

Notes for Panel Chairs and members

Background and context

- The conference is part of the Museum's programme of events at the culmination of Anthony Haughey's residency and his exhibition, ***we make our own histories***, on display at Collins Barracks until 30 June 2024.
- Haughey's is one of five residencies funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Sport, and Media to mark the latter years of the Decade of Centenaries, in the context of a changing Ireland, 100 years after the formation of the state.
- The purpose of this conference is to bring a broad range of artists, cultural historians, educators, curators, and project participants together to explore best practice for this way of working to inform future residencies at the Museum, in line with the NMI's strategic plan, and other cultural institutions. The National Museum's intention is to develop a policy around working with artists in this way and embedding this practice into the institution and outcomes from this conference could inform that policy development.
- The conference aims to highlight the residency project with artist Anthony Haughey and the communities that he worked with.
- In terms of defining what 'artist' means in the context of the conference question around artists and museums, this can refer to all art forms as described in the Arts Act, 1951, including visual arts, architecture, literature, performance, music, drama, design and applied arts etc.

Target Audiences

The target audience for this event includes artists, curators, educators and other museum professionals especially those working in areas of community engagement, and general Museum audiences with an interest in history, and the Decade of Centenaries. There is an opportunity for the Museum to attract potentially new audiences to the Museum, including audiences interested in contemporary art, and socially engaged art, and younger people, aged between 18 – 35 years approx.

Keynote speaker: Gregory Sholette

Gregory Sholette, who has contributed the essay entitled 'Troubling the Museum: Anthony Haughey's Archival Obstinacy' to the 'we make our own histories' exhibition booklet will give a keynote address, with this same title.

Following the keynote address there will be three panel discussions, and both morning and afternoon sessions will end with a short reflection piece, delivered by Martin Drury (in the afternoon he will be joined by National Museum Director Lynn Scarff).

Panels

- Each panel has been allocated 45 minutes duration.
- Suggested allocation is 5 minutes for introductions, 30 minutes for panel discussion and 10 minutes for questions from the floor.
- Panels have been designed to be informal, with emphasis on discussion.
- Chairs are asked to ensure that speakers are allocated equal time and we ask speakers to be mindful of this too.
- Each panel to start with Chair introducing themselves and the panel members.
- Chairs will then invite panel members to respond to a set of questions, suggestions are outlined below.

- Chairs and panel members can also pick up on points or questions raised in the Keynote address or in the previous discussions.
- While the set questions may help focus the discussions, Chairs can also allow for flexibility and enable the discussion to flow and allow for spontaneity.

Panel 1 Activist, Artist, Agitator?

Questions to consider include:

- What is the role of an artist in the Museum?
- Looking at the art museum vs the historical museum does an artist working within the historical museum have a different role to play there?
- What distinguishes an artist in residence from other artists working in museums, or producing work for museums?
- Does duration matter? And in what ways is it significant?
- The primary purpose of a residency – to have a socially engaged practice / process or to create work inspired by museum collections?
- What is the responsibility of the artist working in the (publicly funded) Museum – have they a specific responsibility to the collections, to the museum or to the public?

There may also be points raised by the keynote address that the Chair can pick up on and take up with their panel members.

Suggestions for specific questions for individual speakers

To Éimear O'Connor:

As Director of Collections and Access, what do you want from an artist residency, what is more important to you – the process of the artist being in the museum or the outputs that might emerge?

To Anthony Haughey and Mairéad McClean:

As artists what do you understand your role in the museum to be?
What motivated you to apply ?

To Dónal Maguire:

As a curator can you talk about the question of research in art practice – supporting the artist in the creation of a work that has come into being through the residency – is there a way to balance this objective with the need to engage with museum audiences? Is it possible to do both and also to have different kinds of residencies?

To Anthony – you have spoken about your interest in reconfiguring the collections – making something for the future – can you talk about this ?

