

# IRISH MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION FORUMS 2017:

## EDUCATION & OUTREACH Thursday 6 July 2017, 09:30-16:00

AV Lecture Theatre, National Museum of Ireland – Decorative Arts and History, Collins Barracks, Benburb Street, D7  
#irishmuseums

### SCHEDULE

- 09:30 – 09:45 Registration and Tea/Coffee– AV Lecture Theatre
- 09:45 – 10:00 Welcome
- 10:00 – 11:15 ***Experimenting with programming about experimental archaeology during Science Week 2016***  
Siobhan Pierce, Education Officer, National Museum of Ireland - Archaeology  
***'Finding a Voice': Dermot Bolger, Writer in Residence***  
Lorraine Comer, Head of Education, and Eimir O'Brien, Museum Educator, National Museum of Ireland - Decorative Arts and History  
***Experiencing cultural heritage – creative drama in museum education***  
Seamus Quinn, Dramatherapist and academic tutor, Gaiety School of Acting, Dublin
- 11:15 – 11:45 Tea / Coffee Break
- 11:45 – 13:00 ***A Tale of Two Houses – Castletown and Casino Marino as case studies for education and outreach***  
Pauline Kennedy, Supervisor Guide, Office of Public Works  
***Playful Museum – fun for under 5s!***  
Beth Frazer, Programme Coordinator, Northern Ireland Museums Council (NIMC)  
***Kids 'Take Over' Garter Lane Arts Centre and Galway City Museum***  
Aoibhie McCarthy, Visual Arts & Outreach Manager, Garter Lane Arts Centre, Waterford and Sally McHugh, PhD Candidate, School of Education, National University of Ireland Galway.
- 13:00 – 14:00 Lunch (*at own leisure*)
- 14:00 – 14:45 ***Online learning at Dublinia***  
Sheila Dooley, Curator, Education and Exhibitions Officer, Dublinia  
***Navigating the Urban Landscape – engaging with teenagers living in direct provision***  
Tadhg Crowley, Curator of Education, Lewis Glucksman Gallery
- 14:45 – 15:30 ***The Azure Network: collaborating towards greater inclusion of people with dementia in museums and galleries in Ireland***  
Caroline Orr, Curator Engagement and Learning Department, Irish Museum of Modern Art and Bairbre-Ann Harkin, Education Curator, Butler Gallery  
***Painting Pictures in my mind: supporting health and wellbeing through heritage***  
Elaine Hill, Heritage Development Officer, Mid and East Antrim Museum Services
- 15:30 – 16:00 Open session and Final Comments

# SPEAKERS' BIOGRAPHIES AND ABSTRACTS

## EXPERIMENTING WITH PROGRAMMING ABOUT EXPERIMENTAL ARCHAEOLOGY DURING SCIENCE WEEK 2016

During 2016 the National Museum of Ireland - Archaeology held a day of events about Experimental Archaeology and the techniques that archaeologists, curators, and scientists use to discover more about the past. Inspired by the work of UCD School of Archaeology's Centre for Experimental Archaeology and Material Culture, the Museum's education department worked in partnership with archaeologists from the centre to create a programme for the day. Funded by Science Foundation Ireland and the National Museum of Ireland the day consisted of activities which were hands on, engaging and where possible participatory activities, which demonstrated fun and educational ways in which the role of science can play in archaeological understanding. One aim of the day was to encourage children to take an interest in STEM subjects by demonstrating how archaeologists use and gather information from a wide range of scientific disciplines such as physics, chemistry, geology, zoology, biology, botany, and environmental sciences. Another aim was to have accessible information for adults and young adults about new evidence about the past in Ireland. Balancing hands-on family activities and more serious talks, the activities were facilitated by museum educators, curators and conservators, PhD candidates, graduate students, post graduate students and lecturers.

