



[ art@work ]

*Artists' Residency Programme 2011*



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## [ *Introduction* ]

*Richie Farrell / County Librarian,  
and SEO of Libraries, Arts Culture & Heritage ]*

Roscommon County Council has long acknowledged the positive role of the arts in society. It is the policy of Roscommon County Council to actively encourage the development and accommodate the breadth of creative activity in the County.

Being involved with the arts can have a lasting and transforming effect on many aspects of people's lives and that the arts can act as a tool by which we engage with the world, view ourselves, examine our value systems and provoke thought. It is through the arts that we express ourselves as individuals, groups and as a society whose sense of identity and purpose is expressed through a range of specific arts activities.

Involvement in the arts can help develop community networks and sociability, pride in local traditions and cultures and strengthen community co-operation and networking. Our involvement, management and support of a range of arts provisions such as this *art@work* programme are evidence of our innovative and partnership approach.

The *art@work* programme reflects Roscommon County Council's proactive development of all aspects of the arts programme. The real benefit of the programme is that it encourages and facilitates connections between the social, cultural and economic strands of our society and creates unique opportunities for artists to make and integrate art in a particular environment and has the power to enlighten.

We are indeed grateful to the organisations that accommodated and facilitated the artist into their workplaces and made the whole process such a motivating and rewarding experience. One of the very tangible and evident aspects of this *art@work* process was the interpretation, creativity and meaning that the artists can bring to the most ordinary everyday work environment.

The programme has the ability to challenge social perspectives about Art and break down barriers in relation to the perception of and value of the arts. It offers unique insights into art for a wider public audience and presents us with an opportunity to re-evaluate our thinking.

This is a fascinating and exemplary publication. I would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation on behalf of the members of Roscommon County Council for their support of the *art@work* programme and also thanks to the Arts Council for their dedicated support.

## [ Foreword

*Cllr Eugene Murphy / Mayor: Roscommon County Council ]*

Roscommon County Council is delighted to introduce you to the *art@work* programme 2011, which celebrates the importance of the arts in our every day working lives in a manner that is unique. The *art@work* programme has gone from strength to strength over the years and it grabs the imagination of businesses and artists alike. The placing of artists from various backgrounds into the daily routines of our local businesses has proved successful in providing beneficial insights for both artists and businesses. The short-term nature of the placements demands that artists and employees work together in a dynamic environment which informs and inspires the development of a piece of work. The benefits of the *art@work* programme for the business were initially seen to be focused on the unique advertising platform being offered by participating in the programme. However the real value of the programme to the businesses involved has been the development of fresh and innovative insights into the work of their company and, quite often, improved interactions between their staff and customers. From the employees perspective the value has been in enabling them to look at their work through fresh eyes, showing them that it is possible to apply imagination and creativity to the mundane everyday tasks that often underpin their daily workload.

The benefits to the artist were originally envisioned to be the opportunity to explore different methods of working, experiencing new influences in a unique setting. However the programme has achieved this, and much more. As you will read, through the feedback from the resident artists in 2011, I am forcibly struck by the recurring remarks showing that the programme gave valuable time to think and offered opportunities to approach their work differently and, perhaps, more creatively. I am delighted with the responses from the artists and businesses, which show that the process has been successful in capturing the imaginations of all participants and in introducing all participants to the world of the other.

Roscommon County Council is committed to the development of the arts as an integral part of the cultural, social and economic wellbeing of our county. Our cultural wellbeing is vital, especially in light of the significant economic situation we find ourselves in. The development of creativity and innovation is an intrinsic part of finding a solution to our current financial woes. *art@work* provides a way of enhancing understanding, creating connections and meaningful insights between the social, cultural and economic strands of our society. This enhanced involvement fosters pride by employees in their work and invites customers to become more involved in the work of the business; encouraging ownership, friendship and loyalty in a way that is unique and beneficial to all concerned. In addition the programme has provided unique opportunities for the public to gain insights into the everyday workings of local business through the eyes of a fresh and keen observer.

On behalf of Roscommon County Council I would like to thank the Arts Council for their continued support for this programme and I extend my special congratulations to the businesses involved for welcoming the *art@work* programme into their workplaces at a time when there are significant concerns about the economic environment. I thank each of the artists for their participation in the programme, for their thought-provoking and insightful feedback and for allowing us to share in the creative process.

# [*Transactions of Trust*

*Annette Moloney / Curator + Collaborator ]*

Speaking at the Global Irish Economic Forum in October 2011 actor Gabriel Byrne said that he is, 'interested in bringing the worlds of Business and the Arts closer together, to see what it is that we have in common and to see how mutually we can help each other.'<sup>i</sup>

Perhaps it would have been timely for this Cultural Ambassador for Ireland to have taken a trip to County Roscommon on his way back to New York to witness firsthand how a longstanding model of Business and the Arts can coalesce; with integrity, shared labour and creativity as common links.

In the realm of the arts, words such as *collaboration* and *creativity* are commonplace, both in conversation and in practice, as a means of knowledge production and of partnership, and also in a bid to secure the funding and resources required to realise ideas and projects. It is curious then that these same words are commonplace in the domain of business, often attached to aspirational plans for economic recovery.<sup>ii</sup>

In the area of business, one definition of collaboration is 'A general cooperative arrangement in which two or more parties (which may or may not have any previous relationship) work jointly towards a common goal.'<sup>iii</sup>

Create, the Irish national development agency for collaborative arts in social and community contexts, develops this further by saying that collaborative arts 'is widely seen as one of the most vibrant and challenging areas of arts practice, requiring skills of negotiation and project management.'<sup>iv</sup>

Many commonalities emerge from the areas of Business and the Arts, which in the past were regarded as being at variance to each other. Artists are both aware, and in some ways relieved, that they do not have a monopoly on creativity. This year's *art@work* programme signals some of these commonalities, revealed across a diverse range of business practice, including banking, childcare and stone masonry, and an equally diverse range of arts practice including visual art, sound art, installation, critical writing and film.

One discernible link is the transaction of trust. Through the programme, Roscommon County Council tentatively brokers an unusual situation whereby artists, hosted by local businesses, are given access to and welcomed into the workplace. In turn they have the opportunity to become embedded, and to relocate their creative practices into the world of business and trade; to situate their art making processes in the midst of various interactions between workers, their businesses and customers.

