



# County Cavan Arts Plan

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## 2011-2015



July 2011



# **Cavan County Council**



## **County Cavan Arts Plan 2011-2015**

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Front cover; Eclectic Light Orchestra musicians as part of Cavan Arts Office's Moving on Music Initiative 2008

# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Background**

Cavan County Council commissioned Aidan Walsh Consultancy in November 2011 to undertake and assist in the development of a strategic Arts Plan. It was agreed that the period of the Plan would run from 2011-2015, a five year span. The Plan establishes priorities and work programmes for the work of the Arts Office of Cavan Council, led by its Arts Officer. This Plan succeeds previous plans and is also a requirement of the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon which provides annual grant in support of the work of the Arts Office.

Every organisation benefits from a sound business plan and from sound business practices. To maximise the potential of organisations, strategic or development plans are prepared which provide an overview of achievement and more importantly chart a way forward. With these goals in mind, Cavan County Council is preparing a Plan for the Arts Office and its programmes.

## **1.2 Specialist consultancy**

The Consultancy specialises in providing advice for the cultural sector. Aidan Walsh was Director of the Northern Ireland Museums Council until 2001 and previously Curator of Monaghan County Museum. He also prepared the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan for the Tyrone Guthrie Centre for Artists at Annaghmakerrig.

## **1.3 Drafts of the Plan**

Two draft versions of this Plan were prepared. This First Draft was provided for discussion with the Arts Office and the Director of Services. Following necessary amendment and addition, a Second Draft was presented which formed the basis for a presentation to the SPC for Housing Development and Cultural Policy.

In due course, this Final Draft Plan will be sent to Council for adoption as the 2011-2015 County Cavan Arts Plan.

## **1.4 Brief for this commission**

The Plan was written and facilitated by Aidan Walsh Consultancy.

Following appointment, the Consultancy prepared a Project Initiation Document which formed an agreed statement of the project's objectives, scope and organisation. It also confirmed the brief and consultees.

The Brief required the new Arts Plan to take account of Cavan County Council's strategic plan. It also confirmed that consultation would be an important element of the work of the consultant and will include all stakeholders: including elected members and the Strategic Policy Committee, the Arts Council, the senior management team, staff and the communities we serve.

The 2003 Arts Act requires each local authority to prepare and implement plans for the development of the arts. The Arts Act also empowers local authorities to directly assist the development of the arts locally through

- Provide financial or other assistance in order to
  - Stimulate public interest in the arts
  - Promote knowledge, appreciation and practice of the arts
  - Improve standards in the arts

Within this overarching context, the Cavan County Council Arts Office works and it is within this context also that this Plan is being prepared.

## **1.5 General consultation**

In order to effectively and efficiently use the limited consultancy resources, a decision was taken to undertake stakeholder consultation as the primary consultative methodology. All consultations were planned to inform the Plan and to gather views on current activity of the Arts Office. This consultation took the form of meetings, visits to arts bodies and was also conducted through email and telephone. It included individual artists, arts organisations (both locally and nationally), community arts groups and arts education interests.

While most of the available time was focussed on identified stakeholder consultation, a public call for submissions was also made.

- A call for submissions of views was placed in the Council page of the Anglo-Celt newspaper
- An online call was also placed on the Cavan County Council website
- A second online call was also placed on the Cavan Arts website
- All Council staff were electronically circulated and submissions requested

The outcomes from the consultations are discussed in Chapter 3 and Appendix 2 shows all respondents and stakeholders.

### **1.6 Stakeholder consultation**

The consultative process was initiated with a number of detailed familiarisation meetings with Arts Office staff. A range of places was visited, including Ballyjamesduff, Cavan Town and Virginia

A full list of those consulted can be found at Appendix 2.

### **1.7 Content and purpose of this Strategic Plan**

At commissioning stage, the broad outline of the Plan was agreed, as follows

- Mission & values statements
- A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis
- A brief situation review
- A summary report on consultations undertaken
- Strategic aims
- Objectives underneath each aim

The purpose of this strategic plan can be defined in two ways. It serves to;-

- Define, agree and provide a business-like framework for the work of the Arts Office for a 5-year period, but it also
- Provide an advocacy document for the Arts Office which articulates its purpose in a considered and coherent manner

In this regard, the Brief specifically required the Plan to function as

- An advocacy document for the arts office and the arts generally in Cavan

With both cost control and the virtues of brevity in mind, the Brief also required an Arts Plan that would be

- Incisive – Focused - Short

## **2. The arts in Cavan today**

### **2.1 General**

This section of the Plan describes the factual position of the Arts Office and also of the arts more broadly in the County, in summary form.

Cavan County Development Board describes the county as follows<sup>1</sup>

“County Cavan is an inland border county in the Province of Ulster. It is centrally located within Ireland. The County has no coastal access but has a wealth of inland lakes and waterways, notably the Shannon-Erne Waterway”.

Cavan remains a predominately rural county with 74% of the population living in rural areas. In recent years, Cavan County experienced significant changes with major increases in the amount of residential and other types of developments and considerable increase in the population levels. Prior to the economic downturn, Cavan was a growing county. In the 1996 Census the population of County Cavan was 52,944 but this had risen to 64,003 by 2006.<sup>2</sup>

Cavan Town is the administrative centre for the county and the largest town. It provides an extensive range of services to the county and has been identified as a Hub town in the National Spatial Strategy and the Border Regional Planning Guidelines. Overall, the Border Region remains the most disadvantaged region of Ireland with Cavan the second most disadvantaged local authority area within the region.

### **2.2 The Arts Office**

The Arts Office achieves remarkable results through carefully selected partnerships, both within and outside its parent body, Cavan County Council. In actual staff terms, the Office relies on two specialist officers, supplemented by clerical support. All staff is housed within the Farnham Centre in Cavan Town, a building which also houses the County Library and the Tourism Office for the area. Cavan County Council appointed its first arts officer in 1989.

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<sup>1</sup> “A strategy for the economic, social and cultural development of County Cavan, 2002-2012”, Cavan County Development Board.

<sup>2</sup> Central Statistics Office

Separate from the Arts Office, but related, Ramor Theatre in Virginia provides an extensive all-year round programme of theatre and cinema. Ramor is currently a host venue for visual art exhibitions developed and toured by the Arts Office, although this policy will be kept under to review as the Plan progresses. Ramor was instrumental in the development of another nationally recognised achievement in County Cavan, the Livin Dred Theatre Company. The County Museum in Ballyjamesduff also works closely with the Arts Office. For example, it developed and mounted an exhibition which celebrated traditional music as part of the All Ireland Fleadh 2010 which was held in Cavan. The show was imaginatively titled "Round the house and mind the dresser" and subsequently toured to venues outside the county.



