

WOODSTOCK PROMENADE

a public art training project, April to July 2009

Chrysalis Arts, North Yorkshire, UK,
commissioned by
Kilkenny County Council's Arts Office

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Woodstock Gardens

Woodstock is widely acknowledged as one of the great gardens of Ireland. It is located in the south east of Kilkenny, just outside the village of Inistioge and overlooking the River Nore valley. The main development of Woodstock Gardens occurred in the Victorian period with the works being overseen by Lady Louisa Tighe and head gardeners, Pierce Butler and later Charles McDonald. The gardens are being restored to the period 1840 - 1890 with every effort being made to use plants and materials typical of the era.

The gardens are home to a mix of formal and informal gardens with an arboretum, walled garden, terraced garden, yew walk and rose garden providing the main interest. Also of significance are two stunning avenues, the Monkey Puzzle Avenue and Noble Fir Avenue. The arboretum is home to many fine specimen trees from Asia and South America, a number of which are recognised as champion trees due to their size. Woodstock is a major heritage site which is now undergoing restoration and is managed by Kilkenny County Council.





Woodstock Training for Real

Following some initial public art training in Kilkenny and discussions with the Arts Officer for Kilkenny County Council, Chrysalis Arts developed a proposal to address the need for specialist training for artists in public art skills and working to commission, with a focus on local artists who lack opportunities for support. The Training for Real project took its artistic inspiration from the Woodstock Estate and the potential for interaction and interpretation of the historic landscaped garden.

Aims of the Project

The Woodstock project offered artists the experience of participating in key stages of the public art process including selection interviews, the development of an overall concept for the project, designs for individual artworks, research into materials and processes, the creation and installation of a series of site-specific artworks and the promotion and presentation of the artworks to the public.

During this process the selected artists undertook research and public consultation, and participated in different community involvement processes. The artists worked as a team and were encouraged to maximise opportunities for collaboration both with each other and with other potential partners.

The project was designed to culminate in a site-specific, public art event which aimed to create a unique experience for an audience visiting Woodstock. The temporary public art installations aimed to explore and highlight the creative potential of the site and, at the same time, support the artists in gaining new skills and confidence.

Ultimately, the project aimed to invest in the creative talents of artists and leave behind a legacy of practitioners who are able to move into new areas of work and offer a valuable resource for local initiatives.





Artists' Application and Selection

The introductory day and site visit was well attended by thirty two artists from a wide range of disciplines and at various stages in their careers. A series of presentations by Chrysalis Arts and Kilkenny County Council staff provided information about the site and its history and the potential for site-specific artwork. Information about the selection process and a detailed brief for the project was distributed. There was also opportunity for informal discussion and questions about the project. Transport was provided for a site visit to Woodstock in the afternoon for the group which included a meeting with John Delaney, the Head Gardener.

The project attracted considerable interest and, following the introductory day, artists were invited to submit applications, including initial ideas for artworks inspired by the site and in response to three specific themes identified in the brief: celebrating the rich botanical heritage of Woodstock, memory and animation and a contemporary response to the architectural and landscape features of the gardens.

Following shortlisting and interviews, six artists were selected to take part in the

