



**MENTAL
HEALTH
ARTS NI
MINDSET
FESTIVAL**



8TH - 15TH MAY

BELONGING

2026 FESTIVAL GUIDE

MHANI.ORG



Welcome To Festival 2026

We are delighted to present our 13th annual regional Mental Health Arts NI Festival programme and fringe events for 2026. It's been an exciting time. We have relocated to, and delighted to be working with, the Duncairn Arts Centre and 174 Trust, thrilled about our new and evolving collaborations, harnessing creative partnerships, local, regional and international. We have expanded our team & rebranded!

We have launched exciting new initiatives including the Hidden Narratives and New Works Commission; we are indebted to Arts Council NI & the Baring Foundation, with support from the Mental Health Foundation. We have established a Research & Development Panel, thanks to our collaboration with Research Fellows at Queen's University & Ulster University Belfast School

of Art. We have rebranded from NI Mental Health Arts Festival to Mental Health Arts NI. Our festival remains a key event in our annual programme, we continue to plan opportunities for collaboration across NI with our Arts Managers across Local Authorities all year round. We are more than just a festival—we are a movement! And we are on the move! Thanks to Rock Choir and Translink we are planning ongoing opportunities to celebrate creativity in motion across the region and Island. We hope you can join us on our journey.

Together with our artists, creatives, venues, sponsors, stakeholders and festival partners, we bring you an exciting regional programme of events, virtual & face to face, demonstrating our commitment to challenging stigma across NI. We are celebrating artists emerging, established and internationally renowned

“
We are more than just a festival—we are a movement!
”

from across artforms that are eclectic, prolific and engaging. We have a diverse programme of visual & performing arts. We continue to build upon our previous success, with our dedicated Symposia in both Derry–Londonderry & in Belfast, both learning regions, where we have created forums for compassionate dialogue & creative exchange. We present talks, tours and workshops, plus poetry, spoken word, comedy, film, music, and so much more! Our programme includes creative practice that continues to challenge stigma with compassion & dignity and provokes debate, providing insights into how artists continue to channel their own lived experience to inspire others.

We are thrilled to be joined by internationally renowned Prof Daisy Fancourt Professor of Epidemiology University College London, who gave us an exclusive interview to celebrate

our Festival, reflecting upon her compelling research highlighted in her latest book Art Cure. We are indebted to Northern Visions TV for making this possible.

Our theme this year is 'Belonging,' a feeling or sense of being accepted, valued, connected to people or place. A fundamental human need. You are welcomed as your true self in a group, community, or environment. It is a sense of holding an integral place in a system, family, school, work, community or a physical setting. True belonging is not having to hide aspects of your identity or conform to expectations to fit in. It is vital to feel connected to others, this gives life purpose and meaning.

Many of us know first-hand from lived experience the power

of the arts to provide a sense of connection, a safe sanctuary, a place to belong and grow, that can help transform ourselves as well as our communities. The arts can provide a catalyst for change.

We are thrilled to continue to build upon our profile of film with local, regional & international collaborations thanks to Nerve Centre Derry-Londonderry, Sobriety Films & Voices with Impact in Canada. We are proud to be proactive participants in the growth and development of NI Creative Health Network.

We welcome ongoing partnerships and are committed to lifelong learning with the Scottish Mental Health Arts

Festival, Minding Creative Minds & Mental Health Ireland and many, more across UK & Ireland, supporting the professional development of artists. Exciting collaborations evolving with new venues including the Harrison Hotel and Belfast School of Art Ecologies of Care & public initiatives with Picstory Belfast.

We warmly welcome you to join us and to reflect upon the pivotal role of creativity, self-expression, and 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 welcomes opportunities to challenge and be inspired and experiences for nourishment and growth.

We wish to express our heartfelt thanks to all our team at MHANI:

**Noelle Mc Alinden
& Damien Coyle**
Co Chairs Mental Health Arts NI

Our MHANI team

Grace Fairley, Creative Programmes Coordinator
Sarah O'Malley Graham, Marketing & Projects Assistant

Board Members:

Noelle Mc Alinden, Co Chair
Damien Coyle, Co Chair
Dr Brenda Brady, Secretary
Bronagh Lawson
Frank Liddy
Will Nicholson
Dr. Jonathan McCrea
Rachel Love
Eimear Burton
Randal Rory O'Donnell

Research & Development Panel:

Dr. Trisha Forbes QUB
Dr. Emma Berry QUB
Dr. Pamela Whitaker UU
Dr. Brenda Brady QUB
Noelle Mc Alinden, Mental Health Arts NI
Grace Fairley, Mental Health Arts NI

A word from our funders and supporters



[The Rock Choir is] proud to support [Mental Health Arts NI]. The festival, held each May, champions mental well-being, combats stigma, and brings communities together through the arts all year round.

Rock Choir Ireland



It is great to see the NIMHAF go from strength to strength and we at The Baring Foundation are pleased to also support its year round work in our joint funding with ACNI.

