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Creating Transformation Through Art The Role Of Community Arts in a Transitioning Society Ballymun, Dublin and Belfast Northern Ireland

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Creating Transformation Through Art
The Role Of Community Arts in a Transitioning Society
Ballymun, Dublin and Belfast Northern Ireland

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Abstract
This paper presents my findings from an Independent Study Project conducted over a three-week period in Belfast on the role of community arts in a transitioning society, with a focus primarily on youth. I have found three themes concurrent with my research being that community arts can boost self-confidence and build positive identity, they can be used as a tool for addressing difficult issues, and finally, that community arts can unify a community. The arts, as a cause of these themes, have the potential to help a society transition and transform from conflict.
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Introduction

“The voyage of discovery is not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes.”
Marcel Proust

Community Arts, especially for youth, have the power to potentially transform even the most conflicted of societies. Northern Ireland has been torn by political and social conflict as a result of the “Troubles,” and is now in a state that cannot quite be considered post-conflict. The conflict still exists and, while some would say the most progress has been made in Stormont with the main five political parties under one roof, others would argue that the significant progress is visible at the grass roots community level.

I found there to be some skepticism towards those coming into Northern Ireland to study the conflict—the prevailing attitudes towards foreigners in this position, as we have heard some say, is that we can’t possibly know what the conflict is or what it has been. While this is true to some extent, my findings are not unsupported conclusions, nor do they lack research. I am not an expert on the conflict in Northern Ireland, and by no means trying to provide a solution. However, from what I have gathered through my research, I have seen conspicuous and creative examples of community arts, especially for youth, in this transitioning society. I have also seen examples of community art projects succeeding in transformation and pulling the community together in Ballymun, near Dublin, in the Republic of Ireland, which is transitioning from a social conflict. My research provides examples of community arts boosting self-confidence and building positive identity, and arts being used as a tool for addressing difficult issues—educating
people, and raising awareness. Finally, my research has shown that community arts can unify a community.

In choosing a topic for my ISP, I knew I wanted the focus to include creative expression and youth. I have been working with children for many years, and I am drawn to doing productive and creative activities with them. Additionally, I have taken many visual arts classes including painting, drawing, photography, and ceramics; which I have both learned from and enjoyed. In combining the two—working with children and creating art—I think there is room for endless creativity, connection, and expression. Furthermore, I am a Globalization Studies major focusing on creative expression in the understanding and transforming of conflict. In my major, I have to take a broad interdisciplinary approach and a wide range of classes. As a result, I approached this ISP the same way—starting with a broad topic and a wide range of sources.

This paper will include a methodology section, a literature review, a list of the interviews that I used in the paper, an analysis of my research, and a conclusion. I will be referring to “arts” as any form of creative expression including, but not limited to, the performing arts—such as singing and drama, and visual arts—such as painting and sculpture.
Methodology

As my interests were extremely broad, I took a grounded approach to start to allow themes to emerge. I started with data collection from as many sources as possible on the topic of youth and artistic expression, and from that, I was able to see patterns and pull together themes at the end of my research. The majority of my research was conducted through semi-structured interviews, and desk based research evidenced in my literature review. Interviewing was appropriate to my topic because I wanted to know what each person's own views were on the subject of the role of community arts. Semi-structured interviewing allowed me to do the field research component of this project while still being able to talk with people in a less formal way. I conducted interviews at community based arts development programs in Ballymun, Dublin, North Belfast, Central Belfast, and West Belfast, most of which have a strong focus on youth. In these areas, I gathered data from diverse sources coming from both major communities, (Nationalist/Republican and Unionist/Loyalist), as well as those in neutral areas like the Metropolitan Arts Center (MAC) and the Community Arts Partnership (CAP). I went into each interview with two main questions: (1) What do you think the role of community arts is in a transitioning society? (2) What do you see happening when you are working with the participants? From these two questions, the answers I received would determine the direction of the conversation. The issue of funding was addressed in a few interviews and although it was not one I could explore in-depth, it is still important to note and would be a recommendation for further research. Hearing different views, as well as learning about some difficulties one community
might face—such as local engagement, that another community may not—was essential in attaining various perspectives

I interviewed Emma Connors at Axis before my ISP started and it was my most useful interview as it helped to set up the majority of my research. Although Axis is not in Northern Ireland, it is still an example of a successful community arts program in a society that has undergone complete regeneration post social conflict. I found my interview with Emma to be a useful reference point throughout my paper, especially because it is an example of a community arts program that has been successful in its goal to positively change the community, as well as to be a resource for them. Emma’s voice was useful to bring in because what Axis is doing works.

One of the primary assumptions I brought into this research process was that everyone I wanted to talk to would be accessible and I would be able to find projects to participate in. I found that, at times, it was easy to reach people, but there were a couple of instances where it was extremely difficult. Some people who initially said they would help me became unreachable. Finding a project to participate in that fit within my time frame of research was difficult. This was disappointing, and left out the participant’s views in my research. Most of my assumptions were unrealistic to the time frame and limited the extent of research I was able to conduct, which was a good learning opportunity and helped me to see what was realistic.

While I did not participate in any ongoing projects or talk with participants of projects, there was an element to my research of practical engagement. Some of the events I went to did not relate directly to community arts, but still provided an experience, helped further my cultural knowledge, and allowed me to work with
children, which was my original intention. I went to an Irish children’s choir workshop in Culturlann for part of Belfast Music Week. As Culturlann is on the Falls Road and is an Irish Culture center, its community base is mostly the Nationalist community. However, there is a staff member whose job is cross-community work and projects. I also went to a Theatre of Witness workshop prior to my research, as well as a ToW performance titled “Release,” which is a drama project aimed at truth recovery. Additionally, I visited some of the sites where there were public landmarks created by programs I interviewed. Lastly, I participated in an afternoon Christmas crafts festival with children where I was able to interact and create crafts with the children.

My data collection was qualitative more than quantitative, which provided an opportunity to explore the role of community arts as a positive one, rather than how many people it affected. I recorded one interview and took detailed notes for the rest. The interviewees often seemed enthusiastic about their projects and, once I got in contact, they were eager to share their experiences with me. They gave me a lot of information as well as recommendations of people to talk to or other programs to look at, which was helpful in leading me to my main findings. All of this research was underpinned with an ethical approach to gathering data; everyone who I interviewed or talked to gave their consent to the interview, taking notes, and including findings in my paper.

