

Riverbank Arts Centre - Activity Report 2023



Production shot of The Wrens by Ros Kavanagh

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INTRODUCTION - WHAT IS RIVERBANK?

Riverbank Arts Centre is the county arts centre based in Newbridge, Co. Kildare, funded by The Arts Council and Kildare County Council. Riverbank Arts Centre works in partnership with international, national and local artists to deliver an accessible and consistently high quality arts programme in an intimate environment. We provide a multi-disciplinary programme which includes theatre, cinema, comedy, music, dance, workshops and visual arts.

With a dedicated children's gallery and programming of high quality theatre and workshops for younger audiences, Riverbank is also committed to promoting early engagement with and access to the arts.

Riverbank Arts Centre is a producer and co producer of new work. We work closely with visual artists and theatre artists to develop and present work, with a particular focus on arts experiences for young people. We commission exhibitions, host residencies and have presented world premieres of work by leading theatre companies including Theatre Lovett, Monkeyshine, Moonfish, Fidget Feet Aerial Dance Company, Branar Téatar do Pháistí, Collapsing Horse, and Super Paua.



Ta TumTum! on the Riverbank stage

In 2023, Riverbank Arts Centre:

⇒ Presented live events including exhibitions & theatre, music, literary and family events for an audience of more than **25,000 people**.

⇒ Co-produced **national tour of Lost Lear** (10 venues, October & November)

⇒ Presented a comprehensive programme for schools consisting of **workshops and live events in the venue** which **8,000 school children** took part in.

⇒ **Supported 100+ artists** as part of our **residency programmes**, ranging from Multi-Annual residencies to short term development residencies.

PRESENTATION - MUSIC, THEATRE, CINEMA, LITERATURE

Riverbank Arts Centre presented a programme of live events from January - December



MUSIC PROGRAMME: Music Network - several collaborations: Sultan Stevenson Trio with special guest Denys Baptiste, Liz Knowles, Niwel Tsumbu & Niall Vallely, Linda May Han Oh & Fabian Almazan; Oscailt – a new commission by Jennifer Walshe; The National String Quartet Foundation; Cassiopeia Winds; Vladimir Jablokov; Vanbrugh Quartet; Iarla Ó Lionáird; Jack L; Karan Casey; Inni-K; The Fureys; Lisa Lambe - Nightvisiting; Donal Lunny & Andy Irvine; Far East Sounds by Mei Yi Foo (Music Generation

collaboration); The Ennio Morricone Experience; Irish National Opera - Out of the Ordinary/As An nGnách - a VR community opera experience.

THEATRE PROGRAMME: **Danti-Dan** by Gina Moxley (Livin' Dred) ; **Happy Days** (Blue Raincoat); **The Examination** by Brokentalkers; **Country & Irish** by Pat McCabe; **King by Pat Kinevane (Fishamble)**; **The Perfect Immigrant** written/performed by Sam Yakura (EDI) ; **A Low and Quiet Sea** by Donal Ryan (Verdant Productions); Run of the Mill Theatre Company, **The Ballad of Mossy Flood** by Seamus O'Rourke; **GomBean** by Niamh McGrath; **The Murder of Wolfe Tone** by Paddy Cullivan; **The Curious Case of Albert Cashier** by Quintessence Theatre



CINEMA PROGRAMME: The Banshees of Inisherin; Lakelands; The Lost King; The Woman King; Corsage; Alcarràs; North Circular; The Ordinaries; Aftersun; UTAMA; Aisha; Mrs Harris Goes to Paris; Return to Dust; Vengeance; The Rose Maker; Armageddon Time; The Beasts; Till; EO; Blue Jean; The Fabelmans; Asteroid City; 406 Days - The Debenhams Picket Line; La Syndicaliste; Chevalier; The Blue Caftan; Beau is Afraid; Small, Slow But

Steady; Sunlight; Afire; Carmen; The Innocent; War Pony; The Eight Mountains; Master Gardener; So This Is Christmas.



