

# Michael Hanna



**M**ichael Hanna completed his MFA at the University of Ulster in 2012 and recently undertook residencies at the Millennium Court Arts Centre and Digital Art Studios. He has been involved in exhibitions in the UK and internationally including Rencontres Internationales at the Gaité Lyrique, Paris and Multiplicity at NURTUREart, New York. Hanna is a co-founder of AMINI, an artist led initiative for the promotion and critical discussion of artists' moving image in Northern Ireland.

My current areas of research are psychology and architecture. I am particularly interested in theories about learning and the effect of environment on behaviour.

My work in these areas takes the form of audio and video installations made up from layers and remixes of appropriated material. The installations are developed to be controlled settings that are sympathetic to the architecture of the exhibition space. Psychological theories and learning techniques are integrated into the works themselves. The overall result is often not fixed or ready-made, but is constructed through the emotional and cognitive engagement of the viewer.

I am interested in creating work that inhabits the bones of a building. Work that responds to both the architecture of the space and how people move through it and experience it. I see my role as translating psychological research into these physical environments. Through this I can examine ways in which people, digital material, and architecture can exist together, and how I can nurture that coexistence. I have a toolbox of materials that I can use to 'shape' the environments I work in, with the focus on the relationship of elements to each other, not any one individual element alone.

#### Recent projects include:

*Short Films about Learning* is a video installation juxtaposing a selection of images taken from the Belfast Exposed photography archive with excerpts from a lecture series outlining theories of social and environmental psychology. The work presents the learning theories of the Spotlight Effect, Habituation and Object Permanence alongside images of the effects of conflict. The rhythm of the speech varies throughout from carefully measured statements to free flowing thoughts, with the images timed to mirror this rhythm.

*Behaviour Setting* is a video installation examining the visual language of control. The raw materials used in the moving images are appropriated from a wide range of sources. These sources include optical illusions, particle physics engines, crowd analysis software and microscopic imagery. All this material is batch processed to uniformity. The work is produced to be psychologically probing rather than representational, didactic or passive. Each space in which the work is shown is customised using site-specific combinations of perforated metal, acoustic foam and wet clay. These sculptural elements also serve a practical purpose, offering acoustic solutions to shape each synthetic environment.

*Relearning to Speak: a scientific and cultural mapping of the mouth.* This ongoing research project takes as its starting point the physical requirements of the body to create speech - speech being one of the interesting points where physicality, psychology and culture intersect.



# Vera Klute



Vera Klute was born in Germany but is based in Dublin since 2001. She has exhibited widely in Ireland and abroad and her work is part of both private and public collections. It has recently been included in the Portrait Collection of the National Gallery of Ireland and the National Self-portrait Collection. This year she has been awarded the Hennessy Craig Scholarship at the RHA Annual Exhibition. She has received several Arts Council Bursary Awards, the K+M Evans Award (RHA Annual) and the Emerging Visual Artist Award (Wexford Arts Centre). Recent solo exhibitions include the LAB and the RHA (both Dublin), QSS Gallery (Belfast), the Butler Gallery (Kilkenny) and Wexford Arts Centre. A solo exhibition is scheduled at the Molesworth Gallery for 2016.

Vera Klute works with a variety of different media ranging from drawing and painting to kinetic sculpture, taxidermy, video animation and tapestry.

The artist is always keen to learn new techniques and often crosses over between the different media. Therefore the work has a very playful, home-made quality. Whether it is photorealistic painting or geometric paper sculpture, each piece showcases technical skill as well as great attention to detail and inventiveness with the materials.

Themes are inspired by everyday life and utilize familiar objects and imagery. The artist looks at how we perceive the outside world and our place in it and sees the individual as displaced in its own habitat. Like a natural scientist the artist is attempting to make sense of an often absurd everyday life with its cycles, routines and habits.

The work looks at the body as well as the environment to untangle physical and social relationships. In this way objects or even body parts are taken out of their usual context and derived of their original purpose. What was previously familiar is now recombined in collages, animations or sculptures that mimic the repetition and cycles that form everyday life. The boundaries between science and imagination become blurred in an attempt to give meaning to an existentialist chaos. The world is not seen as an objective, agreed upon reality, but rather a manifestation the individual's disposition. The work talks about monotony, but also creates a meditative sense of the ordinary. It sees the familiar removed from its usual context, often with a slight sense of uneasiness.

