



creative counties

FOUR COUNTIES SIX VENUES ONE NETWORK



THE DOCK



ROSCOMMON
ARTS CENTRE

Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme
2017–2022



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Creative Counties

Creative Counties is a network of six venues, in four counties, who developed a programme of three exchange projects. Funded through a Creative Ireland National award and supported by Local Authorities in Leitrim, Longford, Sligo and Roscommon. The project was led by The Dock and members include Hawks Well Theatre, Backstage Theatre, Roscommon Arts Centre, The Glens Centre and Leitrim Sculpture Centre. This network brought together venues, audiences and creative communities through sharing projects which focus on the performing arts, music and theatre devised for communities.

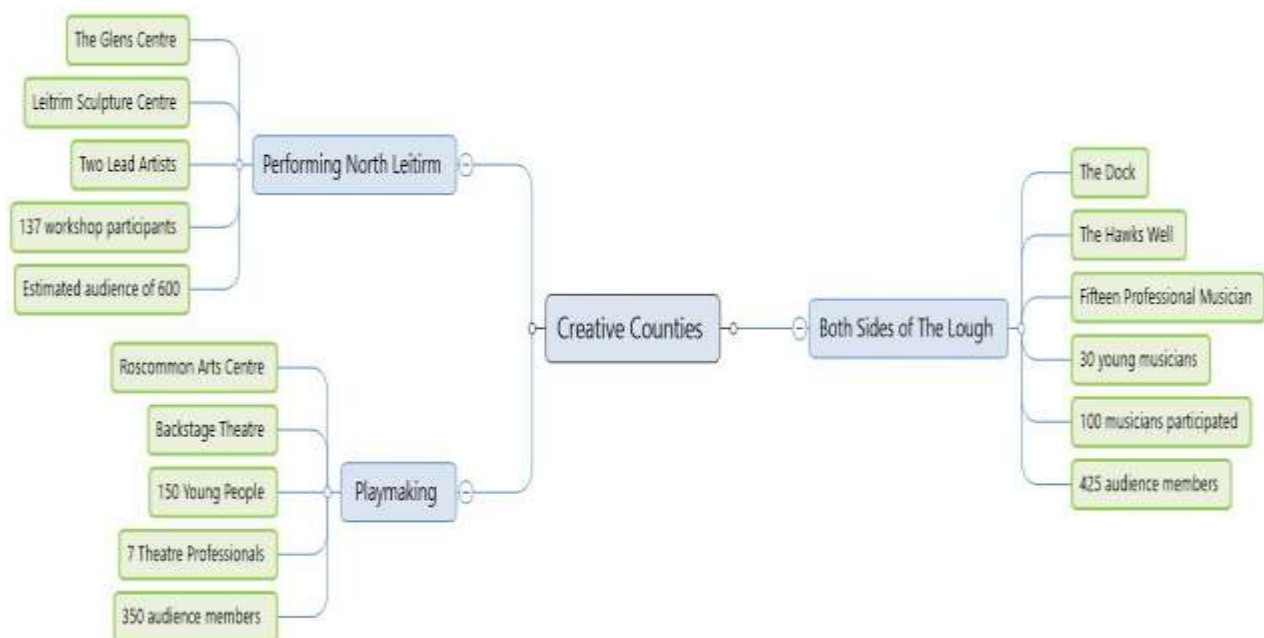
Creative Counties;

The ambition of this scheme was to open networks and increase participation in creative activity through regional arts centres

- The project invested in creative and cultural infrastructure.
- Develop and built awareness of arts provision across the network.
- Enhanced opportunity for improved and strategic communication.
- Raising the status and awareness of the individual and collective activities in the network.
- Opening dialogue and cross agency collaboration and new strategic directions.
- Developing new organisational models of engagement and commissioning,
- Furthered the scope of access to creative opportunity supports to communities in the region
- Three shared arts projects developed and delivered with a view to longer term co-operation.
- Highlighting and articulating the ways by which the network connects with their communities.
- Enabling creativity in every community which is met by the action elements; the projects developed in each arts centre.
- Activating the work of six arts centres; several of which will support by enabling the creative potential of children and young people.
- Extending the reputational economy of the network through the network and developing new forms of commissioning.

Long-term outcomes

- The large part of the network aims to continue to develop and share projects together.
- In particular The Dock, Hawks Well, Backstage and Roscommon Arts Centre see potential to develop and share projects together.
- Meeting with Senior Management of the Arts Council has recommended that The Creative Counties network and its potentials are included in the arts centers strategies.
- The networks have expressed interest in developing a co-commissioning model with a particular emphasis on project which focuses on community engagement.
- The arts centers have been generally working more closely together in the area of marketing and marketing support.
- The Linen Hall Castlebar County Mayo has expressed an interest in becoming part of the network.
- The Leitrim Sculpture Centre and The Glens Centre continue to work together, it was agreed that their participation would become more occasional.
- In 2020 The Dock and The Hawks Well develop a shared residency project which further developed the career and interest of the musician Stephen Doherty
- In 2020 Backstage in Longford continue to work with Roscommon arts centre on The Playmaking project. In 2021 The Dock hopes to join this project.



