



CATHARTSIS

NI MENTAL HEALTH
ARTS FESTIVAL 2025

9TH - 20TH MAY 2025
www.nimhaf.org

WELCOME

We are delighted to present our 11th NI Mental Health Arts Festival Programme and fringe events for 2025. Together with all our festival partners, we bring you an exciting regional programme of events, celebrating artists emerging, established, and internationally renowned from across artforms that are diverse, eclectic, and engaging.

We have a diverse programme of visual & performing arts, forums for dialogue & creative exchange, talks, tours and workshops, plus poetry, spoken word, comedy, film, music, and dance. Our programme includes creative practice that challenges stigma and provokes debate, providing insights into how artists have channelled their lived experience to inspire others. We continue to champion both emerging artists as well as established artists, side by side.

Our theme this year is Catharsis, it refers to “the release of emotions

through the process of creative expression, leading to a sense of emotional renewal”. Many of us know firsthand from lived experience the power of the arts to provide safe sanctuary, a place to shrink & grow, that can help transform ourselves as well as our communities. The arts can provide a catalyst for change, finding release, resolution and renewal in challenging times.

We encourage you to join us and to reflect upon the pivotal role of creativity, self-expression, and the arts & culture in helping us make sense of a chaotic world.

We invite you to embrace and celebrate your own creativity and self-expression, participate, appreciate, and celebrate the creativity of others in a festival that promises to challenge, inspire, inform, celebrate and to welcome the unexpected opportunities along the way.

NOELLE McALINDEN & DAMIEN COYLE
CO-CHAIRS OF NIMHAF 2025

“The Mental Health Arts Festival challenges stigma and honours the role of creativity and self-expression in wellbeing. It reminds us of the importance of the arts in mental health and in promoting recovery. I’m pleased to support the festival and thanks to all those involved.”

SIOBHAN O’NEILL - Professor of Mental Health Sciences and Mental Health Champion for Northern Ireland

SYMPOSIA

This year our NIMHAF Symposia return to Belfast and Derry City & Strabane Learning Regions, and NIMHAF is committed to this lifelong learning agenda.

The Symposia take place in Belfast on Friday 9th May at The MAC and on Tuesday 20th May in The Guildhall in Derry-Londonderry.

We are indebted to the Mayors of Belfast District Council and Derry City & Strabane District Council for hosting these Symposia, featuring keynote speakers from contexts including the arts, mental health and wellbeing, voluntary & community sector, and education, including significant learning from those with lived experience informing academic research. The symposia will provide challenging & enlightening presentations, forums for dialogue & creative exchange, challenge stigma, and celebrate the power of creativity, self-expression and the arts upon our mental health & wellbeing.

These provide insights that deal compassionately and intelligently with the stigma associated with talking about our mental health.

Details of both Symposia & Guest Speakers will be available on our website. www.nimhaf.org



“I am pleased to support the NI Mental Health Arts Festival which has grown in strength and value over the past 11 years. It is more important than ever, in today’s challenging world, to talk openly about mental health, and the festival offers ways to do just that, through poetry, comedy, talks, music and more. This year’s theme of Catharsis really speaks to the power of the arts to provide a place for renewal and self-expression, as well as being a catalyst for change. It also highlights the arts as a force for good, bringing people together, encouraging us to share our experiences of the world around us and finding hope and compassion in one another. I look forward to hosting this year’s symposia in Belfast and experiencing for myself what this year’s programme has to offer.”

**Lord Mayor of Belfast,
COUNCILLOR MICKY MURRAY**

PAUSE CASTS

This year we at NIMHAF continue our advocacy and activism with stakeholders, community champions, and elected representatives, across the region. We are building upon our collaborations with our Arts Managers in a series of regional PAUSE CASTS facilitated by NIMHAF Co-Chairs Noelle Mc Alinden & Damien Coyle. These will be hosted by the Arts Managers of NI and Arts organisations. We continue to promote opportunities to meet, create space to pause, reflect & connect and build upon compassionate conversations across communities, promoting mental health and wellbeing through creative and innovative ways of working.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

We are indebted to all funders & festival partners Belfast City Council, The Baring Foundation, Arts Council NI, Future Screens NI, The Mental Health Foundation, Dormant Assets N.I., Derry City & Strabane District Council. We are grateful to all our Arts and Cultural Managers from Local Authorities across Northern Ireland. Special thanks to all participating artists, activists, arts organisations, venues, volunteers, community and educational champions. Special thanks to our dedicated NIMHAF Team, our Creative Programmes Coordinator Grace Fairley, P.R and Marketing Lead Husk Bennett, & the NIMHAF Board; Damien Coyle, Noelle Mc Alinden, Frank Liddy, Bronagh Lawson, William Nicholson, Lisa Costine, Dr Pamela Whitaker, and Dr Jonathan McCrea.