**Siobhan Pierce** is the education officer for the Archaeology and Natural History branches of the National Museum of Ireland. Siobhan has a Bachelor of Art degree in history and archaeology, and a Master of Arts in Irish history from UCD, as well as a post –graduate diploma in arts management from UCD. Siobhan has been working at the National Museum of Ireland since 2000 and has worked on numerous projects and departments since joining the Museum, but primarily in the education and outreach department.

## FINDING A VOICE: DERMOT BOLGER WRITER IN RESIDENCE

As part of the 2016 Decade of Centenaries Public Engagement Programme, novelist, playwright and poet, Dermot Bolger, was Writer in Residence at the National Museum of Ireland, Decorative Arts and History. This was the first time that the museum has created a writer in residence initiative. The residency, which was a collaborative project between the National Museum of Ireland and Poetry Ireland, was funded by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Dublin City Council, the National Museum of Ireland and Poetry Ireland.

The programme was comprised of four distinct strands: a schools' workshop programme; a local community workshop programme, the Online Mentoring Clinic and the In-Conversation series of talks with Dermot Bolger. While the majority of events were located at Collins Barracks, two weekends of workshops, talks and other events took place at the Museum of Country Life, Co Mayo.

This presentation will look at the processes, time and costs involved in putting together, administrating and evaluating the residency. A selection of benefits along with some of the difficulties encountered during the project will be highlighted. As will some of the more replicable aspects that might be of interest for other institutions thinking of engaging in a similar piece of work.

**Lorraine Comer** is the head of education at National Museum of Ireland (NMI) since 2008 and is responsible for leading and managing the education department for all four sites of the National Museum of Ireland. Prior to joining NMI, she was education specialist with the Arts Council of Ireland, where she advised on arts-in-education policy and practice. As Local Authority Arts Officer with Wexford County Council, she developed Wexford County Council's Arts Strategy and initiated cultural programmes and services covering a range of arts disciplines for a broad audience base. As events and promotions co-ordinator with Brent Council in London, Lorraine initiated and developed culturally diverse and inclusive learning programmes with Brent Council's twelve public libraries and the Museum of Brent. As an educator, she taught history and English at Killinarden Community School and Blakestown Community School in Dublin. Lorraine also co-founded 'After Hours Theatre Company' and produced and acted in some of the company's productions. Lorraine holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in history and English; a Higher Diploma in education and a Masters degree with honours in modern drama studies from University College Dublin.

**Eimir O'Brien** has worked as a museum educator at the National Museum of Ireland – Decorative Arts & History, Collins Barracks over the past 10 years, where most recently she has worked on coordinating an exhibition in partnership with Enable Ireland and DIT entitled 'Universal Design: creating innovative solutions for daily life' and was project coordinator for the 'Finding a Voice' project (March – October 2016). Eimir is also a part-time lecturer on the CEAD evening class at NCAD and at mid-point in a PhD in visual culture. She has a MA in design history and material culture from NCAD (2010), a higher Diploma in community arts education from NCAD (2008), a MA in cultural heritage and museum studies from the University of Ulster (2006) and a BA in English and art history from Queens University Belfast (2003). She is the Website administrator for [www.craftisadirtyword.com](http://www.craftisadirtyword.com) (ongoing).

## **EXPERIENCING CULTURAL HERITAGE- CREATIVE DRAMA IN MUSEUM EDUCATION**

For more than three decades museum educators all over the world have adopted an interdisciplinary approach by encouraging young visitors to study art through literature, music, and drama.

The principal aim of this paper is to draw attention to the importance of teaching by using creative drama techniques in museums and to suggest ways to consolidate drama methodologies in many areas of museum education. This paper discusses the educational potential of creative drama and theatre, provides examples of workshops designed in collaboration with the Chester Beatty Library, and identifies associated advantages. The discussion will focus on exploratory and experiential activities that empower and encourage young visitors to study and experience art exhibits in their cultural context.

Examples of workshops will explain how creative drama-methods and artefacts, inspiration for the stories, can support learning, activate skills, enhance creative potential, and plant a curiosity in culture, art and history.

