Art in the Landscape FESTIVAL OF CHANGE

OFFALY April 5th & 6th 2024 MAYO April 12th & 13th 2024



Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí Offaly County Council











Foreword



It is a significant honour to share curatorial thinking with the brilliant Art in Landscape initiative and partners. In my 20-year career at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, and through offsite projects,

I've experienced the incredible impact art can have on place and people, both economically and intangibly.

YSP is testament to how cultural investment can conserve and share a heritage landscape. It also demonstrates the new insights artists can bring. I am always amazed how different practitioners bring something deeply embedded and unique to light. Creative process celebrates the infinite specialness of different contexts, raising its profile and attracting tourism and investment.

Working with a Bhangra dancer is, delightfully, not an immediate connection to make with the Counties of Mayo and Offaly. However, artist Hardeep Singh Sahota and photographer Tim Smith have collaborated with communities and their dance forms to create a brilliant project that highlights the specialness of the local and particular but, crucially, places it in a global context.

Dr. Helen Pheby

Associate Director Yorkshire Sculpture Park and invited Curator for the Art In The Landscape Commission.

Introduction

Offaly County Council in partnership with Mayo County Council and Visual Artists Ireland have been engaged in a project, funded under the Arts Council's Invitation to Collaboration Scheme since 2020. Initially, funding was allocated to an Art in the Landscape research project that focused on Lough Boora Sculpture Park, Co. Offaly and the Tír Sáile Sculpture Trail, Co. Mayo, with the aim of developing a set of recommendations for the future management/development of each site as well as key learnings for other local authorities and organisations. Following the completion of this the partner organisations were awarded continuation funding from the Arts Council to organise a national / international seminar to further explore questions that arose from the research and to open up the debate on art in the landscape. In particular, the objective was to open a discussion on how arts, culture, tourism, and climate change priorities can align/work together and how this collaboration can inform future policy.

Art in the Landscape: Festival of Change, now returns to the local context and will be held at venues in Offaly and Mayo over two weekends. It is an event for local communities and people working or interested in the arts, heritage, environment, culture, tourism, local business, and community development, and will provide a space for learning, exchange and discussion across sectors and communities.





Artist Commission Hardeep Singh Sahota & Tim Smith

International artist Hardeep Singh Sahota has been working on an art commission in Lough Boora Sculpture Park in Offaly and Tír Sáile Sculpture Trail in North Mayo since September 2023. Collaborating with photographer Tim Smith, they have facilitated workshops in both counties as part of their research and community engagement. This process has informed the direction of the commission.

Hardeep Singh Sahota is a multidisciplinary artist and academic widely known for his work in the field of Bhangra. His muchacclaimed book, Bhangra: Mystics, Music and Migration, explores the origins of folk song and dance from the Panjab in South Asia and its development into part of modern British culture in the hybrid soundscape of British Bhangra and beyond. Hardeep is also a secondary school teacher of art, and an Affiliate Fellow at the University of Huddersfield, in recognition of his research and work within the local community. He continues to study a life-long fascination with dance through the ephemeral qualities of light-painting and other creative explorations.

Tim Smith is a freelance photographer who combines editorial and commercial work with exhibition, publishing and mixed media projects. He is based in Yorkshire. The region and its diverse communities have provided the inspiration and acted as a springboard for national and international projects which have resulted in dozens of exhibitions toured in over twenty countries worldwide and showcased in eleven books. Much of this work explores the links between Britain and people and places in other parts of the world. He's a member of Panos Pictures. This renowned London-based agency represents photojournalists worldwide who document issues which are under-reported, misrepresented or ignored.

Programme of Events Offaly

Friday 5th April

Venue: Esker Arts, Tullamore, R35 NY50

10.30am - 11.00am Coffee & Welcome

11.00am - 1.00pm Tionól moderated by Eileen Hutton

1.00pm - 2.30pm The Conversation Café Networking Lunch

2.30pm - 4.00pm **Rhythm of Light** An illustrated talk with Tim Smith & Hardeep Singh Sahota

4.00pm - 5.00pm **Reflecting The Landscape** Irish Folksongs Performance by Ruairí O'Shea

6.00pm Midland: Mother Myth Memory Exhibition by Rita Duffy – Exhibition Launch

8.00pm **Bhangra Céilí** Fusion céilí – all groups welcome

Saturday 6th April

Venue: Esker Arts, Tullamore, R35 NY50

10.00am – 12.00pm Reading and Writing the Landscape Poetry Workshop with Eileen Casey

8.00pm Rhythm of Light Exhibition launch and Commission showcase by Hardeep Singh Sahota & Tim Smith.

