

1. Arts:

County Arts Programme

Since June 2011 the Carlow Local Authorities Arts Office has proudly received the following awards:

1. **Business to Arts Award** : Winner of the 2011 Award *Best Use of Creativity in the Community*) and Highly Commended for the 2011 Award *Jim McNaughton Perpetual Award for Best Commissioning*. – Carlow Opera Project – Shelter me from the Rain.
2. **International Leadership Award** by Base Network for our commitment and support to Carlow African Film Festival celebrating Africa's arts and culture, thus encouraging and promoting integration through meaningful participation for African communities in Ireland.
3. **RTÉ Two : Heads Up National Movie Award** presented to **Tullow Youth Theatre**, under the directorship of Peter Kelly, managed by the Arts Office.

Since June 2011:

- The Arts Office continues to work closely with VISUAL in order to maximise the investment made in the arts in Carlow. The Arts Officer participates in and supports the Operational Management group responsible for VISUAL and the GB Shaw Theatre.
- Late 2011 we commissioned local artist Eileen McDonagh, to produce large scale sculptures for a major exhibition of her work taking place from February 5th 2012.
- In addition, the Arts Office has been working closely with VISUAL and Eipse Carlow Arts Festival on an ambitious project that will take place from June 2012 large-scale collaboration called ***Heaven's Gate Re-Visited***. Heaven's Gate Re-Played

represents the most ambitious visual art commission in Carlow to date, which fully exploits VISUAL's epic- scale Main Gallery as the only space in Ireland large enough to host the installation. Duggan's installation recreates the iconic Roller-Skating Rink of Heaven's Gate (Michael Cimino, 1980), a place where the community gather at a time of new frontiers, in celebration and conflict. The exhibition draws in the visitor, to skate and be costumed, to revisit the past and reflect on the future. Heaven's Gate Re-Played examines the ideas and realities of community, immigration, the promise of a new dawn and the price of risk.

- **County Carlow Youth Theatre** an initiative of the Carlow Local Authorities Arts Office, Weekly workshops continue to be held in Carlow Town and Tullow. 19 young people regularly attend workshops in Tullow and 39 young people regularly attend workshops in Carlow Town. Tullow Youth Theatre will be producing a show in Tullow in January 2012 and the Carlow Town Youth Theatre will be producing shows in mid 2012.
- **Carlow African Film Festival.** In October 2011 Carlow Local Authorities continued to support this festival due to its previous year's success, growth and development. In 2011 the arts office worked with the festival committee on its artistic programme for the festival and on its choices of artistic film directors/actors who attended the festival this year. There were a total of **645 people attended the festival** in 2011 which took place on a Friday evening and Saturday in October.
- **Carlow Youth Orchestra Masterclasses 2011.** Supported through the Arts Office 2011 saw the unusual occurrence of visits to Carlow of both RTÉ Orchestras - the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra - the only two full-time professional orchestras in Ireland and the opportunity was taken in collaboration with Fergus Sheil and several RTÉ musicians to develop a series of workshops and performances with the Carlow Youth Orchestra in the Spring and Autumn 2011.

- The Arts Office continue to take a multi-partnership approach in applying for national funding for County Carlow – under the **Music Network U2 fund** which would provide music training (voice and instrumental) to all children up to age 18 in the county. County Carlow VEC will be the lead agency, working closely with Carlow Local Authorities, Carlow Regional Youth Services, Carlow Childcare Committee, IT Carlow, Carlow College and the primary education sector. Application to be submitted in November 2012.
- **Public Art Working Group** continue to work with artist Denis Roche on the “Open Windows Project” which working in partnership with the HSE Mental Health Department to address the loss of sense of self, social stigma and isolation that occurs for a person living with mental illness. Workshops have taken place to date at Leighlinbridge Parish Centre and development of the project in Carlow Town, Bagenalstown / Tullow is currently taking place.
- **Artlinks – Supporting local artists** – the Arts Office continues to work in partnership with Wexford, Wicklow, Kilkenny and Waterford County Arts Offices on this initiative which provides support and financial a commitment to the development of the artist led initiatives programme, as well as support for artist development through bursary and award schemes. There are currently 1514+ membership of Artlinks.
- Continuing to work closely with **Éigse Carlow Arts Festival** and **Aspiro** providing support and assistance where needed.
- Continuing to host exhibitions at the Tullow Civic Offices
- The Arts Office continues to support local artists and arts groups.

In 2012 the arts office will develop a new countywide 3 year arts plan, as the existing plan expired at the end of 2010. The plan will focus on consolidating the existing arts service and countywide arts

development, whilst supporting the work of VISUAL/GBShaw. In tandem with this the Arts Office will continue to develop its programme of activities as outlined above. A further full report to Council will issue following notification of Arts Council funding in February.