

DONNA RUTHERFORD  
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I have been devising theatre and video work since 1990 crossing the roles of writer, performer, video maker and director. Starting from a Live Art background I have developed solo and collaborative projects in the UK and abroad with a wide range of artists, musicians and community participants. The work stems from personal storytelling while combining psychology, social history and cognitive memory. The work manages to make difficult subjects such as displacement, family relations, ageing, and miscommunication in relationships accessible to wide audiences while developing innovative forms of personal storytelling. Touring extensively across UK & Eire and performing in Belgium, Denmark, USA & Canada, I've consistently been awarded funding from English & Scottish Arts Councils/Creative Scotland (including International Initiatives, Live Art Commissions, NRLA Residencies, Partners Fund, Made In Scotland), alongside funding from BBC2 Commissions, Barclays New Stages Award, International Festivals & Residencies, Opera North, Arts & Humanities Research Council. Alongside commissioned work I have always engaged with community-based projects, often working with vulnerable groups. Organisations include: Loretto Care; Falkirk Criminal Justice Service Women's Group; NHS Greater Glasgow; North Lanarkshire Council - Older Persons Team; West Dunbartonshire Violence Against Women Campaign; Livingstone's MacMillan Centre.

### Recent projects:

April 2023 – mini version of **'Broth'** presented at Parkhead Schoolhouse

June 2022 – February 2023 **'Remembering Together'** co-creating Covid Community Memorial - Phase 1 artist-in-residence for East Renfrewshire. Presented devised performance *'Many Rivers To Cross'* & community discussion, prior to written report and recommendations for Phase 2

June 2022 (Glasgow) & September 2022 (Inverness) – **Dandelion Festival** (environment, arts & music) – Potting Shed artist with **'Two Soups'** – discussing, recording and creating family soup recipes with the public

April 2019 to April 2022 **'Creative Communities'** – Lead Artist in Residence for Ward 10 (Yorkhill/Anderston/City Centre). Glasgow Life programme of city-wide residencies – Phase 1, 2 & 3 in collaboration with Gallery of Modern Art, Kelvin Hall & Mitchell Library

December 2021 commission from Govanhill Baths Community Trust for **'Occupy Occupy Occupy'** conference – video interviews and live performance exploring historical community & work occupation campaigns across Scotland

April – June 2021 working in Govan, a commission from Fablevision – Woven Network, exploring the added burden of care upon women during the Covid-19 Pandemic – **'Natural Born Carers'**

Feb – May 2020 Co-ordinating small tour, rewriting, editing & rehearsing **Lullaby** (video & performance) **CANCELLED** due to Covid

March – April 2020 project animateur with **Arbroath 2020** event **CANCELLED** due to Covid-19

November 2018 a mini **'Broth'** performance & discussion - Invisible Communities event, Suttie Art Space, Aberdeen Infirmary

July – September 2018 **'Hung Out To Dry'** video & performance for exhibition at conference about public wash-houses. Commissioned by Govanhill Baths Trust

May – June 2018 **'Tannahill Threads'** working with women's group at Tannahill Centre, Ferguslie Park

January 2018 Residency at Aras Eanna, Inis Oirr, Aran Islands developing 'What Good is Looking Well When You're Rotten On The Inside?' with Emma O'Grady

March/April 2017 Firstport **'What if... Girvan'** storytelling workshops with older women's group & advisor on video script

April 2017 **Magnetic North Space Time Residency** Creative Retreat in Dumfries & Galloway [Funded]

November 2016 - February 2017 Research & Development for Performance & Video **'Lullaby'** in collaboration with NTS funded by CS. Initial showings at GFT & GWL in January. Middle-aged women discuss being childless

October – December 2016 – Artist & advisor with **'Curious Routes'** at Arlink Edinburgh (Mental Health support group)

December 2015 – May 2016 - Lead Artist with **'LandWords'** based at Callander House, Falkirk – Intergenerational project . Commissioned by Edinburgh International Book Festival and Falkirk Community Trust

January -March 2016 – Toured performance **'Broth'** around sheltered complexes with Loretto Housing and carried out training day with Loretto staff (support staff & management). October 2015 - Touring performance & video piece **'Broth'** - An honest exploration of the experience of older people in 21st century Scotland. Broth explores the rituals and revelations that trace changes in people's

lives, families and wider communities through a series of personal storytelling conversations. Toured as part of **Luminate**, Scotland's creative ageing festival. Originally commissioned by the Seannachies Research Network, addressing issues around loneliness and social isolation, led by The Institute of Design Innovation at The Glasgow School of Art and funded by the Scottish Universities Insight Institute. Performed at Scottish Storytelling Centre in March 2015

August 2014 – May 2015 CS's Artist Bursary allowing development of new writing and collaboration with non-arts colleagues

Aug '13 – April '14 **'Your Cup Of Tea'** Video project with older people around Wishaw, promoting services & social activities

Sept '13 – April '14 Artist-in-Residence with Falkirk Criminal Justice Service Women's Group **'Transition Project'**. Produced an information leaflet including personal stories

June 2013 – November 2013 Performance **'Wilful Forgetting'** co-written with Martin O'Connor at Tron. Glasgow Commission. Story of a mother and a son via cake-baking and old family photographs.

May 2012 – May 2013 Video film (+ accompanying book) **CARE** created for North Lanarkshire Council Social Work – Older Persons Team. Exhibited at Summerlee Heritage Museum, Coatbridge – exploring independent living in older age without family around.

