts Coordinator during the redevelopment of the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast.

His most recent cycle of works and projects have been utilising a variety of specific visual 'modules' which explore dimensions of consumption, starvation, discovery and connection.

Professor Cahal McLaughlin is chair of Film Studies in the School of Creative Arts at Queens University Belfast. He is director of the Prisons Memory Archive (www.prisonsmemoryarchive.com) and is a filmmaker whose credits include 'We Never Give Up II' (a documentary on reparations in South Africa). He is also the author of 'Recording Memories from Political Conflict: a filmmakers journey' (Intellect 2010).

Curatorial Team

Sarah Tuck is an arts and cultural practitioner based in Belfast. Prior to commencing a PhD in contemporary photography in Belfast in 2012 with Brighton University and Belfast Exposed Gallery, Sarah was the Director of Create, the national development agency for collaborative arts based in Dublin (2006-2011), Director of City Arts in Dublin (2005-2006) and Director of Communications and Development at LIFT, London International Festival of Theatre (2001-2005).

Sarah has published a number of papers, including The Social Dynamics of Art Research: Contemporary Photography in Belfast post the Good Friday Agreement, Arts and Humanities in Higher Education, (2013); Defining Content ; A Report on Homeworks 5, A Forum on Cultural Practice, Beirut, Lebanon, Visual Artists News Sheet, (2010); Applying History, the work of Artur Zmijewski Fireside Conversations, Dublin (2009) and has presented at a number of conferences and symposia, most recently at On Curating in Nicosia, Cyprus.

Sarah is currently the Chair of Dublin City Council Arts and Culture Advisory Group and a Board member of the Void Gallery in Derry.

Caragh O'Donnell is a PhD researcher at the University of Ulster looking at best practice and models of collaborative and participative working in visual arts.

Caragh was previously the Information Officer at Community Arts Forum/CAF (2007-2012). During her time with CAF she worked on a pilot research project looking at

the outcomes of community arts in Belfast (Creative Legacies, 2011); coordinated and reported on training programmes, seminars and conferences; and compiled reports and publications for a wide range of audiences on participatory and community arts.

Caragh's background is as a visual artist and she has been a member of an artist studio group and collective since 2005 (Array Studios); has a strong knowledge of the local arts sector in Northern Ireland and is a former Board member of Trans Urban Arts and New Lodge Arts in Belfast.