

CURRICULUM VITAE

LAURENCE MCKEOWN, PHD

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Awards

2017 Awarded the Tyrone Guthrie Centre Regional Bursary Award from Louth County Council.

2017 Nominated for the Writers Guild of Ireland Zebbie Award for *Green and Blue*, a play which explores the painful and humorous realities faced by individuals who patrolled the border during the height of the conflict. Based on an oral archive of serving RUC and An Garda Síochána officers, collected by Diversity Challenges, the production fuses theatre and film to look at the person behind the uniform and the different experiences of two individuals on either side of a line in the ground. Directed by Paula McFetridge and performed by James Doran and Vincent Higgins.

2016 Nominated in the Celtic Media Festival for *Bhí mé ann* as writer on a series of 6 documentary films (26 mins) made for broadcast in the spring/summer of 2015 on Ireland's TG4 (<http://www.tg4.tv>) and RTÉ (<http://www.rte.ie>).

2012 Selected as an international artist and participant in CORNERS Balkans Xpedition (<http://cornersofeurope.org/xpedition-balkans>) to Xpedition to Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania April 2012. Corners is an intercultural arts project, created and developed by six culture organisations in Europe: [Intercult](#) (Sweden), [Umeå 2014 – European Capital of Culture](#) (Sweden) City Culture Institute (Gdansk, Poland), [Exodos Ljubljana](#) (Slovenia), [Drugo More](#) (Croatia) and [POGON](#) (Croatia)

2011 Selected as an international artist and participant in CORNERS Caucasus Xpedition (<http://cornersofeurope.org/xpedition-caucasus>) to Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan Sept-Oct 2011. Corners is an intercultural arts project, created and developed by six culture organisations in Europe: [Intercult](#) (Sweden), [Umeå 2014 – European Capital of Culture](#) (Sweden) [City Culture Institute](#) (Gdansk, Poland), [Exodos Ljubljana](#) (Slovenia), [Drugo More](#) (Croatia) and [POGON](#) (Croatia)

2009 Co-recipient, along with Dawn Purvis (then leader of the Progressive Unionist Party) of the Glencree International Centre for Peace and Reconciliation *Inaugural Peacemaker Award*

2006 *Daily Ireland Cross-Border Award*: Contribution to Reconciliation Work

1999 *Aisling Award*: Contribution to Arts and Culture

BOOKS PUBLISHED

2025 *And Flowers Grew Up Through The Concrete*. A prison memoir 1981-1992: Belfast: Beyond the Pale Books.

2021 *Time Shadows*. A prison memoir 1976-1981: Belfast: Beyond the Pale Books.

2018 *Threads*. Debut collection of poetry. Clare, Ireland: Salmon Poetry.

2006 *I arose this morning...: A biography of Bobby Sands for Younger Readers*. Co-authored with Denis O’ Hearn. Belfast: Beyond the Pale Publications.

2006 *D’éirigh mé ar maidin...: Beathaisnéis Roibeaird Uí Sheachnasaigh do Léitheoirí Níos Óige*. A biography of Bobby Sands for Younger Readers. Co-authored with Denis O’ Hearn. Dublin: Coiseim.

2001 *Out of Time* Belfast: Beyond the Pale Publications.

1996 *Racconti? Ireland ‘96: Short Stories from Ireland, Italy, France*. Co-edited with Orsola Casagrande (Turin, Italy) Belfast: Beyond the Pale.

1994 *Nor Meekly Serve My Time: The H-Block Struggle 1976-1981*, Campbell Brian, McKeown Laurence, and O’Hagan Felim (eds.), (1994) Belfast: Beyond the Pale.

BOOK CHAPTERS

2021 ‘Mickey Devine’. In *Comrades*, Belfast, An Fhuisseog.

2021 ‘So much went unspoken’. In Norma Hashim and Yousef M. Aljamal (eds.) *A Shared Struggle*, Belfast, An Fhuisseog.

2021 ‘Aftermath: The role of the arts in dealing with the legacy of conflict’. In Lesley Lelourec and Grainne O’Keefe-Vigneron (eds.) *Northern Ireland After The Good Friday Agreement: Building A Shared Future From A Troubled Past? Reimagining Ireland* Volume 99, Oxford, UK, Peter Lang.

2020 ‘A Moment That Changed History’. In Alison Garden and Margaret M. Scull (eds.) *The Irish Review*, Cork, Cork University Press.

