



a new public art series commissioned *by* the sligo local authorities

UNRAVELLING DEVELOPMENTS 2004 – 2006

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MESSAGE FROM DECLAN BREE

MAYOR, SLIGO BOROUGH COUNCIL

On behalf of the Members of Sligo Borough Council I am delighted to announce the launch of our new series of public art commissions, entitled *Unravelling Developments*.

The commissions, ten in all, will highlight the unprecedented level of capital investment in the infrastructure of the Borough and County funded by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

MESSAGE FROM MARGARET GORMLEY

CATHAOIRLEACH, SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

Public art commissions, by their nature, involve people from all walks of life. The concept belongs to the artist, but the process requires bringing together the efforts of officials and local communities. Knowledge is exchanged between the artist, officials and local people. The result is a rich convergence.

On behalf of the Members of Sligo County Council I would like to thank everyone who will contribute to this series of commissions and I look forward to seeing developments unravel!

MESSAGE FROM HUBERT KEARNS

SLIGO COUNTY MANAGER

The shift of pace in the level of development currently taking place in Sligo is evident to all. There is a palpable sense of excitement about this regeneration and an anticipation of better times to come. We are fortunate that in addition to the capital investment in infrastructure and Housing, the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government through the Per Cent for Art Scheme allows the Local Authorities to commission original work from contemporary artists.

In a time of rapid change it is important to take time to reflect on the effects of change on our lives, personally, socially and environmentally. I look forward to seeing how the artists, engaged in their various commissions, reflect and interpret the developments taking place around us.

PUBLIC ART

CREATING CONNECTIONS

MARY McDONAGH. PUBLIC ART OFFICER

Public Art is full of the unexpected because it involves so many variables from the physical/environmental to community and social issues. It is a process of discovery, negotiation, democracy and compromise. Every commission is different and throws up its own challenges. Never a dull moment!

I began working for Sligo County Council in July 1999 as *Public Art Co-ordinator*. This was the first position of its kind in any local authority in the Republic and it was set up as part of a pilot public art programme with a number of key objectives. The programme is very well documented, so I will not dwell on it here except to say that it did achieve it's principal objective which was that the Sligo Local Authorities would adopt a policy to implement the *Per Cent for Art Scheme* on an ongoing basis.

The pilot programme was a very rewarding experience for me professionally and personally but it was not without its challenges. As with the introduction of any new service, there was a steep learning curve for all concerned. Public Art involves an incredible array of people from artists to engineers, planners, to other public bodies and the general public. Essentially my role is to liaise between the artists and communities – the artists and the local authorities – and the local authorities and the communities. In my experience, the artists appreciate my role in facilitating access to local authority expertise and to communities. In turn I am able to facilitate connections between local people and artists.

My job has evolved since the conclusion of the pilot phase. With the adoption of a policy by the Local Authorities, it became possible to access significant levels of funding from the *Per Cent for Art Scheme* and to plan for a series of commissions to be rolled out over a number of years. In 2004 the first Public Art Plan was introduced by the Sligo Local Authorities. All of this was achieved with the support and direction of the Public Art Steering Group.

Now that the Public Art Plan and the mechanisms to implement it are firmly in place, the practicalities of integrating and mainstreaming public art commissioning as part of the services provided by the local authority has further redefined my role which is reflected in the change of job title to *Public Art Officer*.

Much has been learned from the pilot programme and this new series reflects our careful evaluation of the pilot and the resulting policy directions. A curator has been introduced for this series and I wish to thank Joe Lee for his commitment to all of the artists and their proposals and also to the Local Authority as commissioners in order to ensure a successful outcome for all.

MMcD 05.05

CURATORIAL STATEMENT

JOE LEE

Joe Lee is a visual artist and digital media producer/director. He has extensive experience of working on public art projects in community contexts. He has both documented and produced video/DVD work on access programmes for a number of national cultural institutions and is a recent award winner for his video installation work at EV+A 2003.

Unravelling Developments is an apt title for the current Sligo public art commission series 2004—2006 as change and development are possibly the most striking features of contemporary Irish life.

I believe it is important at this time that artists are given opportunities to reflect on or engage with the idea of change as it affects culture, landscape and the built environment. I am confident that this panel of artists will achieve a wide-ranging exploration of the theme across the commissioning series.