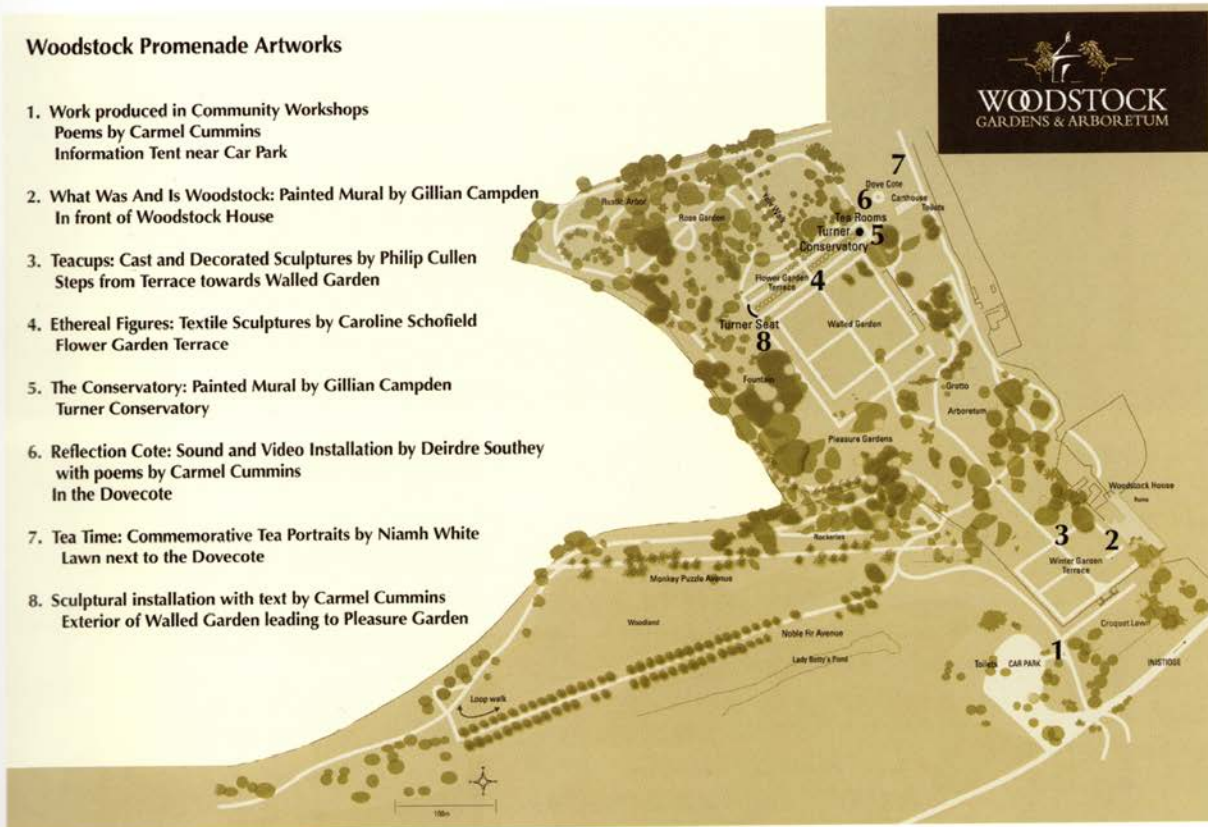
project: Gillian Campden, a painter; Philip Cullen, a sculptor; Carmel Cummins, a poet; Caroline Schofield, a textile artist; Deirdre Southey, a media artist; and Niamh White, an installation artist. Those who applied and were not successful were encouraged to visit the project and were offered the chance to volunteer to gain experience that would be relevant to them. One artist, Catherine Green, who did enthusiastically take up this offer, gained significant benefit from the experience and made a valuable contribution to the project.

A team-building day followed immediately after the interviews. This brought the selected artists together for the first time and was designed as a brainstorming session that helped to create the overall shape of the project. Through this process, the artists chose to focus on two main themes: celebrating the people who created, restored and maintain the gardens, both past and present, and capturing a sense of the formality and ordered leisure of life at Woodstock in Victorian times, from promenading in the formal gardens to taking tea. From these themes, the idea for the Woodstock Promenade event evolved as the culmination of the project.



Woodstock Promenade Artworks

1. Work produced in Community Workshops
Poems by Carmel Cummins
Information Tent near Car Park
2. What Was And Is Woodstock: Painted Mural by Gillian Campden
In front of Woodstock House
3. Teacups: Cast and Decorated Sculptures by Philip Cullen
Steps from Terrace towards Walled Garden
4. Ethereal Figures: Textile Sculptures by Caroline Schofield
Flower Garden Terrace
5. The Conservatory: Painted Mural by Gillian Campden
Turner Conservatory
6. Reflection Cote: Sound and Video Installation by Deirdre Southey
with poems by Carmel Cummins
In the Dovecote
7. Tea Time: Commemorative Tea Portraits by Niamh White
Lawn next to the Dovecote
8. Sculptural installation with text by Carmel Cummins
Exterior of Walled Garden leading to Pleasure Garden



Challenges and Constraints

The scale of the Woodstock site presented a major challenge and considerable thought was given to the aims of creating a series of temporary artworks which responded to the themes identified in the brief and which would also make an impact on such a large site. Other considerations were the need for a stimulating experience for visitors to engage with, and to ensure that the project was achievable within the four-week timescale and within budget. These issues were dealt with alongside the attempt to meet the artists' own individual objectives, aspirations and requirements.

