

**Key Notes**

- 1. The Sound of Music was directed by Robert Alton, produced by Robert Alton and John H. Johnson.
- 2. A young nun, Maria, is sent to a remote mountain town to teach the children of a widowed family.
- 3. Children in Austria love the music, and Maria, in turn, teaches them to love it.
- 4. A young man, Captain von Trapp, is the father of the children.
- 5. The von Trapps are a family of seven children and their mother, Mrs. von Trapp.
- 6. The children are named: Kurt, Maria, Gretl, Liesl, Fredrick, Brigitta, and Rolf.
- 7. The film is based on the book 'The Sound of Music' by Maria von Trapp.
- 8. The film was released in 1965 and was a major success.
- 9. The film is a musical and is one of the most successful musicals of all time.
- 10. The film is a classic and is still loved by many people.



**THE ARTS COUNCIL AND EDUCATION 1979-1989**



THE ARTS COUNCIL AND EDUCATION  
1979-1989

THE ARTS COUNCIL  
**1979**  
**1989**  
TEN YEARS IN  
EDUCATION

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## FOREWORD

The Arts and Education are two important points of reference for reflection upon the culture of any country. There have been times in this country when the Irish tradition of learning and scholarship fed the practice of the arts and was in turn watered by the influence of music, literature and the visual arts. More recently however, the welcome democratisation of education through compulsory schooling has brought in its wake certain social and economic expectations of the schooling system that are inappropriate to the aims of a general education of young people.

One of the important casualties of such pressures upon formal education are the arts. Lack of understanding of the true nature of artistic intelligence has led to a conception of the arts as trivial or merely recreational, with a certain unspecified contribution to make in the area of affective learning. The dominant academic tradition in Irish schools sought to purge itself of such unreliable matter and this process has been accelerated by the new tradition which orients itself by word and number in the new languages and technologies of our age.

The Arts Council believes that such an orientation, if pursued exclusively, is bad for education and bad for the arts. In short it is bad for our culture. Since 1979 the Council has sought, in a variety of ways, to intervene in the domain of education so as to heal the fractured dialogue between the twin worlds of the arts and education. This present report records and celebrates ten years of the dialogue promoted and supported by the Arts Council.

The Arts Council would be failing in its duty to promote an understanding and practice of the arts if it did not underline its conviction that the continued neglect of the arts within the Irish education system represents a cultural dysfunction of significant proportions.

Colm Ó hEocha  
*Chairman, The Arts Council*

# RÉAMHRÁ

Dhá théama thábhachtacha is iad na hEalaíona agus Oideachas agus tú ag machnamh ar chultúr aon tír ar bith. I stair na tíre seo, bhí seal ann nuair a chothaigh na dána agus an léann dúchais na healaíona beo agus, ar an lámh eile, bhí tionchar tairbheach ag na healaíona seo — idir cheol, litríocht agus na healaíona rosc — ar an léann féin. Níos déanaí áfach, ón am ar cuireadh oideachas ar fáil gan bhac agus go forleathan don phobal uilig le bunú córas oideachais éigeantach, bíonn a lán daoine ag dúil le buntáistí eacnamaíocha nó sóisialta nach dual go fírinneach d'oideachas agus oiliúint daoine óga.

Nuair a chuirtear a leithéid seo de bhrú neamhfhoirsteanach ar an chóras oideachais, déantar dochar nach beag do stadas agus do chothú na n-ealaíon. Nuair nach dtuigeann daoine cad tá i gceist le 'healaíon' nó le 'spreagadh ealaíonta', chítear na healaíona mar rudaí gan luach nó mar chaitheamh aimsire nach féidir leo ach tionchar an-bheag a bheith acu ar an dóigh a dtugtar oideachas do dhaoine. Nuair a tháinig traidisiún acadúil i réim i scoileanna na tíre seo, rinneadh iarracht na healaíona — rudaí nach fiú móran, nach féidir cabhrú leat 'dul ar aghaidh', dar leis an traidisiún sin — a dhíbriú ón chóras ar mhaithe leis féin.

An bhrú seo ar na healaíona, tá sí ag méadú le blianta beaga anuas le cabhair ó thraidisiún agus dearcadh nua atá ag brath ar chóras nua cumarsaide agus teicneolaíochta na linne seo.

Creideann an Chomhairle Ealaíon, go bhfuil an dearcadh caol seo dochrach ann féin agus gur mó an t-olc agus díobháil ná an maith agus tairbhe a dhéanfaidh sé don léann agus do na healaíona. Leis an fhírinne lom a rá, déanann sé dochar don chultúr s'againne. Ón bhliain 1979 amach, tá an Chomhairle Ealaíon ag iarraidh, ar bhealaí éagsúla, a ladar a chur isteach sa chóras oideachais le deireadh a chur leis an deighilt dochrach seo idir na healaíona agus an t-oideachas. Tá an tuairisc seo á cur os comhar an phobail le saothar deich mbliain — tréimhse inar tosaíodh agus cothaíodh agallamh torthúil — a cheiliúradh. Bheadh an Chomhairle Ealaíon ag déanamh fáillí ina cuid dualgas le cleachtadh agus tuiscint na n-ealaíon a chur chun cinn mura nochtódh sí go poiblí a tuairim laidir gur cúis inní di go fóill go bhfuil ár gcultúr féin á truailliú tríd an fhaillí bhuan agus scanallach a dhéantar ins na healaíona sa chóras oideachais in Éirinn.

Colm Ó hEocha  
*Cathaoirleach, An Chomhairle Ealaíon*

## THE ARTS COUNCIL AND EDUCATION 1979-1989

In September 1979 the Arts Council published its Annual Report for the previous year and declared that "the arts in education will be a major concern of the Council in future years". That commitment arose from the publication, earlier in 1979, of *The Place of the Arts in Irish Education*, a report which ran to 176 pages and which included 119 recommendations for action by the Arts Council and by education authorities, national and local. The Benson report, as it is known, remains the most important survey of this area of Irish education. Regrettably it also remains a "live" document in terms of the large number of recommendations which wait to be addressed by education authorities.

It is worthwhile noting that the seeds of present Arts Council policy were sown at the June 1976 meeting of the Council. The minutes of that meeting record that:

*A discussion took place as to the extent to which the Arts Council should be involved in the education process, at all levels.*

That discussion arose in the context of a policy meeting called to address the findings of J. M. Richards in his significant report *Provision For The Arts* (1976). Among the principal recommendations of the Richards report are:

*Arts education in schools should be further developed and more courses in arts subjects provided to examination level, especially in boys' schools (6.4) ... The place of the arts in education, however, should not be regarded as mainly concerned with training practitioners but with promoting understanding and enjoyment of the arts among all Irish people (6.14). (Provision For The Arts, page 99).*

In discussing the Richards report and its implications for the Arts Council's role in education, certain members are recorded as stating "that the only feasible role which the Council could play was a recommendatory one ..." *Ab initio* then there was a tension between the significance of the issue being addressed and the huge scale of the task constituted by seeking to influence directly the formal education system.