As a result it is both understandable and necessary that the levels of embeddedness that the artist can avail of varies depending on the sensitive nature of some of the business transactions and due to requirements for privacy and security in how the businesses interact with their public(s), as broached by Marie Brett and Caroline Conway. While these interactions do focus on business, the artists observed that they were also anchored on a fundamental exchange between people. The artists noted the human aspects of the business transactions, witnessing what they described as a lightness of touch and the need, where appropriate, for a sense of humour, as indicated by Jeffrey Gormly.

Another common thread which emerges is the need for both Business and the Arts, particularly collaborative practice, to invest time in the development of good working

relationships; within the team, within the workplace and between the many stakeholders that inform a project, be it a new business venture or an emerging art project.

Along with commonalities some distinctions also arise. For example differences emerged in terms of work patterns, particularly with regard to pace, between artists and their 'temporary co-workers', to borrow a phrase from Róisín Loughrey. The fast pace of the business world stood in contrast to the timeframes usually employed by artists in order to develop ideas and to progress projects. The artists spoke of a clear desire to ring fence time in this way – time to reflect, to think, to question, to digest, and to unravel research, comments and conversations. The artists also spoke of the benefit and resource of time to chase an idea, even if its eventual endpoint were akin to that of a *cul de sac*, finding it better to have tried and failed than not to have tried at all, as disclosed by Marie Brett.

Coming back to the business definition of collaboration and the presence of common goals, one accepted reality for both Business and the Arts is an awareness of the need to protect valuable resources in order to foster growth and progress. While the term *resources* does entail funding and financial backing, its wider definition also includes the assets of knowledge, experience and time. Are these assets traded and exchanged freely in the business workplace, where the common goal is the progress of the company and the retention of jobs, in what is at times a precarious job market? Do these assets flow easily in the art world, in a highly competitive field, often occupied by individuals striving to make their projects and practices stand out from the crowd?

Within the growing restraints of recessionary times the relevance of programmes such as *art@work* get drawn into focus. One repeat comment which appears from the Businesses that applied for and hosted the residencies was that the process provides an opportunity to look at their business from a different perspective, as mentioned by Finbarr Feely from Feelystone, and at times providing an opportunity for customers and friends to look at the staff in a different, very personal and meaningful way, as revealed by Laszlo Kenderesci from the Organic Garden in Knockvicar. Both the Businesses and the Artists committed to an openness and willingness for mutual observation, influencing one another over the duration of the programme.

The opportunity to explore, with honesty, the social perception of the artist, not as an isolated practitioner in a far off ivory tower, but as a co-worker, welcomed into the workplace as an equal, becomes more pertinent than ever, in periods of economic decline. The temporary co-workers do share common goals and traits including a passion to do the job right, with clear attention to detail along the way. These processes of common labour bode well for the social capital of the times in which we live; times where the goal of active citizenship may develop, with openness, and may receive the start-up resources it deserves, through transactions of trust.

(i) The Second Global Irish Economic Forum was held at Dublin Castle on 7-8 October 2011, as a follow on from the first Forum which took place at Farnleigh in 2009 and which was described as a situation where 'Irish business leaders came together to explore how the Irish at home and abroad, and those with a strong interest in Ireland, could work together and contribute to our economic recovery.' See <http://www.globalirishforum.ie/2011Programme.aspx> (Accessed: 28 Oct 11). Gabriel Byrne, Actor and Cultural Ambassador for Ireland participated in a Panel Debate titled '*Promoting Irish Culture: building on the progress since Farnleigh*' which can be viewed at <http://player.vimeo.com/video/30855265?title=0&byline=0&portrait=0> (Accessed: 28 Oct 11)

(ii) By way of a brief but by no means comprehensive example of the common vocabulary when you type the words 'collaboration' and 'creativity' into the Books section of the online bookstore Amazon, the number of titles that appear in the categories of 'Business and Investing' outnumber those in the area of 'Arts and Photography' by about 2:1. While it is a given that the business world is much larger than that of the sphere of the arts, a majority of titles using these key words stem from the area of business and management texts, illustrated in book titles such as '*The Culture of Collaboration: Maximizing Time, Talent and Tools to Create Value in the Global Economy*' (by Evan Rosen).

(iii) See the Business Dictionary.com at <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/collaboration.html> (Accessed: 27 Oct 11)

(iv) See the Create website at <http://www.create-ireland.ie/about/about-create.html> (Accessed: 27 Oct 11)



'someone's epitaph # 1'

## [ Marie Brett @ Feelystone ]

Feelystone are a family run business and represent ten generations of craftsmanship. We are a leading manufacturer and supplier of architectural, monumental and housing stone to Ireland and the international market. Feelystone have direct access to the *world famous* Kilkenny Limestone as the quarries are owned by family members. Whether you are looking for Granite or Quartz worktops, building or paving stone, Memorials or Plaques as well as any customised idea you have we can cater for your needs.

MARIE BRETT - artist

*Did you originally see any connection with what the company does and your work?*

Yes, I saw very close connections to aspects of Feelystone's work and to my own. Feelystone make memorial headstones and I make artwork exploring the idea of ambiguous loss. Our use of material is very different, I'm interested in notions of the ephemeral, but going beyond the materiality, our conceptual reasons for making work are definitely aligned. I was keen to explore this link with them and question/develop my thinking of memorials as serving a focus for remembering presence, specifically that of a deceased person or event.

*What noteworthy or significant stages or experiences did your process go through during the residency?*

Being out on the road shadowing the work of Feelystone's 'fitting team' in various cemeteries was definitely significant for me. I wasn't sure if they'd agree to allow me to attend or to record what they were doing - so testament to their trust and generosity that they did, and welcomed me as a temporary part of their crew. The cemetery site as home for memorial markers holds status as a 'minded place', physically and metaphorically, for both memory and person and working within its emotive and charged silence is an interesting experience. Encounters with clergy, family, visitors and caretakers in this environment, and their relation to an artist with a memorial mason team, is certainly a different encounter to working in such an environment solo. Further days work and fittings being 'rained off' were disappointing but on reflection I realised the gap served to focus my intent and commitment to post-residency work and hopefully a further chapter of collaboration.

