

COIS CÉIM DANCE

BROADREACH | SPARKING DEBATE *..an alternative to polarised thinking*



BACKGROUND

Running in parallel with PALIMPSEST, SPARKING DEBATE is a ground breaking CoisCéim Broadreach initiative for and by over 100 young people to provoke dialogue around Irish identity, hospitality and sovereignty through the question *"who do we want to be"*

Co-curated by poet and writer, Theo Dorgan, it is artistically anchored in 5 poems from the island's canon - one from each of the 5 provinces of Ireland. The poems were chosen to *"encourage people to think and feel on the slant - to allow the poems to stand to one side of the usual narratives and thus prompt fresh thinking, not just about who we want to be but about who we are and have been"*.

The provinces are represented as follows:

LEINSTER | **Jessica Traynor**, The Demonstration
MUNSTER | **Thomas McCarthy**, Full Moon Over The Refugee Centre
CONNACHT | **Mary O'Malley**, Occupation
ULSTER | **Ciaran Carson**, Wrap The Green Flag Around Me
5TH | **Theo Dorgan**, The Question



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In this project, the 5th province is that of the imagination, as referenced in Mary Robinson's inauguration speech from 1990 where she defined it as: "*The Fifth Province is not anywhere here or there, north or south, east or west. It is a place within each one of us – that place that is open to the other, that swinging door which allows us to venture out and others to venture in.*"

Other artistic catalysts for SPARKING DEBATE include: Eavan Boland's poem *Our future will become the past of other women* (<https://www.irishtimes.com/history/century/2022/05/10/eavan-boland-poem/>) which links all elements of CoisCéim's ART:2023 project together and the need for hospitality when reflecting on history - Micheal D Higgins paper on (<https://president.ie/en/media-library/speeches/of-centenaries-and-the-hospitality-necessary-in-reflecting-on-memory-history-and-forgiveness>).



A core visual reference for SPARKING DEBATE is the picture of Ireland taken by a NASA satellite from space – connecting the diaspora to the local and the weather patterns a metaphor for the continual entrance and exit of peoples to and from the island - linking into ideas around hospitality and borders....and *the past being the present being the future*

It will culminate with two high profile events - a pageant for the 2024 St Patrick's parade and a series of physical debates at the Grangegorman Campus of TU Dublin on the final day of the festival.

Highly visual, the Broadreach Parade Pageant will feature bespoke costumes and accessories that captures participants' desires of "*who they want to be*". Both events will also include specially designed art banners with the following extracts from the selected poems.



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ART BANNERS | QUOTES

Province	Quote	Author	Source
LEINSTER	PARADE "a bewilderment of poets and children" PHYSICAL DEBATES "A rebel dying stokes the nation's fire, but starving children? Ask this doctor to number our gains in skulls..."	Jessica Traynor A DEMONSTRATION	Commissioned for 2016 commemoration
MUNSTER	"This is what it takes to come into your own kingdom..."	Thomas McCarthy FULL MOON OVER THE REFUGEE CENTRE	From THE LAST GERALDINE OFFICER Anvil Press Poetry, London, 2009
CONNACHT	PARADE "And make the rules" PHYSICAL DEBATES "we only need To win once, like freedom fighters With a song that blows the house down Or up, if that is your tune."	Mary O'Malley THE OCCUPATION	From PLAYING THE OCTOPUS (Carcanet, Manchester, 2016)
ULSTER	" I donned the magic mantle of the green gossoon To spread myself into a fifth dimension. I pocketed their Starry Plough, their pockmarked moon."	Ciaran Carson WRAP THE GREEN FLAG AROUND ME	From: COLLECTED POEMS (The Gallery Press, Loughcrew, 2008)
5 TH	"What have you done with what was given you, what have you done with the blue, beautiful world?"	Theo Dorgan THE QUESTION	Commissioned by The Guardian, 2015



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PHYSICAL DEBATES | ARTIST NOTES

8 Crews. 7 Motions... *to spark debate around Irish identity, hospitality and sovereignty and ideas to forge pathways towards a state of happy unrest....*

EVENT CONTEXT

THE PHYSICAL DEBATES mark the final event of a major multifaceted project for the culmination programme for the Decade of Centenaries in collaboration with the 2024 St Patrick's Festival. They are part of SPARKING DEBATE, an engagement and access initiative delivered by CoisCéim Broadreach that aims to provoke dialogue around what it means to be Irish today and "who do we [as a nation] want to be".