Organisational Biographies

– The Dock

The Dock has just completed its fifteenth year of business, and has presented a dynamic and engaging year round artistic programme spanning visual art, theatre, music, dance, comedy and performance art. The Art Centre has reinvigorated the rich historic and cultural reputation of the County and wider region, and is housed in the converted Court House built in 1828. The Dock is part of the fabric of the wider arts and enterprise community of Carrick on Shannon and the North West region supporting local arts initiatives and local enterprises including the many superb festival events taking place in the area. The performance programme is augmented by an arts education and outreach programme that provides people of all ages and backgrounds with the opportunities to engage in a meaningful way with all aspects of our artistic programme. Artists are encouraged to develop their practice and show new work through the organisations residency programmes. The Dock provides space for local arts groups and practitioners to meet, create and develop ideas and partnerships. The organisation prioritises high quality programming, developmental projects and contemporary arts, including visual arts, a performance programme & opportunities for audiences of all ages to develop their own creativity. It supports professional, semi-professional and a wide community to show, tour and develop work in visual arts, music, theatre, literature, and dance. It hosts a range of educational workshops, talks and events for people of all ages and the building is also home to the Leitrim Design House and two artists studios. The Dock includes work with artists, audiences, arts, social and cultural groups; youth arts, support to artists, active retired, arts as pleasure, arts as learning, linking with national arts organisations, local festivals, national and regional venues.

– The Glens Centre

The Glens Centre is a cultural jewel in the heart of Manorhamilton in North Leitrim. Manorhamilton is a town which has a rich, active and very dynamic arts scene. This historic town lies in the shadow of Benbo Mountain, is the principal town in North Leitrim. It is surrounded by unspoiled green fields, prized angling and the seven beautiful glens of Glencar, Glenfarne, Glenaniff, Glenboy, Glenkeel, Gleniff and Glenade. The Glens Centre has a performance space which seats up to 130 people. The Arts Centre is renowned for its excellent natural acoustics and superb technical facilities. As a venue it has a lovely intimate atmosphere due to its scale, and its historic importance as a converted church. The Glens hosts a wide range of programmes including the best of contemporary, world, traditional and folk music.

There is a strong history of professional touring theatre, local theatre, and artists residencies and supports to artists in the Centre. The centre also hosts children's events, Irish language events and cultural cinema and youth theatre and supports the wider community. The Centre supports festivals, events and other local cultural events. It is also home to excellent recording facilities and has co-produced awarding winning radio plays and albums for some of Irelands leading musicians. The recording facilities at The Glens Centre began with the guidance of legendary guitarist Steve Cooney. Recorded artists include Conway Savage, Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds, Killa, Lunasa, Kathy Jordon and recently radio plays such as the adaptation of Donal O'Kellys' stage plays "The Adventures Of The Wet Senor" and The Cambria were both nominated for the Prix Europa. The work of The Glens reaches deep into the community of Manorhamilton and its surrounding rural community and townlands. Self catering accommodation for visiting performers and short term lettings.

– **The Hawk's Well**

The Hawk's Well Theatre has been entertaining audiences for over 35 years. The Hawk's Well is a 340 seat theatre in Sligo, North West Ireland. Sligo is rich in historic and cultural heritage and is a centre of regional importance in the West of Ireland, it's a rapidly growing tourist destination on the Wild Atlantic Way, rich in music, festivals and performing arts with many active literary and cultural associations.

The Hawks Well works closely with a number of regional, national and international festivals and has deep connections with community development agencies. With a dynamic team and great artistic leadership the arts centre shares its passion for theatre, music and the arts and it has an excellent reputation for producing and presenting inspiring, imaginative and engaging performances and embraces the vibrant culture of Sligo and its surrounds. It provides a creative space for performance, collaboration and learning. There is a diverse programme of arts and entertainment including professional and amateur drama, a wide range of music from traditional and jazz to opera, dance, pantomime, children's theatre and comedy. The Hawks Well has a well-known reputation for being a welcoming, friendly venue for the community of Sligo and the North West which gives artistic opportunities to performers in the community and to inspire people of all ages to engage with the Arts through workshops and events. The Centre presents a vibrant artistic programme with the best in contemporary and classical work across various art forms. The Hawks Well have a strong track record for producing and co-producing new, innovative work by emerging and established artists and support their development.

– **Backstage Theatre**

Backstage Theatre opened its doors in April 1995. A purpose built state of the art theatre located in the Slashers GAA Complex. Backstage was, from the outset, a community driven project with its main advocates being Slashers GAA Club and Backstage Theatre Group. Since 1995 the venue's vision has been based on the vision for a theatre for County Longford which is accessible, participatory and enhances the cultural infrastructures of the region. Led by an energetic and proactive team The Backstage Theatre promotes the development of the arts regionally by presenting a high quality, diverse and innovative program of arts activities. Backstage is a highly valued and engaging arts centre which provides a platform and resource for artists and companies to present their work.

Over the years a growing audience at Backstage has been treated to a dynamic program of exciting and inspiring theatre. Backstage is committed to continuing to provide the very best that theatre has to offer for our audiences. Backstage Theatre is a proud member of two touring theatre networks; Nasc a nationwide network of seven venues and Nomad, a north midlands based network. In the first few years of their existence these networks have already changed the nature of touring in Ireland. Together the venue managers on these networks form a strong voice to attract top theatre companies such as Druid, Rough Magic and Livin Dred to our venues.

– **Roscommon Arts Centre**

Roscommon Arts Centre is a vibrant, purpose-built arts space in the heart of Roscommon Town. The Centre has recently been reopened after a major renovation to its theatre and gallery. The centre is committed to presenting a dynamic and highly ambitious multi-disciplinary programme of events. With its great reputation for engaging audiences for the arts, the Arts Centre is invaluable in what it contributes to local arts development in County Roscommon and to its people. The core focus is to offer the local community opportunities to actively engage with a range of artforms through participatory and performance-based activities.