**David Cutler,
The Baring Foundation**



I am so excited for Mental Health Arts NI's 2026 Festival. It presents an amazing opportunity to bring people together and consider the vital role the arts can play in supporting mental health. It has been an honour to participate and I hope the festival catalyses important new conversations and continues to raise public awareness.

Professor Daisy Fancourt, Author of Art Cure



Minding Creative Minds (MCM) is pleased to support [Mental Health Arts Northern Ireland] this spring, and in doing so we remind those attending and working in the Creative Sector in Northern Ireland, MCM is a support programme for creative sector workers on the Island of Ireland. You can see our free and confidential service offering at mindingcreativeminds.ie. We are your tribe and we wish all the team at [MHANI] the very best of luck with this year's festival.

Minding Creative Minds



The Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival (SMHAF) is delighted to be partnering with [MHANI] on its programme this year, and we're looking forward to sharing some of the learning from our own festival in its 20th year, as well as our new Performing Anxiety resource which supports people to make new creative work addressing mental health.

**Andrew Eaton-Lewis,
Arts Programme
Officer, Mental Health
Foundation**





I am delighted to support the NI Mental Health Arts Festival as it enters its 13th year of making a vital contribution to our city.

It is more important than ever that we talk openly about mental health. One of my main priorities as Lord Mayor is to ensure that everyone in Belfast feels part of the journey and that no-one is left behind and mental health forms a huge part of this.

This festival offers a truly inclusive way to do just that, using visual and performing arts, poetry, comedy, music, and performance to reach people from across the city.

This year's theme of 'belonging' really speaks to the power of the arts providing a space where everyone feels welcome and can use their voice in a safe and secure way.

The festival also highlights the arts as a force for good, bringing our communities together and encouraging us to openly share our stories.

**The Lord Mayor of Belfast City Council,
Councillor Tracey Kelly**



As Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council, I am delighted to offer my full support to the NI Mental Health Arts Festival as it celebrates its 13th landmark year. This festival has become a vital cornerstone of our cultural calendar, providing a brave and beautiful space for those with lived experience to share their stories through the power of the visual and performing arts. In a year where I have chosen to focus my own Mayoral office on mental health awareness and suicide prevention, I applaud NIMHAF for its tireless work in challenging stigma and advocating for compassionate policy change. I want to extend my best wishes to everyone attending the Symposium that is being organised to celebrate the resilience, creativity, and community spirit that exists across the North.

**Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council,
Councillor Ruairí McHugh.**



Access Requirements:

We have included information on the accessibility of our events on our website, www.mhani.org. If you have any further questions please email us at info@mhani.org.

Find Us:



mhani.org



[@mhani](https://www.instagram.com/mhani)



[@mhani](https://www.tiktok.com/@mhani)



[@mhani](https://www.facebook.com/mhani)

Tickets:

Please use our website www.mhani.org to book your tickets. You will be taken through to our Eventbrite or a venue booking page.

Many of our programmed events are free or pay what you can, but booking tickets is sometimes required as spaces can fill quickly. Some events will have a fee.

If you cannot attend an event please inform us as soon as possible, contact info@mhani.org.

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





Festival Programme:

Our Symposia

This year our MHANI Symposia return to Belfast & Derry-Londonderry. The Symposia take place at the Nerve Centre Derry-Londonderry on Friday 8th May and on Tuesday May 15th at the Duncairn, Belfast. We are indebted to the Mayors of Belfast and Derry-Londonderry for their support.

Our symposia feature keynote speakers from a diverse range of contexts including the arts, mental health, 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. Our symposia provide insights that deal compassionately and intelligently with the stigma associated with talking about our mental health.

We look forward to sharing details of both symposia & guest speakers will be available on our website.



Derry-Londonderry Symposium

Time: 14:00-17:00

Location: Nerve Centre Magazine Street, Derry-Londonderry, BT486HJ

Ticket Price: Pay what you can



Belfast Symposium

Date: 15th of May

Time: 14:00-17:00

Location: Duncairn Ave, Belfast BT14 6BP

Ticket Price: Pay what you can



Exhibitions

Belfast Late Night Art, on the first Thursday of every month, is a free night that celebrates arts and culture across the city. The next Late Night Art will be the 7th of May, the night before our festival begins. Several of the galleries participating in our festival will be hosting events, and we encourage everyone to come out and explore the wealth of amazing art in Belfast.

“HOW ARE YOU?” (A SHORT FILM)

Date: 8th – 15th May

Time: Any

Location: Online

Ticket Price: N/A



Most people say they're fine, even when they're not. When we find the courage to open up, we can often find true connection and belonging.

“IT WAS OKAY”

Date: 8th – 15th May

Time: Any

Location: Online

Ticket Price: N/A

A short comic following a caveman as they go about their day, and how they cope with the unseeable mess in their head.