Several of the artists grasped the opportunity to create work on a much larger scale than they had previously attempted, using materials and techniques which were new or less familiar to them. This involved working very intensively during the whole four-week period, making use of the resources and support offered by Chrysalis Arts, Kilkenny County Council, and by family and friends. The pressure of working to a set deadline, within a tight timescale and of depending on a range of additional people to assist them in completing the project, was subsequently highlighted by several of the artists as a new way of working to them and, whilst not

everyone enjoyed the experience of working in this way, most expressed a great sense of achievement and satisfaction.

The artists were all paid the same fee for their contribution to the project, although this in no way reflected the time spent working on the project or the quality of work produced. The time each artist chose to contribute was ultimately decided on an individual basis and, to a great extent related to the scale and ambition of the work they chose to undertake.

I was very tentative about my capacity to successfully work on community involvement so its success was a confidence booster... there was inspiration in knowing how much Woodstock meant to local children and to the visitors
> Carmel Cummins



Co-ordination and Management of the Project

The project took place between April and July 2009. The management of the project was a collaboration between Chrysalis Arts and Kilkenny County Council's Arts Officer. Chrysalis Arts were responsible for the overall delivery of the project with the artists whilst the Arts Office were involved in the project co-ordination, administration, financing, promotion, the community involvement process and the contractual arrangements. The project involved three lead artists/mentors: Kate Maddison, Rick Faulkner and Christine Keogh from Chrysalis Arts working closely throughout with the Kilkenny Arts Officer, Mary Butler.

Community Involvement

Community workshops in painting, creative writing, casting and lace fabric were held at Woodstock Gardens and in the locality with schools and community groups. Artists also consulted with Woodstock Staff and local residents, to research and inform the artwork.

The workshops were co-ordinated by the Kilkenny Arts Office. Individual artists supported each other and worked to their strengths. As well as gaining confidence in their own skills and abilities, the artists also felt that they had been inspired and encouraged by the creativity and positive attitude of local people towards the project.





On Site at Woodstock Skills Development

For the duration of July 2009, the training project was resident on site at Woodstock. The Chrysalis Arts team lodged locally and the artists commuted daily to a temporary meeting room and small workspace, set up in an estate portacabin.

Originally an estate storeroom and garage were to be cleared for use as a dedicated artists workroom, but due to delays to building work on site and the adverse weather conditions, this did not materialise and workspace to create, make and store the artworks was very limited. Woodstock estate staff were, however, very helpful and installations took place on time amid a team spirit of mutual support and co-operation.

The weather contributed to problems on site. July was an exceptionally wet month, the soft Irish rain was augmented by unseasonal monsoon storms. The ground staff had to deal with waterlogged grass and run off damage to paths, that became an issue of concern for the Woodstock Promenade installations and in planning for the event at the end of July.

During the training project, the subjects broadly covered were:
Applying for Commissions, Submitting a Proposal, Contract, Insurance, Legal Issues, Community Involvement Processes, Planning, Budgeting, Project Management and Technical Skills.

At the end of the training, most artists were more confident in their abilities to tackle these issues and were more aware of their personal strengths and weaknesses.

The artists gained more understanding of:

- working at a larger scale outdoors and in a public space
- collaboration where it can be necessary and advantageous
- delivering to a tight timetable and budget
- responding to a specific site and context
- working towards a shared goal where the emphasis includes collective responsibilities as well as individual expression
- adhering to health and safety guidelines and good practice

The project aimed to be responsive to a diverse group of artists, some of whom were considerably more experienced than others in their field and with a widely varying skills base. Artists demonstrated commitment and willingness to develop their art in new and appropriate ways to suit the context at Woodstock. From the evaluation it is clear that those who approached the project openly, flexibly, and were willing to make mistakes, benefited most from the training experience.

