

Overview 2022-2023

The 'Re-Invigor-Art' project was a multi-strand programme of creative activity delivered to the rural communities within the Sliabh Beagh Region. Its aim was to reinvigorate arts activity within the area, sensitively supporting the return to group working practice after the pandemic. A widespread appreciation of how the arts organically supports social interaction and promotes positive mental health and well being has been highlighted by their absence. The 'Re-Invigor-art' project inspired local people to make creative activity a focused part of life again . It has been an extremely difficult few years and people have become somewhat insular as a result. Mental health issues, in particular social anxiety, have crippled many. Our programmes provide the opportunity for arts engagement in a low pressure, joyful environment, promoting mindfulness through creative expression. The 'Re-Invigor-art' programme featured a number of innovative, quirky rural initiatives. Our programme of public art remains an integral part of our activities as they have a tremendous impact on the area. In addition we supported local artists and inspired them to actively engage with community led projects. 'Re-Invigor-Art' reaffirmed connections which had been stifled throughout the pandemic, allowing collaborations to develop naturally once again. A wealth of local artistic talent was utilised throughout the project ensuring quality, collaborative work was produced and that positive experiences were provided at all levels. We are mindful that the process involved and the experiences given to participants are the main focus of our work. The unique nature and joy of Rural Arts was at the heart of the program and promoted and reaffirmed the importance of access to the arts for all regardless of background, ability, belief or location. 'Re-Invigor- Art' made the arts accessible and available to everyone. We received continuous support from the Arts Council of N.Ireland, The Halifax Foundation N.I & Fermanagh & Omagh District Council for which we are very grateful. We will continue to nurture the growth of the Arts within the Sliabh Beagh Region, creating opportunities for engagement and providing support to local artists and the wider community

Project Aims

- Improve mental health and well being ...increased quality of life for rural communities
- Promote the arts through quality community arts activity, engaging with a wide section of the local community , in particular young people
- Protect and preserve rural traditions and our distinctive natural environment.
- Encourage integration and acceptance of cultural difference
- Provide employment, training, equipped space and technical support to local artists
- Increase Cultural tourism by creating a unique artistic landscape

Creature Feature

Artist Charlie Clifford created a series of pieces in the outdoor realm using features to personify existing natural structures within the landscape. The beautiful natural structures which exist throughout the forests and bogland of Sliabh Beagh are already spectacular. The addition of human features brings the sculptural forms to life creating characters such as 'The Crone', 'Geoffrey' and 'Willie'. During the second strand of the programme we will be working with Artist Elaine Agnew who will take a more painterly approach to the brief, creating characters by personifying man made structures.



During the second strand of the programme Artist Elaine Agnew took a more painterly approach to the brief, creating characters by personifying objects within the landscape, creating interest and enquiry from the passer by.



Art Shelters

Over the past 4 years we have created a series of 41 Art Shelters throughout the Sliabh Beagh area, engaging with a range of artists and community members in the process. The little green bus shelters are an integral part of everyday life in the region and are the perfect method of introducing local communities to quality artworks. The response to the work has been immensely positive and has been a wonderful way to add artistic merit to the local landscape. This year we created 9 new artworks on the shelter engaging with a range of different artists



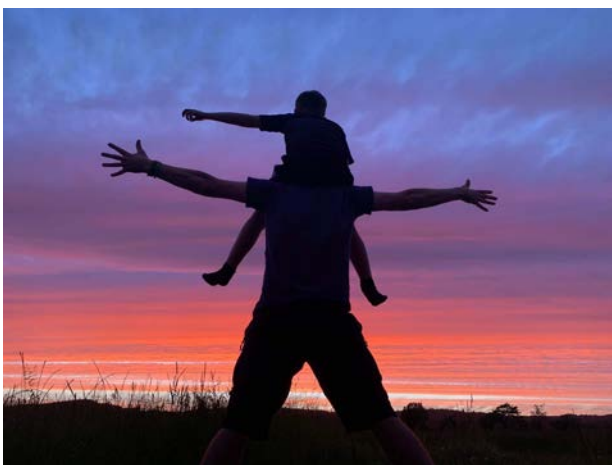
Encaustic Art

The wonderful Niamh O'Connor delivered a series of Encaustic Workshops in Derrygannon Hall. All of the participants achieved some beautiful work and really enjoyed the process of experimenting with the Encaustic waxes. Niamh will be back with us in May to deliver a more advanced session to build on previous skills developed.



Photography

A total of 6 participants worked with photographer Brain McNamee over 5 weeks learning skills in Digital Photography. Participants began by learning the features of their digital cameras and progressed onto a number of practical applications exploring composition, subject matter, colour and tonal. Participants grew in confidence and produced a range of skillful shots. We intend to run an extension of this project in the Summer months to develop skills further with the group.



Coppersmithing

A series of workshops with Matthew and Caron from Lake and Oak were delivered within the Knocks Hall and Donagh Millennium Hall. A fantastic opportunity to learn about coppersmithing which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. Participants were taught how to shape, imprint, colour and cut copper to create a series of stylised leaves and organic shapes.



