



# DOWN COMMUNITY ARTS

ANNUAL REPORT

2021/22



## 2021/22 Overview

It was great relief that a degree of normality returned to the 2021/22 artistic programme with the easing of Covid – 19 restrictions. Support from our Principal Funder the Arts Council of Northern Ireland DCA has continued to allow DCA to provide a programme that benefits all of the people of Newry Mourne and Down. It is with great pleasure that DCA can say that for 2021/22 it delivered 148 participatory activities engaging with 510 participants and a highlight of which was benefiting an audience of 5000 through engagement in Newry Mourne and Down District Councils St Patricks Day Parade.

The organisation continued to develop and promote the arts through high quality artistic interventions providing workshops in digital arts, dance, visual arts, sculpture, festivals, murals and pottery. Moving into 2022/23 DCA is looking forward to continue working with our funders and partners as we seek to launch our new strategy, continue to provide high quality arts experiences, contribute to ACNI's Rural Deliberative Forum and work towards St Patricks Day 2023.

## Creative Ageing

DCA continued to deliver the 'Creative Ageing' programme in partnership with County Down Rural Community Network (CDRCN) and Strangford Residents Association. The Creative Ageing programme is a long standing DCA programme in which the organisation provides social engagement for older people through participatory arts activity. Four of the projects for 2021 were delivered over the summer months in outdoor locations to address ongoing issues at the time surrounding Covid – 19. Working with CDRCN enabled DCA to provide free transport for participants and opportunities for social engagement in stunning outdoor venues across Lecale.

Moving forward into the winter months in partnership with Strangford Residents Association, we provided opportunities for older people through beginner's arts classes with Vincent McDonnell. With limited public transport provision particularly to locations such as Strangford it was noted by participants that the projects help to support reducing isolation and loneliness. With this knowledge DCA will aim to deliver and enhance Creative Ageing for 2022/23 with a focus on engaging isolated rural communities.



## Children and Young People

DCA delivered 6 youth projects across the year funded by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Policing and Community Safety Partnership. In Newcastle at the Burrendale Estate, DCA worked in partnership with Murlough Community Association designing a project to provide diversionary activity for young people to deter anti-social behaviour. Working with artist Ray Bonner groups of young people created artwork in a community garden within the Burrendale estate.



DCA has also delivered 2 projects for Children and Young with Disability in partnership with South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust Disability Services Team. DCA provided 1 dance project and 1 visual arts project for 20 children and young people with disability from August 2021 to March 2022. In October DCA it also began the delivery of 3 projects in Newry, Downpatrick and Newcastle with the Education Authority, Youth Action and Newcastle YMCA (Glenanda). DCA delivered 2 Draw my Life projects and 1 Ceramics project with Graham Ginty (Draw My Life) and Aine Mckenna (Ceramics). Once again, the Draw My Life programme has become a vital component of our activities. DCA will seek to expand the programme in 2022/23 as its flexibility, adaptability and ease of delivery across participants age groups.



## Community

DCA provided 6 community projects funded by the Arts Council Northern Ireland and Newry Mourne and Down District Council (NMADDC). DCA delivered 3 community mural projects and 3 community arts projects creating floats for participation in Downpatrick's cross community St Patrick's Day parade. It is the view of DCA that the annual St Patrick's Day Parade in Downpatrick has the potential to become one of the biggest 'community festivals' in Ireland given the association of St Patrick to Downpatrick. DCA is working closely with NMADDC and Downpatrick Town Committee to realise this vision and successfully secured funding to build 6 community floats. The floats were constructed and retained in storage with a view to building an infrastructure of community floats created by artists and groups. For the 2022 St Patrick's Day Parade DCA engaged with 150 people in arts activities for a parade attended by an estimated 5,000 spectators. It is hoped that DCA can secure additional funding in 2022/23 to build upon this success to continue developing community activity around St Patrick.

In Moneydarragh artist Dermot McConaghy facilitated a mural project with Moneydarragh Community Hub. Dermot worked with a group to design a mural with many images and themes close to the heart of the Moneydarragh community, including nods to former Moneydarragh Primary School's Dove motto 'Knowledge, Understanding, Peace' and to the 'Mourne Men' who through the generations have crafted drystone walls on the surrounding agricultural lands.



*'This beautiful mural represents Moneydarragh's rich educational heritage, knowledge of ourselves and our local place, understanding of the needs of others and the dove '*

**Moneydarragh Chair Person**

**Margaret Rodgers**

## Centenary Project

The NI Office provided funding to DCA to engage with Centenary Celebrations commemorating 100 years of Northern Ireland. DCA decided to deliver a project looking at the changing culture of the population of Northern Ireland and commissioned Chinese artist Fang Zhao to create a sculptural installation. The funding stipulated that work created would have to be accessible to public viewing 24 hours a day 7 days a week so DCA set about working with Fang to create a piece to fit the brief. Zhao created a stunning sculpture accompanied by 100 hand drawn tiles representing the nature of Northern Ireland. The work is currently on permanent display at Down Arts Centre, Downpatrick.



*Fang Zhao's 'Interwoven' sculpture representing the new and changing cultures within Northern Ireland*

**DOWN COMMUNITY ARTS**  
**Income and Expenditure Account**  
**For the Year Ended 31st March 2022**

INCOME	2022	2021
Arts Council of Northern Ireland:		
- Core Grant	33,450	33,450
- Programme Costs	18,138	18,138
- Rural Needs Grant	-	(600)
- Emergency Operations	<u>(91)</u>	<u>3,756</u>
	51,497	54,744
Halifax Foundation	-	5,000
Newry, Mourne & Down District Council	11,700	2,000
Community Foundations Grant	-	5,755
NI Office Centenary Fund	4,000	-
Service Provision:		
YMCA	1,200	2,500
Murlough Community Association	500	-
Downpatrick Community Collective	-	50
Downpatrick Town Committee	<u>10,500</u>	<u>-</u>
	79,397	70,049
Direct Cost of Activities	<u>38,528</u>	<u>30,058</u>
	40869	39,991
Administration Expenses	38,179	8,271
OPERATING SURPLUS	2,690	1,720
Interest Received & Similar Income	-	-
Surplus on Ordinary Activities for the year.	2,690	1,720

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WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS FOR 2021/22