LITERATURE: In October Riverbank Arts Centre hosted six live events over 4 days for **KILDARE READERS FESTIVAL** including Chat LGBT: A Question of Queer Irish Literature

with Katherine O'Donnell & Declan Toohey; Creeping It Real: The Rebirth of Female Horror with Sophie White & Rick O'Shea; Ten Books with Eithne Hand & Gerry Stembridge; The Deadwood Encore with Kathleen Murray & Ed O'Loughlin; Poor: Grit, courage & the life changing value of self belief with Katriona O'Sullivan; Sunday Morning Sessions: Judith Mok & Michael O'Loughlin in Conversation with Dermot Bolger.

Other talks/events included Michael Harding - All Things Left Unsaid (Lime Tree tour); **Ken O'Sullivan** Stories from the Deep.



COMEDY: Our comedy programme at Riverbank Arts Centre invariably results in sell-out shows and provides an audience development opportunity to place Riverbank Arts Centre on the radar of Kildare audiences seeking a good night out - in addition comedy often brings a younger /first-time audience to the arts centre. In 2023 we had performances from **Jason Byrne** - Unblocked; **David O'Doherty** - Whoa Is Me; **DirtBirds #NoFiler**; **Gearóid Farrelly** - Glamour Hammer; **Neil Delamere** - Delamerium; **Deirdre O'Kane** - Demented; **Anne Gildea** - How to Get the Menopause & Enjoy It; **Fred Cooke & Julie Jay's** Marriage Counselling; **Chris Kent** - Back At It; **Karl Spain** - Well, What Did You Expect?

WORKSHOPS/SHORT PROGRAMMES for young people included: CreateSchool: **digital arts camps**; Super Paua (school workshops); **Give a Poem, Get a Poem** with LIVE Network (offsite programme); Children's Books Ireland - in person **Book Clinics** (targeting new participants/access - **EDI**); **I See You Like This** - participatory photography programme led by Jessica Wilson; Chris Judge - **A Daily Cloud** (Family & School engagement prog); Megan O'Neill - **Songwriting workshop**; Joseph Orr - **flipbook animation** workshops; Kate Escolin - **Zines Are Cool**; Tamzen Lundy - Wet Felting (family workshops); Easter Art Camp with Marta Golubowska; Children's Yoga and Storytelling with Johnny Magory; **Manga Comic Book Workshop** with Amy Louise O'Callaghan; Ta Tum Tum! **samba workshop** with Kasia Eliaz.



ADULT WORKSHOPS included: Sean-Nós workshop with Inni-K; Mark-Making with Martina McDonald; Tamzen Lundy - Wet Felting a Funky Feline; Finding Form workshop with Vera McEvoy; Afro-Brazilian Dance Workshop with Alessandra Azevedo; Creating Dance Theatre with Philippa Donnellan & Ruth Lehane; Abstracting the Landscape with Niamh Hynan.

Visual Arts Programme - McKenna Gallery

JAN: Clodagh Kelly & 10 collaborating artists. As part of First Fortnight festival, 'Freedom of Choice' asked participating artists to consider the everyday and the extraordinary, relationships, family & community.

ENGAGEMENT: Panel Discussion chaired by Dr. Brid Connolly (writer and former Tutor with the Department of Adult & Community Education, NUIM). Freedom of Choice visual art workshop with Clodagh Kelly as part of First Fortnight Festival. **EDI**

FEB/MARCH: Brenda Brady - A Cast of Paintings: a response to organic forms, found images and observation in her domestic environment.

ENGAGEMENT: (Re)starting an artistic practice - A Panel Discussion chaired by Carolann Courtney featured artists Brenda Brady, Maria Ginnity & Clíodhna Ní Anluain. LC gallery visit/school tours programme.



APRIL/MAY: Finding Form - Kildare Municipal Collection: curated by Paula Barrett in association with Kildare Arts Service to animate the collection and engage a new audience with the artworks. The exhibition featured works by Niamh O'Malley, Isabel Nolan, Gillian Lawler, Shane Hynan, Emma Stroude, John Minihan, Seán Cotter, Rebecca Peart, John Behan, James Nolan, Derek A Fitzsimons and Dominic Turner.