Evaluation and Documentation

Following completion, the project underwent a detailed evaluation process involving both the artists and the project partners which included the identification of further training and professional development needs.

Woodstock Promenade

A Contemporary Public Art Event
Celebrating Woodstock Gardens

Sunday 10.30am to 5.30pm 26th July 2009

*"Any day here teaches proportion,
any walk sketches infinity"*

The artists chose to focus on two different themes: celebrating the people who created, restored and maintain the gardens, both past and present, and secondly, capturing a sense of the formality and ordered leisure of life at Woodstock in Victorian times, from promenading in the formal gardens to taking tea.



Artworks

- ❶ **Work produced in Community Workshops: Poems by Carmel Cummins**
Information Tent in Car Park
- ❷ **What Was And Is - Woodstock: Painted Mural by Gillian Campden**
In front of Woodstock House
- ❸ **Mown Patterns: Collaborative Artwork**
Winter Garden Terrace
- ❹ **Teacups: Cast and Decorated Sculptures by Philip Cullen**
Steps from Terrace towards Walled Garden
- ❺ **Ethereal Figures: Textile Sculptures by Caroline Schofield**
Flower Garden Terrace
- ❻ **The Conservatory: Painted Mural by Gillian Campden**
Turner Conservatory
- ❼ **Reflection Cote: Sound and Video Installation by Deirdre Southey with poems by Carmel Cummins**
In the Dovecote
- ❽ **Tea Time: Commemorative Tea Portraits by Niamh White**
Lawn next to the Dovecote
- ❾ **Sculptural installation with text by Carmel Cummins**
Exterior of Walled Garden leading to Pleasure Garden

The team spirit on site was fantastic. There were moments that I thought it wouldn't come together but the laughter and support helped me overcome this.... The project made me realise that I need to push myself out of my comfort zone and to be more confident about my own work. > Caroline Schofield

The artworks were installed on a route to encourage visitors to take a walk around the gardens and experience the different spaces and aspects.

Woodstock Promenade was very well attended despite the wet and windy weather forecast. This final event was generally agreed to be very successful and generated highly positive feedback from visitors. Woodstock staff asked for the more durable artworks to be left in place beyond the lifespan of the project and three of the artworks remained in place with the agreement of Kilkenny County Council.

Caroline Schofield: Ethereal Figures



Caroline studied Fashion & Textiles in NCAD and majored in Woven Textiles. Her work explores themes of life and death and she looks to continually push and explore boundaries, including paint and drawings, in her manipulated textile and sculptural pieces which are moving towards life-sized pieces.

Caroline has been regularly teaching, speaking and guest lecturing about her work and manipulating fabric throughout Ireland over the last three years. She works in Endangered Studios, Kilkenny, and her work has been selected for Sculpture in Context two years running. She was awarded a Bursary to Tyrone Guthrie Centre by the Kilkenny County Council Arts Office.

Statement

"One of Lady Louisa Tighe's contributions was to bring lace to Inistioge and set up local work for women. Prior to this there had been a lace industry in Inistioge. William Tighe's journal noted that "in 1800, children were instructed in school, it took two years to learn and was in his opinion unhealthy employment with the constant sitting and stooping. Women could earn 6d to 10d."

The lace industry kept many families alive during the Famine...this was the basis for my inspiration and, like the lace of the 1800's, the pieces required contributions of labour from many craftswomen/volunteers to make. In doing so, we explored again the process of women at work. Most lace and fabric does not survive time and this piece reflects the fragility of time"
 > Caroline Schofield.

Gillian Campden: What Was And Is - Woodstock

Gillian Campden has followed a natural devotion to her art throughout her life. She had her first exhibition in London at the age of 10. After pursuing a career in Biochemistry, she worked for many years in research using electron microscopy. This had a profound impact on her artistic vision, enabling her to discover a new way of looking at small things in a big way which is apparent when you look at some of her paintings.

