



buí bolg
productions

Annual Report 2008



Mission Statement

Buí Bolg is a professional street theatre company that takes the arts to many different audiences engaging them as participants, performers, creators and critics.

We create fresh and innovative outdoor performances through a combination of originality, imagination, impeccable professionalism and humour, with just a touch of mischief to add to the magic.

We aim:

- To make artistic work, through the medium of street arts, outdoor performance and spectacle of the highest standards available to the widest possible audience and client base nationally and internationally
- To promote the value and raise awareness of Irish street arts at festivals and events nationally and internationally
- To create opportunities for artistic involvement of young people through developing ongoing Youth Street Arts programmes
- Provide employment opportunities to emerging and established practitioners in design, construction, direction and performance
- To collaborate with other professionals in the field towards the creation of innovative work
- To assist the professional development of our staff through training and exposure to new work



Our Portfolio includes:



Outgoing Chair's Report

I would like to thank all the staff and volunteers at Buí Bolg for their hard work and innovative approach to the arts throughout 2008 - and for their ongoing support. Buí Bolg is in a constant positive state of flux, embracing change with a tremendous openness and constantly striving to meet the highest standards of excellence. This continuous organisational change and development means that everywhere that Buí Bolg appears, an air of creativity permeates the atmosphere. Other organisations could learn a lot from the Buí Bolg attitude, as I have over the years.

2008 saw an unprecedented number of new initiatives for Buí Bolg and this has been exemplified by the number of festivals and community events we have undertaken internationally, nationally and locally. Buí Bolg as a 'not for profit' company also demonstrate a pioneering financial structure. Their work with the corporate sector helps generate income which is fed back into the organisation. This makes it possible for the organisation to invest in a youth arts group and offer good value to cultural and community events wherever the 'Buí bolg magic' is required.

Congratulations on a very creative and successful year.

Helen Corish Wylde



Artistic Director and General Manager's Report 2008

Buí Bolg is much more than a 'street theatre' company – filling the cultural gap that often exists between different artforms and different audiences. From pop art inspired inflatable sculptures at the Oxegen Festival to appearing in parades, devising spectacular lighting installations and offering comic, physical walkabout theatre in a multitude of venues – from Kilkenny Castle to sports stadia, the Galway Races to the International Scouts Jamboree– the flexibility, adaptability and sheer dynamism of Buí Bolg means that we are both very proud to head up the organisation's creativity and strategic direction. One of the important things that Buí Bolg do is reach non-arts audiences - helping ignite a spark of interest and ensuring social inclusion. Without audiences, companies like Buí Bolg would not survive, so we are delighted that 2008 witnessed the support and celebration of literally hundreds of thousands of people who observed first hand the exuberant experience of a Buí Bolg event. But we must not rest on our laurels and in 2009 we hope to oversee Buí Bolg's move into new areas – health, science and a closer relationship with the Irish and international Festivals Market. Collaborative working with other arts, festivals and community organisations will be a focal point of our work in the year ahead.

We have been working together on the company's vision and direction – while putting into place structures and policies to stabilise a sustainable, viable future for Buí Bolg – including an intellectual property policy, environmental impact statement and a child protection policy. One key development in 2008 was the award from the Arts Council of Ireland - The New Works Research and Development Grant has had an incredible impact on our organisation – not only in terms of improving the range and quality of the art we produce, but has inspired team members to challenge their own personal and professional limitations. This in turn has revitalised the team who are now better motivated and are able to work more closely together. This new stability has meant that we are able to focus our attentions to audiences and looking to work in new areas with vigour and enthusiasm rather than fear.

Marie Brennan

General Manager

Colm Lowney

Artistic Director

Activities 2008

Festivals

Our Festivals work includes Cavan Arts Festival, Birr Vintage Week, Listowel Writer's Week, Temple Bar Diversions, Naas Family Day, Sonraigh Youth Dance Festival and Waterford Food Festival. The flagship event is our street performance for the St. Patrick's Day Festival Parade which won the Spirit of the Parade award.