*"Banjos" painting by Rikki van den Berg from the Cavan County Collection*

Facilitation and support are key elements in the strategy of the Arts Office. While occasionally the Arts Office will organise events, its important to acknowledge that the Office is not an agency for the delivery of events. Nor does it manage an arts centre. Its role is that of enabler, advisor and it also offers funds from a limited funding base.

The facilitation and support strategy has paid off with mentoring projects such as Backstage pass which provides aspiring theatre directors with work experience within their profession. This project is managed by the Arts Office. Some of the skills and experience needed by theatres in Cavan were developed through mentoring schemes like Backstage and the Arts and Heritage Community Employment Scheme which was funded by FAS.



Partnership is a key strategy for the delivery of arts programming in Cavan and the Caomhnú Literary Festival is an excellent example of such work. Caomhnú brings together the very best literary talent in the country for an interesting mixture of readings, workshops, performances and surprises. In fact, Caomhnú has attracted national attention and numbers the Arts Council among its admirers. Caomhnú (Cavan Literary Festival) stages readings, art exhibitions, installations and workshops and broadens out to songwriting and to cross-sectoral social issues.

In fact, Cavan Literary Festival is now planning an imaginative festival for 2012 which will concentrate on Irish women's writing. Cavan Literary Festival is a true partnership. Funding comes from the Arts Council and other sources and organisation is led by the Arts Office, the County Library and Cavan Town Council, have for example, been partners in the delivery of events.

### **2.3 Programmes of activity**

A glance at the Arts Office review of its 2010 programme demonstrates just how lively the arts are in Cavan and how much the Arts Office facilitates and guides this programming. That said, there is powerful grassroots arts movement in the county, also facilitated by the Arts Office with advice, funds and practical support. Those consulted for this Plan pointed to a happy confluence of factors which today places Cavan as one of Ireland's most active and creative arts regions and this is now nationally recognised. Increasingly, the arts are defining a new, positive Cavan identity.

Consultation also suggested that the Arts Office was always willing to listen to new ideas and to respond. In point of fact, many consultees suggested that the willingness of the Office to respond was in fact overstressing its capacity and may diminish its ability to deliver quality. This Plan takes note of this important point as quality is central to arts. Every project proposal and every good idea cannot be supported. Resources of time and money simply do not permit that to happen. Choices have to be made and priorities agreed.

The Plan provides an opportunity to prioritize. For example, this Plan suggests the Arts Office should directly organise no more than 3 visual art exhibitions each year. It should also be remembered that, increasingly, private galleries are mounting visual arts shows.

## **2.4 Artforms**

Cavan has long been associated with producing exceptional writers and writing and this remains the case today. National figures like Dermot Healy, Shane Connaughton, Michael Harding and Tom McIntyre spring to mind but a new generation has also emerged to continue and strengthen this literary tradition. Noel Monahan, Philip Doherty and Heather Brett are now producing work of national quality.

Cavan now also produces "The Moth", an arts and literature periodical of exceptional standard which profiles Cavan writers. Windows Publications is a two-decade old, Cavan-based publishing house which assists and publishes emerging writers' work and brings their work to wider audiences through a programme of poetry and literary readings. This publishing house is the work of Heather Brett and Noel Monahan, who are also established writers.

In the area of traditional music, Cavan Arts Office works closely with Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, and supports its work. Traditional music is now enjoying great public support in the county and the huge success of Fleadh 2010 served to copper-fasten the national reputation of the county as a beacon of the traditional arts. Cavan traditional music is now seen on the national stage, at events like the Temple Bar TradFest in Dublin.

Fleadh 2011 and Failte Ireland recently released statistical information which demonstrates the success of the Fleadh in hard facts<sup>3</sup>. Surveys at the Fleadh showed that "158,000 individuals attended the Cavan Fleadh over the week, a crowd that is second to the Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade (380K) in Dublin and outperforms other Irish festivals". "31% of attendees came from the U.K, USA, France and others while 54% were domestic day and overnight visitors/participants. Almost one third visited a Fleadh for the very first leading to a statement from

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<sup>3</sup> [www.fleadh2011cavan.ie](http://www.fleadh2011cavan.ie)

Fáilte Ireland "that Cavan broke new ground by reaching out far and beyond the traditional Comhaltas family".

"The economic impact on the Cavan region is estimated at €19.7m and when the spending by local visitors and organizers is included, the total value of the Fleadh to the local economy rises to €35m".

The NYAH Festival of Traditional music and singing has been an important part of the arts calendar in County Cavan since its inception 8 years ago and laid the ground work for hosting the All Ireland Fleadh Cheoil. The Arts Office and the Arts Council grant-aided this festival in 2010.

The Ag Seinm Traditional Arts festival is also supported by the Arts Office and the Arts Council. Ag Seinm invites people of all ages to experience music in a relaxed setting and to try an instrument of their choice, for example.

While composer Tom Cullivan has a national reputation, classical music is generally not well developed in Cavan, although alternative and contemporary music is enjoying good patronage in Cavan Town, thanks to the Café Sessions and to Gonzo Theatre's music programme, both independent operations. Cavan-based "Origin Promotions" is dedicated to providing a platform for original artists and bands in Cavan and now features musicians from all over the country and indeed globally.

The number of visual artists in the county has risen in the past 5 years and the visual arts are growing in strength, largely through the work and initiative of the artists themselves. The liveliness of the visual arts is reflected in the ambition of one artist to establish a school of art in the county and the arrival of artist groupings such as the Abbey Drawing Group and the White Rabbit Group. A symposium and temporary installations of the work of 11 artists was mounted during Fleadh 2010, supported by the Arts Office.



*"Glass Flower" by Frances Traynor, winner of the 2008 Tommy Mc Loughlin Award*

A gallery is central to the development of visual arts in an area. It does more than provide opportunities for exhibition and indeed livelihood. A local gallery also nurtures new talent and allows recognition of established artists. It performs a civic and a social role while all the while supporting artistic excellence and developing public appreciation and knowledge of high quality visual culture. In addition to new privately operated gallery spaces in the county, Cavan Arts Office also works increasingly with Cavan Town Council to make best use of the Arts Space at Bullock Lane and to bring its specialist knowledge and contacts to bear in order to programme it successfully.

