Fingal County Council

Press Release

25 June 2018

Fingal County Council’s Public Art Programme 2018-2021 announces 9 major commissions to line up of artists

Five of the nine commissions awarded under Infrastructure - the Public Art Programme 2018-2021 were given to artists from Fingal.

The art programme which is predominantly funded through the Government’s Per Cent for Art scheme is valued at €400,000 and is co-curated by Fingal County Council’s Public Art Co-ordinator, Caroline Cowley and Independent Curator, Aisling Prior. In 2017, they conducted a countywide consultation to deliver the most appropriate creative brief for emerging artists to respond to which resulted in nine being awarded nationally.
There were almost 300 submissions to the open call and three selection phases have been conducted for the Infrastructure commissions. The selection processes featured the expertise of curators, Aisling Prior and Caroline Cowley, academics, Declan Long and Valerie Connor, local public representatives and a range of specialist staff drawn from Fingal County Council’s Community, Heritage, Cultural and Planning departments. The selection processes resulted in nine commissions being awarded to some of Ireland’s most exciting and respected emerging and established artists, all of whom demonstrate an inspiring energy and unique imagination as to how they will make innovative and challenging artworks over the coming three years.

The nine commissions will be exhibited throughout the county under two categories: “Public Art Awards” and “Co-Productions”.

The “Public Art Awards” projects demonstrate a high level of artistic excellence, innovation and ambition for Fingal. The “Co-Productions” category includes artists who work collaboratively with specific Fingal community groups or a new community of interest.

A third aspect of the Infrastructure commissioning programme sees artists making artworks for and in the built environment. Internationally acclaimed artist Corban Walker will be making a sculptural installation for the landscaped areas in the new housing development at Hamilton Park in Dublin 15.

Artists selected under the “Public Art Awards” are John Byrne, Sarah Browne and Adam Gibney (Fingal) and under the “Co-Productions” category we selected, Declan Gorman (Fingal), Anthony Haughey and the Migrant Collective (Balbriggan), Michelle Hall (Blanchardstown), Gareth Kennedy, Yvonne McGuinness (Malahide) and Aoife Dunne (Blanchardstown).

The commissions are across many contemporary artforms including theatre, film, virtual reality and digital art, performance, engaged and expanded practice and literature. Each of the art commissions will align with local communities in new and meaningful ways and will engage with current issues from across the county, to deliver a rich profile of Fingal as it is now.
The programme will also support emerging artists within the public art field. The selection committee identified a small number of artists who would be mentored and supported to develop work in Fingal in the coming years. These artists include Grainne Hallaghan, Brian Cregan, Faolan Carey and Nollaig Molloy.

Mayor of Fingal, Cllr Anthony Lavin said: “I’m delighted to see five talented artists from Fingal being included in the selection process for the Infrastructure Art Programme. It is a testament to the value of the supports developed and that have been put in place by the Fingal County Council’s Arts Office over the past number of years.”

Chief Executive of Fingal County Council, Paul Reid said: “Arts are an extremely important part to Fingal’s culture and identity. This programme is an investment into the talent and creativity that exists across our county and I am delighted to see it being supported and developed.”

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For more details on Infrastructure and for our updates visit www.fingalarts.ie/infrastructure

For further information, please contact press@fingal.ie or Caroline Cowley, Fingal County Council Public Art Co-Ordinator; 01 870 8449 or 087 120 1924 Caroline.cowley@fingal.ie

Notes to editor:

What is Public Art?

Public Art, put simply connects a people, time and place, it is always art and through Infrastructure it will be embedded in our everyday lives. The selected artists will explore themes of identity, agency, literature, mental health and wellbeing, local traditions, youth, diversity and community through this exciting range of commissions. As part of Infrastructure 2018 – 2021 Buildings and Public Places Strand, a panel of artists has been appointed and will realise projects in selected locations in both public and private spaces over the life of the programme. We are also committed to roll out a People’s Purchase
scheme where communities will be invited to select a work of art to be purchased on their behalf through the scheme which will live in their meeting or gathering spaces. The programme will also support emerging artists within the public art field, the selection committee identified a small number of artists who would be mentored and supported to develop work in Fingal in the coming years, these artists include Grainne Hallaghan, Brian Cregan, Faolan Carey and Nollaig Molloy. We anticipate huge interest in the programme locally, nationally and internationally.

**Some background to Public Art in Fingal**

Infrastructure- Public Art Programme 2018 - 2021 is possible through the Per Cent for Art Scheme which is currently celebrating its 40th Year. Evolving from mainly sculptural works to include all the art-forms.

Fingal County Council is acknowledged as a leader in the field of art commissioning in Ireland. The recent work by Garrett Phelan – *The Hide Sculpture*, a 21st century functional monument open to the public and located at Balleally Landfill near Lusk.

www.thehideproject.com

Public Art played a significant role in Fingal’s commemorations of the 1916 Rising with a contemporary interpretation of the role of women played in the Easter Rising and of the ‘travelling secrets’ which were so important in the days leading up to the Rising. “Mobile Monuments” by artists Rhona Byrne & Yvonne McGuinness explored these themes, making a public art event with large scale colourful sculptures – vessels for all sorts of objects and tools - being cycled across the county on rickshaws. A programme of pop-up performances devised with school children and more senior citizens, travelled alongside the routes of these mobile sculptures.

https://visualartistsireland.com/forms-in-action

Public art has also lived at the very heart of our communities through the Award-winning *Resort Residency* which takes place annually at Lynders Mobile Home Park in Portrane where many artists have lived on a short term basis, creating artworks in response to this beautiful coastal area.
Mobile Monuments by artists Rhona Byrne & Yvonne McGuinness and The Origins and Uses of Round Towers by Gareth Kennedy from Resort Revelations 2016 will both feature in forthcoming exhibition I Slept like a Stone at The Lab Gallery Dublin.
http://www.dublincityartsoffice.ie/the-lab/upcoming-exhibitions