ENGAGEMENT: A Panel Discussion chaired by Cristín Leach included Sarah Browne, Sean Cotter, Lucina

Russell & Emma Stroude. Workshop hosted by artist Vera McEvoy. LC gallery visit/school tours programme.

JUNE: Unseen - Kildare Art Collective, a group exhibition. Founded in 2017, Kildare Art Collective provides a platform and ongoing opportunities for Kildare-based professional artists working across a broad spectrum of disciplines and themes. This exhibition featuring 15 artists addressed themes such as faith, philosophy, identity, time and memory.

ENGAGEMENT: A workshop programme hosted by artists Martina McDonald and Niamh Hynan.



JULY: Our Place: An exhibition developed by artists **Sinéad McCann** and **AlanJames Burns** in close collaboration with artists, who are supported by Saint John of God Liffey Services. Actions taken to ensure this exhibition was fully accessible:



- A Lámh welcome video made by one of the collaborating artists supported by Saint John of God Services available on a TV screen in the Foyer of Riverbank Arts Centre. The screen was positioned beside the box office. Captions of the sound artwork available inside the gallery.
- Braille descriptions of the sound artwork available inside the gallery.
- Audio Way finders are available through QR codes. The Audio Way finder begins at the Lámh welcome video, and continues in the gallery area.
- **OUR PLACE Social Story EDI**

ENGAGEMENT: Inclusive and joyful launch event led by the participating artists from SJOG in the Riverbank auditorium with a panel of participating artists and a disco. Numerous tours for local groups including KARE, Camphill Community and St. Mark’s Summer Camp.

SEPT/OCT: Sound|Code|Image - Gavin Casey: An exploration of art and music to include an installation, artworks and a virtual reality experience. Recipient of the Kildare Art Service/RAC Emerging Visual Artist Bursary (2022), first solo exhibition.



ENGAGEMENT: Artist tours for Culture Night. LC gallery visit/school tours programme.

NOV/DEC: Folk Medicine - Sheena Malone: an artistic investigation into the contemporary and historical practice of folk medicine in Ireland. Drawing from personal interviews and archival research, traditional plant lore is combined with magico-religious beliefs about ‘the cure’, inherited healing abilities, the concept of the *bean feasa* and the role of place.

ENGAGEMENT: Artist talk for schools. Panel discussion. LC gallery visit/school tours programme.

VISUAL ART ENGAGEMENT CURATOR: In March 2023, RAC appointed artist Martina McDonald as our Visual Arts: Curator of Engagement, Learning & Participation. This role is to devise and develop an engagement and **creative learning plan** for the 2023 exhibitions programme (April - December). The Curator prepares materials, resources and exhibition assets for each exhibition in collaboration with the RAC marketing team and exhibiting artists. The curator also implements our EDI objectives and reaches out to new communities and to artists from diverse backgrounds.

Cover Illustration - Open Call

Since 2016, we’ve worked with numerous artists and illustrators by commissioning cover illustrations for our brochure. We offer a commission fee of €500 to three artists each year - in 2023 our cover artists were **Shams Asgarzada, Jennifer O’Brien & Hollie Murphy.**



FAMILY PROGRAMME



Presenting work of excellence for young audiences is a strategic priority for Riverbank Arts Centre. In addition, we work closely with visual artists and theatre/dance artists to create and develop exemplary arts experiences for young people. 2023 was no exception with the following events for families: the World Premiere of **Theatre Lovett's** The Teddy Bear's Picnic; cinema screenings in partnership with **Access Cinema** including Onward, Alice in Wonderland & Mavka: The Forest Song; **Jess Rowell** - Making Waves - a full week engagement which included in-school workshops; **Kyle Riley**

- Little Folk on the Road; **The Speks**; **StrongWomen Science**; **Paul Curley** - Grey Matter; **Monica Munoz** - FLiP; **Joe Daly** - It's Magic; **Paul Curley** - Polar Bear & Penguin.

Cruinniú na nÓg took place on Saturday 10th June. A day of free events for young persons, this year it included a Family Drumming Workshop with **Jabba Jabba Jembe**; the Book Doctor was on hand for the **CBI Book Clinic**; and three performances of moving words - a new piece by **Selma Daniel & Little Lion Theatre**. All of these events were fully booked.

