

LIVES



An Exhibition of Work by Hospital and Croom
Family Resource Centres
to mark
UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
17th October 2015

Thank you to all the participants who took part in this project and whose creativity blossomed in creating such thoughtful and striking art work under the guidance of artist, Marion Barry Fitzgerald. The messages and feelings behind the art pieces have now been explained in this booklet with the assistance of writer, Mary Bradford. The 'Lives' exhibition highlights the reality of lived poverty in Ireland today and also worldwide. It emphasises that poverty is not just a financial issue, but is something real and experienced in our own communities in many forms. The art works remind us that the impacts of poverty experienced both at home and worldwide are comparable, such as isolation, social exclusion, health, hunger, housing and deprivation.

Through working together and continuing to raise awareness we hope that this exhibition will support the fight to eradicate both local and global poverty through small and large actions. Key to our message is an emphasis on human dignity, and the importance of individual's and government's commitment to fundamental human rights.

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The views expressed in this document are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Social Protection.

1. **"Haywire"**
Mary Margaret Vallence

Acrylic



When we were asked to create a piece depicting poverty, all sorts of ideas went through my head. I decided to use splashes of colour which for me resembles the chaos around us.

There is a lot of unrest in our world, with people fleeing war torn countries resulting in a major loss of life. We also have global warming.

Ireland has been hit hard by the economic downturn and many of our young people have immigrated. With people losing jobs, homes being repossessed, Bono's quote 'let poverty be history' is a long way off.

2. **"Empty Vessel"**
Imelda O'Riordan

Mixed Media

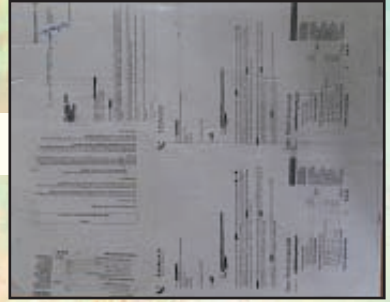


There are many forms of poverty that people can experience. I have witnessed the most extreme cases on my trips to Africa. I have tried to capture the innocence of the child in my painting. The little boy was sitting in the red sands, various items of rubbish were scattered around him.

He was dressed in rags and playing with an empty plastic bottle. He lifted the crushed container to his mouth but there was no drink for him. I exaggerated the size of his eyes as this is what I saw looking at me. I also tried to capture the dryness of Africa and the importance of clean water for survival.

3. "Under Pressure" Breda Heelan

Mixed Media



Poverty to me is a very personal thing as there are so many roads leading from it. This project, although about poverty, I found it empowered me to cope better with personal difficulties.

For my piece, I placed overdue utility bills on the base, then I put a purse made from Plaster of Paris. Next I had money flying out from the purse demonstrating how hard it is for people who are under financial pressure.

I loved doing this project. It gave me a sense of achievement and I also got to work with materials I never used before.

4. "Why Me" Helen Hogan

Collage



This relates to the poverty which is so often a part of domestic abuse and which can prevent women and children from leaving abusive situations. While in the abusive relationship, income and expenditure can be closely monitored, even down to petrol consumption, and use of light and heat at home. Yet those who experience violence and abuse within a relationship may be afraid to leave as poverty and homelessness are risks in leaving home.

5. "Red Tape"
Pauline Dore

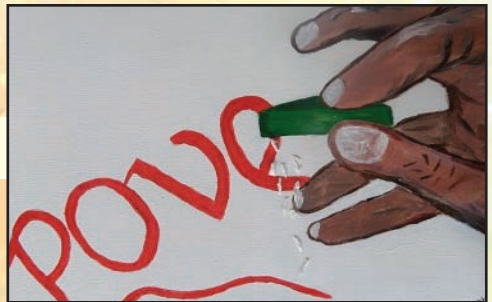
Mixed Media



I feel that bureaucrats' spend too much time trying to decide where food aid is going to, so that by the time the starving receive it, it is too late for many of them. If it were not for all the red tape, many more people would survive famines and droughts in my opinion. There is food available, it just takes too long to get to those in need.

6. "Rub It Out"
Kitty Higgins

Acrylic



I signed up for what I thought was a simple art class. Imagine my reaction when we were informed that the class had a 'theme' and that the object of the class was to produce a piece of work around anti-poverty.

My initial reaction was to run! I had never even held a paint brush. Following much discussion and debate I decided to look at poverty from the angle of eradication. As individuals we all have a responsibility to do what we can.

I really enjoyed the process, learning about both art and poverty.

7. "Worn To A Thread" Pauline Kennedy

Mixed Media



I was delighted to be asked to join the group and I've made some good friends since I became involved. The project we were asked to do was about poverty. Since I do a lot of knitting, I decided to knit a jumper. I put some holes and left loose threads in the garment as I went along. I think it represents poverty very well. The unravelling similar to how people feel when struggling with this issue. The jumper is made up of bits and pieces of wool I had left over from other things I had knitted over the years.

