

ARTLINK

PROGRAMME REPORT

ACTIVITIES 2019



ARTLINK

Artlink is an artist-led organisation, formed in 1992, run by a team of professional artists working from onsite studios at the historic and inspiring location of Fort Dunree, Inishowen. Artlink's mission is to link artists to the community and the community to art by developing innovative projects resulting in exhibitions and participatory events. It invests in national and international emerging and professional artists by creating opportunities to develop their creativity and art practice.

In 2019 Artlink continued with its successful programme of artist residencies, this year selected by a panel which included Stephen Lewis of Artlink Board of Directors, Mary Cremin, Director of Void Gallery, Derry/Londonderry, Sara Greavu Head of Public Programmes, CCA Derry~Londonderry and Shelly McDonnell, Communications and Advocacy Officer, Visual Artists Ireland. With over 500 high quality applications the competition was stiff and the panel finally chose Matthew De Kersaint Giraudeau (INTL), Lucy Andrews (IRL), Emily McFarland (IRL) and Christian Skagen (NOR).

In addition to these residencies Artlink began to develop links with other organizations to begin to build a programme of exchange residencies so that Donegal based artists would also have opportunities to develop their practice and at the same time be ambassadors for Donegal. The first of these partnerships involves Street Level Photoworks, Glasgow and Eastern Edge Gallery, St John's, Newfoundland. In November Frank McElhinney came over from Glasgow as the first of these exchanges.

The solo exhibition programme included an eclectic mix of artists, reflecting the diversity of our membership. This programme is an essential element of Artlink's artist development activities, supporting artists at all stages in their careers. Darran McGlynn (Derry), Patrick Clafferty (Donegal) Emma Zukovic (Galway), John Black (Belfast), Deirdre Doherty (Donegal), Mhairi Sutherland (Derry) all benefited from solo shows managed by Artlink. Included in the programme this year were exhibitions by Litten Nystrøm, artist-in-residence in 2017, who returned to show a body of work inspired by and building on her research at Dunree, and Christian Skagen who brought an exhibition of his work with him as part of his residency.

Anaïs Tondeur (FR), artist-in-residence at Artlink in 2018, also returned in 2019, joined by her family. While here she developed a series of cyanotype prints for an exhibition in Paris. Aileen Barr (USA/IRL), also artist-in-residence 2018, came back to install a series of ceramic panels around the site at Fort Dunree.

Because of Aileen Barr's residency we were able to install a ceramic kiln at our studios. Local artist and ceramicist Matthew Porter delivered two courses in ceramics funded by Donegal Education and Training Board's Community Learning Fund. Both courses were fully booked within days of publishing and feedback from participants was glowing. We plan to continue these courses in 2020.

Amach Anseo also benefited from ETB funding. Gardening classes tutored by Michiel Verspuij saw the major improvement of the structures in the garden including additional raised beds and a polytunnel. The garden has been evolving nicely over the past year, hosting a number of community events, including *Born & Bread*, which linked with Donegal Intercultural Platform and *Pizza Party*, in association with The Big Hello and Street Fest.

After the success of *Pages of the Sea* in 2018, Nerve Centre Derry~Londonderry approached Artlink to work on *Drawn from Borders*, a cross border cross community initiative for the *Understanding the Decade of Centenaries* project. *Drawn from Borders* is a collaboration between Artlink, the Nerve Centre and the Tower Museum and brings 20 Artlink Members together for 26 hours of workshops resulting in an exhibition at Fort Dunree and the Tower Museum in 2020.

2019 was a busy and productive year with lots of artists making new work, new links forged, new friendships formed. Artlink has built upon the work of previous years and laid out groundwork for the coming year and beyond. We are delighted and privileged for the continued support of The Arts Council of Ireland and Donegal County Council. We are grateful to Fort Dunree Military Museum for this stunning and inspiring location.



SOIL TO SEED | 6TH-20TH JANUARY

This course was tutored by Michiel Verspuij (from *Boomtree Bees*) with 15+ years experience covering Forestry / Landscape Management, Riparian zone management, nature conservation, Arboriculture, Horticulture and Organic farming. Participants built raised beds and vertical growing structures and erected a polytunnel from a recycled trampoline.



PROJECTS

AMACH ANSEO

GROWING ORGANIC FOOD FOR ALL | 10th FEB - 24th MARCH

What to sow
When and where.
Protective Growing.
Pollinating.
Fertilising.
Developing your garden space.

Led by Michiel Verspuij.

NOURISH & FLOURISH | 7th APRIL - 12th MAY

An invitation to roll up your sleeves and get stuck into gardening with some nice folks who like to drink tea and coffee and put the world to rights, while learning from a master horticulturalist. This six week course in organic growing of fruit, vegetables and flowers was led by Michiel Verspuij.