“ The NI Mental Health Arts Festival is a powerful initiative which brings hope to many in our community. The power of artistic expression cannot be understated. In a world where the pressures of daily life can often feel overwhelming, this festival provides a vital lifeline. It offers a compassionate space where individuals can share their most personal experiences, find solace in creativity, and connect with others through the universal language of art. Our mental health is precious, and programmes like this remind us that seeking support, expressing our vulnerabilities, and celebrating our resilience are fundamental to our collective well-being. By platforming diverse stories through music, visual arts, performance, and literature, the festival breaks down barriers and helps destigmatise conversations around mental health. Well done to everyone involved. ”

LILIAN SEENOI BARR - Mayor of Derry City & Strabane District Council

INFORMATION AND BOOKING:

Please use our website www.nimhaf.org to book your tickets. Many of our programmed events are free, but booking tickets is sometimes required as spaces can fill quickly. Some of our events will have a fee. If you cannot attend an event please inform us as soon as possible, contact info@nimhaf.org. You are able to make a donation when booking tickets if you wish.

Our events are subject to change please check our website and social media for further updates.

ACCESS REQUIREMENTS:

If you have any access requirements, needs, or concerns please get in contact and we will be happy to help. Contact: info@nimhaf.org

STAY IN TOUCH...

To stay up to date with festival news visit our website www.nimhaf.org. Or follow us on social media, and use our hashtag **#nimhaf25**



@nimhafest



NI Mental Health Arts Festival

IF YOU HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THE ISSUES DISCUSSED AT ANY OF OUR EVENTS, YOU CAN:

Contact **Lifeline**: a free, confidential telephone helpline. It is available anytime every day. **Telephone 0808 808 8000**

Visit <https://www.mindyourhead.org.uk/support> to find a range of resources.

Reliquary, As Oubliette

- 01/05/25 to 25/05/25
- Opening for Late Night Art
01/05/25: 6.00pm – 9.00pm
- Tues - Fri: 10.00am – 5.30pm
- University of Atypical,
109-113 Royal Ave, Belfast

Eibh Gordon is a queer visual artist practicing in Bangor. With a background in textile art and design, she graduated with an MFA from Ulster University in 2024. Her work is grounded in autobiography. Visceral forms and signature shades of red and burgundy material themes of assault and pain.

- Artist Talk: date TBC

Hidden Layers by Justine Scoltock

- 7/05/25 – 29/05/25
- Garden of Reflection, Derry - Londonderry

Derry based artist, digital creator & Film Editor, Justine Scoltock in partnership with UV Arts presents Hidden Layers, a solo exhibition. The artists work is directly inspired by religious icons and confronts issues of mortality, guilt and self-doubt. Blending experimental etching techniques, collage, found imagery, utilisation of chance and mark making, she builds interesting and thought-provoking work.



Between the Lines: Capturing Liminality in Post-Conflict Masculinities

- 01/05/25 – 30/05/25
- Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat:
11.00am – 5.00pm
- Belfast Exposed, 23 Donegall St,
Belfast

This exhibition by artist and Ulster University researcher Brónagh Corr-McNicholl employs experimental photographic and post-production techniques to explore the shifting expressions of young masculinities in post-Good Friday Agreement Derry/Londonderry

Re/cusp

- 01/05/25 – 31/05/25
- Opening for Late Night Art:
01/05/25 6.00pm – 9.00pm
- Tues – Sat: 12.00pm – 5.00pm
- PS², 11 Rosemary St, Belfast

Re/cusp features a short performance film which juxtaposes bodily endurance and nature's unpredictable elements. Martin uses metaphors from the land and her direct surroundings to explore the uncontrollable, cyclical obstacles of an ongoing medical condition.

Phantasm

- 08/05/25 – 25/05/25
- Tues – Sat 5.00pm - late
- The Black Box, 18-22 Hill St, Belfast

Samar Nezamabad is an artist and curator exploring time, memory, and grief through analogue photography and installation. Phantasm reflects on losing her mother, portraying a home that feels both alive with memory and hollow with absence. She captures the physical remnants of grief, contrasting the house's decay with her own emotional landscape.

The MAs (Maternal Advocacy and Support) Exhibition

- 09/05/25 – 19/05/25
- Mon – Fri: 10.00am – 4.00pm
- Arts For All

NIMHAF is delighted to present an exhibition from the MAs project. The MAs project creates hope, connection and builds a community that supports recovery from perinatal mental health illness. The creativity of the women highlights the necessity and impact of community peer support, inspiring hope for other women who may be struggling and creating awareness and breaks the stigma in maternal mental health.

Timeless Tile Collection

- 09/05/25 – 19/05/25
- Exhibition Launch: 12/05/25, 11.00am
- Mon – Sat: 8.00am – 10.00pm, Sun 1.00pm – 6.00pm
- Kennedy Centre, 564 – 568 Falls Rd, Belfast

NIMHAF is delighted to partner with the White Butterfly Foundation to present their Time Tile Collection. A unique collection of handmade tiles created by bereaved parents to commemorate key milestones in their healing process. These tiles provide a tangible way to honour key milestone in your journey.