ART IS A TRADE

Date: 11th – 13th May

Time: 10:00–13:00

Location: Moat Park, 11 Church Grn, Belfast BT16 2LP

Ticket Price: Free

ART IS A TRADE explores Andrew Cooke's journey from Foundation Year to Animal Instincts, showing how making supports men's mental health, creativity, identity, and emotional wellbeing.



BELONGING

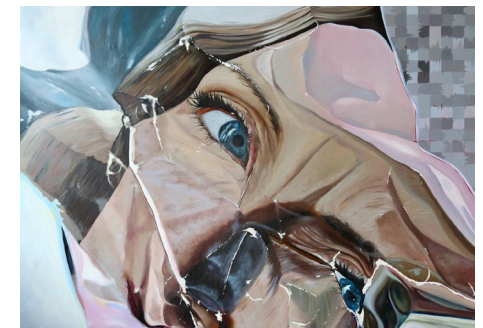
Date: 11th – 22nd May

Time: 9:30–14:30 Monday through Thursday

Location: Eden Place Arts Centre, Pilots Row Community Centre, Rossville street, Derry–Londonderry, BT48 6LP

Ticket Price: Free

Gillian Wright's Belonging explores care, compassion and community through painting, printmaking and ceramics. A quiet reflection on connection, support and healing.



DO YOU MIND IF I DRAW YOU?

Date: 11th – 23rd May

Time: M–W 10:00–17:00,
Th 13:00–20:00, F–Sat
10:00–16:00

Location: Holywood Library,
Sullivan Building, 86–88 High
Street, Holywood BT18 9AE

Ticket Price: Free

Drawings and prints reflecting my experiences as a full-time carer for my mother through Alzheimer's and dementia, and my reflections on loss, memory, and belonging after her death.



THE ECLECTIC SIX EXHIBITION AND LAUNCH

Date: Launches 7th of May,
1st of May–30th June

Time: 19:00–21:00 7th of May;
12:00–22:00 daily

Location: 45–51 Malone Road,
Belfast, BT9 6RX

Ticket Price: Free

This captivating group exhibition brings together six exceptionally talented Northern Irish artists: Niall Conlon, Clinton Fitzpatrick, Louise Lennon, Joel Simon, F. Rabolios, and Trevor McCormick.

THE EXPULSION FROM PARADISE

Date: 25th April–30th June

Time: Opening 25th April 14:00,
9:00–16:30 daily.

Location: Millennium Court,
5–7 William Street, Portadown,
Craigavon, BT62 3NX

Ticket Price: Free

Colin was inspired by the “tension between paradise and the world we actually live in.”



FREE ART PROJECT

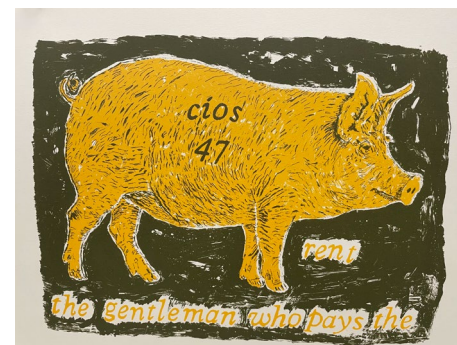
Date: 8th–15th of May

Time: N/A

Location: It's a mystery

Ticket Price: N/A

Own an original artwork by Damien Coyle that you'll find on display in a mystery location. Tell staff you recognise it and it's yours.



I BELONG

Date: 7th – 15th May

Time: Opens 18:00–21:00
the 7th, Tues–Sat 11:00–17:00

Location: Studio Gallery,
Belfast Exposed, 23 Donegall
Street, Belfast, BT1 2FF.

Ticket Price: Free



Using a detached camera lens, McKinney' images reflect a state of liminal focus, mirroring the psychological threshold between disconnection and belonging during mental health recovery.

I BUILT IT FOR YOU

Date: May 2026, artist talk 14th
at 19:00

Time: W–Sat 12:00–23:00,
Sunday 13:00–19:00

Location: Boundary Brewery,
Portview Trade Centre. A5, 310
Newtownards Rd, Belfast BT4 1HE

Ticket Price: Free



Clinton Kirkpatrick presents artworks discussing interconnectedness, shared experience and what it means to belong in a changing, absurd world, full of systemic structures.

MEMBERSHIP — BEING AN ACCEPTED PART OF A GROUP OR STRUCTURE.

Date: 8th–15th of May

Time: M–F 9:00–18:00

Location: Belfast School of
Art Lobby, Ulster University,
York Street, Belfast BT15 1ED

Ticket Price: Free

Exhibition of Bbeyond members work. Bbeyond is a performance art organisation based in Belfast.



OUR BELONGINGS

Date: 8th – 31st May

Time: Launch 11:00. Rest of month:
M–F 9:00–17:00 Sat 9:00–16:00

Location: Enniskillen Library,
Halls Lane, Enniskillen

Ticket Price: Free

A collection of poetry by the clients at Action Mental Health Enniskillen.