Gillian founded Campden's Art and Design in 1998, offering a diversity of artistic services to commercial and domestic clients around the country. Whilst most of her work is commission-based, she still finds time and space for her own fine art pursuits. She works mainly on large canvas or board using acrylics, watercolour, some mixed media and occasionally oil.

I had a terrific experience, one that came at a crucial turning point in my life and one that had a massive effect on me and my future. I have found new confidence and am very excited about the future.
 > Gillian Campden

Statement

"My piece "What Was and Is - Woodstock" celebrates the gardens as they are today and the joy that they bring to so many visitors. It also reflects on some of the images from the past. I have tried to incorporate some distance images from Woodstock in its prime to show how the gardens have given pleasure throughout time and will continue to do so into the future with the help of the very dedicated staff, who are again not forgotten in the painting. The conservatory painting also reflects this and links to all the other artwork"
 > Gillian Campden



Philip Cullen: Teacups



Philip Cullen trained in sculpture at the Crawford College of Art and Design and Waterford Institute of Technology. He specialised in stone-carving and metal construction.

For many years he has worked as a facilitator for a variety of specialised groups, delivering art using a range of methodologies. Recent commissions have included the making of a documentary with settled travellers for Kilkenny County Council, a sculpture for Johnswell Primary School under the Per Cent for Art scheme and a sculpture for the Chief Superintendent's Office in the Garda Training College.

Memorable exhibitions took place in the Secretariat of the European Parliament in Luxembourg, Sculpture at Kells, the Boyle Arts Festival, "90 days" (shown in Kilkenny, Waterford and Belgium) and a group show on a Stenaline Ferry crossing between Rosslare and Fishguard daily.

Statement

"I am addicted to caffeine and love tea. I have wanted for some time to create a sculpture of a cup. As a sculptor I appreciate beautiful materials, therefore it was a challenge to work in cement. It was an interesting process and one I may use in the future."

Tea has a 5000 year-long history. It is exotic yet commonplace in Ireland. The rituals surrounding tea and its preparation are many and vary from person to person. Very few people are satisfied by another's way of preparing a cup"

> Philip Cullen

I do feel more able to tackle public art after this project particularly the insistence to take inspiration from the site and to respond to it and the community rather than just putting in a piece that bears no relation to either.

> Philip Cullen



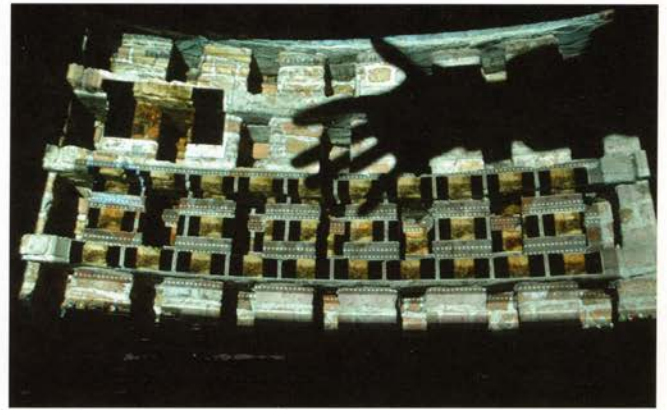
Deirdre Southey: Reflection Cote

Deirdre is a graduate of Waterford Institute of Technology. She holds a Bachelor Degree in Art and Society, specialising in Installation and Media Art. Deirdre has been involved in a number of exhibitions with the Cork Film Centre and was part of VAMP a mentoring project with artist Nigel Rolfe. Recently she has worked on an installation project held at Siamsa Tire Gallery Tralee in October '09.

Statement

"In this installation I have sought to appreciate and reflect upon the history and beauty of Woodstock. Drawing upon the expanse of the grounds, I have created a piece that has been inspired by Lady Tighe, a powerful woman in the Ireland of her time, who created a place where one can forget the outside world and be surrounded by the beauty and power of nature"
 > Deirdre Southey

I have learnt that I should invest in proper equipment for future projects although it is expensive and not depend on other sources as I have done in the past.
 > Deirdre Southey



Niamh White: Tea Time



Niamh's work revolves around relationships, human and chemical, often using biological and natural processes to explore and develop parallels with emotional exchanges and bonds. Her work usually revolves around a place, material or mode of communication, often subverting the traditional function of objects and situations to create new meaning.