EXHIBITIONS

PEERS

DARRAN McGLYNN

SALDANHA SUITE

9th - 24th February

Donegal artist Darran McGlynn presented a new body of work, *Peers*, at the Saldhana Gallery, Fort Dunree this February. The work explores the innate desire in each of us to seek pleasure, even at a time when society is seemingly convulsed by endless crises – be that emigration, climate change, pollution, terrorism, political and economic uncertainty or a mental health pandemic. With characteristic humour Darran explores the current issues touching us all, communicated through the distorting prism of digital media, fake news and targeted marketing to impact on our communication, perceptions and mental health.

On the use of language as a medium, Darran states:

“When I’m working with language I treat it sculpturally; constructing works from nuances, double meanings, contextualisation and slips of the tongue (and imagination). Certain words and phrases jump out at me and I manifest them into another form, literally and physically, to capture the zeitgeist. Language is so much more than the bearer of information; it acts as a bridge between the imaginary and reality. It’s in this context that people can add and take away their own interpretations based on their own experiences.”

Darran plays on this juxtaposition of the imaginary and the real, of the commercialisation of the real world for mass consumption and the reality of facing an indifferent nature and environment. He confronts us with an image of ourselves as consumers in an ever more packaged and mediated world, looking for an authenticity of culture, identity and traditions. *Peer* brings together sculpture, language, installation and a souvenir t-shirt that addresses these experiences.



COME WHAT MAY, JUNI

PROJECTS

CREATIVE SCHOOLS

ARRANMORE | FEB-MAY

Facilitated by artists Rebecca Strain and Martha McCulloch this pilot project was funded by Creative Ireland and The Arts Council of Ireland. Participating schools, Athphort National School and Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada on Arranmore Island off the coast of Donegal developed and celebrated their engagement with the arts, empowering them to bring about real change in the way they work. Children and young people played a central role in this process. The artists explored alternative photography techniques with the secondary school pupils over a series of sessions. The artists and pupils went out into the islands landscape to capture an image of island life. The pupils produced a series of Cyanotype prints developed in the schools science room.

At the National School the artists worked with all of the pupils in the school using Keri Smith's *How to be an Explorer of the World* as a methodology for looking and generating a new understanding of their home. Many sessions were spent outdoors searching, collecting, noticing, drawing and printmaking. The children made large scale land art works on the beach and illustrated their stories with found objects in plaster casts.





EXHIBITIONS

CAREER

JUDE CLAFFERTY

SALDANHA SUITE

2nd - 24th March

Jude is an Inishowen based artists. Born in Leicester he moved with his family to Dublin where he gained a degree at the College of Marketing & Design. He then spent 15 years working as a songwriter and composer producing 4 albums, and tours of Ireland, UK, and Europe. He has composed music and soundtracks for a number of Film and TV productions.

Having moved to Clonmany, Co. Donegal, Jude began his visual arts practice in 2014. He is represented by the Warehouse Gallery, Derry where he produced his first solo exhibition *Citizens* in 2016, and by the Doorway Gallery, Dublin 2. Jude entitled the exhibition *Careør*, and selected work produced during the past three years. The title of the exhibition ironically reflects on the fact that, for the past few years, he has been thrust into the emotionally challenging role of full-time carer for his two ageing parents, while still trying to produce art; his father passed away recently, after a long struggle with dementia. Jude found the experience of being a carer "a test of the self, and what comes with that is some self-awareness. We find out who we really are and what is important."





EXHIBITIONS

POST MEMORY

FROM A LOST COUNTRY

EMMA ZUKOVIC

SALDANHA SUITE

30th March - 24th April

"Post Memory describes the relationship that the 'generation after' bears to the personal, collective and cultural trauma of those who came before – to experience they 'remember' only by means of the stories, images and behaviours among which they grew up. But these experiences are transmitted to them so deeply and affectively as to seem to constitute memories in their own right."

(Hirsch, 2008)

Emma's practice is concerned with the disappearance of Yugoslavia, and those who struggled with cultural identity as a direct result. This concern extends to the diaspora displaced by the Yugoslav wars, of which her family counts themselves. "The stories told to us allow us to fabricate utopian images of a place that we may never have personally visited."

Yugoslavia separated in 1992, causing a major shift in the cultural identity of its inhabitants. In learning of the lives and experiences attached to the former country, the artist delves into her own sense of self and affinity with a land that no longer exists. Being of Macedonian descent, and having spent time with former citizens of this collective state, personal considerations play a significant role in the artist's reflections. Somewhere throughout Emma's encounters with the behaviours and stories of Yugoslavia, a 'memory' of another life has been imprinted in her mind. Personal events and memories of early life in Hampshire at the time of turmoil in Macedonia are pivotal to her practice, in which she approaches complex political terrain through the mediums of photography, installation, film and print.