Saturday 6th April

Venue: Lough Boora Sculpture Park GPS coordinates: 53.224347320350766, -7.7291550580962545 Meeting Point – Visitor Information Centre

10.00am - 11.00am Soil Portraits of Lough Boora

Walk and talk with Eileen Hutton. Eileen Hutton will discuss the use of an alternative photography process to create soil portraits on light sensitive filter paper.

11.00am - 12.00pm Bhangra Dance workshop Interactive dance workshop *Meet at 10.40am at Visitor Information Centre Meeting Point

12.00pm - 1.00pm Soil Portraits of Lough Boora As above.

1.30pm – 3.00pm

Lá na Móna Curated by Rita Duffy & Nuala Hayes, a guided walk with theatrical performances, live music and special guests.

2.00pm - 3.00pm Soil Portraits of Lough Boora As above.

4.00pm – 5.30pm Lá na Móna Curated by Rita Duffy & Nuala Hayes, a guided walk with theatrical performances, live music and special guests.



Programme of Events Mayo

Friday 12th April

Venue: Áras Inis Gluaire, Belmullet Civic Centre, Church Street, Belmullet, F26 W5H0

10.30am - 11.00am Coffee & Welcome

11.00am - 1.15pm Tionól moderated by Eileen Hutton

1.15pm - 2.15pm Networking Lunch

2.30pm - 4.00pm Artist Practice Shares Tim Smith & Hardeep Sahota Eileen Hutton

4.15pm - 5.00pm Wilderland Scoping Session for local artists

Throughout the day Soil Portraits of Tír Sáile

Friday 12th April

Venue: Oweninny Wind Farm Visitor Centre, Moneynierin, Bellacorrick, Ballina, F26 HW72

7.00pm - 9.00pm Bhangra Céilí

Saturday 13th April

Venue: SOLAS Centre/lonad Deirbhle Heritage Centre, An Eachléim, An Fód Dubh, Béal An Átha, F26 X316

Buses will run from and return to Ballina (Ballina Arts Centre, departing at 9am sharp) and Castlebar (New Lough Lanngh Leisure Complex F23 A257 departing at 9am) Advance booking essential.

10.30am - 11.15am Coffee & Welcome 11.15am - 12.30pm Panel Discussion – Culturally Rich Neighbourhoods

Facilitated discussion with input from across the cultural sector including the arts, community, heritage and tourism

12.45pm - 2.15pm Networking Lunch & Walk to Deirbhile's Twist

2.30pm - 4.00pm Workshop 1 Culturally Rich Neighbourhoods The Workshop (max 15)

Workshop 2 Place | Making through landscape, community and materials (max 15)

Workshop 3 Visit to Blacksod Lighthouse (max 15)

4:15pm - 4:30pm Wrap Up

Saturday 13th April

Venue: Ballina Civic Offices, Arran Place, Ballina, F26 E5D7

6.30pm - 8.30pm **Rhythm of Light** Exhibition launch and Commission Showcase by Hardeep Singh Sahota & Tim Smith

(Rhythm of Light will run until 26th April and will be open to the public Monday to Friday 10am-1pm).





Tionól

OFFALY: Esker Arts, Tullamore Friday 5th April, 11am – 1pm

MAYO: Áras Inis Gluaire, Belmullet Civic Centre, Church Street, Belmullet Friday 12th April, 11am – 1.15pm

Tionól is a gathering of ideas; an opportunity for participants to share their 'big' or 'small' ideas around Art in the Landscape. The purpose of the event is to share your thinking and spark conversations locally. Following an open call, participants were selected to present their ideas, in a number of short slots, to an audience of people from the community.

So, whether you are living near Lough Boora Sculpture Park in Offaly or the Tír Sáile Trail in North Mayo, we invite you to come along and hear presentations from interested parties on proposed ideas and viewpoints relative to the local landscape.

