

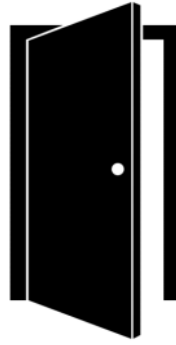


STUDIOS + GALLERY



ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

Image: Alacoque Davey, detail from 'Future/Forward' exhibition

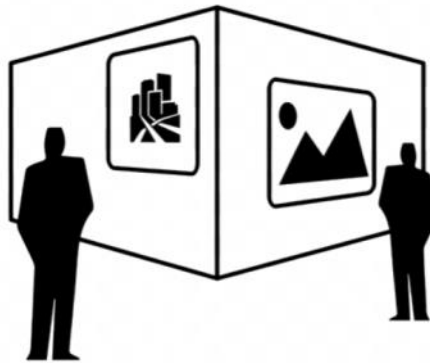


47 self-contained spaces for rent

1 bursary studio

52 artists (50 studio holders + 2 associates)

99.7% studio occupancy rate



12 QSS gallery exhibitions

2 off-site exhibitions

1,214 on-site gallery visitors

450 off-site exhibition visitors

90 exhibiting artists (QSS artists counted once across multiple shows)

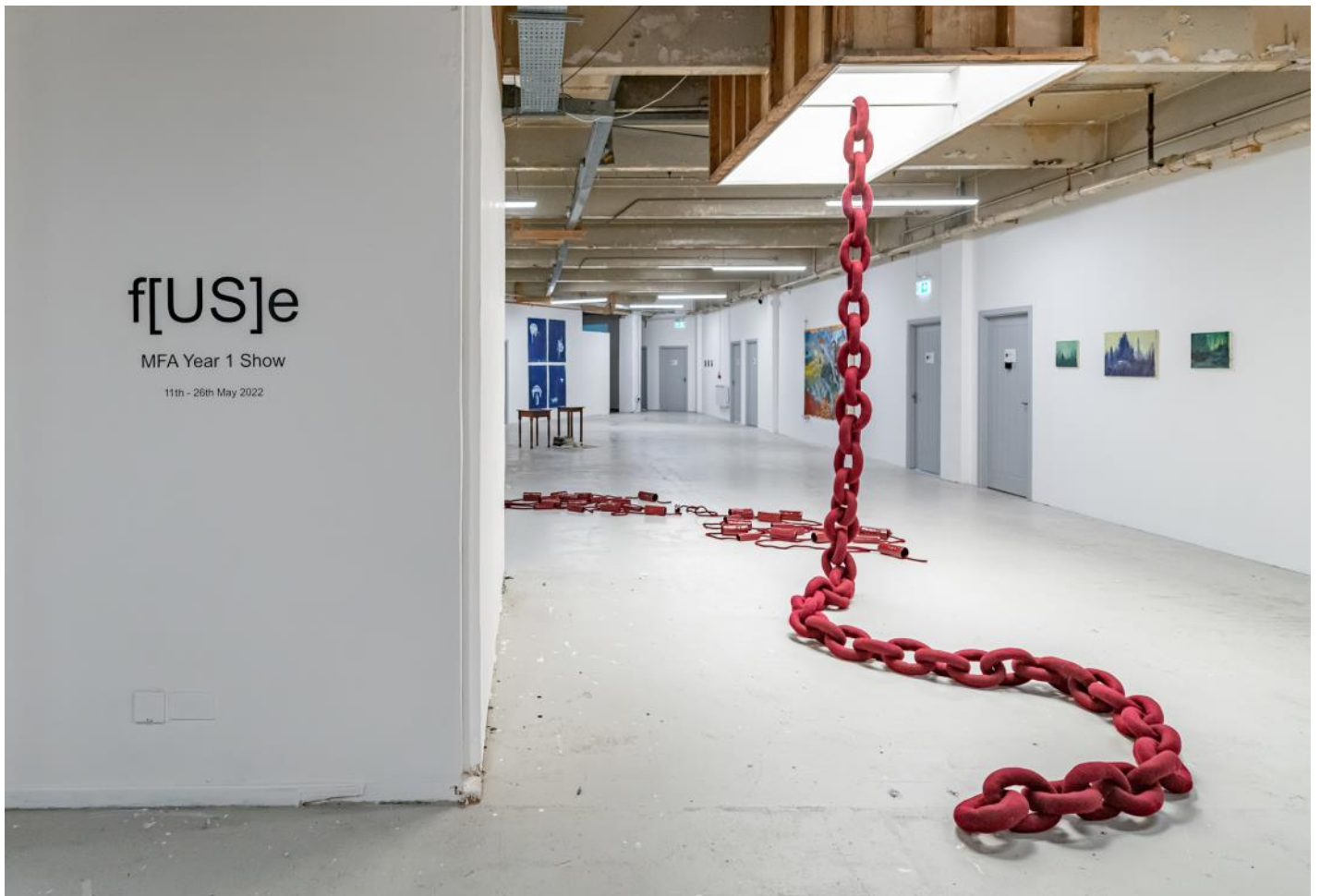
1 Patron Scheme

43 artwork sales



Top: (l-r) exhibiting artists Cyrill Lim, Una Lee and John D'Arcy
at the opening of 'A Land Unknown' and 'Quotations'

