Uprooting Tallaght

Performance Art Festival 2023



Uprooting Tallaght

1—5 August 2023

Rua Red Gallery, Tallaght

Pauline Cummins

Michael Dignam

Francis Fay

Lauren Kelly

Day Magee

Frances Mezzetti

Sinéad O'Donnell

Paul Regan

Elvira Santamaria Torres

The Ljilja

Interlinking the Spiritual Body

Curated by Pauline Cummins
and Lauren Kelly

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Curators Note

Tallaght is a historical place that is rich in a history dating back earlier than the Bronze Age. All around Tallaght there are traces of archaeological history to be found. The name Tallaght comes from the words támh-leacht, meaning a plague and burial place. The earliest mention of Tallaght is the account of Parthalon in the Annals of the Four Masters. Parthalon the Greek was one of the early invaders of Ireland. A plague killed 9,000 of his followers in one week and they were buried in Tallaght and its environs and so the place came to be named Taimleach Muintire Parthalon. And so Tallaght has stood through the centuries, through settlements and invasions, times of plenty, and times of ruin.

Further out toward the mountains is Bohernabreena reservoir, a place many people in Tallaght walk to for leisure. In ancient times, along the roads of Ireland were public houses of hospitality called Bruideans. Of the most famous of these was the Bruidean Da Dearga in what is now Bohernabreena, or 'the road of the hostel'. But as we researched the sites we found locks on gates over and over again. As artists this raises for us questions around the idea of 'Belonging', and what it means to be part of a place?

As land becomes more off limits Uprooting Tallaght naturally kneels to open the gates for site responsive performances. Some of the artists selected have origins in Tallaght and some have moved to Ireland a number of years ago. For Uprooting Tallaght we have selected performance artists that range in age, culture and performative approaches. We came together in agreement with the invited artists, including ourselves to create a series of performances that respond to this place.

Performance art is about people and about our society, as seen through the body, and actions of the performer/artist. We chose the artists easily and deliberately to show the wide range of expression possible within Performance art. Each has a unique response to the location they have chosen and they have created work that is deeply meaningful. Uprooting Tallaght is about being uprooted, by choice or by circumstances. To be uprooted is to lose touch with your beginnings, a disturbing experience for individuals and for communities.

Who is kept in and who is locked out.







Day Magee

Day Magee is a visual and performance artist and writer based in Dublin. Their work concerns the enactment of ideology via bodies, and the lived mythographies of selfhood: the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves and live out. Adopting a phenomenological methodology to the live and lens-based performance of imagery and words across multimedia, they chronicle their bodily narrativisations of queerness, illness, neurodiversity, religiosity, and grief. These take the form of kinetic orations or performance sermons, speculatively engaging rhetoric as a material and language as an algorithmic entity enacting itself.

Chariot of Fire (after Patrick Pye)
10am - 2pm, Tuesday 1 August
Rua Red Performance Space

The performing body interpolates and queers the work of religious painter Patrick Pye, buried in Tallaght, depicting the ascent of the prophet Elijah to Heaven on a chariot of fire.

The performed image immerses the audience in a stylised moment, soundscaped by the recital of messages between the performing body and one of the great loves of Magee's life: a man from Tallaght.

It was in the contents of these exchanges, mediated via the omnipresent screen, where a Heaven was reached but never fully entered, here reinvoked, and sealed into the past as part of an emerging personal iconography.

Image: "Bed Time" by Day Magee, performance at Pallas Projects/Studios, 2022.
Photo by Viktorija Kacanauskaite.



Elvira Santamaría-Torres

Elvira Santamaría-Torres was born in 1967 in Mexico City. She completed a Masters's degree in Visual Arts at the University of Ulster in Belfast. Her work focuses on public actions, process art, installation and chamber performances. She is currently based in Ireland/Northern Ireland.

In 1994, Santamaría-Torres obtained the First Award of the 3rd X-Teresa, The Month of Performance and was invited to the Rencontre Internationale d'Art Performance de Québec. Since then, she has presented her work in festivals, art centres, galleries, museums and public spaces in Mexico, Europe, North America, Asia and Latin America. Her most recent projects include the exhibition “Artefacts and Encounters,” and the art pieces “Salt Cartographies, Ireland-England” and “Amorphous Play” at the Golden Thread Gallery Belfast 2022.

Red-ire-acting
11am - 3pm, Tuesday 1 August
Rua Red Gallery

Red-ire-acting is a process-art piece taking place in the empty gallery for four hours. The gallery offers a space to imagine presence as an artifact in its own right.