Humour takes a big part in Klute's work. The artist combines the grim with the absurd and the beautiful with the macabre, creating work that is light-hearted with dark undertones.



# Elaine Leader



**E**laine Leader was born in Dublin in 1970, Elaine Leader completed an MFA in Sculpture NCAD in 2012. Her practice involves drawing, architectural models and temporary experiential installations. These are psychological, disrupted, in-between spaces, which are activated by the viewer. They employ familiar kinetic architectural and engineering mechanisms from everyday life and repurpose them in a way to de-stabilise our preconceptions of space and how we move through it.

Recent selected Exhibitions include:

'Primal Architecture', Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2015), Curated by Seamus McCormack

'Little Kingdoms', Catalyst Arts Gallery (2014)

'Neutral', Tulca, Galway (2014), Curated by Aisling Prior

All that remains to be seen' Catalyst Arts Gallery, Curated by Iain Griffin (2014)

'Underline' Occupy Space, Limerick, Curated by Orlaith Tracey (2014)

'Penumbra', Tactic, Cork (2014),

'Circulation', Monster Truck/Flood Gallery (2013), Curated by Paul McAree

Production', Monster Truck Gallery, Dublin, (Curated by Kate Strain, 2012 ),

'Transference', Monster Truck (Curated by Clíodhna Shaffrey & Cliona Harmey (2011),

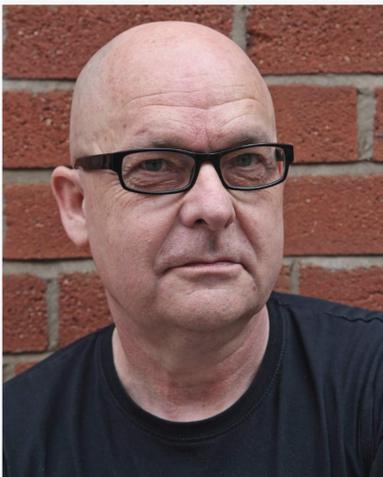
Claremorris Open (Curated by Chris Hammond 2011),

'Draw the line', Monster Truck' (Curated by Dr. Ruth Pelzer-Montada 2011),

Recent awards include: Arts Council Visual Arts Bursary 2014, RHA Studio Award 2013, Arts Council Visual Arts Bursary 2012, Arts Council Travel Awards (2000 & 1996)



# Colin Darke



Colin Darke was born in England in 1957 and remained there until moving to Ireland in 1988. He lived in Derry for twenty years until relocating to Belfast in 2008. He studied at London's Goldsmith's College and recently returned to education, completing his PhD at Ulster University in 2010. He was ACNI Fellow at the British School at Rome in 2012. He has been based in Orchid Studios since 2011.

He has exhibited widely over the past twenty years, including solo shows in Ireland, Britain, Canada and Italy. His most recent one-person show was *Grotesque Mediocrity* at Belfast's MAC (2014).

Group exhibitions include: *Tracings* (Ormeau Baths Gallery, Belfast, 1998); *Manifesta 3* (Ljubljana, 2000); *Something Else* (Turku/Helsinki, 2002/3); *Venice Biennale*, 2003; *Busan Biennale*, 2004; *God and Goods* (Villa Manin, Passariano, 2008); *Commodity Form* (Two-person show with David Mabb - Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast, 2008/The Dock, Carrick-on-Shannon, 2008/The Bluecoat, Liverpool, 2009); *Labour and Wait* (Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 2013), *MAC International* (Belfast, 2014).

Darke's work often references that of three others - Courbet's realism, Duchamp's readymades and Brecht's epic theatre. It also contains direct reference to Marxist political, historical and economic theories.

Much of his work has incorporated text, in various forms. This originated in 1991, with a number of pieces based on "comms" - prisoners' letters written in tiny writing onto cigarette papers, for easy smuggling out of gaol. This led to hand-written wall pieces and to writing directly onto found objects.

The largest text piece that he has made is *Capital*, writing by hand, between 2000 and 2003, an English translation of the three volumes of Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* onto 480 two-dimensional objects. After considering Marx's analysis of commodity production and its significance for the understanding of the Duchampian readymade, he made a follow-up piece, between 2004 and 2007. This piece, *The Capital Paintings*, consists of 480 oil paintings, depicting the objects used in the previous work.