Illumination of the self - Bronagh Lawson +

- 09/05/25 – 25/09/25,
- Opening Reception 10/05/25 2.00pm-5.00pm
- Mon – Sat 9.00-6.00pm
- Belfast School of Art Lobby, York St, Belfast

The creative impulse is rarely talked about in spiritual terms. Illumination of the self is a half way house on the path along the Mystic way sometimes reached by artists. It is in danger of being forgotten with Ai taking over aspects of human creativity?



Catharsis – Group Exhibition

- 12/05/25 – 31/05/25
- Exhibition Opening: 12/05/25
- Mon – Fri 10.00am – 6.00pm
- Eden Arts Centre, Rosville Street, Derry-Londonderry

As part of the NIMHAF (Northern Ireland Mental Health Arts Festival) Eden Place Arts Centre will be hosting a group exhibition in response to an open call for artists to respond to the theme & interpretation of Catharsis.

I Never Promised You A Rose Garden

- 09/05/25 – 19/05/25
- Online: www.nimhaf.org

I Never Promised You a Rose Garden delves into the intricate relationship that young women cultivate with themselves during their adolescence, highlighting the lessons they learn during this inherently traumatic yet creatively charged period of their life. Arann McCormack @aranmck



Healthy Head Space

- 14/05/25 – 17/05/25
- Royal Victoria Hospital Foyer, 274 Grosvenor Rd, Belfast

We have an image of ourselves. Others have their own image of us. In this project, artist Michael Doherty draws an image of individual health service staff at a moment in time. Simultaneously, the staff member assembles some words that reflect the person within, at the same moment in time. This project is a partnership between Michael Doherty, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust Arts in Health Programme and the NI Mental Health and Arts Festival.

Confluence of Minds: Diverse Artistic Journeys

- 20/05/25 – 08/06/25
- Late Night Art: 5/06/25 5.00pm – 8.00pm
- 10.00am – 6.00pm
- 2 Royal Avenue, Belfast

Art is collective is a multi-ability group of artists that have emerged from the knowledge and experience of Bronagh Lawson and Ngaire Jackson working with adults with learning difficulties and the observation that at some point they required supported studio space. This exhibition spotlights individual artists in their own practice.



Torn Tissues

- 25/05/25 – 25/06/25
- Mon – Thurs 12:00pm – 4.00pm, Sat 12.00pm – 6.00pm
- Aeon Community Arts, 46-47 Church Pl, Lurgan

The body of work in our exhibition depicts the concept of catharsis in mental health. As an art therapist I know how art serves as a medium for releasing pent up emotions, processing trauma, and finding comfort and healing together. Our artist in residence Dwyer McKerr encourages artists to explore their personal mental health experiences in Art.

PROGRAMME

FRIDAY 9th MAY

Tenx9

- 10/05/25
- 7.30pm – 9.30 pm
- The Rainbow Factory, 14 College Square N, Belfast

Tenx9 is a storytelling event where nine people have up to ten minutes each to tell a true story from their own life. We're delighted to partner with the NI Mental Health Arts Festival for nine true stories on the theme: MIND. 18+

Tickets: FREE- booking essential, available from www.nimhaf.org

Gigs from Home: Lauren Martin

- Launching 09/05/25
- Online: www.nimah.org

Join us from the comfort of your own home as Lauren Martin debuts her new single, in a special online performance for NIMHAF. Her original music explored themes of mental health, endurance and identity. In this set she will be singing live her most recent release "Ghosted", among other original pieces.

SATURDAY 10th MAY



Nimhaf celebrates the Art of Motherhood with Róisín Erskine

- 10/05/25
- Online: www.nimhaf.org

Trauma informed Martial Arts Instructor, Sound & Yoga Therapist and author of *Losing my Mind mindfully*. An opportunity to seek solace and catharsis as part of NI Mental Health Arts Festival. Saturday 10th May 3pm online, to tie in the Maternal Mental Health Week also.

Event FREE

Booking through eventbrite

Mindful Drawing

- 10/05/25
- 11.00am – 12.00pm
- Golden Thread Gallery, 23-29 Queen St, Belfast

The perfect creative chillout session. We are offering a cathartic mindful drawing workshop as part of NIMHAF25. Mindful drawing is a great way to relax your mind and to express yourself through colour, lines, and pattern. This workshop is suitable for all ages and abilities, everyone is welcome.

Tickets: As always workshops are free but please book your place early to avoid disappointment. Head to <https://goldenthreadgallery.co.uk/> for booking information.

Mindful Silk Painting

- 10/05/25
- 10.00 am – 12.00 pm
- F.E McWilliam Gallery, 200 Newry Rd, Banbridge

Join us for a free mindful silk painting workshop with local artist, Deborah Malcomson. You will be guided through the techniques required to create your own unique masterpiece in the tranquil setting of the Gallery. The workshop is suitable for beginners and all materials will be provided.