The eventual outcome of these discussions was the decision to establish a Working Party on the issue of education and, with the assistance of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Ciaran Benson was employed by the Arts Council as its first education officer to research and write a report on the place of the arts in Irish education. The membership of the Working Party reflected the ethos of dialogue between the worlds of the arts and education which it was intended to promote from the start. Representatives of the Department of Education, and of the world of education generally, deliberated with distinguished artists like Seamus Heaney, Brian Boydell, Joe Dowling and Alice Hanratty under the Chairmanship of writer and academic Sean Ó Tuama.

The Benson report, published in 1979, outlined a role that was more active than the recommendatory one favoured by certain members in 1976. Accordingly, with the approval of Government, the Arts Council appointed a full-time education officer in mid-1979 and the next five years saw the Council engage in a range of activities and discussions directed at implementing the recommendations of the Benson report. That work was reviewed during 1985 and a revised education policy has been implemented since then. Thus the present report records the Arts Council's work in education in the period 1979-1989.

**The work of the Council in schools, through its direct initiatives and schemes as well as its indirect influence through financial support for various arts-in-schools groups or organisations, is better known than its more low-profile advocacy of arts education through submissions, reports, and membership of key committees. It should be emphasised however that, since 1979, the Arts Council has paid a great deal of attention to Recommendation 44 of the Benson report:**

*The Arts Council should monitor educational policy; establish a right of comment on matters relevant to the arts; seek representation for the arts on any advisory or other committee whose recommendations may influence the development of the arts in education.*

**The Arts Council has exercised its right of comment regularly in the past ten years. Often its criticisms have been rejected, and indeed deeply resented, by education authorities. Often too, the Council has been accused of being unnecessarily negative. The response of the Arts Council is that to describe a negative state in any realm of life is not to be negative but to be accurate. The Council acknowledges — and seeks to support — those schools and teachers where there are very real achievements in arts education. But an education system which *allows* such achievements is not the same thing as one which *provides* for them. The fact that a national youth theatre, orchestra or choir exists or that an individual child has lessons in art, dance or music may be a matter of privilege created by parental income, geographical location or fortunate educational opportunity. An educational system, properly speaking, should not depend on such variable factors.**

**The interest and enthusiasm of individual inspectors, principals, teachers and parents are acknowledged by the Arts Council and have been factors critical to the implementation of the Arts Council's education policy. Nonetheless, to paraphrase the Arts Council's report on music education *Deaf Ears?* (1985), enthusiasm is not enough. Our mathematical education does not depend on enthusiasm alone. At all stages of the education system, the arts require and deserve the same attention in terms of time, resources, staffing and syllabus design as do languages, the sciences, history and geography. We cannot profess the educational centrality of the arts and then betray that profession in our provision and practice. We must either change our practice so that it accords with statements of policy or else concede that the arts are not an educational priority and then be prepared to justify that stance.**

**It is important to record that in 1986, when the Arts Council organised a programme of nineteen public meetings throughout the country, as part of its consultative process to inform its submission to Government at a time when a White Paper on the arts was being prepared, the issue of greatest concern to those attending was the neglect of the arts education of their children. As the statutory body on the arts, with a duty to advise Government on artistic matters, the Arts Council included in its submission the following statements:**

*There are four policy areas which the Council considers of prime importance. These are the areas of arts education, community arts, regional arts and arts centres ... We have urged recognition of the importance of art for the community and the individual. This recognition must be followed by an acknowledgement of the fact that art cannot flourish in an atmosphere of ignorance. The Arts Council is deeply concerned at the lack of attention paid to the arts in our education system ... In this submission the Arts Council once again urges government to recognise the urgent necessity for a radical new policy on the arts in education. (Unpublished Arts Council Submission to White Paper, 1986.)*

**When published in January 1987 the White Paper on Cultural Policy acknowledged the**

four areas identified by the Arts Council as critical to the development of the arts. Furthermore it acknowledged the "relatively low standing" of arts subjects within the formal school curriculum and underlined the point that "the education system holds the key to future cultural and artistic development in Ireland". (*Access and Opportunity*, page 51.)

The White Paper alluded to the crucial role of the Curriculum and Examinations Board and stated that "The Government looks to the Curriculum and Examinations Board to provide leadership in this field and to bring about the changes in our educational system at primary and secondary level necessary for the implementation of this cultural policy". (Ibid. page 52.)

In its 1987 Annual Report the Arts Council recorded its disappointment that the Curriculum and Examinations Board "was not established on a statutory basis and it regards this as detrimental to the development of the arts in the curriculum of our schools". Three years later there is little evidence to suggest that the new advisory National Council for Curriculum and Assessment is taking its "crucial role" in developing cultural policy very seriously. The acknowledged neglect of the arts in education continues.

Five years after the Benson report, the Arts Council conducted a detailed review of its education policy and a revised policy was agreed in September 1985. It distinguishes between *arts-in-education* activities, i.e. initiatives in which the artistic community and school community are brought closer together in a range of programmes, and *arts education* which is concerned with the ongoing artistic and aesthetic education of the young person. While remaining committed to the former, the Council also recognises that no intervention by professional artists, however high its quality, can remove the need for all young people to have a carefully structured and enriching arts education as a central part of their school experience. In such a situation it is the work of the teacher, and not of the artist, that emerges as a priority. Such an emphasis has altered the Council's own policy, as well as making more urgent its advocacy to the Department of Education of the need for teachers to be better supported through improved provision in pre-service and in-service education. The need for specialist resources, both human and material, particularly in the primary sector, is urgent.

The Arts Council's concern about arts education is not narrow or self-interested. It is not motivated by a "get them while they're young" attitude. Rather it is the Council's contention that *the arts are forms of intelligence, ways of knowing the human condition and repositories of human experience symbolised in word, sound, movement and image*. To neglect the arts at school is quite simply to ignore a significant and distinctive domain of human thought and feeling. Put simply, the neglect of the arts is the promotion of ignorance.

The Arts Council took heart from the movement to reform the curriculum begun in 1984 under the auspices of the Curriculum and Examinations Board, now reconstituted as the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. Indeed the Arts Council made four separate written submissions on the arts to that body and was represented on both the Working Party on the Arts and subsequently on the Arts Board of Studies. The Arts Council's present education officer and its former officer, Ciaran Benson, wrote the rationale for arts education which underpins all of that work. It is a matter of regret that the promise of 1984 has not been sustained. The Arts Council records its alarm at the dominance of restrictive notions of relevance and achievement in the thinking and language which is informing present decision-making about the curriculum.