This paper will give a brief overview of the interviews used in this paper, and then go on to analyze each theme using fieldwork data collected, literature researched, and my own personal analysis.
**Literature Review**

Community Arts, especially for youth, play a valuable and important role in transitioning societies. The three main themes that have recurred through fieldwork and research are, arts projects can help to build self-confidence and positive identity, arts can be used as a non-threatening tool to address difficult issues, and finally, arts can unify a community; it can bring many diverse people together for a common goal or purpose. ‘The arts’ allow for communities to cooperate, learn about others, become aware, to take responsibility and ownership, and above all to see commonalities within one another.

The literature I have found on the topic of community arts supports and expands on each of these themes and provides examples. The Peace and Conflict studies journal article “The Role of Artistic Process in Peace-Building Bosnia-Herzegovina” (Zelizer 2003) talks about the ways community arts peace-building work can be used both during and post conflict, focusing on the performing arts such as theater and music. This article ties in closely with the theme of unifying a community through arts and allowing groups of people to work together, to learn about each other, and to find commonalities which then help them to see the other not as an enemy, but as a human.

In another article titled “Art Works! Creative Community Development” (Gilliland 2008) outlines how the arts can be an effective tool in assisting the community to address issues that may be otherwise difficult to address (Gilliland 2008, 10). Essentially, this article’s literature review and findings point to community cooperation, increased self-confidence in ability, awareness and
education of other cultures, and engagement with community and other communities among many other outcomes.

In the Community Development Journal, an article entitled “Art and community development: the role the arts have in regenerating communities” (Kay 2000), based on a study “which shows that the arts have a role in regeneration and at a local level can be used as a tool within a wider community development programme” (Kay 2000, 414). In the paper (Kay 2000) describes one of the main points, borrowed from (Matarasso 1997, 1998; Popple and Scott 1999), being that “There is evidence to show that art, as a medium, can enable individuals and groups to become more employable, more involved, more confident, and more active in contributing to development of their local communities” (Matarasso 1997, 1998; Popple and Scott 1999).

The last article I found is in the Journal of Contemporary Ethnography titled “Creating Community: Art for Community Development.” (Lowe 2000) produces an ethnographic report on a study, which “examines the relationship between community art and community development” (Lowe 2000, 358). Data is used from community-arts projects within two Denver neighborhoods. Focusing on solidarity and identity building, this paper is a fantastic representation of an actual study with input from the participants and their feelings about the project. The main findings were about building relationships, gathering awareness, and learning about different cultures—ultimately a common experience that was shared in which these outcomes were found.
Although not all of these articles have direct ties with Northern Ireland or societies in conflict, many of the themes and principles of community art can be applied to any community in need of transformation. Identity building, community relations, addressing important issues—are needed in every community regardless of its history. The methods used to address these themes may vary slightly but overall, the main principles are present wherever one looks. These perspectives will help analyze the case studies and emerging themes, and are the theoretical frameworks that will help to find clarity and meaning in my research.
**Interviews**

I have included a short description of the interviews that I used in this paper. I asked each person both of my interview questions, which again were, (1) What do you believe the role of arts is in a transitioning society? (2) What do you see happening when you are working with the participants? The full interview field notes can be found in the Appendix.

1. I interviewed the Arts Development Coordinator Emma Connors of Axis, an arts and community resource center. She explained to me why Axis was built, and how Axis has transformed the community. Axis is very well known for its youth arts work, and a lot of success has come out of Axis both for individuals and especially for the community (Emma Connors 10/30./12).

2. I interviewed Billy Drummond, the manager of Greater Shankill Alternatives, an organization that focuses on Restorative Justice approaches to dealing with minor offenses by youth in the area. Billy described to me many of the projects Alternatives has worked on in the past and what the role of arts has been for the organization.

3. I interviewed Clare McComish, the Landmarks Coordinator at the Community Arts Partnership in central Belfast. Clare told me about past and current projects and how the CAP works with communities—especially the organization’s cross-community work.
4. I interviewed Chelley McLear, the Poetry in Motion Schools and Community Coordinator. She told me about Poetry in Motion in schools and the process of the project.

5. I interviewed Anne Delaney at New Lodge Arts, which is a community arts organization located in the Greater New Lodge area of North Belfast. She told me that the New Lodge Area is one of top most deprived in Northern Ireland and there is a strong need for community programs (Anne 11/21/12). NLA focuses on issue based work and often partners with other organizations to do projects, which according to Anne is unique to Belfast (ibid).

6. I interviewed David Gilliland at Arts for All. David is the Community Relation’s Officer of a recently finished project called CIRCA which focused on interface communities. David described to me his project, Arts for All’s mentoring program, and the funding difficulties experienced by the organization.

7. I interviewed Sam Porciello, Learning and Participation Officer at the Metropolitan Arts Center (MAC), which is a new arts venue in Central Belfast. Sam told me about a few recent cross-community projects the MAC has done with youth.

8. I interviewed Teya Sepinuck, the Artistic Director of the Theatre of Witness Program. We talked about the purpose of Theatre of Witness and the power it holds in truth recovery and healing.
9. I had a meeting with Amanda Croft, MA ADE, who told me her opinions on community arts.

Axis, Alternatives, New Lodge Arts, and Arts for All are located within the communities they serve and are run by members of the community. The Community Arts Partnership and the MAC are slightly different in both their locations and their focus. The MAC is a center that has a community relations component, but is not the focus of the center. The CAP is focused on all communities while the others are more focused towards the Nationalist/Republican and Unionist/Loyalist communities. I thought it was both interesting and important to look at organizations, that while still focus on community arts, operate on different dimensions.
Analysis

Theme 1: Building a Positive Identity

All of the programs I visited work with youth from disadvantaged areas. In these disadvantaged areas, there can be problems with youth receiving education—sometimes there is no drive, and opportunities can be limited. Religious or political identities are often imposed on those living in these areas and senses of achievement can be low. Due to these factors, communities can get stuck, and therefore cannot transition.

According to the programs I talked with, community development using the arts can build help to build a positive identity. Youth participating in the arts for the purpose of personal and social development can achieve many things, some of these being self-esteem, awareness, respect for themselves and others, a sense of self-worth, a sense of achievement, and pride. Every person I interviewed and talked with described one, if not more, of these achievements as an outcome of the process. David Gilliland at Arts for All believes there is a challenge in engaging some locals into the arts because there can be a believed expectation that a notable work must be created. He further stresses the importance of trying, and that once people see that they can create something good—even if it’s small—there is an enormous sense of pride and ability to tackle something greater (David Gilliland 11/21/12). Emma Connors from Axis says, “people have something to say, and what we’ve found, if you give them an art form that gets them speaking, and you hear their views and all the rest…and they get a chance to be on stage…and once you have that, it’s much easier to get them to try different stuff” (Emma Connors 10/30/12).
Anne Delaney from New Lodge Arts, when asked about what she sees occurring with the youth through these projects, says she sees the development of personal and social skills of those involved (Anne Delaney 11/21/12). Emma Connors, when asked the same question, said she sees youth that become better conversationalists, are still engaged, feel like Axis is a kind of home, and are wanting to be a part of something. She says, “Axis seems to be place everyone taps back into” (Emma 10/30/12).