Statement

"For this project I have looked at the people who make Woodstock what it is today, not the much-celebrated original staff or Tighe Family, but the current gardeners, landscape architects and tea room staff. My Tea Portraits invite the public to experience the personalities at work in Woodstock. I have blended loose teas, herbs and flowers to create Tea Portraits, designed to reflect the many attributes found in the staff that in turn give Woodstock its own personality. There are many people involved in Woodstock but I have focused on four, and so I served four teas: Claire, John, Liz and Jean, to give the public an insight into some of the individuals that are Woodstock"
 > Niamh White



I think this project was a brilliant idea, to go through the site visit, proposal, interview stages really helped me to understand the process better. I felt much more confident about my skills having completed this section
 > Niamh White

Carmel Cummins: Poems

Carmel's poetry has been previously published in *Force 10 Broadsheet*, *Poetry Ireland Review*, *The Shop Poetry Magazine* and *Women's Works*. She was one of four featured writers in *Inkbottle*, *New Writing from Kilkenny*, and has recently been published in the *Kilkenny Poetry Broadsheet*. During March and April this year, she attended workshops on preparing a poetry collection for publication, facilitated by Kilkenny Writer in Residence, Grace Wells. She is working on a first collection. She is lucky enough to live in Inistioge.

Statement

"I love Woodstock. I grew up in Tullagher, less than eight kilometres away. All my life it has been a presence as much as a place. It was a wilderness playground when I was a child. From my grandmother there were nostalgic stories of happy days when it was in its glory and of Lady Louisa's good standing with the whole community. But there was always history's shadow made visible in the ruined great house and the famine walls.

Now, I see the restoration of the gardens, the creation of this leisureed and democratic space, as a sort of emblem for how we can make our own contribution in our time and re-imagine and celebrate our legacy. I hope that the poems I present here, and the unique opportunity I have had to collaborate with other artists, are a step in that re-imagining"
> Carmel Cummins



This process has turned me from someone who wants/needs to write poetry to someone who is confident she can write poetry she wants/needs to write. This is a fundamental change and I greatly appreciate the alchemy in the Woodstock process that enabled me to make that transition.
> Carmel Cummins



*Any day here teaches proportion,
any walk sketches infinity.*

Letter to Lady Louisa

You will be glad to know
that things go on much as they did.
Woodstock is a place of employment still.
What you dreamed and had made is remade.

It is likely you would approve the robust work,
the tender attention to your Eden,
though today demands a pragmatic approach
- some compromise even.

We think about you
- your loves and griefs
your privilege (almost as great as ours)
put to good purpose.

On the flower terraces, young women are dreaming
- ladies in crinolines -
and they imagine a time when their desires
- delicate like lace - are real.

In the winter garden,
children are painting their happiness
on four green canvases
and growing like daisies.

Today, we can even think that
time has not shaken the grass.
You are thought of with unusual kindness
- all here freely send their warm regards.

Walled Garden

There are stories parents feel they must tell,
so we were nudged awake
on the way home from Cluen.
There, in a sleepy twilight,
and looming in the half dark,
that wall built for a penny a day.

Here in the walled garden,
warmed brick against my back,
this wall is for support,
for exotic flourishing.

That other wall,
today, is ivy-covered
and crumbling.

Walls
for keeping in
for keeping out
for knocking down.

Noble Fir Walk

Lime-green frills, birdsong,
sap-scented summers, fruits,
then grey light
and noise in its high branches.

In January, the young ballerinas in snowy tutus
already know what they will grow into.

Any day here teaches proportion,
any walk sketches infinity.

There is a watch beating time,
there is one heart beating.





