

Writing and Community: Ideas of Place

This innovative project is designed to improve individual and communal well-being and quality of life by introducing participants to new ways of evoking ideas about place and belonging, through composing their own works on these themes. The project is firmly embedded within local communities, and provides opportunities for developing new creative skills, through encouraging participants to produce their own forms of artistic expression (whether poetry, song, or performance) primarily through writing, but also through other media. The carefully planned workshop sessions and performance events, led by experienced facilitators, encourage talent, increase self-awareness and self-confidence, and help to build community capacity to understand not only established ideas about place, but also to engage with new ideas about mobility, immigration, pluralism, and evolving communities.

Leon Litvack

Workshops will continue until the end of June 2015. There will be another performance event in the autumn. A selection of the work produced will be included in an anthology published by Guildhall Press.

This project gratefully acknowledges the assistance kindly provided by the Big Lottery; NI Arts Council; Queen's University Belfast; Crescent Arts Centre; Community Arts Partnership; and Young at Art

We would like to thank all the participants for their time, effort, and dedication.

Project Facilitators

Jan Carson, Sharon Dempsey, Moyra Donaldson, Jo Egan, Caroline Healy, Fionnuala Kennedy, Kiyam Khosravi, Bernie McGill, Chelley McLearn, Martelle McPartland, Erika Meitner

Follow the conversation:

<https://www.facebook.com/placewriting>

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Performance Event

Monday 8 June 2015, 6:30 pm
Crescent Arts Centre

BELFAST BOOK FESTIVAL
8-14 June 2015



This project was funded by the Big Lottery, through their 'Culture for All' funding stream, established in the wake of the Derry/Londonderry City of Culture Programme 2013. It is run through the School of English at Queen's University, and aims to bring people together to enjoy writing specifically on the theme of 'place'. This can mean the country or community we live in; it can mean the place we call home; it can refer to both urban and rural environments; it can also mean the place where we feel most comfortable, or the place where we feel most challenged. Our participants have been exploring ideas about belonging, while enhancing their verbal expression, and sharing their work with other like-minded people. Writing is a powerful tool for evoking emotions; by learning, discussing, and 'doing', participants have gained an understanding of how it is possible to express strong, honest feelings about belonging, identity, and purpose.

Project Director

Leon Litvack is Reader in Victorian Studies at Queen's University. He is a Board Member of the NI Arts Council, the NI Community Relations Council, and National Museums NI. He is a freelance broadcaster for the BBC, and can often be seen on television and radio, in broadcasts on arts and culture, as well as on religion and ethics. He has directed several successful poetry projects, including 'Reading and Writing for Peace'. Leon is spending the summer of 2015 at the University of New Brunswick, Canada, editing for publication the selection of work from this project.

Project Administrator

Paul Maddern was born in Bermuda, but now lives in County Down. He is a member of the Board of the Seamus Heaney Centre for Poetry at Queen's University, and the author of two poetry collections: *Kelpdings* and *The Beachcomber's Report*.

Work	Writer/Performer
No Place Like Home	Gavin Ferris
A Freak, A Laugh	Ruben-Dave Mulrooney
Class Notes; Home; Place	Jackie Stevenson
From These Parts	John D. Kelly
At the Gate	Kathryn Baird
Sunset on the Foyle	Lindsay Hodges
On Visiting the Island of My Ancestors	Stephanie Conn
Trupenny Moon; Cul de Sac; Fermanagh 1976	Teresa Kane
White Rocks Beach	Siobhan Scullion
The Barn; Emerald Isle, North Carolina	Therese Kieran
An extract from <i>Derna</i>	James Gray
Brothers in Silverwood	Denis McAlinden
The Forgotten Ones	Tom Ffrench
Tranquility	Thomas Wright
The Bag Searcher	Frances Sloan
Staying; Postcard of Home	Linda Hutchinson
Subject Matter	Annemarie Mullen
The Shadow Belonging	Benjamin Mulholland
Followed	Callum Harley
Followed	Ritchie McGrath
Followed; an extract from 'Marigold'	Emma Spreadborough
To Belong	Abigail Bester
Berlin	Matthew McKay
What am I to You	Mia Mouron-Adams
As a Matter of Fact	Solomon Trimble

INTERVAL

POST-SHOW DISCUSSION

Audience participation, with Leon Litvack, Chelley McLearn, Stephanie Conn, Paul Maddern, Sharon Dempsey, and Solomon Trimble