Through its host venue strategy<sup>4</sup> which includes the Arts Space at Bullock Lane, the Arts Office supports exhibitions of the work of artist in various media, such as the Bailieborough Library show by artist Grainne Brady.

The Arts and Heritage Community Employment Scheme, which was funded by FAS and managed by Sponsoring Body, Cavan County Museum, Ramor Theatre and the Arts Office, also supported the work and the development of artists in the county. These included Martin Donohoe, NYAH and Cavan Man of the Year 2010, Padraic McIntyre co-founder of Livin Dred Theatre Company, Mark Lawlor, writer, Pauline Halton, visual artist and Jim Fee, Cathal Buí Festival to mention a few. The scheme won the North East Community Initiative Awards 2001 Arts, Culture and Heritage Category.

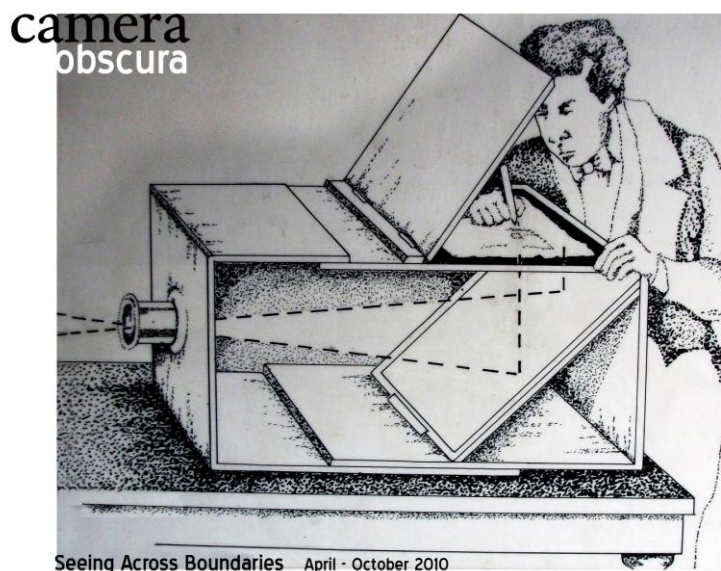
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<sup>4</sup> Further discussed in Chapter 4.



The projected "Casting Light" art installation during Fleadh 2010

The Public Art Programme of the Council deserves particular mention for its highly imaginative collaborations. The "Casting Light" visual arts projection was one of the most talked-about aspects of Fleadh 2010 and formed a highly successful complement to the musical dimension of Fleadh 2010. The permanent "Gateway" project is developing an outdoor optical installation that examines border surveillance and issues of identity and representation. It is a highly original project that has also attracted national attention and is a partnership with the cross-border Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark. It involves 17 artists, geographers and map makers, led by a Canadian artist, Sylvia Grace Borda.



Ben McCabe image from Seeing and Being in the Landscape at Bluewall Gallery, part of the Gateway Project

The Arts Office also championed the innovative “Cavan re-imagined” scheme where an architect-in-residence looked at the possibilities of enhancing public spaces. Workshops were held with local students, before a national exhibition was developed which toured widely.

Cavan Town Council has now purchased sculptures and placed them around the Town. These sculptures were developed for Fleadh 2010 as part of the county-wide Mórtas An Chabháin programme of accompanying cultural events that ran parallel to the Fleadh. Mórtas was supported by the Arts Office and received grant aid from Cavan Monaghan LEADER.

Much of the new activity supported by the Arts Office is led by independent individuals, which effectively function as small and medium enterprises (SMEs) – small to medium enterprises which both give employment and generate income for the locality. Windows Publications publishers, Bailieborough Arts and Cultural Centre, Gonzo Theatre and the Bluewall Gallery come to mind.

Additionally, the county has a very active amateur drama movement with three main festivals

- Cavan Full Length Drama Festival and also 1 Act Drama Festival
- Maudabawn 1 Act Drama Festival,
- Shercock Full Length Drama Festival

Again, the county is featuring on a national stage as Shercock will host the 2012 All Ireland Confined Drama Festival.



*The launch of Cavan Re-Imagined (photo by Daniela Crawley)*

## **2.5 Finance and awards**

In 2011 the Council will provide €293,000 for the work of the Arts Office, inclusive of 3 full-time salaries, employer costs and loan charges. The 2011 figure represents a reduction of 25% on previous years. Around €15,000 is available to fund arts awards and €71,250 from the Arts Council is available for arts programming.

The principal grant-giving mechanism employed by the Arts Office is the "Arts Awards" programme which is intended to stimulate and support the development of the arts in County Cavan. The recent call for applications states that the Council strives to support artists and audiences in engaging with quality artwork and live art events and production. This is in keeping with the Arts Council vision that local authorities should prioritise and support artistically ambitious projects.

In 2010 the arts awards ranged from €300 to €2000 and covered all arts forms and were spread across the county. The total funding available was modest, totalling €32,045 and it supported 45 awards.

Cavan Arts office also seeks grant support from other bodies. In 2010, it attracted funding for the Fleadh associated programme, from Cavan Leader and the "Gateway" artwork attracted support from Peace III. In association with the Cathal Bui Festival community arts festival held in Blacklion, the Arts Office documented and filmed stories of the border troubles of recent decades, capturing memory and story from and introducing children in Fermanagh and Cavan to the experience of their seniors. This "Sounds like Ourselves" project was supported with Peace III funding.

## **2.6 Management**

The Arts Office functions within a directorate of the local authority and also reports through the Director of Services, Infrastructure, Housing and Cultural Affairs to the Strategic Policy Committee for Housing Development and Cultural Policy.

The Arts Officer post is unusual in being graded at Grade 6<sup>5</sup> as most such positions in other authorities follow the Arts Council recommendation of a Grade 7 post. Grade 7 is suggested nationally by the Arts Council in recognition that Arts Officers fill strategic and developmental positions which require leadership and are not risk-averse. The lower grade may also weaken the hand of the arts within the Council groups when dealing with senior staff in other departments. The post also brings a substantial workload often requiring unsocial working and use of personal time. The Plan recommends that the matter be kept under review.

The Arts Council also expresses a preference for a higher grade for the Public Art Manager which is equivalent to Assistant Arts Officers in other counties. The Public Art Manager at Cavan County Council is a Grade 4 appointment whereas the Arts Council suggests a Grade 5 appointment nationally for assistant officers.