Tickets: FREE event but booking essential via the link: <https://shorturl.at/FdweD>

Creating on iPad with Justine Scoltock and Kippie

- 10/05/25
- 12.00pm – 3.00pm
- Check website for more information, www.nimhaf.org
- The Garden of Reflection Gallery, Derry - Londonderry

The girls from Kippie CIC will be helping artist & arts educationalist Justine Scoltock show how to rework, sketch and plan out traditional art using Layers and collage on the iPad. All Levels welcome, and if you haven't used an iPad don't worry we all have to start somewhere. 16+

Tickets: FREE - booking required, tickets available from www.nimhhaf.org

Artist Market – Queer Belfast x NIMHAF

- 10/05/25
- 11.00am – 3.00pm
- 2 Royal Avenue, Belfast

Celebrate this showcase of talented artist by joining us for a Sunday market in partnership with Queer Belfast. Drop-in workshop included, hosted by Jonah Williams.

Belfast Gallery Tours

- 10/05/25
- 11.00 am – 2.00pm
- Beginning at Golden Thread, 23-29 Queen St, Belfast

Join us for a morning exploration through a selection of Belfast's galleries, with mindful drawings sessions, a talk from artist Molly Martin. Galleries include, Golden Thread Gallery, PS², and Belfast Exposed.

Tickets: FREE - booking essential, available from www.nimhaf.org

BELFAST PREMIER: Verdigris - Film and Q&A



- 10/05/25
- 6.15pm, 95min
- Queens Film Theatre,
20 University Square, Belfast

NIMHAF presents in partnership with QFT the 5 Time IFTA nominated film Verdigris. Marian, recently retired and unfulfilled, stumbles upon a job as a census enumerator where she meets teenager Jewel who has been living as a prostitute since her mother abandoned her. As the two become reluctant friends, Marian realises that, with this unlikely ally by her side, she can forge a new and empowering future.

Tickets: £9.60, £8.00, £6.00, £5.00, available from:
www.queensfilmtheatre.com

SUNDAY 11th MAY

Zine Making Workshop with Helen Gomez

- 11/05/25
- 1.00pm – 3.00pm
- Paperclips, 162 North St, Belfast

Join artist and zine maker Helen Gomez to delve into the world on zine making, with the opportunity to have your zine added to a building archive. 18+

Tickets: FREE - booking essential, available from www.nimhaf.org

MONDAY 12th MAY

Psychotic Cinema – An exploration of Psychosis in Film with Dr Adam Flynn

- 12/05/25
- 6.00pm – 8.30pm
- The Black Box – Green Room, 18-22 Hill St, Belfast

Dr Adam Flynn presents Psychotic Cinema, an exploration of psychosis in film. -“ As a psychiatrist and a film fan, I have often wondered how Psychosis could be represented. The idea that someone's mind is very different. By contrasting footage, I hope to lead a discussion around solipsism and the human aspect of mental health.” -18+

Tickets: FREE - booking recommended, available from www.nimhaf.org



GLENN MILLAR
HOST

&

**Special
Guests**

NI ALTERNATIVES, 137 AGNES STREET, BELFAST, BT13 1GG

**THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF MARCHING BANDS
ON MENTAL HEALTH**



Belfast
City Council

**The Baring
Foundation**



Derry City & Strabane
District Council
Community Chairman
Shirley A. O'Connell
on behalf of the
Derry City & Strabane
District Council



Marching Minds: Bands, Beats and Wellbeing

- 12/05/25
- 8.00pm – 9.00pm
- NI Alternatives Justice,
137 Agnes St, Belfast

Glenn Millar presents Marching Minds, a special live edition of the Made to Parade podcast, recorded in front of an audience as part of the Mental Health Arts Festival. The episode will explore how marching bands across Northern Ireland contribute positively to mental health, resilience, and community wellbeing.

Tickets: FREE - available from
www.nimhaf.org

TUESDAY 13th MAY

Art Route Collective

- 13/05/25
- 11.00am – 2.00pm
- ArtsEkta Hub, Olive Tree House, 23 Fountain Street

Come and have a chat with the Refugee ladies. Art Route Collective works with refugee and asylum seekers with the aim of improving emotional health and social wellbeing in partnership with agencies such as Home Plus NI, Ark Housing, Extern, DePaul and Council for the Homeless NI.

Adaptations

- 13/05/25
- 11.00am - 12.30pm
- Chris Ledger Studio, University of Atypical, 109-113 Royal Ave, Belfast

Why is Little Red Riding Hood in a tracksuit? What's the Grand Old Duke of York doing lately? And what does Rihanna have to do with Cinderella's night out at the Limelight? Brain Injury Matters' Creative Writers invite you to hear their modern adaptations of classic tales and rhymes, updated with their unique flair and humour.

Tickets: No tickets needed, free of charge, all welcome.

Ritual Revival with Dr. Katrina Sheena Smyth

- 13/05/25
- 2.00pm – 4.00pm
- The Black Box, 18-22 Hill St, Belfast

Join Express Yourself Social Cafe and artist Dr. Katrina Sheena Smyth as part of Northern Ireland Mental Health Arts Festival for an afternoon gathering and ritual experience to revive participants and nurture our creativity.