Museum collections set the stage for understanding culture, art and history, therefore interdisciplinary educational approach would especially be useful for museum educators.

**Seamus Quinn** is an academic tutor at Gaiety School of Acting, dramatherapist and a drama practitioner (MA, IACAT). He qualified from NUI Maynooth and now works at the Trinity College Dublin National Institute for Intellectual Disability and also with Adolescent/Adult Mental Health Services. He also runs his own private practice. He has worked with people within the elderly and Alzheimer's communities both as a dramatherapist and a creative writing/drama facilitator in a clinical and informal setting. As part of the 'Dalkey Creates' writing festival 2014, he facilitated an inter- generational outreach writing/drama project with primary school children and older members of the community. He was also a panelist on 'Enriched Lives' – an Irish Association of Creative Arts Therapists (IACAT) public discussion on the value of creative arts therapies and drama for the elderly and people with Alzheimer's.

## **A TALE OF TWO HOUSES – CASTLETOWN AND CASINO MARINO AS CASE STUDIES FOR EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

*‘Oh, about geography, I have learned the lakes and mountains and seas and (rivers) of Europe since you were last here’.*

Edward Fitzgerald, aged 8 in 1771, already a prolific letter writer and favourite of his Aunt Louisa Conolly at Castletown, writing from Frescati, the house at Black Rock Dublin where his mother Emily, Duchess of Leinster, hired a tutor to educate her children based on Rousseau’s principles of education.

By the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Big Houses in Ireland were no longer solely the ancestral homes of Ireland’s Anglo Irish aristocracy. Many had changed ownership and function to become luxury hotels, visitor centres and schools. This paper will take a look at a new approach to interpreting the use and value of two 18<sup>th</sup> century OPW properties for schools and educators. Using two properties as case studies, Castletown house and the Casino Marino, the paper will show how historic properties, normally only used for guided tours for visitors and events, can now have a new role for curriculum learning by teachers and pupils outside of the classroom.

Castletown House, is a historic property in the Heritage Services section of OPW and is Ireland’s largest and most significant Palladian-style country house. It is a wonderful place to visit for the general public and is used to support learning outside the school environment using maths and ‘Living History’ modules.

Casino Marino is a national monument and also part of the historic properties portfolio of the Heritage Services section in OPW. The education policy at Casino has developed in a more organic and creative way based on the nature of the building and knowledge and expertise of the people who work there.

This paper will discuss the various ways in which education and outreach has developed over the years in both of these OPW properties.

**Pauline Kennedy** has over 20 years experience of working with OPW as ‘Heritage Card’ officer, as well as at many of their National Monuments and Historic Properties. She is currently supervisor guide at both Castletown House and Casino Marino, managing the visitor experience and education and outreach. Pauline has also worked as a volunteer guide for many years at Newbridge House, Donabate.

## **PLAYFUL MUSEUMS – FUN FOR UNDER 5’S!**

Playful Museums is a new programme for children under 5 years, their parents and carers. Part of the Northern Ireland Museums Council and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Playful Museums is focused on the little ones in all our lives.

Activities, workshops and events designed for 0-5 year olds took place in February 2017 as a month long Playful Museums Festival. A mix of storytelling, arts, music, multi-sensory, interactives and play created enjoyable experiences for the very smallest of visitors. Programmes are based on museum collections and are designed to encourage learning and development from an early age- most importantly - it’s FUN!

This presentation will give an over view of the yearlong pilot project, including key learnings, ideas which could be transferred your museum context, how Playful Museums reached a new audience, the benefits of working with early years children, the challenges of running a province wide festival, the benefits of working in partnership, how delivery concentrated to one month worked, how and why museums in Northern Ireland made their collections relevant and engaging for very young visitors.

