



THE DAY- CROSSING FARM

BY

MARIE BRETT

A MULTI-SENSORY ART INSTALLATION, BUILT OVER FOUR FLOORS WITH LIVE PERFORMANCE, EXPLORING ISSUES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING, MODERN-DAY-SLAVERY AND DRUG FARMING IN CONTEMPORARY IRELAND.

A photograph of a spiral staircase with a blue glow and string lights. The staircase is illuminated with a deep blue light, and a string of warm-toned, globe-shaped lights is draped along the railing. The perspective is from above, looking down the spiral.

COMMISSIONED BY
CORK MIDSUMMER FESTIVAL

AND CREATED OVER A TWO - YEAR PERIOD (19'-21')
IN DIALOGUE WITH HUMAN JUSTICE ADVOCACY
AND SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS, PLUS SCHOLARS,
GARDENERS AND PERSONS WITH LIVED
EXPERIENCE OF TRAFFICKING AND FORCED LABOUR;
THIS AMBITIOUS PIECE IS PRODUCED IN
COLLABORATION WITH

COMPOSER AND SOUND DESIGNER
PETER POWER

FILMMAKER
LINDA CURTIN

LIGHTING DESIGNER
SARAH JANE SHIELDS



LOCATED WITHIN
A SECRET **CORK CITY** SITE

THE DAY- CROSSING FARM

INCORPORATES

LIVE MUSIC

PERFORMANCE

INTERACTIVE SCULPTURE

MOVING IMAGE

SPOKEN WORD

PLANT-LIFE

SOUND AND LIGHTING



”

OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS CORK MIDSUMMER FESTIVAL HAS BUILT UP A TRACK-RECORD OF INNOVATIVE, HIGHEST QUALITY PARTICIPATORY AND SOCIALLY ENGAGED WORK. THE DAY-CROSSING FARM WILL HIGHLIGHT ONE OF TODAY'S BIGGEST ISSUES BOTH ON OUR DOORSTEP AND GLOBALLY, THROUGH THE EXPERT EYE OF LEADING ARTIST MARIE BRETT AND HER INCREDIBLE TEAM OF CREATIVE AND COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS.

A SUBJECT MATTER MADE MORE URGENT BY RECENT REPORTS STATING THAT THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS IN FACT ALLOWED HUMAN TRAFFICKING TO CONTINUE TO BE A MAJORLY LUCRATIVE CRIME THAT HAS INCREASED THE RISKS TO VULNERABLE PEOPLE BEING TRAFFICKED. ”

LORRAINE MAYE

CORK MIDSUMMER FESTIVAL DIRECTOR



ON ART, EMPATHY, AND THE WORK OF MARIE BRETT

BY

EOGHAN MCINTYRE

EOGHAN MCINTYRE IS A DUBLIN-BASED ARTIST AND WRITER WHO USES ART CRITICISM, PERFORMANCE AND ILLUSTRATION TO CRITIQUE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ART AND SOCIAL DISCOURSE.

ENCOUNTERS with the work of Marie Brett leave a deep and lasting impression. My own arts practice has generally reflected on questions around the social purpose of art and Marie Brett's work has frequently offered me impactful and surprising answers, entirely free from the irony or scepticism that so much of contemporary culture is inescapably entrenched in.

Brett's exhibitions, films and live events are illuminating in showing what space an artwork can occupy in the public domain, and whether it can use this position to activate empathy. In a turbulent climate of hostility and discord, fomenting empathy is an urgent imperative, but is a goal that can be difficult to attain through contemporary art.

Where Brett's practice succeeds is through an unusually balanced union of artistic and social processes; her installations - often incorporating sculptures, videos and sound - are the result of the process of respectfully listening and understanding the experiences of others without imposing some form of master narrative on what emerges.

