Research Report into the practices of Professional Artists from Immigrant, New Communities and Traveller backgrounds

"I do not wish my house to be walled on all sides and my windows stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible."

Mahatma Gandhi

"It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength. We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the treads of that tapestry are equal in value no matter their color."
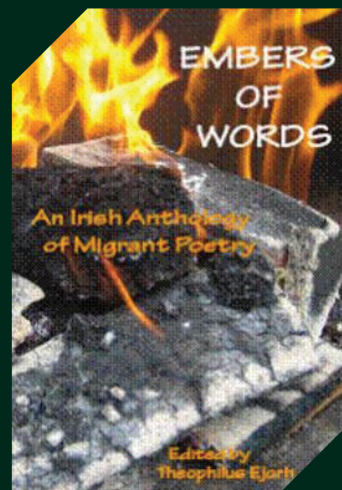
Maya Angelou, Author

50% Male Experimental Theatre's production of "Chemistry", choreographed by Anna Gaciarz, premiered at The Lir as part of the Dublin Fringe Festival 2012.

Nollywood, Ireland:
29th Sep 2012 - 1st Oct 2012

"Embers of Words", a new anthology of migrant poetry, edited by Dr. Theophilus Ejorh and launched 22 October 2012 at the Irish Writers Centre, Dublin.

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1. Introduction

The importance of cultural diversity to the vitality of the arts and culture of Ireland cannot be overstated. The recent 2011 Census of Ireland showed just how much our country is changing. There is now a range of different cultures, communities and complex identities that comprise Ireland today. Although these demographic changes brought about primarily by immigration presents Irish society with many challenges, there is nevertheless and opportunity to build bridges of understanding and awareness between our diverse communities. Central to this is ensuring that artists from immigrant, new communities and Traveller backgrounds have a genuine voice and a valued place within the Irish arts sector. All of us involved in creating, producing and presenting the arts need to be able to respond in a pro-active and constructive way that allows these artists to develop meaningful careers and thus engage with and contribute to the richness of our evolving society.

This research is primarily aimed at the policy makers and service providers within the arts funding system as well as their partners in the wider arts sector. Dublin City Council and South Dublin Council are committed to cultural diversity within their respective local authority areas. The Arts Council published its Cultural Diversity policy in 2010 and earlier this year appointed its first ever Cultural Diversity Advisor.

The report is intended to be a practical document with the research findings informing recommendations that the project partners will wish to further consider. As such, it deliberately skips over the political, economic and cultural contexts, which shape any discussion on cultural diversity as these have been well articulated in other similar reports. I hope the findings and recommendations emerging from this research will be helpful to them in formulating, reinterpreting and implementing their own policies and positive action measures. It is clear though that whilst some actions might be taken by individual agencies working in specific areas, both geographical and socially defined, there are many more that will be best achieved in a variety of partnerships across the arts funding sector including public finding agencies, venues and galleries and arts producers. Furthermore, the opportunity to work alongside community based organisations to identify, assist and promote artists from within ethnically diverse communities is also one that should not be ignored.

In the end, it will be Irish society as a whole that will benefit from the contribution by artists from immigrant, new communities and Traveller backgrounds to the continuing debate of what it means to be Irish in the 21st century.

2. Executive Summary

This research clearly illustrates many of the challenges and barriers that artists from immigrant, new communities and Traveller backgrounds face as they attempt to build careers in the arts and culture sector in Ireland. It reveals the need for such artists to have better access to information on available resources to support the development of their creative practices and careers including funding, physical resources such as spaces to rehearse and create work, opportunities to exhibit, present and perform work and training and education. In addition, these artists are also concerned about the difficulty of gaining recognition and how their creative practices are understood and evaluated. There are also issues around language barriers, networking opportunities, lack of representation on staffs and Boards of arts organisations, stereotyping and the need for arts and cultural programming for young people that facilitate intercultural dialogue.

Behind all of this lies the greater issue of an arts sector in Ireland that is largely perceived as a closed community and difficult to access let alone be a genuine part of. Many arts presenters, producers and programmers are poorly informed about the range and availability of work from artists of culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds. Whilst some however recognise this and would like to see measures and resources dedicated to building up their knowledge and appreciation of this area of work, there is nevertheless a common perception amongst many ethnically diverse artists that the Irish arts sector is just not interested in their work. Part of the reason for this perceived reticence by programmers might be their concern about whether there is a significant enough audience for the work of these artists, a factor even more acutely felt in these difficult economic times. The recommendations contained in this report have been drafted as practical measures to address the findings of the research and are intended to form the basis of internal discussions within the two local authorities (and with their respective partners) as to the appropriate future supports for artists from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds resident in Ireland.

A wider debate needs to be had by all sections of the Irish arts sector about cultural diversity in society and the arts in Ireland today. Ireland is becoming a more mixed country with the latest census data from 2011 showing that those born outside the State account for some 17% of the population. Given this increasing diversity of our population, the need to better understand the experiences of immigrant and culturally diverse artists, art professionals and cultural workers is more necessary than ever. In identifying and effectively addressing these artists' needs, barriers to inclusion can be identified and dismantled, inclusive arts practices and programming can be established, and better strategies to connect artists of diverse cultural backgrounds with existing services and opportunities can be provided.

3. Background

3.1 Purpose of the Research

The project partners for this research into the practices of professional artists from immigrant, new communities and Traveller backgrounds includes South Dublin County Council Arts Office, South Dublin County Social Inclusion Unit, Tallaght Community Arts, Dublin City Social Inclusion Unit, New Communities Partnership with the support of Dublin City Arts Office and CPLN Area Partnership. It has been funded under the Arts Council's Local Partnership Scheme and by the project partners.

The purpose of this research is to provide information that will assist local authorities in forming arts policy and in providing a supportive infrastructure. Its findings will hopefully not only contribute greatly to national knowledge on the needs of these individuals, but also to the enhancement of working practices within the arts. This research has involved a "snapshot" of the lives of artists and cultural practitioners from immigrant, Traveller and culturally diverse backgrounds that are mostly resident in Dublin City and South Dublin County. It assesses their needs and the barriers and challenges they face in building artistic careers in Ireland. It also provides information and insights that might assist future policy formation and identifying administrative systems that can support inclusion.

The research addresses needs identified in the Arts Council's Cultural Diversity and the Arts Policy and Strategy (2010). Specifically, this strategy highlights the lack of knowledge and capacity among arts providers on devising ways to "reach, communicate, and support diverse individuals and groups" (2010: 5). It builds on existing national research available in Cultural Diversity and the Arts research Project: Towards the Development of an Arts Council Policy and Action Plan (Create in association with Dr Daniel Jewesbury and Jagtar Singh of the Change Institute, 2009) and references good practice both at home and abroad. Both these reports describe the general contexts – political, social and cultural - against which this research takes place.

Since then however, the results of the 2011 Census of Ireland have been published with findings that clearly indicate that Ireland is becoming a more mixed country with those born outside the State now accounting for some 17 per cent of the population. The groups which showed the largest increase were those already well established in Ireland. The fastest growing groups were Romanians (up 110%), Indians (up 91%), Polish (up 83%), Lithuanians (up 40%) and Latvians (up 43%). Polish nationals (122,585) have overtaken those from the UK (112,259) as the largest non-Irish group living in the State. Overall, 544,357 non-Irish nationals were living in Ireland at the time of the 2011 census, an

increase of 29.7 per cent or 124,624 on 2006, some 12 per cent of the population. The number of people enumerated as Irish Travellers in Census 2011 increased by 32 per cent from 22,435 to 29,573. These demographic shifts are further underlined with the Irish Times reporting on 31st August 2012 that since the first Citizenship Ceremony took place in June 2011, some 14,000 individuals from 161 countries have to date been granted citizenship at 55 ceremonies.

The Dublin City region is home to 1.24m people accounting for almost 28% of the national population (CSO, 2011). 195,496 people (15.6%) of this regional population are non-nationals, 5168 people (0.4%) are Travellers.

Immigrants now form 17% of the Dublin City population (525,383) with 89,000 people from a non national background and with over 100 nationalities represented in the city: Asia 21.6%, EU 15-27 excluding Poland: 18%, Polish 15.2%, EU 15 excluding Ireland and UK 15%, USA 12%, others 18.2%.

South Dublin County Council is home to 265,174 people (census 2011). 17.1% (45,344) of the population are from non-national backgrounds; an increase of 3.2% since 2006. Top countries of origins are Poland, England and Wales, Nigeria, Lithuania, Romania, India, Northern Ireland, Philippines, Pakistan and Latvia. 37% of these live in South Dublin County.

Both Dublin City Council and South Dublin County Council have undertaken policy responses and grassroots initiatives, in collaboration with migrant and ethnic minority communities that address integration and the issues of interculturalism and cultural diversity. They work closely with representatives of the New Communities towards achieving social inclusion, integration and participation in the decision making process.