EARLY YEARS: BabyLovesMusic by Eamon Sweeney and **BabyGROOVE & I Am Baba** by Anna Newell, in association with the Network for Extraordinary Audiences. Music & Sensory Play with Catherine Hartnett.

OFFSITE: Anna Newell Theatre Adventures: **Sing Me To The Sea** presented offsite at Enable Hydropool, Naas in July 2023, in collaboration with the Network for Extraordinary Audiences (**EDI**).

Riverbank Arts Centre acknowledges and believes that every person has the right to create, engage with, enjoy and participate in the arts. We are an active member of **The Network For Extraordinary Audiences**, seven Irish venues coming together to commit strategically and in the long-term to programming and developing high quality arts experiences for underserved younger audiences, including babies, Early Years and children/young people with complex needs as a key part of their ongoing year-round programme.



VISUAL ART FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE:

In 2023, Riverbank Arts Centre produced and curated a Visual Arts programme for children, presented in our Children's Gallery and offsite locations including exhibitions by:



Jan-March: Chris Judge - **A Daily Cloud** - included Chris Judge's original Cloud prints, images from his Cloud Babies collaboration with Eoin Colfer (Walker Books) and a response area to create your own cloud drawings. **ENGAGEMENT:** Illustrated talk for schools, family workshops, and numerous school tours.

April-June: Maeve Clancy - **Kathleen Lonsdale**, Crystallography & Women in Science. (also tour to Kildare libraries Sept-Dec). An immersive cut paper installation, combined with drawings, lighting and animation designed to take the visitor out of their world and into the extraordinary mind of Kathleen Lonsdale.

ENGAGEMENT: Illustrated talk for schools, school tours, CPD workshop with Maeve Clancy for teachers. Artist Talk - professional recording to accompany the touring exhibition:

<https://vimeo.com/832650836>



ORIGINAL EXHIBITION/COMMISSION



Sept: **Super Paua Stories** - interactive audio installation of multilingual stories. Fáilte! Witamy! Bem-vindo! Welcome! They have been selected from four seasons of audio stories produced by theatre company Super Paua, and written and performed by artists who live in Ireland.

ENGAGEMENT: Three multi-lingual listening parties for Culture Night.

ORIGINAL EXHIBITION

Oct: Jessica Wilson - **I See You Like This**, a unique photography exhibition with art direction by children

ENGAGEMENT: Acclaimed interactive art experience created by Jessica Wilson to celebrate the fascinating relationship that is at the heart of individual identity – between parent and child.

TOURING EXHIBITION

Nov/Dec: Peter Donnelly - **All The President's Books** - exhibition includes some never-before-seen artwork from the four books such as early designs and sketches, pencil storyboards and full colour illustrations. Follow the process of how Peter makes a picture book from his very first drawings to the final cover.

ENGAGEMENT: illustrated Artist's Talk for schools, family workshops, school tours.



ORIGINAL EXHIBITION

Education Programme at Riverbank Arts Centre



Riverbank Arts Centre works closely with Irish and international theatre companies, artists and co-producing partners, to present work particularly suited to schools.

In 2023, 8000 children from 42 schools attended events at Riverbank Arts Centre as part of a school trip/programme.

Riverbank Arts Centre is committed to providing:

- An exemplary programme for schools across key artforms - Visual Arts, Theatre/Dance, Literature and Cinema
- Arts engagement opportunities that are accessible in terms of artistic content, presentation and pricing
- Classroom resource materials, to enhance the experience for young people and their teachers
- A friendly, welcoming experience for school groups in our venue
- Inclusive events which are welcoming and support the diverse academic, social, emotional, and communication needs of students
- A regular evaluation of our schools programme and individual events - we actively seek feedback from teachers, students and the artists we work with.

