



# SMASHINGTIMES

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR  
THE ARTS & EQUALITY

Press Release

February 2021

**Smashing Times presents Arts and Human Rights – Creative Voices for Diverse Narratives for the Annual *Imagine Belfast Festival of Ideas and Politics*, 22 March 2021, 7pm**



**Smashing Times International Centre for the Arts and Equality**, in conjunction with the Imagine Belfast Festival of Ideas and Politics are delighted to present an online panel discussion on the role of the arts to promote human rights, to support the telling of different stories and to build connections between diverse communities. Creative Voices for Diverse Narratives panel discussion takes place online on Monday 22 March 2021 at 7pm.

Join us as we bring together artists, cultural activists and communities to explore the power of the arts in social and political contexts to promote cultural expression, cultural diversity and a culture of tolerance, human rights and equality for all.

Panel members include Mary Moynihan, writer, director, theatre and film-maker and Artistic Director, Smashing Times; Noelle McAlinden, Visual Artist, Creative Advisor and Mental Health Campaigner, Curator and Cultural Broker; Richard Edgar, Author and Historian, Dave Randall, Musician and Writer, Charo Lanao, Change Agent, Facilitator, Trainer and Coach and Dr Stephen Herron, Researcher, Academic, Cultural Anthropologist, and Community Relations Facilitator with Smashing Times. This event is presented as part of Creative Connections supported by the Northern Ireland Executive's T:BUC Strategy through the Central Good Relations Fund.

Smashing Times are delighted to partner with the seventh annual Imagine Belfast Festival of Ideas and Politics which runs from the 22 to the 28 March 2021 on the theme of 'The State of Us' and for further information on the full festival go to <https://imaginebelfast.com/about-the-2020-festival/>

## **Arts and Human Rights – Creative Voices for Diverse Narratives, 7pm online**

**Where:** Online via Zoom

**When:** Monday 22 March 2021, 7-8pm

**Booking:** Book [here](#)

The panel discussion is online and runs for 60 minutes. Suitable for ages 18 and up.

**Creative Connections** is a cultural, arts-based project using creative processes of theatre, film and new digital technologies to promote reconciliation and positive community relations between people and traditions in Northern Ireland. The aim is to use innovative artistic approaches, discussion and debate to promote positive community relations and reconciliation through education, dialogue and culture. Smashing Times are working with a range of diverse groups to explore a legacy of the past and discuss ways to promote tolerance and respect for different cultures into the future. The work will bring communities together by engaging participants in a creative journey to explore diversity of thought and action, building on ways to build deeper connections in society.

Creative Connections is implemented by Smashing Times in partnership with CAIN (Conflict Archive on the Internet) and the University of Ulster INCORE International Conflict Research Institute. The work is supported by the Northern Ireland Executive's T:BUC Strategy through the Central Good Relations Fund and is conducted with a range of communities including Clann Eireann GAC and South Shore Health and Well-being outreach Project, Ballybeen Women's Centre, Old Warren Association and the UDR Association, Portadown.

**Smashing Times International Centre for the Arts and Equality** is dedicated to the promotion, study and practice of the arts, human rights, climate justice and gender equality. Smashing Times is an international award-winning organisation working with artists, citizens and communities to create collaborative art practice in local, national, European and international settings. Our mission is to lead the development of the arts to promote and advance equality and human rights and to connect citizens to the arts, human rights, climate justice and gender equality.

## **Panel Members**

### **Mary Moynihan, Writer, Director, Theatre and Film-Maker, Artistic Director of Smashing Times International Centre for the Arts and Equality**

Mary Moynihan is an award-winning writer, director, theatre and film-maker, Artistic Director of Smashing Times International Centre for the Arts and Equality, and a Theatre Lecturer at the TU Dublin

Conservatoire. As Artistic Director of Smashing Times, Mary specialises in using interdisciplinary arts practice to promote human rights, peace building, gender equality and positive mental health, developing cutting edge arts-based projects with a range of organisations in Ireland, Northern Ireland and across Europe.

Award-winning projects include Acting for the Future, which uses theatre to promote positive mental health and well-being, run in partnership with the Samaritans, and the highly successful Women War and Peace, using theatre and film to promote equality and peace. As playwright, Mary's work includes the highly acclaimed *The Woman is Present: Women's Stories of WWII* co-written with Paul Kennedy, Fiona Bawn Thompson, and Féilim James; *In One Breath* from the award-winning Testimonies and *Constance and Her Friends*, selected by President Michael D. Higgins for performance at Áras an Uachtaráin for Culture Night 2016.

### **Noelle McAlinden, Visual Artist, Creative Advisor and Mental Health Campaigner, Curator and Cultural Broker**

Noelle Mc Alinden is a practicing artist exhibiting locally, regionally and Internationally with work in public and private collections across the UK, Europe, US and Canada. Noelle is a Creative Adviser, Curator, Arts Educationalist, a former Head of Art and Design in a Post-Primary school and Senior Lecturer for Arts at Fermanagh College of Further Education. Noelle teaches across a range of sectors including primary, post primary, university and prison sectors. She is an international Artist in Residence in University of Transylvania, Lexington Kentucky as part of The Governors School of Art. As an Arts Activist for almost 39 years Noelle has worked across statutory, voluntary, youth and community sectors. Noelle is passionate about all artforms promoting visual and performing arts , moving image, film and digital literacy. Noelle is also passionate about the power of the arts to transform communities, support cultural tourism, economic regeneration, health and wellbeing and support for peace and Reconciliation.

### **Richard Edgar, Author and Historian**

Richard Edgar is an Author and Historian based in Portadown. He has a keen interest in Genealogy and is also a regular contributor to Portadown Heritage Tours.

### **Dave Randall, Musician and Writer**

Dave Randall is a London based musician and writer. He has toured the world playing guitar for Faithless, Dido, Sinéad O'Connor and many others, and has released his own critically acclaimed albums under the name Slovo. He composes music for stage and screen and recently completed the score for the feature length documentary 'There Is A Field' which brings together Black Lives Matter activists and the Palestinian struggle. He is also the author of the book 'Sound System: The Political Power of Music' which was described by BBC 6Music's Mark Radcliff as "A deeply intelligent look at music and society. Though provoking, readable and clever."

Drawing on inspiration from the late 1970's campaign Rock Against Racism, and citing examples from his own career and work, Dave Randall will discuss the role that music can play in the fight against racism and for a better world.

### **Charo Lanao, Change Agent, Facilitator, Trainer and Coach**

Charo Lanao has extensive experience in facilitation, training and consulting as a speaker and coach in over 15 countries around the world. Her vision is a world where people have the skills and competence to value and respect each other, a world which is full of empathy and solidarity.

### **Dr Stephen Herron, Researcher, Academic, Cultural Anthropologist, and Community Relations Facilitator with Smashing Times International Centre for the Arts and Equality**

Dr Herron is one of just several military anthropologists in the UK and Ireland. Academic and research interests include violence, conflict management and resolution, military and defence, civil-military relations, trauma and memory, identity and social and community affairs. Dr Herron is a researcher and community relations facilitator with Smashing Times as part of their peacebuilding and community relations work in Northern Ireland.

**Smashing Times International Centre for the Arts and Equality**  
Connecting Citizens to the Arts, Human Rights and Gender Equality

For further information please visit the Smashing Times [website](#) or contact the Smashing Times office on [projects@smashingtimes.ie](mailto:projects@smashingtimes.ie)

See [www.smashingtimes.ie](http://www.smashingtimes.ie)

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