Community and Outreach

We were delighted to see that this area of our work grew in 2008 and includes work with 6 local authorities. One key area of growth was the commission by Wexford County Council's Environment Department for anti-litter puppet shows which included the 'premier' of our first animatronic puppet.

Youth Group

The Youth Group activities at our premises in Wexford continued to be oversubscribed with 80 people on the books and a waiting list of over 2 years. Our youth work covers performance, visual arts, circus skills and puppetry.

Entertainment Events

Buí Bolg offered fantastic entertainment for a wide range of events including work with Fáilte Ireland, Gay Pride Parade and the Galway Race Week.

Installations Events

Including the production of temporary sculptures and inflatable artworks for the Oxegen Music Festival and a lighting installation (in collaboration with local schools and active retirement groups) for Fingal County Council – Light up Fingal at Swords Castle.

Costume and Prop Hires

Including Roundstone Summer Festival, Rehab, GAA, Rathnure Pantomime, RAPID Waterford and the International Scouts Jamboree. 17 new props were constructed - including work for Circus Gerbola, Irish Sikh Society, An Taisce and ENFO.

Master classes and Training Delivery

Once again Buí Bolg staff delivered professional masterclasses for an arts organisation in Singapore to assist them in the design and production of props for the 2009 Chingay Parade to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

We hosted 15 school placements, delivered two workshops in puppet-making/street arts for professional artists and hosted two work placements for graduates in art and design. As outdoor performance and spectacle work is a fairly specialised field we feel it is important to invest in

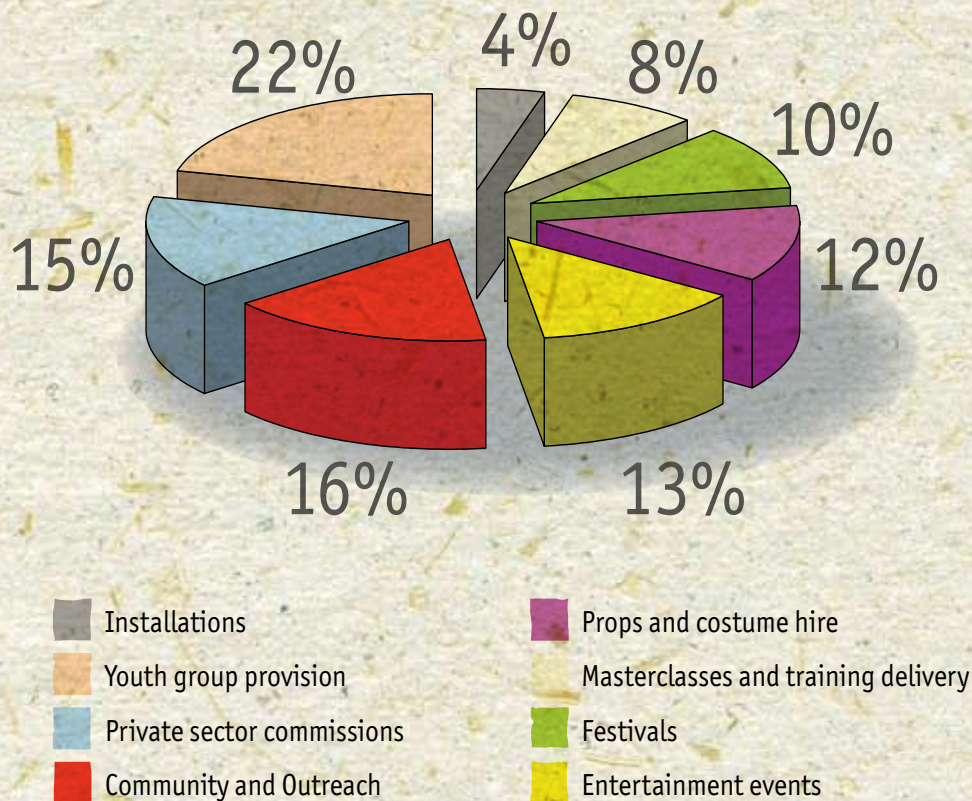
the creative incubation of artists for the future of the art form. One graduate placement went on to win a bursary award from Artlinks to study an MA in Stage and Prop Design.