Panel 2 The impacts of artists working in museums on museums, their visitors and their communities

Questions to consider include:

- What are the impacts of artists working in museums, for example on interpretation, or on visitor experience?
- How do museum visitors and communities of interest experience artists in residence?

- What characterises this kind of engagement?
- How important or significant is it that Museums work in this way with artists?
- Is it more impactful to the institution, or the communities they work with?
- How do you see the power balance in the process where the artist is co-creating work with communities or collaborators?

Suggested specific questions for individual speakers

To Agrippa:

As a Community Engagement Officer with National Museums of N Ireland can you speak about an experience of how an artist residency has impacted on the communities you work with?

To Leina and Lauretta:

As participants with Anthony in his National Museum residency, and as co-creators of the artwork, with Rita Petlane, Remember to Forget the Past, can you talk about the process that you and Anthony engaged in to create this film?

To Aoife:

As curator of Ethnography at the Museum, can you also provide your perspective on the process in working with Leina, Lauretta, Rita and Anthony on this project?

To the three of you - You worked with each other and Anthony over a period of time – is that significant?

To Joe:

As an educator with young people, you have said that working with Anthony enabled your students to see themselves as artists and understand their own artistic process, can you talk about this?

Panel 3 Best practice, what Museums need to do to embed this work?

Questions to consider include:

- What conditions need to be put in place for future museum residencies to thrive?
- What best practice is out there in terms of artists working in museums?
- How can socially engaged art residencies or other types of artist engagement be fostered as a core strand of work of the Museum?
- What about ownership of artworks as outcomes of artist residencies – how best to navigate this critical aspect of co-created work?
- Can artists' residencies in museums genuinely address, or do they have a role in addressing - broader societal issues such as the climate emergency, global inequality and conflict, or is it more effective to focus on specific museum related issues – for example decolonising the collections and universal access?

Suggested specific questions for individual speakers

To Gregory:

As an artist based in the States, can you talk about what is happening in terms of this kind of practice in the US that we might learn from in Ireland?

In Ireland, funding for this type of work tends to come from the state, is this similar in US or does funding tend to come from philanthropic sources? How significant is the funding source?

To Janice:

As the curator for artists resident at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, can you see this kind of infrastructure being replicated across the national cultural institutions?

To Gemma:

As an artist what do you want to see in terms of infrastructure for working in this kind of way?

To Jonathan:

As one of the curators of *we make our own histories* what do you think the museum needs to do differently/ do the same if it embarks on a residency programme in the future?

You reference the Museum as a 'speculative space' where 'contemporary artists ...reveal, reframe and engage in ways that allow us reconsider who we are' – how critical is it to historical museums that they continue to engage contemporary artists in this way?

Biographies

Gregory Sholette is a New York-based artist, writer, teacher and activist. He is a Professor at Queens College, City University of New York (CUNY), Co-Director of Social Practice CUNY headquartered in the Center for the Humanities, Graduate Center; holds a PhD in History and Memory Studies from the University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands, is a graduate of the Whitney Independent Study Program in Critical Theory, and an alumni of the Center for Advanced Study of Visual Art (CASVA). His most recent book is *The Art of Activism and the Activism of Art* (2021).

Martin Drury, practitioner and policy-maker for 45 years, trained and worked as a teacher of English before becoming variously Arts Education Officer (Sligo/Leitrim); Artistic Director of TEAM Educational Theatre Co; Education Officer of the Arts Council; Founding Director, The Ark, A Cultural Centre for Children; Arts Director & Strategic Development Director at the Arts Council. His directing CV includes 20+ productions for the Abbey, Druid, Opera Theatre Company, Second Age, The Ark, Barnstorm and TEAM. He is a former board member of the Ireland Funds, of Music Generation and of Create, the national development agency for collaborative arts, and a former Honorary Fellow in Psychology at UCD. He has been active in shaping cultural policy through membership of key committees and working groups and he has researched, written and edited numerous reports and studies in the field of the arts, especially in the contexts of education and young people. He is currently writing *The Arts, the State and Young People: Cultural Policy, Provision and Practice* (1920-2020).