## **2.7 Communication**

A central recommendations of the previous Arts Plan has now been implemented- the establishment of a dedicated website which showcases the arts in Cavan and slows the listing of events The [www.cavanarts.ie](http://www.cavanarts.ie) website is a flexible and modern resource which profiles the arts and carries up-to- date event information for the public. Arts groups can upload their own information, directly and training will be provided to community groups to enable wider use of this facility. The website also hosts downloadable funding and application data for artists.

Looking ahead, an electronic bulletin has been suggested as a means of instant and direct communication and this should be considered. It should however be recognised that the development of the bulletin is resource dependent and can only proceed on a placement basis and with a person of appropriate IT skill.

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<sup>5</sup> Arts Council information



### **3. Consultations**

#### **3.1 Focussed consultation**

As Appendix 2 demonstrates, a great deal of consultation was undertaken, led by stakeholder consultation to maximise consultancy time to greatest effect. Much time was devoted to meeting and consulting artists, writers and arts administrators, all key stakeholders with knowledge of the arts in the county and with aspirations for its future health.

On each occasion, opportunities were provided to elicit spontaneous comment. The agenda for these discussions was intentionally broad ranging. Thus, the reported views accurately reflect the views of those interviewed.

A call for public submissions was also made through the media and the web, as previously outlined at paragraph 1.5 above.

#### **3.2 The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon**

Two main national bodies were consulted, the Arts Council being the most important in terms of policy direction and funding.

Overall the Arts Council holds Cavan Arts Office in high regard and pointed especially to the Caomhnú (Cavan Literary Festival) programme, the "Gateway" artwork project and the Fleadh as excellent examples of quality and innovative arts provision and equally, of strategic partnerships.

With all its funding clients, the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon seeks the following, points which must be borne in mind when drafting the new five year plan for Cavan

- a more developmental and strategic approach
- proposals which are realistic and resourceful
- proposals which are artistically ambitious
- focussing on quality, not quantity

The Arts Council does not encourage projects or proposals that are reactive, very short-term or unplanned. In broad terms, the Arts Council prefers its clients to select a smaller number of key projects and

do these to a high quality. It is important that this thinking is reflected within the Arts Plan for County Cavan and that the Plan resists the temptation to respond uncritically to individual sectoral interests.

### **3.3 Fáilte Ireland**

Fáilte Ireland (the National Tourism Development Authority) is investing research, resources and support in the cultural tourism sector, within which the arts figure. Meetings with the authority for this Plan showed that the Authority plans closer consultation with local authorities as a central feature of its incoming 4-year cultural tourism strategy and so presents some future opportunities, especially with research, upskilling and promotion.

The arts form an important element within the tourism sector. In Chapter 2 we outlined the impact that visitors to Fleadh 2010 had on Cavan's economy. Nationally, Fáilte Ireland tells that

- 78% of foreign tourist cite history and culture as reasons for coming to Ireland
- 55% of the 2009 foreign tourist were "sightseeing / culturalists"
- 34% of all tourists attended arts festivals
- 40% of domestic tourists attend festivals

Fáilte Ireland will work to ensure a more authentic arts experience for tourists, both foreign and domestic. Fáilte Ireland can support arts groups with business advice and destination promotion and package development. They also offer web development advice and support with business planning.

Cavan is a good county for the short-break domestic tourism market and Fáilte Ireland can assist with listings on its Discover Ireland website (well used already by Ramor Theatre) and also with website development and business advice.

### **3.4 Public consultation**

Public consultation and an internal Council call yielded 9 responses. The crucial support provided by the Arts Office was regularly mentioned; it enables and facilitates many arts projects that would not otherwise happen.

Looking ahead, submissions called for the Arts Office to undertake many matters which are, in some cases, beyond its remit or its resources. The following are noted here

- Commission art works for sale to public
- Council should not compete with private arts operations
- Use artists to inculcate the arts at primary school level
- Develop outreach schemes through placing artists in hospitals and social centres
- Hold an annual arts festival of lesser known artforms, (less emphasis on crafts and traditional music)
- Establish and manage an electronic bulletin board for artists
- Establish a dedicated arts centre in Cavan Town
- Develop the Arts Space at Bullock Lane, Cavan Town
- Establish a sculpture walk at Killykeen
- Produce and print an annual arts programme
- Establish an annual film script competition (prizes €25,000)
- Establish a mentoring director scheme for drama groups

### **3. 5 The Arts Community and the Arts Office**

The arts community in Cavan sees itself as strong and independent. It relies on the Arts Office for advice, endorsement and practical support. It also relies on the Office for pump-priming grants which enable it to take initiatives which are frequently thereafter, self-supporting. The community is strongly supportive of the Arts Office and many artists attribute much of the recent resurgence in the arts in the County to the steady support of the County Council and of the Arts Council.

There is no case to be made for changing the relationship between the Office and artists. The present advisory approach is welcomed and seen to be working. On a separate but related matter, many consultees believe that the Office is overloaded with requests for support and advice, all the more so recently, given its reduced funding and limited staff time.

### **3.6 Comment**

While many of the ideas submitted through public consultation will be carried forward in to the new Plan, it is important to briefly discuss here those proposals which are not recommended.

It is not recommended that the Arts Office commissions work from artists to sell on for financial gain. This is an active part of the private sector gallery business, similar to other profit-making enterprises in publishing and music. It would also pose significant problems for a public office like the Arts Office with the selection of some artists and the omission of others.

The proposal to establish a dedicated arts centre in Cavan Town is not a realistic possibility in current economic circumstances. If, at a future date it were to be considered, a full Feasibility Study should be undertaken to cost the capital and operational aspects of the proposal and to define its functions.

Lastly, the Arts Office is already well advanced with plans to develop two major outdoor sculpture areas, the "Gateway" artwork mentioned above and a second proposal of a sculpture garden at Kingscourt which is cited in chapter 6 below. The Office does not have the capacity to undertake a further project at this time.

### **3.7 Summary views of those consulted**

- Cavan Arts office is widely held in very high regard
- The Office is seen to punch above its weight
- The Office has developed an imaginative host venue exhibition policy and an impressive public art programme
- Its advisory and support services are seen by many as equal to its grant giving
- Strategic partnerships with Ramor Theatre, Cavan Town Council, Cavan County Library and Cavan County Museum allow for practical use of venues.

The account of activity detailed in the 2010 review shows an Office that is extremely active across all the artforms and is working cleverly with

other individuals and organisations to achieve its aims. The role played by the arts in the 2010 Fleadh was frequently mentioned and the visual arts element of the Fleadh was especially noted.

Historically, the arts in Cavan were not to the forefront, but they are now seen, and this view is shared nationally, as defining the image of a new vibrant county. They are seen as building confidence in identity and giving expression to that identity, frequently again on a national as well as local stage.



