

**The best time to get up at the weekend?**

I would privilege getting up at the same time as during the week, which is around 7.30am. It's important I start the day without rush, taking my time and going with the rhythm of my routines. I go to bed around 11.30pm so there's plenty of space for a walk, or to cook from scratch in the evening, and talk to family, friends, colleagues. During the week I find I am rushed through the day to day and the many things that come to me and Conflict Textiles from within Northern Ireland and transnationally. Being able to slow down the pace of my weekends allows me to enjoy what I do, take pleasure in the process, and makes it easier.

**Breakfast or brunch?**

I always have breakfast when I'm at home and it's typically a medium portion of porridge with stewed apples from the garden, and blackberries and other fresh fruit. I drink a big mug of fresh mint with a slice of lemon.

When I'm away, it's not too different. It seems very important to me to be disciplined with food and try not to be hungry but avoid being too full. I find it helps my focus. Being strictly vegetarian means I am careful with what I eat and make sure I eat enough proteins and natural nutrients.

**What does an ideal Saturday look like?**

Start with breakfast, a talk on the phone with one of the several textiles artists that contribute with Conflict Textiles, and then go for a walk. It is very important for me to walk along the beach every day at different times, or in the forest around where I live in the north coast. Most of my creative work, inspiration and thinking happens when walking and immersed in nature. I don't carry music, it's just myself and nature.

There are times I walk with my husband and family, and often also with colleagues and friends.

After my morning walk, I'll come back around 10.30 to share coffee and a nice Welsh cake. After that I generally go through emails, answer some that need attention on a weekend as several of our contributors work during the week and dedicate personal time to their textile art.

I might take the bus to Limavady, visit the Roe Valley Arts and Cultural Centre, and often do some shopping. I value this time in the town and engaging in the community activities.

Every evening, I cook a simple whole-meal. It is relaxing, focused, a nice break and allows me to listen to music. We eat around 7. After that, always a walk to the beach, even if dark, wet, cold or windy.

**What would your perfect Sunday be like?**

Quite similar to a Saturday. A must is a phone call with my daughter and granddaughter in Chile, and also allow time to look into emails and plan the week/s ahead.

**Do you prefer indoors or outdoors?**

I like as much time outdoors as possible. I love wildlife, be that animals or flowers and vegetation. I use public transport — I consider that quality time, looking at the landscape and getting a sense of a place and its people. I also value time indoors at museums, libraries, community centres, and the like. As regards time at home, I quite like giving some time to housework,



## MY WEEKEND

# ROBERTA BACIC

The curator of the Conflict Textiles collection at the Ulster Museum on being outdoors and keeping informed

our cat Madame Gato, and writing cards and letters. I read a lot, but lately there's very little time to read beyond work-related subjects.

**How have weekends changed as you have gotten older?**

The most significant change is that the children are adults and have their own lives and we have had more time for ourselves and for our interests. They look after themselves, and the time we spend together is of great value and we have time to chat with them as adults/equals with no parenting responsibilities. We have certainly more freedom to organise daily

and professional life. They are interwoven, not separated.

**If you could eat out in Northern Ireland today, where would you go and why?**

We would go to Ardtara Country House. We go at least four times a year and stay an overnight. We feel "at home" and they always have a vegetarian menu for us. Walking around the area is great, and 24 hours away feels like an oasis.

We have brunch before leaving, and it's always good. We started going for an overnight break near home a few years ago, and find it so convenient not to have to pack, catch a plane and all the other hassles of going away.

*Roberta Bacic is the curator of the Conflict Textiles collection, which includes over 400 textile artworks. Threads of Empowerment: Conflict Textiles' International Journey, is now open at Ulster Museum. It features 29 textile displays from individuals and communities across the world who have experienced violence and conflict, human rights violations, poverty, oppression and environmental issues. For details, visit [ulstermuseum.org](http://ulstermuseum.org)*



Judi Dench, Jude Hill and Ciaran Hinds in Kenneth Branagh's 2021 drama *Belfast*

**Do you sometimes work at the weekend?**

Yes, I do. It is relevant to say that my interests and work are completely interconnected. They feed each other. They patch together. They are a united, inseparable body.

**Who would you most like to go for a drink with and why?**

My husband, although we don't go for a drink. We do often go out for a walk, or a coffee and a cake. We do once in a while have a glass of wine with our meals or at exhibition launches, previews or events. Preferably red Chilean wine.

**What is your dream Sunday dinner?**

Not different to a week dinner. We don't get takeaways, I prefer to cook from scratch — a main dish that includes protein, some rice/potato or pasta. A must every single day is a salad with many vegetables, and nicely dressed. Dinner is almost always at home. Lunch might be a sandwich in the park or open air.

**Heading to the cinema, what film would you watch?**

Living in Benone is very remote — we do not often go to the cinema from here, though we do watch some recommended films either at home or with our adult granddaughter in Belfast who has a big screen. Recently we watched *Frida*, a 2024 documentary film directed by Carla Gutierrez about the life of the Mexican painter. Inspirational from a perspective of art, curatorial thread, camera, etc. I have seen most films about her and the 1 hour 57 minutes seemed no time at all. We also enjoyed *Belfast*, and we totally enjoyed *Perfect Days* — a 2023 drama film directed by Wim Wenders from a script written by Wenders and Takuma Takasaki.

**Staying in? What TV?**

We do not have a TV; we do other things, sometimes sit by the fire and read, and talk about politics or our work, and we catch up with family and friends by phone. We keep informed by radio, internet, magazines and newspapers.

**Bedtime is?**

Around midnight — when home, away, on holiday or with friends.