Chelley McLear at CAP, who works with youth and poetry on the subject of identity, commented that while there is an outcome (a published poetry book), “it is about sharing, the process, and the kids who find their voices and it is about that discovery” (Chelley McLear 11/21/12). Additionally, many projects try to focus on positive elements of identity and culture rather than the negative ones that can often be the emphasis. For example, Billy Drummond from Alternatives described one project that was around the history of bonfires. In some places, the idea of bonfires has evolved and now has a negative connotation. Billy said that the project looked at the history of bonfires and at the positive aspect of their identity (Billy Drummond 11/19/12). Similarly as in Northern Ireland, Ballymun has had a history of strong division amongst young people. Emma Connors says that running projects where they have to come together has provided a lot of positive identity building and respect (Emma Connors 10/30/12).

Alternatives is different than the other programs in that they do not hire professionals, but look to talent of members of their own community. Billy Drummond says it’s not about bringing in experts, but seeing what the community
has to offer (Billy Drummond 11/19/12). At the other end of this spectrum, many of the programs I visited did bring in professionals, which in their cases, added a sense of validation to the projects, the participants, and the community. For example, CAP, New Lodge Arts, Arts for All, and Axis all bring in professionals to either be project facilitators, to increase engagement, or to help work on projects. Emma Connors says that when the youth participants produce a quality outcome that they worked hard for, it raises their self-confidence and gives them validation—the participants see that they accomplished something and did well. Furthermore, having access to theater or getting writings published is very important for impact, change and sustainability. As Emma Connors says, “When young people have stuff seen and validated, that’s when the change really happens” (Emma Connors 10/30/12).

Both approaches of bringing in professional artists, and seeing what talent the community has within itself make sense; they are validating the youth and community but in different ways. There are two aspects of looking at this. In the case of Alternatives, the youth they work with often have low educational achievement and low self-esteem, so when they are considered the talent of a project, or do it without outside help, seeing they can produce something good really boosts self-esteem (Billy Drummond 11/19/12).

I believe this ability to succeed at something has enormous significance, especially for youth who are low in confidence or are trying to find their place in the world. Having others take notice of something you have created and appreciate it, from my personal experience, is a feeling quite unlike anything else. The hard work and often frustration has paid off, and there is something to show for it. As a young
person finding where he/she belongs and what makes up “them,” the arts offer an abundance of tools for this discovery—especially if it is difficult to discover. Margot Kenny, from the National Youth Arts Programme, describes this perfectly, “At a time when we are struggling to make sense of life and find a way to navigate through it, art can be a powerful and uplifting means of processing and communicating this experience; focusing a view, clarifying a vision” (Kenny 2007, XI). There are many different forms of art, and all allow for personal expression, which is vital.

Many authors from the literature reviewed have discussed the arts being confidence boosting and identity forming. (Gilliland 2008) talks about the building of confidence being one of his main findings in a study carried out in North Belfast working with groups and individuals,

“Community development activities delivered through the medium of community arts have been remarkably successful at improving the self confidence of participants” (Gilliland 2008, 8-9).

One of the main things that increased confidence and learning about one's identity has done—why it is a success of community arts—is that it helps people take the first step to be comfortable and sure of themselves; once they begin to be comfortable with themselves, they might begin to understand another’s identity.

Another project (Gilliland 2008) and AFA did was working with a Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist community on explorations of culture. (Gilliland 2008) says, “These explorations allowed people to talk openly about their perceptions of their own culture before leading them to examine and discuss the cultural traditions of others on an inter-community basis both in Northern Ireland and with others
from the Republic of Ireland” (Gilliland 2008, 20). With understanding, or even awareness, comes the ability to see from another perspective and leaves room for empathy, which is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. What could happen if everyone in a conflicted society was able to simply see another perspective—if they could have even the slightest bit of empathy? Wouldn’t there be a drastic change? I believe community arts are a realistic and productive tool for empathy.
Theme 2: Tool For Addressing Issues (Dialogue)

In a discussion with Sean O'Baoill, a mediator, about the parades in Northern Ireland, he told us that one of the greatest difficulties is getting the two sides to enter into a dialogue with one another. There cannot be a solution without dialogue—it is the most important thing. This difficulty is similarly experienced between the two main communities in Northern Ireland, which is why any means of getting dialogue to occur is significant (Sean O'Baoill Tides Mediation Training October).

All of the programs I talked with believe community arts can be used as a tool to address difficult issues. Art projects can gain involvement, promote cooperation and awareness, can offer a new perspective, and can promote dialogue. Sam Porciello at the MAC describes the role of arts as being a “Tool to create dialogue and highlight similarities in lives.” Many of the organizations mentioned the arts being used as a tool or vehicle to address difficult issues and engage with people. New Lodge Arts, Alternatives, the CAP, and AXIS, among others, all discuss the power arts have to be used as such a tool because they are used in non-threatening and informal ways. David Gilliland stresses this point by saying, “arts provides a means for discussing difficult issues in a non threatening way” (David Gilliland 11/21/12).

Having a common focus of a project brings participants together which provides the initial step to addressing difficult issues. These projects can also fail at times. McComish from the CAP described projects in the past that did not work
because of something that was said; the groups can be fragile. However, coming together works positively for most projects (Clare McComish 11/13/12).

When engaging with youth, according to Emma Connors and Anne Delaney, finding out what their interests are is the best way to get youth involved. Both women stressed the importance of their programs focusing on what the youth want, because their engagement is the most important thing. Anne says that a lot of youth in the New Lodge area may not know about or be interested in the issues surrounding their community, but they are interested working with other groups especially if the project excites them; in this case, it is pretty easy to get them involved and it doesn’t matter where they are from when they are actually working on something together (Anne Delaney 11/21/12). In one example at New Lodge Arts, there was a project surrounding the issue of bonfires. NLA had to find a way to engage youth, so they allowed the participants to build a big wooden sculpture that they were able to burn; “this is what interested them and engaged them in something creative” (Anne Delaney 11/21/12).

Billy Drummond at Alternatives talks about their art projects saying they give “young people an opportunity to engage in art on some things that they might not be interested in— art opens up a new way of looking at it” (Billy Drummond 11/19/12). Billy says that it’s not about “art for arts sake” but about finding a means to look at issues that are important to them. The community then takes notice and it educates them (Billy Drummond 11/19/12). Additionally, David Gilliland agrees that especially for youth, having these opportunities to express themselves in
various ways and show their own perspectives is important and can be extremely valuable.