Dúchas

*"Dúchas" image by Anna Savage exhibiting artist 2010 at Bailieborough Library*

## **4. A situation review and SWOT**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Planning for the next five years must be based on a realistic assessment of achievement and opportunities. Planning also needs to be grounded in the wider context in which the Arts Office operates. This includes the arts community and two key stakeholder and funding bodies, Cavan County Council and The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon. But firstly, a SWOT analysis was conducted to crystallize opinion and garner ideas.

### **4.2 A SWOT analysis**

A SWOT analysis is a tool through which an organisation defines four sets of characteristics which will shape its future. SWOT is an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

A SWOT analysis allows the expression of views within a simple methodology. The development of this Arts Plan was informed by the SWOT. It was led by the Consultancy which based it upon external comment and consultations about the work of the Arts Office. The draft SWOT was then extended and enlarged to incorporate the views of the Arts Office staff. The final SWOT, shown below, thus reflects a wide range of opinion.

Many of the issues raised in the SWOT, especially within the section on Strengths, are also reflected also within the Situation Review. Equally, many of the Opportunities in the SWOT form the basis for proposals for both Aims and Objectives which follow in the last chapter of this Plan.

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## Strengths

- Increasingly high standard of arts in Cavan
- Dynamism of arts in Cavan
- Artistic ambitiousness of artists in Cavan
- Particular achievement in theatre, literature and traditional music in Cavan
- Increasing strength and profile of visual arts practise in the County
- Public goodwill towards the arts
- Arts Office well established role as advocate for the arts
- Arts Office is well regarded by artists
- Skills, commitment and knowledge of staff
- Cavan County Council IT Section support for Arts Office
- Skills, commitment and knowledge of staff
- Success of website cavanarts.ie

## Weaknesses

- Limited formal cross-cultural liaison within Council
- Low profile of arts and cultural sector within Council
- Insufficient staff to respond to demand – under-capacity
- Mismatch between public expectations and reality of resources
- Perception that arts are solely leisure
- Arts community unaware of scale of cutbacks
- Advisory role of Arts Office not always understood
- Traditionally low level of provision for dance and classical music in the county
- Lack of suitable space for the provision of some art forms and large scale events for same

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## Opportunities

- Formalise partnership across cultural functions of Council
- Improve profile within local authority and embed its work
- Establish a Patrons group to provide greater public profile
- Lever funding through partnerships and strategic approaches
- Continue successful partnership with Cavan Fleadh
- Identity opportunities to increase national / international profile of arts and cultural events e.g. Fleadh, Caomhnú,
- Develop music in partnership with Cavan VEC and Music Network
- Work with Cavan Town Council and other stakeholders to increase arts activity
- Work with county tourism officer on promotional opportunities to enhance the profile of the arts
- Work with Peace III to Promote the development of choral singing a County Cavan youth choir
- In partnership with County Development Board, Look at feasibility of developing film production in county
- Continue work with Cavan Peace Partnership
- Develop partnerships to foster emerging arts practice in health care
- Make strategic and creative use of new technologies

## Threats

- Further funding cutbacks
- National economic climate and reducing private investment in the arts
- Reduction in quality of service provided
- Reduction in quality by trying to do too much with less resources
- Burn out of staff
- Public sector staff embargo
- Unrealistic and unachievable expectations of stakeholders
- Lack of co-ordination across cultural service providers
- Emigration of artists and audiences
- Relatively small number of professional arts organisations in the county
- Relatively small number of artists and organisations availing of Arts Council and other national funding opportunities





#### **4.3 Partners**

With the outcome of the SWOT in mind, a review was then undertaken of key partners and their strategies in order to seek partnership with organisations which support opportunities for developing the arts in the county.

#### **4.4 The Arts Council (An Chomhairle Ealaíon)**

The Council sets out its strategic direction for the immediate future within "Developing the Arts in Ireland; Arts Council strategic Overview 2011-2013". The strategy focuses on supporting artists and promoting access and engagement with the arts.

The Council is focussing closely on partnership as a means of delivering the arts and of deepening the impact of the arts. In particular the Council will invest in the following areas which are of greatest relevance to a local authority arts office such as Cavan County Arts Office-

- Audience development and marketing
- Supporting venues in local authorities
- Supporting and encourage excellence in artistic practice
- Increasing arts participation by younger people
- Working in partnership with cultural tourism

There are some evident opportunities here for Cavan to align its work programmes with the strategic direction of the Arts Council. The application for 2011 funding by the Arts Office already seeks support for imaginative projects which build on partnership, reach out to younger audiences and widens participation. Chapter 6 of this Plan provides detail.

#### **4.5 Cavan County Council corporate direction**

The Arts Plan must take full account and align with the corporate direction of its parent body which cites the following in its 2010-2014 Corporate Plan.

Two key strategies of

- Building on existing strengths
- Partnership

The Corporate Plan also commits the Council to the following which are of direct relevance to the incoming plan for the arts.

- Develop Cavan's community and cultural life
- Represent the County culturally
- Expand the use and promotion of its cultural facilities
- Develop leisure and tourism activities

The Arts Plan will support activity through advice, facilitation and grants which actually deliver the Council's objectives.

#### **4.6 Social Inclusion**

The commitment of the Arts Council and of the County Council to widening access to their services and to the arts, are key elements in the delivery of greater socially inclusive policies and practices. The Council supports the equal right of all citizens of the county to participate in the county's artistic and cultural life, to enjoy art and to be active cultural citizens.



*Youths from Florencecourt Primary School and Scoil Naomh Phadraig taking part in team building exercise at the Share Centre as part of the Sounds Like Ourselves Project funded by PEACE III Small Grants Fund, 2010*

The commitment of the Council to progressive social inclusion was recognised some five years ago by the Equality Authority which highlighted a pilot initiative of Cavan and Kildare councils to embed accessibility within their services<sup>6</sup>. The Council issued a Social Inclusion Handbook in 2009 which looked at cultural exclusion where people are marginalised because of difference. The Handbook cited the ways in which the Arts Office was contributing to combating exclusion through the Bealtaine festival for the older aged and through theatre which focuses on youth themes for example.

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<sup>6</sup> "Dara has the Craic", The Equality Authority, May 2007.

Looking ahead, the Arts Office has already contributed to the incoming Social Inclusion Strategy of the Council and its proposals have been carried forward also into this Plan, within Chapter 6. In approaching this area of work, it should be recognised that the Arts Office does not have a specific budget for Social Inclusion or for Disability work. Any delivery in this area must be done through partnership with the Council sections that are charged with specific responsibility for this such as the Social Inclusion Unit of Cavan County Council.