In recent projects Brett has worked closely with Irish maternity hospitals, palliative care and healthcare staff, and members of The Dementia Carers Campaign Network. These collaborations have resulted in gallery-based works and live events in unusual and often politically charged sites, such as military forts, abandoned hotels, and factories. In these projects Brett did not offer 'art as a mirror to society' in the sense of a cold or flat reflection. Rather, Brett's work reveals and reflects multi-layered, complex, and divergent personal narratives, experiences which were faithfully integral to, not mere elements of, the works themselves. *The Day-Crossing Farm* is a work that is hybrid in character; a Chimera

that incorporates performance, video, text, sculpture, and sound installation. It was developed in close dialogue with organisations fighting against human trafficking and agencies that support those who have been exploited by forced labour, and in response to listening to the personal experiences of trafficking victims.

The Irish state has been condemned for its appalling failings in its treatment of trafficking victims, while all too often in Ireland as well as in the UK trafficking victims have been treated as criminals. It is clear that an individual's experiences can be annulled if they are given the label "illegal" or "undocumented", concepts that were created to exclude and exploit.

With *The Day-Crossing Farm*, Brett appears to be exploring what empathy can mean in the arts and asking what role art can have in creating it and spreading it on a social and political level. It is a practice of dialogue, close collaboration, and moving to the forefront the lives and stories of those who have no part in the habitual social representation, all of which forms into concrete artistic interventions.

At its core, this is the work of a sensitive and focused curiosity that is paired with a faith in the irreducible, non-discursive role of narrative as a very particular means of mediation. Brett's inquiries often remind me of Hannah Arendt's insistence that, "Storytelling reveals meaning without committing the error of defining it."

¹ Jack Horgan-Jones, "Ireland criticised for 'major failings' in its treatment of human trafficking victims", *The Irish Times*, Thu, Jun 25, 2020, 22:26

² Annie Kelly, "Enslaved on a British cannabis farm: 'The plants were more valuable than my life'", *The Guardian*, Fri 26 Jul 2019 06.00

³ Hannah Arendt, *Men in Dark Times* (1968), Harcourt, p.105

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THE DAY-CROSSING FARM IS IMMERSIVE, AND INHABITS A SECRET LOCATION WITH MULTI-SENSORIAL, PROMENADE ENCOUNTERS. I WAS KEEN TO EXPLORE HOW IDEAS OF A VISIONARY UTOPIA AND THE LURE OF ESCAPISM COULD COLLIDE WITH THE REALITY OF A PERSON BEING DECEIVED THEN TRAPPED.

I AM HOPING THE ART PIECE WILL ENABLE A HAUNTINGLY SENSORIAL EXPERIENCE FOR AN AUDIENCE, WHERE YOU'RE LEFT HUNGRY WITH QUESTIONS, KEEN TO FIND OUT MORE WHEN LEAVING THE WORK.

I RESEARCHED COMPELLING REAL-LIFE STORIES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING, OF DRUG FARMING AND OF HOW MODERN-DAY SLAVERY IS OFTEN LINKED TO DEBT BONDAGE.

I'VE HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF WORKING WITH SOME OF IRELAND'S LEADING THINKERS AND CREATIVES, PLUS IMPORTANTLY, PEOPLE WHO'VE LIVED THESE PROFOUND EXPERIENCES THEMSELVES AS WELL AS ADVOCACY, SUPPORT AND HUMAN JUSTICE ORGANISATIONS ”

MARIE BRETT
LEAD ARTIST





A DISTANT PROBLEM TRAFFICKING, CRIMINALITY, ART AND ADVOCACY

BY

DR FIONA DONSON

CO - DIRECTOR

CENTRE FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK

PEOPLE TRAFFICKING can seem a distant problem, particularly as we in Ireland struggle with life in the midst of a pandemic. Yet far from being something that happens to people in distant lands, the exploitation of people through modern day slavery and bonded labour arises here in Ireland. It is an integral part of our economy: in the context of the products or services we want to buy at a bargain price and in the (criminal) domestic production of cannabis.

We largely ignore trafficking thinking it must be someone else's responsibility, something happening elsewhere. It certainly can feel as if our government agrees with us. In 2020 the US Department of State downgraded Ireland to the Tier 2 Watch List as part of its "Trafficking in Persons" (TiPs) Report. This report ranks states from Tier 1 (fully compliant with minimum standards) to Tier 3 (not fully compliant/not making significant efforts). Ireland's relegation means that we do not "fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking". The report stated that "the government did not demonstrate overall increasing efforts compared to [2019]" and was the second time in three years we had been downgraded. Criticisms included the fact that our government continued to have "systematic deficiencies in victim identification, referral, and assistance" as well as a "lack [of] specialized accommodation and adequate services for victims...".