Bottom: Performance by HIVE Choir



'Fuse'; an exhibition by MFA 1st year students from the
Belfast School of Art

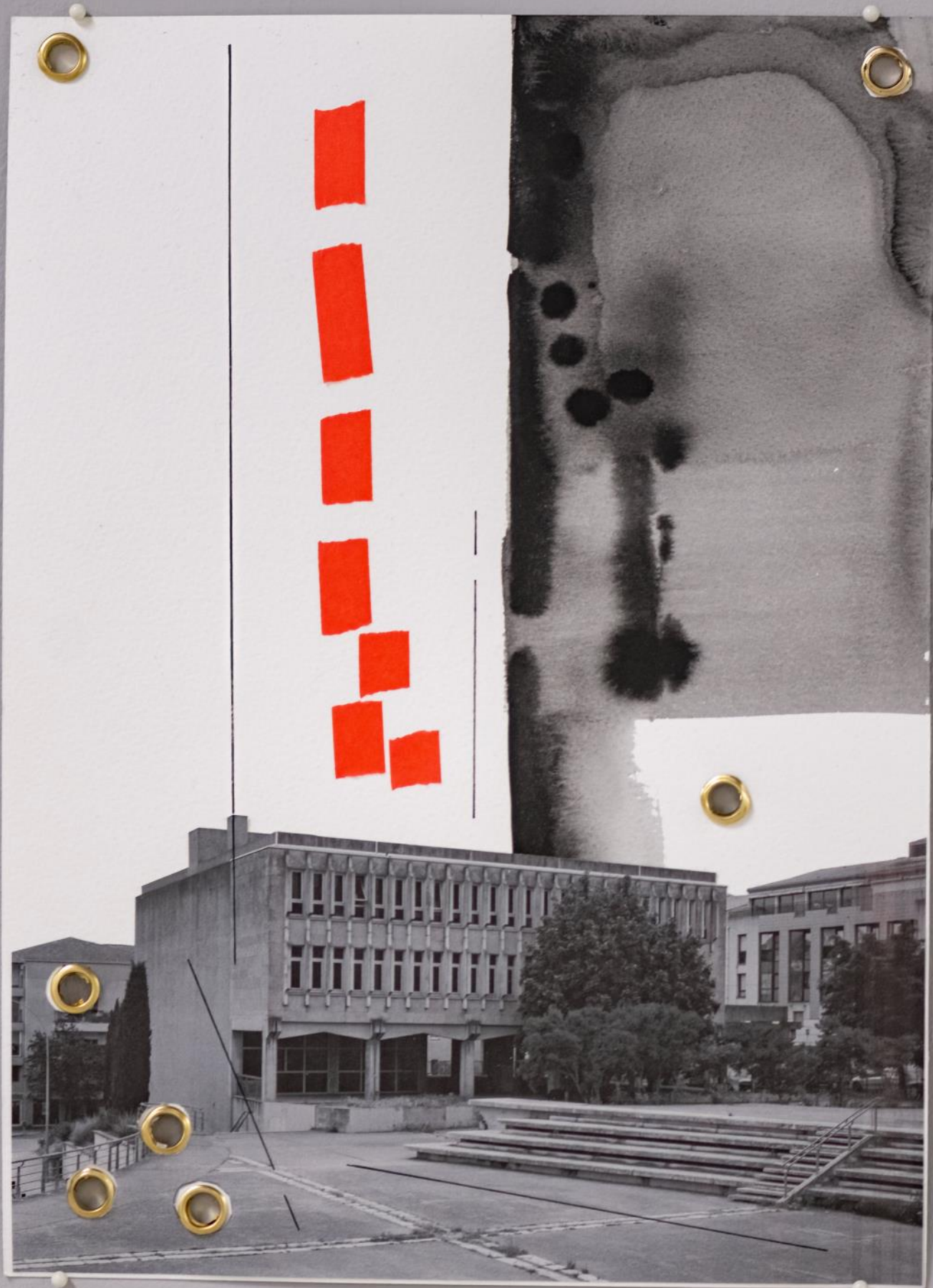
Future/Forward

Exhibition 1
2nd June - 23rd June

Exhibition 2
30th June - 28th July



Amanda Coogan & Sharon Kelly collaboration, *Future/Forward*



Frederic Huska, Joy Gerrard and Vasiliki Stasinaki collaboration, *Future/Forward*



Top: Pauline Clancy & Kwok Tsui collaboration, *Future/Forward*

Bottom: Angela Hackett & Anushiya Sundaralingam collaboration, *Future/Forward*



Top: Rachael Colhoun, Catherine Davison & Andrew Haire collaboration, *Future/Forward*

Bottom: Opening of *Future/Forward*, MART Gallery, Dublin

ABOUT QSS

Founded in 1984, Queen Street Studios (QSS) is the longest running studio group in Northern Ireland. With assistance from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, QSS supports artistic excellence and creative innovation through the provision of high quality, affordable studios and a year-round gallery programme. Through these activities we seek to retain and nurture local talent, showcase Belfast as a cultural hub and foster links with the wider community.

AIMS

In 2022-23 QSS aimed to:

- 1: Provide secure and affordable studios for professional artists at all career stages.
- 2: Foster a community ethos amongst artists through mentoring, collaboration and practical support.
- 3: Create opportunities for wider public access and engagement in the arts.
4. Ensure long-term organisational stability.

OBJECTIVES

To achieve these aims, QSS sought to:

1. Retain and support our tenant base in a well-maintained building.
2. Stay true to our 'affordable' ethos by subsidising studio rent.
3. Support transition from education to professional practice through bursaries and ring-fenced exhibitions.
4. Hold regular member meetings to develop a collective culture and identity.
5. Support our artists via: (i) exhibition/curatorial/development opportunities, (ii) space to make large-scale ambitious work, and (iii) Associate Membership (i.e., affiliation without studio provision).
6. Strengthen public engagement with contemporary art through a year-round programme of activities.
7. Engage more effectively with digital audiences by enhancing content and exploring new technologies.
- 8: Foster and strengthen partnerships that contribute to the NI arts sector.
- 9: Provide regular training for Board members and align board duties with key objectives.
- 10: Continue to refine corporate governance.
- 11: Transition to a hybrid funding model.
12. Diversify revenue streams via strategic planning.

