

NINE TRADES OF DUNDEE

Curatorial Concept

'Nine Trades of Dundee' will commission nine UK/EIRE artists with second non-art trades to lead collaborative art projects with workers from that particular trade in workplaces across Dundee from July 2009 – July 2010.



'Nine Trades of Dundee' received substantial funding from the Scottish Arts Council's Inspire Fund, established to promote 'more, better and wider' participation in the arts. Scottish Arts Council cited the projects as 'Characterised by fresh, inventive and unique presentations, performances or partnerships, these eleven Inspire projects offer pioneering opportunities to experience the arts, which will leave lasting legacies on the communities involved.'

With 'Nine Trades of Dundee' we aim to increase arts access and encourage more participation for non-arts audiences in Dundee by bringing art activity and creativity to the heart of the workplace. A shared trade with its language, skills base, and working experience is the common factor that brings artist and group together overcoming that initial barrier of what art is and preconceptions of who can be an 'artist'. The project then develops through engagement and experimentation with the artistic process to create a significant, inspiring and ambitious exchange and collaboration for both parties. The output of each may be a jointly produced artwork; a shared strategy for the workplace; an artwork multiple distributed through wider trade; or a permanent intervention in the work environment.

Our curatorial strategies are inspired by 'The Nine Incorporated Trades of Dundee'. This organisation, operating since the 1400s, represents nine trade groups including the Bakers, Hammermen, Dyers and Weavers.

Nine contemporary visual artists will be selected by our Nine Trades Advisory Panel, up to four linked to Dundee, another five from UK and EIRE. Artists will be selected on quality of practice, potential to contribute to their trade situation and ability to engage with participants. During the development period we selected three Dundee artists to develop proposals we could

feasibility-check with employers: Alan Grieve, a hairdresser; Fraser Macdonald, a refuse collector and Ben Robinson, a bank call centre worker. We identified three corresponding workplaces including Nori Salon and HBOS Nethergate Branch who all are supportive of proposed activity. Our survey established a database of 170 artists working in second non-art trades who wish to receive information about further opportunities with this project.

The outputs of the 'Nine Trades of Dundee' will be nine core collaborative commissions; two 'scrivener' commissions, visually documenting the collaborative commissions; two essay commissions; a 'Nine Trades Final Gathering' event bringing together the artists, participants and wider audience; two 'open door' tours to see the work in situ; nine 'Nine Trades Apprenticeships' for Duncan of Jordanstone students; one 'Nine Trades' workshop for Braeview Academy, Dundee; and Edinburgh International Festival musical performance co-presented with The Space of 'Experimentum Mundi', an Italian orchestra of artisans; and a linked Creative Learning Resource to accompany the 'Nine Incorporated Trades of Dundee' display at McManus Galleries.

Nine Trades of Dundee is a project devised by Exhibitions Department, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, University of Dundee.

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