**Beth Frazer** is the Playful Museums programme coordinator for the Northern Ireland Museums Council. She has experience in national museums, local government museums, visitor attractions and as a freelance museum practitioner. Beth is currently on secondment from the Ulster Museum, National Museums Northern Ireland and previously delivered the ‘Ways of Seeing, A Sense of Place’ initiative across Mid Antrim Museum Service.

Winner of the MARSH Award for excellence in gallery education in 2015, Beth has been involved in community engagement and gallery education across her career. As programme coordinator, Beth worked with 18 museums throughout Northern Ireland for the Playful Museums Festival 2017 designed to be ‘fun for under 5’s!’.

## KIDS 'TAKEOVER' GARTER LANE ARTS CENTRE AND GALWAY CITY MUSEUM

In November 2016, kids were invited to 'take over' Garter Lane Arts Centre and Galway City Museum as part of Ireland's first 'Takeover Day'. Takeover Day is an initiative by Kids in Museums, a UK-based independent charity, which encourages children and young people to engage with museums, galleries and arts venues by inviting them to 'take over' different roles involved in the running of culture and heritage venues. Almost 5000 children and young people took part in Takeover Days across the UK in 2016, including Garter Lane Arts Centre and Galway City Museum as the first Irish venues in which the initiative was piloted.

Executive Director of Kids in Museums, Alison Bowyer, welcomed the expansion of Takeover Day to Ireland - 'We are delighted that this initiative was piloted in Ireland to help give children and teenagers a better awareness of the culture and heritage sites that are available to them and their families for learning and enjoyment year-round.' This presentation will discuss how Takeover Day enabled children and young people to undertake meaningful roles in their institutions and enrich visitor experiences.

**Aoibhie McCarthy** is the visual arts & outreach manager of Garter Lane Arts Centre, Waterford. She holds a B.A in art & architectural history and English literature from Trinity College Dublin and an M.A in curatorial studies from Limerick School of Art and Design, for which she awarded the Shinnors Curatorial Scholarship. From 2012- 2014, she was education curator of Limerick City Gallery of Art, during which time she also coordinated the outreach programmes of *eva* International biennale 2012 and the 'Make a Move' Festival.

In 2014, she was visual art curator of Galway Fringe Festival and supported the development of The People's Museum Limerick as part of Limerick City of Culture. Following this, she undertook a number of project management and communications roles with the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland Year of Irish Design 2015, AONTAS The National Adult Learners Organisation, MCO Projects and Arran Street East.

**Sally McHugh** is an Irish Research Council Postgraduate scholar (PhD) in the School of Education at NUI Galway. Sally holds a BA (Hons) in Archaeology and Information Technology (2012) and a MA in Digital Media (2013). In her research she is exploring children's engagement with cultural heritage in schools and museums using creative, interactive designs of learning and user-friendly technologies. Sally led the development of the pilot *Takeover Day* in Galway City Museum and facilitated the related events, alongside the museum's education team.

## ONLINE LEARNING AT DUBLINIA

The muddy, dirty and gruesome history of medieval Dublin is well represented within Dublinia's exhibition spaces. Yet moving these medieval stories into the modern world, making them relevant in the digital age and providing compelling learning opportunities for schools was a creative challenge. Yet with this challenge came opportunity and collaboration.

The result is a new Online Learning website on [www.dublinia.ie](http://www.dublinia.ie) that focuses on three key stakeholders of our history, primary and secondary students and the general audience. The Online Learning project had three main goals. The first was to provide curriculum based educational support for students and teachers, acknowledging gaps in resources and focusing on key themes of Viking and medieval Dublin. The second was to promote the authentic stories of Dublin's past by creating engaging, compelling and interactive narratives matching Dublinia's onsite learning ethos. The last was to rescue existing content from an almost obsolete DVD titled 'Medieval Dublin: from Vikings to Tudors, created by Noho Ltd.

Collaborating with Dublin City Council and the creative expertise of Noho Ltd, Dublinia is currently heading into its third phase of the project. This paper will highlight the process of creating this outstanding Online Learning site, a first for medieval Dublin.