PAREIDOLIA

Date: 1st–30th May

Time: M–Sat 9:30–17:00

Location: Strule Arts Centre,
Townhall square, Omagh
BT78 1BL

Ticket Price: Free

This solo mixed media exhibition plays with the phenomenon of pareidolia: the human tendency to seek meaning in drifting and elusive imagery.

QUEER COMMUNITY AND BELONGING IN BELFAST: COMMUNITY ART EXHIBITION

Date: 8th–15th of May

Time: M–F 10:30–5, Sat 11–5

Location: Happy Day Arts, Conway Mill (5–7 Conway St, Belfast, BT13 2DE)

Ticket Price: Free



Queer Belfast presents an exhibition of works by queer artists living and working in Belfast exploring the theme of 'Queer Community and Belonging in Belfast'

RECOVERY STREET FILM FESTIVAL SELECTION

Date: 8th – 15th May

Time: Any

Location: Online

Ticket Price: Free

Four films from last year's Recovery Street Film Festival—a festival that centres those with lived experience of substance use.

REFRAMING & RECONNECTING

Date: 30th April–23rd May

Time: Tues–F 10:00–16:00 & Saturday 10:00–13:00

Location: Sunburst Gallery, Ards Arts Centre, Town Hall, Conway Square, Newtownards, BT23 4NP

Ticket Price: Free Entry



Led by artist, researcher and designer Rachel Fitzpatrick, this exhibition presents a new site-specific installation co-created with Brain Injury Matters NI.

TRACES OF A TRAUMATIC FUTURE

Date: 2nd–20th of May

Time: T–F 11:00–17:00, Sat 11:00–16:00

Location: Golden Thread Gallery, 23–29 Queen St, Belfast BT1 6EA

Ticket Price: Free

Frederick Huska presents black-and-white analogue photographs of Taiwan's coastline, exploring landscapes shaped by political tension, memory, uncertainty, and imagined futures.



TRANSFORMED BY BELONGING

Date: 8th–15th of May

Time: 10:00–17:00

Location: 2 Royal Avenue, Belfast

Ticket Price: Free

Exhibition of Art is Collective member artists and invited guests. A group of artists that meet to support each other's practice and transform in the process.



Events

MOVING CANVAS

Time: 19:00–20:30

Location: Enniskillen Castle, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh, BT74 7HL

Ticket Price: www.enniskillencastle.co.uk/whats-on

Booking required; admission free

“Moving Canvas” is a film created by Noelle Mc Alinden on behalf of MHANI, showcasing artists reflecting upon their creative practice.

5TH
MAY

CHAT-TEA TRAIN

Time: 09:30

Location: Northwest Transport Hub, Derry–Londonderry BT47 6DH

Ticket Price: N/A

60+ Please bring bus pass to avail of free transport

The ‘Chat–Tea Train’ aims to provide opportunities for older people (60+ years) to chat, connect, and engage with others to reduce isolation and loneliness. Please contact your GP Practice Social Work team to register your interest, all welcome for a cuppa!

6TH
MAY

THE TESTAMENT OF ANN LEE

Time: 19:00

Location: Nerve Centre Cinema Magazine Street Derry–Londonderry BT486HJ

Ticket Price: £7 plus booking fee www.nervecentre.org

From award-winning writer–director Mona Fastvold comes the extraordinary true legend of Ann Lee, founder of the devotional sect known as the Shakers.

7TH
MAY

CREATE AND BE MINDFUL

Time: 11:30–13:00

Location: Spectrum Centre, 331–333 Shankill Road Belfast BT13 3AA

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

A drop in art class to encourage mindfulness through the act of being creative.



8TH
MAY

MINDFUL MAKING

Time: 11:30–13:00

Location: Golden Thread Gallery, 23–29 Queen St, Belfast BT1 6EA

Ticket Price: Free, book a free space through Eventbrite on goldenthreadgallery.co.uk

Take a moment to enjoy some mindful artmaking in the Hub inspired by the Sharon Kelly and Frédéric Huska exhibitions at the Golden Thread Gallery.



8TH
MAY

ACCIDENTAL COMEDY CLUB

8TH
MAY

Time: 19:00

Location: Accidental Theatre,
12-13 Shaftesbury Square,
Belfast, BT2 7DB

Ticket Price: £7 from
accidentaltheatre.co.uk



Gloriously Unhinged.
Ridiculously Funny. Brutally
Honest.

Welcome to Accidental's
Comedy Club — the monthly
meltdown of madness.

AYE YOUR MA: MOTHERHOOD WORKSHOP AND GROUP EXHIBITION

9TH
MAY

Time: Workshop 10:00-12:00,
Exhibition 14:00-19:00

Location: Pigment Space, 54
Sunnyside, Ormeau, Belfast BT7
3EX

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

Portrait workshop with local
artist Lauren Martin; exploring
identity, motherhood and
belonging. A group exhibition
showcasing local mother
artists exploring motherhood,
belonging and mental health.