- 2020 'From D102 to Paulo Freire: an Irish Journey'. In Rod Earle and James Mehigan (eds.) *Degrees of Freedom: Prison Education at the Open University*. Bristol. Policy Press.
- 2008 'An afternoon in September 1983'. In Phil Scraton and Jude McCulloch's (eds.) *The Violence of Incarceration*. London: Routledge.

SCREEN AND THEATRE

- 2023 ***The McKearneys: an Irish family*** *Writer/Director*

A feature-length documentary on Tommy and the McKearney family from Moy, Co Tyrone who suffered great loss during the conflict.

- 2023 ***Dee Hub***
Writer/Director

Funded by Create Louth. A short film looking at the work of Dee Hub youth project in Ardee, Co Louth and seeing the world through the eyes of several young, male participants in the project.

- 2022 ***Nowhere to Hide: Clann Naofa Boxing Academy***
Writer/Director

Funded by Creative Louth. A short film about Clann Naofa Boxing Academy, Dundalk, Co Louth which was established in 2004 by Jim O'Neill, formerly of the Lower Falls, Belfast. Jim's aim was to provide an opportunity for young people from the sprawling working-class estate which was greatly lacking in facilities. In the intervening years Jim not only helped train Katie Taylor and Katie Harrington but produced his own local champions, Deárbhla Tinnelly and Evelyn Igharo.

- 2021 ***Before You Go***
Playwright

Written as part of the 'From Oriel to Brexit' project funded under the EU PEACE IV-Programme. The project used the arts (theatre, music, creative writing and photography) to look at how to deal with the legacy of the past. *Before You Go* was written as part of that project.

Sorcha O'Hagan, daughter of Brendan O'Hagan and Mary McPeake, is about to leave home to emigrate to Australia. Her mother, Mary, died when Sorcha was aged three and her father, Brendan, and his family reared Sorcha. Brendan was involved in the conflict, but it is unclear to what degree. It meant, however, that he was often absent from Sorcha's life. Despite that, they have a warm relationship though a lot has not

been talked about regarding the family, Brendan's past, SORCHA's upbringing, and family dynamics. On the morning when SORCHA is about to emigrate, she wants to discover more.

2020 ***Schedule 24 Section 3*** *Writer*

Commissioned by The Playhouse, Derry. A short film that examines the impact of Police 'stop and search' procedures.

2019 ***Something in the Air*** *Playwright*

Commissioned by Brassneck Theatre Company, Belfast, the play looks back at the burning of Bombay Street, Belfast in August 1969 which led to thousands of Catholic/nationalists fleeing from their homes and becoming refugees across the border in the Republic of Ireland. Seen through the eyes of Rosie Murray 50 years later, we discover that she lost more than just her home which was burned to the ground; she also lost her innocence. Fifty years later, as she recounts events of that period with Lauren Walsh, a former banker from Dublin who now works on behalf of refugees and migrants, Rosie is confronted with the events of that summer of '69 in a manner that she could never have imagined.

2019 ***In the Shadow of Gullion*** *Writer and Director*

Commissioned by The Playhouse, Derry, funded under the EU Peace IV programme. A live multi-media event using film, sound, theatre, music, song, and narration to show how South Armagh, an area designated as one of natural beauty, is rich in folklore, culture, and tradition but has also suffered strife and conflict over many centuries.

2016 ***Green & Blue*** *Playwright*

Commissioned by Diversity Challenges and produced by Kabosh Theatre Green & Blue explores the painful and humorous realities faced by individuals who patrolled the border during the height of the conflict. Based on an oral archive of serving RUC and An Garda Síochána officers, collected by Diversity Challenges, the production fuses theatre and film to look at the person behind the uniform and the different experiences of two individuals on either side of a line in the ground. Directed by Paula McFetridge and performed by James Doran and Vincent Higgins.

2016 ***Cherish all the children of the nation equally*** *Writer and Director*

A multi-media pageant incorporating song, music, film, and theatre exploring the origins of the 1916 Irish Proclamation and its relevance today in particular its

reference to ‘cherishing all of the children of the nation equally and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government, which have divided a minority from the majority in the past.’ Directed by Paula McFetridge and produced by Kabosh Theatre Company.

2014 ***Those you pass on the Street*** Playwright

Commissioned by Healing Through Remembering and produced by Kabosh Theatre. *Those you pass on the Street* explores the complexities of dealing with the legacy of a conflict that was very personalised and local. It contrasts party political positioning on any agreed way to deal with the legacy of that conflict with the individual needs and human interaction that has already begun at a personal level. Most importantly it challenges the view that any mechanism for dealing with the past is simply about ‘whose side gets what’ and shows that there is a need not just for inter-community but also intra-community engagement and reconciliation.