Private Sector Commissions

We are unable to deliver artistically without the support and commissions of private sector companies and other groups who ‘buy in’ our services, including Google, Brand Ignite, Irish Hotels Federation, Guinness, Red Hot Productions, Fleishman Hillard, Publicis D, MCD Productions and Bulmer’s Comedy Festival. As a not for profit company we feel we have a strong social entrepreneurship structure which means we generate income to make up the short fall in funding and deliver our services to young people in Wexford. In addition, our collaborations with the private sector enable us to bring the arts to a whole host of different audiences. Corporate clients will be delighted to know that their employment of us helps not only our artistic ambitions, but also goes along way in assisting with the subsidy of our work with charities, schools, youth and community groups throughout the island of Ireland.

Audiences

Our Street theatre and outdoor performance reach large numbers of people as audiences, or as active participants. Our work is naturally inclusive and assists communities’ sense of well being via communal celebration. The demographic range and numbers for our sector are therefore immense. For example, our pageant at St. Patrick’s Festival Dublin 2008 reached an audience of c600, 000. This chart shows a breakdown by percentage of our work in 2008.



Achievements

- Colm Lowney nominated for a Fellowship (FRSA) Royal Society of Arts London
- Buí Bolg Youth Group affiliated with the National Association of Youth Drama
- Buí Bolg won 'Spirit of the Festival Award' St. Patrick's Day Festival Dublin
- Commissioned by Feile Peile na nOg/Cavan County Council to produce an international festival finale with 200 local children (audience 3,500)
- Membership of the Independent Street Arts Network in the UK

Artistic Development

- Visit to Fira Tarrega 2008 – networking and visiting shows and companies
- 4 members of the team received specialist training in animatronics with Gorton Studios in London who produce special effects for television and music industries – including Dr. Who
- Bespoke training in inflatable artworks construction with Keith Payne (who has created inflatables for Pink Floyd, The Rolling Stones, and St. Patrick's Day Parade)
- Attendance at conference at UCD Cultural Management



Buí Bolg Financial Statement for 2008

Profit & loss statement as at 03/02/2009	Actual 2008	Per cent of sales
Total revenue	€613,765	100%
Total operating costs	€558,204	90.9%
Grand total costs	€614,978	100.2%
Profit (loss)	(€1,214)	(0.2%)

***Grants include;**

Arts Council of Ireland
Wexford Borough Council
Wexford County Council
Katherine Howard Foundation
Pobal

We value the support of all of the above for their generous financial support and advice.



Board

Name	Sector	Joined	Left
Helen Corish Wylde	Education and arts	01/10/98	ongoing
Eamonn Hore	Local Government	04/07/01	ongoing
Stella Konik	Arts	22/6/08	ongoing
Annette Lowney	Local Business	01/01/94	ongoing
Grainne Millar	Culture/tourism/arts	07/09/07	07/10/08
Tom Mooney	Media	18/11/05	ongoing
Arthur Robb	Accountancy/business/finance	06/11/03	ongoing
Ray Yeates	Arts	22/06/08	ongoing
Karla Sanchez O'Connell	Arts/Philosophy	25/03/07	18/01/08

Incoming Board Members from February 2009:

Gianni Ponzi, Director, Eireann Design Wexford.

Sean Mythen, Chief Executive Officer, Wexford County Enterprise Board, Wexford.

Ann Gallagher, Gallagher Law, Wexford.

Staff

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR - Colm Lowney FRSA is the creative giant behind Buí Bolg's picaresque pageantry. Nobody but Colm has ever plummed the depths of the psyche from which those off the wall wild-eyed monsters and shockingly uproarious characters spring... and we're not sure we'd want to! Nobody who has ever come face-to-face with one of Colm's creations can forget the experience! Colm manages to bring out the creativity in all of the staff and anyone who witnesses a Buí Bolg creation. In 2008 Colm became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, a very prestigious accolade to receive.