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**Sheila Dooley** has been curator, education and exhibitions officer at Dublinia Heritage Centre since 2008. She is passionate about the past since gaining her degree in history and archaeology from UCD in 1999. Initially working in the field as an archaeologist, her interest in artefacts and collections has allowed her the opportunity to work with a number of key institutions including the National Museum of Ireland, Trinity College Dublin and the National Gallery of Ireland. Her Masters focused on the history of early medieval Ireland and sources from NUI Maynooth but since having achieved a H. Dip in museum studies from the University of Leicester she is dedicated to the exploring the story of our past through interpretation and learning. Her ultimate goal is to transcend time by inspiring everyone, of all ages, to enjoy learning about our history and help us understand our future!

### **NAVIGATING THE URBAN LANDSCAPE – ENGAGING WITH TEENAGERS LIVING IN DIRECT PROVISION**

As we enter the teenage years we begin to gain a little more freedom. This new found autonomy provides us with the opportunity to explore our local area through aimless wanderings and walks or by beginning the process of ownership of our locality in the corners or streets we lay claim to. This is crucial in the development of civic pride in young people but also in the establishment of a sense of belonging. For teenagers living in Direct Provision — who live in isolated and restrictive settings — they are not afforded the opportunity to get to know their local area in the same way as other young people.

Navigating the Urban Landscape was an art project that invited teenagers living in Direct Provision centres in Cork city and county to work with the Glucksman and practicing artists over a six-week period in autumn 2016.

Throughout the weekly sessions participants engaged in projects that investigated the idea of *dérive* (an unplanned journey through an urban landscape) working with different mediums and artists.

The project was an opportunity for these teenagers to interact with artistic ideas and mediums and to discover their own creative and imaginative capabilities away from their prohibitive surroundings.

**Tadhg Crowley** is the curator of education at the Lewis Glucksman Gallery in University College Cork. The Glucksman presents a wide-ranging programme of temporary exhibitions accompanied by an extensive education programme to engage visitors of diverse interests and backgrounds. A graduate of Limerick School of Art and Design, Tadhg's role at the Glucksman is to help foster an appreciation of the visual arts among the wider public. Tadhg has presented at the IMA Annual Education and Outreach Forum (2015); Arts in Education Portal National Day (2016); Scenario Conference UCC (2017); Creativity and Change Roadshow CIT (2017); Arts Participation among Young Asylum Seekers Symposium at Mary I (2017). He lectures on the MA: Art and Process at Crawford College of Art & Design; the Futures PhD module UCC; and was guest lecturer on the M. Ed at UCC (2017); UCC BIS 1<sup>st</sup> year course (2016). Tadhg is currently a research student in UCC School of Education where his focus is on primary schools, creativity and the role of the museum.

### **THE AZURE NETWORK: COLLABORATING TOWARDS GREATER INCLUSION OF PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA IN MUSEUMS & GALLERIES IN IRELAND**

This presentation will reflect on the *Azure* project which is working toward greater inclusion of people with dementia in an Irish cultural context. Through the provision of specially designed dementia friendly art-looking tours, *Azure* strives to reduce the barriers experienced by people with dementia and their family members, friends and professional carers in accessing cultural organisations. Briefly covering the origins of *Azure*, as a project inspired by the *Meet Me at MoMA* programme and initiated through collaboration between Age & Opportunity, The Alzheimer Society of Ireland, the Butler Gallery, Kilkenny, and IMMA (Irish Museum of Modern Art), focus will be given to its subsequent development and the expansion nationwide. This has included an extensive tour facilitator training and the establishment of the Azure Network, an alliance of cultural organisations across Ireland that share the *Azure* ethos of inclusivity.

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The presentation will also explore *Azure* in the context of Butler Gallery and IMMA, with particular focus on local, national and international collaboration and partnership. Butler Gallery's participation in a European Erasmus+ funded Museums, Art and Alzheimer's project will be examined and how this has opened up possibilities for professional development for members of the Network. The successes and challenges of *Azure* and its potential for future growth will be discussed throughout.