FAILURES, FIASCOS, AND FINDING YOUR VOICE

9TH
MAY

Time: 11:00

Location: Seamus Heaney
Centre, 38-40 University Road,
Belfast, BT1 1NN

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

Taking inspiration from our
biggest fiascos, this poetry
workshop forms a safe
space to fail.

PICSTORY BELFAST: PORTRAITS OF US

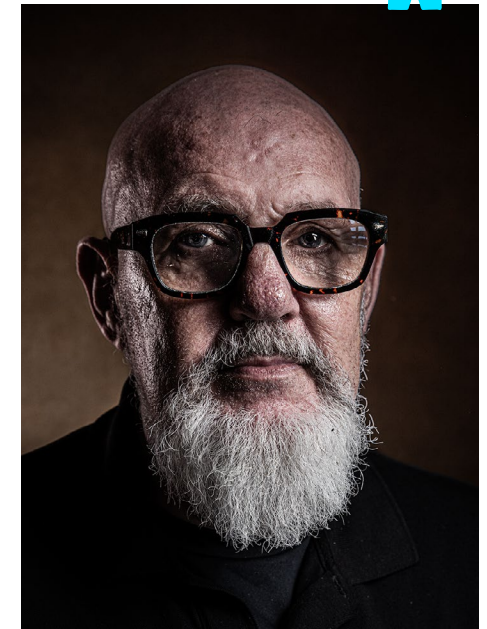
9TH
MAY

Time: 12:00-16:00

Location: 2 Royal Ave, Belfast,
BT1 1DA

Ticket Price: Free - Walk in or
pre-book

PicStory Belfast invites
people to share portraits
and personal stories, creating
meaningful connections,
amplifying lived experiences,
and supporting open
conversations around
identity, community,
belonging and mental
wellbeing.



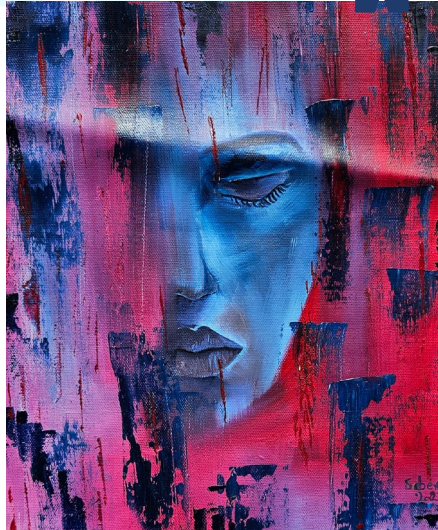
THE GIRL ON FIRE

9TH
MAY

Time: 14:00

Location: Seamus Heaney Centre, Belfast, 38-40 University Road, Belfast, BT7 1NN

Ticket Price: Donations via EventBrite



An immersive workshop creating words inspired by art produced by Women in Afghanistan and art inspired by stories and poems written by Women in Afghanistan

PUBLIC SPEAKING EVENT: BELONGING – A PLACE FOR EVERY VOICE

9TH
MAY

Time: 19:30

Location: Accidental Theatre, 12-13 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast BT2 7DB

Ticket Price: £5 cash payable on the day. 'Reserve your spot by contacting Will on thespudsgroup@gmail.com'



A two-hour inclusive public speaking event where anyone can deliver a five-minute speech, fostering belonging, confidence, communication skills, emotional resilience, and overall mental well-being.

THE ART OF CONVERSATION WITH PROF DAISY FANCOURT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

9TH
MAY

Time: 18:00. Viewable online 24/7 for the rest of the festival.

Location: Online

Ticket Price: N/A

Noelle Mc Alinden and Prof Daisy Fancourt discuss Art Cure, Fancourt's book based on compelling research about the power of arts on our mental wellbeing.

WHY AM I

10TH
MAY

Time: 10:00-11:30

Location: Studio 2 Youth & Community Arts Centre Units 2-3 Foyle Business Park, 4 Beraghmore Road, Derry-Londonderry BT48 8SE

Ticket Price: Free

This event will be an opportunity for an audience to view two stanzas of a challenging mental health play and subsequently interact with the author.

MINDFUL MORNING YOGA AND POEMS

10TH
MAY

Time: 12:30

Location: Black Mountain Shared Space, 280 Ballygomartin Rd, Belfast BT13 3NG

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

Join us for a mindful morning of yoga and poetry.

POEMS FOR PEACE AND BELONGING - POETRY READING AND Q&A

10TH
MAY

Time: 15:00

Location: Black Mountain Shared Space, 280 Ballygomartin Rd, Belfast BT13 3NG

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

Maureen Boyle and Deirdre Cartmill will read poems of belonging and connection to help you breathe and be still in a peaceful space.

SONGS FOR OUR COMMON GROUND

10TH
MAY

Time: 16:00

Location: Black Mountain Shared Space, 280 Ballygomartin Rd, Belfast BT13 3NG

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

A gentle singing workshop exploring belonging and mental wellbeing through beautiful harmonies—connecting voice, earth, and community in a supportive, uplifting space.