(Zelizer 2003) in his article “The Role of Artistic Process in Peace-Building Bosnia-Herzegovina” supports the idea of arts being used as a tool for addressing important issues. He says, “…theater and other arts base activities have long been used as a tool for educating and uniting communities to work towards collective action or to facilitate community problem solving within the field of development” (Zelizer 2003, 65). This article also discusses arts using the view of Lumsden, an author who writes about social reconstruction, which “suggests that the arts and artists have a critical role to play in post-conflict reconstruction in that they can help foster a creative process for rebuilding social relationships” (Lumsden 1999).

Similarly, (Gilliland 2008) looks to the point Kelly, a community art practitioner, argues which is that community arts “provided an opportunity for artists and the community to work together to develop approaches that would assist them to develop better structures, as well as improving communal and individual communication and expression” (Kelly 1984). (Kay 2000) quotes François Matarasso, a writer on the Arts Council of England, who says, ”There is evidence to show art, as a medium, can enable individuals and groups to become more employable, more involved, more confident, and more active in contributing to the development of their local communities” (Matarasso 1997, 1998). To conclude the literature, (Gilliland 2008) says, “The arts can often be a way of allowing groups and individuals an opportunity to express their culture, their concerns, or simply their experiences in a non threatening inoffensive manner” (Gilliland 2008, 20). A direct
example of this is the docudrama entitled “1912-A Hundred Years On” showing the many perspectives of various communities and people leading up to the signing of the covenant—it was informative and tried to equally portray the different sides. Another example is the Theatre of Witness workshop I attended before I began my ISP. This workshop was located in Belfast and was open to everyone. The workshop showed parts of the past drama on women in the conflict, and also one of the parts from “Release.” Throughout the workshop, there were many opportunities for dialogue and people were able to share what they felt.

The arts and artistic expression are used frequently in therapeutic ways for people dealing with trauma, or children with learning disabilities. One must wonder why the arts continue to be used in this way. Is it because they have proven to be successful and can be used in many different ways? They can be used to express feelings, or to tell a story. The arts can become a powerful voice for those who may not have any other means of expressing themselves.

Also, as someone who enjoys creating art, I know the sense of validation and accomplishment I can feel from completing something I work hard on and know it is good. From my perspective, this accomplishment makes me eager and willing to try and work hard at other things, which is the point most programs I talked to, made. Knowing that many people can feel this way after completing something meaningful, makes me question why arts aren’t implemented more in schools and why funding for the arts can be extremely difficult to receive. To quote (Matarasso 1997,1998) again, “There is evidence to show art, as a medium, can enable individuals and groups to become more employable, more involved, more confident, and more
active in contributing to the development of their local communities” (Matarasso 1997, 1998). Community art projects have proven their success and potential; what else needs to happen? Chelley said the CAP recently had to complete a funding report and that at times it can be difficult because funders are interested in quantitative data rather than qualitative. I find this ironic as the point of funding and running these programs is to create quality people, quality communities, and quality change. As long as this quality is being created, I think the numbers are not as important. My conviction is money spent on the arts is not wasted, and funding should be top priority.
Theme 3: Unity

Conflict of any kind, as shown throughout the world, destroys and divides communities. In those communities where transformation needs to occur, as has been shown in Northern Ireland and Ballymun, it can be difficult to find ways to bring the community back together. Author Charles Landry was quoted by (Kay 2000).

“There is now recognition that many people working on renewal and regeneration programs in cities are becoming increasingly aware of the human potential of a community, and that the arts can be used as a mechanism to trigger individual and community development” (Landry, 1996).

Finally, my research has presented that community arts, through the means of ownership, responsibility, and a common purpose have the ability to unify a community. Amanda Croft explains that common projects are interdisciplinary and inter-community; participation comes from various communities, but the unifier is the activity. With a common purpose or goal, it is easier to set aside differences and barriers (Amanda Croft 11/20/12). Many conflict studies theorists support this.

One of the main unifying themes I found in every interview was the theme of ownership. Having a finished product or outcome to be proud of is extremely significant because it means that the participants will take ownership of it, together, and will not destroy or vandalize it; the makers have pride and it becomes personal. I think this idea of ownership is especially important with youth. It can help them to
feel like they are being heard and being listened to. For example, at the new MAC arts center in Belfast, there is a section called “The Den” that was designed by a group of young people from different backgrounds. They were able to create their own space in a new and expensive and beautiful arts center and they were in charge of advertising it and getting others involved. This space has now become neutral and is “owned” collectively by youth who come from different areas. Sam Porciello from the MAC says that these projects can “evolve from cross-community to one community being creative together” (Sam 11/23/12).

One of the greatest examples of arts unifying a community is Axis. In my interview with Emma Connors, she said Ballymun used to be “somewhere you didn’t come or stop or stay, it was dangerous, there was drug use and suicide and all the rest” (Emma Connors 10/30/12). Ten years ago, a regeneration started in the area and as a direct result of the needs of the community, Axis was built. Since then, Ballymun has dramatically changed. According to Emma, this change can be majorly accredited to Axis and the arts. Emma said there used to be a lot of rivalry and fighting from different areas within Ballymun, but there have been projects which involve youth from all different parts and now it is seen as a much more collective Ballymun. The center is professional, yet a place for the community and its highest needs. As a result, the community is engaged and involved in Axis. Emma also mentioned that for the first couple of years, parents wouldn’t come to their children’s shows or performances; now that the kids are doing better at home and are proud of themselves, their families are starting to come and support them. In addition to providing arts for youth, Axis also provides mentoring opportunities for
the community whenever they can. Axis sometimes will pay youth who are interested in helping to facilitate something; Emma believes it’s a good investment and it’s real. Also, Emma believes as the youth grow, the opportunities need to grow with them. If they are no longer interested in taking classes or being participants, then they can help with managing things, or taking responsibility of a piece of a project (ibid). This way they are still involved and doing something meaningful.

Like Axis, New Lodge Arts, Arts for All, and Alternatives provide mentoring opportunities and engage in promoting further education interests—they are holistic programs. They will help with CVs (like a resume), or job/school applications. These programs are more than just art programs—they are programs designed to engage and help the community using art. Whatever the needs of the community are at the time, that is what the program focuses on, and this has found to be especially valuable.

Finally, community arts can act as a unifier simply in that they bring the community together for performances and presentations. The project Poetry in Motion has a big show at the end of the six-month time period where 900 people from the 20-30 various schools throughout Northern Ireland come together to present their work. Chelley says at this event, “all the kids are really supportive of each other and encourage each other, it doesn’t matter where they are from” (Chelley McLear 11/21/12). Theatre of Witness is another example. It is a drama meant to be shown—and it is shown in the communities where it essentially takes place. It is by the community and for the community, and it can be a hard thing to
watch, but even more important to because it shows many perspectives all being of equal value.