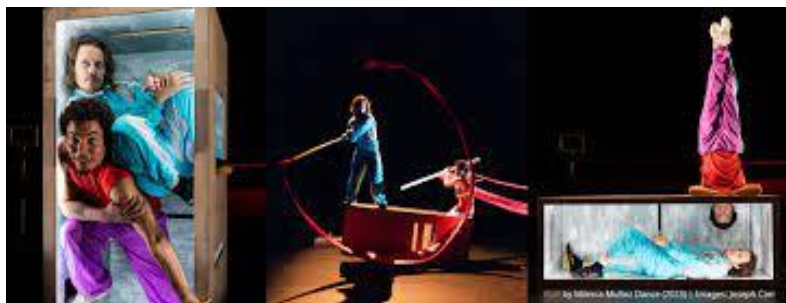


'Riverbank Arts Centre has been so great and supportive of our school and indeed all schools in the locality and beyond. We are blessed to have such a wonderful facility on our doorstep. The standard of programming for children is superb and the effect on our young children is immeasurable!'
Teacher, Scoil Mhuire, Newbridge

Summary of Education Programme in 2023

PRIMARY SCHOOL

PROGRAMME included: Paul Curley: **Grey Matter & Polar Bear & Penguin; StrongWomen Science;** Science Magic Show: **Messy Mayhem;** Jess Rowell - **Making Waves (EDI),** Little Lion Dance : **Adoleta!;** Monica Munoz -**FLIP!;** Theatre Lovett



Presents **The Teddy Bears' Picnic;** **Artist Talks** with Mario Corrigan & Dave Butler; Chris Judge; Maeve Clancy; Sheena Malone.

POST PRIMARY SCHOOL PROGRAMME included: Ger Carey - **A Comic Journey Inside the Teenage Mind;** Kildare Youth Theatre - **A Doll's House by Henrik Ibsen;** Kildare Youth Theatre Presents **Hamlet by William Shakespeare;** WhistleBlast Presents **Petrushka;** Irish National Opera - **Out of the Ordinary/As an nGnách.** Riverbank continued its partnership with **IFI Schools Programme** to present eight screenings of four films: **An Cailín Ciúin** (Ireland, 2022, directed by Colm Bairéad); **King** (France, 2022, directed by Davd Moreau); **Mediterraneo: The Law of the Sea** (Spain/Greece, 2021, directed by Marcel Barrena); **Der Pfad** (Germany, 2022, direct by Tobias Weimann).

Riverbank continues to present an ongoing series of free in-venue and in-school **Fighting Words Creative Writing Workshops** led by Peirina Campbell. These workshops attract schools from across county Kildare including Clane, Kilcock and Celbridge. In 2023, we expanded our programme to include Irish language workshops.

In 2023, Riverbank Arts Centre expanded its gallery tour programme, both for primary & post-primary TY & LC Gallery visits (with engagement packs) - e.g. we presented tours of Chris Judge's **A Daily Cloud** to 500 local primary school children. Artist Brenda Brady hosted LC gallery tour of her exhibition **A Cast of Paintings** and curator Paula Barrett hosted tours of **Finding Form**, artwork selected from the Kildare Municipal Collection.

WORKSHOP FACILITATION PROGRAMME: In collaboration with Super Paua, we developed and hosted a training programme for artists/arts workers seeking to explore improvisation, storytelling and theatre facilitation skills. We actively sought multilingual participants. 10 artists took part in a taster workshop and from there, three artists completed the full paid training programme: Abdelmonem Nasr, Alexandra Gogan & Marta Iwanowska. Programme was devised and facilitated by Mark Ball **EDI**

In addition, Riverbank Arts Centre presented outreach/in-school programmes in association with partners including Music Network, Music Generation, Improvised Music Company and continued our **Creative Schools engagement** as Creative School Associate.

Outreach & Engagement Activities



Connections Festival in association with National Theatre, UK - April 2023

Riverbank Arts Centre partnered with NT Connections to showcase plays by three Irish youth theatre companies, hosted by **Crooked House Theatre Company** and attended by **Waterford Youth Arts, Mr. Sands Youth Theatre, County Limerick Youth Theatre** and **Straffan Drama Club**. Riverbank Arts Centre is very happy to support Connections Festival and the participating companies each year.

Pride 2023

Riverbank Arts Centre celebrated Pride 2023 by commissioning artist **Kate Escolin** to produce a family friendly Pride Poster to display outside Riverbank for the month of June. Kate was also commissioned to create smaller posters to display within Riverbank.