Chrysalis Arts

Chrysalis Arts is a public art company and training agency which has been creating art in public spaces for over 20 years, pioneering techniques of facilitating community consultation and involvement. In 1997, Chrysalis Arts established The Art Depot in Gargrave as a training centre, and it has since developed several ground-breaking initiatives to support and nurture artists' professional practice and development.

see www.chrysalisarts.org.uk

The Training for Real approach that Chrysalis Arts has developed as a public art professional development model for artists is based on the structured delivery of a real public art project within a framework of support and mentoring for the trainees involved. The project is a live situation dealing with the real issues of a public art commission. Experienced practitioners,

commissioners and project managers from the Chrysalis Arts team, direct and manage the project and take the trainee artists through the process from application and responding to a brief, to the delivery, installation and decommissioning.

The pressures of project delivery within a set timescale and budget are genuine and the Chrysalis Arts team work with the trainee artists to plan and manage the process and resolve issues as they arise. The process is most suited to artists who have some experience of professional practice and are looking to undertake a public art commission for the first time or increase their existing skills in public art.

The training needs of individual artists are appraised during the project and addressed where possible or identified as a training need for the future. The primary aim of the Training for Real model is for artists to gain practical experience and confidence in their abilities, it also encourages them to experiment outside of their normal comfort zone and put theory and new ideas into practice.





Kilkenny County Council Arts Office

Kilkenny City and County has an extensive, illustrious and spirited tradition within the Arts. They continue to be a significant ingredient in Kilkenny largely contributing to the progression of the social, cultural, creative, economic, and political future of Kilkenny.

Kilkenny County Council Arts Office recognises the individual and collective potential of the Arts and acknowledges that quality arts provision educates, empowers, and fosters pride in ones environment. Our programme reflects this in its support for the arts across all disciplines and for all aspects of the community both practitioners and audiences and also in our widespread provision of professional development services for artists. Practitioners seek to earn a living from their work and they now operate in a fiercely competitive national and international environment. The Arts Office recognises the need for ongoing supports in terms of professional training, personal development and industry knowledge. Therefore we continue to offer targeted and accessible training and supports which are critically important to sustain the sector.

In addition we place an emphasis on lifelong learning enabling people at all stages of their careers to address their skills needs and we offer ongoing advice, advocacy and support to groups and individuals alike.

The initiation and maintenance of partnerships between organisations with similar or complementary aims is at the core of much of our work. The key objectives of these linkages is to further the professional development of practitioners, to support participation in the arts by the community, to maximise available resources and to identify and resolve gaps in provision. The Arts Office also forges inter-departmental linkages within the local authority for sharing of funds and resources. The support, skills and expertise of other agencies and groups can be harnessed in order to meet key strategic objectives. The role of the Arts Office also involves empowering and promoting innovation within these groups. As a result of this synergy, significant and valuable projects are being delivered, such as this collaboration with Chrysalis Arts and the Kilkenny Local Authority Parks Department.

www.kilkennycoco.ie/eng/Services/Arts

Acknowledgements

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Chrysalis Arts Team:

Christine Keogh, Kate Maddison, Rick Faulkner.

Kilkenny County Council:

Arts Officer – Mary Butler;
Arts Administrator – Niamh Finn;
Landscape Architect – Claire Murphy;
Head Gardener – John Delaney.

Artists:

painter Gillian Campden; sculptor Philip Cullen; poet Carmel Cummins; textile artist Caroline Schofield; media artist Deirdre Southey; installation artist Niamh White; volunteer artist Catherine Green and support from the artists' friends and families.

Photos:

Suzanna Crampton, augmented by photos from the artists and the Chrysalis Arts Team.

Brochure design: Andy Thursfield



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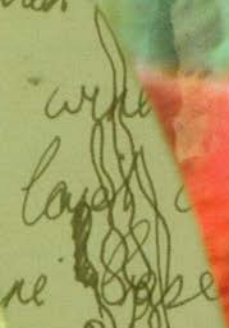
teacher

propagation

— need care to make it will wear Red fabric only see



structure on stand - painted body by in wire create



see



Arts Office
Kilkenny County Council



WOODSTOCK
GARDENS & ARBORETUM



Comhshaol, Oidhreacht agus Rialtas Áitiúil
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