The artist's involved work in a variety of disciplines including, writing, music composition, new media, and the visual arts. They will engage with a wide and varied public during the course of making and presenting their work for *Unravelling Developments*.

Already a number of innovative projects have begun. The composer Ian Wilson is writing and recording new music that will be presented to the public at locations in Sligo town through a series of listening posts. These have been designed and produced in collaboration with second year Industrial Design students from the Institute of Technology Sligo.

The writer Jack Harte has produced a CD, *Lament for the Birds* which includes some of his Sligo short stories and songs performed by Carmel Gunning. He will also complete a novel that reflects on the past and present in rural Sligo. He has engaged with a variety of writers groups around the county.

The photographic artist Dara McGrath has completed a new portfolio of work based on the development and the planning process in Enniscrone and West Sligo. Dara's work has been presented to the public on billboards, newspaper advertisements and in a free publication. He is also engaging with the public through talks in Enniscrone Library and local schools.

The Dutch artist Carlo Kroon hopes to engage with both the residents of Caltragh housing estate and the Parks Section of the Borough Council. He hopes that out of these collaborations and his own responses to the site a permanent sculpture will be realised in the area.

The artist Christine Mackey will collaborate with the Parks Section of the Borough Council and local residents on the redevelopment of the Doorly Park area.

Grace Weir is producing a film/DVD on the Greenfort. She has a special interest in the relationship between art and science and the work of contemporary French philosopher Deleuze who had explored ideas around narrative and rhizomatic structures. Grace has consulted widely in the area and her work will explore the many readings Greenfort has for the people of Sligo.

While all of these projects don't literally deal with the theme of change or the new they do in one way or another break new ground whether that is in the area of new collaborations in the production or presentation of work as in the cases of Ian Wilson, Christine Mackey and Carlo Kroon. (Kroon will also explore using new materials in the production of his work) Dara McGrath, Grace Weir and Jack Harte deal with the theme directly. Change is central to the subject of Harte's book. Grace Weir's work is informed by science and contemporary philosophy, while Dara McGrath continues his exploration of the new Ireland in his Sligo work.

In the current series six artists remain to be commissioned as more capital projects come on stream. They are Alberto Duman, Stephen Hurrell, John Langan, Nevin LaHarte, Helen O'Leary and Paul Chidester. We look forward to working with them and documenting their commissions in a concluding publication to this series.

JL 05.05

STEERING GROUP AND SELECTORS PANEL

Following the adoption of policy by the Sligo Local Authorities on the application of the *Per Cent for Art* scheme in 2002 a new Public Art Steering Group was established. The role of the Steering Group is to oversee and assist the development of the Public Art Plan and the commissions series and to nominate and appoint the selectors of the artists and their proposals. Members of the Steering Group and the selectors are listed below.

PUBLIC ART STEERING GROUP

COUNCILLOR DECLAN BREE

SLIGO BOROUGH COUNCIL

MR DAMIEN BRENNAN

SENIOR EXECUTIVE, NORTH WEST TOURISM AUTHORITY

MS LIZZIE BYRNE

ARTIST AND LECTURER, INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, SLIGO

MR PAT DOYLE

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

MR PAT FORKAN

DIRECTOR OF SERVICES, SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

SHAUN HANNIGAN

DIRECTOR, LETTERKENNY ARTS CENTRE

COUNCILLOR JOE LEONARD

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

MR EOIN MacNAMEE

WRITER

MS MARY McAULIFFE

ARTS OFFICER, SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

MS MARY McDONAGH

PUBLIC ART OFFICER, SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

MR GERRY McEVOY

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE

MR SEAN MARTIN

SENIOR EXECUTIVE ARCHITECT, SLIGO BOROUGH COUNCIL

MR DONAL TINNEY

COUNTY LIBRARIAN, SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

MS SUZANNE WOODS

VISUAL ARTIST

SELECTORS FOR THE SERIES

COUNCILLOR DECLAN BREE

SLIGO BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR JOE LEONARD

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

HELENA GOREY

ARTIST AND CURATOR. ARTS COUNCIL COLLECTION

HUGH MULLHOLLAND

DIRECTOR. ORMEAU BATHS GALLERY, BELFAST

JOHN MC HUGH

SENIOR ENGINEER. SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

ROSELEEN HOLLAND

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE

MELANIE SCOTT

ARTS OFFICER. NORTH TIPPERARY COUNTY COUNCIL

NIAL HENRY

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR. BLUE RAINCOAT THEATRE COMPANY