Tickets: FREE - booking essential, available from www.blackboxbelfast.com

Experimental Drawing Session with the NI Mental Health Arts Festival 2025

- 13/05/25
- 6.30pm – 8.30pm
- Belmont Church Tower, 82 Belmont Church Rd, Belfast

Sociable aerobics inspired art workout, using large pieces of paper, strings, charcoal and sticks. No level of drawing skills required just a willingness to be open-minded about what drawing is. Physical movement, video and music involved. Wear comfortable clothing. This workshop is targeted at adults age 14+

Tickets: FREE - booking is recommended, tickets available from www.nimhaf.org

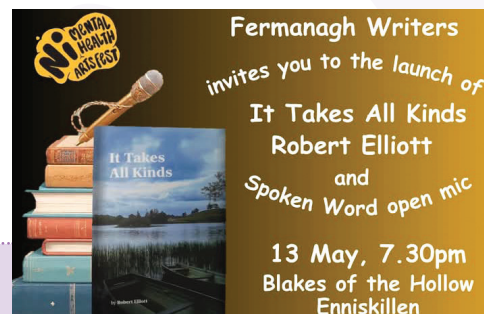


Black Moon

- 13/05/25
- 7.00 pm – 10.00 pm
- Black Box, 18-22 Hill St, Belfast

Black Moon is a monthly, disabled lead club night at the Black Box. We come together to dance, socialise and enjoy entertainment from the learning-disabled community. Resident DJs invite guest artists, mixing up the vibe for a unique experience every time. A warm welcome awaits you in our accessible venue. Bar/Music/Visuals/Fun! 18+

Tickets: £5 (Free PA tickets)



Fermanagh Writers Present Book Launch by Robert Elliott 'It Takes All Kinds' & Open Mic Poetry Night

- 13/05/25
- 7.00pm
- Blakes of The Hollow, 6 Church St, Enniskillen

Tickets: FREE event

WEDNESDAY 14th MAY

As Far As The Eye Can See – Gallery Tour

- 14/05/25
- 11.30am
- F.E McWilliam Gallery, 200 Newry Rd, Banbridge

Join us for a FREE guided tour of our current exhibition, As Far As The Eye Can See: Contemporary Painting from ABC every Wednesday and Saturday at 11.30am.

No need to book, meet at the information desk.

Weekly Online Performance Art

- 14/05/25
- 1.30pm -2.30pm, weekly
- ONLINE

During the pandemic, when gathering in public was not permitted, Bbeyond created online zoom meetings James King and the BBDB, similar to the PS2 online drawing project. The online meetings have continued and offer an opportunity for our global network to connect through performance art online. email bbeyond@europe.com for the link

Tickets: FREE, contact bbeyond@europe.com for tickets

Visual Artists Help Desk

- 14/05/25
- 2.00pm – 4.30pm
- Online / Phone

Book a Help Desk with Brian Kielt (Advocacy & Advice NI)
Do you have an area in your practice you need help with or would just like some advice on where to go next? Artists can book in for a FREE one-to-one appointment to discuss any aspects of their professional careers. Tickets: Help Desk sessions will be held online or on the phone. These Help Desks are free of charge for both Members and Non-Members. Email belfast.office@visualartists.ie

Reverberation Performance

- 14/05/25
- 2.00pm - 3.00pm
- 2 Royal Avenue, Belfast

Taking the 80th anniversary of World War 2 as its inspiration, Reverberation is a performance of songs, stories and poetry that explores the theme of conflict both internal and external. The performance features musician/choir leader Una McCann musician/songwriter Matt McGinn, bass player Nick Scott and drummer Chip Bailey hosted by The Enthusiasts Choir.

Tickets: No tickets needed, free of charge, all welcome

North West Creative Network - May Meetup

- 14/05/25
- 7.00pm – 9.00pm – drop-in
- Millennium Forum, 3 Newmarket St, Derry - Londonderry

This is a monthly gathering for creatives, artists, facilitators, arts organisations and their employees. Arriving at a different arts venue each month, these sessions aim to give like-minded individuals an opportunity to connect, keep up-to-date with the creative sector and share and explore new opportunities for creativity, collaboration and growth.

Tickets: Drop-in sessions

Black Box Open Mic

- 14/05/25
- Doors: 5pm, Event: 8.00pm
- The Black Box, 18-22 Hill St, Belfast

The Black Box Open Mic is back for it's (mostly) monthly outing featuring musicians, poets and comedians with regular host Jessie Fletcher trying their best to keep things vaguely on schedule.

Tickets: FREE

Mind the Line

- 14/05/25
- 2.30pm – 5.30 pm
- 2 Royal Avenue, Belfast

Children aged 8 to 80 years are welcome to join artist Damien Coyle in producing a community painting. Create a menagerie and learn a little bit about artists from Monet to Picasso. You will make your own Jackson Pollock and be prepared to have fun and get messy so wear old clothes or bring an apron.

Tickets: FREE - booking is recommended, tickets available from www.nimhaf.org

A Cold Eye, Notes From a Shared Island 1989–2024 – Carlo Gébler

- 14/05/25
- 6.00pm
- Enniskillen Castle Museum



Carlo Gébler reads from his new book, A Cold Eye, Notes From a Shared Island 1989 – 2024. Followed by a discussion with Noelle Mc Alinden. Drawing from journals he has kept for over four decades, Gébler stitches together days of his life into something bigger than his own lived experiences.