The two local authorities involved in commissioning this research also have explicit aims and objectives in relation to the development of culturally diverse practices in the arts. South Dublin County Council's "Arts Development Strategy 2011–2015" affirms; "*Pathways of progression, cultural diversity and audience development are some of the key concerns that the Council has begun to address in this new arts strategy*". In it's "C*ulture Strategy 2010 – 2017*", Dublin City Council states that it will "*Ensure vibrant and innovative cultural activity in the city through maintaining an awareness of diverse, alternative arts practice*" A significant priority under Theme 3 (Create opportunities for everyone to participate in the city's cultural life), is to "*acknowledge, explore and engage with the richness of cultural diversity in the city*". One of the subsequent actions arising from this will be to "*support festivals and events that promote mutual respect among the city's diverse communities*".

A more recent and very welcome development has been the appointment of Dr Alvina Grosu as the Cultural Diversity Adviser for Arts Council of Ireland/An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

3.2 Methodology

Research Participants

Twenty three artists, with all but two resident within the Dublin City and South Dublin County Council areas, agreed to participate in the research (see Limitations below). In addition, it was agreed that the views and opinions of a handful of selected arts organisations and venues in the two council areas would also be consulted on their experiences of working with artists from these backgrounds. Finally, the project partners who commissioned this research were also asked to contribute their views to the research. Details of participating artists can be found in Appendix 4.

Identifying and Recruiting Participant Artists

A "call-for-artists" was solicited by email to arts organizations, artform networks and resource organisations, community groups and individual artists from May 2012. The various project partners also provided contact details for various artists. Key informants were recruited on the basis of their artistic background, experience and interest. The participants involved in the research were from a range of artistic backgrounds, levels of experiences, gender and age groups and represent the tip of the iceberg in respect of the wider community of artists from culturally diverse backgrounds. From May to August 2012, the interviews were conducted face-to-face, by phone and by email correspondence and based on a questionnaire pre-agreed with the Project Partners. A full copy of the questionnaire is attached herewith as Appendix 3.

Key Informant Interviews

Seven of the participating artists were personally interviewed in sessions that ranged from 60 to 90 minutes in duration. The main goal of these key informant interviews was to explore the personal experiences, both positive and negative, of culturally diverse artists in more depth and in order to gain a better understanding of the key issues, challenges and barriers they face. Information gathered reflects the artists' work as individuals and within the community, specifically in the council areas of Dublin City and South Dublin County Council. This anecdotal evidence provides further understanding of relevant issues surrounding diversity in the arts, including racism, discrimination, social isolation, accessibility, and lack of support. Unless specifically requested, quotes taken from interviews and surveys are reproduced in an unattributed manner. The findings identify a number of barriers to the inclusion of artists from diverse cultural backgrounds into the mainstream Irish arts sector and proposes ways in which the local authorities often in partnership with other like minded public finding agencies and arts organisations can best support these artists in the future.

Participating Arts Organisations

A number of arts presenting and representative organisations, located within the two local authority areas, also assisted with this research, offering suggestions of individual artists that might wish to participate in the research and in some cases, promoting the research more widely and in some case also offering an important perspective on behalf of programmers, curators, producers and resource organisations on engaging with these artists and their practices. These organisations included;

- Project Arts Centre
- Axis Arts Centre, Ballymun
- Rua Red South Dublin Arts Centre
- The Civic Theatre, Tallaght
- Chester Beatty Library
- Create
- Common Ground
- Theatre Forum
- Dance Ireland
- Association of Composers of Ireland
- Visual Artists Ireland

Outside the State, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and ArtsExta, both based in Belfast, provided helpful contributions. The views of the individual commissioning partners for this research were also considered and taken into account.

Artists Feedback on Findings and Recommendations

Several of the participating artists attended a feedback session in March 2013 to comment on the findings of the research and to discuss which of the proposed recommendations should take priority. Subsequent to this feedback session, a final report was produced and delivered to the commissioning parties. See P.27 Artists' Responses to Findings and Recommendations.

Limitations

The limitation to this research is that the findings presented cannot be generalized to the larger population of ethnic minority, Traveller and immigrant artists living in Ireland based on this study alone. The intention at the outset of the project was to produce an audit of these artists, and their practices but it soon became clear that many of the obstacles and challenges that these artists face, including a lack of confidence in discussing their work, resulted in a limited number volunteering to participate in the research. This however presented an opportunity for in depth interviews, rather than a more cursory, audit approach. As a result, the research provides valuable first hand insight into the lived

experiences of artist from diverse cultural backgrounds and provides a foundation on which to further draw parallels to the experiences of artists from immigrant, Traveller and new communities backgrounds and their needs.

4. Key Findings

4.1 Artists

4.1.1 Profile

The profile of the 23 artists surveyed and interviewed for this research can be summarized as follows;

- 74% of respondents described themselves as "an artist doing professional work from time to time", with 14% opting for "a full-time professional artist, who's getting by".

- The survey group covered many ethnic and cultural backgrounds and included 2 Travellers, 2 Middle East, 8 Africa, 6 Eastern Europe and Russia, 2 India, 2 South America and 1 Western Europe.

- 78% reported that their work has been presented in some form or another in public although in most cases, this was on a one off or irregular basis and largely within a community rather than mainstream arts context.

4.1.2 Key Issues for Artists

Although issues and challenges faced by artists from immigrant, Traveller and new communities backgrounds are not necessarily homogenous, many of the key informants expressed similar experiences they faced as artists either working or seeking to work in the arts and culture sector in Ireland.

1. Perceived Inequity of Funding and Lack of Information about Available Funding
   The issue of funding being inaccessible or limited was a recurring theme throughout all the interviews. Over 60% of the informants were unaware whether or not there was any funding available to them. Even though one dancer from Ghana has been living in Dublin for the past ten years, she has little knowledge on who to approach for funding or how to gain access and information of funding opportunities for immigrant, Traveller and culturally diverse artists. Moreover, some artists also perceived that the funding system was inequitable and that their practices were either misunderstood and/or not being appropriately evaluated or even fairly assessed.

   "As an artist from an immigrant or new Irish community background, one of the difficulties encountered is in the area of funding. In this type of work that I do, the only thing that keeps one going on is the passion that one has for the work. In fact, for any

fairly established or even aspiring actors or directors from the ethnic minority group, funding is definitely a great impediment"

"I find artists who are foreigners are not told the benefits or receive financial help at present cause they don't feel qualified they will get it before their counterparts".

"Outside of paying for necessities such as food and rent, I have not had the financial means to carry out my artistic ideas. It has been very difficult to finance any of my artistic ventures without any support".

"(There is a) lack of accessibility and knowledge of the structure in place for artform entertainment in Ireland for New Communities"

"(Also a) lack of a strategy to incorporate or engage the diversity current in Ireland into the structure that caters for those who understands the system or terrain i.e. funding, grants, in-kind supports etc".

2. **Difficulty in Gaining Recognition and Exposure**
   The majority of artists interviewed cited the challenge of gaining recognition and exposure of their creative practices, due to the lack of inclusivity. Many commented on the closed nature, whether perceived or real, of the Irish arts sector. Despite a growing public discourse surrounding diversity, there appeared to many to be little progress in convincing Irish presenters, promoters, venues, galleries etc. to seriously consider artistic programmes and projects from ethnically diverse artists. However, there was also recognition by these artists that many programmers and curators lacked the confidence and knowledge to meaningfully engage with artists from immigrant, Traveller and new communities backgrounds and so practical advice and assistance was probably required on both sides.

   "The biggest challenge as an immigrant artist is, breaking into the mainstream art industry (which is pathologically insular, and achieving the recognition I desire, purely on the merit of my art rather than primordial considerations".

   "(There is a) covert resistance to accept new communities into the structure and territorial power struggle by those inside already … and some sort of lack of interest/ little interest from the majority Irish society to accept/embrace other artforms from New Communities".

3. **Lack of Opportunities to Present Work**
   Closely related to the aforementioned point, many of those artists interviewed bemoaned the lack of opportunities to present, exhibit and/or perform their work. There was a general consensus that programmers and curators in Ireland were not aware and/or knowledgeable of the range of diverse cultural practices in the wider

community. This lack of understanding and appreciation of the creative practices of ethnically diverse artists were seen as a major obstacle for such artists entering the mainstream. Programmers and curators needed to be regularly exposed at first hand to this work and supported by their audiences and public funding agencies in including it in their seasonal programmes. There were of course some exceptions to the rule, with several artists mentioning the Project Arts Centre and Axis, Ballymun in particular (see Section 3.2 below).

The vast majority of artists interviewed felt that they didn't know how to explain and present their practice and their work to arts producers and presenters, let alone make contact with them in the first instance.

A small but significant number also commented that experience and qualifications gained outside Ireland was often undervalued. One Indian writer and performer said his own personal challenges included, "Lack of opportunities, perception against the back ground … not enough attention and consideration and respect for qualifications and professionalism".

4. Language as a Barrier

Some artists remarked that their challenges were less based on racial or ethnic discrimination but rather overcoming feelings of isolation due to language and cultural barriers as they attempted to make their homes in Ireland. This can contribute to a range of problems for such artists including misunderstandings about their practice through to not being clear on the criteria for arts funding. It can also create real challenges in how their creative works are perceived or understood too. One writer for example commented "*The differences in the style and way of writing in literature, specially poetry according to the different traditions, values, way of dealing with life, feelings, thoughts, emotions, ideas, all this makes it difficult sometimes to express yourself in a different language*".

