

CONFLICT TEXTILES

Stitched Voices / Lleisiau wedi eu Pwytho

Workshop: Making an arpillera doll Saturday 25th March 11am-1pm

This workshop, the first activity within the **Stitched Voices** programme of events, was facilitated by local textile artist Becky Knight. Eleven people participated; members of the Exhibition team, Arts Centre staff and members of the public.

Roberta Bacic started off with a short guided tour and invited us all to focus on a textile we were drawn to.

Back at the sturdy wooden table, working with the scraps of materials provided, we each created a doll in response to the textile with which we had a special connection.

We stretched nylon tights to form their body shape, we stuffed their heads with wadding, we paused as we considered how to dress our doll, we threaded needles (some of us, with difficulty) we stitched their clothes into shape, we sewed eyes, noses and mouths, we gave them long/short/bright/dark hair.



Deep in concentration around the table. (Photo: Breege Doherty)

As we cut, stitched, moulded and caressed the fabric of so many different hues and textures, our dolls took shape; each with their own character and life story. As they came to life, our concentration deepened. We worked in silence, we chatted, we laughed, we paused, we reflected, we marvelled at our creations, we remembered, we slowed down, we connected; with each other, with our ancestors and with people worldwide – in a myriad of circumstances.

Finally, we introduced our dolls to their textile and placed them there; their temporary home.



Berit, introducing her doll, who is banging a pot in solidarity with the women in “Cacerolazo / Women banging their pots”. (Photo: Breege Doherty)



Christine describing her doll who carries a basket entering the market place, similar to the women in “Verdulería en la población / Greengrocers in a población”.
(Photo: Breege Doherty)



Lydia, expressing the character of her doll, who has joined Berit’s doll in supporting the women in “Cacerolazo / Women banging their pots”. (Photo: Breege Doherty)



Elsie at “The Peace Ribbon” with her hippy, rebellious doll who refused to be moulded. (Photo: Breege Doherty)



Becky placing her representation of Steffan, Arts Centre Curator, at the entrance to the exhibition space. (Photo: Christine Andrä)

Five of the ten dolls created are shown here. The remaining five made by Margaret, Carol F, Carol B, Dani and Breege were also placed beside their textile of choice.

Calming, reflective, concentrated, inspiring, connecting and powerful are some of the words we used to describe our experience of this workshop.

Breege Doherty
27th March 2017