



# LIVING ARTS PROJECT

## ARTS IN EDUCATION

30 MARCH – 1 MAY 2024

In 2013, the Living Arts Project was established as an artist-in-residency scheme in primary schools, supporting the existing partnership between the Arts Department of Wexford County Council and Wexford Arts Centre. The aim of this project is to provide children with an understanding and appreciation of contemporary visual art. The Living Arts Project exhibition represents a selection of work produced by the participating primary schools and offers pupils a chance to see their work presented in a professional gallery.

The following artists and schools were selected for the 2023-24 programme: **Caoimhe Dunn** and **Ilaria Berardi** with **Ballymurn NS** (Enniscorthy), **Deirdre Meehan-Buttimer** and **Mandy Galvin** with **Gaelscoil Moshíológ** (Gorey), **Kate Murphy** and **Kate Tyrrell** with **St. Aidan's NS** (Enniscorthy), and **David Begley** and **Hanneke van Ryswyk** with **St. Anne's NS** (Rathangan).

By learning new techniques and embracing creative practices, pupils were encouraged to experiment and play, discovering their own artistic potential. Themes from mythology, folklore and the history of ancient Ireland were explored through mixed media, sculpture, printmaking, painting and drawing processes. This has resulted in a playful and experimental exhibition filled with storytelling and joyful investigation.

A mentorship programme ran alongside each residency which helped to ensure the effectiveness of the project while also providing a positive critique for the resident artists. In addition, it served to refine methods of engaging with the children throughout each residency. The mentors involved were **Frank Abruzzese**, **Hilary Fennell**, **Martina Furlong**, **Eamonn Maxwell**, **Lar O'Toole**, **Emma Roche**, **Karla Sánchez Zepeda**, **Sarah Scallon**, and **Gerda Teljeur**.

The Arts Department of Wexford County Council and Wexford Arts Centre would like to take this opportunity to thank all schools, artists and mentors involved in the project, and the local community for their support and interest in the project to date.



The Living Arts Project is a partnership initiative between the Arts Department of Wexford County Council, Wexford Arts Centre and the Arts Council.

**Ballymurn National School, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford**  
With thanks to Principal Emer O'Gorman, and Teachers Grainne Kehoe and Nicola Sheenan.

Artists **Caoimhe Dunn** and **Ilaria Berardi**

Artists Caoimhe Dunn and Ilaria Berardi facilitated their residency with the fourth, fifth and sixth classes at Ballymurn National School, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

Throughout their residency, Caoimhe, Ilaria and the pupils took time for a short walk during many of the sessions at the school. The aim was to take a moment out and pay closer attention to the world around them, observing details of the natural world closely and documenting them. In the classroom, they explored different mediums, including mark-making, working with textiles and printing, and shadow puppetry, often using the found objects and natural materials collected during their excursions.

### CAOIMHE DUNN

Caoimhe Dunn is a Wexford based artist with nearly 20 years of experience working in the arts. An IADT graduate of both Fine Art and Model Making, she has been involved for many years in street arts and spectacle, community, and youth arts.

Caoimhe is continually fascinated by science, history, and folklore and takes inspiration from these subjects for her work. Her street theatre show 'A Snail's Tale', premiered at Spraoi Festival in Waterford, and was inspired by the margins of medieval manuscripts and the fascinating biology of snails.

She is a recipient of an Arts Council Project Award in Street Arts and Spectacle 2022, an Artlinks Bursary 2022, an Agility Award 2021, and Wexford County Council's Tyrone Guthrie Bursary 2022.

**St. Anne's National School, Rathangan, Co. Wexford**  
With thanks to Principal John Ormonde, and Teachers Ita Cunningham and Lesley Power.

Artists **David Begley** and **Hanneke van Ryswyk**

Artists David Begley and Hanneke van Ryswyk facilitated their residency with senior infants and fourth class at St. Anne's National School in Rathangan, Co. Wexford.

The process-led residency began with charcoal drawing. Children explored mark-making, tone, line and shape, and drew still lives and portraits from observation. In painting, they worked in colour, learned to mix a range of colours using primaries, made washes, pressed tonks, made playful collages, and experimented with pattern and texture.