Patchwork Pottery

Ceramicist Lisa McCabe (Corranry Forest Pottery) worked with 42 students from Fivemiletown College & St Kevins College to create a wonderfully detailed piece exploring the theme of Intention. The final sculpture is a tactile, dynamic totem representing the thoughts and feelings of the young people who participated.



Spray It Don't Spray It

Graffiti Artist Kev Largey worked with 7 adults, most of whom are local practising artists, exploring spray painting techniques and applications. The artists involved all undertake mural projects and to date have been using brushes which are slow and labour intensive.. By upskilling them with spraying techniques they can work on a larger scale more productively . All of the artists involved fully embraced the medium and were grateful for the opportunity to learn new skills.



Graffiti Bales

Artist Kev Largey created a series of quirky characters on wrapped silage bales. The Bales always receive positive attention within the community prompting great debate amongst the older generation of farmers. The silage bales are the perfect rural canvas for public artworks bringing quality works into the landscape for all to enjoy.



Mending with Mosaic

Artist Elaine Agnew created a series of mosaics in cracks & potholes throughout the area creating public art which is unexpected and surprising within the landscape. We aim to continue the project on a larger scale throughout the area, tackling the Fermanagh pothole crisis one artwork at a time!



Barn Mural

Artist Kevin Mchugh created a large powerhouse mural depicting the mythical sea serpent of Lough Erne using a powerhouse. The reverse graffiti project creates outdoor artworks in a farm setting encouraging engagement from local farmers



Cyanotype Printing

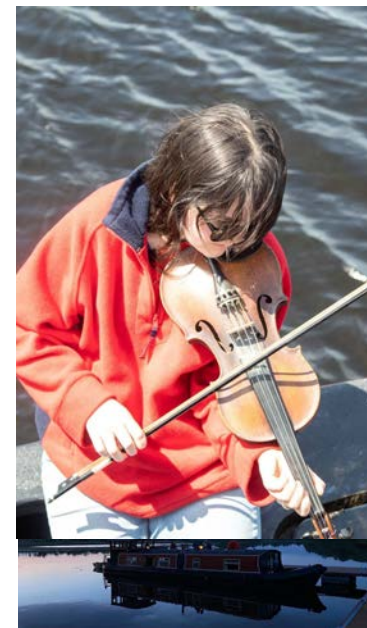
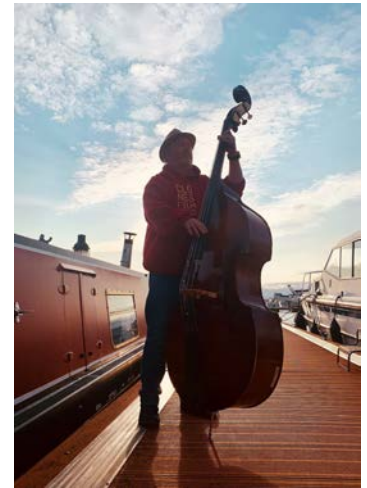
Print Artist Fionnuala McNichol brought the joys of cyanotype printing to the Sliabh Beagh area with a series of workshops in Corranry Studio, St Kevins College, Lisnaskea and Fivemiletown College. Cyanotypes are one of the oldest photographic printing processes in the history of photography. The distinctive feature of the print is its shade of cyan blue, which results from its exposure to ultraviolet light. All of the participants really enjoyed the process and achieved some beautiful results



Drift

The Drift project was designed to bring together local musicians to “retreat and reconnect with each other after Covid, giving them a chance to compose and play. A creative collaboration which allowed the musicians to make connections, disseminate ideas and inspire each other in a free environment. The group of talented border musicians included composer Rose Connolly, Robert Perry (Dead Can Dance) Rita Perry, artist and performer Annie June Callaghan, Cormac McCann, Stephen O’Dwyer, Patrick McCabe, Jamie Bishop, and Simon O’Reilly. Together they travelled the inland waterways of Lough Erne on a barge named ‘Erne Rambler’, starting off in Galloon, before eventually completing their journey to Belturbet.

“What was really nice was refraining from the songs that everyone already knows, and together having the opportunity to make music that was totally new and inspired in and by the moment,” Robbie explains. “While the boat brought us together, like a womb, and it took us from A-B, coming outside then in a new place, a new space, you don’t make music like that in this fashion very often. So that was really special.” *Robert Perry*



Final Exhibition

The Re-Invigor-Art Exhibition was a photographic review of the past year, celebrating rural arts within the Sliabh Beagh Area. A collection of original works by the S.B.A facilitators in addition to a range of project outcomes were on display in the bespoke setting off Corranry studio & forest, creating an immersive experience for all involved. Participants from throughout the various programme strands gathered to celebrate their achievements and view their work which created a sense of pride amongst the creators. Music was provided by the 'Drift' Collective and Tully creating a wonderfully joyous atmosphere for all.