He has continued to incorporate text into his work, but the significance of objects used has become increasingly important, along with his interest in the consideration of important historical moments. For example, the floor-based installation he made for his solo show in The MAC in 2014 brought together two pieces of nineteenth-century literature, one in text form and the other represented by objects. Marx's essay on the 1851 coup d'état, titled *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, was written onto objects featured in Alfred Jarry's 1896 play *Ubu Roi*. Both pieces of writing refer to coups and subsequent corrupt monarchical regimes. The intermixing of the two establishes relationships between historical reality and literary artifice. At the centre of the piece, the last paragraph is written onto a number of apples. This is a reference to Gustave Courbet's paintings made while imprisoned for his part in the Paris Commune of 1871, which soon followed the end of Louis Bonaparte's rule as Emperor Napoleon III after the Franco-Prussian War.

Darke continues to work with both text and objects, now exploring complex relationships between apparently disparate objects and between events centuries apart, relating, for example, toothpaste to hammers and Dante to Trotsky.



# Clodagh Emoe



Clodagh Emoe: My work moves between installation and events that are often predicated on a gathering. Through a process of staging, the works call people together to specific locations at particular times. The work seeks to create spaces that are “other” using particular methods of assembly and through a process of staging that draws on strategies associated with ritual, meditation and trance. These *other spaces* operate on an experiential and symbolic level, offering a temporality where ideas may be perceived collectively and where thought might be ‘felt’.

I approach my practice as an enquiry and extend the explorative process in my work through my collaboration with individuals from academic fields of knowledge and cultural practice (that include philosophers, critical thinkers, writers, astronomers, photographers, filmmakers, musicians and architects) to specific community groups. I consider my work as an open-process that develops over time. For example, *Mystical Anarchism* (2009-2013) incorporates numerous iterations that have unfolded out of a collaboration with the philosopher Simon Critchley. This work includes a midnight lecture held in an undisclosed forest in Glendalough, Co. Wicklow, a film made with Thomas McGraw Lewis, an event centred around a screening, a supper hosted by Edia Connole and a public conversation held in a disused office space and an installation at the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery. *Metaphysical Longings*, (2006-2014) is constituted by seven different events that have developed over eight years. This work has been enacted in locations ranging from a soon to be demolished flat in a social housing complex at dusk to an empty wing in the National Gallery of Ireland during closing time.

Projects and works have been commissioned and shown internationally. Recent projects include; *We Are and Are Not*, (2015), a film installation and site-specific event at commissioned by Model Niland, *The Things We See*, (2014), a collaborative, audio work for the National Museum of Fine Art, commissioned for the Taipei Biennial, *An Exercise in Seeing*, (2013), commissioned as part of the curatorial project *I Won't Say that I'll See You Tomorrow*, Mermaid Arts centre and Red Cross Forest, Co. Wicklow, *Proposition 7*, (2013), The National Art Studio, Seoul, Korea, *The Closing of Mystical Anarchism* (2013) as part of the curatorial project, *Sleepwalkers: Production as Process*, Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery Dublin. I have also developed large-scale public commissions. *Creating the Common*, (2010) a six-month explorative project in collaboration with a community of older people that culminated in *The Unveiling*, a theatrical event parodying a failed unveiling of a monumental sculpture. This event was filmed. An architectural structure specially designed by abgc architects for *The Unveiling* was exhibited in IMMA along with a screening of the film.

Projects have been supported by the Arts Council of Ireland, Dublin City Council, South Dublin County Council, A.H.R.B. UK and the European Cultural Foundation. Works are included in the permanent collection of the Model Niland, NYLO, Iceland, Anthony Reynolds Gallery, Kilfane Sculpture Garden, Limerick City Gallery, and IMMA. Awarded residencies include Banff Centre, Canada, Seoul, Sim, Iceland, National Museum of Contemporary Art, TNUA, (Taipei National University of the Arts) Taipei and IMMA, Dublin.

She holds a BA in Fine Art Sculpture from NCAD, a MA Fine Art from Chelsea College of Art and Design/ The University of the Arts, London and a PhD, titled, *Exploring the Philosophical Character of Contemporary Art thought a Post-Conceptual Practice* from GradCAM/DIT.