Several artists also commented that arts presenters and producers in Ireland were skeptical about whether artists from ethnically diverse backgrounds could be trusted to deliver artistic projects and programmes.

"They (Irish promoters/venues) always want to show sympathy for you and not exploring your expertise and passion for what you do. There is this unspoken signs that you cannot deliver, you are not trusted – we should lead while you tag-along … "

"One of the problems I have experienced working with a few establishments outside my own ethnic community is the sheer failure or refusal to recognize my positive qualities as an artist".

5. Feelings of Discrimination

Experiences of discrimination and isolation were raised by many those surveyed.

For example, several key informants indicated that while there is a strong presence of white actors represented in the professional arts scene in Ireland, there is an absence of artists of colour seen on stage. The informants involved in theatre suggested this is mainly due to the common practice of professional theatre production companies and houses and institutions hiring mainly white actors and, thus, creating casts and ensembles that are predominantly white. The same observation might also be leveled at galleries and arts centres in respect of the general lack of exhibitions by ethnically diverse artists resident in Ireland.

It is important though to note that there are exceptions to this situation and that from time to time there have been productions and presentations of theatre and dance, music and exhibitions by ethnically diverse artists resident in Ireland in some venues and galleries. Rosaleen McDonagh is a Traveller with a disability who is a playwright, activist and performer based in Dublin. Her plays include her acclaimed one-woman show, *The Babydoll Project, Stuck* and most recently in March 2012 *Beat Him Like a Badger* (as part of the *Tiny Plays For Ireland* season for Fishamble: The New Play Company) and all presented at the Project Art Centre. Project Arts Centre has been a regular and genuine supporter of such initiatives, including providing a Dublin venue for Traveller Focus Week. Michael Collins is also a member of the Irish traveller community who has been an advocate of traveller human rights for over 20 years. He is an actor, writer and performer and has acted on stage in the Abbey Theatre and The Olympia. His most recent play, *Magpies on the Pylon* was performed at Axis, Ballymun in June 2012. Axis is another arts venue that has a strong interest in developing and promoting artists from culturally diverse backgrounds. Dublin Dance Festival (in association with Culture Ireland and Dance Ireland) recently showcased seven artists/companies in its annual "Re-Presenting Ireland" programme including Seekers from 50% Male Experimental Theatre, a Polish dance company based in Dublin and led by choreographer, Anna Gaciarz. 50% Male Experimental Theatre have since gone on to premiere a new work, Chemistry, at the 2012 Dublin Fringe Festival.

Despite these positive experiences and examples, many of those artists interviewed nevertheless relayed feelings of being typecast for specific, usually limited, roles and their range of ability was usually not considered. One young Black African Actress said that a major challenge for her was *"proving that I can play different character - not only immigrants"*. Behind this lies some major philosophical, ethical as well as cultural issues including the limited nature of the theatre repertoire in Ireland and the place of integrated casting.

In a wider context, there was not surprisingly feelings of racism and prejudice; *"Sometimes when some people in Ireland need an excuse or explanation for unemployment, shortages in housing, health service crises etc, or even the general dire strait of economy, there is the tendency to use anti-immigrant rhetoric to misinform others"*.

6. Challenges with Networking

    Three of the key informants identified networking opportunities as a challenge. Many lack the confidence necessary to approach arts presenters and producers to discuss and sell their work. The opportunities to network with colleagues are few and indeed the "art" of networking itself can often be a difficult process. Some artists remarked that a major challenge is the lack of networking opportunities to make connections with arts presenters, producers and potential partners and collaborators and to seek out available resources to integrate or establish themselves as bona fide artists. Many immigrant and Traveller artists have no or limited knowledge of networking, where to go for information, and how to access the available resources in the arts sector.

    Without proper resources and knowledge being easily available and accessible to immigrant, Traveller and culturally diverse artists within their community, artists from these backgrounds are unable to build their networks and establish themselves in an arts profession. This can also create feelings of discouragement and the feeling that the work of immigrant and culturally diverse artists is of lesser value in the Irish context.

7. Other Issues Arising

    A handful of other issues were raised by artists and whilst they did not occur with the same frequency as those mentioned above, they are perhaps no less significant.

    ◗ The importance of youth opportunities in the arts

    Both artists and arts organisations agree on the importance of providing opportunities for young people from immigrant, Traveller and new communities backgrounds to develop themselves as artists and pursue career oriented growth within the arts and culture sector. Arts programming can provide experiential learning opportunities for young people to explore their options, interests and build upon their strengths. Equally, the presence of good role models from their own communities along with access to both expert career guidance and counseling and further education are vital building blocks in developing the next generation of artists.

    ◗ The lack of ethnic minority representation

    The lack of representation of artists from immigrant, Traveller and new communities backgrounds in the arts sector – funders, producing and presenting

organisations – is also a key issue. If there is no diversity at the top of an organisation for example, it is unlikely that there will be much at its heart. Rosaleen McDonagh, a leading Traveller and disabled artist, was clear that representation was generally lacking in both the arts sector workforce and on Boards of Management. Public funding agencies cannot expect to have a developed knowledge of culturally diverse artistic practices unless they engage artists from those fields on their staffs, advisory and funding panels.

Some sensitivity however needs to be exercised by organisation seeking to make otherwise genuine attempts to broaden representation on boards of management and funding panels. As one artist put it "the difficulty is, an artist, regardless of their ethnicity or national identity may well be just an artist who does not have an analysis of the issues for their wider community, or an understanding of racism and its impact. There is no reason why an artist should have the burden of representing issues or their community." Choice, individuality, expectations and affirmative action are all key elements to this discussion.

Positive action where needed

Limited forms of "positive action" are generally seen as an acceptable means to ensure disadvantaged and under-represented groups have access to facilities for training and are encouraged to apply for funding and jobs. Whilst many artists interviewed simply want "an even playing field" when it comes to accessing funding and work, they do believe that a range of positive actions may be helpful in establishing this.

The need for meaningful intercultural interactions and dialogue

Issues surrounding the need for meaningful interactions and intercultural dialogue were raised by several of the informants. It was also a key concern for those arts organisations with a track record in promoting culturally diverse programmes and events, such as Axis, Ballymun and the Chester Beatty Library. A greater level of debate and discourse with and within the mainstream arts sector in Ireland is required. In addition, the lack of intercultural stories and histories being shared in classrooms across the country is a barrier that must be overcome if a greater appreciation of the richness of cultural diversity of society is to be achieved.

It is difficult and perhaps unhelpful to separate out the above issues, as they are all inter-related in some way or another. However, in terms of broad ranking of issues and challenges facing artists from immigrant, Traveller and new communities backgrounds, the following were most keenly felt by 91% of respondents; a lack of appreciation of cultural diversity (and sometimes related language issues), the

closed nature of the mainstream Irish arts sector (with the consequence of few opportunities to present and produce work) and a perceived Inequity of funding together with a lack of Information about available funding.

4.2 Presenters and Networks

In general, the artistic programmes of arts buildings in the two council areas only include a small proportion of work by Asian, African and Caribbean artists from Ireland and abroad and only a very few play a significant role in engaging with regionally based Asian, African and Caribbean artists. The majority of arts performance and gallery spaces in the two council areas seem to have little engagement with Asian, African and Caribbean artists, with some notable exceptions like Axis, Ballymun, the Project Arts Centre, the Chester Beatty Library and the Civic Theatre, Tallaght. Obviously there is a key issue for arts programmers of the actual availability of culturally relevant product. Nevertheless, the artists surveyed perceived that there was a lack of engagement between the artists and arts presenters and producers, an issue, which needs to be addressed.

Venue programmers and directors are in general well disposed to the idea of hosting work by artists from immigrant, Traveller and new communities, however, they all make the point that there is little information about who these artists are, what they are doing and how and why this might be relevant to their audiences. There are very few "champions" in this sector for this area of artistic activity i.e. curators, directors or programmers who are willing to make the effort to go out and find emerging artists from these particular backgrounds and champion their career development. A lack of champions means that there is a cycle in which artists from immigrant, Traveller and new communities do not benefit from exposure through performances, exhibitions, concerts etc and therefore do not gain from the related developmental opportunities, which then becomes a self-perpetuating problem.

Arts programmers and producers agree that they need to expand their knowledge of artists from immigrant, Traveller and new communities within Ireland and to broaden their general understanding of the artistic practices of diverse cultures. However, there is little access for them to sources of valid research and/or information about this within Ireland let alone the two council areas and a lack of an identifiable individual or agency developing this, as compared to similar situations elsewhere such as Northern Ireland and Great Britain (see appendices for case studies). There are no discernable Asian, African and Caribbean led arts organisations within Ireland that artists from these backgrounds can turn to either. Consequently, there are currently no agencies or organisations that could provide culturally specific expertise and a connection with audiences that may be able to contribute effectively to the creative development of these artists.

