



# MOBILE MONUMENTS

RHONA BYRNE YVONNE MCGUINNESS





## ***“Mobile Monuments” - Fingal Re-imagines 1916 with a unique collaborative Public Art Commission***

*Samuel Beckett said that the task of the artist is to find a form to accommodate the mess. In this year of commemoration many artists have been tasked with the challenge of bringing the fragmented memories of the 1916 Rising to a new generation. Artists can only create work that is in and of their time so the appropriate form is complex.*

Artists Rhona Byrne and Yvonne McGuinness have stood up to this challenge presented by Fingal County Council with their newly commissioned work **Mobile Monuments** by taking key elements from the time period and re-appropriating them into a new kind of memory and a new way to think about how artists work but also about what certainties we can take from historical accounts of the time period which are as follows.

### **Bicycles**

The availability and use of bicycles were a key component in the transfer of information. Many of the messages delivered to the volunteers would have been by bicycle, often by a female messenger, such as Mary (Molly) Adrien who delivered dispatches from Pearse in the GPO to Thomas Ashe in the Swords area. As part of the commemoration ceremony Fingal will put a special emphasis on the Rothaíocht na mBan during their official commemoration ceremonies. During the time period, bicycles were key to freedom, especially for women as it allowed them to put greater distances away from their home-place and move towards the greater independence that would unfold in the coming years.

*There is nothing more invisible than a monument...*

The artists are working with three rickshaw trikes which are currently being transformed into what is essentially a moving plinth that will support a series of sculptures which will travel to villages and towns in Fingal as a powerful symbol of the importance of movement during the time period and a unique way to question what purpose a monument serves in how we remember.







### **1916 in European Art Movements**

1916 across Europe marked the beginnings of a shift in art practice where artists began to question their role within society during a period of political unrest and also proposed a democratization of art as something that could be produced, created but also felt more deeply by everyone. This period coincided with the birth of modernism where the art moved away from the purely figurative or classical to simple shapes and geometric forms thought to represent a more universal language of representation. This was also true of the later monuments in this period across Europe. The memories of the 1916 Rising have been pieced together from a selection of simple everyday objects. The monuments reflect this every day aesthetic associated with the time period which still resonates today.

### **Empowering Citizens**

Just like the rising the content and meaning of the monuments is being created by citizens across the county. The artists are working with Swords Educate Together, Castaheaney Educate Together and Garristown National School who have connected with the Swords Senior Citizens and the Rush ICA during a number of workshops which have sought to unpack the principles of this revolutionary period and what resonates for citizens today. Artists looked at how information was transferred in contrast to our instant modes of communication today, how are networks created, what do we feel our responsibility is as citizens and how do we identify ourselves both individuals and groups. Fabric banners, text pieces, fabric motifs have been created which reflect these themes and will travel within the monuments to their destinations. When they reach the towns they will open up and become a performance sight in which all participants will play a very important role.



**Where**

The Mobile Monuments will start moving on in April and you can catch them en-route at the following dates and locations.

The journey begins ...

7<sup>th</sup> /8<sup>th</sup> April 2016 from Swords to Rush,  
**Fri 8<sup>th</sup> April 2016 - Performance Kenure Park, Rush @ 11am**

14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> April 2016 from Swords to Garristown  
**Fri 15<sup>th</sup> April 2016 - Performance Main Street, Garristown @ 11am**

21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016 from Swords to Castaheany  
**Fri 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016 - Performance Castaheany, Educate Together, Ongar Park, D15 @11am**

**Sun 24th April 2016 - Fingal 1916 Commemorative Day, Swords**

Mobile Monuments will form part of the events taking place in Swords on Sunday 24th April to commemorate the 1916 Rising in Fingal.

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