Our fishing sector was singled out as being a particularly problematic sector whose working scheme increased its vulnerability to trafficking. Yet this is just one of a number of areas where modern day slavery operates in Ireland. Agriculture, car washing, restaurants and nail bars are all recognised as being locations for victims alongside criminal activities such as grow houses. Indeed, the availability of cheap car valeting ser-

vices and manicures is indicative of a problem that is well recognised in reports from state bodies such as the Workplace Relationship Commission. Yet headlines report this largely as "employment practice failures", sanitising the lived reality of those working long hours for pocket money with no possibility of escape. The warning that "where the price of a service looks to be too good to be true we should be asking why" is important. In these sectors while it is not the customer that suffers, we are saving money off the back of the person whose labour (and life) is being exploited.

In terms of enforcement, while we now have a specialised Garda Unit – the Human Trafficking Investigation and Coordination Unit – it was only in the last week that we finally had a successful prosecution under the Human Trafficking Act 2008, as amended in 2013. The Department of Justice had responded to the 2020 TiPs Report by announcing that 80 criminal investigations were "ongoing" and that "convictions in relation to associated charges" had been secured. While the recent convictions are very welcome, the fact remains that despite the official identification of 471 trafficking victims since 2013 only two people have been held criminally responsible for trafficking. As the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings stressed in 2017, the inability to successfully and systematically convict traffickers can deter victims from testifying and add to a culture of impunity.

What is also apparent is that the category someone might fall into has a huge impact on their treatment as either victim or offender. A victim of trafficking is (or should be) provided supports, services, perhaps permissions to stay in a country they have been trafficked into.

An illegal migrant, a growhouse worker, a sex worker, may instead be criminalised, imprisoned, deported. Their status as victim or offender is often only allotted because of government policy, the type of work they are trafficked into, and their own citizenship status.

Even where someone is classified as a victim, the state has systematically failed to provide specialised accommodation with 180 alleged victims of trafficking placed in direct provision centres over the past 5 years. The EU's anti-trafficking directive requires that the State provide "appropriate and safe accommodation" including "necessary medical treatment including psychological assistance". Direct provision centres fail miserably to meet this requirement. While a dedicated accommodation centre is scheduled to open later this year it will be on a "trial basis" with space for only 8 – 10 victims.

How then, do we meaningfully and sensitively communicate the lived reality of experiences such as trafficking? Art is one way; it allows us to connect with things in a fundamental and empathetic way which is particularly powerful in terms of human rights issues. When crisis issues can feel too large, too far away, too different for us to understand on a personal level, artistic representation can immerse us in an experience that triggers a fundamental emotive response, channelling our sense of justice.

The Day-Crossing Farm social arts project is a powerful example of advocacy and art coinciding. I have been lucky to be, in a small way, part of the development of acclaimed visual artist Marie Brett's ambitious and immersive art installation. The Day-Crossing Farm explores how the human rights issue of human trafficking and modern-day-slavery relates

to drug farming in Ireland currently. The art piece has been developed over two years' consultation with justice and advocacy organisations, scholars, gardeners and persons with lived experience of trafficking and forced labour. Commissioned by Cork Midsummer Festival, it is produced in collaboration with filmmaker Linda Curtin; composer/sound designer Peter Power; and lighting designer Sarah Jane Shiels. The installation is large and located in a secret Cork city location, featuring multi-media sculptures, plant life, sound-scapes, projections, live music and other performance.

Engaging our multiple senses, the installation evokes the complex and multiple elements at play in growhouses. People lured into a trapped world of criminal activity by the promise of escape from debt and poverty. People isolated from others, deprived of their agency, working for both the plants and the gangs that have no regard for them. They are disposable. In this space the victim lives in a world that is both alien (to them and us) yet on our own doorstep. Art and advocacy of this nature is designed to be unsettling and thought provoking, to call on us to find out more, to accept less at face value.