Anthony Haughey is a socially engaged artist, photographer, filmmaker and lecturer at TU Dublin. His co-authored and solo artworks have been exhibited and collected by museums and galleries nationally and internationally.

Sharon Heal is the director of the UK's Museums Association, a professional membership organisation that campaigns to promote the value of museums to society. She regularly comments on museums and cultural policy in the UK; speaks at conferences and events in the UK and internationally; and has published extensively including contributing a chapter in *Museums and Public Value* (Carol A. Scott, Ashgate, 2013). Sharon's background is in journalism, event creation and policy development. She has lectured in journalism, the history of museums and museum ethics and has judged prizes and awards including the Clore Award

for Museum Learning. Sharon is the Chair of the Museum of Homelessness, a Trustee of both the Thackray Museum and the European Museum Forum.

Janice Hough curates IMMA's Residency & Artist Programmes to support sited live/work opportunities for creative research, production, and the public dissemination of practice. Residencies are curated through various strategies such as invited, themed open calls, and partnerships & exchanges. In recent years Hough has produced sited projects and supported commissions at IMMA with artists such as Array Collective, Forerunner, Fiona Whelan & Brokentalkers, Iz Oztat, Liliane Puthod, Clodagh Emoe, Navine G. Dossos and ANU Productions. She has curated and produced numerous group and solo projects such as More Than One Maker, 2015; A Fair Land, 2016; Wilder Beings Command, 2017 and co-curated the major IMMA Collection exhibition Ghosts from the Recent Past, 2020. International partnerships have included Light Works, Syracuse NY; Grizedale Arts, UK; Kooshk Residency, Tehran, and MMCA Residency Changdong, Seoul, South Korea. Hough was a founding member of the studio network VISIT and of Artists Studio Network Ireland. Past presentations include TransCultural Exchange Conference, Boston; Location One, New York and she regularly moderates studio discussions and open studio events at IMMA, along with third level engagements. Hough is currently a board member at Leitrim Sculpture Centre and in 2022 she curated C L O S E R with Backwater Artists' Studios in the Lavit Gallery, Cork.

Leina Ibnouf, originally from Sudan, has been living in Ireland for more than 20 years. She works as a Sustainability Development and Educator, training individuals, community leader and organisations to thrive through the implementation of the sustainable development goals. She also works with communities to promote sustainability and social justice. Leina has a BSc in Psychology from the Open University and a MSc in Management from Smurfit Business School, UCD. She is an advocate against violence against women. Alongside her work, she is a freelance translator. Leina is interested in histories and the intergenerational impact of major events across histories.

Lauretta Igbofonu is a community leader and care worker living in Balbriggan. She is a co-founder of the Global Migration Collective together with Warsame Ali Garare and artist Anthony Haughey. The collective was initiated in 2003 in response to the precarity, hostility and negative stereotyping towards migrants who were in the process of seeking sanctuary in Ireland. Many former members lived in direct provision. Together they have produced public art interventions and performances, as well as collaborative film productions, video installations, and public discussions.

Mairéad McClean's visual art practise spans film, video, sound and photography. She uses material from a diverse range of sources from found footage, historical and family archives, filmed performances and televisual media. Her work often features ordinary people as they cope with forms of control. Whether the camera follows actual events or reenactments by a performer, people are seen to challenge or circumvent authority or to improvise with their own actions. Memory, and how and why we remember has been explored in many of her experimental films. The groundwork for her most recent 16mm film, Acts of Memory, was laid during McClean's Artist in Residence with the Beyond 22 Project Team/Virtual Record Treasury of Ireland, as part of the Decade of Centenaries program at the Long Room Hub, Trinity College, Dublin. The film was project funded by the Arts Council of Ireland /An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

Damien McGlynn is Director of Create, the national development agency for collaborative arts. Create has led the development of collaborative, socially engaged arts practice across Ireland

for 40 years. He is responsible for core programming, strategic and organisational development and partnerships, nationally and internationally. He has worked in the cultural sector across Ireland, the UK and Europe for more than 15 years, including working with Creative Lives, Amateo, and as part of the ARTIST ROOMS team at Tate and National Galleries of Scotland, supporting a unique touring collection of works. Damien was born in Tallaght, Dublin and studied Fine Art (Sculpture) at NCAD. He loves working with people, agonising over football and listening to all of the music.