It is impossible to deny the importance of an education in science and technology and

**in European languages but false oppositions between the sciences and the humanities are being established and, as a consequence, choices are being offered to young people which are educationally false and which are also inappropriate to the aims and objectives of a general education. In 1984, in its first submission to the Curriculum and Examinations Board, the Arts Council anticipated this issue of false oppositions and choices:**

*Resistance to the arts in education often takes the form of stating that there are already too many subjects on the school timetable. What is needed now is a quantitative decision based upon a qualitative evaluation. We are not advocating, for example, replacing "French" by "Music", for that would only be to state the problem differently, not solve it. French and Music are not educationally interchangeable. Perhaps though, particularly at junior-cycle second-level, there is a way in which we could teach less French than we do and more Music than we do, because it is agreed that the educational loss sustained by having no Music cannot be made up by having more French.*

**The Arts Council is glad to note the increased attention accorded to the arts by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment in its documentation. It is significant that the reports of both the Working Party and the Board of Studies on the arts were published. However, without a political decision to make available many new teachers of the arts at second-level, to undertake significant in-service education of primary teachers and to establish an advisory and resource service on a regional basis, all that can happen will be changes to the existing syllabi. Curriculum reform is a far more wide-ranging issue than syllabus change and the depressing prospect for the future is that arts education will remain poorly regarded and poorly provided for in Irish schools.**

**In many countries there is a long tradition of symbiosis between the worlds of culture and of education. This tradition achieves formal recognition in the charging of many ministries of education with responsibility for matters of arts and culture. Neither in institutional terms, nor in terms of policy and practice, is this true of Ireland. It is important to understand how this leads to the cultural dysfunction referred to in the last sentence of the Foreword to the present report. Some of the most exciting work in arts education has emerged from the world of the arts which has sought to intervene in the world of formal education but has often found that world, in its structure and practice, to be inimical to the very source of development and experiment which it should embrace.**

**Formal schooling, on the other hand, has an almost total monopoly of the human, material and financial resources available to education. Those resources have never been made available in significant amounts to the domain of arts education. Indeed when formal education does provide for the arts it has tended to embrace a definition of the arts that is circumscribed and conservative. The curriculum has consisted of syllabus content which is obsessed with enduring human values and romantic conceptions of art mediated in a pedagogic mode which favours passive reception.**

**It is time not alone for the arts to have a more central role in education but also for the arts curriculum to be renegotiated to reflect contemporary arts practice and contemporary understandings of arts education. If formal schooling persists in neglecting the arts or in distorting the liberating nature of artistic experience, then it is legitimate to insist that out-of-school experiences must be created in which young people can explore the arts in a mode which acknowledges, rather than neglects, the particular qualities of artistic intelligence and experience.**

**Indeed there is a remarkable irony in the fact that the relative neglect of the arts within orthodox schooling contrasts with a growing interest in arts-based courses within the alternative curricula of Vocational Preparation and Training**

Programmes and of Post-Leaving Certificate courses. Courses in the visual arts, theatre studies, dance and drama and rock music are now available and there is increasing demand for, and increasing provision of, a kind of education which acknowledges the cultural world inhabited by young people today. The acknowledgement is serious and rigorous. It is not an act of uncritical abasement.

In the staffing, curriculum content and outreach work of these courses the resonating influences are found outside in the cultural practice of the real world rather than internally within formal education. In this context the most interesting development to watch in the coming decade may well be the growth of the young arts movement which in its out- of-school education model may be more open to the kinds of discourses and structures which are the pre-requisites for good (arts) education.

To date the education policy and practice of the Arts Council has concentrated upon schools. However, the Council is increasingly aware of the complementary (not alternative) tradition of out-of-school arts education. Indeed the Council's experimental project ACE (Arts Community Education), established on a joint basis with the Gulbenkian Foundation, has already underlined the significance of this new sector and will probably devote further attention to it in its final report to the Arts Council, due to be published before the end of 1989.

In the meantime, and in the domain of school-based arts-in-education, there is much to be celebrated. Never before have so many schools had arts days, arts weeks or arts festivals. Never before have so many artists, musicians, writers, actors and dancers been involved in making work for and with young people and in visiting schools for short and long stays to discuss their work and share their skills. Such work should not be justified in terms of "building the audiences of the future". That is an outmoded conception, which has more to do with marketing than with education. The excitement of this new movement lies in the amount of writing, performing and image-making that is now being done which acknowledges the *present wholeness* of the ten-year old or the fifteen-year old rather than conceiving of him or her as an embryonic adult for whom concessions must be made.

The Arts Council is proud of its role in stimulating and providing much of what is excellent in the arts-in-education movement. However the crucial partners in the dialogue are the artists and the schools. This report, and the special exhibition organised in conjunction with it, are a testimony to the commitment and imagination of schools and artists in the past decade. This report is also intended as a challenge to all concerned to develop this dialogue in the years to come.

**Martin Drury**  
*Education Officer, The Arts Council*

September 1989



Photo: Michael Foley.

*The tenants confront the bailiff and the landlord's daughter in Two Houses, a theatre-in-education play by John McArdle in collaboration with TEAM Theatre Company. The mural in the background was painted under the Arts Council's Murals-in-Schools Scheme.*

# DRAMA

## **THEATRE-IN-EDUCATION**

Theatre-in-Education (TIE) accounts for over one-third of Arts Council expenditure in the area of education. The Council made available a sum of £600 to TEAM Educational Theatre in 1975 and has funded the company since then, with the level of grant-aid rising to £95,000 in 1989. TEAM tours widely in some ten counties playing in both primary and post-primary schools and has developed a high reputation at home and abroad, particularly for its policy of fostering new writing for young people.

TEAM pioneered the development of a working model of TIE in Ireland which has won equal respect from both the theatre and education professions. The concept of a TIE programme (specially written performance, complementary workshop and accompanying resource material for teachers) was developed painstakingly over many years and the recent development of a schools liaison service emphasises the company's commitment to serving the needs of schools. Unlike other countries where the funding of TIE is shared between arts and education authorities, the Department of Education here has steadfastly refused to offer financial assistance to either of the two Irish TIE companies.

Graffiti, the Cork-based TIE company, serves the Munster and South Leinster regions and has been in receipt of direct grant-aid from the Arts Council since 1987 after a period when it operated under the auspices of Cork Theatre Company. The company sees itself as addressing a range of objectives in the area of drama and young people with TIE as only one aspect of that broad approach.

## **YOUTH DRAMA**

The National Association for Youth Drama is the umbrella organisation for youth drama and youth theatre in Ireland. It is the parent body for the National Youth Theatre and it also runs a national youth drama festival and a range of courses for young people, teachers and youth workers. NAYD also receives financial assistance from the Department of Education.