DEBATE STRUCTURE

In a nutshell, 8 dance crews will debate 7 topics in a competition format. A debate is defined as a "a competition in which teams of people, discuss a subject [a motion] and the team that is judged to make the best argument wins".

With these physical debates, the goal is to take this concept one step further – by staging a discussion where diverse perspectives are debated with and through the body in one or more dance styles - in an artistic experiment to spark new thinking around conciliation and peace-making.

The structure of the debate will be as follows:

TYPE OF DEBATE	Competitive. 8 crews will debate 7 topics through an instant composition. The topics are listed below. The debate will be a spontaneous physical conversation driven by the dancers involved
NO OF DEBATES	7 (Round 1 (4); Semi-final (2) and Final (1))
ROUND DURATION	Each round will be 12 mins long and freestyle, with crews intervening as appropriate in line with the physical discussion
DANCE STYLES	All dance styles are permitted
CONCEPT/GOAL	Each dancer will embody a personal response to the topic under discussion - the debate will be freestyle to allow maximum flexibility - the goal is to show the different perspectives of the dancers taking part
CREW NAMES	To be decided on the day - each crew leader will write on a piece of paper at the start of the event
CREW SELECTION	The dance crews will be selected by extraction at the start of the event and the audience will discover their names at this point
MC	MC will extract the crews for each round
DJ/MUSIC	Chosen by DJ to reflect topic of debate and dancers involved. DJ will act as referee the debate through music as and when required
JUDGES /PRIZE	There will be five Judges and the prize is a surprise



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CRITERIA	Crews will be judges on skill, dynamism & creative response to debate topic
COPYRIGHTS	All copyrights remain with artists at all times. Standard non commercial permissions will be sought in relation to images / video so all involved are able to use the materials

In terms of documentation, it is planned to engage both a photographer and videographer. The Art Banners for SPARKING DEBATE that link this event to the overall project will be in the space and shared with artists involved in advance. The performance area will be defined by light and the topics projected on the walls for the audience

TOPICS

Each topic is linked to the 5 poems from each province of Ireland that underpin SPARKING DEBATE (here the 5th province is that of the imagination) and are designed to be catalysts for conversation not to discriminate and they are in order of appearance:

ROUND 1

1. FIRST PEACE, THEN JUSTICE (Leinster)
2. A UNITED IRELAND FOR ALL OF US OR NONE OF US (Connacht)
3. BORDERS SHOULD BE DEFINED BY NATURE (Ulster)
4. Ní haithne go haontíos / IF YOU WOULD KNOW ME, COME LIVE WITH ME (Munster)

SEMI-FINAL

5. NORTHERN IRELAND CAN TEACH THE WORLD: PEACE IS POSSIBLE (5th)
6. CLIMATE CARE STARTS AT HOME (5th)

The topic of the final debate will be chosen by the crews involved - possible subjects include:

- > To build an Irish identity we all have to want one
- > The goal of peaceful living is a state of happy unrest
- > Truth is born from dispute
- > For peace making it's about finding pathways that can evolve not solutions

POSSIBLE PROVOCATIONS in relation to each POSITION

LEINSTER | First Peace, the Justice

FOR: Peace needs to be secured before justice can be decided on and carried out

AGAINST: Accountability is a fundamental premise for positive peace

CONNACHT | A united Ireland is for all of us or none of us

FOR: A united Ireland cannot thrive without the support of everyone – it must include and be endorsed by the Unionists

AGAINST: A united Ireland should exist if the majority of the population votes for it

ULSTER | Borders should be defined by Bioregions

FOR: Geology, geography and the natural environment should define borders rather than "man"

AGAINST: Borders are physical outcomes of political, social and economic processes and therefore history, heritage and culture should be the primary drivers of their evolution



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MUNSTER | Ní haithe go haontíos (If you would know me, come live with me)

FOR: Migration enriches political, societal and economic health in the receiving nation

AGAINST: Immigration leads to a "brain drain" & increased competition for jobs and services in the receiving nation

5TH | Northern Ireland can teach the world: Peace is Possible

FOR: Our island's evolving journey makes it a leader in putting peace-making into practice

AGAINST: Peace in Northern Ireland is also dependent on external actors – locally, the last 25 years shows power-sharing is a failed system

5TH | Climate Care starts at home

FOR: Every single initiative, no matter how small, makes a difference. Individuals need to lead and challenge governments to action

AGAINST: Government leadership is fundamental to define and implement actions that address climate change.