The centre presents work by professional and community based artists in theatre, dance, music, visual art, comedy and literature, along with a programme of Irish and world cinema in the auditorium space. It also programmes a number of workshops and classes for children and adults both in the centre and off-site. The Centre also offers a very dynamic and interesting programme of visual arts, showcasing local, national and international artists and arts collectives.

The Centre has an excellent reputation for its development of youth arts and its programme which engages younger audiences and through its work in developing and commissioning for early years . The Centre has developed several innovative and dynamic sensory opportunities for young audiences.

Roscommon Arts Centre supports the artists role as being central to the artistic process and seeks to develop the work of artists at all stages of their careers through increased opportunities at the venue.

– **Leitrim Sculpture Centre**

The Leitrim Sculpture Centre based in the centre of the market town of Manorhamilton in North Country Leitrim was established in 1997 to facilitate the training and professional needs of artists across the North West. In its earlier years the Centre offered high quality working facilities for practicing artists in sculpture techniques with a specific focus on stone, bronze and wood. It has since developed into a leading centre for contemporary practice including installation, multimedia and environmental practice and research.

The Sculpture Centre is housed in two properties in Manorhamilton, a nine bedroom hotel known as ‘Sheehans’ and a large factory complex known as ‘Merenda’. With these two fantastic resources the venue is unique in its offering to artists in Ireland and Internationally. The Centre has a range of studio spaces, technical equipment and expertise that allows for glass, metal, casting, carving, printing and support for artists wishing to undertake new work, develop their practice within a studio, community or creatively explore new processes.

The Sculpture Centre provides space and equipment for 3D construction, hot-process and large-scale sculptural work, Hot Glass, Bronze Foundry, Metal Work and Ceramic facilities Mould-making and model-making production area, Fine Art Print & Multi-media Unit for digital design, print and time-based work, Traditional Printmaking Studio for Etching, Litho and Silkscreen production Heating throughout.

Partnership Project Summaries

1. Performing North Leitrim The Glens Center and Leitrim Sculpture Centre

Artists: Little John Nee and Sandra Corrigan Breathnach

Communities: North Leitrim Mens Group, The Womens Centre, Manorhamilton, Kilgar Group, Manorhamilton careers group, Manorhamilton Choir, Samhain Community Festival

Performing North Leitrim was a cross-disciplinary project and collaboration between Leitrim Sculpture Centre & The Glens Centre in Manorhamilton. It was an umbrella title for a range of projects led by artists Little John Nee and Sandra Corrigan Breathnach including many communities in North County Leitrim. The project establishes new performance opportunities jointly at the two Centres through the sharing of resources and expertise. The project commissioned two artists in residence, Little John Nee and Sandra Corrigan Breathnach. Artists researched and developed projects in collaboration with community members and in relation to the historical contexts and material environments of Manorhamilton and the North Leitrim area.

Workshops

Residency artists, John and Sandra developed projects with local communities through a series of workshops that took place at the two Centres and at a number of sites or outdoor locations around Manorhamilton. The workshops started evolving and giving shape to an ensemble of related performance works to be presented to the public at the end of October 2019.

Themes and Sites – Little John Nee

– The Return of the Lesser Known Púca Ó Ruairc.

The artist Little John Nee developed the project with the North Leitrim Men's Group entitled *The Return of the Lesser Known Púca Ó Ruairc*. The Púca Ó Ruairc is a tired old soul who has been damaged and disempowered by past experiences, trauma, and his own outmoded attitudes. His return to his old haunts and the incidents he encounters allows him to be radically transformed and to have his integrity as a Púca shapeshifter restored by these experiences in a town that has never been better. Nee's thoughts on structure suggest 10/12 chapters, scenes, site specific performances that took place at various locations throughout Manorhamilton. Incorporating 8/10 incidents were developed for installations created by participants in the workshop.

– The Tin Tabernacle of Tunes

“The Tin Tabernacle of Tunes” was the finale of the “Púca Ó Ruairc” story, which took place in the Gallery at LSC at the end of the Samhain parade. The “Tin Tabernacle” was a tin shed structure built by the Mens Group and inspired by the Chapel of Ease at Lurganboy. The structure became a live musical instrument where up to five people can enter and play music together on kettle drums and chime instruments tuned to a pentatonic scale which allows five strangers with no musical experience to play together spontaneously and in harmony.

‘Scientists and astronomers have marveled at the celestial accuracy and mathematical authority of ancient sites such as New Grange, Stonehenge and the Pyramids. I experience the same sense of awe when I look at the corrugated iron sheds of Leitrim – what kind of life forms built them. Are these tin structures bouncing messages to other planets? Or do they possess knowledge and messages beyond our limited means of communication?’

Traces Sandra Corrigan Breathnach.

Traces was led by performance artist Sandra Corrigan Breathnach. The project initially gathered and recorded stories from older members of the community and directly related to the history of the town and its border location. These narratives of place formed the basis of a sound-map which consisted of a number of site-specific sound installations located at key sites throughout the town of Manorhamilton. The housing for the sound-works were designed and built by working closely in collaboration with members of the Women’s Centre. Inspired by the sound-works and through her engagement with community members she came to focus on the basic elements of wood, fire, earth and straw.