## **DRAMA-IN-EDUCATION**

In recent years Thomond College of Education has become a key institution in the development of drama-in-education and has established a post-graduate diploma in drama, approved by the NCEA and with some financial support from the Arts Council. It is worth recording that a critical stimulus in this process was the award of a post-graduate scholarship by the Arts Council to a lecturer in English and Drama at Thomond to allow him study in London prior to returning to Limerick to establish a course there. Since 1987 Thomond has been the venue for the National Conference on Drama in Education, supported by the Arts Council, the College and by the Department of Education.

### *Note 1: Other Companies*

*Not included in this section are Theatre Omnibus, Wet Paint, Dublin Youth Theatre, Pooka Theatre for Children, all of whose work is/was educational or has/had a direct contact with young people in and out of school. Funding for these companies comes! came from the Community Arts or the Drama budget of the Arts Council.*

### *Note 2: Other Expenditure*

*Expenditure in drama education is also represented in the sections dealing with Artists-in-Residence (page 27) and Professional Development (pages 30-31).*



Photo: Michael Foley.

*Barefoot Dance Company working in a primary school in Wexford. The company tours widely to schools in the south-east.*

# DANCE

Since 1985, when it published the Brinson report **The Dancer and the Dance**, the Arts Council has devoted a great deal of attention to the twin issues of dance education and dance-in-education. The focus for much of that work has been Thomond College of Education where second-level teachers of PE and Dance are trained.

## DANCE-IN-EDUCATION

The Arts Council supports the position of dance artist in residence in partnership with Thomond College and with Mary Immaculate College of Education, Limerick. See section on Artists-in-Residence (page 27). This development evolved into the formation of a small dance-in-education company at Thomond and this company, called Daghda, is in receipt of Council grant-aid since 1988. The company's work is directed at schools, particularly in the Mid-West region, as well as at developing the experience of dance performance among students of Thomond College and Mary Immaculate College. The concept of a significant arts resource housed within and hosted by a College of Education is of particular interest to the Arts Council.

## DANCE EDUCATION

The Arts Council has also supported the research and development necessary to the establishment at Thomond College of a post-graduate diploma, and possibly an undergraduate degree, in dance education. This is analogous to the support given by the Council in 1981 to a similar development in drama which is discussed on page 15.

Another key organisation in this developmental area is the Dance Council and, in particular, its curriculum development project in second-level dance education funded jointly by the Arts Council and the Department of Education and described in more detail on page 29. The Dance Council's Youth Dance Festival and National Youth Dance Company have also received considerable financial support from the Arts Council in 1989 and the partnership between the Dance Council and the Irish International Folk Dance Academy of Ireland in the area of youth dance is particularly welcome.

## BAREFOOT

For ten years Barefoot Dance Company has been working in Wexford and the South-East region. The company's work has been in the related areas of community dance, youth dance and dance-in-education and it has also played a pivotal role in the annual Movement Month at Wexford Arts Centre.

### *Note 1: Training*

*The Arts Council expends significant resources (£20,000 in 1989) on the training of young dancers but regards this as expenditure directed at the professional development of young dance artists and does not include it within its education budget or policy per se. The nature of dance — and in particular its demands in the area of technique — require Council intervention from an age (16 years) when the dancers may still be at school but at a point when they have developed to need the concentrated and high-level training not generally available in Ireland.*

### *Note 2: Other Expenditure*

*Expenditure in dance education is also represented in the sections dealing with Arts Education Curriculum Development Projects (page 29) and Professional Development (pages 30-31).*



Photo: Anne Smyth.

*The composer, Seirse Bodley working with professional musicians and with students on his 'The Fiddler', specially created for the series of music workshops organised by the Music Association of Ireland.*

# MUSIC

## **CONCERTS AND RECITALS FOR SCHOOLS**

The Arts Council supports the work of two organisations dedicated to providing opportunities for young people to hear live performances of music. Ceol Chumann na nÓg, founded in 1951, has been funded by the Arts Council since 1953. This organisation, in cooperation with RTE, arranges concerts by the RTE Symphony and Concert Orchestras. Normally these concerts are given in the National Concert Hall and schools come from all over the country. A limited service of illustrated talks on the orchestra and the concert programme is available to schools in the weeks before the concerts.

The Music Association of Ireland's work is now heavily concentrated in the area of its service to schools. A regular programme of visits to schools by individual musicians, duos and chamber groups has been augmented in recent years by a more intensive workshop service built around original compositions which allow for collaboration between professional musicians and school choirs or orchestras.

## **CHORAL MUSIC**

There is indirect but significant support for music education from the Arts Council's Music budget by virtue of its support (£32,000 in 1989) for the Association of Irish Choirs/Cumann Náisiúnta na gCór. CNC which is based in Cork has a wide-ranging programme of services, some of which are intended specifically to support the work of primary and post-primary teachers. Services include advice on repertoire, publication of scores directly related to the curriculum, general conducting courses, and specific courses and workshops for teachers in the organising and conducting of choirs. CNC has also a specific curriculum development project in music at primary level which does receive direct funding from the Arts Council's education budget (see page 30).

## **TRADITIONAL MUSIC**

Since 1979 the Arts Council has pursued a policy which encourages and supports a range of initiatives, projects and programmes which aim to promote the appreciation and practice of traditional music, both within the formal education system and outside it. While activities which take place outside the education system — summer schools, education programmes run by music organisations, workshops, seminars, masterclasses — are relatively easy to administer and supervise, their availability to all young people depends to a great extent on the circumstances of privilege referred to on page 10 of the introduction to this report.

To provide all school children with equal opportunities to learn about and experience traditional music in the classroom is more difficult and demands an approach which takes account of the basic needs of teachers and pupils as well as the exigencies of the curriculum, and which can be incorporated into the normal daily routine in the classroom. From its involvement in a range of schemes — visits to schools in Dublin by traditional musicians in 1980-81; Ceol an Chlair, subsequently known as The Music Experience (1983-87) and Ceol an Iarthair (1985) which presented traditional music both in a local context and in relation to other forms of contemporary music — the Arts Council identified the need for developing a structured approach to introducing traditional music in the classroom which went beyond occasional visits/recitals by musicians.

In 1987-88 the Arts Council funded a

project in St. Oliver Plunkett's School, Malahide, Co. Dublin which sought to establish a model for introducing traditional music in the primary curriculum which could be used effectively by teachers who had little or no experience of this or any other music and which presented traditional music in terms easily understood by children, by using examples from other forms of modern music and by using modern technology, especially video. Following on the success of this project the "Music Awareness Agency" was formed and ran an Arts Council funded pilot scheme in sixteen schools with the aim of identifying specific resources (written, audio/visual) which should be made widely available to primary teachers. At the moment, the Arts Council is considering the results of the various pilot schemes and will most likely decide its approach to traditional music in primary schools before the end of 1989 after discussions with relevant organisations such as the Music Awareness Agency and the Irish Traditional Music Archive.