#### **4.7 Disability**

Cavan County Council published a Disability Strategy 2009-2013. Accessibility remains a central focus of this strategy, through providing access to services and also through achieving greater participation in public life by people with disabilities. The Arts have an important part to play in the latter especially. The Arts Office worked successfully with the Irish Wheelchair Association and co-funded a play "Our Journey" whose cast included people with disabilities. The play toured and also featured in Fleadh 2010.

#### **4.7 Cultural partnership**

The County Council's has expressed a clear commitment to partnership within its Corporate Plan and there is equal commitment to partnership as a principle within the Arts Council strategy. Partnership can lever resources that one group working alone cannot get access to. Partnership makes sense in a time of recession but in the case of Cavan Arts Office, partnership with many groups is a central strategy for the delivery of its aims and objectives. It's also an empowering strategy which supports and facilitates rather than directly delivering.

All organisations benefit from better "joined-up" thinking and Cavan County Council is a strong advocate of this principle. As an example, the Arts Office works with 6 venues to deliver its visual arts and exhibition policy. These venues are all in local authority hands, as follows

- Johnston Central Library, Cavan Town
- Cootehill Library
- Bailieborough Library
- Cavan County Museum, Ballyjamesduff

- Ramor Theatre, Virginia
- The Arts Space at Bullock Lane, Cavan Town

The consultations which were reported on in Chapter 3 above showed a need for better profiling of the arts within the county as whole, but equally within the Council. Better understanding of the work of arts Office will better inform its parent body and will better embed it within local authority strategies and policies. The arts form a positive public interface for the Council, at a time when public perception is increasingly negative about public services. To strengthen the role and place of the arts within the Council, the plan therefore proposes the establishment of a formal Cultural Committee which jointly plans programmes and strategies. The Group would be composed of representatives from the following bodies

- The County Library
- The Arts Office
- The County Museum
- Ramor Theatre
- The Arts Space at Bullock Lane

Other partnerships also suggest themselves. The Council has formed the nucleus of a contemporary arts county collection of photography and of paintings and sculptures. The further development of this collection offers the Arts Office an opportunity to work with the County Museum which is an accredited museum and is skilled in curation and recording of collections.

#### **4.9 Patrons – Community Partnership**

Throughout the consultations for this Plan, widespread and spontaneous acknowledgement and support emerged for the work of Cavan Arts Office. This warmth was voiced by artists, arts groups, local authority staff and by general users and patrons of the arts. The achievement of so much by the Arts Office with such slim resources was very highly praised and the Office is clearly held in great respect by its community. There is much goodwill in Cavan for the arts and for the Office.

Opinion was also clear in suggesting that the work of the Office deserves greater public recognition and that it is also needed to achieve

a better profile. To this end therefore, the Plan proposes the establishment of a group to support the arts and to provide a network of patrons. Such groups have a social purpose and they act as supporters and champions of the arts within the community, spreading the word and recruiting new interest. A Patrons group can also facilitate linkages with business and with other sectors such as education and tourism.

A Patrons group works best when

- It is chaired and led by an external figure, respected within the area and within his or her profession.
- Draws on the skills, contacts and experience of a wide range of professionals

In terms of functions, the Patrons could

- Fund-raise for specific projects such as exhibitions or recitals
- Fund-raise to expand the county contemporary art collection
- Oversee a sponsored awards system to recognise outstanding artistic achievement in the arts in the County.

The Plan recommends that the Council considers this proposal and establishes it on a pilot basis.

#### **4.10 Summary analysis**

At project inception stage, it was suggested that that the arts in Cavan are in a healthy state. While funding and staffing for Council support for the arts has been reduced in recent times, there is a positive engagement with the arts community. The county is generally seen as putting in a strong performance in

- Literature
- Music
- Theatre

Consultation probed this perception and sought views on its accuracy. All consultees, national or local, individual or group, agreed that the arts in County Cavan are thriving. They also suggested that the role played by the Arts Office in supporting and in developing the arts is understood and recognised by artists and has contributed to the present positive situation.

The Arts Office is seen as highly responsive and approachable but often lacking the time to undertake the many varied demands made of it. There is a clear need to focus on priorities and be less reactive to unplanned proposals. These views were voiced locally and nationally.

There is also strong endorsement for the partnership strategy employed by the Arts Office in the development and the delivery of support for the arts. Two extensions of partnership were tested with consultees, internal networking and public profile building and these proposals were also well supported.

#### **4.11 Taking matters forward**

The next chapter and chapter 6 takes account of the consultations and the situation review when making proposals for future work. A mission statement and a set of values for the Arts Office have also been defined.



*Dance Artist in Residence 2011, part of Cavan County Council's commitment to the creative exploration and growth of dance*

## **5. Mission and Values**

### **5.1 Mission**

A good mission statement should contain a number of elements and it should be short, memorable and capable of standing alone as a statement. It should include reference to underlying values of the organisation and tell the reader

- What you do
- Why you do it and
- How you do it

The Consultancy proposed a draft statement for consideration by Arts Office staff. In responding the Arts Office sought a shorter, strong statement. The following revised statement is now proposed, incorporating some of bulleted points above.

***Cavan Arts Office increases engagement with the creative arts and fosters a strong cultural identity for County Cavan through enabling, supporting and facilitating arts development throughout the county in partnership with artists, organisations and the wider community.***

### **5.2 Values**

Cavan Arts Office defines a number of values which guide its work and underpins its mission. The Office is

- Flexible
- Approachable
- Inclusive
- Partnership-based
- An advocate for the arts

This Mission and these values will guide the Arts Office for the incoming 5-year Strategic Plan.



## **6. The next five years: 2011-2015**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This Plan is designed to cover a medium term period of 5 years. The Aims set out below, define the direction of the Arts Office for that period. These Aims grew from the consultation process and from the ideas and contributions of Council staff and the staff of the Arts Office itself. The Aims relate to the primary work areas of the Arts Office and to its core functions as defined within its mission and values statements.

The Objectives for the period are arranged under each Aim. These are shorter-term proposals, which flow from each Aim.

### **6.2 Context**

Context is always critical to the development of a strategic plan but none more so than at present. The national context is inescapably one of retrenchment and funding cutbacks. Between 2009 and 2010, the Arts Council saw a decline of its government grant of more than €13 million.

