

# IRISH MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION FORUMS 2016: EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Friday 1 July 2016, 09:30-15:30.

AV Lecture Theatre, National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks, Benburb Street, D7

#irishmuseums

## SCHEDULE

09:30 – 09:45	Registration – AV Lecture Theatre
09:45 – 10:00	Welcome
10:00 – 11:00	<p><b><i>Young people sharing global histories: The Gallipoli Centenary Education Project</i></b> Helen Beaumont, Education &amp; Outreach Officer and Edith Andrees, Project Coordinator, National Museum of Ireland - Decorative Arts and History</p> <p><b><i>Give your Voice Wings: an opportunity to talk about migration</i></b> Aoife O'Toole, Education &amp; Outreach Assistant, National Museum of Ireland - Country Life</p> <p><b><i>Across Africa – an interactive storytelling event</i></b> Ellen Byrne, Creative Director and Cofounder, Festival of Curiosity and Catherine McGuinness, Museum Educator</p>
11:00 – 11:30	Tea / Coffee Break
11:30 – 12:45	<p><b><i>Raising the profile – inclusivity and equality for artist with learning disabilities</i></b> Sarah McEvoy, Programme Administrator – Learning Department, Victoria and Albert Museum</p> <p><b><i>HOME: A project with 13 traveller women from Limerick City</i></b> Fiona Byrne, Acting Curator of Education and Outreach, Hunt Museum</p> <p><b><i>The Contemporary museum without walls</i></b> Liz Johnson, Arts Educator</p>
12:45 – 13:45	Lunch ( <i>at own leisure</i> )
13:45 – 15:00	<p><b><i>An Audience to Win: The 'A World to Win' Secondary School's Programme</i></b> Gretta Halpin, Education Officer, National Print Museum, Dublin</p> <p><b><i>Inspiring teenage boys with a range of abilities</i></b>; Arlene Bell, Social Inclusion Programme Manager, National Museums Northern Ireland</p> <p><b><i>Kids in Museums: How Takeover Day works to get kids in</i></b> Dea Birkett, Creative Director, Kids in Museums, UK</p>
15:00 – 15:30	Open session and Final Comments

## ***THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:***

### ***Advisory Committee:***

Brian Crowley, IMA Chair and Curator, Pearse Museum – OPW

Carla Marrinan, National Print Museum

Rosemary Ryan, Waterford Treasures, Three Museums in the Viking Triangle

Elizabeth Crooke, Professor of Museum and Heritage Studies, Ulster University

### ***Supporters:***

The National Museum of Ireland – Decorative Arts and History

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# SPEAKERS' BIOGRAPHIES AND ABSTRACTS

## ***YOUNG PEOPLE SHARING GLOBAL HISTORIES: THE GALLIPOLI CENTENARY EDUCATION PROJECT***

This paper presents contents and outcomes of an international schools project on World War One. Museums and other collections-based cultural institutions have used the Decade of Centenaries as an opportunity to explore and make accessible their collections in new ways. It gives an example of a successful partnership approach with post primary schools, local, national and international partners.

Independent, interdisciplinary and cross-curricular learning were at the core of this project. Students and their teachers, from five post-primary schools in Ireland, examined the 1915 Gallipoli campaign by exploring the histories of people from their locality who had participated in the campaign. The schools combined historical research with drama, film-making, creative writing and poetry, visual arts, song and home economics. The project culminated in an international conference in Birmingham (UK) where students had the opportunity to present their work and meet their peers from a number of different countries.

The paper shows how interdisciplinary learning within international contexts can be effectively facilitated for young people and within the constraints of school schedules and curricula. It will give practical suggestions for cultural institutions interested in getting involved in similar partnerships.