The Conversation Café

OFFALY: Esker Arts, Tullamore Friday 5th April, 1pm – 2.30pm

Connect, collaborate, and converse over a casual café style lunch. An opportunity to network, share ideas and cultivate new ideas. Leading on from the ideas presented at the Tionól, we are inviting community groups who have an interest in Lough Boora Sculpture Park and or Art in the Landscape to meet others and share their thinking over a relaxed and leisurely café style event. A light lunch of refreshments will be provided. Booking is essential for this event.

Rhythm of Light

OFFALY: Esker Arts, Tullamore Friday 5th April, 2:30pm – 4:00pm

An illustrated talk by photographer and film maker Tim Smith supported by Hardeep Singh Sahota. Illustrated with material drawn from his long career as a photographer and film maker Tim Smith will reveal how he and Hardeep Singh Sahota have worked together for the past decade, weaving together words, images, music, dance and "found sounds" to explore the lives of communities local to their homes in the North of England, and how this has led onto their latest work here in County Offaly and in County Mayo. Inspired by the local landscape and stories gathered from local people talking about their employment in industries such as peat extraction and the making of textiles, they will explore how they have used creative expression to explore the rhythms of people's working lives and discuss how this project has adapted and evolved through collaborating with different people and in different places in the two counties.

Reflecting The Landscape

Irish Folksongs Performance by Ruairí O'Shea

OFFALY: Esker Arts, Tullamore Friday 5th April, 4pm – 5pm

Reflecting the themes of landscape, nature, and climate, join Irish Folk artist Ruairí O' Shea for an intimate performance that will entertain, soothe, and reflect thoughts and conversations through the prism of live music. Ruairí is a multi-instrumentalist musical performer specializing in guitar, mandolin and bazouki. He has extensive experience of bringing groups together in community settings using folk and traditional music. For further information please visit: <u>Ru O'Shea - YouTube</u>.

Bhangra Céilí

OFFALY: Esker Arts, Tullamore Friday 5th April, 8pm

MAYO: Oweninny Wind Farm Visitor Centre, Moneynierin, Bellacorrick, Ballina Friday 12th April, 7pm – 9pm

Come along and experience an evening of dance that will leave you feeling energised. For the very first-time ever, the traditional Irish Céilí, led by local people, will meet Bhangra, led by UK-based practitioner Hardeep Singh Sahota.

The event will include a demonstration with some easy to learn Bhangra moves!

Bhangra is lively traditional folk dance and musical form that began amongst farming communities in the Panjab in South Asia.

Soil Portraits of Lough Boora

OFFALY: Lough Boora Sculpture Park Saturday 6th April, 10am, 12pm and 2pm

On this guided walk and talk, visual artist Eileen Hutton will discuss the temporary installation of soil chromatography 'trail markers' located along sections of the Sculpture Trail in Lough Boora. Based on scientific methodology, soil chromatography is an alternative photography process that creates a 'soil portrait' on light sensitive filter paper. It can be used to assess the general health of soil, including soil structure, biological diversity, organic matter content, humus, and minerals available for plants. Come join her on this experiential walk for fluid conversations on the importance of soil and bogs, the vast microcosms contained within, their role in supporting biodiversity, citizen science and more! For more information on Eileen and examples of her work visit: www.eileenhutton.com (Limited spaces per session, booking essential)

Meeting Point: Visitor Information Centre, Lough Boora Sculpture Park.

Lá na Móna

OFFALY: Lough Boora Sculpture Park Saturday 6th April, 1:30pm – 3pm and 4pm – 5:30pm

A co-curated cross art form collaboration between Rita Duffy visual artist and Nuala Hayes performer/storyteller. A series of interactive performances and happenings, with music, storytelling and more.

'We offer a magical mystery walk through Lough Boora Sculpture Park, which will divert, entertain and inspire participants. A surreal and multi-sensory experience in this renewed natural environment with surprise guests followed by tea and turf cake.'



This walking theatrical experience will take inspiration from one of Offaly Playwright Marina Carr's most celebrated characters 'Catwoman' from the renowned play *By the Bog of Cats* and will include featured special guests Séan Ryan, Eimear Burke and Michael Creagh, who will feature at various points of the guided theatrical walk. Local actors and musicians from drama groups in the area will also feature in the performance.

