

North-55 refers to the line of latitude, which crosses the border between Derry and Donegal.

Not factory women,
factory girls. Everyone
here is a factory girl.
Factory girls never
grow old and they
don't fade away.

MISSION

North-55 is a socially-engaged visual arts organisation which develops site-specific public art that engages divergent communities on civic issues on a cross-border basis.

North-55 has shaped a hybrid form of cultural practice that utilises a multi-disciplinary approach, fusing cultural and aesthetic pursuits with community development processes.

North-55 establishes new coalitions with other arts, community and statutory organisations through long-term partnerships, thus creating a cultural corridor where innovative ideas are visualised and articulated across the region.

North-55 promotes critical art practices and cultural strategies through projects, ongoing research, and public forums.

AIMS

To act as a catalyst for the development of innovative cross-border projects, that utilise a multi-disciplinary approach.

To initiate collaborative site-specific projects that target marginalised groups, encourage access to the arts and engage diverse audiences.

To develop strategies that breach cultural isolation and create a dialogue beyond conflict. North-55 takes full cognisance of cultural diversity in the development and delivery of its programmes

To promote international collaborations, critical debate, and the dissemination of information, within this area of practice.

CONTACT

North-55
51 Upper Main Street
Buncrana
Co Donegal
Ireland

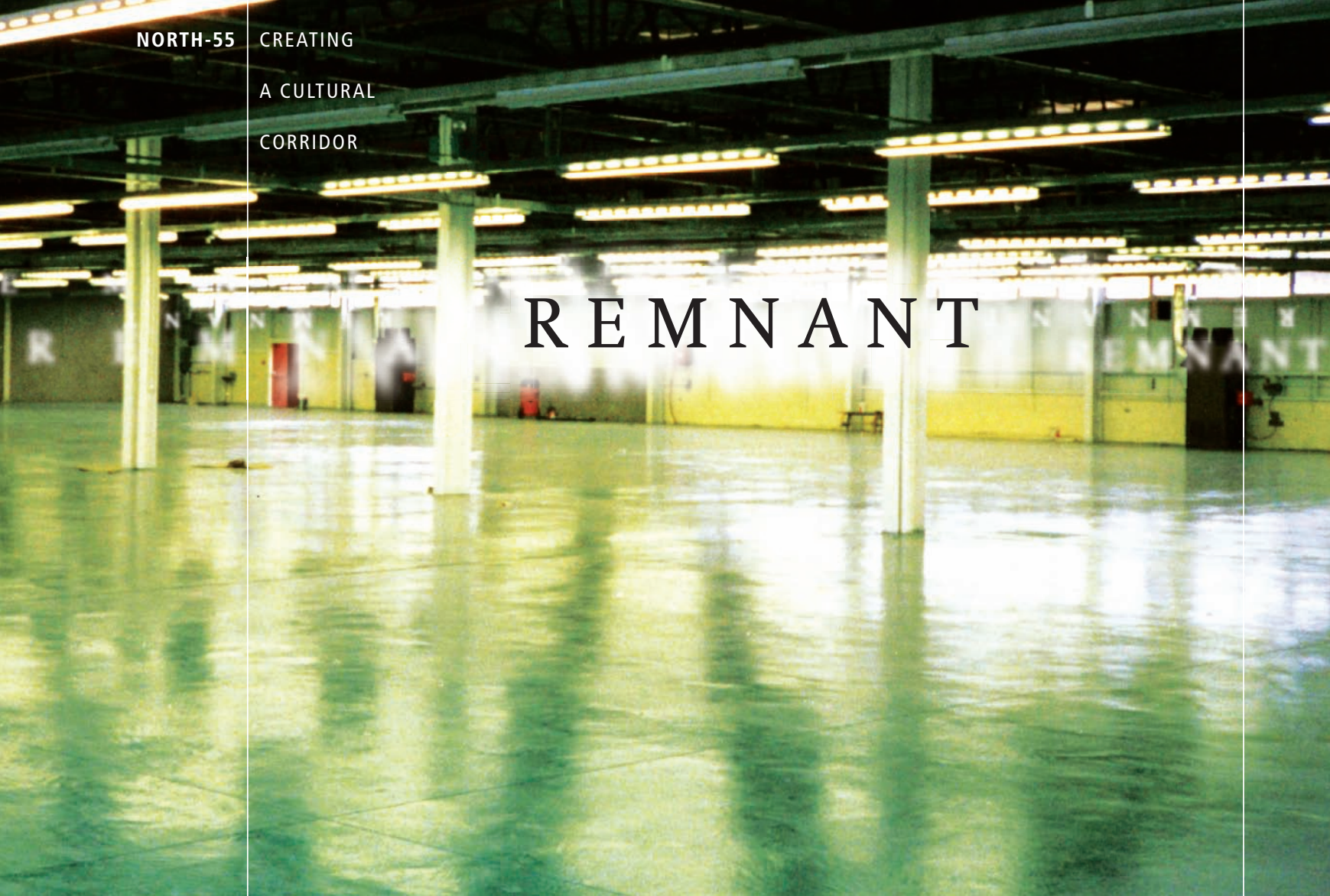
T +353 (0)74 932 2870
E north55@eircom.net