PANEL OF ARTISTS

PAUL CHIDESTER & HELEN O'LEARY

ALBERTO DUMAN

JACK HARTE

STEPHEN HURRELL

CARLO KROON

NEVAN LdHART

CHRISTINE MACKEY

DARA McGRATH

GRACE WEIR

IAN WILSON

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The realisation of any public art project is a complex undertaking that involves a wide range of individuals. I therefore wish to acknowledge and thank everyone associated with the current series for their help, support and enthusiasm.
public arts officer 05.05

Val Baynes (Enniscrone Area Engineer), Padraig Weir (Foreman), and Margaret Cowley, Sean Morrison, Dermot McBain, Joe Feeney, John Hogan, Michael Duffy, Joe Kelly, John Weir, Peter Naughton (Enniscrone Area Roads Team). Ray O'Grady, Patrick Clerkin, Mihaela Davidescu, Fionnuala Meagher, Tommy Banks, Francis Kivlehan, Damien Willis, Eibhlin NicEochaidh, Denise Clarke, Alice Clarke, Pauline Brennan, Feeneys, David Roberts, Barry McGuinness, Kathryn Keane, second year Industrial Design students and staff Institute of Technology, Sligo, Declan Bray, Nola Gibbons, Pat Doyle, Seamus Concannon, Kathleen McTiernan, Margot Soden, David Dunne, Sean Martin, Marian O'Callaghan, Bridie Conway, Des McGarry, Margaret McConnell, Emer Connolly, Micheal Condren, Hugh Glynn, Marie Leydon, Marie-Louise Blaney, Linda Hayden, MCR Community Centre, Tracy Walsh, Tom Brennan, Annette Moloney, Anna Jones, Michael Carty, Siobhan Ryan, Michael MacDonagh, Bernie Flynn, Kathleen Kane, Terry Rooney, Kevin Colreavy, Northside Resource Centre, Dorothy Clarke, Rhona Feely, Sarah Leavy, Mary McAuliffe. The Public Art Steering Group and the selectors.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS BY THE SLIGO LOCAL AUTHORITIES ON PUBLIC ART COMMISSIONING

- *Placing Art; Pilot Public Art Programme* launch booklet, 2000.
- *Placing Art; Pilot Public Art Programme* catalogue, 2000.
- *Placing Art; Pilot Public Art Programme* video, 2001.
- A report on the evaluation of the pilot public art programme, *Placing Art* by the Public Art Steering Group, report, 2002.
- A report by the Public Art Strategy Group on the future application of the *Per Cent for Art Scheme* by the Sligo Local Authorities, Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council, report, 2002.
- *Placing Art; A Colloquium on Public Art in Rural, Coastal and Small Urban Environments* colloquium papers, 2002.
- *Art Best Placed*, Sligo Local Authorities, Public Art Plan, 2004—2006.

For further information please contact;
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jack harte *In the Wake of the Bagger*
Funded by the Per Cent for Art Scheme from a
new Sligo County Council social and affordable
housing scheme in Dromore West.



HARTE

JACK

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAT PIDGEON

jack harte was born near Easkey in Co. Sligo. When he was nine years old his family moved to Lanesboro, Co. Longford. Jack has maintained close ties to Sligo over the years. As an arts activist in the 1980s, he founded the Irish Writers' Union and the Irish Writers' Centre. His first collection of stories *Murphy in the Underworld* was published in 1986 followed by *Homage* (1992), *Birds and other Tails* (1996), *Birds and Selected Stories* – Bulgarian translation (2001), and *From Under Gogol's Nose* (2004). One of his stories has been made into a film in Bulgaria.

Jack Harte is writing a novel based on his childhood experience of having to leave Co Sligo as an economic migrant which will be published in 2005. He has produced a CD of his stories and songs entitled Lament for The Birds, featuring songs by Sligo singer Carmel Gunning. The CD was launched in Dromore West in October 2004. All local people were invited and copies of the CD were made available free of charge to those who attended. He has also given readings and talks to a number of active retirement and writing groups in the county.

carlo kroon Caltragh
Funded by the *Per Cent for Art Scheme* from a
new Sligo Borough Council social and affordable
housing scheme.