"*In a dialogue between me and some simple objects for the people of Tallaght, I will try to understand the inner drama of these objects and their possibilities. Colour may be the most significant presence in this performance. Then, if the inner logic of this process-art piece pulses into my intimate significance of the piece for a last special movement, I will end the performance somewhere outside on the streets of Tallaght. For me, process art is a meditative, analytical and re-signifying work, in which the bodily and gestural expressions generate creative work in the present moment.*" - Elvira

Image: Salt Cartographies by Elvira Santamaría-Torres. Sur Gallery, 7a-11d Festival of Performance Art Toronto, 2018. Photo by Henry Chan.



Michael Dignam

Michael Dignam lives and works in Dublin, Ireland. He completed his MFA at Goldsmiths University, London (2016), and his BA in Fine Art Sculpture from the National College of Art and Design, Dublin (2013). He works predominantly with the moving image, often combining photography techniques with digital manipulations and the sonic. His practice is informed by his own upbringing in a suburb of Tallaght on the fringe of Dublin city, displaced from the inner city in a familiar cycle of 'spent' urban planning. Having left school early to pursue an apprenticeship as an Industrial Screen Printer, he witnessed first-hand the death of an industry as advances in digital technology progressed. These formative years working on the factory floor and a subsequent series of dead-end jobs have shaped his current art practice, as he investigates forms of living, labour, and class-structures within society. His informed approach to materiality has resulted in a particular aesthetic value that is inherent to his practice, as is his selection of pre-existing materials, with which he arranges, remixes, and makes interventions.

Unleavened
4pm - 5pm, Tuesday 1 August
Rua Red Gallery

Unleavened is a performance incorporating found objects, live audio, interviews, and the soundscape from a previous video work titled Suburban Cookie Collector (2018). Composed by the late Al Keegan – local music producer, DJ, and friend of the artist – the soundscape is used as a point of departure, layering and interweaving the artist's personal experience growing up in Tallaght with the social, labor, and music histories of the local communities. It explores Tallaght's lost industrial past, from Urney's Chocolate factory, and the Jacobs Biscuit factory, to the car part manufacturer Packard Electric. Much of this history has been replaced by present-day data centers that now occupy a large area of the very same landscape.

Image: Untitled by Michael Dignam, performance at the Nicosia Buffer Zone, Cyprus, 2020. Photo by Maria Stepkina


SLUT

Lauren Kelly

Lauren Kelly is a neurodiverse conceptual visual artist who works both individually and collaboratively within a socially engaged context. Performance art is her primary artform, which she extends also to photography and film. Lauren incorporates her spiritual practice into her performances through ritualistic artwork. With her work, she speaks about oppressed states of the body and body politics using the unlimited landscape of performance art. Her subject matters are rooted in history, politics and her own personal experiences and she works closely with researchers, archivists and activists. People are an important part of her practice, as Lauren believes we are all experts of our own experiences therefore there is art in us all.

The Slut
12pm - 1pm, Wednesday 2 August
Bohernabreena Resevoir

Lauren Kelly performs the second live piece of her most recent project *The Slut and The Witch*, exploring the idea of 'the slut' as a radical non-gender conformity that transgresses social norms. With *The Slut*, Lauren explores her personal experiences with her sexuality while growing up in Tallaght, placing you in a space of ritualistic transgression. This new work has recently developed from a live art piece performed with five other women for Repeal the 8th's 5th Anniversary and the new Pro-Choice Bill day outside Dáil Éireann.

Transport: meeting at Rua Red at 11am, retruning from Bohernabreena at 3.30pm

Image: The Slut by Lauren Kelly, 2023



The Ljilja

The Ljilja is a visual artist born in Croatia. She made her debut in 2006 and since then her art has been shown in group and solo shows. Her work ranges from installations and paintings to photography and performances. The Ljilja is an ongoing ritual project.

"As an artist my main aim is making the subconscious conscious, and bringing it to the light. We live in an era where most of us are showing the best part of ourselves, the most beautiful parts (a wonderful Kingdom of Selfies), and I am showing those hidden, dark, disturbing parts. By covering my face and hiding my identity, I become no one; and by becoming no one, I have become everyone. By disfiguring my face, covering my eyes I am allowing my Primordial Self to step out from the darkness, and to reconnect all over again with my true Self." - The Ljilja.