NORTH-55 CREATING

A CULTURAL

CORRIDOR

REMNANT



REMNANT is an innovative cross-border public art project that has visualised and articulated elements of the working lives of women and men who were central to the linen/garment industry in the North-West region.

Remnant will culminate in an audio-visual installation and large-scale projection event at Fort Dunree from the 28th November to the 12th December 2008.

The linen/garment industry existed in the North-West for over a century and had been a major source of employment. It had a major presence in the area over the last twenty years, employing over

3,500 people in plants across the county. This has had a significant impact on social-cultural identity – young people, particularly females, left school early to work in local factories and generations of the same family often worked in the industry.

At its height 10,000 people worked in more than 30 shirt factories in Derry. The industry

received a mention in Das Kapital by Karl Marx when discussing the factory system:

'The shirt factory of Messrs. Tille at Londonderry, which employs 1000 operatives in the factory itself, and 9000 people spread up and down the country and working in their own houses.'

Part IV, Chapter XV
(first published in 1867)

The project has found resonance within the current socio-economic climate – garment sector production has now become highly globalised and characterized by continual waves of relocation. The social-economy in the North-West has been transformed by the unraveling of the once dominant textile industry.



REMNANT has recorded contemporary and historical elements of linen/garment factory work and culture. Audio-visual workshops took place with (40) participants, who were ex-factory workers, to document their experiences. Through oral testimonies, photographic portraits and video recordings these workshops gathered a range of perspectives.

The exhibition presents large-scale photographs of derelict factories; these reveal ghostly signage that reflects the history of the buildings former use and occupancy. These photographs make visible an urban and rural archaeology which chronicles local social history. Visitors to the exhibition can simultaneously listen to audio testimonies.

The Remnant film includes footage of factory buildings, people at work, and a wide range of participant's narratives which epitomised an era. The sound track features extracts from the Frank McGuinness play *The Factory Girls*. His play explores the story of five women who, facing the threat of redundancy, stage a lock-in in a shirt factory in Co. Donegal.

'Not factory women, factory girls. Everyone here is a factory girl. Factory girls never grow old and they don't fade away'

Frank McGuinness, *The Factory Girls*

Communal singing was a strong tradition in local factories. Evoking that tradition, the soundtrack includes the recorded singing of Masie Grant, who was a local factory worker and extracts from instrumental music that factory workers in Derry would sing along to, which was piped onto the factory floor. (Typically from the BBC radio programme "Music While You Work"). The film also features the sound of the shirt factory horn, symbolising the last post for the factories.

The Remnant film will be projected in Fort Dunree over two consecutive nights in a weekend event, as part of the overall exhibition programme. The audience for the work will include direct participants, the local community, and representatives from the arts sector.

The exhibition and event will be opened by **Sophie Hope**

B + B Curators, London

Guest speakers

Professor Frank McGuinness, Playwright
John McCarter, McCarters Factory

COLLABORATORS

McCarters Factory
John McCarter

Inishowen Development Partnership
Fort Dunree

Inishowen Community Radio

The Playhouse

The Verbal Arts Centre

The Nerve Centre