Those you pass on the street toured to almost 50 venues across Ireland and in July 2016 was selected as part of the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown – the largest and oldest arts festival in South Africa. In 2016 South Africa celebrated a number of anniversaries: the 20th anniversary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission; the 40th anniversary of the Soweto Uprising; and the 65th anniversary of the signing of the Freedom Charter. As part of the theatre section of the festival programme there was a focus on the theme of ‘dealing with the past’ and looking at how various countries had approached this. The festival also wanted to explore the role that the arts had played in that process. *Those You Pass on the Street* was the only play chosen from Ireland. The play then went on Rwanda to be performed as part of the Ubumuntu Arts Festival at the site of the monument to the victims of genocide in their country. In June 2017 it was performed as part of the Dresden Arts Festival, Germany.

2014 ***You were never big on luxuries: Art, Life and Conflict.*** Writer and Director
Documentary film (60 mins)

A documentary film that looks at how artists, political activists, academics, and those tasked with providing funding for the arts regard the role that the arts have played in dealing with the conflict in the north of Ireland and the legacy of that conflict.

2014 ***Bhí mé ann: I was there*** Writer

A series of 6 documentary films (26 mins) broadcast in the spring/summer of 2015 on Ireland’s TG4 (<http://www.tg4.tv>) and RTÉ (<http://www.rte.ie>). The programmes recount the experiences of a wide range of people who lived through the conflict in the north of Ireland. The broadcast programmes are part of a wider

project including radio programmes and archival interviews part of the Glórtha Aduaidh: Northern Voices project funded under the EU PEACE III Programme.

2013 ***Two Roads West: Derry*** Playwright

A site-specific drama commissioned by Kabosh Theatre Company and performed in a moving black taxi as part of the Derry City of Culture programme.

Rosie, originally from the Donegal but who spent her early teenage years in Derry, returns from London for a short trip. She takes a black taxi ride around Derry and shares memories with Gerry, the taxi driver, from Derry.

2013 ***Built to Contain*** Playwright

A radio play developed with people with convictions in NI. Through a series of intense workshops over a one-week period stories were gathered to produce a unique 26-minute play exploring life in prison including daily routines, power systems, small acts of rebellion, communication with the world beyond the walls and imaginary escapism. I then wrote the play in one week along with Artistic Director, Paula McFetridge. The third week the play was rehearsed with the participants in the workshops then recorded live in the basement of the old Crumlin Road Prison, Belfast. The play is an integral part of the Corners Europe artistic project - a platform for artists and audiences, designed and driven by cultural organisations at the fringes of Europe including; Stockholm, Donostia/San Sebastián, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Rijeka, Belgrade, Gdańsk, Bari and Belfast. The programme creates opportunities for artists and researchers to collaborate internationally on multidisciplinary artistic and cultural projects and share them with audiences and communities in arts events across Europe. In Northern Ireland the artists are commissioned and funded by the Arts Council. The development of the play in Northern Ireland was supported by NIACRO (the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders).

2013 ***Aftermath – the exhibition*** Writer and Director

16 short (12-minute) films for the Aftermath exhibition (www.diversity-challenges.com/aftermath-project).

The films feature interviews with a range of people who tell their story of engagement in the conflict, who were displaced by it, or who had relatives killed in it. The exhibition was part of the Aftermath project funded by Louth Peace and Reconciliation Partnership as awarded under Peace 3. The exhibition toured four venues in 2013 – the County Museum, Dundalk; the Gallery of Photography, Dublin; the Sean Hollywood Arts Centre, Newry; and Belfast Exposed Gallery. In 2014 it toured a further six venues in 2014: The Market Theatre, Armagh; The Market House

Museum, Monaghan; University College Cork; The Verbal Arts Centre, Derry; Féile an Phobail, Belfast; the Belfast Film Festival, Belfast.

2012 ***Life as an interface*** *Writer and Director*

Documentary film (45 mins)

Commissioned by the Community Relations Council of Northern Ireland.

The film is based on the Skegoneill Glandore Common Purpose (SGCP) project which sits on the interface between Skegoneill and Glandore in North Belfast. It has no 'peace wall' to separate the communities but contains the same mix of population that in other areas has meant the erection of a wall, many of which have gone up post 'the peace process'. The chair of the group is an American woman who is now resident in the area and has worked in community development in Belfast for many years. The vice-chair is a former loyalist life-sentence prisoner; two of the staff recently employed are from a republican background. All are committed to ensuring the success of the project. And all have their own lives outside of the project.