GENERAL MANAGER - Marie Brennan M.A, M. ICOMOS, E.E.S, A.M.A Marie has been working in the arts, heritage and cultural sector since 1988. She has worked with international artists such as Anish Kapoor, managed arts venues and written cultural strategies for national and regional government. Marie joined the company in 2008 whilst working as a consultant specialising in arts and disability, creative enterprise development, community arts and arts within education. She holds a BA (hons) degree in the History of Art Design and Film and has taught extensively in this area. In addition she also holds a teaching qualification and a Masters degree in Creative and Media Enterprise from Warwick University (2001).

ASSISTANT MANAGER - Lucy Medlycott BA (Hons) graduated with a Degree in Fine Arts (Sculpture) in 1993 from the Limerick School of Art and Design. She is a founder member of Buí Bolg, helping to establish the company in Wexford since 1994. Lucy works with the corporate sector and community groups and is a member of the Executive of Wexford Community Forum, and in this capacity sits on the Wexford County Development Board.

COSTUME DESIGNER/INFLATABLE MAKER - Frances White has travelled widely – born in Chile, she holds a Diploma in French Language Studies from the University of Besancon, France, and a Diploma in Costume from Wimbledon College of Art. She has also managed to pack in more than twenty years experience in costume design working for prestigious companies such as The Gaiety Theatre, Drury Lane Theatre, The Barbican Centre, and the Mermaid Theatre in London, The Royal Shakespeare Company and Wexford Festival Opera. Frances is responsible for designing and creating costumes and inflatable artworks and props.

PERFORMANCE DIRECTOR & YOUTH GROUP FACILITATOR - Edward Milbourne Edward is a performer, improviser, clown and comic youth theatre and drama facilitator, sketch writer, props and float maker. He has worked with Bare Cheek Theatre, Wexford Pantomime Society, Pakasha Arts, directed a major outdoor performance for the GAA and Cavan County Council and an outdoor performance at a train station for the Sonraigh Youth Dance Festival in 2008. In the 1990's he was honoured with the titles: All Ireland Ballroom Champion, All Ireland Waltz Champion and All Ireland Rock and Roll Dance Champion for consecutive years

He is also a trained first aider and is trained in Child Protection best practice. He is also taking a HGV licence to help us get all our stuff about.

DESIGNER & YOUTH GROUP FACILITATOR - Caoimhe Dunn (Ba Hons) graduated from the IADT, Dun Laoghaire in 2005 holds a degree in Model Making and Design, and an honours degree in Fine Art. She has worked with the National Library and also with the Dublin Lyric Players as visual artist and mask maker. She has been employed with Buí Bolg since September 2005 as model designer, youth theatre and drama facilitator and prop maker. Caoimhe, when not up to her neck in polystyrene also works on the visuals of the small details that make up our work – wigs, noses, make-up etc.

MODEL MAKER, ANIMATRONICS TECHNICIAN AND DESIGNER - Fionnuala McMullin (BE elec. BA Hons) graduated from UCD in 1997 with a degree in electronics. After a couple of years programming, she decided to re-train and studied model making in IADT, Dun Laoghaire. Since then, she has worked on a wide range of projects both here and abroad - from architectural miniatures to large scale sets and props for the film, music and theatre sectors. Fionnuala is the creative brain behind our animatronic giants.

PROP AND INFLATABLES MAKER & MUSICAL DIRECTOR - Edgar Bird graduated in Sound Engineering and Music in 2005. He regularly plays and performs live at many of Buí Bolg's larger events. Edgar is also a skilled model maker and metal worker. He also runs a highly successful grunge rock band. More recently he has been specialising in inflatable art works production with us at Buí Bolg.

Affiliations:

NAYD (National Association of Youth Drama), **ISAN** (Independent Street Artist's Network), **Theatre Forum Ireland**, **AOIFE** (Association of Irish festivals and events), **Wexford Chamber of Commerce**, **ISME** (Irish Small and Medium Enterprises Association), **Create**(National Development Agency for Collaborative Arts), **Business 2 Arts**.



Wexford County Council



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