**Edith Andrees** is a cultural historian and museum educator. She has worked in museums in Germany and Ireland since 1999. As Education Assistant at the National Museum of Ireland – Decorative & History (NMI), she has worked on various programmes and participative projects that have addressed themes of interdisciplinary learning and historical memory, for example in relation to World War One and *Asgard*. She is currently involved in the Museum's 1916 Centenary Programme.

For her PhD thesis entitled "Museums, Migration and Cultural Diversity: Narratives and Practices in Ireland and Germany" (University College Dublin), Edith Andrees has examined historical narratives and their accessibility in the museum context. This research has also informed her work as the NMI co-ordinator of the Gallipoli Centenary Education Project.

**Helen Beaumont** is Education & Outreach Officer at the National Museum of Ireland – Decorative Art and History, Collins Barracks. Appointed to this role when the Museum opened in 1997, she set up and subsequently manages this section of the Museum's Education Department. The Department is engaged in working with and providing for a broad range of audiences, including schools, families and adults. Her role includes working on exhibition development, on-going planning and provision of public and schools programmes, managing a team and working on a range of projects, including the project presented here.

Before working at the Museum, Helen Beaumont worked for eight years as a post primary teacher in Dublin and London and is a graduate of the MA in Arts Management and Cultural Policy, UCD.

## ***GIVE YOUR VOICE WINGS: AN OPPORTUNITY TO TALK ABOUT MIGRATION***

The temporary exhibition, Migrant Women – Shared Experiences, which opened at the Museum of Country Life in 2015, provides the museum and the wider community with the opportunity to explore and interrogate the theme of migration past and present and related subthemes: refugee crisis, experiences of asylum seekers and Direct Provision. The exhibition explores the experiences of Irish immigrant girls crossing the Atlantic to New York at the end of the 19th century alongside the stories of eight migrant women who have come to live in Mayo in the last 20 years.

This presentation will focus on the learning arising from integrating interactive visitor opportunities within this exhibition and the challenges of developing a relevant public programme. It will also explore how a collaborative project such as ‘Give your Voice Wings’, developed in partnership with Mayo Intercultural Action, successfully engaged the local community with the theme of migration; highlighting the value and power of working in partnership with the local community.

**Aoife O'Toole** has been working in the Education and Outreach Department at the National Museum since 2006, starting in the NMI - Archaeology and moving to the Country Life Museum in 2008. Her role involves the planning and delivering of learning projects and events as part of the Education Team at Turlough Park. She has a BA in Irish Art History and Design from the National College of Art and Design. Aoife has a strong interest in hand crafts and textiles. Growing up in Leenane she worked in the Sheep and Wool Museum and uses her wool craft skills in the delivery of activities in her current role. Aoife O'Toole is also on the Education Panel for the Design and Craft Council of Ireland.

## ***'ACROSS AFRICA' – AN INTERACTIVE STORYTELLING EVENT***

Outside the Natural History Museum in Dublin there is a statue of a man holding a rifle with his left foot resting on a skull. This unknown chap was once the most famous person in Dublin in the late 1800's. As the chief medical officer on Stanley's infamous Pasha Emin Relief expedition, Thomas Heazle Parke became the first Irish person to traverse the African continent. He met new cultures, experienced untold hardships, and had to treat previously unknown tropical diseases.

“Across Africa” was an interactive storytelling event telling Thomas' story, mapping the route he took and talking about the scientific discoveries he made on the way. A mixture story, performance, demonstrations and audience participation, it aimed to educate in an immersive experience. The show looked at the journey Thomas undertook, conditions of expeditions in the 1800's, the habitats he would have seen, the African tribes he would have come into contact with and how our attitudes to other cultures have changed over time. It also discusses why stories like his were lost after the 1916 Rising.

**Catherine McGuinness** is a science communicator, museum educator and performer specialising in biodiversity, zoology and natural history. She is a regular contributor to programmes by the National Museum of Ireland, Dublin Zoo, RTÉ Jr and the Science Gallery. She most recently worked with Electric Picnic, Body and Soul and the Festival of Curiosity.