406 Days - The Debenhams Picket Line

Riverbank Arts Centre presented a special screening of 406 Days in September. Former Debenhams workers were invited to view the screening free of charge

406 Days tells the Incredible story of the Debenhams Ireland Picket Line. On April 9th, 2020, nearly 1,000 Irish Debenhams workers, most of them women, received a generic email telling them they were being made redundant. So began the longest-ever Irish industrial dispute in Ireland. The workers remained on the picket lines, through the Covid-19 pandemic, for 406 days. They faced all challenges and year-round weather - fighting on with boundless courage, determination, and friendship.

The screening was followed by a Q&A session chaired by Cllr Chris Pender.

Sing Me To The Sea by Anna Newell Theatre Adventures

Riverbank Arts Centre partnered with Enable Naas to present **Sing Me To the Sea**. **Sing Me to the Sea** is an immersive multisensory adventure for children and young people with complex needs. It is performed in hydropools with 3 audience members per show, each with an adult companion – with everyone in the water!

Sing Me To The Sea was originally created in 2018 with funding from Wicklow Arts Office. Created in partnership with Enable Ireland and St Catherine's School.



Co-Producers: Kildare Jazz Festival



In November Riverbank hosted the inaugural Kildare Jazz Festival. Kildare Jazz Festival consisted of twenty-one artists performing ten events over three days, including family and dance workshops. The festival featured musicians from all over the world, including Peruvian guitarist **Rodrigo Almonte** and three-time **Grammy Award** winning **Brazilian percussionist Rogerio Boccato**. On Friday 10th Brazilian guitarist

Gustavo de Moraes played with his quartet, followed by award-winning Irish vocalist **Lauren Kinsella**. Saturday saw Irish interdisciplinary composer **Bianca Gannon** take to the stage, followed by **RBG Trio**, a collective of Ireland's leading jazz musicians. Rodrigo Almonte and Rogerio Boccato came together with fellow musicians **Lorenzo Vitolo** on piano, **Rafael Abdala** on double bass, **Roberto Pistolesi** on drums, and **Daniel Juárez** on tenor saxophone. On Sunday 12th Jazz & Bossa Nova Duo **LR Project** held an intimate gig in the foyer at Riverbank Arts Centre where patrons were treated to a complimentary beverage of their choice, and singer Luana Matos got everyone up dancing! The festival closed with Irish/Dutch songwriter **Patrick Stefan** and Moroccan artist **Aziz Ozouss**.

Workshops were hosted in Newbridge Town Hall over the course of the festival. On Saturday **Tum Tum!** brought their exciting samba workshop for children and their adults to Newbridge Town Hall. Then on Sunday **Yves Lorrhan** taught an **Introduction to Afro-Brazilian Dance** for adults.



Ta

The festival was curated by Kasia Eliaz and supported by the Festival Investment Scheme Funding from The Arts Council and Riverbank Arts Centre.

Photos by Pamela Griesang.

Artist Support Programme

Supporting artists and the creation of work is a strategic priority for Riverbank Arts Centre. We offer a variety of artist-centred residency and bursary opportunities including:

- a multi-annual residency and bursary programme to develop artistic practice
- short term residencies (through Open Call)
- and once-off residencies for artists
- commissioning or co-commissioning of new work by individual artists or companies, for ongoing development, presentation, or touring.

These residencies and bursaries provide practical support to artists to make work but also serve to allow the venue to engage creatively with our audiences and wider community through workshops and work-in-progress sharings. In many cases, these residency programmes enable Riverbank Arts Centre and our artists to garner feedback from audiences which can shape the development of the work and enrich our audience's engagement with the artform.

RESIDENCY SCHEMES

Navigator Programme: Riverbank Arts Centre partnered with Improvised Music Company on a 14-day residency for a musician in Autumn 2023. This residency offers a professional musician time and space to develop and perform work, and is an opportunity to grow audiences for improvised music, and also engage with local music artists and audiences. The artist selected for 2023 was Cora Venus Lunny.