Agrippa Njanina has over 20 years of experience working in the non-profit, education, and community sectors with current interests in decolonisation, ethics and community engagement in museums. As Assistant Curator of Inclusive Global Histories at National Museums N.I, he focuses around documentation and researching of the World Cultures collections there. Before becoming Assistant Curator, as Community Engagement Officer on the Global Voices Local Choices project at National Museums N.I; Agrippa played a vital role in coordinating and facilitating the program across six museums in Northern Ireland. Their work focused on promoting inclusivity and diversity and empowering marginalized communities, ensuring their voices are represented. As a committed advocate for inclusive practices within the museum, ethical decision-making processes and decolonization. Agrippa is a committee member of the UK Museums Association Ethics committee. He also supports the MMMV project at Queens University Belfast on its Advisory Group.

Éimear O'Connor is an art historian and author with extensive experience as a curator and collections manager. O'Connor joined the National Museum of Ireland as Director of Collections and Access in October 2023.

Aoife O'Brien was appointed curator for the World Cultures/ Ethnography collections at the National Museum of Ireland in November 2022. She is former curator for the Oceania collections at the National Museums of World Culture/ Världskulturmuseerna in Sweden (2017 to 2022) and has held fellowships at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Washington University in St. Louis, and the Saint Louis Art Museum. Aoife received her Ph.D. in Anthropology/Art History from the Sainsbury Research Unit (SRU) for the Arts of Africa, Oceania and the Americas at the University of East Anglia in England. She also holds an MA in the Arts of Africa, Oceania and the Americas from the SRU. She is part of the Advisory Group that supports the MMMV project (QUB). Her research interests include collecting histories, visual anthropology, cross-cultural encounters, de-colonising methodologies, community collaborations, and museum ethics and care.

Gina O'Kelly is the director of the all-island Irish Museums Association (IMA). She is responsible for delivering the association's vision and leading its advocacy work, research, and programming in support of the museum sector. A Licentiate in Fine Arts, specialising in Visual Culture, from the University of Granada, Spain, Gina has held senior management and curatorial roles with a diverse range of cultural and contemporary art organisations across the public and private sectors. She currently sits on the board of directors of Visual Artists Ireland and of Encountering the Arts Ireland.

Gemma Reid trained as an artist, and was drawn into the world of museums by her interest in objects as an expression of individual and collective identity. At first within small local authority museums and later as a freelance practitioner, her work has centred on creative, ethical, participative approaches to public engagement in heritage. She currently works alongside her sister, Bryonie Reid, as [quarto](#), creatively engaging people in exploring identity and memory in place. Together, they are committed to engaging with Northern Ireland in all its (often troubled)

complexity. They are curious about the untold stories and quiet work for change in every community. [Agreement](#), a collaboration with artist Amanda Dunsmore and Ulster University, is the most recent example of that intent.

Lynn Scarff, Director of the National Museum of Ireland, is an expert panellist on public engagement, environmental education, and community regeneration. A former Director and change leader at the Science Gallery Dublin, she has delivered multiple community-led programmes, including for children and young people. An advocate for the participative museum, her research focuses on museum collaborations with under-represented groups. She has authored extensively on museum and education practice and has delivered projects funded competitively by Science Foundation Ireland, the Wellcome Trust, Horizon 2020 and Creative Europe. Board memberships include the Rediscovery Centre in Ballymun.