Emma sources inspiration organically from the forgotten land; the recurring image of displayed, botanical-roots is relevant to her work as a symbol of those who were uprooted from their cultural heritage before her. The artist injects a surreal element to the work with the introduction of fog and smoke to the scene. This, alongside erratic etchings of acid on aluminium suggests a process of immolation.

About the artist

Emma Zukovic was born in Lymington, England, in 1993. The artist is now based in Galway, Ireland. She received her BA in Fine Art Printmaking and Contemporary Practice



EVENTS

WITHOUT : WITHIN

8TH APRIL

The *Amazing Grace Festival* and Artlink hosted a family workshop at *The Exchange* , making kites from leaves and natural materials in preparation for the *Without Within* beach art event at Ludden Beach.

On the anniversary of the very day John Newton washed up on the shores of Lough Swilly, Artlink, as part of the *Amazing Grace Festival*, commissioned five artists Amy Carrol, Aileen McGee, Daniel Gallanagh, Rebecca Strain and Catherine Ellis to develop participatory artworks on the beach. Artlink presented an afternoon of creative fun for all the ages at Ludden beach, Buncrana. Members of the public were invited to work with local artists to create sculptures, sand art, music, poems and more, all inspired by the environment and using materials from the shore.



WORKSHOPS

INTRODUCTION TO CERAMICS

**WITH MATTHEW PORTER : 6 SESSIONS
19TH MARCH - 23RD APRIL**

A six week course funded through ETB Community Education Support Programme led by Matthew Porter, designed to introduce the complete novice and more experienced learner to working with clay.

The course involved basic coil and slab-building techniques, pinch pots, a variety of decoration methods and glaze applications. These workshops were oversubscribed within minutes of publication and we have a waiting list of people from the local community waiting to take part in the course.



WORKSHOPS

ON THE AIR

BARRONSCOURT DAYS
10TH APRIL

The Pushkin Theme for this year was *On the Air* and was derived from the element of air, the most fundamental of all our needs. The Pushkin spirit is 'an air', charged with the positivity of creativity. It is a way of 'sensing a new wavelength'. The importance of taking time and finding space to breathe is emphasised and actively promoted throughout the theme. We have forgotten how to use our senses in a world of the indoors and of passivity. Things simply happen to us! People, especially children, are becoming more and more removed from real social interaction. We need to find 'new wavelengths' to communicate on and to help us get back to a more natural way of life. Everything we experience is experienced through our senses. Artist Rebecca Strain worked outside with pupils at Barronscourt encouraging awareness of breath and mark making whilst listening.

WORKSHOPS

JAPANESE TEA BOWLS

WITH NICOLE TONDEUR
24TH & 29TH APRIL

Nicole Tondeur delivered a workshop exploring the Japanese Tea Ceremony (Chawan). Assisted by Anaïs Tondeur, participants fashioned their own unique tea bowl while the significance of the ritual was discussed. The bowls were then fired in traditional 'Raku' fashion with the participation of Mathew Porter, a ceramic artist based in Buncrana and a regular tutor in Artlink's developing ceramics workshop programme.





WORKSHOPS

STORM TAMER

WITH ANAIS TONDEUR
27TH APRIL





Whistle used in English witchcraft to raise the wind,
Photography by Yesenia Thibault

Artist in residence Anaïs Tondeur facilitated a discussion and practical workshop about the wind, introducing a number of objects and practices used over the centuries to control the weather. Participants shared their experiences and relationships to the wind above the cliffs of Fort Dunree and, combining writing and speculative drawing, sketched ways to get closer to wind fluxus and cycles, inventing their own objects/rituals to raise or calm the wind. The texts and drawing produced will form part of Anaïs' research for *The Storm Tamer Collection*, a *Chaoide Collective* project developed in association with Yesenia Thibault Picazo.

EVENTS

PIZZA PARTY

5TH MAY

We built a pizza oven so we had a party!

A free public event to celebrate the huge progress we have made at our community garden at Fort Dunree. We've been working hard since last year and we wanted to share what we do with all the people in our community. We also wanted to thank all of the people who have helped make our wee garden grow.

We were delighted that artist Christine Mackey joined us on the day. Christine initiated the project *The Potting Shed* in 2013-14 as part of the *Resistance and Rebellion Residency*. It is because of the work she and her team carried out that we have the space we have today.