Meitheal: Riverbank Arts Centre is a partner of Branar's creative production services pilot programme Meitheal. This initiative, managed by Branar, is designed to support artists creating and producing performing arts for young audiences across Ireland. In 2023, Meitheal's first venue-based Producer-In-Residence was appointed by the Meitheal programme team, hosted and mentored by RAC for 12 months. Funded by Meitheal, with in-kind support by RAC, this producer supported several Meitheal artists' presentations at RAC and touring work by these artists. Caoimhe Whelan was selected as emerging producer in residence by the Branar Meitheal team for 2023.

Run of the Mill: In 2023, RAC supported and hosted 'Connections' a new poetry film from Mark Smith, renowned Irish poet Colm Keegan and Arcade Film, an exclusive screening of the Oscar-Qualifying short film Headspace by Aisling Byrne (film programme & talk) and Samba workshops & performance Co-created and performed by The Run of the Mill Community Group and Ta Tum Tum! (Kasia Eliaz, William Kanela and Marcio Tarktarov) EDI

OUR PLACE: a collaborative, socially engaged project by Dr Sinead McCann and AlanJames Burns, with participants from Saint John of God Liffey Service. In partnership with Kildare Arts Service, we will offer a week-long residency and support the artists to develop an accessible, inclusive exhibition at McKenna Gallery, based on their film work of the same title. EDI

SHORT-TERM RESIDENCY OPPORTUNITIES: Emerging and established artists and companies were offered short term residency opportunities throughout 2023 (between 5-10 days in the venue, In-Kind support and mentoring). These residencies provide practical support to artists to make work but also serve to allow the venue to engage creatively with our audiences and wider community through workshops and work in progress sharings.

Other artists and companies we offered support to in 2023 include:



- Susan Connolly** - developing her play *Bring Them In* (based on her time in Goldenbridge) in collaboration with Noelle Brown and Emilie Pine EDI
- Emma Finegan** - developing a new autobiographical theatre work inspired by queer identity, being a Gaeilgeoir and living on the Curragh.
- Selma Daniel & Cibeles Sabione**: exploring the singing voice & dance movement.
- Brenda Donohue, Tanya Dean & Lianne O'Shea**: Rehearsed reading of a new translation of a work by contemporary Italian playwright Emma Dante.
- Lianne O'Shea and Matt Burke**: The role of lighting design in live performance.
- Fizz&Chips** developing *Juno and the Jetpacks* and a new dance work *Deirfiúr*.

Dan Colley - Multi-Annual Residency

Continuation of four-year residency with theatre-maker Dan Colley, hosted by Riverbank Arts Centre and at various locations in Co. Kildare

Residency activity:

- Premiere of new work **The Wrens**
- Research and development of new theatre projects including **A Nativity Play** and **Coyote** and street/film performance, **A Painted Man**.
- Development of his own artistic practice through research and writing
- Development of the artistic practice of collaborating artists and providing paid employment opportunities for theatre artists and technicians throughout the residency period.

In addition, Riverbank Arts Centre acts as co-producer for National and international touring work which was created as part of this residency. In 2023, **A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings** travelled to leading festivals and venues supported by Culture Ireland including:

- STET, The Hague, Netherlands
- Irish Arts Center, New York, USA
- Ottawa Children's Arts Festival, Ottawa, Canada
- Brighton Festival, Brighton, UK
- Imagine, Edinburgh, UK



NETWORKS

Strollers - PROPEL

2023 saw the delivery of cycle 3 of the PROPEL Artist Development Programme. A newly established artist support initiative that utilises the network's existing infrastructure, resources, and wider network partnerships to support the sustainable development of independent theatre makers working within the Irish theatre and dance sector. The programme is delivered over three years, in three graduating cycles (early, mid, final). Supporting a maximum of three artists per year, over a three-year period. The aim of this programme is to strengthen the ecology of the Irish theatre sector by firstly supporting the development of new work by independent theatre makers, and secondly by supporting the long-term sustainable development of artists through capacity building and strategic professional development.

