

Blogpost #1 – August 6th 2018

Having recently graduated from Limerick School of Art & Design, I was delighted when I found out I was awarded the emerging artist in residency at An Táin Arts Centre, and now that I'm just over a month in to the residency I'd like to reflect on the work I've done so far as well as my plans for the rest of the Summer.

The most common struggles I've heard from talking to other recent art college graduates is that it can be difficult to get back into the habit of making work and finding an adequate studio space after college. After enjoying a month off in June, I was glad that the residency would get me back in the studio and give me a reason to get back into work mode. Despite this it was nice not having to work towards 'finished pieces' straight away as the last few months of college was very focused on making work for the degree show.

After spending the first couple of weeks researching ideas and getting inspiration, I started off by working with some local imagery associated with Dundalk. I found it interesting to return to my home town after four years away so I made some sketches of the Heinkel Bubble car, Proleek Dolmen, the Green Church, and also using some images taken from Google Maps.



One of my main objectives for the residency was to make some art specifically for a public space. While art college is a great environment, much like art galleries, it can be restricted to a small audience and not be seen as accessible to the general public. Given the ethos of community engagement of the residency, I felt it was important to make work that can be enjoyed by everybody and not just art enthusiasts.

The first piece of outdoor art I made was a collaboration with my partner, Cliona Williams who is a knitwear/textile designer from Cork. We spent a few days over the August bank

holiday weekend making a 9 foot tall Celtic high cross installation at Arcadian Field Festival in Bellurgan Park. The sculpture was inspired by looking at ancient and modern ways of celebrating Irish festivals/rituals. It was great fun working alongside the team up at Bellurgan park who were very helpful throughout and it was fantastic to see it getting such a positive reaction from festival goers of all ages.



As for the next month, I am currently planning a large scale mural in the town. I recently bought a set of oil paints which look forward to putting to good use and will probably start by making a couple of portraits. I also intend to get membership for the Creative Spark print studio so I can back to screen printing. Finally there will be an open studio event taking place during Culture Night in September.

Sean McGuill is An Táin Arts Centre's visual artist in residence. Sean will be in residence in the Basement Gallery studio during July, August and September 2018. Follow his progress on Instagram @seanmcguillart #antainartists