KROON

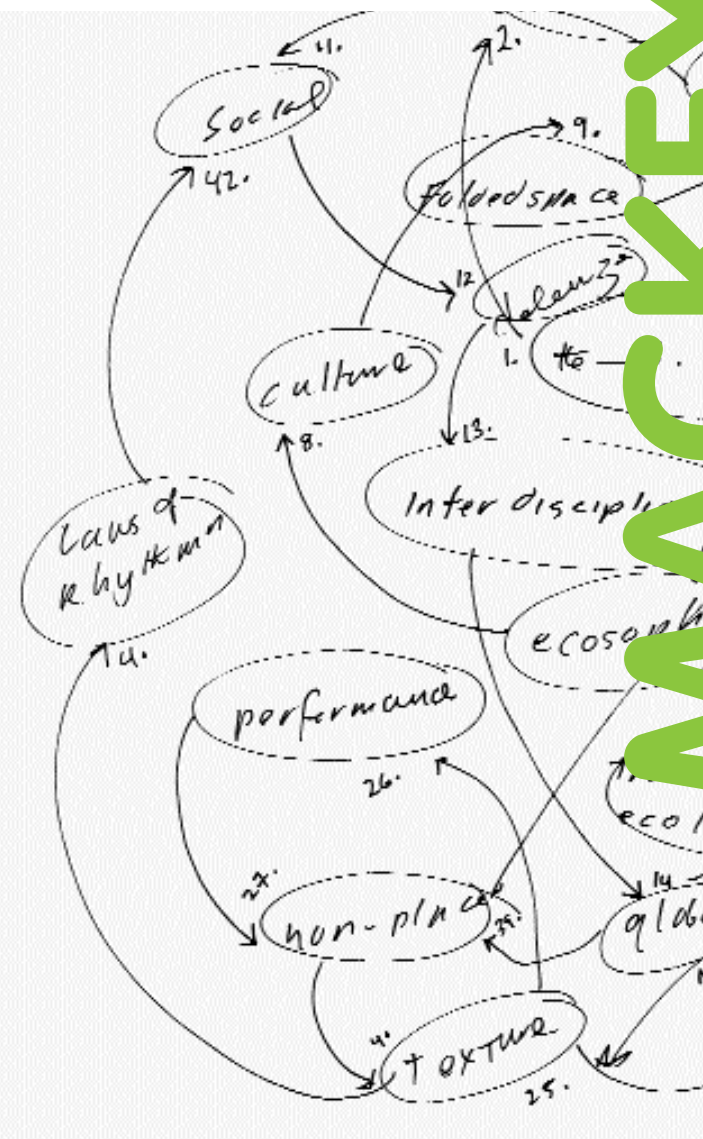
CARLO

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE LEE

carlo kroon is a visual artist and environmental designer from the Netherlands. He has a substantial track record in public art projects carried out in contemporary built environments. Carlo often makes public sculptures which include various types of metal, neon light and LED light sources. He has completed two projects in Donegal and Kerry and is currently working on a proposal associated with the Luas project in Dublin.

Carlo Kroon hopes to develop a public sculptural piece in collaboration with the residents of the new community at Caltragh Housing Estate and the Parks Section of the Borough Council. A number of site visits have been made and a meeting of introduction with the whole community took place on 9 November 2004. This project has linked with the outreach programme at the Model Arts and Niland Gallery and workshops with the community will take place as the project progresses.

christine mackey Doorly Park
 Funded by the Per Cent for Art Scheme from a
 Sligo Borough Council remedial works scheme
 to Garavogue Villas.



WACKY
 CHRISTINE

DRAWING BY CHRISTINE MACKEY

christine mackey is a multidisciplinary visual artist from County Kilkenny. In 2005 she was awarded the Fire Station Arts Studios community award which is working together with a Per Cent for Art Scheme project for Dublin City Council. In 2003, Christine won the Exhibition Award from (EV+A) Limerick. She recently completed a residency in Costa Rica with an exhibition at Teor/e Tica, San Jose. She has an impressive track record in public art commissions and working collaboratively with communities. She successfully completed a public art project in Racecourse View, Sligo in 2002.

Christine Mackey is working on a proposal based around the existing foot-path in Doorly Park. To walk is to give ourselves time and space. So the main question for her work process is how to utilise this function in the development of a proposed art work, which does not impede on the landscape or the space of the walkers. A close collaboration is required with both the Parks section of the Borough Council, and local residents.

dara mcgrath *Plantations*

Funded by the *Per Cent for Art Scheme* from a new Sligo County Council social and affordable housing scheme in Enniscrone.