Tickets: FREE - booking required, available from www.nimhaf.org

THURSDAY 15th MAY



Get Pumped!

- 15/05/25
- 10.00am – 11.00am
- Brooke Park, Derry – Londonderry

As part of NIMHAF, In Your Space Circus is inviting local primary schools to join Mr Move-it and DJ Groove-it in Brooke Park on Thursday 15th May at 10am for 'Get Pumped!' 'Get Pumped' is an interactive performance piece that promotes physical activity, confidence building and group-play in a fun, entertaining and supportive setting.

Tickets: FREE, for tickets email zoe@inourspace.org

Ecologies of Care: CHOICE Mobilising Health Assets within the Arts

- 15/05/25
- 10.00am – 1.00pm
- Clifton House, 2 North Queen Street, Belfast

Access to the arts can be life changing, yet many people find the path blocked. Evidence suggests that people with severe mental illness tend to be forgotten when social inclusion policies are written. This symposium seeks to explore how the arts could be more engaged in addressing the health disparities of this population.

Tickets: FREE - booking essential, available from www.nimhaf.org

Group Improv Drawing

- 15/05/25
- 10.30 am – 2.00pm
- 2 Royal Avenue, Belfast

Join Art is collective, a weekly multi-ability group of artists that meet in 2 Royal Avenue, to work on a large-scale improv drawing. Loosen up your creativity and see where it goes. Materials provided or bring your own.

Tickets: Drop in event

Art Route Collective

- 15/05/25
- 11.00am – 2.00pm
- ArtsEkta Hub, Olive Tree House, 23 Fountain Street

Come and have a chat with the Refugee ladies. Art Route Collective works with refugee and asylum seekers with the aim of improving emotional health and social wellbeing in partnership with agencies such as Home Plus NI, Ark Housing, Extern, DePaul and Council for the Homeless NI.

Tickets: All ages

Holding Space

- 15/05/25
- 2.00pm – 7.00pm
- The MAC Belfast, 10 Exchange St, West, Belfast

Counterpoints, a UK based organisation working in the field of arts, migration and cultural change in partnership with the MAC, invite you to a networking event that connects local practitioners, communities and initiatives with an interest in mental health, displacement and the arts.

Tickets: Invited Only, register interest with maren@counterpoints.org.uk

OpenDecks – One Year Birthday

- 15/05/25
- 6.30pm – 7.00pm
- The Black Box, 18-22 Hill St, Belfast

Celebrate the Open Decks first birthday, a monthly event where early career and aspiring DJ's can take to the decks and perform, a night of electronic music, dancing, and fun. Free Admission.

Tickets: FREE - please contact director@blackboxbelfast.com for more information

The Chicken Box Comedy Night

- 15/05/25
- 8.30pm
- Bennigans Bar, 13 John St, Derry – Londonderry

They say humour is a tonic & the antidote to depression. Join Rory McSwiggan founder of The Chicken Box Comedy Night as he hosts an evening of Stand Up for Mental Health in his Award-winning Comedy Night featuring the very best of Stand-up Comedy from Derry Londonderry & across N. Ireland. 18+

Tickets: For more information visit www.nimhaf.org

FRIDAY 16th MAY

The Art of Conversation with Noelle McAlinden

- 16/05/25
- 11am to 12pm
- The Ulster Museum, Belfast.

The NI Mental Health Arts Festival presents The Art of Conversation with Noelle McAlinden, featuring internationally renowned sculptor Tim Shaw, member of the Royal Academy of Arts and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Sculptors with Kim Mawhinney, Senior Curator, Ulster Museum. An opportunity to see & hear Tim Shaw as he reflects upon his body of work over the years, sources of inspiration and his ambitions for the future.

Tickets: FREE - Booking necessary



A group of people are rowing a long boat on a river. The rowers are wearing blue life jackets and are captured in the middle of a stroke, with water splashing around their oars. The river is surrounded by lush green trees and foliage. The sky is blue with some white clouds. In the foreground, a purple rounded rectangle is partially visible on the left side of the image.

- 17/05/25
- 10.00am - 12pm

Please book on www.rowtheerne.com

Tickets: Free drop in event, find more details on www.bbeyond.live

- 17/05/25
- 11.00am – 4.30pm
- Meet at Void Art Centre, 10 Waterloo Pl, including a walk to St. Columb's Park, Derry - Londonderry

This eco-somatic walking workshop invites you into a day bridging urban and ecological spaces through engagement with clay, soil, wild seeds as pathways to ecological and physical awareness. Led by Gail Mahon, artist-mover-researcher, the workshop will consider our connection to the more-than-human and ancestral practices of walking, carrying, gathering, and sharing.

Tickets: FREE - but registration required visits www.derrvoid.com



- 17/05/25
- 10.00am -3.00pm
- The Old Mill Ballinamallard, Co Fermanagh.