VALUES

- Loyalty
- Inclusiveness
- Honesty
- Respectfulness
- Outward looking
- Professional
- Friendly
- Equal
- Trustworthy
- An organisation with integrity

STUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Queen Street Studios was founded in 1984 and reconstituted in 1994 as a company limited by guarantee, defined by the Companies Act 2006. The organisation is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association and managed by a voluntary Board of Directors with support from two part-time employees (Membership & Development Officer and Board Secretary).

DIRECTORS & ORGANISATION STRUCTURES

The QSS Board meet approximately every six weeks. Current board membership comprises four studio artists and four external Board members with experience in high level management, marketing and finance. The directors, who are also the trustees of the charity (for the purpose of charity law), who served during the year are as follows:

Heather Moorhead

Jim McKeever

James Fair

Jessica Pearson (Resigned 8 June 2022)

Majella Clancy

Heather Wells

Dan Ferguson (Resigned 24 January 2023)

Joy Gerrard

David Haughey

Sharon Kelly

The QSS Membership & Development Officer and Board Secretary have delegated responsibility for the day-to-day running of the studios and gallery in accordance with the instructions issued by the Board. The Membership & Development Officer works four days per week and reports to the Board Secretary weekly. The Board Secretary works one day per week and reports to the Chair on a weekly basis. Both staff members report to the full Board at each meeting.

COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

QSS issue regular updates to members via email and a dedicated Studio WhatsApp Group, keeping them abreast of studio news and opportunities. We promote the artistic activities of our members and the organisation's events programme through regular posts on the QSS website/social media platforms, via email to the organisation's subscribers and third-party platforms (i.e., Irish Arts Review, Visual Artists Ireland and Community Arts Partnership). Available studios and exhibition opportunities are openly advertised as they arise.

PRINCIPAL RISKS & UNCERTAINTIES & RISK MANAGEMENT

The QSS trustees monitor and evaluate risks and ensure systems and controls are subject to regular review. The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the operations and finances of the charity, and have put in place a risk management plan to manage any exposure to those risks.

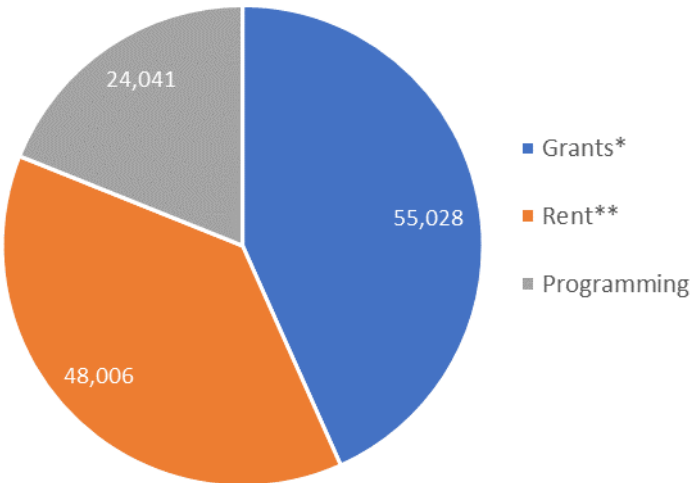
The key risks set out in the organisation's risk register are detailed below:

- Arts sector funding is constantly under threat. As with similar organisations, there is a risk from an over-reliance on annual funding rounds and that funding in future years may be reduced. The board recognises the risks associated with this and are committed to building reserves and increasing operating sustainability, enabling the organisation to continue to make its valuable contribution to the Arts and the wider community.
- The charity requires suitable premises to be able to support artists in their practice, and is restricted to short-term leases by the nature of short term funding. The charity has a lease on suitable premises until 31 March 2024. Following this date, the organisation will move to a one-year rolling contract with six month's-notice to quit. There is a risk that should notice to vacate be given suitable, affordable premises could be difficult to secure.
- After several years of low inflation, much higher levels of inflation were seen in the 2022-23 financial year and they have remained high in the beginning of 2023-24. This is in a context of a difficult funding environment for the Arts within Northern Ireland, and at a time when the artist's personal income is uncertain due to a reduction of disposable income for patrons and customers. There is a risk that costs for the charity will exceed its income, and if this continues

for a prolonged period that this will reduce the sustainability of the charity. The Board have decided to designate reserves to mitigate the risks in the short to medium term and continue to work to diversify income for the continued future success of the organisation.