Directors Brendan Murray, The Glens Centre & Sean O'Reilly, Leitrim Sculpture Centre.



Tin Tabernacle Installation at Leitrim Sculpture Centre Gallery Culture Night 2019

“I think what runs through the different communities that we were working with is that there's various disadvantages.

One of which is the lack of access or even the lack of habit of using cultural centres like ourselves. This was one of the main aims of The Creative Counties project which was to bring us together to increase access.”

Sean O'Reilly, Leitrim Sculpture Centre.



North Leitrim Men's Group.



Community Groups working with Sandra Corrigan Breathnach

Project Feedback:

– Sean O'Reilly, Director Leitrim Sculpture Centre

The overall aim would be to continue to develop collaboration between different art forms; The Glen Centre is a theatre, a music, drama and performing arts venue. Whereas we at The Leitrim Sculpture Centre are coming from the visual arts. So for Creative Counties we try to look at the traditions of Visual and Performing Arts and to bring them together.

The benefits of this project are to the communities of the two centres, working together we have to think about what it is that these two venues can do, we can focus on shared marketing and promotion and the sharing of audiences and participants so a gain of knowledge and understanding from each other. The North Leitrim men's group, for example, John Nee very much looking at working with those groups. Sandra is working with the women's centres who give broad support to women of all ages in education training and also developing social projects.

I think what runs through the different communities that we were working with is, that there are various disadvantages. One of which is the lack of access or lack of habit of using cultural centres like ourselves. This was one of the main aims of The Creative Counties project which was to bring us together to increase access.

– Brendan Murray, Director The Glens Centre

What's lovely about The Creative Counties project it allows the participants, the community, to drive, under the guidance of the artists, what they would like to do. Just to see people finding that within themselves it's transformative, so exciting to see and you never really never underestimate the power of artistic expression and what it can do for us.

It's great to see this community celebration which is driven by artists. To see that it brings the community together and how working with artists is allowing them an avenue to explore their own inner creativity. The results are the Samhain parade, and what we see it all is one major coming together through a performance through the streets and to share it with their own community.

There are many artistic disciplines involved, like today we were down in the workshop and the participants were doing this dance between two giant figures whereby they are trying to eliminate the whole concept of the fossil fuels - so this oil slick man is the bad one and the goodies are the eco-warriors coming in who are trying to reclaim Leitrim.

— **Joel Smith North Leitrim Mens Group Leader**

“I think The Creative Counties project has been very positive for us and for the demands of the group because it's allowed us to tap into something outside of making furniture. To connect into something a bit different, we've been involved in making a film this year with little Johnny Nee. We're probably the oldest man shared in a way in Ireland because we've been around for about twenty two years. Our main thing really I suppose is to manage isolation to give them training and skills and to promote good mental health and promote a sense of teamwork and a sense of community.”

— **Sandra Corrigan Breathnach Artist.**

I was really happy to be part of the Creative Counties project because it meant that I really got to know the people in the town extremely well and built really strong connections with some of the people.

The choir who are about 30 strong it's kind of a culmination of working with Declan Drohan who is part of the choir and who has written the song for the Samhain event. We really owe a lot of the ladies involved too who have been making willow headdresses and willow lantern holders. Working with The Glen Centre and the Leitrim sculpture Centre, and The Creative Counties Project, it's been a phenomenal program actually and I've really enjoyed it.

2. Luminaria and Playmaking Roscommon Arts Centre and Backstage Arts Centre

Under the creative leadership of artists Maisie Lee and Fionnuala Gygax 'Lúminaria', facilitated a series of children's workshops in creative writing, puppet making and theatre making in three schools in both Longford and Roscommon. In the second phase of the residency, the Artist facilitates a community project entitled 'Playmaking' inviting young people aged 9 to 12 to learn about playwriting, develop their own play and see it brought to life by professional theatre artists. This process culminates in the participants writing their own short play and working with a team of professional actors and designers to bring their work to life.



Arts Centre Directors : Mona Considine Backstage Arts Centre & Aeryl Dooher Roscommon Arts Centre



“All of the stories that have come from my mind were put onto paper; they were just printed and practiced. It makes you feel so important. You get a sense of self pride. It's just mind-blowing!”

Fionn, Participant

Project Feedback:

– **Mona Considine, Director, Backstage Theatre Longford.**

“Playmaking” was a project with our artist in residence at Backstage, Maisie Lee, a playwriting project for children, teaching them about character, structure, and the development of character and essentially how to write a script for a play. These children would have written stories in school but never a play. So the project is really unique.

What is special about it, and innovative for theatre in Ireland is that those plays were performed by a professional cast of actors, and that the set, costume and lighting has all been designed by professional designers. These children are really getting their plays brought to life in the in the best possible way to the highest standards. The project worked because Maisie Lee was artist in residence with Arts Council, this is project that we planned to do at Backstage but when we got involved in Creative Counties it gave us the opportunity to share it with Roscommon and develop it further. You know the children really let their imaginations run and I suppose that was a great thing about Maisie. She allowed them to do what they liked, she allowed them to tell the story the wanted to tell. “

– **Averyl Dooher, Director, Roscommon Arts Centre.**

“When the opportunity to get involved in making this project came up, we were just so delighted. I suppose it really stood out - it was such an original and creative idea - children to be creative the leaders was wonderful and for them to be the playwrights and to see professional actress perform. It was just a really unique project.

