

# Research Advisory Committee

24 February 2020

12.30- 3 pm

## Recovering AfR practices

- Welcome and introductions
- Recovering arts for reconciliation practices
- Opportunities and challenges

# For discussion

Is there a need for an archive of arts practices specifically aimed at recording the distinctive and specific contribution that the arts have made to transformative outcomes associated with peacebuilding?

# Tendency towards forgetting

- Emphasis on developing *new* projects
- Increasing gaps in core funding
- Little time for reflection, few resources for revival
- Evaluation processes that record quantitative data rather than documenting the qualitative and experiential
- Political mindset that wants to move on from the past

# The ethics of remembering

- Recollection as remembering and the *activity* of re-collection as a way of ‘gathering and reassembling’ after a dispersal or a loss (Alison Jeffers, 2016)

# Power, Memory and the Archive

“Archives validate our experiences, our perceptions, our narratives, our stories. Archives are our memories. Yet what does on in the archives remains remarkably unknown. Users of archives (historians and others) and shapers of archives (records creators, records managers, and archivists) add layers of meaning, layers which become naturalised, internalised and unquestioned.

This lack of questioning is dangerous because it implicitly supports the archival myth of neutrality and objectivity, and thus sanctions the already strong predilection of archives and archivists to document primarily mainstream culture and powerful records creators.”

(Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook, 2002, p.18)

# The problem of the archiving the ephemeral

“Archival” memory exists as documents, maps, literary texts, letters, archaeological remains, bones, videos, films, cds, all those items supposedly resistant to change. [...] The repertoire, on the other hand, enacts embodied memory: performances, gestures, orality, movement, dance, singing—in short, all those acts usually thought of as ephemeral, nonreproducible knowledge. [...] As opposed to the supposedly stable objects in the archive, the actions that are the repertoire do not remain the same. The repertoire both keeps and transforms choreographies of meaning.”

(Diana Taylor, 2004, pp.19-20)

# Access & the Form of the Archive

“Architectures of access (the physical aspect of books, bookcases, glass display cases, or even the request desk at an archive) place is in particular experiential relations to knowledge. Those architectures also impact the knowledge imparted. Think of it this way: the same detail of information can *sound, feel, smell, look, or taste* radically different when accessed in radically different venues or via disparate media.”

(Rebecca Schneider, 2011, p.104)

# Practical dimension

- Re-energising, taking stock, building capacity
- Potential for pooling existing and accessing additional expertise and resources
- Complementary programmes
- Extending reach, building new audiences
- Public Engagement, Knowledge Exchange and Impact (University of Liverpool funds)



# For discussion

- What would be the value of recovering AfR project and practices?
- Who would benefit?
- What form(s) might it take?
- What might it contain?
- Opportunities and challenges?

# The next step....

- Agree key objectives
- Invitations to future meetings?

13–15 October 2016

## Object Matters

# Making Memory: Visual and Material Cultures of Commemoration in Ireland since c.1800

A conference at the National Gallery of Ireland, Royal Irish Academy and National  
College of Art & Design

Convened by Lisa Godson  
Funded by the Irish Research Council New Foundations Scheme