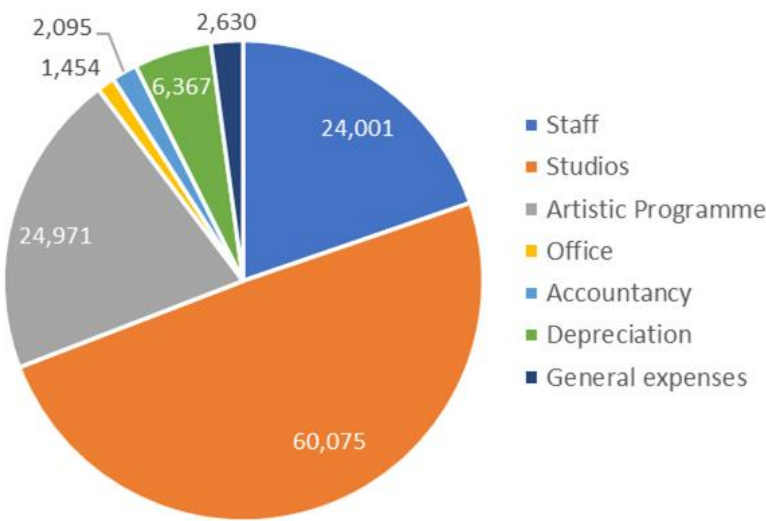
FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

2022-23 INCOME - £127,075



*ACNI AFP @ £30,625 + ACNI H&S/Capital @ £14,403 + BCC @£10,000
**Studios, storage fees & venue hire

2022-23 EXPENDITURE - £121,593



RESERVES POLICY

The QSS board has determined that free undesignated reserves, equivalent to three to six months operating expenditure, should be maintained for the benefit of the whole community in the event of an unexpected interruption of income. For the year 2022-23 this would equate to approximately £19,000 to £38,000. In an environment of short-term funding and continued pressures on financial resources for the Arts the board believe that this would provide sufficient time for the organisation to respond to specific challenges. Further reserves have been ear-marked for sustainability development and future relocation.

Collectively, these designations equated to £68,106 on 31st March 2023 (£34,106 – business interruption, £8,000 – sustainable development, £26,000 – relocation).

STUDIO 37 (1ST FLOOR)

ALANA BARTON



STUDIO 14 (2ND FLOOR)

TIM MILLEN



"I've been so impressed with the provision and organisation of QSS since joining in September 2022. It's a friendly place with excellent facilities and I find the constantly evolving exhibition programme really stimulating. It's important to have a room of one's own (and I feel lucky to have a large, bright studio with heater!). But it may be even more important to have the community and support of excellent artists who choose to make this facility their place of work".

STUDIO 27 (2ND FLOOR)

ALACOQUE DAVEY



STUDIO 4 (2ND FLOOR)

JOY GERRARD



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCE

In September 2022 QSS expanded into the 1st Floor of the premises we occupy, increasing our studio provision by 30%. As a result, we now provide 48 high quality, self-contained studios for 50 artists at varying career stages. The affordability of these studios enabled our members to maintain their creative practices throughout 2022/23, despite the rising cost of living and growing precarity of income.

Additionally, with support from Belfast City Council (BCC) and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI), QSS refurbished a large under-used area (onto which ten of our 2nd Floor studios open) into a second gallery/event space. Together with the purchase of new digital equipment we can now showcase a more diverse range of work by a larger number of artists. These improvements have also increased our scope to partner with other organisations and increase our audience reach.