An invitation to participating artists of Moving Canvas to embrace their own catharsis & experience Well Spring at The Mill as part of NI Mental Health Arts Festival. Participating Artists are invited to just be in the space & see what evolves... sounds familiar. Well-spring is a multisensory experience, provides participants with head & heart-shaped... for artists across artforms to invest in themselves in an old mill in Ballinamallard with beautiful space to wander & reflect.... an opportunity to get lost & find yourself in nature and an opportunity to reflect upon your practice and inspiration as Moving Canvas Artists. Funded by Future Screens NI. An invitation to be a glorious & curious child.

Tickets: £10 + £8 Concession, available from: <https://echochodance.com/whatson/it-comes-in-waves-by-majella-biernat-karen-devlin>

Tickets: FREE - booking essential,
available from www.nimhaf.org

- 17/05/25
- 7.30pm – 10.30pm
- Accidental Theatre, 12-13 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast

Tickets: £7.00 available from [www.
accidentaltheatre.co.uk](http://www.accidentaltheatre.co.uk)

- 17/05/25 and 18/05/25
- 7:30pm
- The Sanctuary Theatre, 1a Castlereagh St, Belfast

Mother & Son - As Jack spirals into another drink-fuelled depression, things are made all that much worse by the arrival of his estranged mother. As grievances are aired, will they reconcile, or will things be made worse? This is a story about the things we do for the ones we love, whether they are right or wrong.

Tickets: £12 / £8 Concession, available from www.brightumbrella.co.uk

- 17/05/25
- Doors 8.00pm,
Event begins: 8.30pm
- Braid Arts Centre, 1 - 29
Bridge Street Ballymena

Tickets: £5.00 online <https://thebraid.ticketsolve.com/ticketbooth/shows/1173662543>

SUNDAY 18th MAY

- 18/05/25
- 3.00pm
- Windsor Tennis Club,
37 Windsor Ave, Belfast

Tickets: To book please email
belfastargentinetango@gmail.com

- 18/05/25
- 4.00pm – 5.00pm
- St Mary's Star of the Sea,
Rostrevor

Tickets: FREE event

- | 18/05/25
- | 8.00pm - late
- | Oh Yeah Centre, 15-21 Gordon St, Belfast

ORTHA is a female led experimental folk band, influenced by Irish music, dance and theatre. Using traditional elements like tap dancing, bodhran, whistle and guitar – ORTHA build dynamic layers of sound with contemporary electronics and captivating storytelling.

Tickets: FREE - booking required,
available from www.nimhaf.org



SUNDAY 18th MAY

Art Bath – Creative Wellbeing Workshop

- 19/05/25
- 11.00am – 1.00pm
- Creggan Library, 59 Central Dr, Derry - Londonderry

Immerse yourself in painting with its natural rhythm and flow. A therapeutic workshop based on letting go and enjoying the wonderful sensory benefits of the arts. Mix media approach. Experiential Workshop.

Tickets: Invite only, register interest with deirdre.doherty@mail.com

From Ticking Boxes to Transformation – Give 5 Workshop

- 19/05/25
- 10.00am - 12.30pm
- Glór na Mona, 4 Clós na Carraige Belfast Upper Springfield, Belfast



This New Script for Mental Health activist-led workshop explores our new Give 5 human rights-based approach to mental health. Centred on lived experiences and trauma-informed principles, it shifts the focus from “what’s wrong with you?” to “what happened to you?” through conversations, presentations, poetry, and maybe even some singing!

Tickets: Free, booking required, available from www.nimhaf.org

My Centrepiece: The Art of Nature Displays

- 19/05/25
- 2:30 pm - 4:00 pm
- Eden Place Arts Centre, Pilots Row Community Centre, Rosville Street, Derry - Londonderry

This workshop will explore how we can create table-based art displays, which will bring the garden and seasonal influences indoors. Using natural materials, plants, nature books, poetry and art making we will generate ideas for your own home centrepiece. This is a way to focus on nature and our own belongings as resources for self-care and resilience.

THROUGHOUT

NERVE CINEMA

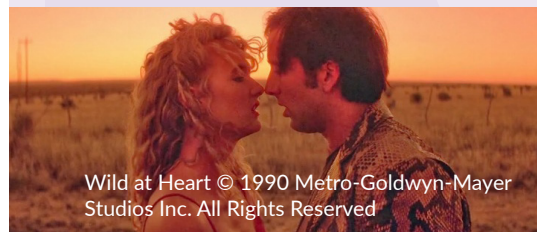
Nerve Centre, 7-8 Magazine St, Derry - Londonderry

Nerve Centre Cinema showcases the best in contemporary cinema weekly, every Wednesday and Thursday, year round. Enjoy the new releases and well loved classics in our state of the art cinema. Nerve Cinema is funded by FilmHub NI, and BFI Film Audience Network (BFI FAN)

Tickets: £6 + booking fee, available from www.nervecentre.org

- September Says (Film Screening)**
13/05/25, 7.00pm

Delving into the dark complexities of sisterhood, adolescence and femininity, September Says is the haunting feature filmmaking debut from Ariane Labeled. Based on the acclaimed novel Sisters by Daisy Johnson, this uniquely eerie portrait of girlhood features remarkable debut performances from leads Pascale Kann and Mia Tharia and marks the arrival of a bold and distinct new cinematic voice in Labeled.



