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Michelle Browne
reflects on the Inter Art College
Placement Programme

Learning

Generosity and Exchange



Learning through Doing: The Inter Art College Learning Development Programme and Collaborative Arts

‘What matters is the exemplary character of production, which is able first to induce other producers to produce, and second, to put an improved apparatus at their disposal. And this apparatus is better the more consumers it is able to turn into producers – that is readers or spectators into collaborators’

Walter Benjamin – ‘The Author as Producer’¹

Create has an interest in this notion of an improved apparatus that Benjamin talks about. In their promotion of a genre of art making that engenders cultural inclusion and through the Inter Art College Learning Development Programme, Create invests in the development of skills around collaborative practice. In 2008 they are managing this programme for students from National College of Art and Design, Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin Institute of Technology and Tisch School of Performing Arts, New York University. Beginning at an early stage in the career of young artists and engaging with a variety of groups, Create is equipping both artist and community to explore the possibilities of collaboration.

As many of these young artists are coming from a studio based practice, which focuses on the development of an individual mode of expression, the move into collaborative practice will pose many questions and will challenge received notions of individual expression. Much contemporary art practice in Ireland and internationally embrace notions of co-authorship of work and revel in the dynamics that it brings to the creative process. As philosopher Michel Foucault proposes in his writings might we be moving to a future where the artist is not considered the definitive source of meaning in a work – a future time when we would:

No Longer hear the questions that have been rehashed for so long: who really spoke? Is it really he and not someone else? With what authenticity or originality?²

These issues are charged and of great importance to those engaging in collaborative practice. The participants of Create’s Learning Development Programme have the opportunity to actively explore and negotiate some of these ideas and to test out approaches to collaborative arts making. With this testing is the possibility of failure. This is an important luxury, where trust can be built up with the communities as they take a journey into the unknown. This generosity in exchange is fundamental to the success of the programme.

*Image (L-R): Dagmar (NCAD, Erasmus student), Wendy and Douglas.
Community: RADE*



Image (L-R): Wendy, Ken and David. Community: RADE

So where does the learning lie in collaborative practice? For those arts students engaged in this programme it is through doing. Invaluable experience is being gained through this opportunity. Participants are asked to think outside of the traditional modes of art making and to consider a variety of issues that are of importance to much contemporary art practice. More and more we see calls for artists to engage with ‘communities’ through public art commissions and residencies. The Inter Art College Learning Development Programme creates a space for students to gain experience in this area enabling them to confidently work in this field in their professional practice in the future and thus enriching the experience of all collaborators in this arts practice in Ireland.

Providing a template of inter college collaboration, community collaboration and a model of experiential learning the programme equips students with a practical knowledge and skill set from which to consider the arena of collaborative arts as a viable professional arts practice. Moreover it provides a genuine opportunity to test out the theoretical terrain – from Claire Bishop’s ‘The Social Turn: Collaboration and its Discontents’³ to Miwon Kwon⁴ and Grant Kester’s⁵ contested readings of ‘community’ and the politics and ethics of an artists collaborative engagement – in ways that are unexpected and surprise, and ways that cannot necessarily be guided by theory alone. In this way the experiential learning of the placement programme enhances and emboldens an arts student's study, providing a critical and supported pathway to professional collaborative arts practice.

As a former placement student I value the experience garnered from the programme that has provided me with building blocks from which to develop my professional practice in this field.

A collective show will take place in ThisisnotaShop 26 Benburb street, Dublin 7, 30 April - 3 May, 11-7pm.

The show will unpick and challenge assumptions around gallery space and exhibition.



Image: Bernie. Community: Ballybough Community Centre



Image: Christine. Community: RADE



Image: Douglas, Ken and Eoghan (RADE staff member). Community: RADE



Image: Saad. Community: SPIRASI

¹ Benjamin, W. ‘The Author as Producer’ in *Walter Benjamin Selected Writings Vol.2 1927-1934* (ed.) Jennings, M. Eiland, H. & Smith, G., 1999, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, p.777.

² Foucault, M. ‘What is an Author?’ (1969) in *Foucault A Reader* (1984) (ed.) Robinson, P. New York, Pantheon. p. 120.

³ Bishop, C. ‘The Social Turn: Collaboration and its Discontents’ *Art Forum* February 2006, pp.178-183 Claire Bishop

⁴ Kwon, M. *One Place After Another: Site Specific Art and Locational Identity*, Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press.

⁵ Kester, G. *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, Berkeley, University of California Press.

Michelle Browne is a visual artist and curator of Out of Site festival.

Welcome to Create News

This is the fourth edition of Create News. Create News is published twice a year in March and September. It is sent free of charge, features a guest writer and offers the latest information on Create events and services.