*Note 1: Training*

*The remarks concerning dance training (see page 17) are applicable equally in the area of music, though obviously there is a much more developed infrastructure of education and training in music than that which obtains in dance. Again within the context of the professional development of young musicians, singers and composers rather than as part of its education policy and budget, the Arts Council expends significant resources on an annual basis (£25,000 in 1989), in awards to young people wishing to travel abroad for high-level training.*

*Note 2: Other Expenditure*

*Expenditure in music education is also represented in the sections dealing with Artists-in-Residence (page 27), Arts Education Curriculum Development Projects (page 29), Professional Development (pages 30-31) and Advocacy (page 32).*

## VISUAL ARTS

Unlike the performance arts of drama, dance and music which, by their nature, are organised in terms of companies and collectives, the visual arts and literature operate in a manner which reflects the individualist pursuit of the artist or writer. Accordingly the role of the Arts Council in these disciplines is to intervene with policies which are directed at building relationships between artists and schools. A range of programmes and schemes has been developed and promoted by the Arts Council to construct a process of dialogue between artists and schools.

Present policy ranges from the basic provision of slide packs of contemporary art, specially chosen for second-level students, to the artist-in-residence-in-schools scheme which is availed of by visual artists mostly and which allows for a contact which is both intensive and extensive between artist, young people and teachers in a collaborative project of their own design. The residency programme, which is discussed more fully in a separate section later, emerged from the programme of murals-in-schools piloted in 1979/80 and which then operated for five years throughout the country. In that time approximately 300 murals were painted by professional artists in primary schools all over Ireland.

### **SLIDE-HIRE SERVICE**

The Arts Council designs slide packs of contemporary Irish art on a thematic or generic basis and makes them available for hire to schools. The existing range includes packs on Irish Stained Glass; Public Sculpture; Landscape Painting; Irish Women Artists; ROSC '88 and themes covered include school, the nuclear bomb and the Northern Ireland conflict. One or two new packs are added each year and each pack includes approximately two dozen slides accompanied by specially prepared notes.

### **ARTISTS-IN-SCHOOLS**

In partnership with certain galleries and local authorities the Arts Council provides a service to second-level schools whereby visual artists are available to visit schools to discuss and demonstrate their work with groups of students. First piloted in Dublin in 1986 this scheme has now grown to serve schools in Dublin, Dundalk, Limerick, County Kerry, County Donegal, County Laois, County Clare. It is hoped to extend the scheme more widely in the coming years.

### **EXHIBITIONS FOR SCHOOLS**

The first phase of this aspect of its education policy was undertaken by the Arts Council in 1980 when it introduced a Prints-in-Schools programme in association with a number of County Libraries. Four different exhibitions of twelve prints each were made available, accompanied by a catalogue designed to inform about printmaking generally and about the particular prints in the exhibitions and their makers. Sets of these prints are now available to schools served by the County Libraries in Carlow, Clare, Donegal, Kerry, Kildare, Kilkenny, Leitrim, Mayo, Offaly, Sligo and Tipperary.

In 1986, as one outcome of the 1985 review of its education policy, the Arts Council introduced a new programme of specially commissioned exhibitions for second-level schools. The intention here was to establish a series of shows which in their thematic focus, their presentation and their touring availability, would address the need for young people to have access to contemporary Irish art and indeed the complementary need for artists to have access to a young public.

The shows in the series so far are **The School Show** (1986), twenty artists on the theme of school and education; **HEROES** (1987), sixteen artists on heroism and the heroic; **HEADS** (1988), seven sculptors on the theme of the human head; and **A Special Place** (1989), twelve artists on their relationships with particular places. Each exhibition spends a year in a county and visits a school for a two-week period. Thus since 1986 each year has seen another exhibition added to the series and another county to the list of those served. In 1989/ 90, for example. **The School Show** will visit schools in Co. Longford, **HEROES** will visit Co. Kerry, **HEADS** will tour Co. Westmeath, and **A Special Place** will be in second-level schools in Co. Monaghan, the fourth exhibition to visit schools in that county since 1986.

#### **JOINT PURCHASE**

The Arts Council has a modest annual budget within its overall allocation for the visual arts by which it helps public bodies, including schools, to purchase works of contemporary Irish art. Subject to Council approval of the work it is possible for a school to pay only 50% of the price with the balance being met by the Arts Council. Many schools, colleges and other institutions have established small collections of contemporary Irish art on this basis.



Photo: Sean Boylan.

*Students in St. Louis Convent, Monaghan, working in response to "Head of My Father", Conor Fallon's piece for the 1988 exhibition for schools HEADS.*

## WORKS OF ART ON LOAN

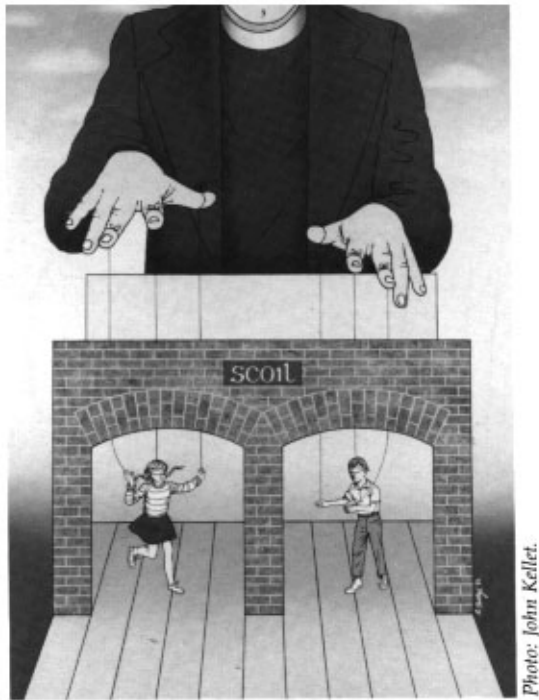
On a limited basis it is possible for schools to borrow works of art from the Council's collection for public display within the school buildings. This service has become very restricted of late so as to ensure that the condition of works loaned to schools can be monitored satisfactorily.

### Note 1: Other Expenditure (A)

*Expenditure in the visual arts from the education budget is also represented in the sections dealing with Artists-in-Residence (page 27), Arts Education Curriculum Development Projects (page 29) and Professional Development (pages 30-31).*

### Note 2: Other Expenditure (B)

*It should be noted that there is a deal of expenditure in education from the Council's overall visual arts budget. The position of Education Officer within the Douglas Hyde Gallery is the most obvious example among a range of programmes, schemes and services in education operated by Arts Council visual arts clients with specific support from the Council. Wexford Arts Centre, funded from the Council's Arts Centre budget has a full-time community artist who does a lot of schools-based work and work with young people generally, from August 1989 the new position of Education Officer attached to Triskel Arts Centre, in Cork has been funded by ACE, the joint Arts Council/Gulbenkian Foundation committee, with Council commitment in principle to fund the post from 1990.*



*'The Dance of Life', by Robert Ballagh from The School Show, the first in the series of exhibitions specially commissioned for touring to second-level schools.*

*Paul Durcan whose reading of his own work has invigorated poetry for many young people and their teachers whom he has visited through the Writers-in-Schools Scheme.*



Photo: Denis Morrell.