Teya Sepinuck says the purpose of ToW is to bring people together to bear witness to issues and society; it is putting a face and heart to the issues and moving people beyond entrenched positions to be able to see each other as “me” (Teya Sepinuck 11/21/12 10:00 AM Phone Interview). This statement directly relates back to the idea of empathy and being able to feel what another would feel. It also is similar to Rorty’s theory of sentimentality and sentimental education.

Rorty states that “…manipulating sentiments, on sentimental education…sufficiently acquaints people of different kinds with one another so that they are less tempted to think of those different from themselves as only quasi-human. The goal of this manipulation of sentiment is to expand the reference of the terms ‘our kind of people’ and ‘people like us’ (Rorty 1999 73-74).

With notions of empathy, people are aware of other perspectives and can unify to form a community.

The literature also agrees with the notion of arts being a unifier. (Zelizer 2003) states “…theater and other arts based activities have long been used as a tool for educating and uniting communities to work towards collective action or to facilitate community problem solving within the field of development” (Zelizer 2003, 65). In his view of activities that focus on relations between groups in conflict, most focus on approaches that include dialogue to help others try to understand, to trust, and to “facilitate interaction through community projects” (ibid 64). (Zelizer
2003) also found that in his study in Bosnia-Herzegovina, that with youth, positive interaction is encouraged and facilitated through the arts where there is a common goal (ibid, 70). In “Creating Community: Art for Community Development,” (Lowe 2000) quotes (Perlstein 1998), who wrote an article on how culture builds community, “art projects were a common experience that people could share as a starting point for meeting and learning about each other” (Perlstein 1998).

I think if communities that continue to work on community arts projects and development projects, the stereotypes and ideas can change. As more and more members of the community get involved, the mindsets will start to evolve. Progress is slow, but progress is still progress. And while these community arts projects are not affecting everyone, they are setting a solid foundation for years to come.

The literature goes on endlessly showing all of the positive impacts community arts can have on individuals and on a community. The examples are there to see; over and over again are success stories of arts development projects at the grassroots level and these are the projects that impact the community and create change.

As my findings and additional research has shown, the many and various ways of artistic expression through community arts can provide all of these positive outcomes. While I am pointing out the many great things the arts can do, I am also aware that the arts can be used in negative forms. For example, some of the murals in Belfast, which depict violence can be controversial. Some say that they cannot be considered art, but propaganda (Aeveen Kerrisk 11/30/12), while others, such as myself, think art can be any form of expression good or bad. Additionally, some
might argue that the arts in areas of regeneration marginalize and stigmatize the arts; it gives a negative connotation that community art projects are only for people in disadvantaged areas. I think community arts have the opposite effects; they put communities on the map and give them something to be known for other than being a disadvantaged community. Once again, looking at Axis in Ballymun as an example, youth from Axis are frequently asked to come perform at places all over Dublin; people are interested in them and what they have to offer, not necessarily because they are from Ballymun but because they are good. The regeneration has made it so they can now be seen and heard in positive ways.
Conclusion

The main critique I would make of the ISP is the time constraint. Two and a half weeks was not enough to do the type of project I had in mind and I could not be as in depth as I was hoping. I was not able to get in touch with all of the places I wanted to in this amount of time and I think that in the future, preparing for the ISP and making connections throughout the whole semester would have been beneficial. I think that this paper could have been stronger if I had talked to youth participants of projects, and also government programs and funders such as the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. Their perspectives are important and would make my paper more professional and the findings more meaningful.

Researching the topic of community arts, let alone community arts in a transitioning society, was completely new to me at the start of this project. I had never had an interest before, I think because I did not hold much knowledge about it. I had heard of people in the US doing dynamic community building projects with youth in various deprived communities, and it was of interest to me, but I did not make the connection with it being a community arts project. Sam Porciello from the MAC told me she thought what Northern Ireland was doing was innovative and asked me what it was like in the U.S., and I had absolutely no idea. This bothered me after the interview because I felt that I should know what is going on in the U.S. as the impact of arts and youth has been of interest to me for many years. However, I am extremely glad that I chose this topic for my ISP because now I do know about community arts and it has opened up many possibilities of future career paths that I was not aware of. After meeting with project facilitators and learning about what
they do, facilitation work with youth seems like a definite possible career. I have also found that making connections with people can be very helpful for new ideas or further research—it is not hard to talk to people if you just tell them you are interested and want to know more, they often are happy to make time.

Possible recommendations for future study would be to be involved in a project from start to finish. I would observe and participate, get views from all aspects including the participants, the facilitators, the program, and the funders. I think this would be extremely useful to really see how community arts work and pertains to my three themes while they are occurring.

In order to show a more holistic perspective of community arts in a transitioning society, there are a few dissenting perspectives that should be represented. David Gilliland summarizes these views that mindsets have not changed in large ways—some of the attitudes of people working cross community are that while they are working on the project they are fine and can work together and even get a long, but then they will go back into their community where the stereotypes still exist and ideas are put back into their heads (Gilliland 11/21/12). However, Ballymun shows that an entire communities’ mindset can change. As an area at an extreme end of the spectrum, where regeneration was desperately needed, the arts provided a vehicle to transform. It is still happening ten years later, but immense progress has been made and there is a positive view on the arts from the community (Emma Connors 10/30/12).

In a society that has been broken by hatred and violence, such as that of Northern Ireland, there has been increasing interest and success stories in the arts
being used as a tool for good relations and transformation. Community arts can offer a plethora of avenues for learning, sharing, educating, connecting, interacting, and healing. They can increase self-confidence, help build positive identity—especially for youth—, be a tool for addressing important or difficult issues, and finally community arts can unify a community. These outcomes of the arts are especially important for youth, as youth are the future. The endless cycle of entrenched division and ignorance needs to stop in order for transformation to really occur. The arts are powerful and expressive; they are malleable to any interest or passion and can bend to fit whoever is using them. Community arts have the potential to transform even the most conflicted of societies.
Examples of Projects:

Belfast Bloom-CAP Landmarks Project

Clare McComish told me about a current project she is working on called Belfast Bloom with ten different communities including young adults, ethnic minorities, and groups from socially deprived areas (McComish www.comartspartner.org). The project is on the subject of the environment and will be a large sculpture to be put in
the Botanical Gardens in Belfast. It is a sphere comprised of ten flours—one representing each community. In order to do the project, all ten communities had to come together at points. Both Clare’s and Chelley’s projects take about a year from start to finish and the project facilitators have a mandatory set of hours of contact time with the communities they work with. All of the staff are creative and the CAP has a creative base working from the ground up (Clare McComish 11/13/12).