Rita Duffy is one of Ireland's most revered visual artists. See further information in exhibition listing and to learn about Rita's incredible body of work visit www. ritaduffystudio.com. Nuala Hayes is an Actor, Storyteller and Author who has collaborated with Rita Duffy on many projects over the years, including The Shirt Factory Project in Derry. Learn more about Nuala at www.storytellersofireland.org

Approximate distance of walk: 5km. Limited audience per performance. Advance booking essential.

Meeting Point: Visitor Information Centre, Lough Boora Sculpture Park.

Artist Practice Shares

MAYO: Áras Inis Gluaire, Belmullet Civic Centre, Church Street, Belmullet, F26 W5H0 Friday 12th April, 2:30pm – 4:00pm

Artists will share insights into their practice interests and some of the projects they have worked on to date.

Session 1 - An illustrated talk by photographer and film maker Tim Smith and multi-disciplinary artist, Hardeep Singh Sahota.

Session 2 – An illustrated talk with Eileen Hutton, about her work, with specific focus on soil chromatography and her community project in Mayo.



Culturally Rich Neighbourhoods Panel Discussion

MAYO: SOLAS Centre/Ionad Deirbhle Heritage Centre, An Eachléim, An Fód Dubh, Béal An Átha, F26 X316 Saturday 13th April, 11.15am – 12:30pm

Presented in partnership with Community Futures, Culturally Rich Neighbourhoods is an invitation to explore how local economies can benefit from collaboration between the arts, heritage, local business, tourism, and local government. By collectively pooling resources, creativity, and expertise, these 'neighbourhoods' can come together to drive economic growth, enhance community identity, and create vibrant and sustainable local economies.

Some of the potential benefits of such collaboration which will be discussed and explored in more depth at this event include:

- Community engagement and social cohesion
- Enhanced community identity and branding
- Job creation and entrepreneurship
- Revitalization of local areas
- Increased tourism revenue
- Cultural and creative industries growth
- Increased local spending

Wilderland Scoping Session for local artists

MAYO: Áras Inis Gluaire, Belmullet Civic Centre, Church St, Belmullet, F26 W5H0 Friday 12th April, 4:15pm – 5:00pm

An invitation to join one of the first scoping sessions for artists, living and working in Mayo, who are interested in developing sustainable arts practices. The session will include a short, illustrated introduction to the project and a discussion on how the Wilderland project can respond to local needs.

Workshops

Rita Duffy Shrine Making

OFFALY: Esker Arts, Tullamore Choice of two slots across March. Saturday 23rd March, 10am – 4pm Saturday 30th March, 10am – 4pm

To complement Rita Duffy's Mother Myth Memory exhibition at Esker Arts, the artist will host Shrine Making workshops in advance of the festival. The shrine remains a familiar concept in Irish culture and usually marks significant locations. Both the ancient and the useful were marked out as places of ancestral spirits. Just as ribbons and amulets are tied to 'rag trees' with an intension or wish filled prayer, shrines are unique little special places that draw art and spirit together. Traditionally these small roadside constructions marked the religious veneration of a particular saint or took the form of a sacred marker, where people visited with deep thoughts. In these workshops, the artist will explore the origins, looking at examples and discussing our ancient impulse towards ritual and memorial. These shrines can be described as 'folk art windows into the other world' a view through our experience of the present moment into the creative sacred, a space for the symbols, keepsakes and memorabilia we individually keep as special.

Participants are asked to bring along selections of 'personal' bits and pieces i.e. old photos, textiles, small objects of sentimental value etc. If you have an old wooden box, a redundant drawer, or a deep tray of any sort please drop it into Esker Arts when you are signing up for one of the workshops (limited spaces per session, booking essential).

Bhangra Dance Workshop

OFFALY: Lough Boora Sculpture Park Saturday 6th April, 11am – 12pm *(Meet at 10.40am)

Join multi-disciplinary Bhangra artist Hardeep Singh Sahota in an exciting Bhangra dance workshop that will leave you feeling energised. Bhangra is a lively traditional folk dance and musical form that originated amongst farming communities in the Panjab in South Asia. In this Bhangra demonstration and interactive workshop, UK-based practitioner Hardeep Sahota will show you some fundamental rhythms and easy-to-learn Bhangra moves and invite you to join in.