**Ellen Byrne** is the Creative Director and Cofounder of the Festival of Curiosity. With over 40,000 attendees each year across 14 venues in Dublin City Centre, The Festival is Ireland's annual celebration at the intersection of art, science, technology and design. The Festival of Curiosity believes in a world where every person has the confidence, the courage and the opportunity to be curious. Their mission is to create a culture of curiosity in Dublin and beyond.

## ***RAISING THE PROFILE – INCLUSIVITY AND EQUALITY FOR ARTIST WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES***

This paper will focus on the partnership between the V&A and Intoart, an arts organisation working with artists with learning disabilities. As part of the V&A Intoart *Place and Repeat* Programme, a V&A learning programme supported by Lord Leonard and Lady Estelle Wolfson Foundation; six Intoart artists: Ntiense Eno Amooquaye, Kevin Jacobs, Lisa Trim, Christian Ovonlen, Andre Williams and Clifton Wright dedicated nine months of research, development and design to create new artist-designed fabrics. The artist's repeat pattern fabrics were inspired by the fashion collections and archives at the V&A in collaboration with designers Holly Fulton and James Lambert from the British fashion label 'Holly Fulton'. Intoart artists visited the fashion and textile archives at Blythe House for the first time, developed their designs in the studio and presented their ongoing research to V&A staff members at a work-in-progress event before the final display of their fabric in the 20th Century Internationalism & Modernism galleries.

The partnership between V&A and Intoart first developed in 2013, when Intoart undertook the role of artist-mentor to open up the collections to adults and young people with learning disabilities through practice-based workshops responding to the Ceramics collections, including opportunities to work in clay with the ceramicist in residence. In 2014, Intoart went on to design a series of 'Drawing Tours' of six of the museums' collections ranging widely from Ironwork to Japan collections. Resulting tours were facilitated by Intoart artists and made available for museum visitors as downloadable self-guided tours.

This partnership sits within the wider Adult Social Inclusion programme which aims to reduce barriers to accessing the museum, to explore new and interesting ways to interpret our collections and to engage local organisations and community groups, especially those who do not normally visit or access the museum or collections.

**Sarah McEvoy** is a Programme Administrator in the Learning Department at the Victoria and Albert Museum supporting the community, social inclusion, Black heritage and culture programmes as part of the adult learning team. She is also a freelance artist facilitator with a specialization in working with adults and young people with learning disabilities in galleries and arts organisations.

Sarah currently runs an outreach project in a day care centre with Action Space. Having recently completed an MA in Art and Design in Education at UCL Sarah's final research project explored sensory environments, tactility and affect as an artist working with people with learning disabilities.

## **COMMUNITY BASED ENGAGEMENT - HOME: A PROJECT WITH 13 TRAVELLER WOMEN FROM LIMERICK CITY**

'Home' was a collaborative project between the Hunt Museum, the Limerick City Traveller Health Advocacy Programme and artist, Róisín de Buitléar, funded by Limerick City and County Council. It explored the complex themes connected to Travellers' understanding of 'Home'. Through a participative and experiential process the women explored what these themes might be. The project allowed space for negotiation, for mistakes, discovery and unexpected learning. Using the Museum as a source of inspiration, the women transformed their reflections, their conversations and their thoughts into pieces of art.

For the women involved, seeing their work exhibited in a museum of national significance has had a major impact. For the museum it is important that we are constantly encouraging engagement and increasing access for the public. By setting up projects like this we get a chance to have a meaningful relationship with groups that might fall outside our regular visitor. In this way we can learn how we can better serve these communities and how their input can help us develop well thought out programmes. 'Home' demonstrates the potential of community-based adult education and for this group of women, it is only the beginning of their journey.

**Fiona Byrne** has been the Acting Curator of Education and Outreach at the Hunt Museum in Limerick since May 2015. In this role she has over seen numerous community projects, events and festivals, as well as managing school and group bookings for the museum.