ART AND WELLBEING BELFAST'S STORYTELLING NIGHT: BELONGING IN VOICES

10TH
MAY

Time: 19:00–21:00

Location: Phin Vietnamese Coffee, 300 Ormeau Rd, Ormeau, Belfast BT7 2GE

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

An intimate evening celebrating personal stories of connection, identity, and community. Share, listen, and reflect in a safe, welcoming environment.



KITSUGI YOUR HEART

10TH
MAY

Time: 19:30

Location: Aeon Arts 46 Church Place Lurgan BT666HD

Ticket Price: £5

The exhibition will showcase the work of local artists such as Mark Magee, Arlene Marks, Ursula Leighton, and Dwyer MC Kerr. Kitsugi your heart.

TEXTILE CAFE

11TH
MAY

Time: 11:00

Location: The Duncairn, Duncairn Ave, Belfast BT14 6BP

Ticket Price: Free

All are welcome to this drop-in textile cafe, work on a collaborative community banner for mental health awareness or bring your own project!



MINDFUL APPROACHES TO PHOTOGRAPHY

11TH
MAY

Time: 13:00–15:30

Location: No.2 Royal Avenue, Belfast, BT1 1DA

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

This workshop will explore using photographic images to support the exciting world of photography and wellbeing.



A WELCOMING CIRCLE OF VOICES



Time: 18:30–21:30

Location: Belfast Room, Ulster Museum, Stranmillis Road, Botanic Gardens, Belfast, BT9 5AB

Ticket Price: Pay what you can



Explore sharing our different voices in a supportive circle of others to experience the new ways it can lead to fulfilment and wellbeing.

FINDING OUR WAY HOME



Time: 19:00–21:00

Location: Tearmann Éiriu 4 Whiterock Close, Belfast BT12 7RG

Ticket Price: Free – email sara@pprproject.org to reserve a place, numbers limited.



An evening of story, poetry and song about connection, belonging and the communities that hold us.

IN OUR OWN WORDS



Time: 12:00–14:00

Location: No.2 Royal Avenue, Belfast, BT1 1DA

Ticket Price: Pay what you can



Beyond Personality Differences Northern Ireland

Readings of prose and poetry by the writers, members of the charity BPD-NI; and Courtney, a poet with lived experience

MHANI POETRY CORNER



Time: 13:00–16:00

Location: The Black Box, 18–22 Hill St, Belfast BT1 2LA

Ticket Price: Pay what you can



Join us for an afternoon of poetry on mental health and belonging. A full list of participating poets is available on our website.

A CELEBRATION OF CREATIVITY, COURAGE, AND COMMUNITY - CREATIVE WRITING FOR AUTISTIC ADULTS

12TH
MAY

Time: 14:00–16:00

Location: Flowerfield Arts Centre, 185 Coleraine Rd, Portstewart BT55 7PL

Ticket Price: Free

Overview of creative writing classes for autistic adults in NHSCT area, and readings by some of the writers from a recently published book.



FESTIVAL SOUNDS: T4T B2B

12TH
MAY

Time: 19:00–21:00

Location: Catalyst Arts, 6 Joy's Entry, Belfast BT1 4DR

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

Festival Sounds is an intimate party designed to explore the connection between mind and movement hosted by T4T B2B. Find where you belong on the dancefloor.

STAND UP FOR MENTAL HEALTH: A COMEDY WORKSHOP WITH TORY GILLESPIE

12TH
MAY

Time: 11:00–14:00

Location: Book Bar, Accidental Theatre, 12–13 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast BT2 7DB

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

Tory Gillespie encourages adults to explore storytelling, silliness, and comedy to promote positive mental health.

NEW WORKS COMMISSIONS SHOWCASE

13TH
MAY

Time: 14:00–17:00

Location: The Lab, The MAC, 10 Exchange Street West, Belfast, BT1 2NJ

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

Join the Mental Health Arts Festival NI for an afternoon to showcase the artworks created for our New Works Commission.



MHANI X CCA DLD SEED LIBRARY

13TH
MAY

Time: 14:00–17:00

Location: Centre for Contemporary Art Derry–Londonderry, 10–12 Artillery Street, Derry–Londonderry, BT48 6RG, Northern Ireland

Ticket Price: Booking is essential for this free event. You can book your ticket via CCA's online shop <https://www.ccadld.org/shop>



Learn about the CCA DLD Seed Library, plant seeds, considering how seeds are a model of adaptability, being part of the environment to which they belong.

SEA OF GLASS - FILM SCREENING & Q&A

Time: 15:30

Location: Screen 2, Queen's Film Theatre, 20 University Square, Belfast BT7 1PA

Ticket Price: Free



13TH
MAY

Short film screening introduced by director Mervyn Marshall, followed by a Q&A with cast and crew.