MARIE BRETT

Marie Brett is a visual artist working across filmic, immersive sculptural installation and site responsive live event, making work about profound human experiences recurrently involving trauma or social (in)justice. Recent works include IMMA's premier of 'Yes, But Do You Care?' a live event and filmic artwork exploring issues of care-giving and capacity legislation purchased into Ireland's National Art Collection in 2021; and an international art commission reconsidering European contributions to global justice exhibited at Brussel's European Parliament in 2020. Brett graduated from Goldsmiths, London University, with MA and BA degrees. She has received numerous awards for her Social Arts practice; has artwork held in national and international art collections and has writing published in Ireland, the UK and Finland.

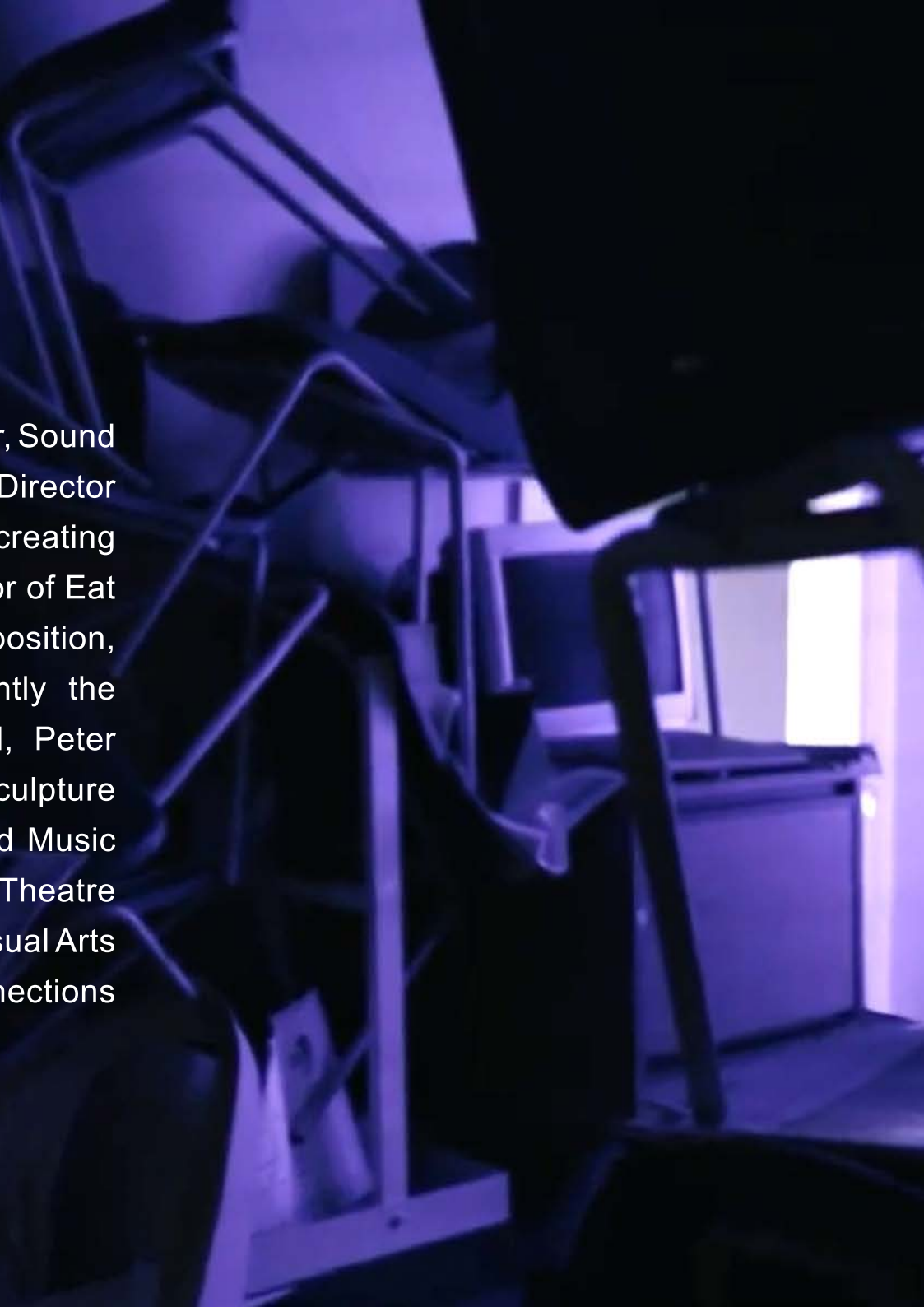
LINDA CURTIN

Linda Curtin is a filmmaker whose process is embedded in socially engaged arts practice and visual anthropology. Her approach to the moving image is experimental in nature and she aims to bring ideas to life through alternative modes of visual storytelling in documentary and art film.