Alongside this need for a greater knowledge, awareness and accessible information of the artistic practices of diverse communities, many of those programmers interviewed also stressed the need to help develop audiences from across all communities for this area of work. In the current challenging economic climate, venues will find it increasingly difficult to take the risk of promoting a particular event, however worthy, innovative or talented the artist(s) may be, if there is no discernable audience for the work. Audience development is however an essential and accepted aspect of arts management and with the right mix of imaginative programming and promotional resources and measures, significant audiences can be generated not only artists from culturally diverse backgrounds but for good quality artistic events in general.

There are however several examples in Ireland of good practice and work in developing an increased awareness of culturally diverse practices in the arts including for example;

- A one day seminar on "*Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity in Ireland's Cultural Spaces*" in November 2010 hosted by the Council of National Cultural Institutions at Chester Beatty Library, Dublin;

- The Chester Beatty Library's support for young curators from ethnically diverse backgrounds;

- The inclusion of artists such as Bisi Adigun in Project Arts Centre's programme;

- Axis, Ballymun's pioneering work with Traveller artists, such as Michael Collins;

- The promotion of international collaborations and local relationships at the Civic Theatre, Tallaght including "Real Soap Opera" (2010), Skin Deep (2008) and Mushroom (2007);

- Fishamble's approach to developing, supporting and producing writers including most notably Rosaleen McDonagh;

- The activities of the Centre for Creative Practices, a Dublin arts centre dedicated to connecting, integrating and promoting immigrant, experimental and emerging artists.

In addition, there are also examples of communities forming their own groups and associations to promote local artists and arts practices. One example is Migrant Writers & Performing Artists Ireland, established in 2011 in partnership with New Communities Partnership. Migrant Writers and Performing Artists Ireland serves as a creative platform for bringing together migrant artists, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to modern Irish arts in a positive way. It provides migrant artists with "an opportunity to achieve fulfillment as creative thinkers and commentators on issues and events in ways different from how they have been interpreted in the public sphere". As a result of funding by the South Dublin County

Council Arts Office, they were able to produce and publish an anthology of migrant poetry called *Embers of Words*, which was launched on 22nd October at Irish Writers Centre. The book, edited by Dr. Theophilus Ejorh, Illuminates the thoughts, feelings, personal experiences and longings of migrant poets from different backgrounds in a newly evolving Ireland.

4.3 Young People

A key area that policy makers and their strategic partners might address is the need to create programmes of activity, which establish the notion of a meaningful career in the arts in the minds of young people, and particularly those from ethnic minority groups. Although the timing, nature and scope of this research did not allow for any extensive surveying of young people, some interesting approaches to facilitated learning was observed from participants engaged in a workshop day led by the Phakama Project (in association with Tallaght Community Arts and Common Ground) in May 2012.

In addition, there are also studies and research from elsewhere that is helpful in understanding the issues arising for young people considering careers in the arts. For example, in December 2008, Arts Council of England published a policy proposal called "*Beating the Odds - Enhancing the engagement of young people from culturally diverse backgrounds with careers in the arts*". Participants in a workshop in the West Midlands identified specific barriers and opportunities for students opting for the visual arts.

Barriers to students opting for the visual arts
- Family expectations and values
- Perception that art is not academically robust
- Absence of clear career paths or opportunities
- Uncertainty of future income
- Cost of participation in arts courses
- Resource limitations in institutions

Opportunities through mentoring
- Inspire through example positive role models encourage participation
- Build students' confidence
- Establish clear, supported pathways at key moments
- Demystify visual arts for prospective students and their families
- Improve awareness of education and opportunities in the industry

Other means to address barriers
- Build better links with careers guidance services
- Develop a carefully targeted bursary programme

"Beating the Odds…" recommended supporting a pilot mentoring programme in order to support young people in school across a range of ages and stages in their development. This programme would enable mentoring to connect and add value to existing activities provided by a range of organisations already engaged with visual arts education. These should be delivered over a minimum of five years in order to test whether mentoring can make a difference to young people's career choices. The pilot needs to be concerned with ensuring continuation, supporting transition, strengthening abilities and 'demystifying' ways forward.

A good but quite different example of how to actively involve young people in the arts is Project Phakama. Project Phakama is a UK based organsiation that is committed to cultural exchange and the celebration of shared experiences. A youth arts organisation that believes individuals' own stories and life experiences have the power to move, challenge and inform, Phakama creates shared spaces for young artists to express, perform and grow. Over the years Phakama has benefited thousands of young people through employment and active citizenship who have experienced extremes of social disadvantage in their lives. In May 2012, Phakama delivered a 2 day workshop for arts practitioners, communities workers and young people from Bluebell, Inchicore and Tallaght in partnership with Common Ground and Tallaght Community Arts. The Phakama team led sessions that included a multidisciplinary process, shared creative responsibility and intercultural creative dialogue/ processes/projects. The young participants appeared to greatly enjoy and benefit from this facilitated learning process and perhaps in doing so, also were able to enhance their knowledge of and skills in various creative practices.

Another example from across the Irish Sea is *Tomorrow's Warriors*, a leading UK organisation for jazz music education and professional artist development. It is a multicultural organisation with a special, though not exclusive, focus on young musicians from the African diaspora. *Tomorrow's Warriors* focuses on the ongoing musical development of young people from 9 years onwards (see Appendix 3 for further details).

What these examples share is the value of direct exposure to and participation in professionally led arts practice, whether through mentoring or facilitated learning. More research into ways of encouraging young people in Ireland from all backgrounds but particularly those from ethnic minorities to consider careers in the arts needs to be undertaken, possibly in partnership with various career guidance services and the Department of Education. The notion of mentoring is a positive and reoccurring theme throughout this research and there is merit in further considering how such an approach might be integrated into existing arts curriculum and career guidance structures. This is something that the commissioning partners of this research may wish to consider advocating for in the future. In the meantime, collaborative and participatory initiatives

such as the Project Phakama training days could be expanded and/or customized to benefit many more young people, though this will require additional and longer term support from local agencies and funders.

Finally, the question of visible and recognisable role models is key for illustrating to young people what can be achieved. It is significant that public funding agencies in the UK including the various Arts Councils and Creative Scotland, have adopted an approach to develop talent at the very top level, particularly in the case of both disability arts and culturally diverse arts practice as a way of creating leaders in the field and role models for the next generation. Such an approach in itself also in time creates demand from young people for further education and professional training, hopefully followed by a corresponding response from training providers and colleges.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The interviews conducted with both artists from immigrant, new communities and Traveller backgrounds clearly illustrate many of the challenges and barriers that they face as they attempt to build careers in the arts and culture sector in Ireland. The interviews reveal the need for such artists to have better access to information on available resources to support the development of their creative practices and careers including funding, physical resources such as spaces to rehearse and create work, opportunities to exhibit, present and perform work and training and education. In addition, these artists are also concerned about the difficulty of gaining recognition and how their creative practices are understood and evaluated. There are also issues around language barriers, networking opportunities, lack of representation on staffs and Boards of arts organisation, stereotyping and the need for arts and cultural programming for children and youth that facilitate intercultural dialogue.

Behind all of this lies the greater issue of an arts sector that is largely perceived as a closed community and difficult to access let alone be a genuine part of. Many arts presenters, producers and programmers are poorly informed about the range and availability of work from artists of culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds. Whilst some however recognise this and would like to see measures and resources dedicated to building up their knowledge and appreciation of this area of work, there is nevertheless a common perception amongst many ethnically diverse artists that the Irish arts sector is just not interested in their work. Part of the reason for this perceived reticence by programmers might be their concern about whether there is a significant enough audience for the work of these artists, a factor even more acutely felt in these difficult economic times.

A wider debate needs to be had by all sections of the Irish arts sector about cultural diversity in society and the arts in Ireland today. Ireland is becoming a more mixed country with the latest census data from 2011 showing that those born outside the State account for some 17% of the population. Given this increasing diversity of our population, the need to better understand the experiences of immigrant and culturally diverse artists, art professionals and cultural workers is more necessary than ever. In identifying and effectively addressing these artists' needs, barriers to inclusion can be identified and dismantled, inclusive arts practices and programming can be established, and better

strategies to connect artists of diverse cultural backgrounds with existing services and opportunities can be provided.

5.2 Recommendations

The following are recommendations for Dublin City Council and South Dublin County Council based on the key issues, challenges and barriers expressed during the research. Whilst the majority focuses on potential ways for developing and improving the careers of ethnically diverse artists, there are a handful of recommendations that will indirectly aid this objective, such as initiatives around audience development and ethnic minority representation on the staffs and boards of arts organisations. Many of these recommendations though may be best delivered in partnership with like-minded public agencies such as the Arts Council, arts venues and representative organisations and networks. They are listed to reflect the priorities articulated by the consultees to this report with some consideration also being given to the practicality of delivery.

5.2.1 In General

1. The nature and scale of change required to create a more culturally diverse arts sector requires a **long term commitment**, particularly by the public funding agencies. Time is needed for artists, venues, promoters and producers to establish new contacts, increase their knowledge of culturally diverse artistic practice, and discover new mutual ways of working and to build trust. Phased targets, frequent monitoring and reviews and the involvement of expert practitioners with a track record in this area are vital components of this process.