Poetry in Motion—See Local and Vocal Book

Local and Vocal Project 2012

New Lodge Arts Lantern Parade—See supplemental material.
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Arts Center. 10/30/12.


Irene Cooke. Early Years Program involving art. Early Years. 11/16/12.


Teya Sepinuck. Interview. Purpose of Theatre of Witness, Role of Community Arts in a Transitioning Society. Phone Interview 10:00 AM. 11/21/12.


APPENDIX

*These are my fieldnotes notes from interviews—they are rough and sometimes include my own opinions and feelings of each interview.

Organized by date

10/30/12 Interview with Emma Connors-AXIS
-use projects to promote axis
-promote young people
-and promote Ballymun particularly as it is a disadvantaged community
"somewhere that you didn't come or stop or stay it was dangerous there was drug use and suicide and all the rest” so anything now 10 years on –regeneration in Ballymun and reason axis was built was because local comm. wanted it to happen EXX
-link Ballymun to other parts of city and country
-using arts to connect community and places
-rap project successful→been asked to run project again several times
-invite young people from each bally places in country to participate –have bally in common
-need in school, bullying was up attendance down and suicides were going on so suicide prevention funded it
-rivalry and fighting from different areas within Ballymun but since this project was with young people from all different parts it is seen as much more a collective Ballymun
-“is it just a music project? Or are you trying to do it to change something else?”
-really well known for youth arts work –because way community works
-axis knows their way of working works because they’ve seen success
-various youth projects everyone comes together and sits on committee together for two big events throughout year
- festival youth committee –young people who have moved through ranks who want to have career in arts or want to be part of planning
-doesn’t always have to be based around projects/doesn’t need to stop
-5 years on she still has people coming in every couple of weeks for tea or are helping to plan festivals now
-“around them still continuing having an artistic relationship with this place”
-young people want to participate and want to go back and want to be around adults→”see them all around becoming more successful” CONC
-very careful about what they pitch to young people → people doing drugs .. understanding what would engage them
-“what we’ve really found here is that people have something to say, and what we’ve found if you give them an art form that gets them speaking and you hear their views and all the rest ..they get a chance to be on stage..and once you have that it’s much easier to get them to try different stuff”
-use that to get the next generation of young people to try things because the younger ones see these older ones successful and doing things that are difficult for them

don’t keep treating young people as young people—done doing projects but they want a new role..have to change quickly with that

-kids show support for each other’s things

-how to bring others in from community to be AUDIENCE not just do projects so have to find things that they are interested in

-axis is diff. others :the art is to help personal development

-axis is some of this but also do care about product and quality—can say something isn’t good enough

-because then they work on it until it becomes quality and then there’s something to be really proud of

-use axis as mentoring oppor. for community...whenever they could, actually pay young people for their time –if they want to help facilitate something..good investment and its real not tokenistic

-Identity building

-"this year there have been more young gay people coming out than ever before” because of young ppls involvement in arts , or bc they have become cool” given them a freedom to explore their identity and its safe

-a lot of young people here in different cliques---never have had anything to do with each other but running projects where they have to come together there has been a lot of building identity and respect and such

-getting access to theater or getting to publish things –very impt for impact and change and sustainability— ..."when young people have stuff seen and validated..thats when the change really happens" they have say in what happens with their works

-“youth arts absolutely exploded in Ballymun in last five years”—young people would definitely felt invisible here..not a place you’d want to be in or a place you’d ever admitted you were from

-underdog disadvantaged thing “in” now –people are proud to be from Ballymun—taking them into town people have asked them

-Ballymun ppl are worth/stuff is good

-change in how young ppl from Ballymun are seen

-has been a massive massive change in how Ballymun is seen, in how young people are seen, in terms of how they engage and it seems like so many young people now move through axis and art projects and come out the other side—better conversationalists, still engaged, feeling axis is kind of home, wanting to be part of something

-axis seems to have been place everyone taps back into..very positive view of building

-how to continue promoting things using popularity
- community resource center where professional stuff happens
- everyone proud of this place bc there’s been a lot of success coming out of it
--- center) if really well run the impact is potentially phenomenal

11/9/12 Children's Choir Workshop CULTUR LANN
- arts and culture center dedicated to promotion of arts and Irish Lang.
- drama, music, visual arts, poetry, literary readings, workshops
- former Presbyterian church .. interesting!
- children’s choir “culture belongs to everybody, not one side or the other”

11/13/12 CAP- Clare McComish
- public art
- started by bringing chance to develop small projects to go into immediate centers... etc. (was funded by peace funding from EU) (Belfast Arts..?)
- CAP ➔ stretching to all rural areas in Northern Ireland and big works in cities if funding allows.
- In a year there will be 6 community groups, 2 of which will be cross community in partly disadvantaged areas
- EX.
  - New start education center-youth who have slipped through educ system, ➔ informal re-introductions of qualifications
  - Look @ include youth – children in care system, increasing self-esteem, projects with outcome and achievement
  - Brought two groups together to MAC (neutral space also very nice new space) special
- In projects.. no age limit.. any disability ➔ open applications
- Creative base ➔ staff all creative and started from ground up
- Sometimes projects touch political things
  - Sculpture going into botanic garden (pic online)
    - 10 groups of all ethnicities and diversities (online details) 2 years 20 hrs contact time with project artists and group (15 hours if not cross community)
- Role of arts (accor to Clare)
  - Non threatening way
  - Opens safe environment
  - Creates energy and less formal way for connection-with youth especially and generational
  - But with youth— things can blow up, sometimes projects have failed from someone saying something offensive
  - But can maybe achieve more because projects informal / relaxed
  - In New education.. project facilitator got kids to sing song ➔ self worth/identity getting some to simply concentrate is a huge achievement
Breaking down barriers getting them in new space, everyone’s in
Neutral space to create SHARED WORK
  Positive reinforcement self worth ownership of project
One project Clare did with peace walls
  Community leader in Ardoyne got in touch with Clare and she
  was commissioned to remove negative art and aspects to the
  little girls going to school and protests
  She worked with youth from that specific school and there
  were 1300 tiles most of which were created by individuals
  Its been 3 years and have not been vandalized→she says its
  because the kids and community have taken ownership of it
  and will not touch it –she says great to see
  Optimistic and shows using art to go into area which is
  entrenched with massive divides
  You never know how much influence these projects will have
  on youth→they can go way beyond the immediate project
Project based programs