Each year QSS reinvests a percentage of its turnover in artistic activities directly benefitting studio holders and external, early career artists. In 2022-23 these activities included exhibition opportunities, artwork documentation, online promotion, a graduate bursary (12 months free studio provision awarded to Belfast School of Art graduate **Reuben Brown**) and the culmination of an in-house mentoring project entitled Future/Forward (in collaboration with local curator, Jane Morrow) across three exhibitions (June/July/August 2022). The last of these exhibitions was held at the MART Gallery in Dublin in August 2022 (subsequently, seven of our artists were selected to exhibit in Los Angeles with MART). Further QSS exhibitions included (i) 'Quotations' by netlabel 'Quills that Whisper' (included Una Lee, JJ Devereaux and HIVE Choir) and 'A Land Unknown' by Cyrill Lim & Marcel Zaes, both of which were part of the Sonorities Festival of sound and music; (ii) 'Fuse' an exhibition by fifteen MFA 1st year students from the Belfast School of Art; (iii) 'Lands in Between' by **Kwok Tsui** (QSS) and Ben Malcolmson; (iv) 'Structures' a solo-show by **Majella Clancy** (QSS), (v) 'Did that really happen?' a two-person show by **Dan Ferguson** (QSS) and Patrick Colhoun, (vi) 'knockoff, weltanschauung!' by **Vasiliki Stasinaki** (QSS) and Ronan Smyth; (vii) QSS' third artist support pledge exhibition (with works priced £220 or under) and Christmas Show (various price points); (viii) 'Emergence VI' a group show by fifteen BA graduates from the Belfast School of Art; (ix) Oscillate Quietly' a solo show by **Clare French** (QSS); and, (x) 'Hinterlands (Heart)' by **Hannah Clegg** (QSS).

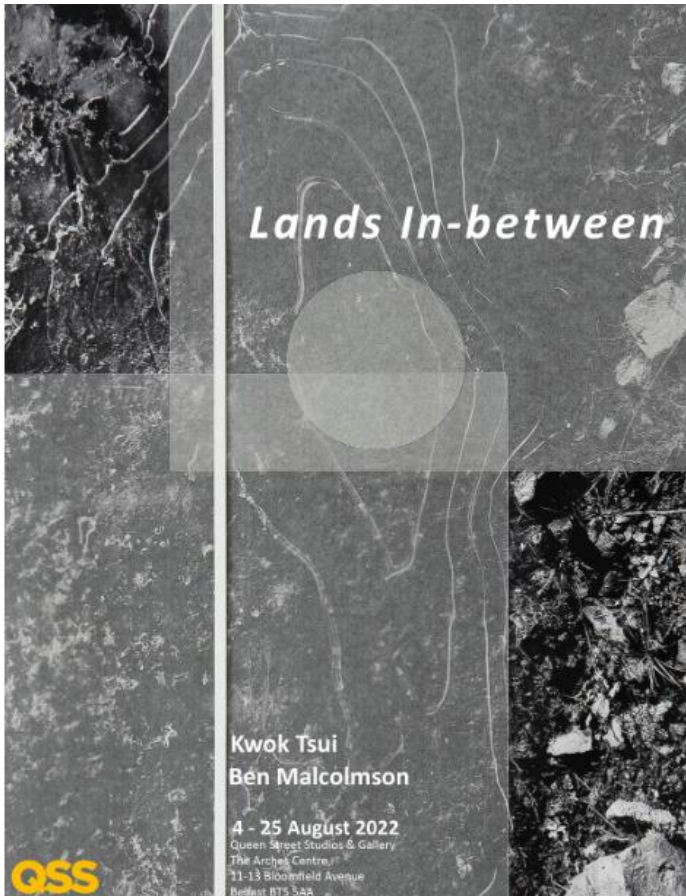
Outside of QSS linked events, 91% of our artists exhibited in Northern Ireland (Banbridge, Bangor, Belfast, Derry/Londonderry, Lisburn, Newtownards), 57% in the Republic of Ireland (Cork, Donegal, Dublin, Galway, Kilkenny, Roscommon and Sligo) and 19% in Great Britain (Anglesey, Bristol, Caithness, London, Manchester, Norwich, Plymouth and Swansea). Complimented by exhibitions in Antwerp (**Vasiliki Stasinaki and Majella Clancy**), Barcelona (**Ian Cumberland**), Berlin (**Majella Clancy**), Los Angeles (**David Haughey**), Paris (**Jennifer Trouton**), Wuppertal, Germany (**Amanda Coogan**) and residencies in Rome (**Sharon Kelly**) and New York (**Joy Gerrard**) these activities give a strong