PETER POWER

Peter Power is a multidisciplinary Visual Artist, Composer, Sound Designer and Director from Waterford. He is the Artistic Director of the Award winning company Sparsile Collective creating immersive experiences led by music. He is also Director of Eat My Noise, a multi-genre audio duo that work in Composition, Event, Film, Television and Post-Production. Currently the Artist-In-Residence in the Cork Midsummer Festival, Peter is the outgoing Artist-In-Residence in the National Sculpture Factory. He is the winner of the Arts Council of Ireland Music Bursary award, Music and Theatre Project Awards, Theatre Bursary Award and most recently the AGF award and Visual Arts Commission Award. His current interests are in the connections between Digital and Live art.



SARAH JANE SHIELDS

SJ began designing lighting in Dublin Youth Theatre, completing a BA in Drama and Theatre Studies (Trinity), and the Rough Magic Seeds. She was co-artistic director of WillFredd Theatre. SJ is currently studying a masters in Interactive Digital Media (Trinity).



PROGRAMME

JUNE 2021

LIVE
EVENT 14TH – 20TH

FILM
STREAM 17TH – 27TH

PANEL
DISCUSSION 17TH

ON ANTI-SLAVERY DAY MARIE BRETT WILL LAUNCH AN ARCHIVAL
WEB PAGE ENABLING PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE EXTENSIVE RANGE
OF RESEARCH MATERIALS GATHERED AND CONSULTED IN THE
FORMATION OF THIS ART PIECE.

OCTOBER 2021

ARCHIVE 18TH
ONLINE

www.mariebrett.ie



LEAD ARTIST

MARIE BRETT

CREATIVE TEAM

THE INSTALLATION WAS DESIGNED AND THE
CONCEPT PRODUCED

IN COLLABORATION WITH

PETER POWER / COMPOSER / SOUND DESIGNER

LINDA CURTIN / FILMMAKER

SARAH JANE SHIELS / LIGHTING DESIGNER

PERFORMERS

PIN QIAO HUANG / Gardener

EMMA NASH / Opera Vocalist

MARK D'AUGHTON / Spoken Voice

JOHN LEHANE / Security

MARCUS BALE / Taxi Driver

JULIAN HALPIN / Violinist





PRODUCTION TEAM

KATH GORMAN / Executive Producer

CLAIRE RYAN / Project Manager

KATE O'SHEA / Project Manager, Residency

ROB FUREY / Production Manager

DREW MCCARTHY / Technical Manager

ANDREW SHEEHAN / Event Control

COLM WALSH / Av Technician

EOIN LENNON / First Associate Lighting Designer

HANNAN SHEEDY / Deputy Associate Lighting Designer

JOE CUSACK / Sound Engineer

NIC PIPER / Master Carpenter

GER CLANCY / Maker

DIARMUID O'LEARY / Technical Stage Crew

CHRIS HOPCRAFT / Technical Stage Crew

RORY MCGOVERN / Young People's Facilitator

MARIA ROLSTON / Communications and PR

CORK MIDSUMMER FESTIVAL PLACEMENTS

courtesy of University College Cork

ISABELLA DOGLIANI / Research / Runner

RACHEL GLEESON / Research / Runner / Residency

COMMUNITY OF EXPERTISE

KEITH ADAMS / Social Policy Advocate

Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice, Dublin

AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA / Bandon Garda Station

The Drugs Squad, The Sniffer Dogs Unit

DR. SOPHIE CARTWRIGHT / Senior Policy Officer

Jesuit Refugee Service, London, UK

MARY CRILLY / Director / Sexual Violence Centre Cork,

Cork Against Human Trafficking

DR FIONA DONSON / Co-Director

Centre for Criminal Justice and Human Rights / University College Cork

LINDA LATHAM / Manager ; RGN

HSE Women's Health Service and Anti Human Trafficking Team

ANN MARA / Education Manager / MECPATHS*

EDEL MCGINLAY / Director / Migrant Rights Centre Ireland

JP O'SULLIVAN / Network & Communications Manager

MECPATHS*

*Mercy Efforts for Child Protection Against Trafficking with the Hospitality and Service Sectors