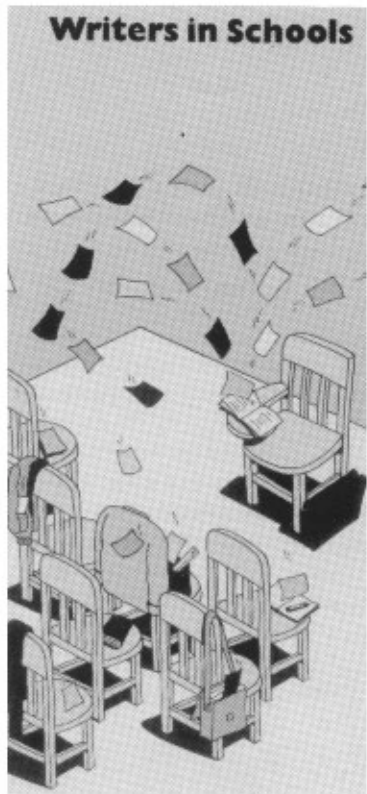




Photo: Michael Foley.

*Poet Brendan Kennelly meeting students during a Writers-in-Schools visit.*

# LITERATURE

Literature is the artform most present in the school experience of Irish people. Regrettably however contemporary literature is almost completely neglected, despite the availability of a great deal of work by living Irish writers which would seem to offer great possibilities of engagement for young people. Recent moves to include work by living playwrights on the Leaving Certificate syllabus and the introduction of greater flexibility within the new Junior Certificate syllabus are to be welcomed. Indeed the greater fluidity at Junior Cycle level has been part of the motivation for a special project in the area of poetry for 13-15 year olds being initiated at present by the ACE committee established jointly by the Arts Council and the Gulbenkian Foundation.

## **WRITERS-IN-SCHOOLS**

The Arts Council's education policy in literature, centres upon its Writers-in Schools scheme, piloted in a few western counties, before being introduced on a country-wide basis in 1979, in cooperation with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. In January 1989 the scheme was revised, extended to include senior classes in primary schools, and a new brochure and directory was launched and an increased budget was made available.

As an Arts Council promotion the Writers-in-Schools scheme has an inherent flexibility which allows for creative responses to interesting proposals. For example, in Autumn 1989, in the context of the professional development needs of teachers taking the new Junior Certificate courses, Drumcondra Teachers' Centre has organised a special Writers-in-Association service. Funded jointly by the Arts Council and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment the introductory programme will be serviced by writers Val Mulherns, Bernard Farrell and Brendan Kennelly.

Since 1979 the Arts Council has spent £80,000 on this scheme. In the six months January-June 1989, for example, 129 readings were held in 122 different schools, primary and post-primary. Thirty-five writers participated in that period and total Council spending in the six months amounted to £6,234.

## **IRISH SCHOOLS CREATIVE WRITING AWARDS**

Organised by the Community and Comprehensive Schools Sports and Cultural Association, these awards are intended to foster creative writing in both Irish and English by young people at school all over Ireland. From an annual entry of about 5,000, professional poets, dramatists, and writers of fiction adjudicate the awards and the winning works are published in a book every year. Major sponsorship comes from Prudential Life and the Arts Council provides grant-aid (£1,500 in 1989) towards the fees of the adjudicating writers.

## **LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

In 1980 the Arts Council developed a policy intended to assist the writing and publication of literature for children. This policy paid particular attention to poetry and fiction in English. For many years there has been a good range of children's books in Irish. In the area of drama the Council's increased support for TEAM reflected in part its support for that company's policy of commissioning new plays for children and young people.

Writers whose work for young people has been supported by Council grant-aid from the Literature budget include Tom

McCaughren, Julie O'Callaghan, Carolyn Swift, Tony Hickey, John McArdle. The development of the writing of poetry for young people has been a welcome feature of recent children's literature.

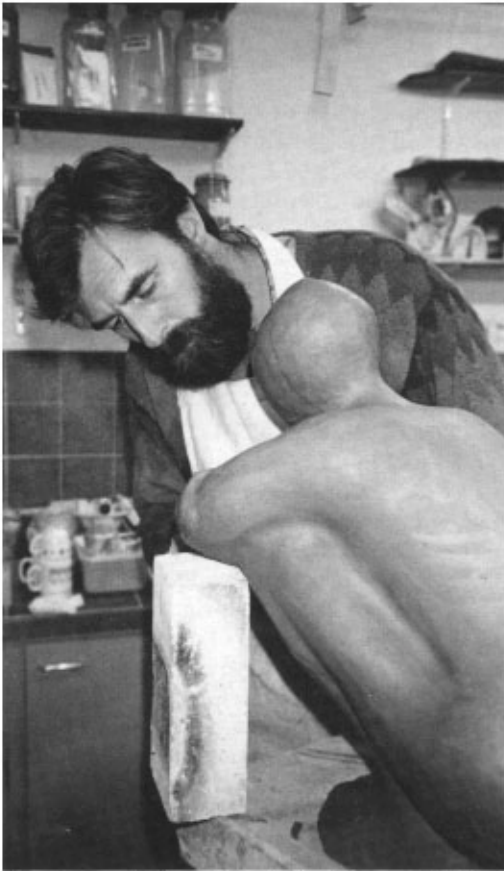


Photo: Ewan Morrissey.

*Mike Byrne, artist-in-residence at Mary Immaculate College of Education, Limerick.*

*Note 1: Other Expenditure  
Expenditure in Literature is also represented  
in the section dealing with Arts Education  
Curriculum Development Projects (page 29).*



Photo: Michael Foley.

*"Crucifixion", a woodcut by Dylan Ryan, a pupil of Dalkey School Project National School where the printmaker Carmen Benson was artist-in-residence.*



*The sculptor David Lambert working as artist-in-residence in Camphill Community, Ballytobin, Co. Kilkenny.*

## **ARTISTS-IN- RESIDENCE**

The idea of an artist-in-residence, at least in its modern manifestation, is a relatively recent one internationally and it was in 1986 that the Arts Council introduced the concept within the ambit of its education policy. It has been one of the most successful elements of its education programme and has led to a deal of valuable work and to a considerable development of positive and informed attitudes about making art.

### **... IN SCHOOLS**

A separate brochure on the artists-in-residence-in-schools scheme has been published. Detailed information is inappropriate here. The scheme permits an artist of any discipline to work for between 8 and 26 weeks in a school on a fairly intensive basis on some project devised and executed in a collaborative way by the artist and the school. Apart from the specific benefits of artist and students making work together — work which sometimes remains on to enhance the school environment — there is a range of subliminal benefits for all concerned by virtue of the artist being present in the school and using it as a work environment.