UNSAFE ADVENTURES

Time: 19:30–20:30

Location: Accidental Theatre, 12–13 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast, BT2 7DB

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

Wife-and-husband poets and partners-in-rhyme Geraldine O'Kane and Colin Dardis explore a life of ADHD, autism, anxiety and other adventures together.

13TH
MAY

OPEN MIC NIGHT

Time: 19:30–23:00

Location: Black Box Green Room and Bar, 18–22 Hill Street, Belfast, BT1 2LA

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

A place for performers new and old to share their work and try something new.

13TH
MAY

PLEIN AIR OPEN DAY

Time: 10:00–13:00

Location: ISLAND Arts Centre, BT27 4RL, Lisburn

Ticket Price: Free, reserve a place at islandartscentre.com

Meet artist and tutor, Paul Jordan, for a relaxed and welcoming introduction to Plein Air Painting and Drawing at ISLAND Arts Centre.

14TH
MAY

ART IS COLLECTIVE DRAWING SESSION

Time: 10:30–14:00

Location: No.2 Royal Avenue, Belfast, BT1 1DA

Ticket Price:

Open drawing session with a weekly artist's group.

14TH
MAY

IN OUR OWN WORDS

Time: 12:00–14:00

Location: No.2 Royal Avenue, Belfast, BT1 1DA

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

Readings of prose and poetry by the writers, members of the charity BPD-NI; and Courtney, a poet with lived experience

14TH
MAY

VOICES WITH IMPACT: MENTAL HEALTH SHORT FILMS

Time: 15:00–17:00

Location: The Duncairn Arts Centre, Duncairn Ave, Belfast BT14 6BP

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

A screening of short films on the topic of mental health produced, funded and programmed by Voices With Impact.



14TH
MAY

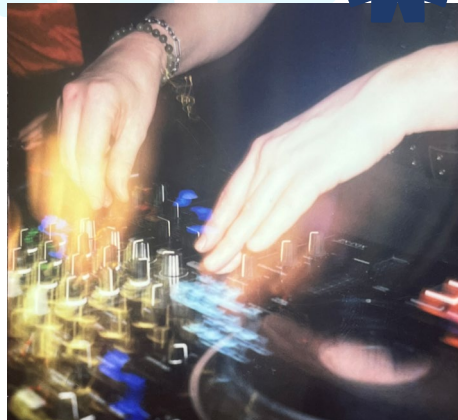
T4T B2B COMMUNITY MIX

Time: 18:00–23:00

Location: Oh Yeah Music Centre, 15–21 Gordon Street, Belfast

Ticket Price: Free

Free open decks night for Belfast's queer community | Zero-barrier DJ slots and a safer space to build confidence, creativity, and connection.



14TH
MAY

A DERRY QUEEN OPEN MIC - ADQOM

Time: 18:00–20:00

Location: The Playhouse, 5–7 Artillery Street, Derry–Londonderry, BT48 6RG

Ticket Price: Free Entry

LGBT+ open mic hosted by Isaac Quinn and Alex Cregan. All disciplines welcome, new voices encouraged.

14TH
MAY

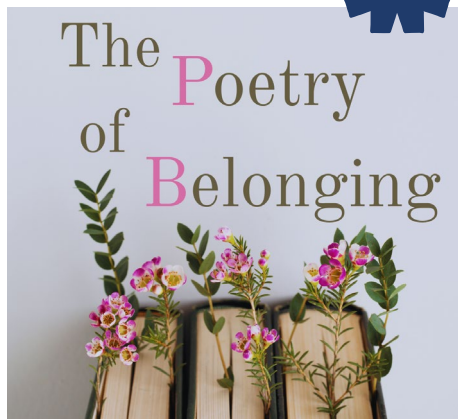
THE POETRY OF BELONGING WITH DR. SHELLEY TRACEY

Time: 19:00–21:00

Location: Zoom. Link will be emailed to those who book tickets.

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

This workshop is an introduction to poetry therapy. We will read and write poems about belonging and home and find out about poetry therapy.



13TH
MAY

FATHER MOTHER SISTER BROTHER

Time: 19:00

Location: Nerve Centre Cinema Magazine Street Derry–Londonderry BT486HJ

Ticket Price: £7 plus booking fee www.nervecentre.org

Father Mother Sister Brother is the new film from Jim Jarmusch. Funny and tender, this is an intimate exploration of the intricacies of family dynamics.

14TH
MAY

OPEN DECKS

Time: 19:00

Location: Black Box Green Room and Bar, 18–22 Hill Street, Belfast, BT1 2LA

Ticket Price: Free

Join us for a night of electronic music from early career and aspiring DJs and artists at The Black Box.

14TH
MAY

NEGOTIATING THE INDUSTRY

Time: 19:00

Location: Accidental Theatre, 12–13 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast, BT2 7DB

Ticket Price: £10

This one-off course is an introduction to equipping participants with practical knowledge and confidence to navigate fees, contracts, and working conditions within industry-standard and unionised environments.