2. Public funding agencies working to promote the arts need to **demonstrate nationally (and internationally) the strengths of a culturally diverse society**. In particular, they might consider measures to unpack and debunk some of the misconceptions around the concept, such as that the work from culturally diverse artists is either irrelevant to Irish audiences or is of a lesser quality than works of art from indigenous Irish artists.

5.2.2 Specific Actions to support the development of Artists and their Creative Practice

1. Explore strategies to better communicate with immigrant artists and artists from diverse cultural backgrounds with information about existing and available funding sources, services and opportunities. This might include for example a dedicated website, perhaps not dissimilar to the model developed for the highly respected Artsandhealth.ie, the independent, national arts and health website developed by the Waterford Healing Arts Trust (WHAT) and Create (the national development agency for collaborative arts in social and community contexts). Such a website might provide a

resource and focal point for culturally diverse arts practices in Ireland via information, support, advice and news, and encouraging a wider discourse between artists, arts organisations, public agencies and others interested in this field. It could also include a directory of artists with information on their work, availability and contact details. Existing websites hosted by both public funding agencies and arts organisations might also be made more "migrant friendly" with less jargon and clearer language and where appropriate highlighted programmes catering for artists from culturally diverse backgrounds. Equally, more personable routes to connecting with these artists should be considered, particularly through community based associations and organisations. Translation of funding criteria and application forms into other common languages found in Ireland should also be considered.

2. Provide mentorships, skill development, placements, artist residencies and events for emerging and more established artists from diverse cultural backgrounds to communicate and share their needs, experiences, and ideas of establishing a career. Such capacity building programmes, for indigenous artists and arts organisations already exist (Common Ground, Create and Tallaght Community Arts all in their different ways have worked in this way) and an extension and/or redesign of these should not be too difficult for public funding and training agencies to conceive. As part of its Intercultural Arts Strategy, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland provides funding for immigrant artists from two new programmes within the Arts Council's Support for Individual Artists Programme – *Minority Ethnic Individual Artists Award and Artist in the Community Awards*. In the former, grants of up to £1,500 (approx. €1,800) can be used to support new projects, specialised research, personal artistic development, and the purchase of materials and equipment. Grants of up to £5,000 under the *Artist in the Community Award* scheme will be offered to artists working with a professional arts organisation, reflecting, researching and reconsidering art practice within an intercultural context. A similar programme of support might be worth considering here too.

3. Establish a professionally managed biennial platform for immigrant and culturally diverse artists to showcase their arts within the public sphere and receive recognition for their work, creating equal opportunities for emerging and existing artists from diverse cultural backgrounds. Showcasing is a very common practice for raising the profile of artists and their work whether for home or international markets. It has also been successfully used in the UK through the *decibel* initiative (see Appendix 2) to give artists from culturally diverse backgrounds an opportunity to exhibit and perform their works to arts presenters and programmers that they would not otherwise have had. Consideration should however be given to the timing of the first show case event to

ensure that participating artists and groups have sufficient time to develop and prepare work for presentation.

4. Create networking and information sharing events that offer opportunities for artists of diverse cultural backgrounds to build connections in the arts community. These might be dedicated events, such as conferences or seminars, specially designed to bring together the wider arts sector to discuss and explore together culturally diverse artistic practices. Equally, artists from immigrant, Traveller and new communities backgrounds might also be helped to become members of existing networking and representational bodies such as Visual Arts Ireland or Dance Ireland and attend industry and trade events, such as the annual Theatre Forum conference. Such assistance should not though be restricted to just financial help for registration fees, travel and accommodation but might also include a "buddy system", whereby first time attendees are chaperoned by long-standing members, who accompany them to individual sessions and make sure that they are introduced to other members.

5.2.3 Specific Actions for Agencies to facilitate

5. Review current practices in the design of and selection processes involved in arts funding programmes. Some of the definitions and concepts that are used to describe, understand and evaluate artistic practice as it is understood in the western world may not be helpful or indeed relevant to practices from say Africa, Asia or Latin America. The criteria for funding programmes may have to be revisited to ensure that they are genuinely inclusive of the non – traditional artistic practices. This is a major issue, which is likely to require further substantive research to build up knowledge and a genuine understanding of the diversity of creative practices within the funding agencies.

6. Related to this, explore the language issues that can often form an obstacle to immigrant and culturally diverse artists constructively interacting with the wider arts sector and in particular accessing public funding. This might, as mentioned above involve the public funding agencies publishing some of their programmes, application forms and criteria in other languages, other than English and Irish. This however is potentially expensive and some thought therefore might be given to accessing financing from other governmental agencies and departments as well as trusts and foundations.

7. Increase financial support to organisations and artists that already support non-traditional art forms and arts programming that foster intercultural dialogue and artistic expression to help build careers for artists from immigrant, Traveller and new communities backgrounds. This would include provide additional and/or new funding to the community arts sector to provide youth from ethnically diverse backgrounds

opportunities for growth through and participation in arts and cultural programming. The recent Phakama Project residency in March 2012 is a good example of this approach (see Appendix 2).

8. Encourage a greater representation from culturally diverse communities on Boards and staffs of all arts organisations. The Arts Council's 2006 "*A Practical Guide for Board Members of Arts Organisations*" largely restricts itself to the formal roles and functions of an arts board with no mention of the desirability of having a Board that not only understandably contains relevant skills, knowledge and experience but also represents the diverse communities that it serves. One action the local authorities might consider in partnership with the NCP is establishing a "Board bank" to develop a new generation of trustees from culturally diverse backgrounds.

5.2.4 Artists' Responses to Findings and Recommendations

Several of the participating artists attended a feedback session in March 2013 at Rua Red Arts Centre to comment on the findings of the research and to discuss which of the proposed recommendations should take priority. Also in attendance were members of steering group of the commissioning parties and the session was independently chaired by Noel Fitzgerald. Overall the report and its recommendations were well received with many welcoming the fact that artists were being directly consulted for their views and opinions.

The artists were asked to prioritise the recommendations in 5.2.2 and 5.2.3 above and in considering these it was noted that the recommendations broadly fell into two strands with the order of these being seen more as a strategy rather than a simple prioritising, as follows;

1. Recommendations relating to artists and the development of their creative practice
   The first four recommendations 1-4 fell into this strand with their ordering being recommendations, 1, 2, 4 and 3.

2. Recommendations for public agencies and policy makers
   The second four recommendations 1-4 fell into this strand with their ordering being recommendations 8, 5, 7 and 6.

In addition, it was also noted that there needed to be a recommendation for the arts press and media that would ask them to take more of an interest in the works and opinions of artists from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The success of the sports sector in tackling racism and prejudice might also be worth consideration by the wider arts community.

In summary, the feedback meeting suggested that the priorities for implementing the recommendations contained in this report, should be as follows;

Development of artists and their creative practice	Agencies to facilitate
▢ Representation on Boards & staffs	▢ Improved communications with and information for artists
▢ Design of funding schemes including selection processes	▢ Skills development & mentoring
▢ Funding for organisations working with culturally diverse artists	▢ Networking and information sharing events and opportunities
▢ Review language / use of plain English	▢ Showcases and platforms

6. Delivery in Partnership

Many of these aforementioned specific and general actions and recommendations can and indeed should be delivered in partnership with other like-minded public agencies, community and arts organisations. Whilst Dublin City Council and South Dublin County Council can implement some of the recommendations on their own, there are likely to be benefits from partnerships with agencies such as the Arts Council, Create, Common Ground as well as arts venues and producers. Moreover, consideration might be given to the commissioning of specific creative, developmental and promotional services from suitable partners.

Here below are some examples of possible actions that these sorts of partnerships and commissions might address and consider;

- producing a conference and/or series of regular seminars to bring together artists, venue and festival programmers, producers and curators, researchers and policy makers to explore the opportunities and challenges of culturally diverse arts practice in Ireland today and to identify effective ways forward in terms of policy, strategy and partnership. A previous and successful example of this approach was the *Vital Signs*, a series of arts and health events that took place in 2009, initiated by The Arts Council and delivered in association with Create (see Appendix 3 for further details).

- encouraging arts presenting venues, festivals and galleries to form consortia to develop work with artists from immigrant, new communities and Traveller backgrounds backgrounds, both from the two Council areas and beyond, potentially linking up with similar like minded partners from parts of Ireland;

- exploring the option of funding a curatorial or programming post aimed at stimulating more projects, productions and exhibitions originated by and featuring artists from immigrant, new communities and Traveller backgrounds, looking at models already tried and tested or under consideration in other sectors;

- identifying ways of developing leadership in artists from immigrant, new communities and Traveller backgrounds, both established and emerging;

- producing strategies and practical measures for developing audiences from immigrant, new communities and Traveller backgrounds, which might include a range of pilot projects and involving professional arts, local authority arts offices and community partners and agencies;

- reviewing current funding arrangements for research, development and production supports to ensure that they are working effectively for artists from immigrant, new

communities and Traveller backgrounds as they are for indigenous artists;

- encouraging all arts organisations throughout the country to provide training for staff that broadens their understanding of African, Caribbean, Asian, Traveller communities and artists in particular;

- working with the Department of Education and career advisory services to provide advice to young people in and out of the school system about opportunities for further education and development in artistic practices;

- enabling young people to have direct exposure to and participation in professionally led arts practice, whether through mentoring or facilitated learning;

- discussing with colleagues in Northern Ireland, such as the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, possibilities for cross border collaborations and partnerships;

- establishing opportunities for meaningful intercultural dialogue where non-immigrant and indigenous artists and audiences can learn about diverse artistic practices and build intercultural understanding through the arts across cultures.

