

Waterford Healing Arts Trust (WHAT)

Annual Report 2009



Introduction

2009 was the first year of operation for the WHAT Centre for Arts and Health. The Centre, the first of its kind in Ireland, housed the Artist in Residence programme, participatory arts programmes in partnership with community organisations, exhibitions, meetings, Open Studio, the Arts and Health library, professional development workshops for artists as well as the administrative hub of the organisation.

Most of WHAT's arts programme in 2009 was delivered in and through Waterford Regional Hospital, including the exhibitions programme, *Healing Sounds* performances and the Art Kart service.



Art Exhibition Programme



WHAT's exhibitions programme in 2009 explored the many facets of Arts and Health work. *Hide & Seek* (April – June) showed us two artists' approaches to understanding and expressing their illnesses through their art practice. Gypsy Ray is a Breast Cancer survivor and Laura Gladney suffers from the autoimmune disease Systemic Lupus Erythematosus. In *Once Upon a Time* (June – August) WHAT Artist in Residence, Laura Fitzgerald explored the theme of memory. The exhibition featured drawings Laura made based on memories from hospital staff, patients and visitors. The exhibition toured to the Index Gallery, Central Library, Waterford in August. *Captured Time* (August – September) brought us portraits by Frank Curtis and poetry by Johanna Tanner, created through art sessions in the Dialysis Unit, WRH, which were guided by artist Philip Cullen. Johanna's poetry was published by WHAT in a book entitled *Lines in the Half Light*. *insideOut7* (November – December) was the seventh annual HSE staff art exhibition in WRH. The exhibition aims to highlight the creativity and talent of HSE staff members. *Celebrating Ageing in People with Disabilities* (October) was a one day exhibition of photographs in the WHAT Centre for Arts & Health, which was organised by the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing, Trinity College, Dublin.

Art Collection

In 2009, five new works loaned by the Arts Council joined the collection. Generous donations of works from artists include mixed media works by Gypsy Ray and paintings by Dermot Browne. Drawings and mixed media works by Laura Fitzgerald were acquired through the Artist in Residence scheme.

Public Art

A major Public Art scheme by Raul Vicente was launched in the Paediatrics ward in February 2009. This art commission was managed by a multidisciplinary Paediatrics Environmental Group and was an integral part of the ward renovation. Child friendly signage and colourful frames as a means of presenting the artworks made by children during Art Kart sessions were also installed in the ward.



Michael Durand produced a collection of photographs of Waterford city and county, its people and its places entitled *Consultations & Observations* through the Per Cent for Art Scheme for the new WHAT Centre for Arts & Health

Patient Programmes

The **Art Kart** programme was facilitated in the Paediatric, Renal Dialysis and Psychiatric units of WRH by Boyer Phelan, Philip Cullen and Martin Kennedy. Philip continued to work with patients of the Oncology ward and from this produced a sculpture to be installed in the ward in early 2010. Monthly **participatory music sessions for Renal Dialysis patients** commenced in October.

WHAT delivered a programme of over 70 **participatory music workshops for mental health clients** from seven mental health settings in Waterford. These were facilitated by Mary Prendergast, Liam Merriman, Jane O'Brien Moran, Leah Clarke, Una McSweeney and Kevin O'Shanahan. Kevin O'Shanahan was awarded an Arts Council bursary to research creative approaches to participatory music in mental health settings via this programme.



Community Programmes

WHAT hosted a Community Open Day in January 2009. Arising from this, WHAT engaged the clients of Acquired Brain Injury Ireland, Brothers of Charity (Tory Services & Cedar Bungalow) and the Jonah project in participatory music programmes and the residents of Respond Housing Association in a multidisciplinary arts programme.

In September 2009, a Visual Art and Health project for young people entitled *Who do you think you are?* recommenced in Squashy Couch Youth Café. This project centres on the emotional health of the young people involved.

The weekly **Open Studio Workshop** was established in March 2009. This is a drop in facility for people in the community and hospital users to make art on a once-off or continuing basis. The workshop is facilitated by Claire Meaney.



Artist in Residence Programme

Laura Fitzgerald was the first artist to use the artist's studio space in the newly developed WHAT Centre for Arts and Health. During her six month residency, she drew the memories that staff, patients and visitors to the shared with her. Some of these drawings were made in Laura's *Memory House* in the WRH foyer in May 2009. 166 individual drawings of peoples' memories featured in her concluding exhibition *Once Upon a Time*.