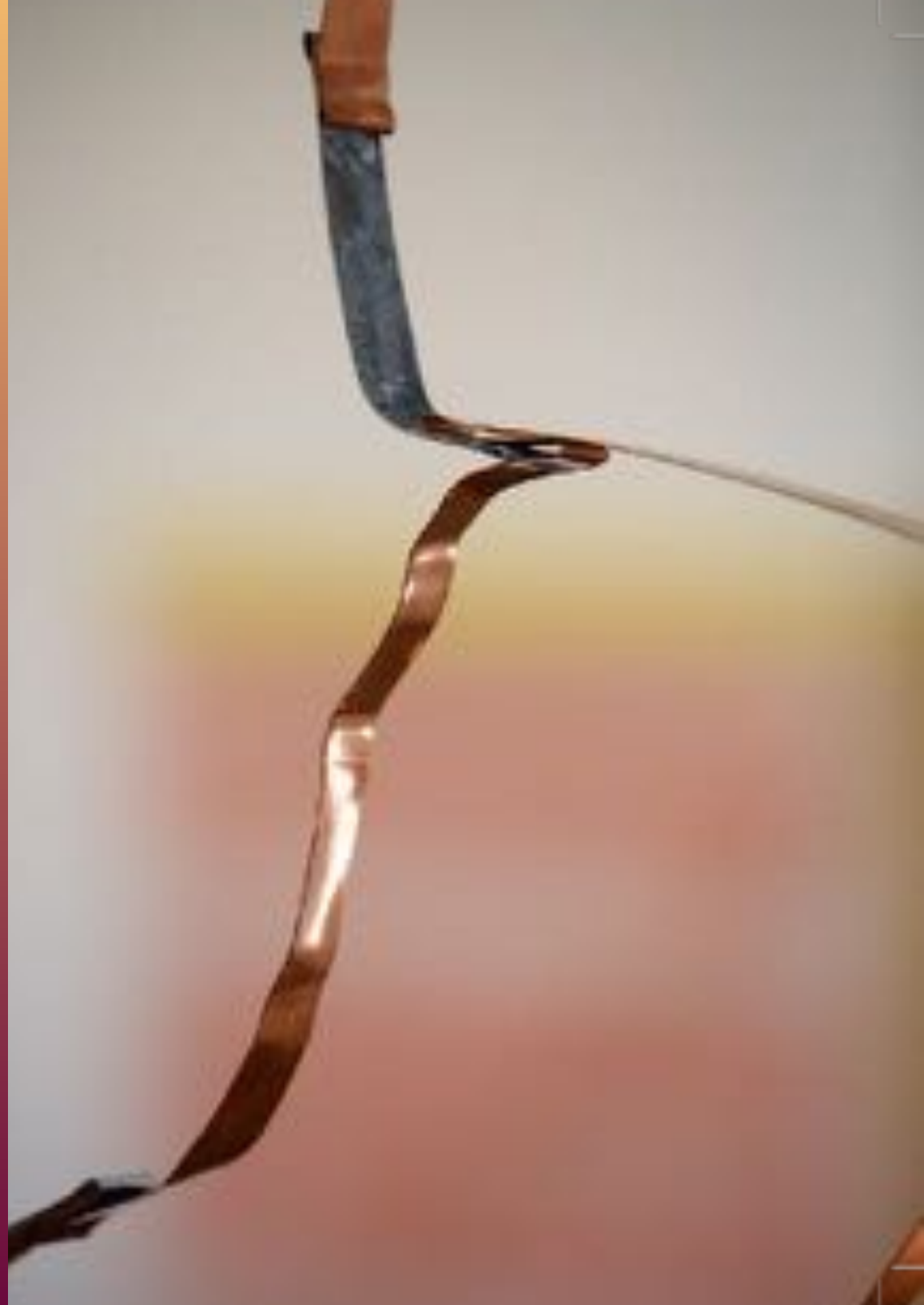
EXHIBITIONS

AFTER MEMORY

LITTEN NYSTRØM

SALDANHA SUITE

5th May - 2nd June



In her exhibition *After Memory*, Litten Nystrøm, artis-in-residence at Artlink in 2017, presented a new body of work unfolding thoughts about the temporal landscape; how a place is remembered and experienced, through mind and body, and how the senses and memory define and re-create a place over and over again.

During her residency she worked with light sensitive emulsion on large sheets of silk to capture the light's intrusion through various openings in buildings on site: structures where a frame was captured in a state of change, losing grip of their strict geometry. The colour palette of the images reflect the sky between sundown and sunset, when many of the images were captured. Their fragile transparent appearance and tactile character hint at the ruins which the photograms depict.

Her previous works, connected to specific sites, have included found pigment from stones and minerals, pigments that occur naturally like subtle colour specks in the terrain. At Fort Dunree a large spectrum of colours, applied at different time periods, covered the interiors of buildings in uneven, torn surfaces. Litten's work is often characterized by a subtle lightness in describing connections between time, matter and place, materialised in works that are both subtle happenings and tangible compositions in one. The works in *After Memory* relate to each other and underline new possibilities in the changing and shape shifting properties which time facilitates.