8. "World Wide" Anne-Marie O'Brien



I designed my piece of art around Global poverty. I started with a big sheet of white paper. Then I gathered cuttings that referred to poverty from magazines. Once I had enough cuttings, I stuck the pieces of paper with bits of suitable material on to the large sheet.

Once I was happy with the result I had my collage completed. Both children and adults can experience poverty through lack of education, food, fresh water, social events and mental illness.

9. "Excluded"
Mary Raleigh

Acrylic

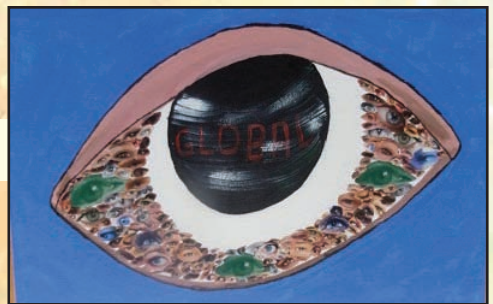


While sitting around the table, we were asked to depict poverty in whatever form of art that we liked. I decided on a painting and I automatically started to draw a mountain. I was thinking of all the people in the third world who are all hoping for help to improve their lives and thought of the big mountain they had to climb to achieve that wish.

The person in the picture is depicting the height of the mountain and hoping one day to get there, to reach the top and so to a better life.

10. "Look and See"
Mary McGrath

Acrylic



Last year I signed up for an art class, and was surprised to learn our topic was anti-poverty. While thinking about it, all I could picture were the adverts about hungry children and famine on television.

I drew a big eye. Then I cut out pictures of small eyes from magazines and glued them down all around the big eye.

I want people to look and see and think about the poverty that is all round us.

11. "Vision" Phyllis Finnan

Oil

My painting last year for the anti-poverty project was based on the experiences of a friend who has travelled to third world countries regularly with the 'Orbis' flying eye team. They perform eye operations on needy people and teach their doctors how to do the procedures and improve the standard of aftercare.



My piece depicts the misery and poverty of blindness at the bottom of the painting. The figure of the girl represents a person who has had a sight saving operation and the joy of being able to see the tiny butterfly at her fingertips.

12. "War" Group

Acrylic

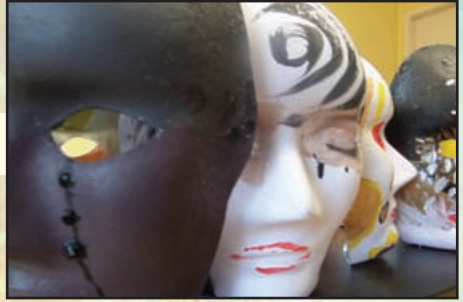


Towards the end of our day's activities our tutor suggested that instead of consigning the left-over paint to the bin, we should apply it to a clean board and analyse the result in relation to the topic.

The general opinion was that our picture depicted the awfulness of a bomb exploding, almost blocking the light and bringing horror, death and destruction to the area.

13. "Faces of Poverty" Group

Mixed Media



This project is more about personal, emotional, and internal poverty.

Suggestions of such suffering include, abuse, depression, isolation, fear, mental trauma and anguish.

Like in life, there are two sides to each of us, the dark internal we often keep to ourselves and the outward face we wear in public as depicted by the masks.

14. "Money Money" M. Cotter

Collage



I used the money as a representation of the veil placed over the impoverished by the rich. This cover is put in place to hide and shield the struggle of poverty to the masses. If we were to take away the money we would see the truth behind poverty. These people lack healthcare, food and water. These are the basic commodities we all need in our daily lives.

15. "Enough is Enough" Marjorie McCluskey

Mixed Media



All the headlines coming to the fore and pushing business out of focus.

Life has become muddled. What is next? What will be the next eye-catching big headline to shock us? Can we be shocked anymore?

16. "Empty Hearth" Christina Ryan

Mixed Media



I love being challenged in a creative manner, using both my mind and hands. Once I understood the concept of this project, my idea came to me easily. I decided to do an empty hearth. Why?

I believe the home is where love, security, warmth and protection are given and received. It is where ones heart is and an empty fireplace appears cold and unwelcoming. The materials I used gives the impression of hardship within a home, worn carpets, torn layers of wallpaper etc.

Hence the EMPTY HEARTH reflects the poverty that can be in any home.

17. "All Kinds of Everything" Geraldine Walsh

Collage

By communicating with other people in the group, I learnt about our project on anti-poverty and what it was I could do.

I crocheted my piece to highlight the poverty that we live in around the world.

1 Poverty around the world. 2 Broken Heart. 3 Bankers. 4 Homelessness.
5 Child Poverty. 6 The tap – water charges. 7 Living below the bread line.

I was pleased to be able show my ideas on poverty through my love for the craft of crochet.