Wild at Heart © 1990 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc. All Rights Reserved

- Wild at Heart**
14/05/25, 7.00pm, 125 mins

Winner of the Palme D'or at Cannes Film Festival, David Lynch's intoxicating Wild at Heart follows Sailor (Nicolas Cage) and Lula (Laura Dern), two lovers struggling to remain together even when fate seems intent on keeping them apart. 18+

- The Return**
15/05/25, 7.00pm, 116 mins

After 20 years Odysseus finally returns to Ithaca, where he finds his wife held prisoner by suitors vying to be king and his son facing death at their hands. To win back his family and all he has lost, Odysseus must rediscover his strength. 15+

- Blue Road:
The Edna O'Brien Story**
18/05/25, 7.00pm, 99 mins

In 1960, a young Irish woman named Edna O'Brien wrote a sexually frank debut novel, The Country Girls. She became a literary sensation, writing for The New Yorker, delivering provocative interviews, and authoring screenplays. Her success enraged her writer husband and made her a pariah in her native Ireland, where her books were banned and burned. In July 2024, Edna passed away and this film provides a final testimony from her, aged 93, as she reflects upon her extraordinary life for filmmaker Sinéad O'Shea's camera. 15+

FRINGE EVENTS

Transforming Pain into beauty: Art, healing and care of the spirit

I TBC

Dr Anna Musonda is former Miss Heritage Zambia and a champion campaigning for human rights and ending violence against women and girls. Anna supports many schools and other charities throughout her humanitarian work in Zambia. Anna is also a qualified clinical and psychosocial practitioner. The event will also include visual arts activities facilitated by artists with lived experience of living under oppressive regimes and the trauma of war.

Tickets and further info: Visit www.nimhaf.org for more details

Walking tour of USWA Spring Exhibition

- I 03/05/25
- I 11.30am – 1.30pm
- I Flowerfields Gallery,
185 Coleraine Rd, Portstewart

Join us for an inspiring Spring group exhibition at Flowerfields Arts Centre, showcasing the remarkable works of Diploma holders and prize winners from the Ulster Society of Women Artists. This exhibition invites viewers to explore the transformative power of art as a medium for emotional release and renewal.

Tickets: RSVP to uswasecretary@gmail.com

Bangor Late Night Art Tour

- I 29/05/25
- I 6.00pm – 9.00pm
- I Bangor

Join us to explore the exhibitions on offer with a guided tour of Bangor Late Night Art, book on to avoid disappointment.

Tickets: Free, booking required, available from www.nimhaf.org

Empower Wellness, Fiona Bawn

- I Running 6 weeks beginning
21/05/25
- I 7.00pm – 8.00pm
- I Millenium Court, 5-7 William St,
Portadown

Join us for these six weeks of a deeply soothing relaxation and mindfulness class that harnesses the power of sound baths to guide you into a meditative state, with Fiona Bawn from Empower Wellness. The class promotes stress relief, inner calm, and mental clarity. 18+

Tickets: £20, available from www.millenniumcourt.co.uk

Six Week Landscape Painting Workshop with Ann Feely

- I Running 6 weeks beginning
21/05/25
- I 7.00pm – 8.00pm
- I Millenium Court, 5-7 William St,
Portadown

In this course participants will study 'Landscape Impressionist Painting-with a Twist!' This 6-week course involves experimenting with colour and techniques to create a gorgeous riverscape scene.

Under the guidance of professional artist, Ann Feely, you will be inspired and encouraged to develop your own sense of style.

Tickets: £45, available from www.millenniumcourt.co.uk

Words Strong Enough to Heal – An Evening of Poetry and Song

- I 22/05/25
- I 7.00pm – 9.00pm
- I Gairdín an Phobail, Whiterock
Close, BT12 7RJ

New Script for Mental Health activists will share their personal contributions to an upcoming Rest of the Story anthology. The Rest of the Story, a trauma-informed storytelling programme, uses individual story to connect with others in solidarity and build communities at the intersection of justice and healing.

Tickets: Free, booking required, available from www.nimhaf.org

“

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland is delighted to be participating in this year's Northern Ireland Mental Health Arts Festival and to celebrate art created by artists with lived experience of mental health challenges. Our own £600,000 Mental Health and Arts programme, funded in partnership with the Baring Foundation, is designed to help build a more resilient creative sector and to support a host of new arts-based projects within the mental health and wellbeing arena. As the programme enters a new phase of delivery, we welcome the opportunity to share the latest news on its development with all the artists and visitors who will be enjoying arts events across the region, thanks to the 2025 Northern Ireland Mental Health Arts Festival.

”

JAVIER STANZIOLA, Director of Strategic Development & Partnerships,
Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

VENUE & ORGANISATION PARTNERS



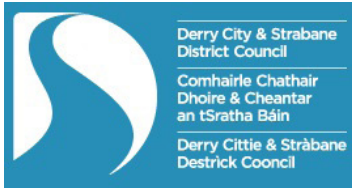


FUNDERS



**Belfast
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