indication of the geographic range of our artists during 2022/23. Further artistic achievements included **Anushiya Sundaralingam's** selection for ACNI's Artist Career Enhancement Scheme, **Jennifer Trouton's** Major ACNI Award (in recognition of her contribution to creative life in Northern Ireland) and the receipt of The Adams Award by **Joy Gerrard** at the 192nd RHA Annual Exhibition, Dublin.

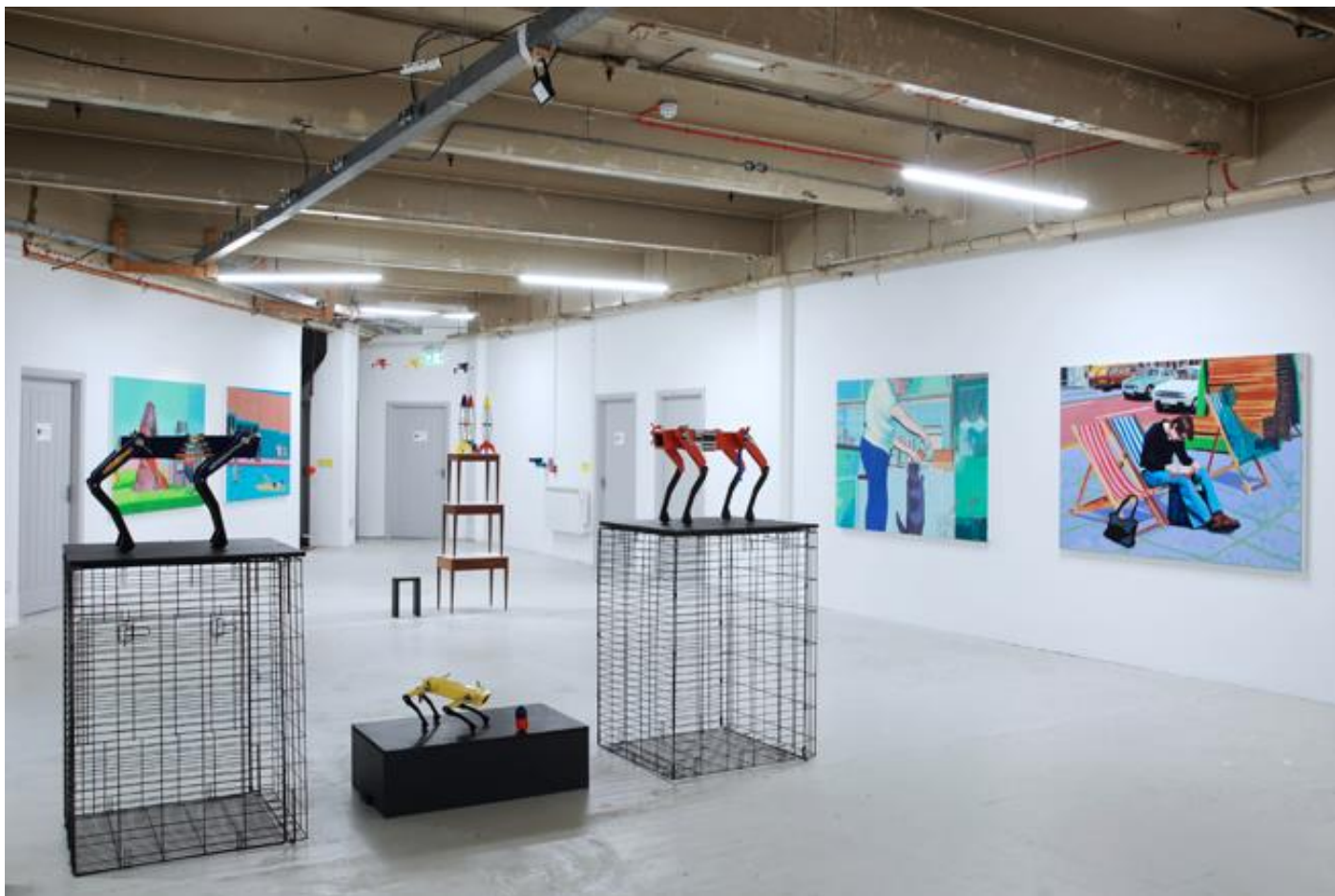
Lastly, in March 2023, QSS successfully launched a Patron Scheme (at 35DP, Belfast), the first of its kind in Northern Ireland. Through this initiative, individuals and organisations can provide financial support to the studios and receive art benefits in return. The funding raised will play a key role in our future activities and programming development whilst supporting artists at different career levels in sustaining their practice. The scheme will also help QSS foster closer links with our East Belfast community, through the provision of learning and participatory events.