Another significant aspect was talking at length with staff who fabricate and sell memorials; those who straddle the intimate encounters of private mourning with public and permanent statements of remembering. I came to understand Headstones - by their nature personal, offering windows onto family narratives, also have the potential to reflect fundamental social and cultural junctures. Religion and notions of faith have for years been inherently intertwined with Ireland's use of memorial symbology; currently a massive shift is taking place within the country in relation to religion and how this in turn is affecting a collective memorial expression will be interesting to witness.

Watching the sandblasting of script onto headstones was also a pivotal encounter for me and I'm still exploring ideas about the metaphoric nature of script on stone and the attempt to stem the dissipation of a name or kinship by permanent evidencing.

For me, the residency was a two part deal, both aspects were as important as each other, but perhaps one more hidden...no doubt the chance to immerse yourself within a company's fabric is a brilliant opportunity but equally important is the provision for breathing time and reflection, to allow for the unravelling of ideas and journeying up roads that may potentially be dead-ends, to allow for response but without deadline pressures.

*In what way did this process of creating work differ to your normal working practices?*

Towards the end of my residency, after predominantly utilising video/sound/photography, I decided to make a work in stone...a departure from my regular practice. I'm exploring ideas of memorial related to the inherent tension between the notion of permanence and strength versus transience and vulnerability. Physically this tension is evidenced in the materiality of stone, its perceived strength but inherent fragility and I'm questioning how the ephemeral notion of loss and its implicit transitory nature has need to be anchored perpetually by use of 'everlasting' materials. I'm developing a multiple work in response to Cillínis, the burial grounds of unbaptised children, who at most, may have traditionally had a small boulder rock as marker, without script.

On a parting note it's important to say thank you to Feelystone staff who have been generous in their interest, guidance and help towards my work. It's evident they're an experienced staff in encountering artists and I'm very grateful to gain an insight into their work which has certainly influenced my own thinking and practice.



'someone's epitaph # 2'

FINBARR FEELY - Feelystone

*What were your expectations of the residency?*

Our expectations of *art@work* are never fixed we tend to let it flow into whatever we are doing at that time. The Artist then gets a real feel of the workings of our company and slots into our day-to-day programme.

*Was having this artist in residence different in any way to what you expected?*

This year was a little different as Marie took a big interest into how we dealt with our customer in the monumental business. There are a lot of different emotions attached to this part of the business and Marie wanted to get a feel for that and translate it into her work. Marie also this year spent time with our teams that work off site in the graveyards to extract information from them.

*What do you think were the benefits to the company of having an artist in residence?*

We always enjoy the artists time in Feelystone, it makes us look at our business from a different perspective and we can then make changes if necessary.

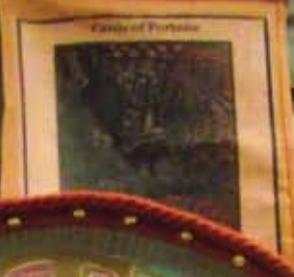
*Did you discover anything new about how artists work?*

I have worked with many artists over the years so I know how they work and I always admire the passion they have for their work. Myself coming from a more commercial aspect I can see results and more importantly money coming in on a regular basis whereas the artist has to play the waiting game and that's hard.

*Did the artist's work have any effect on how you or the staff sees your own business?*

Marie consulted with many of our staff and I always encourage this as they have a mine of information to pass on. I always feel it has a positive effect on the staff and it is great for morale in general.

*“I’m still exploring ideas about the metaphoric nature of script on stone and the attempt to stem the dissipation of a name or kinship by permanent evidencing.”*



**Instructions**

1. Spin the wheel and find your animal character aligned with the arrow above.
2. Select Bank service required and gently pull the key.
3. Carefully press the handle to reveal your hidden 4 tones.

## [ *Caroline Conway @ Ulster Bank* ]

Ulster Bank is a financial services company. The Branch is opened 17 years in Roscommon but in the republic for over 150 years. We cater for personal, business and corporate customers.

CAROLINE CONWAY - artist

*What interests you about making art?*

I enjoy the physical process of producing work. I love the surprise of completing a piece of art. I see my work as a celebration of the everyday. I hope that my work enriches the environment, and cheers people up!

*What initially drew you to art@work?*

I was drawn to the site specific nature of the project.

*Did you initially see any connection between what the company does and your own work?*

To be honest, no. After the site visit I just remembered a very blank space in which this strange, stressful business of banking goes on, and was kind of challenged about how an artist could possibly work in the environment.

*What noteworthy experiences did your process go through during the residency?*

At the initial site visit I was struck by the blandness of the work environment. My concept was to 'decorate' a lobby area using the imagery of our old currency as a starting point. As I researched the old money, I felt a sadness that we no longer have it, as it was such a celebration of culture, history, music, art, nature, society - in fact a microcosm of what there is to celebrate about this country. However I had a couple of days when I doubted I could overcome an inherent anti - Euro message in using this imagery, but eventually felt that since we no longer have this beautiful money in our pockets, it would be valid to remember it through an artwork. Coincidentally I had an exhibition coming up in October and decided to work within the same theme and create a series of prints based on the old money.

The other noteworthy experience was feeling stuck! I felt torn between the intangible business of banking, that I couldn't interact with in any way, and then the ordinary everyday lives of the employees that I met at lunch break, and how to reconcile these two.

Working in the context of the bank at this point in time, was a difficult situation to create art in. From the outset, I had felt that it was not the place of the residency to comment on the difficulties of the sector, but then felt slightly odd being there and not commenting. I therefore decided that, as I wasn't making a big statement about banking, I would create something light-hearted and playful, and came up with the idea of making an ATM, based on old Fortune Telling machines, playing on the idea of 'bank teller' and 'fortune teller', and the multiple definitions of 'fortune'. I used the animal coinage prints as 'Fortune Cards', to compliment the ATM.

*In what way did this process of creating work differ to your normal working practices?*

As a relief printmaker, my normal practice involves mess and fumes, so that was not possible in the bank. I also work with fabric, and although initially, I thought I could use a sewing machine, that turned out to be too noisy. I therefore decided to work mainly with the computer, collecting and manipulating images. This also meant that I was mirroring the other bank employees, who face screens all day.