In addition to this she is a PhD candidate at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick. Her research looks at how staff of museums/galleries approach visitor evaluation.

## ***THE CONTEMPORARY MUSEUM WITHOUT WALLS***

This presentation will reflect on a project that set out to determine if the Irish Museum of Modern Art's (IMMA) National Collection is relevant to the lives of people living in a regional area of Ireland.

Using socially engaged art as a methodology, the study explored the potential for a meaningful engagement that did not necessitate visiting the museum.

Rooted in André Malraux's concept of the 'Museum Without Walls' (1933) the purpose was to examine barriers to engagement, real and perceived, and test the capacity to generate a new model of practice; by bridging the distance between a National Institution and people living in a designated disadvantaged regional area.

The primary resource for the project was IMMA's Online Collection which was integrated into a blended learning programme. Participants also engaged in a process of collaborative and participatory arts activities, making contemporary artworks germane to their lives and distinct regional identity.

An outcome of the project was a virtual exhibition, curated by the participants. Artworks from IMMA's Collection were shown publicly alongside artworks made by the group. This ongoing research continues to focus on the concept of socially engaged art as a framework for further critical engagement with National Cultural Institutions.

**Liz Johnson** is an artist and educator. She holds an MA in Socially Engaged Art from the National College of Art and Design and is a graduate of Chelsea School of Art. Her practice incorporates a multidisciplinary approach that is informed and underpinned by twenty years of experience as an arts practitioner working across the fields of art education, community arts and collaborative arts practice. She has led numerous participatory arts projects, and undertaken many residencies in a variety of contexts.

Liz Johnson's work has included engagement with schools, community organisations, Education Centres, Colleges, Youth Reach Centres, public hospitals and residential care homes. She has also been involved in diverse multidisciplinary arts education projects as an Artist-in-Education for Birmingham Royal Ballet. Liz's recent research explores how socially engaged art as a model of practice could enhance learning and engagement with National Cultural Collections for people living in regional areas of Ireland.

## ***AN AUDIENCE TO WIN: THE A WORLD TO WIN SECONDARY SCHOOL'S PROGRAMME AT THE NATIONAL PRINT MUSEUM***

To celebrate the year of design, Irish Design 2015 and the National Print Museum hosted the Irish debut of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, touring exhibition, *A World to Win, Posters of Protest and Revolution*. *A World to Win* is an exhibition exploring a century of posters agitating for political and social change. It features posters from a diverse array of international artists, graphic designers and print collectives and was curated by Catherine Flood, V&A Prints Curator.

Considering its subject matter having a multitude of cross-curricular links with the Secondary School curriculum, an audience that does not frequent the Museum in high volumes annually, the Museum's Education Department felt it important to realise the exhibition's educational potential. Hence, an interactive education programme suitable for Second Level Junior Cycle - CSPE, Transition Year, Senior Cycle - Art & Design and Senior Cycle History, was researched, developed and implemented by the Education Officer, with the assistance of a part-time Exhibition Education Intern.

The programme, which consisted of pre-visit classroom discussion and group work, followed by an *A World to Win* Guided Tour and Protest Poster Workshop at the Museum, was designed to help students engage with the theory and history of protest and revolution, explore the relationship between politics and graphic art and to promote the idea active citizenship. The programme was a great success, with an engaged audience of 165 students and teachers taking part. This presentation will explore the development, implementation, and learning outcomes of this programme at the National Print Museum.

**Gretta Halpin** is Education Officer at the National Print Museum since March 2012, where she is primarily responsible for the development of a range of socially inclusive educational programmes for a variety of audiences relating to the museum's permanent and temporary exhibitions. Her work also involves tour guide training and development, management and delivery of the Museum's outreach programme, children's craft workshop development and delivery, and the co-ordination and development of special educational events. Since beginning her role, Gretta Halpin has developed a number of special education projects, including a Heritage Council funded Letterpress Training Seminar, a Creative Community Workshop Programme for Seniors, and most recently the *A World to Win* Secondary Schools Programme in the autumn of 2015. Gretta holds a BA (Honours) in History and English from NUI Maynooth and is a graduate of the MA in Cultural Heritage and Museum Studies at the University of Ulster.