**Bairbre-Ann Harkin** has been education curator at Butler Gallery since 2011 and is responsible for education and access programmes, encouraging people of different ages, backgrounds and abilities to engage with the Gallery's collection and exhibitions.

Bairbre-Ann is a board member of Arts & Disability Ireland and a module tutor on Age & Opportunity's Creative Exchanges course. Following an internship at the Museum of Modern Art New York, Bairbre-Ann initiated a programme for people living with dementia based on Meet Me at MoMA at Dublin Contemporary 2011 and 2012, led Butler Gallery's participation in *Azure*, a collaborative partnership to explore the potential for greater participation of people with dementia in cultural settings in Ireland. As well as *Azure* at Butler Gallery, she has facilitated *Azure* programmes at The Turner Prize 2013; Municipal Gallery at DLR LexIcon; F.E. McWilliam Gallery and has delivered training throughout Ireland and Lithuania.

**Caroline Orr** is curator within the engagement and learning department at IMMA (Irish Museum of Modern Art). Her role is to create innovative and inclusive opportunities for people to engage with the museum's exhibitions and programmes, informed by models of practice designed to meet the needs of specific groups and address targeted education needs. She is an IMMA representative on the *Azure* project, a collaborative partnership exploring the potential for greater participation of people with dementia in cultural settings in Ireland. She has introduced *Azure* dementia-friendly art-looking tours to IMMA and has supported the expansion of such tours to a network of museums and galleries throughout Ireland. She also contributed significantly to the drawing up a memorandum of understanding for *Azure* that lays out the ethos, values and aims of the project.

## **PAINTING PICTURES IN MY MIND: SUPPORTING HEALTH AND WELLBEING THROUGH HERITAGE**

Mid & East Antrim Borough Council's Museum and Heritage Service worked in conjunction with Mid and East Antrim Agewell Partnership (MEAAP), to deliver this project to support the health and wellbeing of older people and tackle social isolation through heritage and reminiscence activities.

The *Painting Pictures in my Mind* project was delivered in six venues across the area including a residential care home, a day centre and sheltered housing schemes and included participants living with dementia. This pilot project ran between September 2016 and March 2017 with 30 sessions delivered in total.

A programme of participatory reminiscence workshops was developed, exploring the themes of dancehalls and working life in the 1950s and 1960s. The dancehall sessions incorporated music and movement into the activities as well as reminiscence activity on working life using photographs from the museum collection.

This project was externally evaluated to measure the outcomes of the project and its impact on helping to ensure older people are active, respected and supported in their communities. As a result, two loan boxes which include the participants' memories and stories are being developed and a touring project exhibition will be launched in September 2017.

**Elaine Hill** is heritage development officer at Mid & East Antrim Borough Council and has worked for 17 years in the local museum sector in Northern Ireland and Scotland. She has worked on a range of learning and outreach projects and delivered the 'Painting Pictures in my Mind' project working with six housing associations in the Mid and East Antrim area to support the health and wellbeing of older people through heritage and creative activities.

Elaine is also a Kids in Museums volunteer and a Museums Association members' representative for Northern Ireland.

### ***Moderators:***

Brian Crowley, Museum Curator, Pearse Museum – OPW

Rosemary Ryan, Keeper, Bishops Palace, Waterford Treasures – three museums in the Viking Triangle

### ***Convener:***

Gina O’Kelly, Irish Museums Association

### ***Supporters:***

The Education and Outreach forum is an initiative of the Irish Museums Association, supported by the National Museum of Ireland.

The IMA is funded by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and The Heritage Council



**An Roinn  
Ealaíon, Oidhreachta agus Gaeltachta**  
**Department of  
Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht**

**An Chomhairle Oidhreachta  
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**museum**  
National Museum of Ireland  
Ard-Mhúsaem na hÉireann