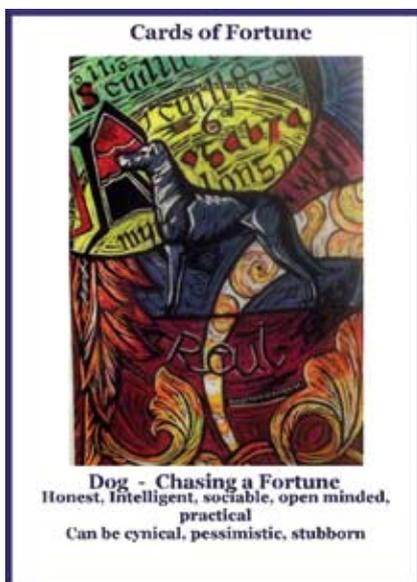
I felt it was important in the context of my residency to have something visual on the wall from an early stage, so I got my work printed up commercially to hang in the foyer and introduce colour, texture and personality to this dead zone. To balance the high-tech production of this work, I hand stitched bunting to go alongside it. With this “decoration” going up early in the residency, I then set about producing something more personal to the branch.

*In what way did the creative process differ to other residential contexts?*

The bank is a very alien environment to me. There are so many security and privacy issues that there cannot really be any significant interaction. For this reason, I have actually felt more internalized working here than working in my studio. Space was very limited, so I spent most of the time in the bank researching ideas rather than producing work.

*If your work practice changed during the residency, how has it changed and what influenced these shifts in practice?*

When I am working in my studio, I find myself totally caught up in the physical process of producing the work. I enjoy the rhythm of cutting, printing and cleaning the blocks. Working in the bank, I am disengaged from a physical production and so spend more time thinking and questioning what I am doing. I wanted the ATM to be interactive, which is a new element to my work, as I felt that this would help to engage with the staff, in a playful, stress relieving way.



MARIE FARRELL - Ulster Bank

*What were your expectations of the residency?*

We had no expectations but were a bit concerned as to how it would fit in with the pace of the office. It was unusual for us to have a stranger working side by side with us given the secure environment we conduct business in. It was interesting to see how Caroline adapted to the alien surroundings and the rigid security such as doors locking after entry etc. Staff don't digest daily the secure environment as it is the normal routine of working life but we do spend the day behind locked doors and bandit barriers.

*Was having this artist in residence different in any way to what you expected?*

No it wasn't. Caroline was very good at blending into our working lives and was discreet as appropriate. She slipped into the routine with ease and was almost instantly a familiar sight arriving for work daily alongside staff.

*What do you think were the benefits to the company of having an artist in residence?*

The benefit was the opportunity for staff to open themselves up to the previously unexplored world of art. They had no expectations but I would be confident in saying they were very intrigued and impressed with Caroline's work. Her talent was fascinating to all, particularly her interpretation of the ATM machine which she effectively turned inside out while yet preserving its fundamental functions. She also took inspiration from the staffs home lives and incorporated the information into her currency - that of the children's faces on the notes. This was achieved by spending time with the staff on lunch breaks etc.

Additionally staff interacted with the pieces on an ongoing basis as our exhibit was located in a common area. One could hear the melodies of Caroline's ATM Machine in the office - which brought an interesting dynamic to the work space.

*Did you discover anything new about how artists work?*

The biggest discovery was the whole creative process in terms of time taken to decide on a project and the work involved in creating the particular piece. The inspiration, planning of the idea, and the reworks that happen would largely have been overlooked by staff here.

*Did the artist's work have any effect on how you or the staff sees your own business?*

The biggest effect was undoubtedly Caroline's interpretation of things we take for granted and how she in turn could turn these familiar things completely upside down. The familiar surrounds that mould our day and provide the tools for work were interpreted by Caroline in a way that only an artist could configure and explore.



## [ Naomi Draper @ Nurture's Best Crèche ]

Nurture's Best Crèche opened in September 2007. It is a high quality, 5,000 sq. ft. purpose built Crèche which prides itself in the quality and wide range of services which it offers to families. We provide full & part-time care, along with Montessori, Afterschool and Drop In options. We pride ourselves in the range of activities and out of house events we offer and were delighted to receive a Centre of Excellence Award within one year of opening, along with the County Enterprise Best Newcomer Award in 2009.

NAOMI DRAPER- artist

*What interests you about making art?*

Through my work I am interested in exploring the environments we build around ourselves, the ways in which we construct safe, secure and comfortable spaces to be part of. I am intrigued with how we respond to a space both physically and emotionally. In the making process I can investigate and question these issues. I am excited by experimentation with materials and the magic of their transformation.

In making art I am particularly interested in its accessibility, the viewers experience and engagement with it as well as how it might play a role through education and development.

*What initially drew you to art@work?*

The site specific nature of the residency initially drew me to *art@work*. Having worked previously in an educational and community context directing projects I was interested in the opportunity to create a piece of work for and about an educational setting that responded to my experience of the environment created at Nurture's Best. Having worked only for a short period with children as young as 4 years old I was interested in taking the time to develop an understanding of the importance the environment and its structure has on the child's early stages of development from the age of 6 months.

*Did you originally see any connection with what the company does and your work?*

I noted an immediate connection between my work's central theme of environments and the importance placed in the environment created for young people at Nurture's Best. I was excited by the carefully planned and considered structure of the space which plays a critical part within the Reggio Emilia ethos of learning at the crèche. I also found a connection to the value this ethos placed on the role of arts in early year's development.

*What noteworthy experiences did your process go through during the residency?*

During the residency I intended to use my time to observe and document through photography and drawing what happened around me, the construction and building created by the children in their daily activities, as well as how they use

and alter their spaces within each room. From the documentation and experience gathered I hoped to construct a new space within the crèche.

As the residency progressed I found the time to simply observe, document, interact and play was a more significant stage than I had anticipated and decided to use the post- residency period to develop and construct the final piece of work.

I spent my time there moving between the different rooms. I looked at how many of these spaces contain smaller spaces for different activities. My observation allowed me to focus on the child's relationship to the environments, how they themselves construct, change and influence these places. I had not anticipated the fast pace of activity at the crèche, it moves and changes constantly with a huge amount of energy, to capture this was an exciting challenge for me. It took me time to understand the structure within this, the fluid movement from one activity to another, and the importance of the pattern that emerged.