EVENTS

VISUAL ARTS IRELAND

One-to-One Sessions with Maja Ciric 19th June

In June Visual Artists Ireland invited Artlink members to meet with visiting curator Maja Ciric at their offices in Dublin. Ten members made their way with their portfolios to discuss their practice with the internationally renowned Serbian curator. Taking time to speak to each artist individually about their practice and the direction of their work made the trip very worthwhile for each participant.



EVENTS

FEEL GOOD FORTNIGHT

FOIL RELIEF WORKSHOP

2nd July

Artlink offered a free drop-in workshop in foil relief making for all ages. We gathered foliage from the site at Fort Dunree to make some creative art pieces. It was a beautifully simple process, which produced amazing results, using the humblest of materials - kitchen foil, recycled card, poster paint and steel wool. We were inundated with families arriving to take part and took advantage of the good weather to move the workshop outdoors.



EXHIBITIONS

LEADING THE BLIND

JOHN BLACK

SALDANHA SUITE

8th - 30th June



Artist John Black was invited by Artlink to showcase his latest body of work, *Leading The Blind*.

For this work John spent time researching how a blind and visually impaired group came together over knitting in order to overcome their isolation, improve their own lives and support each other as a community. He weaves this narrative together with the re-telling of historical events from 1939, when blind workers at the Gwynn Institute in Derry launched one of the first known industrial disputes by disabled workers.

Through the act of unearthing and presenting such hidden stories and histories of marginalised communities, Black seeks to bridge historical landscapes and enrich our understanding of the human condition. John Black explains, "This exhibition is an exploration into how we visualise the invisible. Central to the concept of 'Leading the Blind' is the uncovering of forgotten historical events which shine a light on the human condition and our enduring ability to re-adapt and control challenging environments through self-empowerment and a mutual-aid impulse, which is intrinsic to the evolution of mankind."

As part of his recent photographic work Black combines portraiture and landscape in which he both documents and maps the relationships between people and place.



EXHIBITIONS

IDENTITY

MEMBERS SHOW

SALDANHA SUITE

3rd - 24th August





This year Emma Zukovič, from the 126 Gallery in Galway, was invited to put forward a theme and curate the annual members' exhibition. Emma's practice is concerned primarily with the importance and knowledge of identity. Emma asked Artlink members to respond to the theme of *Identity*, be it cultural, regional, personal or otherwise.

Emma Zukovič is a graduate of LSAD and is currently located in Galway, Ireland. Emma is an award winning artist who has exhibited extensively both nationally and internationally, in Ukraine, Russia, Macedonia, Canada and Spain.

RESIDENCIES

MATTHEW DE KERSAINT
GIRAUDAU

AUGUST



Matthew de Kersaint Giraudeau creates sculptures, drawings, performances and films. His work addresses abject materials, negative affective states, and the ambiguities of language and objects. His work examines affects, bodies and language through 'ugly' techniques and formal qualities. These paintings and animations incorporate words, objects and sometimes a character he calls *The Creep* who facilitates and is subjected to strange processes that allude to an allegorical or mythical function.

His latest animations are made with the ugliest animation technique from recent history - Flash animation, a style last used in the early days of the internet, before bandwidth rose to allow for streaming video. As he developed these animations, he began to make 'digital paintings', creating compositions based on Medieval religious painting which to modern eyes often appear 'ugly' or naive because of the different pictorial conventions in that era.

For this residency, he proposed to make new paintings and animations, developing the work he has been focusing on over the past few years. He visited sites of interest in the local area such as old monastic sites, as well as speaking to local historians and artists to develop a better understanding of how the history of Irish Medieval art is embedded physically in the landscape of Donegal, and how that history is represented in contemporary culture.

Matthew was an Associate of Open School East, 2013-2014. He runs *The Bad Vibes Club*, which is a research project into Morbid Ethics, runs *Radio Anti* with Ross Jardine, and collaborates with Ben Jeans Houghton as the *ARKA* group. He lives and works in London.

During his residency Matthew lead a pointillism workshop, delivered a talk on his work alongside local sculptor and historian John McCarron and held 1 to 1 sessions for artists giving them feedback on their practice.



EVENTS

BORN & BREAD

14th September



Dún na nGall (Fort of the Foreigners) is hugely privileged to have a diverse population with a breadth of experiences and traditions, yet we rarely have an opportunity to learn about the many customs and skills that people in our community practice. Artlink welcomed the entire community to *Born & Bread*, a feel good event aimed at promoting inter-cultural dialogue and cooperation among different generations and ethnic groups as all kneaded together around the same table, while sharing skills, stories and traditions, learning from each other and enriching awareness, understanding and respect. The event was designed to create a friendly space for families and individuals to come together and have fun whilst learning about each other through making.