'Structures', solo show by Majella Clancy



'Lands in Between', two-person show by Kwok Tsui (top right image) & Ben Malcolmson (bottom image)



'Did that really happen?'; two-person show by Dan Ferguson & Patrick Colhoun



'knockoff, weltanschauung!', two-person show by Vasiliki Stasinaki & Ronan Smyth



Top: *Emergence VI*, an exhibition by 20-21 graduates from the Belfast School of Art
Middle & bottom: *Oscillate Quietly*, a solo show by Clare French



'Hinterlands (Heart)', a solo show by Hannah Clegg

QSS—P/S

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE LAUNCH OF
QUEEN STREET STUDIOS PATRON SCHEME

OPENING DRINKS AND EXHIBITION
THURSDAY 09.03.23 / 6:00PM — 8:30PM

EXHIBITION OPEN
FRIDAY 10.03.23 / 12:00PM — 6:00PM
SATURDAY 11.03.23 / 2:00PM — 4:00PM

EXHIBITION VENUE
35DP, 3RD FLOOR, 35 DONEGALL PL, BELFAST BT1 5BB (ABOVE BOOTS)

Drinks sponsored by Muriel's Café Bar

www.queenstreetstudios.net/qss-patron-scheme



Belfast
City Council

35DP



WIREFOX





Top: QSS Patron Scheme Launch at 35DP, Belfast
Bottom: (l-r) Meadhbh McIlgorm & Niamh Clarke

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Registered Address:

Queen Street Studios, The Arches Centre, 11-13 Bloomfield Avenue, Belfast BT5 5AA

Charity Commission Number in Northern Ireland:

NI100835

HMRC Reference:

X0286/94

Company Number:

NI028725

Accountants:

Muldoon & Co Chartered Accountants 16 Mount Charles Belfast BT7 1NZ

Bankers:

Bank of Ireland Belfast City Branch Belfast BT1 2BA

+44 (0)7495 013947

gallery@queenstreetstudios.net

www.queenstreetstudios.net

<https://www.facebook.com/QSSArtistStudios/>

<https://twitter.com/QSSArtStudios>

<https://www.instagram.com/qssartstudios/>

Photography:

Tim Millen (studios), Paul Marshall, Simon Mills & Anushiya Sundaralingam (exhibitions)

**PRINCIPAL
FUNDER**



**arts
council**
of Northern Ireland