Rebirthing Ritual
1pm - 2pm, Wednesday 2 August
Bohernabreena Resevoir

The Ljilja is performing a collective healing ritual. Statistics shows that Tallaght has an alarming number of female suicides in Dublin. The figure shows that mothers in their 20s and 30s, with small children, represents most of the suicide in that area.

Antonin Artaud called for a new kind of a body: one in which pain of life will burst out. A primal body. The shamanist art of transformation is an ability to cross from image to image, shifting spaces & bodily forms while relating to others & other worlds. On this path the artist will perform a collective rebirthing ritual through which she will not transmute present pain, but also past and future traumas.

Transport: meeting at Rua Red at 11am, retruning from Bohernabreena at 3.30pm

Image: Meeting the Shadow ritual, Alte Münze 2023, Berlin. Photo by: Julia S



Francis Fay

Queer artist Francis Fay creates live performance and video art, being commissioned for events as diverse as 'Future Histories', Kilmainham Gaol, Dublin (2016) and for MART, The Non Zero Sum Art Games, Platforma Revolver, Lisbon (2013). Awarded an MA in Art in the Digital World, NCAD Dublin (2005), he co-curates 'Livestock', the bimonthly performance art platform event at MART gallery. Fay was an active member of the Dublin Live Art curatorial team from 2015 to 2017.

Fay has previously stage-managed for Brokentalkers throughout their award-winning shows 'The Blue Boy' and 'Silver Stars,' and worked as scenographer on their critically acclaimed production “Have I No Mouth.” In 2021, Fay produced the exhibition “Flikkers-Come As You Were,” a Bealtaine Festival commission. The show platformed the personal stories and histories of the LGBTQ+ community who attended the iconic queer club in the 1980s. A recent retrospective of Fay’s practice took place in MART HX.

Sreabhadh (Flow)
2pm - 3pm, Wednesday 2 August
Bohernabreena Resevoir

Rolling - an action inspired in part by the Hindu practice known as Angapradakshinam and the Christian tradition of pattern (Irish: pátrn). Both are rituals of devotion that require physical and mental strength. This action of rolling is a nod to Bohernabreena's ancient significance as a place of pilgrimage and site of one of the most important elements, water, from which life emerged; nourishing the local farmland and sustaining its communities.

Transport: meeting at Rua Red at 11am, retruning from Bohernabreena at 3.30pm

Image: Making an Entrance_On street performance by Francis Fay, at MART studios HX, 2022. Photo by Aoife Giles



Sinéad O'Donnell

Sinéad O’Donnell (b.1975) is an artist from Tallaght, Dublin. Her practice is contextual and she has made works across the globe, integrating her learning of new cultures with personal experience. Sinead uses her body to create works that reference the challenging experiences that women face across the world: she gives a voice to those that have been silenced. Previous works have addressed: violence; grief; being neuro-diverse in a neuro-typical world; inclusion; and exclusion.

Tongue Mouthed
11am - 1pm, Thursday 3 August
St. Mary's Priory

tongue mouthed
cheeking

eyes gated
locked

Splinted trees

Fog

temporal memories
land

Image: Violent by Sinéad O'Donnell, 2022. Photo by Hugh O'Donnell.



Paul Regan

Born in Dublin in 1970, Paul Regan has a background in painting and completed his MA in Visual Arts Practices at IADT. Since 2016, he has focused on live performance as a vehicle to explore themes pertaining to faith, ritual and cultural [mis]identities through site-specific actions and interventions. He is currently working on a project around Saint Paul the Apostle and the subjects of eschatology, walking, observation and the displacement of objects.

Dispensation (Saint Paul)
1pm - 3pm, Thursday 3 August
St.Mary's Priory

Who am I?
Paul.
What is that?
A [Christian] name. Named “after” Saint Paul the Apostle.
Who was he?
The Biblical apostle “blinded by the light” on the road to Damascus [in Syria].
Why is he carrying a sword?
He was depicted in artworks as carrying an executioner’s sword; to represent his fate — that he would be killed by the authorities for preaching against paganism.
Where are we?
Tallaght, a suburb in south Dublin, Ireland, planet Earth.
What is that flag? Ukraine?
No, it’s the flag of planet Earth, designed by James W. Cable, a farmer from Homer, Illinois in 1970, the same year that Paul Regan arrived on Earth. The flag shows Sun, Earth and moon.
Why is he carrying a sack of walnuts?
To return them in a ritual to the sacred walnut tree at the Dominican Priory in Tallaght. The artist’s [St. Paul’s] nuts are actually from Brazil. The [Persian] walnut tree is not native to Ireland. Pesia is now Iran.