I would not have been able to do it as a venue on our own. We were really very lucky I suppose that The Creative Counties Network came about and Creative Ireland Funding was there to support this project and drove it from our end. I think The Creative Counties initiative is great. It's been lovely for me to be working on this with the two venues together.

We've got to know Maisie from being here all summer. Her professionalism and I suppose her patience. Her vision for this project, it has just been wonderful to watch.” Averyl

– **Donncha O'Dea Actor**

“The kids have been guided through improv, through honing their writing skills, and the project has actually given them a fully fledged printed play. What they have created is amazing! I think the best

thing for us as actors and for Maisie as well is that whatever they put down on paper - we said okay - we will achieve that to honor the kids. To do what they wanted.

You could just tell that the child has written all the characters with such hearts and such depth, it's evident in their character descriptions. We got to meet every child who wrote a play, they got to give their feedback, they gave us notes on what our performances were like. It's brilliant that art centres like here in Longford and Roscommon can bring in children at such a young age to enjoy theatre at this level because that's what we want, we want to start kids getting this buzz from an early age" Donncha

— **Fionnuala Gygax Actor and Writer**

The shows are so imaginative and kind of bonkers and you just kind of have to go with that, the childrens vision of their shows. So it's been really fun and just to be allowed to be a bit silly and go oh well! In one we get sucked into a game of Twister and there's another one we end up on the moon. Theatre I think is enriching for everyone but I think with children, I think it's even more important. They have a chance to be involved and to see how a germ of an idea can be manifested into a full production – it's magical.

— **Maeve Playmaking Participant Roscommon.**

"I thought it was really fun and it's really fun making a play from scratch because you can put whatever you like in it. "

— **Paul, Maeve's Dad**

"The whole process was excellent. They really enjoyed it and saw how a theatre production is produced. How it's all put together. Who knows, maybe in the future, Maeve might get involved in that area."

— **Fionn, Playmaking Participant, Longford.**

A couple of kids like us have actually have gotten to do this, to work with actors, to work with Maisie - which was absolutely brilliant - and to put on a play.

All of the stories that have come from my mind were put onto paper; they were just printed and practiced. It makes you feel so important. You get a sense of self pride. It's just mind-blowing!

3. Both Sides Of The Lough : The Dock and The Hawk's Well

The Dock and Hawk's Well Theatre jointly commissioned and produced a large scale music project across Sligo and Leitrim. This project harnessed the wealth of musical talent and tradition in the Counties and is being produced in conjunction with a number of highly skilled creative leaders including: Michael Rooney, Niamh Crowley and Kellie Hughes. Through a series of workshops in both Sligo and Leitrim, two groups of young traditional musicians worked master musicians; attaining skills, broadening their musical horizons. The project links master and apprentice musicians.

This project included fifteen professional Practitioners including Kellie Hughes, Niamh Crowley and was lead by Michael Rooney at The Hawks Well and Stephen Doherty at The Dock there were fifteen young musicians from The Dock and The Hawkswell meeting for rehearsals. On the night of the performances amateur adult musicians in Sligo and Leitrim played as a community orchestra. The project attracted people interested in history and heritage across Sligo and Leitrim. One of the key benefits was that it helped reconnect the participants to their general interest in music and the Arts in Sligo and Leitrim.



The Dock and The Hawks Well Directors Sarah Searson and Marie O'Byrne

Lead Artists

Michael Rooney is a prolific composer and is widely regarded as one of the foremost players of the traditional Irish harp. He was awarded the TG4 Composer of the Year in 2017. Michael has just completed work on 'The Famine Suite' for Imbolc Derry (Feb 2019) and is currently working on 'The Markievicz Suite', commissioned by The Hawks Well Sligo & UCD (Autumn/Winter 2019). Originally from Scotstown, Co. Monaghan and now a long time resident of County Sligo, Michael has composed thirteen suites of music in the past 20 years, including Constance (2019), The Famine Suite (2019), The Macalla Suite (2016), Boróimhe Suite (2014), The Second Coming (2014), De Cuellar Suite (2011) and Battle of the Books Suite (2007). In May 2015, Michael was commissioned to write music and perform on the occasion of Prince Charles' visit to Sligo. His music features on 'The Queen's Speech', RTE's documentary of Queen Elizabeth's visit to Ireland.

Stephen Doherty is from Foxford, Co. Mayo in the West of Ireland, he began learning music at the age of 4 and through his teenage years began to accumulate numerous all-Ireland medals on whistle, bodhrán, drums, accordion and is a two time All-Ireland winning Champion on Melodeon and is a senior All-Ireland Champion on the flute. His first music based international trip was at the age of 17 to Cleveland Music Festival in America, and at the age of 18 he became a full time musician joining FOM productions for various shows throughout France and America over the next year. While juggling between teaching and touring, he then became the resident Traditional Irish Music Teacher at the Renowned Mayo School of Music teaching 5 Instruments to a student base of over 100 students a week. Throughout 2008/2009 he toured America & Europe with Various productions including Celtic Crossroads, Ragús the Show and highly acclaimed Irish band Slide, he also became one of the resident Melodeon players for the annual Oireactas Sean Nós Dancing Championships aired live on TG4 and joined the Cunningham family at Fuaim Chonamara for a National Tour. In 2009, Stephen Joined Irish band Gráda as a fulltime member, embarking on a world tour and the recording of a new Cd at Compass Records in Nashville.



“..There’s a network built up here now, thirty teenagers that now know each other musically and, you know will be friends or whatever and they'll come together at festivals and sessions over the years to come.”