*In what way did this process of creating work differ to your normal working practices?*

Having so much time to simply experience the place was precious. I am often caught up in the 'doing' and 'making' of the process, so time and space to gather material and build a relationship and an understanding of the audience I would create the work for was a very valuable experience.



*ANNE MARIE TIERNAN - Nurture's Best Crèche*

*What were your expectations of the residency?*

We had a very open attitude and had hoped for a mutual exploration / observation of an artist at work by the staff, children and parents alike. We also hoped that Naomi would gain something from working with us.

*Was having this artist in residence different in any way to what you expected?*

The level and depth of interest the staff showed and the manner in which we were able to include parents and families was perhaps even more than I had anticipated. The children engaged enthusiastically as the project was about their work.

*What do you think were the benefits to the company of having an artist in residence?*

The Staff absorbed a lot from their observation and interaction with Naomi and also observing how the children responded to her. The children were interested in what role she had within our service and were thrilled to discover that it was their play that she was observing and became involved in. Naomi was also adaptable and absorbed and became involved in our child centred approach. We as staff have learned to encourage the children a little more. We also learned to add the influence of art work that is more than primary colours in a story book. We were encouraged to use other mediums for the children's art work.

*Did you discover anything new about how artists work?*

Watching Naomi's detailed interest in the children building with the blocks and becoming aware of what she observed in the children's creative play and how this formed the base for her design was interesting. Watching the steps involved in her unique piece was a rare opportunity for the staff and children here at Nurture's Best.

*Did the artists work have any effect on how you or the staff see your own business?*

We have a strong creativity programme at Nurture's Best and consider it extremely valuable for our staff to interact with professional artists which adds greatly to Training Workshops they do. This 'rare glimpse' of a true artist at work was a whole new level of experience for them, opening their eyes to the multitude of materials around them for exploring creatively. Also the nature of the design of this piece gave them great opportunity to further explore the value of children's creative play. We have been able to integrate elements of all of this into our regular programme.

We are greatly looking forward to our Exhibition of Naomi's work for staff, children, parents and families.



'a people's idea of a bank of art@work' - photo Angie Duignan

## [Jeffrey Gormly @ Bank of Ireland]

Bank of Ireland provides a broad range of Banking and Financial services.

JEFFREY GORMLY - artist

*What interests you about making art?*

What I have discovered is that I am fundamentally a thinker. I like to develop long trains of thought, to freely associate, to dream, to discover analogies and new images or metaphors for processes I observe at work in my life and around me. The search movements that have brought me to my current artistic practice are born out of my love for expansive freedom of thinking. These search movements are modified by my desire to make the most of my own abilities as a person, and discover ways in which I can best contribute to my world.

The various activities that I engage with in my working life include reading, writing, drawing, mapping, managing projects, observing people and processes, working with music, teaching and talking. These are all for me ways of doing thinking: feeding myself new ideas, sifting or sedimenting or composting thoughts that I am working with, cultivating fertile spaces in which my thoughts can dance, and also, importantly, giving my self some activity to engage with while I leave my thoughts to think themselves. In my experience, this is how clarity slowly works itself out.

*What initially drew you to art@work? Did you originally see any connection with what the company does and your work?*

The public aspects of my work, whether in theatre and dance or in the staging of thinking spaces like a **bank of art@work**, satisfy my desire to work in collaboration. I get a great amount of pleasure from working with others, especially when their own creativity is flowing even in the lightest way.

I also enjoy explaining and expanding on my own thinking. My work in Bank of Ireland has led me to understand how important it is for creativity to flow. I mean creativity and expression in the broadest sense, as the human imaginative force that allows us to have dreams and ideas, and encourages us to work with those rough or raw bits and pieces of intuition and let them, perhaps, become reality as an art project, a new business venture, a friendship, or an adventure in life. When expression is blocked or ideas stagnate, a system soon starts to feel pretty bad. I feel this is true of our current problem with economics and productivity: a lack of movement.

But in order to have a healthy sense of flow there must be spaces into which expression can 'pour' itself. This is what I understand by 'capacity'. For an artist, this means a safe place to speak a poem or show a dance, somewhere supportive and responsive. We all shrink from criticism that comes too early, or is too personal or speaks in the wrong tone of voice. In the beginning of a creative process one gives one's ideas a chance, one nourishes the dream and lets it be and doesn't try to make sense or form too quickly.

*What noteworthy or significant stages or experiences did your process go through during the residency?*

The practices and processes of art are not just for artists. They are for everyone to make use of to discover their own gifts, to give these gifts expression, to join them with the gifts of others. If everyone is an artist, and I believe we are, then society needs to cultivate these kinds of spaces in which citizens can work on and express their own ideas in their own way, where these ideas can grow or change or die and make room for new thought: **a people's idea of a bank of art@work** is such a space. It is shaped by my desire to encourage people to listen to their dreams. It contains my own mapped out thinking about the relationships between personal creativity, work, exchange and social wellbeing. It invites citizens to give their own creative ability a chance. It also tries to gently shift ideas of what a bank could do as a public space and a supporter of local enterprise. I must thank all at Bank of Ireland Roscommon for their openness to my ideas, for having the flexibility to never say no, and for respecting and protecting my efforts to express myself and carry on my work in sometimes unusual and unexpected ways. The gift of imagination often arrives in unexpected ways, and a generous hospitality such as I received is key to healthy creative living.

*In what way did this process of creating work differ to your normal working practices?*

My experience of working on this program has provoked questions about work and art and how they are the same and how they are different. When I am at work in the Bank, I clearly observe different cultures of work: what work is, what it asks of a person, where lines are drawn between 'work', 'art', 'effort', 'pleasure', 'reward' and 'living'. I learned to value my own autonomy, my control of my own conditions of work and my own conception of work as art.

*If your work practice changed during the residency, how has it changed and what influenced these shifts in your practice?*

I wanted to resist an urge to fall in with the daily rhythm of the bank. My working hours are flexible, fluid, and responsive. Early in the residency I did a lot of reading and this required that I also spend a lot of time walking, napping, listening to music and pottering about the town as I digested the written material. I learned to enjoy and work with a gentle friction between my working hours and practices and those of people around me in the Bank. This difference became a point of contact and exchange between they and I.