We chose to work with the theme of bread because bread is a staple food popular around the world and in every household in Ireland and is one of the world's oldest foods, prepared by the simple process of baking a dough of flour and water.

The virtually infinite combinations of different flours and differing proportions of ingredients, has resulted in the wide variety of types, shapes, sizes, and textures available around the world. Bread has come to take on significance beyond mere nutrition, standing as a

metaphor for hospitality and welcome, evolving into a fixture in religious rituals, secular cultural life and language. The event was been organised with the guidance of Donegal Intercultural Platform, a voluntary organisation made up of individual members and affiliated organisations who are committed to building inclusion and equality in Donegal, promoting human rights and opposing discrimination and racism.

Born & Bread used Amach Anseo's newly built wood-fired oven alongside an open firepit where griddle and hotplate breads were prepared alongside traditional Irish soda bread. Through conversations with Donegal Intercultural Platform we welcomed chefs from Syria, Billal Abd El Jalil and Nadine Berri, who demonstrated how to make flat breads and a variety of fillings to enhance the flavour. Children and adults had a go at kneading and rolling out the bread and watched it bubble up on the hot plate on the fire pit before tasting the fresh warm bread. Local baker Gerard Moynes, known widely for his soda bread which is sold at Molly's Kitchen in Carndonagh used the wood fired oven to bake traditional Irish breads. A lively character, he thrived on sharing recipes and stories of bread making. Participants enjoyed tasting the fresh breads and jams and taking down recipes on greaseproof paper.

An aspiring music star Nicolas Armalick from the Roma community entertained participants with ambient keyboard music throughout the event.

The children broke the language barrier with their interest in the garden wildlife. While the adults drank tea and filled their bellies with delicious bread the children made a competition of collecting the most caterpillars. The Tuscan Kale and Brussels Sprouts were saved by the enthusiasm of the young children who gathered every single caterpillar from the garden, proudly showing off their findings off to each other. They took their pets home in boxes along with produce from the garden to show their friends at school on Monday.





RESIDENCIES

LUCY ANDREWS

SEPTEMBER



Lucy Andrews makes sculptures, installations and architectural interventions. She combines organic and industrial materials to form dynamic arrangements in which the passage of time is incorporated or alluded to. Recently she's been working with dust, soot, liquid chlorophyll, rocks, and molten plastic, addressing the provenance and longevity of these materials and probing their fundamental nature as well as the concept of nature itself. The work communicates a sense of contingency through forms that are fluid, amorphous and yielding, revealing the agency of 'matter out of place' in both human and non-human systems.

She proposed to use the residency to try out ideas for a new body of work. This will engage intimately with the landscape of Dunree by focusing on the fallible shifting layers of its physical surface, both architectural and geological. She is developing a casting process which traces the form of various terrains while also subsuming part of each into the form of removable 'skins'. This process engages with the legacy of land art, and specifically Robert Smithson's dialectic of Site and Non-Site; a displacement of part of a site, which goes on to become 'a three dimensional map' creating both a presence and an absence.

During her residency Lucy gave a public talk about her work and plans for the residency at Artlink.

Lucy Andrews is a graduate of NCAD Dublin, and the Sandberg Institute, Amsterdam. She was born in Stoke-on-Trent, UK and now works in Ireland and Belgium. Recent exhibitions include: *Outgrowths* at Leitrim sculpture Centre (2019) *I send my love along the Boyne*, Solstice arts centre, (2019) *And the days run away like wild horses over the hills*, Scoil Lorcáin, Dublin (2019) In 2018 she was resident at the Bemis Centre for Contemporary Arts, USA.



Photo: Denis Mortell



PROJECTS

DRAWN FROM BORDERS

Drawn from Borders is a free creative engagement programme exploring key moments in Ireland's history, delivered by Artlink, Nerve Centre and the Tower Museum.

This has provided Artlink members with an opportunity to look creatively at the events of 100 years ago, the partition of Ireland, borders and Brexit and to generate a creative output in response. The resulting work will form part of a new exhibition, to be shown at Fort Dunree and in the Tower Museum in Spring 2020.

The project will support the artists participating in the project to research and develop work collectively and independently. A key element of this is to meet face to face as often as possible and to keep in touch online through a website www.drawnfromborders.com in the intervening periods so that we support each others' development.

The programme is part of the *Understanding the Decade of Centenaries* project being delivered by the Nerve Centre in partnership with the Tower Museum and supported by the European Union's PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)



RESIDENCIES

AILEEN BARR

AUGUST

During her residency at Artlink in 2018 Aileen Barr created artwork in response to the natural environment of Dunree, engaging Artlink members in a series of hands on workshops. The workshops included exploring clay and tile using text, print and relief carving. In August 2019 Aileen returned with several panels for installation at various locations throughout the site. These are permanent artworks at Fort Dunree and will be accompanied by a walking trail.