## **INSPIRING TEENAGE BOYS WITH A RANGE OF ABILITIES**

The extensive transport collections held at NMNI, ranging from the DeLorean car and steam locomotives, to the Ferguson Flyer, lend themselves to STEM learning outside of the traditional school environment, something which proved particularly successful with the Year 10 teenagers from Ashfield Boys High School from the Eastside Urban Village.

Skilfully facilitated by museum educators and an experienced STEM Ambassador from Bombardier, the boys enjoyed an extensive programme which ranged from exploring the principles of flight through to an actual flight around Belfast Lough. Museum collections were also used as the creative impetus for a range of digital and multimedia elements of the programme.

Unique engagement with museum collections, and the drive to help pupils achieve their potential, offers a possible approach to the increasingly recognised trends of academic under-achievement in specific sections of society. Importantly, it can also inspire boys to consider the range of potential career options open to them in the STEM sector.

**Arlene Bell** is Social Inclusion Programme Manager at National Museums Northern Ireland, leading the delivery of the Social Inclusion Programme which targets groups and individuals from the top 20% areas of social and economic deprivation in Northern Ireland.

With a background in Primary Education and cross-community youth work, she joined the Ulster Folk the Education Department in the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum in 1990, initially leading the Education for Mutual Understanding Programme (EMU) and then acting as Head of Education for approximately five years. She moved to the role of Capital Programme Manager in 2005 before taking up her current position in 2013.

## KIDS IN MUSEUMS: HOW TAKEOVER DAY WORKS TO GET YOUNG PEOPLE IN

Kids in Museums is a UK-based charity working with museums to make them more welcoming of young people, children and families – in particular those who haven't visited before. They produce the *Kids in Museums Manifesto – 20 ways to make your museum more welcoming*; the Family Friendly Museum Award; and resources to support museums, such as the recent *How can your museum better welcome families and young People with autism*. But their biggest campaign is Takeover Day – the annual day on which young people are given 'adult' roles in a museum. 7000 young people took part last year.

So why does the Takeover approach work? Because the young people are empowered. Takeover is *not* an invitation to a youth event, where they come along and make or watch. It is active participation. It is doing something that would not usually be done by a child in that museum. Kids in Museums uses three words to describe Takeover Day – it has to be meaningful, powerful and decision-making for the young participants. It is this that makes it have a long lasting effect on both the children and the museum.

This active participation supports young people that wouldn't usually just 'come along' and 'do something'. Giving a young person responsibility and a defined role enables and empowers them. It moves them beyond being visitors, to being deliverers.

**Dea Birkett** is Creative Director of Kids in Museums, the visitor-led organisation working with museums, galleries and heritage sites to make them more welcoming of children and families – in particular those who have never visited before. She is passionate about advocating the importance of museums in providing experiences, opportunities and ambitions to young people. The annual Kids in Museums Manifesto is the foremost family friendly audit document in the museum and arts sector. The Telegraph Family Friendly Museum Award, which Kids in Museums founded and runs, is the biggest museum award in Britain and the only one judged by families.

Dea is also an award-winning writer and journalist, author of seven books including *Serpent in Paradise*, *Off the Beaten Track* and *Three Centuries of Women Travellers* (with the National Portrait Gallery). She is a contributor to the *Guardian*, *Mail on Sunday* and a wide range of national publications, as well as a regular commentator for the BBC. She is co-Director of TextWorkshop [www.textworkshop.co.uk](http://www.textworkshop.co.uk), working with museums and visitor attractions on their messages and written interpretation.