Although the Arts Council funds have been cut, less drastically than some other cultural agencies, the Council is looking at a very tight financial period ahead and will be scrutinising all applications for support very critically. As reported above in Chapter 3, it seeks evidence of strategic, longer-term thinking and planning and also of partnership.

Fáilte Ireland may assist with support, but no funding should be expected for an individual county or for specific arts programming. Any support will be predicated on delivery of an arts service which targets Fáilte Ireland's markets, tourists. Cavan is currently marginal in that respect; although it has a developing short-break domestic market and domestic tourist are regular arts festivals patrons.

Partnership also emerged as an important factor in taking forward the work of the Arts Office. Equally, local consultees suggested that the commitment of the Council to its arts programming deserves and requires greater public recognition. The opportunities to attract

sponsorship and to build partnership can only be increased by such an increased profile.

Based therefore on the analysis presented in previous chapters, the new Plan should therefore be based around the following principles, from which specific Aims and Objectives will flow

- Consolidation of current activity and role of Arts Office as an enabler
- Concentration on strategic, medium to longer term projects
- Reduction in quantity of actions delivered
- Strengthening of partnerships through formalisation
- Increased profile building of the arts in community life

### **6.3 Funding the Plan**

The implementation of the work proposed in this Plan will be delivered over a full five year period. Many of the proposed objectives in this Plan will happen using the personnel and finance currently available to Arts Office. People and funding form the two key resources that will enable the implementation of this Arts Plan. The continued support of the County Council and of The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon will therefore be critical.

### **6.4 The Strategic Aims for the next five years**

Five Strategic Aims have been defined to guide the work of the Arts Office over the 5-year planning period, as follows-

#### **Strategic Aim 1**

Support artistic excellence and innovation in the arts

#### **Strategic Aim 2**

Consolidate and build on strategic partnerships across all artforms

#### **Strategic Aim 3**

Raise the public profile of the arts across County Cavan

#### **Strategic Aim 4**

Foster public engagement and participation

### **Strategic Aim 5**

Strengthen the management and operation of the Arts Office

#### **6.5 Monitoring and Review**

An annual review is recommended as a minimum. At years' end, the annual review can then be written up to become the normal Annual Review of Arts Office which is required by the County Council and the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon. The Plan can effectively be used as the template and format for this report.

## Strategic Aim 1

Support artistic excellence and innovation in the arts

Objectives
1. Continue the Arts Awards grant programme across all artforms in support of innovation and excellence
2. Establish the "Dance artist in residence" scheme
3. Continue the Tyrone Guthrie Centre bursaries in support of participation by artists from the county
4. Continue to work with external community representatives and subject experts on the % for Art Scheme Steering Committee
5. Participate in the "Year of craft" and other national initiatives and partnerships
6. Develop potential through The Arts Space at Bullock Lane residency and other initiatives in general and public arts programme
7. Develop and promote three visual art exhibitions each year
8. Work with Cavan County Museum on the expansion and curation of the County Collection of Contemporary Art
9. Work with artists and arts organisations to access alternative funding sources
10 Work with Cavan County Enterprise Board, Cavan Institute and other National/International Institutions on skills development training for arts personnel and community representatives

## Strategic Aim 2

Consolidate and build on strategic partnerships across all artforms

Objectives
1. Continue work on the "Gateway" sculpture installation, in partnership with cross-border Geopark
2. Establish the Dún an Rí Mythology Sculpture Garden at Kingscourt
3. Develop the Cavan Literary Festival on contemporary Irish women's writing in 2012, cross-sector within the local authority
4. With an external partner, work to put a support scheme in place for youth theatre
5. Seek funding from the International Fund for Ireland in support of music and drama
6. Work in partnership with Cavan Institute educationalists, organisations and national institutions to establish mentoring schemes
7. Support high quality engagement in the arts through collaborations with bodies like Music Network
8. Strengthen links with national cultural institutions such as the Irish Film Board

**Strategic Aim 3**

Raise the profile of the arts in the county

<b>Objectives</b>
1. Establish a Patrons of Cavan Arts Group to build public profile, foster arts appreciation and support an arts awards recognition scheme
2. Continue to resource, maintain and develop cavanarts.ie website as a central information portal for the arts community and produce an e-bulletin
3. Provide training to community arts groups in uploading data onto Cavan arts website
4. Ensure that all artists and organisations are aware of web publicity opportunities
5. Design, print and produce a summary public version of this Strategic Plan, funds permitting
6. Work with County Tourism Officer on promotional opportunities which raise the profile of the arts and cultural life of the county

## Strategic Aim 4

Foster public engagement and participation

Objectives
1. Publicise and continue the Arts Awards programme in support of excellence, audience development and community engagement
2. Encourage groups from rural settings, and groups that are disadvantaged in other ways to participate and engage by seeking opportunities to make the arts increasingly accessible.
3. Deliver 6 art workshops and throughout the county to encourage people, especially from low income backgrounds, to engage with contemporary art culture.
4. In partnership with Cavan County Museum, Cavan County Library and Ramor Theatre, participate in Annual National Arts Initiatives
6. Develop and enhance local relationships including Cavan Vocational Educational Committee in support of the Music Generation Project Funding
7. Work to develop the arts and health sector in County Cavan in partnership with neighbouring counties, local and national organisations

**Strategic Objective 5**

Strengthen the management and operation of the Arts Office

<b>Objectives</b>
1. Advocate the establishment a cross-cultural internal Council committee to enhance co-operation with the County Library, County Museum, Ramor Theatre and Cavan Town Council (The Arts Space at Bullock Lane)
2. Engage with the graduate placement scheme and other initiatives of this nature
3. Provide workplace-focussed training for staff in fulfilling their roles
4. Review the grading of the post of Arts Officer and Public Art Manager to seek compliance with nationally recommended level.
5. Review and formalise the visual art host venue strategy
6. Build relationships with North East Network of Arts Officers



## **Appendix 1    Brief**

### **Cavan County Council Arts Strategic Plan**

#### **Cavan County Council wants to engage a Consultant to research and write a strategic plan for the arts in County Cavan**

1. An outline of current services and infrastructure.
2. A SWOT analysis and brief Situation Review
3. Mission Statement and strategic aims for the arts service
4. Objectives to deliver on the aims
5. A summary report on consultations undertaken

The Arts Plan will take account of Cavan County Council's strategic plan

Consultation and the facilitation of consultation will be an essential element in the work of the consultant and will include all stakeholders: including elected members and the Strategic Policy Committee, the Arts Council, the senior management team, staff and the communities we serve.