11/16/12 EARLY YEARS
Irene Cooke
  • Art projects
  o work with kids together → “parents never had that opportunity, to
    just get messy”
  o gets young to express themselves in different/other ways than talking

11/19/12 BILLY DRUMMOND –ALTERNATIVES
  o Art projects
  o “Gives young people opportunity to engage in art on some things that
    they might not be interested in...art opens up new way of looking at it “
  o Glencaird community center one example—working with a group of
    kids who had participated in anti social behavior so they decided the
    way they wanted to work with community was to make a mural in
    classroom...started with bad things like drugs and effects and guns and
    went into aspirations
  o One project surrounded history of bonfires and looking and the
    history of them as a positive aspect of their identity
    ▪ Did mural and incorporated all bands in area
  o Looking at positive elements of identity and culture—do not hire
    professionals...look to talent and own members to complete things
    (different than other programs who do) Its not about bringing in
    experts but seeing what area has
  o When looking at Racism and approaches to problems in area →tried
    to use something that would originally come from loyalist pt of view
    so murals are big one→ but they are positive and not negative as
    loyalists ones can often be
- Travelled to Berlin—did mural on peace walls and berlin wall incorporating Hebrew, Arab, English, German
- Arts to represent WHERE they are (place impt to identity [me]) sculpture in park representing industrial Belfast
- Tap into positive role models of area
- One mosaic with artist was looking at hidden aspects of history → history group and young people collaborated on art piece bringing alive history and people
- Medium is chosen by groups who Alternatives is working with
- Depends on circumstances. Sometimes funding comes with arts
- Photography project around policing or around issue based things
- Role/outcomes—Accor Billy
  - @individual level (what Billy thinks)
    - often people they work with have low educational achievement/low self esteem and realize @end they can produce something that is GOOD really boosts self-esteem
    - “not about art for arts sake” but used as a means for looking at issues that are important to them
    - people take notice and it educated people
    - murals in Belfast → many messages are negative
    - Alternatives is putting positive things out there
    - And promotes further education interests
    - Altvs has been able to give support, to travel, and do art pieces
    - Breaking down some hesitancy people would have looking @ issues
      - Indirect way
    - People get involved in things they’d not necessarily get involved with and focusing on actual pieces of art and the process of how they will do it helps this
    - Arts based approach to issues
    - About diff oppor that arise„sometimes art is that oppor.
    - Look at Action for Community Transformations
    - Billy thinks there is a big sense of community in northern Ireland
      - Diff irishness in republic vs NI and different brutishness in NI vs Britain
    - Youtube video ShankillAlternatives
  - Billy also said people two years ago would have never believed the progress being made NOW

11/20/12 AMANDA CROFT
- artists used to be shipped in from somewhere else but they must have some influence from the comm.
• Projects tend to be “safe” – they must please everyone and project gets watered down from what artist originally wanted or intended
• Role of art according to Amanda
  o Operates on all levels
    ▪ engages fine artists with community that wouldn’t normally have any interest at all
    ▪ makes it accessible
    ▪ people think “not for me” but artists have made art and galleries acceptable
    ▪ youth groups ➔ notion of art being something for them ➔ they are more likely to support arts
    ▪ unifier for community. Common projects are interdisciplinary and inter community and participation comes for various communities but the unifier is the ACTIVITY
      • helps break down barriers
      • common purpose or goal ➔ set aside barriers angst “this is very valuable”
      • “visual artists can do this better than writers bc people look at art not so much at artist.”
      • Growth area—valuable to artist and community
      • Idea of art for EVERYONE becomes another unifying factor
      • “grassroots community must be catered for

11/21/12 Interview with Teya Sepinuck-Theatre of Witness
• --what is purpose of theatre of witness ➔
  • --to bring ppl together to bear witness to issues and society—putting face and heart to them, moving ppl beyond entrenched positions...to be able to see other (enemy)...as me
• -process of identification/of understanding
• -something extraordinary happens ppl from very different backgrounds when all work together

•
• --why is it important?
• --what do you see happening when you work with these groups, is it always similar?
• -careful about who she chooses and how they work together, and always been able to make it happen.
• -once they start, relief to ppl, not be judged,
• --meant to be for performers and for community--first class performance/work to make a drama FOR audience /healing for both
• --opens up their stories /audience ..healing, the people she works with don’t experience (healing) fully until performed with audience ..performers start to feel that they are doing something important because of audience reaction
• --what I think is valid—my opinions and beliefs
• --get stories out and be heard
• --brings “enemies” or two different sides together ..little by little, forgiveness, healing? See that other is suffering or going through a similar experience ..getting to know other side

11/21/12 New Lodge Arts—Anne Delaney
• New Lodge area one of top most deprived in Northern Ireland
• There is a NEED
• Focus on what young people are interested in
• About their engagement and what they want
  o Ballet class—discipline
• Impact of peacewalls –drama project
• Issue based work/partnering with other organizations
• Good relations strand looking @interface areas
• Linking city themes to community like Titanic
• Do positive parades in interface areas where there is a lot of anti social behavior and not a lot of positive things happen
  o LANTERN PARADE –one of main events during year
    ▪ Belfast Telegraph was interested –haven’t been interested a lot
    ▪ 3000 expected 6000 came
    ▪ make their own lanterns
    ▪ got a lot of funding through Belfast city council and art council
      b/c it was an interface project
  o NLA makes arts affordable to community, people wouldn’t normally go out into city and do things bc they cost money but NLA makes things free-very cheap.
  o “A lot of youth don’t know or aren’t interested in problems but they are interested in working with other groups especially if you’re doing something they are interested in Æ easy to get them involved”
  o where they are from doesn’t matter when they are in the doing
  o finding a place where they can be together
  o impt for NLA to do things youth are interested in Æ surrounding issue of bon fires, youth wouldn’t want to come in and take an art class but instead made a big wooden sculpture (cross community) that they then got to light “good way to engage in something they wouldn’t normally be involved in, something creative”
  o Work with 2000 youth each yr
  o Positive contribution, NLA is open to working in partnerships/unique to Belfast
  o Work goes over and beyond b/c good relations part which makes a big impact
  o Trying to branch out and work with other organizations
  o A lot more than a community arts organization
• What Anne sees
  o Development of personal and social skills of those involved
All about participation
Young leaders—program that takes it further than arts helps with applications and gives advice, cv's, links in with other organizations
Some youth still involved in NLA from when they were younger
- 1 is on board
- there is a youth advisory group who advises company on what they should be doing
Arts Academy works with ages 3–approx 18 but till 25
Classes for parents and children to develop together
Good support from locals
Community engagement
Get to work with some of best artists and facilitators in Northern Ireland\(\rightarrow\) good opportunity
Good relations part\(\rightarrow\) makes it better than normal community arts program
Lantern parade was something for everyone a big variety of things