6.1 Next Steps

The steering group with representatives of project partners will wish to consider the merit and value of the recommendations and actions contained in this report and if appropriate, make further comments and suggestions to the public funding agencies. The steering group's remit ends following a half day seminar for arts sector to share learning, support better communication and enhance working practice (provisionally scheduled for May 2013).

There is a genuine opportunity for the two local authorities, primarily in partnership with the Arts Council to demonstrate real leadership in shaping the future design and delivery of programmes benefitting this area of work. They may also wish to meet and discuss the report and identify ways that they might collaborate to deliver one or more of the report's recommendations, taking into account available resources. These discussions may also involve exploring which actions should be prioritized as a response to the current and anticipated needs of artists. Perhaps most crucially, measures will need to be taken to commence a meaningful and continuing dialogue with the wider arts sector in Ireland on the benefits of culturally diverse artistic practices.

Some of the above recommendations and actions may be able to **be** implemented concurrently whilst others may need to be addressed early on to lay the ground for others

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to follow. For example, a decision might be taken to produce a showcase event with ancillary discussions, seminars and discussions on a biennial basis in 2014. Prior to this though, measures will be required to help artists develop and prepare work that might feature in this event. These preparations might include mentoring programmes, artist residencies and the provision of financial resources for commissioning and producing work.

Whilst some actions might be taken by individual agencies working in specific areas, both geographical and socially defined, there are many more that will be best achieved in a variety of partnerships across the arts funding sector including public finding agencies, venues and galleries and arts producers. Furthermore, the opportunity to work alongside community based organisations to identify, assist and promote artists from within ethnically diverse communities is also one that should not be ignored.

Appendix 1: Case Studies

This section aims to provide examples of both good practice and interesting initiatives in promoting greater diversity in the arts, particularly in relation to the needs of artists, both emerging and established and including in several cases from ethnically diverse backgrounds. Examples are taken from Northern Ireland and the UK and New Zealand that illustrate new policy initiatives, funding streams to develop talent from ethnically diverse backgrounds, mentoring and training programmes, showcase opportunities for artists to present their work to programmers and venues and parallel successful initiatives in the areas of arts and disability, health and older people. Hopefully these examples and case studies will encourage and inspire funding agencies, arts organisations and artists within the State and from all backgrounds to consider new ways of supporting the arts that reflects the diversity and the reality of the world we live in today.

Case Studies from Ireland
1. The Arts Council/ An Chomhairle Ealaíon – Arts Participation Initiatives
2. The Arts Council of Northern Ireland Intercultural Strategy and Funding Schemes
3. ArtsExta – an Arts and Social Enterprise
4. Community Arts Partnership – Dialogue, Training and Development
5. Deis – A Positive Initiative for the Traditional Arts
6. Centre for Creative Practices

Case Studies from outside Ireland
7. Creative New Zealand – Approaches to Cultural Diversity
8. "decibel" Performing Arts Showcase
9. Tomorrow's Warriors (UK) – music education for young people

1.   The Arts Council/ An Chomhairle Ealaíon – Arts Participation Initiatives

Arts participation is a core value across all areas of the Arts Council's work as reflected in its current mission statement, which commits the agency to increasing public access, participation and engagement in the arts, as well as assisting artists of all disciplines to make work of excellence. The Arts Council has specific policies and strategies to support arts and disability, arts and older people and arts and health, which have aided and assisted important developments for artists, audiences and participants alike in these areas. Some of the approaches and initiatives employed in these areas might also be helpful in assisting public funding agencies to achieve similar successful outcomes in respect of cultural diversity.

The Arts Council uses the term '**arts and disability**' to encompass a range of arts practices and activities involving people with disabilities both as practitioners and as audience members. It provides funding support to a wide range of agencies that have a central role in supporting this area of work, which includes venues, local authority arts officers, festivals, and production companies in initiatives to improve access through arts programming arts and targeting people with disabilities as artists, participants and audiences.

In particular, it is worth mentioning two specific initiatives; the *Shift in Perspective* resource pack and *The Arts and Disability Networking (ADN) initiative*. The arts and disability resource pack, Shift in Perspective, is the result of a partnership between the Arts Council, Arts & Disability Ireland (ADI), Mayo County Council, the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) and South Tipperary, County Council. It grew out of the partner organisations' work to develop innovative approaches in high quality contemporary arts and disability practice, and to make arts venues more accessible to artists and audiences with disabilities. The resource pack aims to capture the learning from three arts initiatives and share its practical application with artists and all who work in professional and community-based venues, galleries, theatres and related arts organisations.

The *Shift in Perspective* resource pack was the result of a partnership between the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon, Arts & Disability Ireland (ADI), Mayo County Council, the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) and South Tipperary County Council. It grew out of the partner organisations' work to develop innovative approaches in high- quality contemporary arts and disability practice, and to make arts venues more accessible to artists and audiences with disabilities.

One of the initiatives described in the resource pack is the *Arts and Disability Networking Pilot (ADNP)*, a model that offered training and support to artists and venue personnel based in Mayo as a means of extending the scope of arts and disability practice in the county. It also promoted the presentation of high quality; professional arts and disability work in local venues. During the pilot, the partners developed a set of guiding principles that included;

- Identifying key stakeholders that together can improve access and participation and extending artistic ambition in the area of arts and disability including local authorities, venues, individual artists, disability organisations and individual people with disabilities;
- An operating model that connects and integrates all these stakeholders in developing practice at local level;
- Disability equality training to bring people together on a county/regional basis to explore attitudes, consider access, discuss opportunities and explore a broad range

of arts and disability work including professional contemporary arts and disability practice;

- Providing tailored support to enable venues to conduct access audits and individual artists to extend their practice and build capacity for the future;
- Programming high-quality contemporary arts work in local venues and developing continuing professional development opportunities for disabled and non-disabled artists;
- Placing contemporary arts and disability practice at home within an international context as a means of continuously challenging and extending practice in Ireland.

The Arts Council also promotes a range of arts practices occurring primarily in healthcare settings, which bring together the skills and priorities of both arts and health professionals. Its **arts and health** policy and strategy was developed following a period of consultation and research with the arts and health sector, which included *Vital Signs*, a series of arts and health events that took place in October 2009. *Vital Signs* included a conference in the Royal College of Physician that brought together artists, project managers, healthcare staff, service users, researchers and policy makers to explore the opportunities and challenges of arts and health practice in Ireland today and to identify effective ways forward in terms of policy, strategy and partnership. Other events in the *Vital Signs* programme included a national exhibition in five venues in Dublin 8 and a series of opinion pieces about arts and health practice. *Vital Signs* was initiated by The Arts Council and delivered in association with Create, the national development agency for collaborative arts.

In addition to providing funding for key agencies working in this field, it also supported the development of the independent, national arts and health website **www.artsandhealth.ie** developed by the Waterford Healing Arts Trust (WHAT) and Create (the national development agency for collaborative arts in social and community contexts). The website provides a resource and focal point for the emergent field of arts and health in Ireland via information, support, advice and news, and generates discussion between artists, arts organisations, health service users, carers, healthcare professionals and others interested in arts and health.

2. Arts Council NI Intercultural Strategy and Funding Schemes

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland launched its Intercultural Arts Strategy 2011-2016 earlier this year. In the preceding consultation, many indicated the need for training and mentoring within the arts sector, particularly for minority ethnic artists. It was generally felt that existing training for the sector did not meet the needs of minority ethnic artists and minority ethnic leaders/communities, for instance, building capacity in relation to accessing funding, developing CV's, writing contracts and governance issues. Others

expressed the need for training and development courses to assist local and ethnic artists working within various community contexts. A summary of the key issues raised during the consultation is as follows;

- Barriers hindering minority ethnic communities from accessing and participating in the arts in Northern Ireland: language, financial issues, lack of awareness, generational factors, and apathy and access problems.
- The need for development within the sector in terms of capacity building and training.
- Raising awareness of the existing funding and network opportunities for minority ethnic arts in Northern Ireland.
- The importance of integrating areas such as intercultural engagement, developing good relations, increasing awareness of diversity, tackling racism and developing community cohesion into the strategic direction of the strategy.
- The need for financial resources to develop work within the sector.

Two major themes are articulated in the strategy together with specific objectives, actions and outcomes.