If you do not wish to receive further editions, please write or email us at info@create-ireland.ie. You will automatically receive copies unless you ask us to remove your details from the list.

If you would like to receive a personal copy of Create News please email info@create-ireland.ie and include details of name, address and postcode.

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Continuing Professional Development - The Bubble Video Podcasting Workshop

As part of Create's ongoing commitment to support professional development for artists working collaboratively with communities, Create will be scheduling a number of workshops this year. The first workshop, in partnership with Project Arts Centre, will be on video podcast production and distribution. It will be conducted by Tim Duggan and John Callaghan of Mercury Boy. The 1 day workshop will run on the 17th April from 10.30 -12.30 and 2-5 at Project Arts, Dublin.

To book a place, email box-office@project.ie or telephone Project Arts Centre's box office at 01-881 9613/14.

Cost €25 (incl light lunch) Reduced rate €15 (Create and Project Arts Centre members)

Trinity House and Create

Create on behalf of the Irish Youth Justice Service and Trinity House, Children's Detention School, Lusk appointed three visual artists Dominic Thorpe, Ivan Connolly and Niamh O'Connor to work collaboratively with the residents. All artists are supported throughout the residency by Create and funding is provided through the Irish Youth Justice Service.

Certificate in Youth Arts

Create has been working in partnership with the National Youth Arts Programme on the management of a placement programme for the NUI Certificate in Youth Arts since 2004.

The placement programme provides participants with the opportunity to gain experiential learning within a youth arts projects, actively working with an artist on a project or within an arts organisation.

Participating organisations to date include: The Beat Initiative, Belfast; St Patrick's Day Festival; Dance Ireland; Smashing Times; IMMA; Breaking Ground; Stage Craft Youth Theatre, Droichead Youth Theatre; Community Arts Factory, Ballymun; Waterford Youth Arts; Roundabout Youth Theatre, Ballymun and the Tower of Babel, Calypso. For further information on Create's Learning Development Programmes contact Deirdre Healy, 01-4736600, or email research@create-ireland.ie

Cultural Diversity and the Arts Research Project

Create has been appointed by The Arts Council and the National Action Plan Against Racism, Dept of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to manage the research and consultation phase to shape policy on the arts and cultural diversity.

The project was formally launched on Feb 21st at the Arts Council. The lead researchers for the project are Rustom Bharucha, international arts consultant, The Change Institute, UK, Drs Suzanna Chan and Daniel Jewesbury, University of Ulster and Deirdre Healy, Create. The research advisory panel are Dr Ronit Lentin, Trinity College, Dr Alice Feldman, UCD and Piaras MacÉinrí, UCC. The research will focus on the range of cultural activity being undertaken by minority ethnic arts practitioners and cultural groups as well as the participation and attitudes to the arts amongst Ireland's culturally diverse population. The research and consultation phases will take place throughout 2008 and a report and recommendations will be presented to Arts Council and DJELR at the end of the year.

If you wish to be consulted as part of this research process, please contact Sarah Tuck, at Create, 01-4736600, email director@create-ireland.ie



Brokentaklers (Gary Keegan and Feidlim Cannon) production of Track, site-specific performance February 2008 a journey into the heart of intercultural Dublin. Photographer: Keshet Zur

Artist in the Community Scheme First Round 2008

Create manages the Artist in the Community Scheme on behalf of The Arts Council. In the first round this year, Create received 32 applications from a broad geographical spread of counties with successful applicants from Cork, Mayo, Galway, Sligo, Wexford and Dublin. The selection panel included: George Seremba, playwright and actor; Deirdre McCrea, Chief Executive, Music Network; Liz Burns, Development Manager, Fire Station Artists Studios, Aileen Lambert, visual artist; Kate Kennelly, arts officer, Kerry County Council.

Successful applicants for Round One in 2008 were:

Phase 1 - Research + Development Awards (artist and community, artform, location)

Debbie Hunt, Corrach Bui Residents' Association, visual arts, Galway; Joe Brennan, Ramelton community youth group, theatre, Donegal; Vanessa Fielding, Stonybatter youth project, theatre, Dublin; Angela Anderson & Denise French, Mountwood Fitzgerald Housing Project, visual arts, Dublin; Fiona McGeown, Globe House, theatre, Sligo; Daragh O'Toole, schools, music, Dublin; Mary Ellen Conlon, youth, theatre, Mayo.

Phase 2 - Project Realisation Awards (community, artist, artform, location)

Young people, Owen Boss, theatre, Dublin; young writers, Billy Roche, literature, Wexford; members of the Deaf community, Donal Gallagher, theatre, Cork.

For further information on the Scheme contact Katherine Atkinson, 01-4736600, or email support@create-ireland.ie.

The next deadline for 2008 is 29 June.