Healing Sounds

The *Healing Sounds* music programme featured performances by *Well Strung*, *Hollering Pine*, Simon Fay, Una McSweeney and *Cultural Harmonies* among others in the foyer, wards and outpatients clinics of WRH.

Festivals



Musician Des Manahan performed for patients of St. Patrick's Hospital in May as part of the **Bealtaine** festival celebrating creativity for older people. The clients of Tory Services performed as part of the first Ferrybank Arts Festival in July. **Tramore Gospel Choir** performed as part of **Culture Night** on the 25th September in the WHAT Centre for Arts and Health. Audience members were invited to join in to simple vocals, chants and percussion. WHAT distributed *A Menu of Poems* featuring the poetry of Grace Wells, Mark Roper, Peter Sirr, Thomas MacCarthy, Kerry Hardie, Michael Coady, Johanna Tanner, Richard Tillinghast and Áine Uí Fhoghlú to patients in Waterford Regional Hospital along with their menu cards as part of All-Ireland Poetry Day on 1st October.

Staff Programme

Hospital staff members enjoyed an eight week programme of **visual art workshops** facilitated by artist in residence, Laura Fitzgerald and **creative writing workshops** led by Mark Roper. The **ArtVenture** WRH staff group were given a fresh take on contemporary art practices through a series of six lunchtime talks by Mary Grehan, Claire Meaney and Laura Fitzgerald.



Professional Development

In 2009, various networking and training meetings were held for visual artists and musicians involved with WHAT. Boyer Phelan and Philip Cullen visited the Renal Dialysis unit in Tallaght hospital to share experiences with artists working there. Two professional training days for artists and musicians were hosted by WHAT in partnership with Artlinks; *The Power of Participative Music in Healthcare Settings*, facilitated by musicians Aingeala De Burca and Kevin O'Shanahan and *Developing Visual Arts Projects for Health Settings*, facilitated by visual artist Charlotte O'Donovan.

Conferences & Research



Mary Grehan made presentations on the work of WHAT and Arts and Health in Ireland in Lingnan University, Hong Kong, and the Art of Good Health & Wellbeing Conference, Australia in November.

In October 2009 WHAT, in collaboration with HSE South (Cork) Arts + Health Programme, published *Guidelines for Good Practice – Participatory Arts Practice in Healthcare Contexts*. The Guidelines were written by Mike White and Mary Robson of the University of Durham based on consultation with artists and healthcare professionals working in the field of Arts and Health in Ireland.

Funding

WHAT received its core funding from Arts Council, HSE, FAS and Waterford City Council. Project and partnership funding was received from Punchestown Kidney Research Association, the National Lottery, the National Concert Hall,

Waterford County Council, Waterford Area Partnership, Waterford Youth Committee, the Ministry for Integration, Poetry Ireland, Arlinks, Respond Housing Association, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland, Brothers of Charity, Renal Dialysis and Medical 4 patient funds. Sponsorship was received from Pfizer.

Funds were raised through a range of events – Bridge Evening, Car Boot Sale, Fashion Show, Sponsored Walk, Fashion Swap Party, Coffee Morning, performance by the Omagh Peace Choir - which were co-ordinated by members of the WHAT Fund-raising Committee.

WHAT Committee

Mr. Gordon Watson (Chairperson) Ann Ellis (Deputy Chairperson), Dr. Abdul Bulbulia (President), Mary Baxter (Treasurer), Cllr. Tom Cunningham, Mary Tritschler, Patricia Sullivan, Dr. Peter Jordan, Sean Swift, John O'Connor, Lila Kelly, Mai Lannigan and Dr. Jack Gallagher.

WHAT Staff

Mary Grehan (Arts Director), Claire Meaney (Assistant Arts Director), Susan Crossan (Administrator), Anna Lisowska (Admin Assistant), Larry White (Artworker – Art Collection and Exhibitions), Layla Hughes (Music Co-ordinator) and Deirdre Hayden (Admin Assistant).

Waterford Healing Arts Trust,
Waterford Regional Hospital,
Dunmore Road,
Waterford

Tel: 051 842664 E-mail: WHAT@hse.ie
www.waterfordhealingarts.com