Suitable for all ages and abilities. Should children wish to partake, workshop is most appropriate for children aged 7+, with accompanying parents/carers.

Meeting Point – Visitor Information Centre, Lough Boora Sculpture Park 20 minutes before workshop start time where group will be escorted to The Pavilion for the 11am start time.

Reading and Writing the Landscape

Poetry Workshop with Eileen Casey

OFFALY: Esker Arts, Tullamore Saturday 6th April, 10am – 12pm

"Bog lands are essentially prairie like places but yet, magical and mystical. They hold treasure, from both the distant and recent past. Subtleties of change are partly what draws the artist's eye to read such landscape, to capture through paint or ink or music or whatever medium. Bog lands appear to be immutable. Silent witnesses, shadowy outlines in our comings and goings. Sometimes they are lit by a flash of furze or the soft white of a bog flower."

In this workshop, Eileen Casey will discuss how the landscape ignites the artist, looking at layers of meaning in terms of the romanticised pastoral or the politics of an environmental poem. Participants can expect to explore topics such as collation of material, the naming of landscape, environmental, aesthetic, futuristic themes and collaboration. Practical exercises including triggers and prompts to begin writing the landscape will also be discussed. Originally from the Midlands, Eileen is an award-winning poet, fiction writer and journalist. For more information on Eileen and examples of her work visit: Eileen Casey (@EileenCasey2) / X

Suitable for all levels. Adults/young adults welcome.



Culturally Rich Neighbourhoods The Workshop

MAYO: SOLAS Centre/Ionad Deirbhle Heritage Centre, An Eachléim, An Fód Dubh, Béal An Átha, F26 X316 Saturday 13th April, 2.30pm – 4pm

This workshop, led by Lisa Hallinan, will provide attendees with some practical examples of how communities are achieving the outcomes that were highlighted in the morning's panel discussion. (Max 15 participants).

Place | Making through landscape, community and materials

MAYO: SOLAS Centre/Ionad Deirbhle Heritage Centre, An Eachléim, An Fód Dubh, Béal An Átha, F26 X316 Saturday 13th April, 2.30pm – 4pm

An artist's view of landscape and the story of place. Join Elaine Harrington for a guided walk and hands-on making workshop, to hear about an artist's view of the landscape and telling the story of place through community engagement and using native materials (max 15 participants).

Visit to Blacksod Lighthouse

MAYO: Bus Departing SOLAS Centre/Ionad Deirbhle Heritage Centre, An Eachléim, An Fód Dubh, Béal An Átha, F26 X316 Saturday 13th April, 2.30pm – 4pm

A rare opportunity to visit a working lighthouse and hear the fascinating stories of maritime history, Irish culture, and local folklore. From world changing weather reports to daring adventures and as a family home for generations of keepers' families, Blacksod Lighthouse holds many memories within its thick walls. (Max 15 participants).



Exhibitions

Rita Duffy Midland: Mother Myth Memory

Visual Art Exhibition

OFFALY: Esker Arts, Tullamore Official Opening Friday 5th April at 6pm, running until 25th May.

The exhibition is curated from several bodies of work and will include a series of paintings made while Rita's residency in the Norwegian artic, laden with the energy of bog land and matriarchy. Also included is a major painting of Rita's grandmother Mullins, who lived in Clara and greatly influenced the artist in her early years. New works on paper will be presented for the first time, images springing from memory preserved as if steeped in bog water, rich in magic realism and narrative. One of Ireland's groundbreaking visual artists; initiating major collaborative art projects, visiting lecturer at international universities, with contributions to numerous publications and media engagements. She was made an Honorary Member of the Royal Society of Architects for developmental work in the built environment, and an associate at the Goldsmiths College London, collaborating on artistic exchange with Argentina looking at the role of art in post conflict societies. Duffy's work is held in museum and private collections worldwide and her public art projects continue to grow in scale and ambition. For more information on Rita and examples of her work visit: www.ritaduffystudio.com

Hardeep Singh Sahota & Tim Smith Rhythm of Light

Visual Art Exhibition and Commission Showcase

OFFALY: Esker Arts, Tullamore Official Opening and Commission Showcase Saturday 6th April at 8pm running until 25th May.

MAYO: Ballina Civic Offices, Arran Place, Ballina Official Opening & Commission Showcase Saturday 13th April at 6.30pm, running until 26th April (Gallery open Monday – Friday 10am to 1pm).