Image: Lio by Paul Regan,performance still. Photo by Marianne Marcote.


a victory

Frances Mezzetti

Frances Mezzetti is a visual artist based in Dublin. Her work addresses individual and collective memory in the constellation of space, time and place. Over twenty-five years, she has developed her fine art performance practice, incorporating video and site specific installation. Working with individuals or in community settings, she looks to engage with others in manifesting situations and installations that opens questions around communication with ourselves, with others and with the environment. The recently published book and show “Walking in the Way: Performing Masculinity”, in collaboration with artist Pauline Cummins, is currently on tour. Other work is featured in Dr. Áine Phillips Ed., “Performance Art in Ireland: A History.” Mezzetti is a graduate of Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh and the National College of Art & Design Dublin.

Re-placement
12pm - 1.30pm, Friday 4 August
St. Maelruains Monastery

Within the walls of St Maelruain’s Church stands the large rugged Losset. Uprooted, hewn, and transported this Granite body has a speculated history and purpose. Many people have experienced this uprooting and being re-placed. Shifted and replaced the Losset Stone offers a questioning of where we have come from and of our present situation in Tallaght.

"*I have gathered peoples stories for many years in my art practice and from these I make a live action bearing witness to the story givers within a given location. Over a period of being present in and about Tallaght Square I invited people I met to share their stories with me around their personal experiences of settling in Tallaght. The result is this collective history which will be part of the performance at the Losset Stone.*"
- Frances

Image: Head Lines by Frances Mezzetti, 2015 with The Performance Collective NCAD gallery 5 Days of live performance. Photo by Joseph Carr.



Pauline Cummins

Pauline Cummins' performance and video work examines the human condition from a feminist perspective. Research driven themes of the political body, activism, human rights and gender are often explored in the artist's practice. Cummins likes to collab with artists and communities in public sites and situations; including within prisons as a visiting artist and was the founding chairperson of the Women's Artist Action Group, (WAAG). Cummins lectured at the National College of Art and Design, 1994 – 2014. Her work is in both national and international collections including The Irish Museum of Modern Art and the National Maternity Hospital. Commissions include the Newgrange Interpretive Centre, New St. Park (Dublin) and the National Maternity Hospital. She was an Artist in Residence at The Irish Museum of Modern Art, 2021 - 2022. Cummins is currently working on a new project in her studio at Rua Red.

Roadside Memorials
2.30pm - 4.30pm, Friday 4 August
Tallaght Laus Stop - Main Street

Roadside memorials are a way of exploring memory and loss but also the communal creative expression of grief.

"*I have been collecting images of roadside memorials for some time, most recently in Tallaght. They are usually made in the area where a loved one died, and then maintained by family and friends. During my performance we will visit some of these memorials and commemorate each life with a performance at each site. The starting point is the Luas stop in Tallaght, and people can come and go as they please.*" - Pauline

Image: Bare Bones by Pauline Cummins, 2016.

Interlinking the Spiritual Body

Vera Ryklova, Karen Aguiar, Eileen Mc Loughlin, Sé Franklin, Marion Bergin, and Laura Kelly

5pm - 7pm, Friday 4 August
Sean Walsh Park

This is a live presentation from the workshop *Interlinking the Spiritual Body — An Introduction to Performance Art*. Artist Lauren Kelly guided a 3-day intensive workshop in Rua Red earlier this year. The group of six participants were introduced to the practice of using one's body, both physical and spiritual, as a tool to create art. For this performance this temporary collective will integrate their learnings into a live site-specific performance where they respond to the idea of 'Tallaght', each with their own unique approach.

Uprooting Tallaght: Panel Talk and Performance Art Jam

Panel talk with Kate Antosik-Parsons, Pauline Cummins, and Lauren Kelly

12pm - 4pm, Saturday 5 August
Rua Red Gallery

To mark the final day of the programme join us for a panel discussion with *Uprooting Tallaght* curators Pauline Cummins and Lauren Kelly with rapporteur Kate Antosik Parsons, who will be discussing the week of performance and the wider context of performance in Ireland. A very special thanks also to Áine Phillips who significantly contributed to the research for this event.

Following the talk there will be a performance jam in Rua Red Gallery with the artists that took part in Uprooting Tallaght. The aim of this performance jam is to create dialogs between artists without rehearsals and focus purely on the live action. You are invited to come along and watch the celebration ending Tallaght's first Performance Art Festival.

Image: Interlinking the Spiritual Body - Altar. Photo by Lauren Kelly.