14TH
MAY

LIT(ERATURE) TO THE TIT X WOMEN OF COLOUR BELFAST SPOKEN WORD NIGHT: BELONGING

14TH
MAY

Time: 19:30–20:30

Location: The Library Bar (Middle floor), The Watson Bar, 2–14 Little Donegall St, Belfast BT1 2JD

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

A spoken word open mic exploring belonging through poetry, story and shared experience, hosted by Lit to the Tit and Women of Colour Belfast.



ACCIDENTAL OPEN MIC NIGHT

14TH
MAY

Time: Doors: 20:00 Show: 20:30

Location: Accidental Theatre, 12–13 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast, BT2 7DB

Ticket Price: £2 to perform and Free entry for audience member book spaces at accidentaltheatre.co.uk

Ever wanted to give stand up a try?

Join comics trying out new material for the first time or acts making their debut in front of an audience.



GARDEN LIKE AN ARTIST

15TH
MAY

Time: 12:30–13:45

Location: The Duncairn, Duncairn Ave, Belfast BT14 6BP

Ticket Price: Pay what you can

Garden like no one is watching—make a statement with nature inspired by artists who garden.

SHARED GROUND: STORIES IN CLAY WITH CARRIE NEAL

14TH
MAY

Time: 11:00–13:00

Location: Walkway Community Centre, 1–9 Finvoy Street, Bloomfield, Belfast, BT5 5DH

Ticket Price: Free but registration required

Shared Ground: Stories in Clay is a calm, dementia-friendly workshop using simple clay making to encourage memory, storytelling, connection, and a shared sense of belonging.



MINDFUL MAKING

15TH
MAY

Time: 11:30–13:00

Location: Golden Thread Gallery, 23–29 Queen St, Belfast BT1 6EA

Ticket Price: Free, book a free space through Eventbrite on goldenthreadgallery.co.uk

Take a moment to enjoy some mindful artmaking in the Hub inspired by the Sharon Kelly and Frédéric Huska exhibitions at the Golden Thread Gallery.

IN GOOD COMPANY

Time: 19:00–21:00

Location: YouthAction NI 14
College Square North Belfast,
BT1 6AS

Ticket Price: Flexible/Pay What
You Can (PWYC) Eventbrite

In Good Company is an open
mic night for young people to
perform anything including
(but not limited to): song,
poetry and stand-up!



15TH
MAY

CHAOTIC SOUL: BOOK LAUNCH, FILM SCREENING, AND Q&A

Time: 15:00

Location: Craic Theatre
Coalisland, 51 Dungannon Rd,
Coalisland BT71 4HP

Ticket Price: Free admission,
donations welcome

Casey-Jade Campbell
celebrates her first published
collection of poems Chaotic
Soul—more than a collection
of poems—followed by A
Film Screening and Q&A with
MHANI co-chair Noelle Mc
Alinden.



14TH
MAY

TAI CHI PAINTING WORKSHOPS

Date: 20th, 27th May & 3rd, 10th
June

Time: 19:00–21:00

Location: Millennium Court,
5–7 William Street, Portadown,
Craigavon, BT62 3NX

Ticket Price: £30 Eventbrite or
Millennium Court Reception

Join Paul King for these
sessions to learn the
traditional tai chi and ink
painting techniques.

15TH
MAY

PICSTORY BELFAST: PORTRAITS OF US

Time: 12:00–16:00

Location: 2 Royal Ave, Belfast BT1
1DA

Ticket Price: Free – Walk in or
pre-book.

PicStory Belfast invites
people to share portraits
and personal stories,
creating meaningful
connections, amplifying lived
experiences, and supporting
open conversations around
identity, community,
belonging and mental
wellbeing.

23RD
MAY

GETTING

Getting Support:

Poor mental health can impact everyone, it is important to know that you are not alone. There are various support services available.

Normally your GP should be the first point of contact if you have concerns about your mental health that won't go away – or if you have thoughts about suicide.

You can call the NHS on 111 and speak to their mental health team, this is available 24 hours.

You may prefer to seek other support.

Lifeline



0808 808 800 | lifelinehelpline.info

Northern Ireland's 24/7 crisis response helpline. Translators available, and options for BSL/ISL users.

Childline



0800 1111 | childline.org.uk

A free, confidential, 24/7 helpline for anyone under the age of 19. Also available by email and webchat.

Samaritans



116 123 | samaritans.org

Samaritans offer a variety of free ways to talk to someone about your concerns. This includes phone number, email, mail, and in-person.

The Rainbow Project

rainbow-project.org

Offers support to LGBTQ+ people in Northern Ireland, including short-term LGBTQ+ affirming therapy, training, information and advocacy on a wide range of issues.



Helplines Network NI



helplinesni.com

Easy-to-use website with a network of 30-different helplines.



MENTAL HEALTH ARTS NI MINDSET FESTIVAL

MHANI.ORG

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