PROPEL Artists: Roisin Whelan (year 2 in 2023); Shane O'Reilly (year 1 in 2023), Choy-Ping Clarke-Ng 吳彩萍(artist selected for 2024).

Network for Extraordinary Audiences - Riverbank Arts Centre is a partner of a network founded by Anna Newell Theatre Adventures which aims to develop, promote and advance work for diverse audiences. EDI

LIVE Network - promotes and explores literature as an artform, discovering new connections, partnerships, formats, and projects that connect RAC with new audiences and make literature a more visible artform within our venue. In addition, the Network seeks to support writers and literary makers in their ambitions to tour, workshop and engage with readers digitally and in person.

NOMAD - In 2023, the NOMAD partners supported a development phase of Livin' Dred's new production of The Playboy of The Western World, directed by Aaron Monaghan among other productions.

LOCAL ARTS

Riverbank Arts Centre has a strong commitment to our local artists and arts organisations, with regular performances from Newbridge Drama Group and Riff Raff Drama Group. We continue to host a number of events as part of June Fest each year. This year **June Fest** presented A Parlour Evening with Friends.

Riverbank held several local art productions on its stage over the course of 2023, including: **MAC Theatre Productions** - Nunsense; **Ballymore Eustace Concert Band**; **Curragh Community College** Presents Grease; **The Odd Theatre Company** - Once; **Newbridge Drama Group** Presents The Importance of Being Earnest (June) & A Little Like Paradise by Niall Williams (November), **Riff Raff Drama Group** Presents What Are the Odds?; **Newbridge Musical Society** - Thank You For the Music; **Highly Strung** - All Wrapped Up; **Griese Youth Theatre** - Double Bill; **Kildare Youth Theatre** - A Doll's House by Henrik Ibsen, Hamlet by William Shakespeare, & The Indigo Collective. In addition, Riverbank offers access to theatre artists/companies and



engagement programmes for Kildare-based youth theatre companies throughout the year.

CO-PRODUCERS OF TOURING WORK

We were co-producers of Dan Colley's **Lost Lear national** tour, in Autumn 2023.

Lost Lear is a very (very) loose adaptation of *King Lear*, examining the self and that part of us that's inaccessible to others. **Lost Lear** previewed in Riverbank Arts Centre in July 2022 before premiering at Dublin Theatre Festival 2022.

★★★★★ The Stage

"Devastating stuff, deftly done...Colley is a theatre maker of remarkable imagination and insight"

★★★★★ Irish Examiner

"Brilliantly conceived and executed... a remarkable achievement"

★★★★★ The Arts Review

"Bravely visits painful places to tenderly illuminate them"

★★★★★ Irish Mail on Sunday

"In a role demanding a wide physical and emotional range...Bowe is remarkable"

Lost Lear is funded by The Arts Council, An Chomhairle Ealaíon. Co-produced by Riverbank Arts Centre & Mermaid Arts Centre.





TEAM

Venue Director Caroline Williams
Programme Manager Aleksandra Rosiak
Marketing & PR Manager Helen Whiteley
Box Office & FOH Manager Theresa Davidson
Technical Manager John Mahon

BOARD

Paul Davis - Chair
Maureen Bergin
Holly Carey
Dr Brenda Donohue
Thomas Hunter McGowan
Teresa Murray
Donnchadh O'Neill
Lucina Russell (up to Sept 2023)
Eláine Donnelly (from Sept 2023)



NETWORKS

Riverbank Arts Centre is a member of Strollers, Nomad, and the Network of Extraordinary Audiences touring networks.

RIVERBANK ARTS CENTRE WORKS WITH THE FOLLOWING NATIONAL PROGRAMME

PARTNERS: Fighting Words, access>CINEMA, Europa Cinemas, DIFF, Irish Writers' Centre, Words Ireland, Children's Books Ireland, The National Gallery, Laureate na nOg, Youth Theatre Ireland, First Fortnight, Culture Night, Improvised Music Company, Music Network and Music Generation.

FUNDERS

Riverbank Arts Centre acknowledges the financial support of The Arts Council and Kildare County Council.

Riverbank Arts Centre CLG Is a registered Charity (20074982) with Revenue Commissioners (CHY 19193)

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