2010 ***Bespoke Theatre for Political Tourism: 'Reports from War-Torn Belfast' and 'Winnie and William'*** *Playwright*

Two 10-minute dramas commissioned by Kabosh Theatre Company, Belfast on behalf of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Failte Feirste Thiar and in partnership with Coiste na nIarchimí and TaxiTrax tours. Performed at Easter 2010. To be revived in August 2010 as part of Féile an Phobail.

2009 ***Two Roads West*** *Playwright*

A site-specific drama commissioned by Kabosh Theatre Company and performed in a moving black taxi during the Cathedral Quarter Festival 7th – 10th May. Sixteen sold-out performances for 80 people. The production was revived during Féile an Phobail 30th July – 8th August, where 24 performances were held for 120 people.

Rosie, originally from the Falls Road in Belfast, returns from London for a short trip. She takes a black taxi ride up the Falls and down the Shankill and shares memories with Bill, the taxi driver, from the Shankill.

2009 ***Bespoke Theatre for Cultural Tourism: HMS Belfast and RMS Olympic*** *Playwright*

Two 20-minute monologues commissioned by Kabosh Theatre Company, Belfast on behalf of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board. Performed at the Tall Ships exhibition

14-16 August. Approximately 42 performances each. To be revived in October 2009 for NITB board and visitor event.

2008 ***Bespoke Theatre: Dealing with the Past*** Playwright

Thirty-minute drama commissioned by Kabosh Theatre Company, Belfast (December 2008). Addresses pertinent issue of victims and survivors for the Relatives for Justice AGM. Presented in Fall's Road Library prior to Eames/Bradley report. One performance for 120 traditional non-theatre-goers.

2008 ***Bespoke Theatre: Whatever you say, say Something*** Playwright

Six 10-minute pieces commissioned by Kabosh Theatre Company, Belfast (June 2008). Performed at the Healing Through Remembering (HTR) conference *Whatever You Say, Say Something*, the Baby Grand @ Grand Opera House. Broad range of controversial issues explored including the need for individuals to engage in proactive discussion. One performance for 220 traditional non-theatre-goers.

2006 ***The Official Version*** Playwright

A two-Act play commissioned by Dubblejoint Theatre Company (September 2006). Performed on the Whiterock Road, Belfast and various other venues around Ireland. Produced by: Dubblejoint Theatre.

A drama set in 2006 where four people visit the site of the former prison at Long Kesh. One is a former assistant governor at the prison, one a researcher, and the other two had a relative (son and brother) imprisoned there.

2003 ***A Cold House*** Playwright

A 2-Act play co-written with Brian Campbell and commissioned by Dubblejoint Theatre Company. Performed in Amharclann na Carraige, Belfast and various other venues around Ireland. Produced by: Dubblejoint Theatre.

A drama set in 2003 where a republican ex-prisoner meets up, by accident, with an ex-RUC man when he comes to fix his central heating system.

2001 ***The Laughter of our Children*** Playwright

A 2-Act play co-written with Brian Campbell and commissioned by Dubblejoint Theatre Company (May 2001). Performed in Belfast and various other venues around Ireland. Produced by: Dubblejoint Theatre.

A drama set within a family in a rural community in the North of Ireland during the time of the 1981 hunger strike when they receive the news that their imprisoned son, Peadar, has volunteered to participate on the hunger strike.

2001 ***H3*** *Co-writer*

Feature film about the protests and 1981 hunger strike in the H-Blocks by Republican prisoners.

Golden Rosa Camuna (first prize) at Bergamo Film Festival, Italy. Best screenplay award at Avanca Film Festival, Portugal. A film based on the 1981 hunger strike in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh prison (HMP Maze), Belfast. Premiere: Galway Film Fleadh, 2001. Co-written with Brian Campbell. Directed by Les Blair.

1997 ***I gCillín an Bháis*** *Co-producer*

Documentary film about the protests and 1981 hunger strike in the H-Blocks by Republican prisoners, featuring those who took part in them.

Commissioned by Teilifís na Gaeilge. In 1998 the documentary was selected by Amnesty International as one of just 15 films from throughout the world to celebrate Amnesty's 50th Anniversary. A documentary based on the 1981 hunger strike in Long Kesh, 1997.

1992 ***The Visit*** *Writer*

First published in *An Glór Gafa/The Captive Voice* the short story was later adapted for film and screened on Channel 4 and RTE. Directed by Orla Walsh.