Join multi-disciplinary artist Hardeep Singh Sahota and Photographer Tim Smith as they showcase the outcome of the Art in the Landscape commission with a short film and live music.

The project takes its inspirations from Lough Boora Sculpture Park in County Offaly, and Tír Sáile Sculpture Trail in northern Mayo, the surrounding landscapes and the working lives, both past and present, of the people who inhabit them.

For more information on Hardeep and Tim and examples of their work visit: www.ysp.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/pastexhibitions/hardeep-sahota-bhangra-lexicon

Soil Portraits of Tír Sáile

Community Project & Installation

MAYO: Áras Inis Gluaire, Belmullet Civic Centre, Church Street, Belmullet Friday 12th April Running throughout the day Friday.

Artist Eileen Hutton has proposed a sitespecific response to Tír Sáile, based on soil chromatography. Soil chromatography is an alternative photography process that creates a 'soil portrait' on light sensitive filter paper. It was first developed in 1953 by Ehrenfried E. Pfeiffer, a German soil scientist and advocate for biodynamic farming and became an inexpensive means for farmers and composters to view a snapshot of the biological activity and health of soil, compost, plants, and food. This project unfolded over the last months engaging local communities with the Tír Sáile Trail and resulted in a soil chromatogram to represent each site, all of which will be exhibited at the festival in April. For more information on Eileen and examples of her work visit: www.eileenhutton.com



Festival partners

Art in the Landscape – Festival of Change is funded under the Arts Council's Invitation to Collaboration Scheme. The events are the culmination of a collaboration including Offaly County Council Arts Office, Mayo County Council Arts Service and Visual Artists Ireland in association with partner sites Lough Boora Sculpture Park, Co. Offaly and Tír Sáile Sculpture Trail, Co. Mayo.

Delivery partners

Esker Arts Community Futures Áras Inis Gluaire Ballina Arts Centre Ballina Municipal District Gallery Oweninny Wind Farm Visitor Centre Solas Centre

Contributors to Festival of Change

Anna Connor Anna Cullinan Comhar Dún Chaochain Eileen Casey **Eileen Hutton Elaine Harrington** Hardeep Singh Sahota James Winnett Jo Mangan Lisa Hallinan Marian O'Donnell Michael Smyth Nuala Hayes Rita Duffy Ruairí O'Shea Tim Smith Úna Forde Communities in Offaly & Mayo

Image credits

Cover Image: Hardeep Singh Sahota performing at the Tidal Pool in Belmullet, County Mayo. Photographer Tim Smith Page 2: Image courtesy of Jonty Wilde Page 2: Lough Boora Sculpture Park courtesy of Paul Moore. Page 3: Battling Forces by Fritze Rind at Downpatrick Head. Photographer Eamonn O'Boyle. Page 4: System No. 30 by Julian Wild. Photographer Paul Moore. Page 5: Tearmon na Gaoithe by Alan Counihan in Kilcummin. Photographer Eamon O'Boyle. Page 6: From Rhythm of Light by Hardeep Singh Sahota and Tim Smith. Photographer Tim Smith. Page 8: From Rhythm of Light. Hardeep Singh Sahota performing at Sky Train by Michael Bulfin. Photographer Tim Smith. Page 9: Deirbhle's Twist by Michael Bulfin in Fallmore. Photographer Eamonn O'Boyle. Page 10: From Rhythm of Light by Hardeep Singh Sahota and Tim Smith. Photographer Tim Smith. Page 11: Image courtesy of Elaine Harrington. Page 12: From Rita Duffy, Midland: Mother Myth Memory exhibition Page 13: From Rhythm of Light by Hardeep Singh Sahota and Tim Smith.

Photographer Tim Smith.

Booking

All festival events are **free** to the public however **booking is required**. Early booking is advised given limited capacity of many of the events.

Offaly Events 057 938 3801 | www.eskerarts.ie

Find out more: www.offaly.ie/festivals www.mayo.ie

Mayo Events 094-9064666 | mayoarts@mayococo.ie www.mayo.ie/en-ie/your-council/services/arts/arts-programme/art-in-the-landscape





Comhairle Contae Mhaigh Eo Mayo County Council











