

## An Táin Arts Centre

Elaine Cronin

General Manager

**INSPIRED BY THE** lore of the cultural giants of Louth, An Táin Arts Centre was established in 2014 as an independent, community-focussed cultural hub for the people of North Louth. Dundalk has a thriving arts presence and at An Táin Arts Centre we hope to amplify local programming and provide opportunities for artists in the North East.

An Táin Arts Centre is based in the Town Hall building in Dundalk, and receives grant funding from Louth County Council and the Arts Council of Ireland. We are grounded in community and collaborative practices in performance and visual arts contexts, and this ethos is reflected in our programming, encompassing theatre, film, music and visual arts from local, national and international practitioners. An Táin Arts Centre gives particular focus to local artists and performers, with additional support given to artists at the start of their career through our emerging artist and residency programmes.

An Táin Arts Centre's Basement Gallery is programmed throughout the year with solo, group and community exhibitions. A series of talks, workshops and presentations runs concurrent to our exhibition programme. This has included visual art classes for children and adults, art history lectures, artist talks, artist workshops, gallery tours for school and further education groups, outdoor urban art interventions, and family craft workshops.

Since our launch and inaugural exhibition, Ciaran O'Sullivan's 'Double Back' (2014), exhibited work has included Brian Hegarty's 'I'll be your Mirror, The Album Sleeve Project' (2015), Orla Barry's 'Otherworldly' (2015), Paul Woods' 'Oradour, Elegy for a Town' (2016), Els Boghart and Declan Kelly's 'On the Way / Onderweg' (2016), Aileen Hamilton's 'Chain of Pulses' (2017), Lisa Fingleton's 'Holding True Ground' (2018), Leanne Mullen's 'Drawing Breath' (2018), Michelle Rogers' 'Secret Places' (2019), and Louth Craftmark's 'Glowing Works That Make the Heart Sing' (2020). To date, there has been five exhibitions in our Emerging Artist series, Aoife Ward's 'Becoming' (2014), Eimear Murphy and Eileen O'Sullivan's 'In Search of Place' (2015), Neil Waters and Inga Kazokait's 'Hidden Dundalk' (2017), Mark Bourke (2018),

and El Harrington's 'A Far Place' (2019). Proposals to exhibit work in the Basement Gallery are accepted on a rolling basis.

Our Summer residency programme is open to recent graduates and artists at the start of their career, looking to establish a collaborative practice in a community setting. The aim of the residency is to assist artists to research and develop new work and give them the time and space to develop their practice in a community setting. The recipients of the emerging artist residency have included Una Curley (2016), Roseann Berrill (2017), Sean McGuill (2018) and Rozzi Kennedy (2019). The deadline for each year's residency is in the springtime.

Ceramic artist and facilitator Etaoin O'Reilly is An Táin Arts Centre's artist-in-residence for 2020. Etaoin is a graduate of NCAD (2014), and of the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland's Ceramics Skills and Design Course (2016). She is also a former artist-in-residence at NCAD (2016) and LSAD (2018). Etaoin hopes to explore the fading industry and skills of bone china factory workers, with an exhibition of new works planned for the month of September.

Many of our former artists in residence continue to work with us, including painter Rozzi Kennedy (our 2019 artist-in-residence), who has developed a collaborative outreach project with participants from the Birches Alzheimer Day Care Centre. Her project, 'Memory Matters', will focus on exploring the diverse lived experience of people with dementia, culminating in a presentation of new work that will tour to local venues. Rozzi is a member of the Ring of Gullion Handcrafts and Artists Collective, and works from her studio in South Armagh. She is a graduate of LSAD (2008), and is also a former artist-in-residence at The Cill Rialaig Project (2012).

An Táin Arts Centre hopes to be a place for the community to celebrate in creativity and enjoy the best of local and national art. These have been a difficult few months globally, and it continues to be an uncertain time for the arts in Ireland; but, even if the doors to our building are closed, our inboxes and phone lines are always open to conversation and collaboration.

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Rozzi Kennedy, *Mind the Gap*, 2019, acrylic on canvas, 76.2 x 101.5 cm; courtesy of the artist and An Táin Arts Centre