Aileen studied Craft Design at the National College of Art and Design, Dublin, specializing in Ceramics and has been creating handmade tile projects for the public arena for the past 22 years. As well as establishing Artlink (with Marie Barrett and Lisa Spillane), she led a number of community based Public Art projects in Donegal through Artist in Residence in Schools projects and Artist in the Community projects before emigrating to the United States in 2002.



EXHIBITIONS PROGRESSION

DEIRDRE DOHERTY

SALDANHA SUITE

7th September - 3rd October





Progression was a retrospective which reflects Deirdre Doherty's artistic journey through the years.

Deirdre's seascapes, inspired by the Donegal coastline she has lived beside all her life, are well known locally. She unfailingly captures the untamed character of the sea and ever changing skies in the North West because she draws on her personal connection to this landscape.

Perhaps less well known are her figurative works and fine art prints, but she approaches these by seeking the same emotional connection to her subject matter. Deirdre says, *"My figure paintings and Carborundum prints are not photo realistic but semi-abstract and try to capture the essence of someone and their emotional state".*

This retrospective exhibition brings together a wide variety of Deirdre's work produced over a number of years, embracing a variety of themes. In all her work there is a characteristic spontaneity; an emotional energy in the dash of a line or splash of colour. Deirdre explains this positive energy in her work as a reflection of her process, *"painting makes me happy. I rarely have a fixed notion of how a painting is going to turn out, it just evolves. I like to create paintings that speak for themselves on an emotional as well as a visual level."*

The background of the entire page is a close-up, slightly blurred photograph of several film reels and strips of film. The reels are of various sizes and colors, including black, white, and red. The film strips are coiled and layered, creating a sense of depth and texture. The lighting is soft, highlighting the metallic and plastic surfaces of the reels and the translucent quality of the film.

RESIDENCIES

EMILY MCFARLAND

OCTOBER

Artlink's artist-in-residence throughout October, Emily McFarland, uses video and installation to reflect on the construction of shared cultural narratives and identity in cinema, television and visual culture. Often through citing a referent - borrowing from an assemblage of film clips, imagery and cultural artefacts - she re-stages structures and narratives in order to examine and re-appropriate articulations of cultural authority and representation. Emily is interested in renegotiating ideological structures of cinema using methods associated with the cut-up as a tool to recode cinematic conventions. Most recently, incorporating text, video and spatial interventions, the work is often generated from one or two significant reference points - films, plays and cultural ephemera, which is revisited and translated through an editing process. The aesthetic and political qualities of these sources are used a framework to trace or unravel particular histories, identities, communities and stories.

During the residency Emily developed a new 16mm film loosely based on *Translations*, a three-act play by Irish playwright Brian Friel. Located in BaileBeag, a fictional village in Co. Donegal, the play is set in the year 1833, a time marked by the beginning of more active intervention into Ireland by Britain. The play focuses on themes of language issues, post-colonialism, identity and culture which play out in the isolated community and hedge school in rural Co.Donegal. In spite of the rural isolation, tales of Greek goddesses are as common as the local oral histories and in addition to Irish, Latin and Greek are spoken in the local hedge schools too. *Translations* uses language as a tool to explore the inherent problems of communication and narratives which are lost and potentially gained in each act of name place translation, including lingual, cultural and generational, and is a starting point for the new work.

Emily McFarland is an artist working in Belfast and Glasgow. She studied at The National College of Art and Design (IRL) before completing an MFA at The Glasgow School of Art. She is currently a recipient of the Freeland's Artist Programme at PS2, and a previous recipient of the major Arts Council of Northern Ireland ACES Award (2017-18) in partnership with LUX and Artist Moving Image Northern Ireland; Culture Ireland Fund (2016 & 2017) and was awarded the Creative LAB residency at The Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow (2018), and Digital Art Studios Residency, Belfast (2015). She is a co-founder of Soft Fiction Projects, an artist-run organisation devoted to producing digital and printed matter, providing a platform for new artworks, collaborations, writing and exhibitions, and is a former co-director of Catalyst Arts Gallery, Belfast



EXHIBITIONS

GENESIS LOST

MHAIRI SUTHERLAND

SALDANHA SUITE

26th October - 16th November





Mhairi Sutherland has explored military archaeologies and their relationship with photography over a number of locations and projects; from Loughs Swilly, Foyle and Belfast Lough to the east and west coasts of Scotland, and more recently as far afield as Linköping in Sweden. Her approach draws both on personal experience and collaborations and partnerships using archives, experimental photography and drawing as connected strands of a larger narrative. Her approach embraces contradiction, chance and association.