To date there have been projects in 46 schools in 17 counties. There have been projects in puppetry, mime, theatre, musical composition, sculpture, ceramics, printmaking, video, batik, painting, paper-making and photography. The Arts Council's grant to each residency has been £1,000 and this is normally identified as the fee to the artist. £46,000 has been spent on this scheme since 1985.

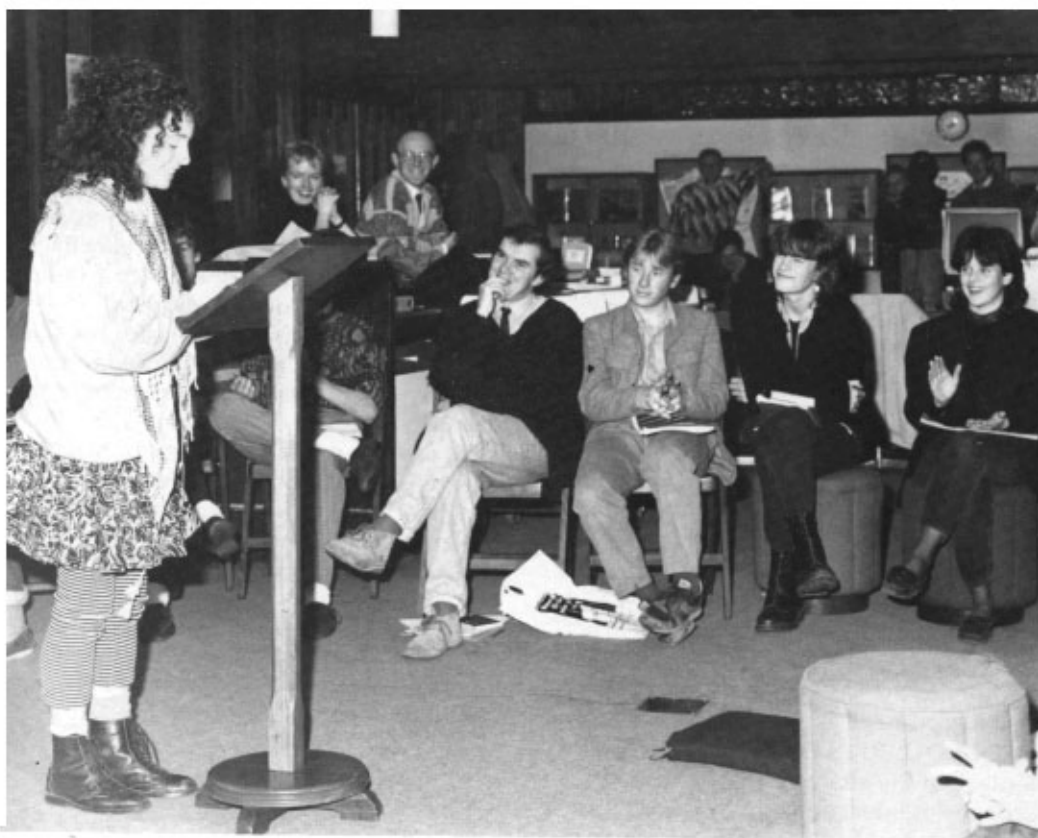
### **... IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION**

Because of the strategic significance of Colleges of Education within the cycle of educational practice, the Arts Council has endeavoured to have an open relationship with the arts departments therein.

In 1986, and initially on a pilot basis, Mary Immaculate College of Education, Limerick was included as a school within the terms of the artist-in-residence-in-schools scheme. So successful was the residency there by ceramic artist Michael Byrne that it was decided to develop the project and increase the funding pro-rata. Thus Michael Byrne became artist-in-residence for a second year before being replaced for 1988-89 by Aidan Linehan, a printmaker. It is intended to continue with this position of artist-in-residence for the foreseeable future and to change the incumbent and the particular idiom he/she represents every year or two.

Around the same time, and again in Limerick, the idea of a dance artist-in-residence was explored with the authorities at Thomond College of Education. This proposal arose from a recommendation in the 1985 Brinson report on dance and it led to the employment of Mary Nunan as dance artist-in-residence. This is effectively a full-time post funded by the Arts Council, Thomond College and by Mary Immaculate College. So successful has this experience been that a dance-in-education company emerged as a development of the idea (see page 17). Not content with a visual artist and a dancer, Mary Immaculate College is beginning a pilot project in Autumn 1989 with a theatre artist-in-residence, funded jointly by the College and the Arts Council.

In Autumn 1989, and on a pilot basis, it is intended to have an Irish language writer-in-residence based in St. Patrick's College of Education for a short trial period.



*One of the young poets reading in Ennis County Library at the end of the Poets Live project. One of the four participating professional poets, Tom McCarthy, is on the left of the seated group.*

# **ARTS EDUCATION CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The Arts Council has always insisted that the responsibility for overall policy and provision in arts education belongs to the Department of Education. In this the arts should be no different from the sciences or languages. However, the Council, when it reviewed its education policy in the 1984/ 85 school year in the light of significant changes within curriculum development at national level, recognised the realities of arts education in Ireland, and attempted in a number of ways to address the need to develop and extend the present level and range of understanding and practice. Those ways include support for curriculum development; bursaries and awards for teachers; support for courses and conferences in arts education; advocacy of the arts as areas of primary educational concern.

## **CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

In 1985 the Council identified four areas in which it wished to undertake or to see undertaken curriculum development work in the period 1985-89. Those areas were poetry at second level, music at primary level, dance at second level and visual art at primary level. The Council wished that such work should occur in an atmosphere of cooperation and was equally happy about promoting the work directly or funding an appropriate body to undertake the work.

### **Poetry/Post-Primary**

This project, promoted and organised by the Arts Council took place in eight second-level schools in County Clare during October 1987. Called **Poets Live** the project involved approximately 900 students in the 15-16 age range working with four poets (Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, Tom McCaughren, Paul Durcan and Michael Coady) who toured schools on an intensive basis to read from and talk about their work. The presence of the living poet was one aspect of the project; another was the publication of a special broadsheet which in its design, format and content was intended to engage young people in a way conventional poetry anthologies generally fail to do; the third element was the encouragement of the writing of poetry culminating in a public reading by thirty poets in Ennis County Library (i.e. the four professional poets, joined by twenty-six young people who responded to the creative writing challenge).

The **Poets Live** project was evaluated by means of a detailed questionnaire. Four hundred students of the nine hundred who participated, completed the questionnaire. Their responses indicated almost universally negative attitudes to poetry, moderated significantly by the kinds of contact and encounter afforded them by the **Poets Live** experience. The findings of this project have influenced further developmental work in poetry being undertaken by the Arts Council/Gulbenkian Foundation committee on Arts Community Education (ACE).