I observed the activity of the Bank: the work of the staff and the flows of communication with and within the public. I developed an appreciation for the manner in which the work was carried out, and especially the lightness of touch and good humour brought to potentially difficult negotiations. My task was to map those flows of relationship in terms of creativity and everyone's human potential to nurture their own ideas or dreams as another kind of capital, and social capability for collaboration with processes of growth, transformation and exchange that allow this capital to enter into a larger system of circulation ie. an economy.

MICHÉAL CURLEY - Bank of Ireland

*What were your expectations of the residency?*

We had a very open mind. Having had a residency previously in a different art field, we were interested to see the end product in this case, and we await this with great expectation!

*Was having this artist in residence different in any way to what you expected?*

Yes....in Jeffrey's efforts to involve customers in the experience. Jeffrey involved the staff, spoke at a number of our team meetings, and became a part of the team while here, and in doing so, broadened our perspectives, and encouraged us to look at the affects of our business on all aspects of life. He used the metaphor of a Bank of Ideas.

*What do you think were the benefits to the company of having an artist in residence?*

Sheila Flynn: Overall the project was a positive experience for both staff and customers, particularly the interaction between Jeff and the children at the 'bank within a bank'. He captured the ethos of the importance of our customer interactions very well. It created a buzz in the office.



'capital = creativity'



Stills from 'Our Daily Bread'

## [ *Eimhin Hawes @ Molloy's Bakery* ]

Molloy's bakery produces a large range of breads, cakes, pastries, and morning goods, ie. scones, rock buns, bread rolls. We currently focus a lot of time on our range of healthy spelt breads and cakes. These breads and cakes are suitable for people who have an intolerance of standard bread flour. Wedding cakes and novelty cakes are made to order and decorated to the highest standard by our dedicated staff.

EIMHIN HAWES - artist

*What interests you about making art?*

I find it very difficult to summarise my practice into a neat little paragraph. For me it seems like I have developed quite diverse body of work. But the common denominator in all of it is myself. Every work I have made, varied as they are thematically, each draw from various aspects of my character and are inherently imbued with elements of my own personality. What is important for me is that my work continues to maintain that honesty to myself and that it is rich with the sense of enthusiasm and dedication I had when I created it. If some others can sense that from my work then I can say it was a successful project for me.

*What initially drew you to art@work?*

What sparked my interest about this residency was the fact that it offered a unique environment to work in, both in a physical and social context. As an artist I always try and consider my audience. I don't create work purely for myself, even though I take great pleasure in making it. *art@work* offered the chance to make something for the people that worked at a particular company. I wanted to make something that they could appreciate and enjoy and that we could both mutually benefit from. The funding, of course, is not something to be sniffed at either!

*Did you originally see any connection with what the company does and your work?*

Initially what drew me to working at Molloy's bakery was the fact that I had used flour as a material in one of my previous video works. In 'Passage' I was interested in the material qualities of flour and I had initially intended to explore this material further during the residency. My concepts somewhat diverged down a different avenue during my time at Molloy's and I found it interesting that in this work I began exploring the more practical and everyday use of flour as opposed to focusing on its purely visual qualities. I have worked in commercial kitchens before and was aware of the type of rhythms and routines that occur in these places. This notion of the rhythms of work and how they have an almost ritualistic quality to them was the dominant focus of the visual element of my work during the residency.

*What noteworthy or significant stages or experiences did your process go through during the residency?*

I spent my first week gathering masses of footage, filming constantly and focusing on every element of life in the bakery. The second week I spent sifting through this footage and slowly paring it back and compiling it into initial edits. The final week I spent interviewing the staff, then refining and synchronizing the sound and visuals for the final edit.

*In what way did this process of creating work differ to your normal working practices?*

It differed in a number of ways. Generally I work on projects that require a long time to plan and execute and the entire process can take several months. With this particular residency the timeframe of three weeks was a welcome challenge for me. My video work ranges from experimental and conceptual video art works to my current work, which follows a more conventional documentary format. *art@work* presented an ideal opportunity to try to merge these two strands, to create a film that contained elements of both.

*If your work practice changed during the residency, how has it changed and what influenced these shifts in your practice?*

At the early stages of the residency I decided to deviate somewhat from my initial proposal and focus more on the reality of daily life within the bakery. I wasn't entirely sure what the end product would look like. I found an odd sense of security in not knowing where exactly I was going next and what way things were going to end up. For me this is unusual as I generally have a clear idea of the finished product and spend my time planning and working towards creating that vision. Here I found myself doing the opposite, gathering as much material as possible and allowing myself the time to discover something within it. Sometimes, I guess, a light bulb goes off somewhere and an idea lands on your lap fully formed and neatly wrapped whereas other times you have to surrender yourself to the experience and have faith in your potential to uncover the best out of what you have. This residency has made me a lot more comfortable with the surrendering bit.

DECLAN MOLLOY - *Molloy's Bakery*

*What were your expectations of the residency?*

We have been involved with *art@work* for a number of years and we never know what to expect. We have had some interesting artists in the past and this year was no exception. Eimhin mixed well with all the staff and shot some interesting clips over the weeks. We hoped to get some clips for the web site and face book as a result of the work done. It looks like we will have something to show customers in the coffee shop and I think this will prove to be a big hit.

*Was having this artist in residence different in any way to what you expected?*

This is the first time an artist used a camera in the bakery to film the staff working as apposed to concentrating on the baked products. Sometimes it looked like it was 'hidden camera' checking out the bakery as Eimhin filmed from every corner of the bakery.

*What do you think were the benefits to the company of having an artist in residence?*

The big benefit we have this year is that we can use Eimhin's work for both marketing and training purposes. The staff will also get a kick out of seeing themselves on the tv. screen in the shop. Our behind the scenes staff will be seen by the customers, the customers will realise its not machines that produce the excellent range of products but a team of dedicated staff. All this interaction is a good motivator as well.

The big effect the artist would have on everybody in the bakery is that it motivates us to keep raising our standards. After watching the video it brings home the pride and the passion the staff in the bakery have for their job and whether or not it was for the camera, everybody seemed happy at their work.