The pupils made botanical inks and, inspired by Medieval bestiaries, created magical insects, animals, plants and landscapes in colour. This gave the children the opportunity to combine visual art, handwriting and language skills.



### DAVID BEGLEY

David Begley is a visual artist, writer, and arts educator. He has exhibited his animations, drawings, paintings, monotype prints and films nationally and internationally since 1996.

David has held solo exhibitions at Wexford Arts Centre, The Linenhall, Mayo, Cross Gallery, Dublin, and was Ancient Connections artist-in-residence (Ferns, Co. Wexford) from 2020-2023. His work can be found in the Collections of Wexford County Council, OPW, EPA, INTO, and Contemporary Irish Art Society.

David has facilitated many projects for children including *Drawing as a Universal Language*, *The Wexford Whale* animation, and *The Monk's Garden* - a visual art, heritage and gardening project.

David's documentary *The Keepers* (2023) was selected for EKO Film Festival, Czech Republic, Inheritance Environmental Festival, UK, and Louth International Film Festival in 2023.

### HANNEKE VAN RYSWYK

Hanneke van Ryswyk is a Welsh-Dutch visual artist living on the Wexford coast. She paints the natural world, its vulnerability, beauty, and the effects of extreme weather on land and sea.

She has held eight Irish solo exhibitions and has been selected to exhibit in the UK, Australia and nationally at the RHA, Dublin, VISUAL Carlow, The Model, Sligo, The Lavit Gallery, Cork and at Wexford County Council.

She has been awarded residencies at Cill Rialaig, The Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Kultivera - Tranås, Sweden, and has been awarded Visual Arts Bursaries by ArtLinks in 2014 and 2019. Her work can be found in the Collections of the Office of Public Works and Wexford County Council.



**Gaelscoil Moshíológ, Gorey, Co. Wexford**  
 With thanks to Principal Aodhagán Swords and Múinteoir Dáithí and Múinteoir Clodagh.

**Artists Deirdre Meehan-Buttimer and Mandy Galvin**

Artists Deirdre Meehan-Buttimer and Mandy Galvin facilitated their residency with fifth and sixth classes at Gaelscoil Moshíológ, Gorey, Co. Wexford.

The residency explored Neolithic Ireland, circa 4000BC to 2000BC, focusing on "Brú-na-Bóinne" (the Boyne Valley tombs at Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth). "Neo" means new or revived form and "lithic" is 'stone like' or relating to stone. During this period, farming replaced the hunting and gathering economy with people building communities of place. Subterranean chambers and tunnels were built as precision timepieces. Kerbstone drawings and patterns from this timeframe inspired the children's monotype prints on rocks, rice and linen-effect papers.

Until forests were cleared for cultivation, wild boar were widespread and wolves ("Na mic tíre eadh" - Sons of the land), roamed freely. These inspired mythological creatures as the children explored abstraction and realism, movement and context, utilising Visual Thinking Strategies to ensure meaningful engagement. The collaborative pieces depict "na scéalta miotaseolaíochta" - the mythological cycle of tales.



DEIRDRE MEEHAN-BUTTNER

Deirdre Meehan-Buttimer graduated from the Wexford Campus School of Art & Design, SETU, in 2016 and successfully transitioned to build a strong participatory arts practice.

Deirdre was awarded Creative Communities Awards by Wexford County Council to undertake projects with Wexford Women's Refuge exploring coercive control, with adult service users of Windmill Therapeutic exploring intellectual disability isolation, and with Soroptimists International (Wexford) exploring gender-based violence. She has also been the lead artist on the Living Arts Project in 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23.

Deirdre's practice is experimental in nature, driven by an intuitive and curious approach. Her processes have a strong photographic/drawing element, using inks and mixed media. She uses non-standard surfaces and everyday objects as mark-making tools, and facilitates others to narrate their stories in a collective, collaborative way, using their everyday possessions.