PERSONS WITH DIRECT EXPERIENCE OF

TRAFFICKING AND FORCED LABOUR

GRÁINNE O' TOOLE / Director

Skein Press / Migrant Rights Centre Ireland

ISABEL TOOLAN / Senior Legal Advocacy Officer

Migrant Rights Centre Ireland

DR GILLIAN WYLIE / Assistant Professor

International Peace Studies / Trinity College Dublin



GARDENING SPECIALISM

JONATHAN O'CONNELL

AIDAN KEANE

MENTORS

PAT KIERNAN / Corcadorca

LOUISE LOWE / Anu Productions

YOUNG PERSON GROUPS

CRAWFORD COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

Cork Institute of Technology

LIGHTBULB YT / Mallow

THE KABIN STUDIO / Cork

CRAWFORD COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN

Students:

Ramona Farrelly / Myfanwy Frost- Jones / Mary Goggin / Zoe Harley

Dee Hurley / Rory Lynch / Maitiu MacCartaigh / Caoimhe Moore /

Veronica Santorum Crespo / Nicola Sheehan / Zoe Velthuysen

FILM AND PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION

ARCADE FILM

CHRIS HURLEY

JED NIEZGODA

CLAIRE RYAN

GRAPHIC DESIGN

LUCIA POLA

BOX OFFICE

KEVIN TERRY

CAOILIAN SHERLOCK

THE ARTIST AND PRODUCTION TEAM WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE INVALUABLE COLLABORATIVE CONTRIBUTION AND SUPPORT

OF

- An Garda Síochána
- Cork Against Human Trafficking
- Cork ETB
- MECPATHS
- St John's College, Cork
- The HSE's Anti-Human Trafficking Team
and Women's Health Project
- The Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice
- The Jesuit Refugee Service Uk
- The Migrant Rights Centre Ireland
- Trinity College Dublin, Irish School of Ecumenics
- University College Cork, Centre for Criminal Justice and Human Rights
- University College Cork, Theatre Department



ADDITIONAL THANKS ARE EXTENDED TO:

- ABC Taxis
- Ray Bluett
- Ian Brown
- Niall Cleary
- Clare Creedon
- Colm De Barra
- Tom Doyle
- Emma Feeney
- Festival in a Van
- Brian Gould
- Brenda Greene
- Judy Greene
- Catherine Hehir
- Dr Marie Kelly
- Rose-Anne Kidney
- Ber Langford
- Michael Linehan
- Gary McCarthy
- Lorraine Maye
- Paula McCarthy
- Morleys Suit Hire
- Erin O'Brien
- Ann O'Connor and all at the Arts Participation Team
- The Arts Council
- Frank O'Connor
- Julie O'Leary
- Conall Ó Riain
- Allyson O'Sullivan
- Clodagh Piper
- Nic Piper
- Jude Sherry
- Joe Stockdale
- The Everyman Theatre
- Aidan Wallace
- Fionn Woodhouse



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**THE ARTS COUNCIL
CREATIVE EUROPE PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
CORK MIDSUMMER FESTIVAL
CORK CITY COUNCIL**

THE PROJECT IS PART OF THE FESTIVAL'S PARTNERSHIP IN CREATIVE EUROPE LARGE-SCALE CO-OPERATION PROGRAMME; BE PART, A 4-YEAR AUDIENCE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN THE FIELD OF PARTICIPATORY ART PRACTICES WITH 10 EU AND NON-EU PARTNERS.

PHOTOGRAPHY :

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| | | Pg.22: <i>Jed Niezgoda</i> |