*“I found an odd sense of security in not knowing where exactly I was going next and what way things were going to end up.”*



## [ *Róisín Loughrey @ The Organic Garden* ]

Knockvickar Organic Garden is a grant-aided, community based organic garden, producing vegetables, providing training and gardening services in the larger North Roscommon area. The garden is open to visitors and serves as a hub with advice and consultation for local hobby growers, school gardens and generally the interested public.

RÓISÍN LOUGHREY - artist

When we initially visited Knockvickar Organic Garden I was drawn to the peace and silence of the place. My first response was simply that I would love to spend some time here. When Laszlo was giving his tour to the artists on the site-visit a rain shower fell upon the polytunnel we were gathered in and I was struck by the immense sound this created. This sparked in me an immediate interest in the notion of how sound affects a space of work and how we respond to both the 'native' and foreign sounds around us.

My work is usually in film and video so to strip back the visual and work in the aural was a daunting yet appealing jump. Because of the reciprocal and process-driven nature of the residency I allowed myself time to sink into the place. For the first week I helped in the garden; planting, weeding, clearing, asking questions throughout, but what resonated with me most was the chats I had with the people who worked there. Over endless cups of tea we talked about gardening, politics, history and most crucially about their own stories. I was fascinated in their own timelines and how they all ended up here. I was also interested in the elemental nature of work in a garden and how that would effect someone, either consciously or not.

I spent most of the second week in one of the wooden cabins researching sound in its relation to art practice and in relation to the environment. Brandon LaBelle in his book 'Acoustic Territories: sound culture and everyday life' (2010) talks about the ephemeral nature of sound which I thought was in perfect fitting with the cyclical and transient nature of a garden.

I also drew from Les Back's notion of 'sociological listening', "[which] is needed today in order to admit the excluded, the looked past, to allow the out of place a sense of belonging." (The Art of Listening, 2007)

In response to this research I did a series of interviews with the workers in the garden. I was initially tempted to film them but decided to abandon my usual reliance on the visual and work completely with sound. One person rathered that her 'story' was told by the silence and sound she works in everyday and so for her I created a soundtrack of 'silence'. I edited them all on-site at the garden and transferred them onto mp3 players. These were then hung with a pair of headphones in each of the polytunnels. Each polytunnel told a different worker's story. This was the opened to the public as an installation entitled 'seedlines'.

What struck me most about the showing of this work was the way in which the public engages with sound. Each soundtrack was nearly ten minutes long and I wasn't expecting people to listen to them all fully and yet what I found was that people were sinking into the stories as the lack of visual stimuli allowed for less distractability. This

was further emphasised by the work being *in situ* so that they could absorb the sound with the smells and feel of the garden.

The *art@work* residency has been a unique opportunity to concentrate on process in a way that allowed the artist and her temporary co-workers go on a journey together. In this way it enables both worker and artist to participate in the art-making together while gaining a deeper understanding and respect for each others work. For me it was a very organic and rewarding experience.



*“...yet what I found was that people were sinking into the stories as the lack of visual stimuli allowed for less distractibility”*

LASZLO KENDERESCI - *The Organic Garden*

*What were your expectations of the residency?*

This was our second year in the programme, so what we expected was pretty much in the lines of last year's. I personally was prepared, to a certain extent, to witness an artist in his/her ivory tower, being a bit distant and removed from our everyday working life – accepting all that as the natural and obvious way of an artist.

*Was having this artist in residence different in any way to what you expected?*

It was. People and their art are different, and our artist this year is more of a production-oriented person whose routine, methods and the resulting art-piece connected in a different and certainly more direct way with what we do and are about. This doesn't mean that we are less appreciative of last year's art-work, but the difference is there.

*What do you think were the benefits to the company of having an artist in residence?*

On the personal level, we had a lovely colleague for a few weeks, and we all miss her. As for our 'professional' level, for the time the outcome of the residency (a sound installation) is on, visitors and friends have the opportunity to look at us in a different, very personal and meaningful way. That is just great.

*Did you discover anything new about how artists work?*

Yes, a lot. The creation of the art-piece happened right in front of us, involving us and connecting us with the artist, each other, and the rest of the world. Yet it was interesting to experience the way of our input getting re-moulded and turned into something bigger and more complete.

*Did the artists work have any effect on how you or the staff see your business?*

I'm absolutely sure it did – not necessarily the business in its business-like meaning, but definitely in the way we see and understand each other, colleagues and visitors alike. This, I'm sure, will have a long lasting and positive effect on the whole of the business, especially through the connection with the local community we serve.

## [ *Artists' Biographies* ]

### MARIE BRETT

Marie Brett is a visual artist whose practice spans the use of digital media, sculpture and installation. The notion of 'the ephemeral' is central to her thinking and works explore a means of engaging with ambiguous loss. Interested in site specificity and located within a frame of relational art practice, she seeks means for dialogue/collaboration to inform and influence her work.

With a MA/BA from Goldsmith's College, London University in fine art textiles, she has received awards from The Arts Council of Ireland, Create, Culture Ireland, several Local Authorities plus the Arts & Humanities Research Board. Her work has been commissioned/held in public collections both nationally and internationally including The Health Service Executive, The Vocational Education Committee, University College Cork, The National Health Service, plus numerous Local Authorities in Ireland and the UK.

In 2011 she received an Arts Council/Create AIC project realisation award and was the national recipient of the Create/Common Ground *Connect Mentoring* award for arts & health, as mentor. In 2010 she received an Arts Council of Ireland artist bursary plus a Cork City Council project award.

Contact: [www.mariebrett.ie](http://www.mariebrett.ie)

### CAROLINE CONWAY

Caroline Conway is an English artist based in Birr, County Offaly. She initially studied Architecture at Edinburgh University before switching to the Art School where she gained a First Class Honours in Printed Textiles and Printmaking. Caroline has been awarded a number of Per Cent for Art Commissions in recent years in schools and hospitals in both the North and the Republic, as well as exhibiting work in solo and curated shows. Caroline has been involved in the Artist in Schools Scheme in the Midlands for several years and teaches classes to a number of community groups.