18. "Hung out to Dry" Maureen O'Connor

Mixed Media



In this piece, I used clothes hangers. I wanted to represent the gates closing in business. Our business was affected by illness and disability, I feel there is no help for those in need, hence my title, 'Hung Out to Dry'. Poverty is world-wide, but until it comes to your own front door, no-one knows or understands it fully.

19. "Grasping" Mary Cronin

Mixed Media



Extending the hand of friendship is important in a world where people are starved not only of food and water but of company as well. In some countries, the governments should be made answerable for how they treat their poor.

I see loneliness as a form of poverty, also not everyone is comfortable with talking to friends or family and may open up to a stranger instead. So all types of poverty needs to be tackled. This reminds me of the old saying, 'Always extend your hand to the stranger'.

20. "The Crutch" Betty Kiely

Mixed Media



When first asked to take part in this project I felt very anxious about it. But I enjoyed meeting with others and discussing the different views on what poverty meant to us.

I decided on drug and alcohol abuse for my art piece because it effects a lot of people throughout the world. It leads to a lot of problems in families. One's whole life can become dependent on feeding this addiction hence my title, The Crutch.

21. "Global"
Norah Theresa Fennessy

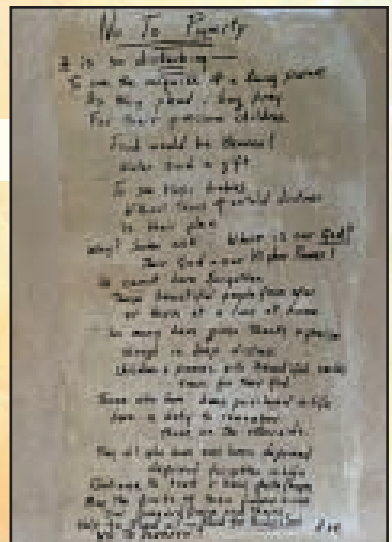
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The day I came to class and was asked by our teacher my opinion of poverty I was really taken back. Poverty, a seven letter word yet so large and so many people are suffering from it worldwide. I chose a globe for my art project as poverty is global. It appears some countries experience it more than others, people without food, clothes, homes, people fleeing for their lives from war torn countries, not knowing what lays ahead of them for example. Hopefully the governments of the world will govern as they were elected to and give the help to those less fortunate than others.

22. "Food for Thought"
Anne O'Connor

Poem on hand dyed paper



23. "The Great Divide" Georgina McMahon

Mixed Media

Poverty has so many aspects to it that I didn't know where to start. While flicking through a booklet, I saw a photo and hey presto, I had a light bulb moment. My work of art was going to be about water. This is a basic human right and a necessity in today's world for health and hygiene.

I dealt with the Government's decision to implement water charges and the struggle this will put on people.



While completing the project, I thought of my late Dad saying how 'the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.' Now I had the title for my piece, 'The Great Divide'.

24. "Dark Moments" Rene Crofton

Mixed Media



Poverty: Lack of certain amount of material possessions or money - deprivation of basic human needs, including food, water, shelter, health and work. Poverty also results because of war, slums and famine.

In this world, 1.1 billion people live in poverty.

25. "Falling"
Rene Crofton

Mixed Media



Looking at the falling leaves, cars, money, homes, and friends. Then drugs can hit and like the falling leaves, everything falls away.

Poverty comes, no car, no money, no friends, only pain and mental illness, depression and sometimes death.

It could be your child.

26. "Change"
Anne Corry

Mixed Media



When I first heard of this project I was a bit anxious. I didn't know what was expected from me, although I really enjoyed it once I started. This project made me think about poverty and what it can do to people.

The inspiration for my piece came from a painting I once saw.

I titled my art piece CHANGE, because before the recession people had everything they wanted, now many are struggling with poverty. The boat in my picture seems abandoned, left there without oars, and I wonder, where is the person that owns it?

27. "Here There & Everywhere"
Group

Mixed Media



28. "Left Behind"
Anne Cahill

Mixed Media



I enjoyed all the different ideas in the course. I am aware of the problem of homelessness in our country at the moment. There is a shortage of homes for families and individuals.

Currently there is a huge refugee crisis in the world. In making this painting of a house I was thinking about the importance and the value of one's home and the need for a home for everyone.

29. "Mess" Group

Mixed Media



This group piece depicts how life for people in poverty is a mess. Poverty is a collage of problems. It is something to be dealt with by all and cleaned up, where there is chaos in life, people need hope, and to be reminded not to give up. When poverty strikes, you make the most of what you have, and the old saying 'waste not, want not' comes to mind.

This piece came from using the paint that was left over our projects.





Knockainey Road
Hospital
Co. Limerick



Phone 061 383884
Fax: 061 383899
Email hospitalfrc@eircom.net

Limerick Printing 061 422300