# VISUAL ARTISTS IRELAND



**V**isual Artists Ireland (VAI) is the representative body and primary support service for professional visual artists in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland. Founded in 1980, VAI supports visual artists at every stage of their careers as well as providing support to governments, local authorities, non-governmental organisations, and other interested parties who wish to engage with the visual arts.

In June 2015, VAI opened its first Northern Ireland office in Belfast. This has built on the work that has taken place since its foundation. The office, Visual Artists Ireland [NI] is dedicated to the support and promotion of the visual arts in Northern Ireland and their international promotion and engagement.

VAI is unique in the broad range and quality of services that are designed and delivered with individual visual artists, artists' collectives, and visual arts organisations in mind. VAI is a truly egalitarian organisation as we offer our services to both member and non-member alike. Our internal policies dictate that we deliver not only in metropolitan centres, but also we bring our services to local areas for visual artists who are not in a position to travel. It is this openness to listening to the everyday needs and strategic needs of visual artists that informs every service that we deliver and ensures that inclusion and respect are firmly embedded in our core values.

VAI [NI]'s Advocacy, Advice, and Membership Services offer a confidential advice/helpdesk service for visual artists that covers the wide range of professional concerns being experienced by artists today. This programme works in tandem with the VAI [NI] Professional Development Programme and VAI [NI] Information resources. It's content and focus is informed by: current professional practice; the input of VAI staff; VAI members; our primary UK partner Artquest, on-going needs analysis and evaluation; an advisory panel involving visual art professionals with a range of expertise; and dialogue with our international partners such as CARFAC, NAVA, Culture Action Europe and the IAA.

The VAI Professional Development Training (PDT) Programme is aimed towards professional visual artists at all stages of their career. VAI PDT offers daylong workshops; talks; information sessions and seminars on a range of professional practice topics across three strands. These strands include: Practical skills & knowledge; Career pathways; and Peer centred critique. Training is offered year round in Belfast as well as a variety of regional locations with events programmed February to June and September to November each year.

As an information provider, VAI is the leading source of information, news, discussion, jobs, visual arts opportunities, and event & exhibition advertising. As well as being designed for visual artists at all stages of their career, The Art News Centre is designed to be attractive to a broader audience. The section breaks down into the following: The Visual Artists Ireland News Sheet; Visual Artists Ireland Critique; eBulletins; Visual Artists Ireland websites; and Visual Artists Ireland on Social Media.

Recent research and projects include: The Social, Economic, and Fiscal Status of the Visual Artist in Ireland (ROI and NI), Payment Guidelines for Visual Artists in Northern Ireland, Belfast Open Studios, Visual Artists Ireland Cafés, Visual Artists Ireland Show & Tells, The Manual, a Survival Guide for Visual Artists, Creative Ireland: The Visual Arts [2000 – 2011], Combined Public & Product Liability Insurance for Visual Artists sponsored by Standard Utilities, and The Suki Tea Art Prize sponsored and supported by Suki Tea and Arts & Business NI.

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# SUKI TEA

Multiple award winning **Suki Tea** ethically sources and blends the world's best tasting teas, herbal infusions and fruit blends.

Celebrating their 10th year in business this independent company started out at Belfast's St George's market by business partners & pals Annie and Oscar.

*"one of our ethical policies is 'People first, then plant and planet'. This stretches far beyond the tea pickers in India and Africa but to our staff, customers and the wider community. This is a wonderful opportunity to engage directly with local artists as well as try and inspire the business community to step up and make a difference.'*

Oscar Woolley

# ARTS & BUSINESS NI

**Arts & Business Northern Ireland** sparks new partnerships between commerce and culture. We believe creativity drives performance and prosperity. We connect companies and individuals to cultural organisations and provide the expertise and insight for them to prosper together. At the heart of our work is the knowledge that the arts deliver unique, creative and innovative solutions that can help business to achieve success and increase competitiveness. Our aim is to improve business performance through culture - that's performance of private sector businesses and cultural businesses.

Through the Investment Programme Arts & Business NI aims to promote mutually beneficial relationships between commerce and culture. The Investment Programme is designed to encourage inspirational, sustainable partnerships between businesses and the arts organisations they sponsor, to maximise the benefits of working together.