Contact: [jandcnichol@eircom.net](mailto:jandcnichol@eircom.net)

**NAOMI DRAPER**

Naomi has studied at the Academy of Art, Architecture and Design, Prague, Pilchuck, Seattle and the National College of Art Design (NCAD), Dublin, where she graduated from in 2007 with a Bachelor of Design in Craft Design specialising in glass, and has most recently completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Community Arts Education also at NCAD.

Naomi is a multidisciplinary artist who is currently based in Boyle, Co. Roscommon. Alongside an established studio practice in sculpture and glass, Naomi often works in an educational and community context.

Naomi is interested in creating work which responds to specific sites. Through her work she examines issues of protection and containment looking at the spaces we create around ourselves and the relationship we have to them. Over the past few years she has exhibited throughout Ireland and has been awarded a number of commissions for her sculpture and glass work.

*Contact: naomidraper2002@yahoo.com | www.naomidraper.com*

**JEFFREY GORMLY**

Jeffrey Gormly is a writer editor and producer engaged with ideas of social choreography, applied science fiction, and new participatory formats for theatre. Literary editor for *nervousystem* theatre laboratory, creative director of Soul Gun Warriors, he has been commissioned by The Abbey Theatre, Clonmel Junction Festival, and Dance Ireland, worked with Siamsa Tire and Irish Chamber Orchestra, as well as being Associate Artist with Daghda Dance Company since 2004. He will be working with KCAT Callan this year as a CREATE-funded Artist in the Community.

Publications include Framemakers Choreography as an Aesthetics of Change, Framemakers Book of Recommendations & Sediments of an Ordinary Mind, and he is editor at choreograph.net.

*Contact: editor@choreograph.net*

## EIMHIN HAWES

Eimhin Hawes is an emerging, Irish visual artist and film-maker. Born in Dublin in 1987, Eimhin moved to County Clare at the age of eight. He Studied Fine Art in GMIT in Galway where he now lives and works.

He received a BA Honours Degree in Fine Art in 2010. He also attained Student of the year award 2010 in the category of sculpture and has received national critical acclaim; featuring in CIRCA - Ireland's leading contemporary arts magazine last year.

He has exhibited throughout Ireland over the past number of years, working in a variety of different media including film, video, sound, installation, sculpture, drawing and photography. He has achieved international success this year featuring in numerous arts festivals and exhibitions throughout Ireland, Europe and further afield. Among these include a screening as part of the renowned CologneOFF project in Riga, Budapest and Beirut and Festival Miden in Kalamata in Greece.

Currently he is working on more film-based projects having been commissioned to make a feature-length documentary on the Galway-based theatre company Waterdonkey and their latest production, 'Happening'.

Contact: [eimhin\\_hawes@hotmail.com](mailto:eimhin_hawes@hotmail.com) | [www.cargocollective.com/eimbinhawes](http://www.cargocollective.com/eimbinhawes)

## RÓISÍN LOUGHREY

Róisín Loughrey graduated from the National Film School, Dún Laoghaire in 2003. While at college she won the TV3 'Cast 2001' Award for her short drama 'Dreams of a Forgotten King'. Her graduate film 'Fall Into Half-Angel' a short documentary, won five international awards, including the prestigious Silver Dove at the International Festival of Documentary & Animation, Leipzig.

Her work since then has been shown at home and internationally, including Museum of Modern Art, New York (MoMA); SmartLab International Symposium, London; Independent Exposure 07 – Seattle / San Francisco/Anchorage/ Houston and Film Expo Texas 2007. Her films have also been shown on RTÉ, TG4, TV3, BBC NI, PBS (USA) Movieola (Canada) and SBS (Australia).

She is currently doing a Masters in NCAD and is exhibiting her work in a group show in the V&A Museum of Childhood (Oct '11- Feb '12) in London.

Contact: [roisinloughrey@gmail.com](mailto:roisinloughrey@gmail.com) | [www.roisinloughrey.com](http://www.roisinloughrey.com)

**ANNETTE MOLONEY**

Annette Moloney is a curator and collaborator based in Limerick. Her curatorial practice includes exhibitions, critical writing, talks, artist's professional development projects and public art commissions.

She is interested in how social change is reflected in contemporary arts practice, while also remaining aware of the role of audience and public(s). She remains curious about the development of alternative art spaces and how contemporary art engages with slack spaces within society.

More than anything she tries to retain an artist centred and idea centred approach to her work. Her self-published text on 'Art in Slack Spaces' can be found at [www.artinslackspaces.ie](http://www.artinslackspaces.ie) and in July 2011 a version of the text was shortlisted for the New York based *art&education* Papers Prize co-organised by e-flux and Artforum on the topic of 'No rules – Negotiating Art and Deregulation'.

Current projects include the role of Artists Liaison on the Dialogue Arts + Health project working with the Arts and Health Coordinators Ireland (AHCI) and also co-curating a project based in Dundrum, Co. Dublin called *unfolding narratives* Dundrum Open Submission 2011 (with Maeve Mulrennan).

Previous professional experience includes working as project manager at the Irish Pavilion at the 53rd Venice Biennale, as Artistic Director of Clare County Council's Public Art Programme and as Public Art Specialist with the Arts Council of Ireland.

Contact: [www.artinslackspaces.ie](http://www.artinslackspaces.ie)

## [ Companies Details ]



**Bank of Ireland**  
Roscommon  
090 6626171  
[www.bankofireland.com](http://www.bankofireland.com)



**Feelystone**  
Boyle  
071 9662066  
info@feelystone.ie | [www.feelystone.com](http://www.feelystone.com)



**Molloy's Artisan Bakery**  
Roscommon Town  
090 6625940/1  
molloybakery@gmail.com | [www.molloybakery.ie](http://www.molloybakery.ie)



**Nurtures Best Crèche**  
Tarmonbarry  
043 3359936 | 087 1334008  
[www.nurturesbestcreche.ie](http://www.nurturesbestcreche.ie)



**The Organic Garden**  
Knockvicar  
071 9667958 | info@knockvicargardener.com  
[www.knockvicargardener.com](http://www.knockvicargardener.com)



**Ulster Bank**  
Roscommon  
090 6627356  
[www.ulsterbank.com](http://www.ulsterbank.com)