Mhairi first came across the main focus of *Genesis Lost* whilst researching the landscape of derelict military airfields around Lough Foyle. Part of the former Limavady Airbase stood out amongst the more conventional conflict architecture; an isolated, bitumen-black spherical structure, suggestive of an extra-terrestrial form, marked it out as having a particular purpose. The building was an anti-aircraft training dome, conceived, designed and built in order to train WW2 gunners to shoot down enemy aircraft. Over 40 were built throughout the UK in the 1940's and this is the only one remaining in Northern Ireland.

Genesis Lost included HD video, a unique artists' book with hand printed analogue and digital photographic prints, cyanotype and drawing, and sculptural pieces of gilded wood.

RESIDENCIES

FRANK MCELHINNEY

NOVEMBER

Frank McElhinney spent the month of November with us at Fort Dunree. Frank was the first of our exchange artist photographers from Glasgow, as part of a new collaborative exchange initiative with Street Level Photoworks.

His artistic practice focuses on migration and nationhood. Using different types of photography including aerial images (making use of kites and drones), pinhole (making his own primitive cameras), digital and analogue.

For the last four years Frank has been researching and making work about Scottish migration with a focus on the Highland Clearances. *The Far Field*, comprises four photographic series: Abandoned settlements in the highlands and islands of Scotland; The Atlantic coast; Scottish settlements in Nova Scotia; Deep space. This project began in response to the 'migration crisis' of 2015 and reflects on a time in the nineteenth century when migration both from and to Scotland had a huge social impact. The opportunity to take part in the residency programme at Artlink was very timely as it allowed him to expand this project to explore migration from Donegal to Scotland and elsewhere.

The themes he considered during his residency at Artlink include migration to Scotland and the 'new world' but also the causes of migration. He visited sites associated with the Great Hunger and subsequent evictions including Doagh, and Arranmore. Although informed by historical events the work is an investigation of what Donegal is as a place today.

Frank says, "*My work is typically objective but sometimes the personal raises burning questions. When visiting cleared settlements in the highlands and islands of Scotland I've always asked myself the question: where did all the people go? Lately however I've started asking myself the question: where did we come from? Although Donegal is my ancestral homeland I do not know it well. Using my camera as a tool of investigation I would like to immerse myself in the landscape of Donegal and discover more about this place where my family came from and then share these discoveries with others through my photographs*".

Frank studied Fine Art Photography at Glasgow School of Art. He was awarded first prize in the Jill Todd Photographic Award (2014), the Alice Duncan Travel Prize (2014) and was Creative Scotland Open Fund recipient in 2019. He has undertaken a number of residencies including Shona Projects, Eilean Shona (2015); Lythe Arts Centre, Caithness (2016); Cove Park, Rosneath Peninsula (2017) and RSA Residencies for Scotland, Isle of Coll (2019). Recent exhibitions include *A Broken Line*, The Auld Kirk Museum, Kirkintilloch (2017); *Postcards from Scotland*, Nida International Photography Symposium, Lithuania and Centre Photographique, Marseille (2018) and *Timefield*, Platform, Easterhouse, Glasgow (2019)

Frank presented a talk on his practice and the project he began to develop on his residency and led a workshop in pinhole photography and solargraphy.

RESIDENCIES

CHRISTIAN SKAGEN

NOVEMBER



Since 2007 Artlink, in association with Donegal County Council's Arts Office, has been building links with Vesterålen, in northern Norway, and East Iceland to explore the potential of working with other artistic communities in similarly remote, rural settings. Continuing with this developing relationship Artlink hosted Christian Skagen, an artist from Vesterålen, as artist-in-residence at Fort Dunree.

During his residency Christian delivered a talk on his working processes and led a workshop in Japanese knife sharpening, a process that is integral to his practice. He also shipped an exhibition of his drawings to Fort Dunree.

Christian's approach is slow and methodical, almost meditative, a pursuit of absolute calm where thoughts are stilled and the mind is truly quiet.

The deceptively simple and incredibly intricate small-scale drawings stand in opposition to a world of fast-paced and ephemeral image making. With no obvious external subject matter, these images exist purely as themselves and invite, quietly, that we simply look at these marks on the paper without the need for external reference.

For the past 15 years Christian has been working with his partner Ragnhild Adelheid Holten. They have an ancient property in Stokmarknes, Vesterålen which they have been gradually restoring. It contains their home and two studios. The old house, though demanding, has in many ways given them independence. Ragnhild paints and Christian draws. Their home and studios are their primary mode of work and interaction with the public.



Drawing No. 504 | 27.05.2019



EXHIBITIONS

DRAWINGS

CHRISTIAN SKAGEN

SALDANHA SUITE

26rd November - 1st December





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