### **Dance/Post-Primary**

This project which is concerned with designing dance syllabus modules for the 12-15 age group is being undertaken under the auspices of the Dance Council with financial support from the Arts Council and the Department of Education. The project is based at Thomond College of Education and is being guided by the College's head of education, Diarmuid Leonard. A core group of teachers have been meeting for regular long weekends to explore issues of theory and practice prior to designing modules which they then test in their schools, evaluate and report upon. The project which began in 1986 is

scheduled to conclude in 1989.

#### **Music/Primary**

In 1987 the Arts Council offered grant-aid to Cumann Náisiúnta na gCór/The Association of Irish Choirs to undertake a two-year curriculum development project which would seek to explore means whereby existing music expertise in the primary system could be shared on a wider basis through a system of master-teaching. This involved the pairing of an "expert" teacher with one or two self-confessed "non-experts" with a view to supporting — and not supplanting — the weaker teacher through special in-service sessions and periods of shared teaching as well as general advice. The project was directed by Mary Shorten of CMC, herself a primary teacher, and the final report will be submitted to the Arts Council, and to the Department of Education, in 1989.

#### **Visual Art/Primary**

This project, unlike the previous three, was to have been a joint initiative of the Arts Council and the Department of Education and after frustrating delays in 1986 and 1987 the project took shape and began its work during 1988. Called **Artworks** it sought to explore the role and value of the work of art — broadly interpreted — within primary education. Fifteen teachers in Co. Wexford formed the project group and they undertook an intensive induction week in August 1988 aimed at raising the crucial issues and exploring a range of approaches to exploring those issues with the full age-range in a primary school.

The Arts Council made available forty prints from its collection as well as hundreds of slides and reproductions of master artworks. A range of specialised inputs from artists or art educators was also arranged.

At the time of writing this project is in abeyance, pending clarification from the Department of Education of its role.

#### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS**

Since 1979 the Arts Council has striven in a variety of ways to encourage individuals with a particular commitment to arts education. At all times the intention has been to increase the pool of expertise in arts education and to validate the arts as legitimate areas for professional development through research and (post-) graduate training. There is an implicit acknowledgement that at times it is necessary to travel abroad for specialised training. Since 1979 the Arts Council has spent over £123,000 in education awards.

Present Council policy has been to concentrate exclusively on more modest travel awards so as to permit a larger number of teachers to benefit from Council support. This alteration in policy also reflects changing trends in teacher mobility arising from the employment situation within education.

#### **Leaving Certificate Scholarships**

For a three-year period, and on an experimental basis, the Arts Council offered scholarships on the basis of Leaving Certificate results in Art and Music. Seven students were supported in their undergraduate studies at a cost of approximately £32,000. The Council reviewed this policy in 1985 and decided to re-deploy these resources to a different end within its education budget.

#### **Post-Graduate Scholarships**

Now discontinued, this scheme offered bursaries to (mostly) young teachers to pursue arts education training at a level not available in Ireland, prior to returning to

the classroom to invest their increased expertise in education in this country.

Since 1979 fifteen such scholarships were awarded at a total cost of over £74,000. Three scholarships were for post-graduate studies in music education, three in the area of visual arts education, four in dance and five in drama.

#### **Travel Awards**

Introduced in 1986 this scheme has so far helped over thirty teachers travel abroad to take short-term or year-long courses in various aspects of arts education. £15,000 has been spent on thirty-three teachers. By far the greatest number of successful applicants have been in music, most often to travel to a range of courses or summer schools in the Kodaly Method in Hungary. Indeed of the thirty-three successful applicants to date, twenty-four have taken courses in music, two in art, three in drama and four in dance.

#### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/ COURSES AND CONFERENCES**

Only in exceptional circumstances does the Arts Council provide financial assistance for in-service courses in the arts which it regards as the responsibility of the Department of Education or of agencies like Teachers' Centres. In the early years of its education policy the Council did fund a number of specialised courses but now its support is very limited.

Modest support is offered to the Annual National Conference on Drama-in-Education held at Thomond College because of the strategic significance of this event in an art-form which does not have a specific presence within the curriculum or the benefit of a subject association. Dance too suffers on this account and in 1985 the Arts Council organised and promoted a major national conference on dance education from which many of the initiatives discussed on page 17 have flowed.

The special circumstances arising from the availability of international experts from Hungary and the partnership-funding proposed by the Department of Education led the Council, as an exceptional measure, to support the Music Education Seminar conducted by senior staff of the Kodaly Institute, Budapest for a week in April 1988.

In all since 1979 the Arts Council has spent £23,146 on courses and conferences in arts education.

# ADVOCACY

Reference has already been made (page 10) to Recommendation No. 44 of the Benson report urging the Arts Council to establish and maintain a right of comment on educational affairs. In its membership of significant organisations like the Educational Studies Association of Ireland and the Irish Association for Curriculum Development; in its representation on arts education committees of various VECs; in its status as a designated body of the Curriculum and Examinations Board/National Council for Curriculum and Assessment; but above all in its own reports and in its submissions to a range of bodies and committees this commitment to the advocacy of the arts within education is reflected.

## PUBLISHED REPORTS

**The Place of the Arts in Irish Education** by *Ciarán Benson* (The Arts Council, Dublin, 1979).

**The Dancer and The Dance** by *Peter Brinson with Andy Ormston* (The Arts Council, Dublin, 1985). See especially chapters one and five.

**Deaf Ears?** *A Report on the Provision of Music Education in Irish Schools* by *Don Herron* (The Arts Council, Dublin, 1985).

## UNPUBLISHED SUBMISSIONS

**A Modest Proposal** *A submission to the Department of Education (1983).*

**Untitled Submission** *by the Arts Council to the Committee on Inservice Education (see Report of the Committee on Inservice Education, published April 1984).*

**The Arts and Education (I)** *A submission to the Curriculum and Examinations Board (June 1984).*

**The Arts and Education (II)** *A submission to the Curriculum and Examinations Board (November 1985).*

**The Arts and Education (III)** *A submission to the Curriculum and Examinations Board (December 1985).*

**The Arts and Education (IV)** *A submission to the Curriculum and Examinations Board (September 1986).*

**The Arts and Youth Policy** *A submission to Government (October 1985).*

**Education, Training and Young People** *Section Five (pages 39-53) of the Arts Council Submission to the Minister of State for Arts and Culture on the Proposed White Paper on the Arts (January 1986).*

**Untitled Submission** *by the Arts Council to the OECD Review of Teacher Education and Supply (April 1987).*

**The Artist and The Public** A Five Year Development Plan presented to Government by the Arts Council (June 1987).  
See especially Section 18 on Education (pages 93-100) R.