1. *Develop the Minority Arts Infrastructure* with the objective of providing opportunities for ethnic/local artists, minority ethnic groups and arts organisations to develop their engagement within the arts sector. Actions include;

- Promote the current funding streams of the Arts Council. Raise awareness through information sessions on the current opportunities to engage in intercultural work through funding streams, e.g. Re- imaging Communities Programme, Small Grants Programme, STartUP Programme, Lottery funding, SIAP and ASOP.
- Develop communication avenues, which encourage minority ethnic communities to access and participate in the arts.
- Support the identification of training and development opportunities within the sector in terms of building capacity, accessing funding, developing CV's/contracts as well as governance issues.
- Establish baseline figures on the levels of attendance and participation of minority ethnic communities in the arts. For example, review of current forms of data gathering, RFO and Equality Monitoring Forms.
- Investigate with DCAL research opportunities within this area. This will help contribute to our understanding of the sector, e.g. barriers faced by distinct ethnic groups.

2. *Using the arts to develop community* cohesion with the objective of providing artistic opportunities for minority ethnic and indigenous communities to come together within their communities in order to develop community cohesion and integration. Actions include;

   ◗ Establishing an Intercultural Arts Steering Group inviting participation from public, private, charity and academic sectors in addition to ethnic artists, arts organisations and umbrella organisations within the minority ethnic sector

   ◗ Identifying and working with excluded groups, e.g. hard-to-reach minority groups as well as those located in the 36 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, 26 Areas at Risk and rural communities.

3. *Using the arts to increase awareness of diversity* with the objective of supporting and providing opportunities for minority ethnic communities to develop skills, which will strengthen their 'voice' in the promotion of their cultures and traditions – artistic, professional, and personal development skills. Actions include;

   ◗ Develop a dedicated communications strategy

   ◗ Sourcing partners that can develop advocacy and lobbying skills of minority ethnic communities, e.g. Intercultural Arts Steering Group. Showcase minority ethnic arts across Northern Ireland, e.g. within arts venues.

   ◗ Hosting a conference that engages critical discussion around the use of the arts to promote interculturalism. This conference would involve academics and arts practitioners.

One of the specific outcomes of this strategy in 2012 has been the promotion by the Arts Council of four funding strands;

1. *Intercultural Arts Grants* that support meaningful collaboration between minority ethnic communities and artists. Grants are available up to STG£10,000.

2. *Artist in the Community Awards* that support professional arts practice within a community setting and provide artists with the time and resources to work within an intercultural community setting and reflect, research and reconsider art practice within this context. Grants are available up to STG£5,000.

3. *Minority Ethnic Individual Artists Awards* that support professional arts practice and specifically targeted at artists from minority ethnic communities. Grants are available up to STG£1,500.

4. *Intercultural Arts Support Programme*, managed in association with the Community Arts Partnership, provides a number of training, development and networking opportunities for artists and communities exploring the area of arts and cultural diversity.

3.   ArtsEkta – an arts and social enterprise

ArtsEkta (Ekta means "bonding/uniting" in the Indian language) is a multi-award winning arts and social enterprise, based in Belfast, that works to enhance the practice, understanding and appreciation of ethnic arts within an artistic, social and educational context. The organisation is dedicated to strengthening and deepening relationships between different cultures and communities through a series of arts-based programmes. The founders believe in particular that there is a strong need to develop the presence of local minority ethnic artists at a grassroots level and enable opportunities for their professional artistic development.

ArtsEkta's mission is to promote and support multi-cultural arts and artists in the community by;
- Sharing the value of unique cultural experiences;
- Raising awareness and acceptance of different cultures through an innovative and creative programme of workshops, educational outreach and festivals.

Their programmes include;
- Regional outreach programme – Cultural Coach;
- Specialised dance programme – South Asian Dance Academy;
- Festivals – Belfast Mela, Diwali & Samhain and Festival of Colours;
- Artistic Development;
- Sectoral Development – leadership on Minority Ethnic Arts Forum and Stronger Together working groups;

Examples of ArtsEkta's work and approaches that might help inform possible initiatives to assist the development of artists' careers in the Republic include its Cultural Coach programme which in the first instance prepares ME artists to present their work in local schools as "cultural facilitators" as well as providing longer term residencies for more established artists. Participating artists receive an hourly fee starting at £12 for new entrants to the programme rising to £30 for those that successfully complete the training programme. ArtsEkta also provides one to one mentoring services for artists, again with hourly payments to both parties. Programming cultural diverse work also forms a key element of ArtsEkta's remit including the annual Belfast Mela and the Festival of Colours, both of which serve to showcase ME artists from within and outside Ireland to a wider audiences and in partnership with a wide variety of mainstream Belfast arts venues. Finally, ArtsEkta are involved in the development of best practice models in ethnic arts through national partnerships with Creative Scotland, European Mela Network, The Nehru Centre (London) and Ulfah Arts (Bradford) and leadership in the ME sector through the "Stronger Together" and "Cultural Weave" initiatives.

4. Community Arts Partnership – Dialogue, Training and Development

Community Arts Partnership operates throughout Northern Ireland and develops creative opportunities for artists, communities and individuals and champions community arts through advocacy, research and promotion. CAP are continually looking to develop and extend new opportunities at community level and champion community arts practice for local, national and international practitioners, participants and audiences. CAP is currently home to the Minority Ethnic Arts Forum, which until recently was administered by ArtsEkta. This Forum meets on a periodic basis and is a place for debate and discussion around issues of cultural diversity in Northern Ireland. CAP also manages the Intercultural Arts Support Programme in partnership with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (see case study above). This programme provides training, development and networking opportunities for artists and communities exploring the area of arts and cultural diversity.

5. Deis – a positive approach to traditional arts

Deis is a scheme established under the Arts Council's Traditional Arts Initiative, 2005-2008. It is an example of a positive initiative aimed at developing a particular artistic community, in this case the traditional arts community who were encouraged and facilitated to seek funding from the Arts Council for a range of projects. For example, the Deis Recording Award provided support for traditional arts recording projects and recording projects involving collaboration between the traditional arts and other artforms. In 2011 the Arts Council supported 19 proposals under this award with the average award being €4,500. This Arts Council initiative is supported by a number of advisors who have specific expertise and working knowledge of this area of work including for example, Maureen Carty, Tara Connaghan, Matt Cranitch, Catherine Foley, Treasa Harkin, Liam Ó Maolaodha, Tom Sherlock and Toner Quinn.

6. Centre for Creative Practices

The Centre for Creative Practices, founded in September 2009, is a Dublin based arts centre dedicated to connecting, integrating and promoting immigrant, experimental and emerging artists amongst the local arts scene and audiences. CFCP reports that since 2009 it has engaged 600 immigrant artists and 200 local niche artists. CFCP provides a creative, supportive and Inclusive multidisciplinary space dedicated to integrating different societies through arts and culture. It offers mentoring, consultations, creative and business training to enhance professional development, communication skills and knowledge. Its activities are primarily aimed at immigrant and local artists and creative communities, arts professionals and event organisers, local and international audiences and wider society. Their approach links artistic and social inclusion practices to help to

overcome linguistic, cultural and economic barriers Innovative business model bringing together the artistic and corporate worlds. Events include regular concerts and exhibitions and their forthcoming programme for 2013 includes a series of events, courses, talks and discussions on marketing for artists and arts organisations (as part of their Professional Development Series 2013) and *Migrant Artists About Ireland*, a programme of exhibitions and performances of the works from migrant artists that will run through to June 2013. The organisation has been awarded the Multicultural Company of the Year 2011 (MAMA Awards), has been shortlisted as Dublin's Gallery of the Year 2011. In 2012 CFCP became an Award Winner of the Arthur Guinness Fund.

7. Creative New Zealand – Approaches to Cultural Diversity

Creative New Zealand's purpose is 'to encourage, promote and support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders'. One of the cornerstones of making this a reality is by recognising New Zealand's cultural diversity and celebrating the arts of ethnic communities. Here are two examples of specific approaches around promoting a wider debate within the arts sector and the contribution that audience date can make to this that Creative New Zealand has taken;

1. New Zealand Diversity Forum

   In 2006, Creative New Zealand hosted a special topic forum 'Diversity and the Arts' as part of the New Zealand Diversity Forum. This Forum provided an opportunity to further explore questions and issues around diversity, identity and the arts. A number of key themes came out of this forum that have since been taken on board by the funder including;
   - We all possess multiple identities – therefore strategies and approaches must be inclusive rather than exclusive;
   - We are already living in a diverse society. It is important that arts organisations reflect this;
   - Organisations must take flexible approaches to defining diversity;
   - Organisations need to demonstrate leadership by beginning to examine the issues and opportunities associated with diversity.

2. Providing Market Intelligence

   Creative New Zealand recurrently funds a number of arts organisations in Auckland, among them Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, Auckland Theatre Company, NBR New Zealand Opera, Black Grace Dance Company, Moving Image Centre, Artspace and Objectspace. In partnership with these organisations, it plays a leadership role in providing market intelligence to help them understand different

audiences' needs for future artistic and audience development. A growing diversity of communities is acknowledged by these mainly performing arts organisations but many questions remain as to how they adapt and reframe their artistic programme offer to cater for a more multi-cultural society. Creative New Zealand aims to provide arts organisations that aspire to forge long-term relationships with ethnically diverse communities with the tools and the knowledge that "tell a story" and enable them to redefine awareness, accessibility and attraction of their programming to successfully grow a range of audiences.