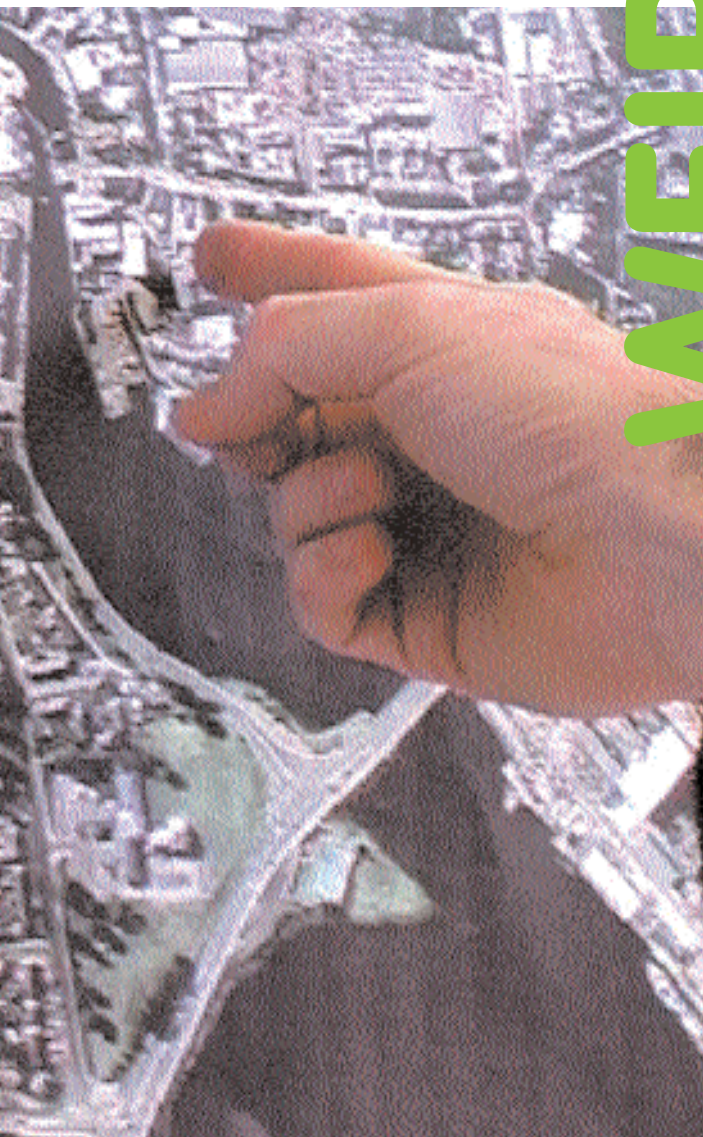
DARA MCGRATH

PHOTOGRAPH BY DARA MCGRATH

dara mcgrath is a graduate of Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology. In 1999 he was awarded a Young European Artist Award. He won the prestigious AIB Artist of Promise Award in 2003 for his photographic series *By the Way* which explored marginal areas around the nation's new motorway networks.

Dara McGrath explored the nature of planning and development in the Enniscrone and West Sligo area. He monitored developments at 200 sites and took over 600 photographs. Three distinct spaces are depicted, the newly built housing estate, the town and the landscape. His work on this project goes beyond the making of the photographs he also initiated and supervised the production of a publication, newspaper advertisements and the making and installation of four large billboard images outside Enniscrone. He is also engaging with the public in talks about this work and his career as a photographic artist at Enniscrone Public Library and local schools.

grace weir *Greenfort*
Funded by the *Per Cent for Art Scheme* from a
new Sligo Borough Council social housing scheme,
City View on Connaughton Road.



WEIR GRACE

IMAGE BY GRACE WEIR

grace weir studied at the National College of Art and Design and Trinity College, Dublin. In 1991 she was selected for a PS1 residency at the Institute for Art and Urban Resources, New York. In 2000 she had a solo exhibition at the RHA, Dublin. In 2001 she represented Ireland at the Venice Biennale. She has shown extensively in Ireland (including the Model Arts & Niland Gallery), Europe, and in the USA.