Stephen Doherty Musician

Marie O'Byrne, Director, The Hawk's Well

The Hawk's Well and The Dock have been working on this joint project for the last three months. It involved two youth groups from each county, Sligo and Leitrim. They are youth groups of traditional musicians who've been working with the brilliant musician Stephen Doherty for the last few weeks. They've each done six to seven workshops and they were working on new music that was written by Michael Rooney. The Hawk's Well happened to be working on another project for which Michael had written some new music so we thought it was the perfect material for these groups to work on. We started talking about the project with Sarah Searson from The Dock, both organizations. The Hawk's Well and The Dock wanted work with young musicians, young people in general because I suppose sometimes you know the offering for young people can be sort of scant particularly in relation to innovative project in traditional music.

Sarah Searson, Director, The Dock

Both of us have been looking at the idea of introducing a new kind of dynamism into the repertoire of young traditional musicians. It's a really good idea in terms of trying to think about how we can share resources, exchange knowledge, reach out to artists and improve our engagement with our communities.

Stephen Doherty, Musician

The Creative Counties Network is a brilliant idea, it's brilliant to see the different Arts Centres coming together, be that both venues but also the people in those both areas getting to come together and work as well.

It's exactly what we were aiming towards and you can see there, you know, there's a network built up of here now, thirty teenagers that now know each other musically and, you know, be friends or whatever and they'll come together at festivals and sessions over the years to come.

It's great to see youngsters hungry for new music and interested in doing something that sounds good, and making an effort.

We've given them a piece of music that was written by Michael Rooney to learn. It's a new piece that hasn't been heard yet so each group in Sligo and Leitrim both had to learn one piece each. We also got them to arrange some traditional music. We just helped them to sort of put a nice polish on it and put their own little touches on it as well.

Michael Rooney, Musician

I suppose music is part of my DNA, it's part of my identity and I love playing music but I suppose in the last twenty years I've started writing music. As I say we're really blessed in that we have, organisations like Creative Countries that actually afford us an opportunity to bring in experts to give these young kids the best. I mean if I only had that when I was young it would have been an amazing experience. I'm watching them all here; they're all in the green room it's a massive opportunity for them. We're all one big family here tonight so does that make sense so there's no status here, we're all here playing

music and it's a fabulous opportunity for everybody. So it's very exciting and there's a massive buzz around the place.

Mark, Participant

Personally, I think this was a great opportunity for me and all the others musicians in the youth group to come together. You know we don't get often the chance to play all together and to learn new pieces together and to arrange them with each other and sort of get our minds going as well rather than a teachers mind going to give me more to my playing and has added to my vocabulary of music if you could say that. I think its really great that Creative Ireland have come up with the money and the funding and given it to us so that we can do these sort of projects.

Project Templates: Including Outcomes, Participant Details and Timelines

Project Title	
	Both Sides of the Lough
Number/ Names of Theatre Practitioners / Artists Leaders (Please confirm who we can contact and provide details)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 15 Professional Artists – Theatre Practitioner: Kellie Hughes – Musician Leaders: – Classical: Niamh Crowley Niamh – Traditional: Michael Rooney – Traditional: Stephen Doherty, The Dock
Target Audience Name of groups And Numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Participants: – Young traditional musicians in Sligo and Leitrim aged between 12 and 18 years – Amateur adult musicians in Sligo and Leitrim interested in playing in a community orchestra – Adult musicians in Sligo and Leitrim interested in performing as part of a classical chamber music group – Audience for performance elements: – People involved in both classical and traditional music in Sligo and Leitrim 12 open sessions. – People interested in history and heritage across Sligo and Leitrim. – People connected to the many participants in the project. – People with a general interest in music and the Arts in Sligo and Leitrim.
Rehearsal/ Production Development Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Collaborative Music Development Period: 20 – 22 June (Sligo) – Community Collaborative Music Development Period: Full week – 26 Aug – Callout for participative groups – July/August – Traditional youth group rehearsals: September/October – Community Orchestra rehearsals: September/October – Chamber music group rehearsals: September/October – Combined rehearsals involving all participants: last 2 weeks of October – Collaborative performance at Hawk’s Well, Sligo: 2 November – Collaborative performance at The Dock, Leitrim: 27th November

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Dock - Youth Trad Group of 11 young people – 7.00 – 8.00 Open Session – The Dates are as follows – September 23rd 30th – October 7th 14th, 21st – November 4th, November 11th – Performance at The Hawkswell 17th November – Performance at The Dock 27th November – Bespoke performances featuring professional musicians, amateur youth groups and chamber music groups augmented by theatre.
Performance/ Workshop Dates and number of performances in The Dock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 6 workshops in September/October with Leitrim youth traditional music group – 2 workshops in October with Leitrim classical chamber group – 1 large scale collaborative performance in November
Performance Dates and number of performances in Hawks Well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 6 workshops in September/October with Sligo youth traditional music group – 4 community orchestra rehearsals with Sligo and Leitrim amateur classical musicians – 2 workshops in October with Sligo classical chamber group – 2 joint rehearsals in October involving both Sligo and Leitrim youth traditional groups, chamber music groups and professional traditional musicians. – 2 rehearsals in late October early November involving all participants/performers. – 1 large scale collaborative performance in November – 5 bespoke performances featuring professional musicians, amateur youth groups and chamber music groups augmented by theatre performers:
Project Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Dock and Hawk's Well Theatre are joining forces in 2019 to commission and produce a large scale music project across Sligo and Leitrim. This project harnesses the wealth of creativity and talent available across the two counties and is being produced in conjunction with a number of highly skilled creative leaders including: Michael Rooney, Niamh Crowley and Kellie Hughes. – The project links master and apprentice musicians and brings together different segments of our artistic community including young traditional musicians, amateur and professional classical and traditional adult musicians and also involves a number of professional theatre practitioners. – Through a series of workshops in both Sligo and Leitrim, two groups of young traditional musicians will meet with

master musicians; attaining skills, broadening their musical horizons and working on a body of newly commissioned pieces of music written by renowned composer Michael Rooney.