MANDY GALVIN

Mandy Galvin's journey into the arts began while living and travelling in her bus; it was accidental and organic, connecting with various creative outlets but primarily with contemporary circus' *Mutoid Waste Company* and *Archaos*, forerunner to the now better-known *Cirque du Soleil*. It was with the aforementioned that working with metal became a passion, learning to weld and fabricate, gaining qualifications along the way.

Mandy graduated from Plymouth College of Art and Design in the UK in 2000, where she studied Metal Design and related subjects. Stemming from this, she has been creating sculptures and bespoke furniture mainly through commissions. Painting has been a constant in her life mostly as a way to relax but she has also had success exhibiting.

Currently she works at Wexford Arts Centre which has a full vibrant programme in all the arts. It was here she started facilitating children's art classes and loved it, so therefore the Living Arts Project was a natural progression.



KATE TYRRELL

Kate Tyrrell has been an educator and practising craftswoman for over a decade. She had a solo exhibition titled *Found* at Presentation Arts Centre in 2021.

Kate's work has roots in her home by the sea and takes on a therapeutic nature. Seaweed, shells and organic matter are collected and go through an industrial curing process before use. Her process is habitual, reminiscent of the collecting habits of an animal preparing for winter. This process of collecting, taking home and being with the items, gives her work an unusual, familiar, almost historic quality.

Kate's experience to date working with children and community groups has benefited her in many ways and allowed her to engage fully in the Assistant Artist strand of the Living Arts Project.

**St. Aidan's National School, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford**  
 With thanks to Principal Frank Murphy and Teachers Emer Dunne and Maura Shanahan.

**Artists Kate Murphy and Kate Tyrrell**

Artists Kate Murphy and Kate Tyrrell facilitated their residency with the third classes at St. Aidan's National School, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford.

The children used drawing to begin their residency and examined the work of artists who use pattern, such as Gustav Klimt, Yayoi Kusama and Jen Stark. They learned about pattern-making and built a notebook of practice pieces and ideas. They then used these new skills to bring abstract, patterned pieces to life with colour, using Posca acrylic markers.

Stemming on from the theme of pattern and using the children's own fascination with creatures and characters from games and films, they looked at the Mexican folk-art phenomenon of *Allebrijes*; colourful fantastical creatures usually sculpted in paper mache. The children brought their patterns from 2D into 3D with a diverse range of influences and imagination.



KATE MURPHY

Kate Murphy graduated from the National College of Art & Design in 2000 with an Honour's Degree in Fine Art. She has held a number of solo exhibitions in galleries in Dublin and Wexford and has shown nationally and internationally. Most recently she exhibited her work at Claremorris Gallery, Co. Mayo in 2023 and had a solo show at the Molesworth Gallery in Dublin in March 2024.

Kate's paintings have been purchased by the Office of Public Works, Bank of Ireland, Wexford County Council, Wicklow County Council and by private collectors.

She has worked collaboratively with communities, schools and institutions for the past 13 years.



The Living Arts Project exhibition will run in the lower and upper galleries of Wexford Arts Centre from Saturday 30th March to Wednesday 1st May 2024. Gallery hours are Tuesday to Friday from 10am-5pm, and Saturday from 10am-4pm.

If your school is interested in participating in the Living Arts Project 2024-25 please contact Catherine Bowe, Curator on +353 (0)53 9123764 or email [catherine@wexfordartscentre.ie](mailto:catherine@wexfordartscentre.ie).

Wexford Arts Centre  
 Cornmarket, Wexford  
 T: +353 (0)53 9123764  
 E: [info@wexfordartscentre.ie](mailto:info@wexfordartscentre.ie)

For further information on Wexford County Council's full arts programme please visit [www.wexfordcoco.ie/arts-and-culture](http://www.wexfordcoco.ie/arts-and-culture) or call +353 (0)53 9196441 or email [arts@wexfordcoco.ie](mailto:arts@wexfordcoco.ie).

The Arts Department, Wexford County Council  
 Carricklawn, Wexford  
 T: +353 (0)53 9196441  
 E: [arts@wexfordcoco.ie](mailto:arts@wexfordcoco.ie)

Photography by Frank Abruzzese



SPROUTS

two-player game

connect two dots without crossing an existing line

first one to cross a line loses