To apply please include the following:-

- Proposed methodology
- Time frame for the completion of the Strategic Plan
- Schedule for the consultative process
- An outline of the fees
- CV of relevant experience

**Please reply in writing before 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2010.**

Tenders should be clearly marked "Tender for Strategic Arts Plan" and addressed to:

**Mr. Joe Mc Loughlin,  
Director of Services,  
Cavan County Council,  
Cavan,  
Ireland.**

## **Appendix 2    Consultations**

### **Stakeholder consultations**

#### **Cavan County Council**

Jack Keyes, County Manager  
Joe McLoughlin, Director of Services  
Catriona O' Reilly, Arts Officer  
Rhonda Tidy, Public Arts Officer  
Josephine Brady, County Librarian  
Savina Donohoe, County Museum Curator

#### **Cavan Town Council**

Brian Hora, Town Clerk

#### **The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon, Dublin**

Monica Corcoran, Head, Local Arts

#### **Bluewall Gallery**

Joe Keenan

#### **Disability / youth theatre**

Maura Williamson

#### **Gonzo Theatre**

Philip Doherty, Playwright and director  
Ainé Conboy, Manager

#### **Ramor Theatre**

Mary Hanley

#### **Individual artists**

Noel Monahan, poet

#### **Abbey Drawing Group**

Will Govan

#### **Publishers**

Will Govan, The Bog Road Press  
Noel Monahan, Windows Publications

#### **Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Annaghmakerrig**

Dr. Patricia Donlon, Director and chair of "Gateway" artwork project

#### **Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, Cavan**

Martin Donohoe

#### **Cavan Institute**

Ann Marie Lacey, Director  
Catherine Fox, Vice Principal  
Breda Hennessy, Head of School, Services, Leisure & Tourism

**Failte Ireland**

Helen O'Halloran, Development Officer, Dublin  
Martin Donnelly, Failte Ireland Northwest

**Responses to public call for submissions**

**Shercock Drama Festival**

Kay Maguire

**Cavan County Council**

Noel Burke, Chief Fire Officer

**Lavey Community Group**

Mary Cullivan

**Bailieborough Arts & Cultural Centre**

Niamh Smyth, Curator

**Individual artists who responded directly**

Jim Fee, visual artist, Blacklion  
Michelle Boyle, visual artist, Whitethorn Studios, Virginia  
Siobhan Harton, visual artist, Maudabawn  
Mary Farrelly, dancer and choreographer, Cavan Town  
Freda Young, visual artist, Killeshandra  
Kevin McCann, film-maker and theatre director, Belturbet

## **Appendix 3 Acknowledgements**

I am especially grateful to Catriona O'Reilly, Arts Officer at Cavan County Council for her knowledge, her accessibility and her unfailing courtesy. I am also grateful to Rhonda Tidy, Public Arts Officer for her input.

I also grateful to the following people who met me and contributed their ideas and enthusiasm for the arts in Cavan

Jack Keyes, Joe McLoughlin, Josephine Brady, Savina Donohoe, Brian Hora, Monica Corcoran, Joe Keenan, Maura Williamson, Philip Doherty, Aine Corby, Mary Hanley, Martin Donohoe, Ann Marie Lacey, Catherine Fox, Breda Hennessy, Helen O'Halloran, Martin Donnelly, Patricia Donlon.

I am also grateful to the following who contributed through telephone, correspondence or email

Noel Monahan, Will Govan, Kay Maguire, Noel Burke, Mary Cullivan, Niamh Smyth, Jim Fee, Michelle Boyle, Siobhan Harton, Mary Farrelly, Freda Young, Kevin McCann

## **Appendix 4    Short profile - Aidan Walsh Consultancy**

### ***Work Profile***

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As a career cultural sector professional, Aidan Walsh has a substantial working knowledge of museums, public libraries and the cultural sector as a whole.

In 1973 he was appointed Curator of the first County Museum in Ireland at Monaghan. The Museum won the Council of Europe Museum Prize for the quality of its work with community groups on both sides of the border.

He was appointed Director of the Northern Ireland Museums Council (NIMC) in 1993, a post he held until leaving to establish his own consultancy in 2001

As Director of NIMC, a central government agency, he worked with a wide variety of museums, both public and private and advised on heritage and museum policy.

As a consultant he has worked with central government agencies and local authorities in Ireland and the UK on curatorial, management and the wider strategic development of museums, public libraries and more recently, the arts.

An archaeologist by training, he qualified from National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG) in 1970 and was also conferred FMA by UK colleagues in 1998. (Fellow of the Museums Association).

International work has been a notable feature of his career, much of it concerned with strategic development and policy. He sat on the Brussels-based EU Committee for Cultural Heritage and on NEMO, the Network of European Museum Organisations, representing the Irish Museums Association.

In 1997 he was also invited by the Council of Europe to join a team of experts, which reviewed the cultural policy of Lithuania. From 1999-2001 he sat on the Reform Task Force of ICOM, the UNESCO non-governmental organisation, based in Paris.

At different times during his career he has served on many public bodies, in a personal or representative capacity. These include

- Board of the National Museum of Ireland
- Council of the Museums Association (London)
- Cultural Relations Committee (Department of Foreign affairs, Dublin)
- Federation for Ulster Local Studies (Chair)
- Irish Museums Association (Chair)
- Gulbenkian Museum Awards for Ireland (Chair)
- Monaghan County Arts Festival (Chair)

He also has the unique distinction of holding the presidencies of two National Committees of ICOM (the International Council of Museums), in Ireland (1987-1989) and the UK (1998-2001).

In February 2004 he was again elected as Chairman of ICOM Ireland.

He has also retained his keen interest in regional local history and in December 2004 he was invited to become a trustee of the Ulster Local History Trust Fund, under the patronage of Seamus Heaney.

## **Principal clients 2001-2008**

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- **Ireland (Republic)**
  - Galway City Council
  - The Heritage Council of Ireland
  - Kerry Skellig Region Tourism
  - Kerry County Council
  - Monaghan County Council
  - National Museum of Ireland
  - National Historic Science Centre
  - Meitheal Forbartha na Gaeltachta, County Kerry
  
- **Northern Ireland**
  - Ballymena Borough Council
  - Derry City Council
  - Deloitte UK
  - Iomairt Cholm Cille / The Columba Initiative
  - Mid-Antrim Museums Service
  - National Museums Northern Ireland
  - Northern Ireland Regional Curators Group
  
- **Britain**
  - Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council)
  - Heritage Lottery Fund
  - Scottish Museums Council, Edinburgh