March 2010 - August 2012 Developing intergenerational project **KIN** working with CCA and NHS. Funded by CS Partners Fund. 2 part project with Listening Posts touring clinical waiting rooms and live performance with performers to camera. Toured as part of **SMHAFF** Glasgow; **Bealtaine, Ireland's Older Person's Festival**; UK tour & Edinburgh Fringe Festival (Made in Scotland)

2008 Nov - 09 January **Artlink** at MacMillan Centre, Livingstone. Artist-in-Residence working with female cancer patients

**PERFORMANCE/ VIDEO WORK** 1993 – 2008 (as Performer, Writer, Director):

**Medley of Denial** commission from West Dunbartonshire Violence Against Women Partnership 16 Days of Action. Tour community venues, schools and women's refuges

**Ochone Ochone** collaboration with Glasgow's Iraqi Kurdish community around men dancing

**Doormat** Collaboration with Opera North - Don Giovanni & Bonington Gallery, Nottingham -

**Butterfly** Dramaturg & Video with Quarantine's production Tramway, working with 3 generations of the one family

**Avoidance Tactics No. 1 thru to 25** with students from RSAMD CTP Course

**Unaccompanied** video installation with non-nationals in Gent, Belgium for the Time Festival & in Glasgow (city centre shop).

Individuals sang popular & traditional songs from their own land to camera, without music

**Backward** 11 performers aged 9 – 67 Research & Development funded by SAC

**If I Knew Now What I Knew Then** created as part of 'Scotland's Year of the Artist'. Residency with Stirling University's Psychology Department (Face Perception Lab)

**You've Chosen Numero Uno** Created during International Residency at Banff Centre, Canada. Short film based on Blind Date show - Participants go on a date with themselves

**Where D'ye Get Those Eyes** Edinburgh International Book Festival

**You Don't Say** BBC2/ Arts Council England commissioned film. Collab with John Carson.

**Lonesome Standard Time** Music-Theatre funded by SAC & GCC

**Every Blank Cries Shame** NRLA/ CCA commission collaboration with sound artist Matt Wand

**All of Me, Why Not Take All of Me** Arts Council of England Live Art Commission

**De Hele Waarheid, Niets Anders (The Whole Truth, Nothing But)** Music-Theatre. Created in Ghent, Belgium. Toured Belgium & UK. Involved Turkish, Flemish, Scottish & Bosnian musicians. Barclays New Stages Winner & funded by International Initiatives.

**Ochone** National Review of Live Art at ICA

**QUALIFICATIONS:** 1987 – 1990 Studied BA Hons Creative Arts (visual art/ performance & music) Nottingham Trent University

2003 – 2007 Arts & Humanities Research Council Creative Fellowship with RSAMD & GSA & New Moves International **'Taking the Personal Out of Itself** - the development of personal material in a live art context'. Developing own solo & collaborative projects, a connected Symposium programme and a DVD 'Rearranging Realities' (still widely used teaching aid, purchased by university libraries world-wide). Involved close collaboration with Stirling University's Psychology Dept Memory Lab

**COMMUNITY VIDEO WORK:** Rutherford's video work (ie. filming, directing & editing) has involved diverse community-based groups (since 1998) including: Scottish Gas Youth Challenge (video won a UK community events utility award); New Directions (long-term unemployed & over 25); Dalmarnock Youth Project, East Glasgow; North Ayrshire Dance Project; Easterhouse Young Carers; Glasgow Care Leavers Social Inclusion Partnership; Scottish Year of the Artist – launch video; SYOTA residency in East Ayrshire with Lone Parents; Lord Provosts Millennium Award Scheme (elderly/ youth project about the future); Enable (special needs respite care); Fair Deal for 1 in a 100 (shown at Hampden conference, special needs respite care); Central Easterhouse Tenants Forum; East Glasgow Youth Theatre (The Bay – a documentary); 7:84 Belonging Youth Project; Off-Cast Project (video for dance track); Sub-Urban Festival (East Renfrewshire, Street Arts festival with Kultyer Dance Theatre); Rembrandt Women (Workshops with locally employed women at National Gallery, Edinburgh); Arisaig Primary; Milton Kids (Special needs afterschool club); Race Awareness Training Video for Glasgow City Council

**TEACHING:** Devised programmes for teaching Video Art, Performance & Writing at Post Graduate & Degree level. Institutions include: Glasgow School of Art (Historical & Critical Studies, Sculpture & Environmental Art); RSAMD (Contemporary Theatre Practice & MA Acting); Glasgow University (Theatre, Film & TV Studies); University of Bristol (Feminist Theatre Studies); University of Essex (Theatre); Dartington College of Arts, Devon (Performance Writing & MA Theatre); **Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, West of Ireland (Sculpture)**

**PRODUCING:** 1998 – 2000 Producer for large scale Lottery Funded project "Myths of the Near Future" JG Ballard stories developed for live performance by Director/ Designer Stewart Laing (Tramway co-production). 2000 Project Animateur for "see-saw" at Tramway. Involving 70 community participants. 1990 – 92 Technical Production Manager for various companies and festivals including "Dogs in Honey" and Nottingham's "NOW Festival". 1992 – 94 Programmer for Nottingham's "Powerhouse"

**COMMITTEE WORK:** Spring 1997 – 2000 Member of Scottish Arts Council's Combined Arts Committee