8. **"decibel" Performing Arts Showcase**

decibel Performing Arts Showcase is a biennial event managed by Arts Council of England with the purpose of promoting diverse practice in the performing arts sector. National and international promoters, producers, programmers, artistic directors and venue managers are invited to see extracts from leading artists' latest productions and new and developing work. Networking opportunities then lead to longer term relationships, which see delegates booking artists' work or collaborating with them to develop their ideas further. This key showcase provides UK and international arts professionals with the opportunity to preview innovative and culturally diverse productions from some of the UK's most talented performing artists and companies. An open call is issued by the Arts Council to artists and companies with diverse artistic and cultural practices, which includes, but is not limited to, artists from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, disabled people or any other artist who may have had limited opportunities to participate in the arts. All the performances are selected by an independent panel of experts for their creative excellence and ability to appeal to national and international audiences. Performances take place over a week long period and are accompanied by other related events such as symposia and talks and an online archive of recorded performances and artists' details. The last event was held in Manchester in September 2011 and details can be found at http://www.decibelpas.com/

9. **Tomorrow's Warriors (UK) – music education for young people**

Tomorrow's Warriors is a leading UK organisation for jazz music education and professional artist development. It is a multicultural organisation with a special, though not exclusive, focus on young musicians from the African diaspora. The company is a weekend resident at Southbank Centre, London and an Associate Artist of Turner Sims Concert Hall, Southampton, delivering a unique programme comprising learning and participation, artist development and professional performances. In addition to its core programmes, *Tomorrow's Warriors* offers a range of bespoke music education programmes in schools, arts venues and community centres across the UK and

internationally. *Tomorrow's Warriors* is a National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England.

Tomorrow's Warriors focuses on the ongoing development of the following groups:
- Junior Warriors (9-15 yrs)
- Youth Warriors (15-19 yrs)
- Tomorrow's Warriors Youth Jazz Orchestra (15-25 yrs)
- Nu Civilisation Orchestra - a professional touring orchestra consisting of past and present Warriors

Appendix 2: Artists' Questionnaire

Research Commission into the Practices of Artists from Immigrant, New Communities and Traveller backgrounds

This is a short questionnaire to help Dublin City Council, South Dublin County Council and its partners assess the needs of artists from immigrant, new communities and Traveller backgrounds and to assist them when developing future policies in this area. Examples of artistic practices and artforms are architecture, circus, dance (traditional, modern, ballet, contemporary etc), drumming, film, literature and writing, music (including traditional, jazz, classical, world etc), opera, street arts and spectacle, storytelling, theatre, traditional arts and crafts making and visual arts (painting, sculpture, digital), filmmaking etc. If you have any questions on completing this questionnaire, please contact **Richard Wakely on 087 667 2137** for assistance.

Research Questionnaire

1.   Name _____

2.   What is your nationality?
     Irish ☐
     Other – please state _____

3.   What is your ethnic or cultural background?
     A.   White
          1.   Irish ☐
          2.   Irish Traveller ☐
          3.   Any Other White Background – please state _____
     B.   Black or Black Irish
          4.   African ☐
          5.   Any other Black background _____
     C.   Asian or Asian Irish
          6.   Chinese ☐
          7.   Any other Asian background – please state _____
     D.   Latin American or Latin American Irish
          8.   Brazilian ☐
          9.   Any other Latin American background – please state _____
     E.   Other, including mixed background
          10. Other, write in description _____

7. What kind of art do you specialize in? For example, are you a writer, painter, crafts maker, filmmaker, actor, dancer, producer, presenter etc?

   _____

8. How would you describe your present work as an artist?
   1. Very successful professional artist ☐
   2. A fairly successful professional artist ☐
   3. A full-time professional artist, who's getting by ☐
   4. An artist doing professional work from time to time ☐
   5. An artist rarely selling work or performing ☐
   6. Other - please state _____

9. Has your work been performed, presented or exhibited in Ireland and if so, where and when?

   _____

10. In your opinion, what challenges or barriers have you faced as an artist from an immigrant, new communities and Traveller background?

    _____

11. What are some of the problems or negative experiences you have had in working with organisations/institutions outside of your community?

    _____

12. What are some of the positive experiences you have had?

    _____

13. Have you accessed or been supported by any formal networks /informal networks in the arts? Do they work as you know them or could they be improved?

    _____

14. Are you aware of any Arts Council, local authority or any other arts development agency initiatives and funding opportunities? If so do you have any opinion on how they currently work?

    _____

15. What role should the public funding agencies, such as local authorities and the Arts Council, play in assisting with the professional development of artists from immigrant, new communities and Traveller backgrounds backgrounds?

    _____

16. With respect to audiences, who is your work for or aimed at?

    _____

17. What kind of support is available to you from your own community? How important are audiences/participants from your own community in presenting and appreciating your work?

    _____

18. Who is best placed to assess your work and practice? How does this fit into the current mainstream understanding of arts practice in Ireland?

    _____

19. Would you be happy for us to contact you in the future regarding the development of arts policy for artists from immigrant, new communities and Traveller backgrounds? If so, please can you provide the following contact details please?

•   Address

    _____

    _____

    _____

•   Email

    _____

•   Cell number

    _____

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Appendix 3

List of participating and contributing artists and organisations

Participating Artists and Artform Discipline

- Ziad Salih (poetry)
- Anna Shubina (music)
- Bisi Adigun (theatre)
- Tunde Yusef (literature)
- Siraj Zaidi (film)
- Anna Wolf (theatre)
- Maria Nilsson Waller (dance)
- Niranjana Arand (dance)
- Natalia Kostrzewa (theatre)
- Reginald Oko-Flex Inya (film)
- Agata Stoinska (visual arts)
- Anna Gaciarz (dance)
- Mauricio Pinzon (visual arts)
- Cynthia Ado (dance)
- Ade Oke (film)
- Jayro Gonzalez (music)
- Dr Theophilus Ejorh (literature)
- Olakunle Animashaun (theatre)
- Silvia FS Ostroha (music)
- Richard Hearns (visual arts)
- Tasumudzwa Chimbganda (dance)
- Rosaleen McDonagh (theatre)
- Michael Collins (theatre)

Participating and Contributing Arts Organisations

- ArtsExta
- Arts Council of Ireland/ An Chomhairle Ealaíon
- Arts Council of Northern Ireland
- Association of Composers of Ireland
- Axis Arts Centre, Ballymun
- Chester Beatty Library
- Civic Theatre, Tallaght
- Common Ground
- Create
- Dance Ireland
- Project Arts Centre
- Rua Red South Dublin Arts Centre
- Theatre Forum
- Visual Artists Ireland

Appendix 4

About the Author

Richard Wakely is an established dance and theatre producer, curator and arts management consultant, working internationally out of Ireland. He is the Producer for both junk ensemble (Ireland) and Claire Cunningham (Scotland), International Associate for Sol Picó Dance Company (Spain) and founder and co-curator of an annual season of new dance from Ireland at Dance Base for the Edinburgh Festival. Recent productions include *The Falling Song* (Dublin Dance Festival 2012 and Belfast Festival at Queen's 2012), the award winning *Bird with boy* (Dublin Fringe Festival 2010 and Dublin Theatre Festival 2011), *Five Ways To Drown* (Irish tour 2012 and Dublin Dance Festival 2010) for junk ensemble and *Frame* (Irish tour 2012) for Ríonach Ní Néill.

Former positions include Commissioner of the China-Ireland Cultural Exchange Programme (2004/5), Managing Director of the Abbey Theatre, General Manager of London's Hampstead Theatre and General Manager of Temba Theatre Company, formally the UK's leading Afro-Caribbean professional theatre company. He has transferred, produced and co-produced 15 productions for London's West End including new plays for the Abbey, such as *Dolly West's Kitchen* by Frank McGuinness and for Hampstead Theatre, *Burn This* by Lanford Wilson (with John Malkovich, West End) *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* by Frank McGuinness (Broadway, New York and West End) and *Dead Funny* by Terry Johnson (West End and several UK tours).

Previous artistic evaluations for South Dublin County Council include reviews of both their Dance Artist in Residence Programme in 2011 and in 2010, *Rewind and Replay*, a collaborative youth arts project involving the Tallaghtfornia Youth Club and the Irish Wheelchair Youth Group at St Kevin's Family Resource Centre with visual artist, Aileen Lambert. Policy research commissions include *Public Engagement with Architecture in Ireland* (with Mullan Consulting for the Arts Council, 2008), a report on the *Current state of literature, music and film sectors in Ireland* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2008) and *The potential for cultural relations between Ireland and Hong Kong and Singapore* (Dept. Arts, Sport and Tourism, 2005).

Richard was the Project Director for the critically acclaimed new Lyric Theatre, Belfast (project value STG£18.2m), which opened in May 2011 and was recently shortlisted for the prestigious Stirling Architecture Prize. Richard is a Director of Dance Ireland.

Comhairle Contae
Átha Cliath Theas
South Dublin County Council

**Tallaght
Community
Arts**

Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
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