Grace Weir is producing a film/DVD on the Greenfort. She is interested in exploring the idea of place and multiple narratives. Grace has consulted widely in the area and this work will explore the multiple readings a particular site can have for its local people. There is a certain mystery about the site, it has always been a bit inaccessible or seeming remote but there exists a common bond between locals in the idea that it is a place of importance without always knowing why. She hopes to shoot the film in July and complete the remaining work on the project before the end of October 2005.

ian wilson *Pieces of Elsewhere*
Funded by the *Per Cent for Art Scheme* from a
Sligo Borough Council Water Supply Scheme at
Kilsellagh.



IAN WILSON

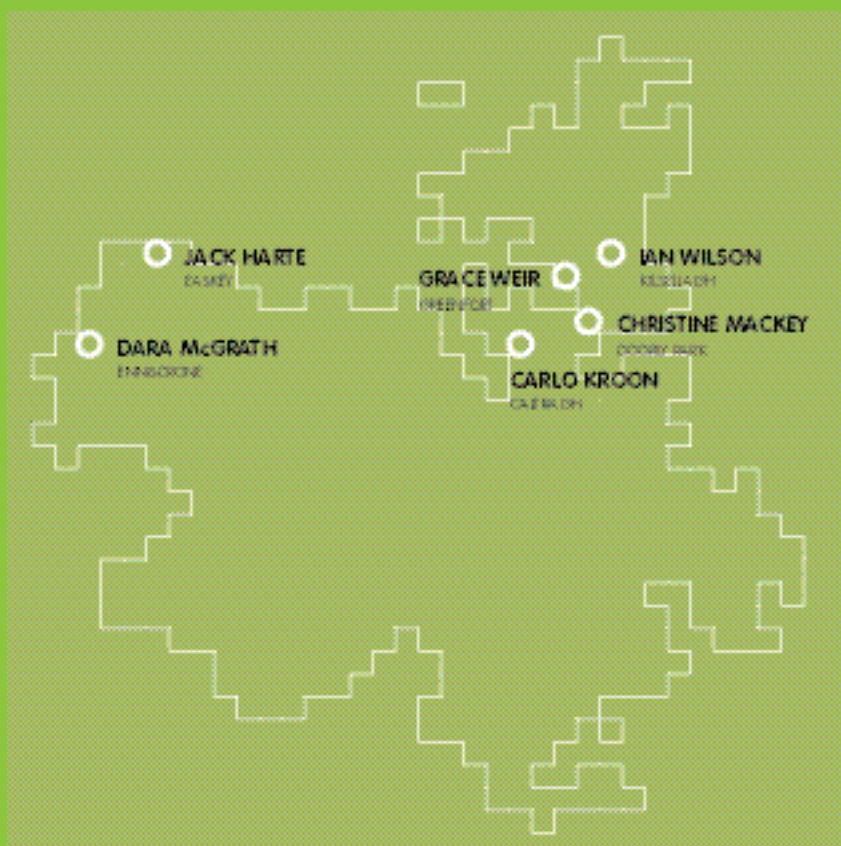
PHOTOGRAPH OF BARRY MCGUINNESS (INDUSTRIAL DESIGN STUDENT, SITI) BY DECLAN BRAY

ian wilson is a highly respected composer living in County Leitrim. He has written over seventy pieces including an opera, concertos, orchestral pieces, string quartets, piano trios and many other chamber and vocal works. He is a member of Aosdana and his music has been performed and broadcast on six continents. The premiere of his latest orchestral work was given by the National Symphony Orchestra under Gerhard Markson during their *BeethovenFest* in May 2005.

Ian Wilson is developing a series of new musical compositions that will be heard in public spaces around Sligo town. A CD of this work will also be produced and made available. This project involves a collaboration with second year Industrial Design Students at the Institute of Technology in Sligo. As part of their project work for this year, the students are designing the listening posts to be sited around Sligo town. The music will be recorded in June and it is hoped the project will be ready for public presentation in summer 2005.

IT IS IMPORTANT AT THIS TIME THAT ARTISTS ARE GIVEN OPPORTUNITIES TO REFLECT ON OR ENGAGE WITH THE IDEA OF CHANGE AS IT AFFECTS CULTURE, LANDSCAPE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT.

JOE LEE. CURATOR, UNRAVELLING DEVELOPMENTS 2004 – 2006



UNRAVELLING DEVELOPMENTS 2004 – 2006

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