- Separately, a community orchestra in Sligo will expand to include interested musicians from Leitrim and 2 chamber music groups are being formed in each county will rehearse the newly commissioned music also.
- Harnessing the creativity of youths and adults in Sligo and Leitrim the project will culminate in two large scale performances (one in each county) which will showcase the development of creativity which the project has enabled and nurtured. A bespoke performance involving a smaller contingent of participants augmented by theatre artists is also planned later in the year.
- Our project supports the vision and objectives of the Creative Ireland Programme across four of its five pillars and has collaboration at its heart. Collaboration between arts organisations, artists and the community at large.
- It aligns most closely with pillar 2 of the Creative Ireland Programme as follows:
- This project incorporates a participative element that is encouraging and indeed driving both personal and collective creativity.
- This project represents a celebration of the diversity of musical traditions in Ireland today in a wonderful collaborative community effort. The community orchestra is open to all ages and enhances the creative and innovative capacities of its participants and creating an ecosystem of creativity in our communities.
- The enhancement of participants' creative capacity is facilitated through open and friendly communication and engagement and the project is energising and stimulating innovative capacities in those involved.
- Involvement in this project is also emphasising not only creativity and imagination, but also values of cultural understanding and social harmony which the arts can engender through the provision of ways to connect across different kinds of knowledge.
- Participation by a large number of people of different ages and backgrounds in this new cultural project is offering those involved opportunities to create real connections between a diverse range of people in the community.

- **outcomes**
- Creation of three different new professionally produced, innovative creative performances in 2019.
- Creation of cross sectoral partnerships between art forms.
- Support of a number of creatives across a significant programme of work.
- Expansion of access and participation in creative activities across two counties.
- Expansion of an adult community orchestra across two counties.
- Introducing participants to the diversity of Irish traditional music and culture through the international musical language of the classical genre.
- Enrichment of Sligo and Leitrim’s cultural and creative sectors.

Project Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Performing North Leitrim – The Glens Centre and Leitrim Sculpture Centre – The Return of the Lesser Known Púca Ó Ruairc (Little John Nee) – Traces (Sandra Corrigan Breathnach)
Theatre Practitioners / Artists Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Little John Nee – Sandra Corrigan Breathnach
Target Audience Name of groups And numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Participants: Groups presently being approached & engaged with – North Leitrim Men's Group 25 – The Women's Centre, Manorhamilton 12 – Kilgar Group 10 – The Carers Group 10 – Manorhamilton Choir/s 30 – Samhain Community Festival 50 – (Variety of groups including local schools) – Audience – General Public Manorhamilton 600
Rehearsal/ Production Development Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <u>The Return of the Lesser Known Púca Ó Ruairc Little John Nee</u> – 22nd May First workshop to take place at the Men's Group – 29th May using Men's Group as base, scouting the town and sites. – 5th June Men's Group at Men's group – 12th June Men's Group in THEATRE – 13th June Music for Theatre/Sound Design and Song-writing for Young Musicians THEATRE – 26th June Men's Group Set Design, Installations at Men's Group – 3rd July Men's Group at Men's Group and locations – 17th July Men's Group possible first event – 24th July Men's Group – 31st July Men's Group possible second event – 7th Aug Men's Group – 14th Aug Men's Group possible third event – 21st Aug Men's Group – 28th Aug Men's Group possible fourth event – 3rd Sept Storytelling and Soundtrack workshop with Local Artists THEATRE – 4th Sept Men's Group and Artist Group THEATRE also location event – 11th Sept Men's Group and Artist Group THEATRE also

	<p>location event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 18th Sept Men's Group and Artist Group THEATRE also location event – 22nd Oct – 2nd Nov. – CREATIVE COUNTIES SHOWCASE 20 SEPT CULTURE NIGHT – TIMELINE 2 – Traces Project Sandra Corrigan Breathnach – 4 days for each workshop (or 2 x 2 days) are booked into the following slots and will involve both on-site (outside) and off-site (gallery) – June – 11th -18th Workshop LSC Gallery – July – 15-24th Workshop LSC Project space <p>September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 2-15th Workshop LSC and Theatre (Glens and LSC collaboration) – October – 3 workshops x 2 days – Performance workshops (Alistair MacLennan, James King 1-3; Brian Connolly 7-9) – Set up and Final Rehearsals – 21-25th October LSC Gallery Space
Performance Dates and number of performances in The GLENS and Leitrim Sculpture Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – On-site performances 29th Oct – 2nd Nov
Project Text/ Write Up 500 words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – PERFORMING NORTH PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS – Performing North Leitrim... is a cross-disciplinary performance based collaboration between Leitrim Sculpture Centre & The Glens Centre in Manorhamilton, North County Leitrim. – The project sets out to develop and establish new performing and performance art opportunities jointly at the two Centres. Projects will gain supports through the sharing of resources and expertise and realise new site-specific performance based methodologies working with local communities. – The project begins in May 2019 with the commissioning of two artists in residence Little John Nee and Sandra Corrigan Breathnach. Artists will research and develop projects in collaboration with community members and in

relation to the historical contexts and material environments of Manorhamilton and the North Leitrim area.