After thoughts
Creative room next to office where some projects are done and other projects fill the room
Makes space more appealing Anne thinks—when look in window and see all of these things, one of Europe’s cows
Once she started talking to me about all the things NLA is doing/has done she was saying "wow we’ve really done so much it’s quite exciting" she was sort of realizing all the achievements as she was telling me about it and was saying she could talk for a while about it all
She seemed very proud of their work especially of the lantern parade and youtube video and Belfast telegraph interest and number that showed up –has a lot of pride in NLA all throughout interview
Seemed excited to talk with me and very helpful—gave me a lot of things to take home with me

11/21/12 POETRY IN MOTION-Chelley McClear
New Belfast Arts –founded at peace process when thought arts could be vehicle for change and enabling interactions –LOOK AT PAMPHLET
Kids Poetry in motion
Send poets into schools
6 hours
20-30 schools participate all across north
cross community project
do look @ social deprivation index when choosing schools
free
funded by Arts Council and Belfast City Council #s based not value based
launch event /all schools come together to share work
read out loud and make audio recording
- 400 of 900 will get up and perform and get a change to be on stage.
- Must be careful about what goes in –around 80% between 9-11 years old.
- 1 or two classes from each school.
- Process of inspiration editing and performance.
- When all types of schools come together it is highlight.
- “All of kids are really supportive of each other and encourage each other—doesn’t matter where they are from “.
- All in same room together.
- Community ethos about PROCESS and what happens between poets and kids.
- There is an outcome but it is about sharing and process and kids who find their VOICES – it is about THAT discovery.
- Theme is always connected with Identity in some way either geographical, cultural, religious, family, social, dreams.
- If kids write from their own perspective and experience → it is grounded in their identity.

- Benefits seen:
  - Youth Not always aware of what is happening for them.
  - Having fun while doing it – poets use different methods to get kids to explore and engage.
    - One example was of a selective mute who had never spoken in school and at end of this project he wanted to read his poem out loud to the class.
  - Self confidence → PRIMARY AIM.
    - Kids engage with their own abilities.
    - And gives them confidence to try and enjoy something cultural.
    - Focus on what they can do not what they cant.
    - Try to leave legacy in school – teachers can use those methods.
    - Kids are excited about project and interested in arts.
    - Kids engage and start creating and enjoy doing it.
    - Outlet/learning to express themselves and enjoy expressing themselves.
    - Comm/parent support varies from area—some school more proactive than others but all support in some way.
  - Venue is always neutral and friendly to all communities.
  - Do get “staunch” views expressed by some of the older kids but careful about what is published → also begins to challenge and question views of kids and identities.
    - Process of discovering others identity—have to discover ones own.

11/21/12 Arts For All-David Gilliland
- Focus is slightly different than other community arts based orgs.
- Protestant community traditionally don’t engage with arts very well.
- Local politician said how can we change.
- Community development org primarily through medium of arts
- AFA different because any art project would involve QUALITY ARTISTS (different than Alternatives)
- "look at engaging people in proper art" with preponderance of visual arts
- deal with
- people who view arts with suspicion, they don’t believe they are artistic
  - with visual arts there is a product at end which shows them they are GOOD
- people who have had negative experience in education, or literacy issues…thus visual arts is focus of many projects (may not be able to write)
- “art itself has important role surrounding issues of conflict”
  - can address many issues and things through ART
  - different perspectives important especially with youth
  - its about PEOPLE doing project
  - “arts provide means for discussing difficult issues in non threatening way (ALL HAVE SAID THIS )
- 2005-2005 project with women "with these hands"—telling their story→made something
- short story compilation s ppl writing about life and what they have experience
- getting people within one community together as much as cross –community
- about ARTIST and what they think is important
- they think expectation is to create this amazing piece which can be a CHALLENGE
- getting them to take ownership(ALSO MAIN THEME)
- in last few years community relations has been big focus
  - CIRCA project funded by international fund for Ireland
- Process of developing of strategy of how they continue to look at issues and address
- LIMITED TO NORTH BELFAST which is primary focus
- Offices in gallery space offered to local groups to have exhibitions
- AFA Mentoring scheme, pair young emerging artist with existing artist to help develop skill and portfolio -Mentors and mentees who become mentors
- David said they could be running programs everyday if funding allowed
- Large challenge in getting enough money
- David thinks mindsets haven’t changed much in large ways
  - Some Attitudes of ppl working cross comm. →while working on project they are fine and get a long but when it is over, they go back into their own communities where all the stereotypes still exist and ideas are put back in heads –notings really changed →(as arts expand through communities and more and more are involved could this change?)
- Sectarian bigots→racist bigots
  - Can deal with this through arts and conflict resolution
o **Personalize it—Kasha (polish artist) going into community is invaluable to this idea of seeing people as other and learning to respect differences and value them.

o Follow ups?
  o Look at all projects and see if they work /why/why not?
  o Occasionally will go back
  o BUT for many of these projects AFA has been working with are a constant group of people and constant stream of work ..AFA doesn’t drift in and out
  o With physical regeneration it is easier to do follow ups and provides new generation opportunities to get involved

o AFA works across age ranges 9-90 –things are there for everyone
o There is a demographic sector from 19-mid 30s that are left out
o Also some youth are succumbed to peer pressure, they think these things are boring, or there are other better things out there..can be difficult to get them to stay involved

o very difficult to engage with men and arts (COULD BE WHY STEREOTYPES STILL EXIST??)
  o not arty, do not want to get involved
  o when art projects are done in a group only 6 of previously 25 men will show up
  o →but then those 6 can recruit others
  o Edward Carson Project AFA is hoping to capture mens interest with history and politics of project
  o Word “art” in itself can scare them or turn them off
  o Art is hard with WORKING CLASS MEN—cultural hang up? Image?
  o Also difficult because funding is available for youth and mothers/toddlers but difficult to find it with men unless they are ex-combattants or paramilitary but even then its hard

o Once ppl see they can do something even if its small, they are so proud of themselves and ready to tackle something bigger →“arts is great way for that”

o AFA lots of projects and community pride
o Ppl being prepared to tackle other things because they tried something and it worked well for them

11/23/12 MAC with Sam Porciello
o Part of space “Den” was designed by youth to ensure they had ownership of space
o Workshops with different groups from different backgrounds and advertising of “den” –neutral space
o Young ppl involved take shapes in programs

Role of ARTS
o **“Tool to create dialogue and highlight similarities in lives”
  o “evolves from cross community to one community being creative together “
not the same generational problems with internet and tv which exposes youth to other cultures