- Workshops
- Residency artists will develop projects with local communities through a series of workshops that will take place both at the two Centre's and at a number of sites or outdoor locations around the town. The work undertaken within the workshops will evolve and give shape to an ensemble of related performance works to be presented to the public at the end of October 2019.
- A central motif will be "The Tin Tabernacle of Tunes" in the finale of the "Púca Ó Ruairc" story, this might take place at the castle or at LSC at the end of the Samhain parade. The "Tin Tabernacle" would be a small tin shed structure built by the Mens Group and inspired by the Chapel of Ease at Lurganboy. The structure would be accessible to the public, where up to five people can enter and play music together on metal drums/chimes/instruments tuned to a pentatonic scale which allows five strangers with no musical experience to play together spontaneously and in harmony. Recordings from this might be included as part of the final chapter of the story.
- The second project entitled TRACES is led by performance artist Sandra Corrigan Breathnach. The project will initially gather recorded stories from individuals and older members of the community that directly relate to the history of the town and its border location. Following on from this element and drawing on the sound-works Corrigan will explore with community members the historical traces of the area and how these might be animated by the use and manipulation of materials and processes found locally. Wood, fire, earth and straw are some of the basic elements Corrigan will activate in relation to the body, narrative and site.

Project Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Luminaria & Playmaking – Backstage and Roscommon Arts Centre
Project Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Maisie Lee has been engaged as Artist in Residence at Backstage Theatre Longford. Backstage are funding the residency under their Arts Council Strategic Venue Funding for 2019. During the Residency the Artist will work on the development of new professional theatre for children 'Luminaria' and will deliver a playwriting project for children. On foot of the Creative Ireland Network funding, Backstage agreed to share both elements of the residency with Roscommon Arts Centre to broaden the reach and deepen the impact of the artist's work and Roscommon Arts Centre agreed to invest additional money into the project to cover the cost of the delivery of the project in Roscommon.
Number/ Names of Theatre Practitioners / Artists Leaders (Please confirm who we can contact and provide details)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Maisie Lee is the Artist in Residence at Backstage Theatre and the lead artist on this project. – Fionnuala Gyax is the writer of 'Luminaria'. – A number of actors and designers will be engaged on the development of 'Luminaria' and the presentation of 'Playmaking'
Target Audience Name of groups And Numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Luminaria – 3rd or 4th Class Students in six schools (3 in Co Longford and 3 in Co Roscommon) are participating in a programme of 5 workshops and will attend the sharing of a work in progress in both venues. Each class is approx. 25 students so the total participating students are approx. 150. – Playmaking – Children aged between 9 and 12 are invited to apply for this programme of workshops. 5 children will be selected in each county to participate in the playwriting programme.
Rehearsal/ Production Development Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 'Luminaria' Development – Longford – 15th April, 27th to 29th May and 10th & 11th June. – Roscommon – 29 April to 3 May – 'Luminaria' School Workshops – Longford – 4th & 5th March and 21st, 22nd & 23rd May – Roscommon – 13th & 14th March and 4th, 5th & 6th June. – Playmaking Workshops and Development – Longford - Weeks commencing 15 July and 19 August – Roscommon – Weeks commencing 22 July and 12 Aug – Additional workshop sessions will take place in September and the development of the professional presentation will take

	place in Oct 2019.
Performance Dates and number of performances in Backstage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 12 June 'Luminaria' - Sharing of work in progress with students - – 13 June 'Luminaria' - Extract of work in progress as part of Crinniu na nOg – – 26 Oct 'Playmaking' - Performance of children's plays by professional actors
Performance Dates and number of performances in Roscommon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fri 14 'Luminaria' – Sharing of work in progress as part of Crinniu na nOg –June – Sun 27 Oct 'Playmaking' - Performance of children's plays by professional actors-
Project Text/ Write Up 500 words (or even a copy of the original arts council application)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – From March to June 2019 Maisie Lee and Fionnuala Gyax will work collaboratively with guest artists on the development of 'Luminaria', a new piece of work for children. The artists will interact with schools throughout the development of 'Luminaria', facilitating a series of children's workshops in creative writing, puppet making and theatre making in three schools in both Longford and Roscommon. Both venues will provide space for the development of this work and Backstage will also provide additional production, marketing and administrative supports. A sharing of the work in progress will be presented to participating student in both venues in June 2019 followed by a Q and A with the young audience to gain insight into their response to the piece and inform its further development. – In the second phase of the residency, the Artist will facilitate a community project entitled 'Playmaking' inviting young people aged 9 to 12 to learn about playwriting, develop their own play and see it brought to life by professional theatre artists. In July/Aug /Sept 5 participants in each county will take part in a series of playwriting workshops with Maisie Lee exploring structure, character, setting and stagecraft. This process will culminate in the participants writing their own short play and working with a team of professional actors and designers to bring their work to life. The programme will finish with a professional production of the participants' plays in Backstage, as part of the Aisling Children's Arts Festival on Sat 26th Oct and in Roscommon Arts Centre on Sun 26th Oct 2019.