

Seminar

Conflict Textiles seminar with Year 3 students, School of Applied Social and Policy Sciences, Belfast School of Art, Ulster University, Northern Ireland

22nd April 2026

Photo Gallery

The seminar, delivered by Conflict Textiles curator Roberta Bacic and facilitated by Claire Wright, explored the relevance of arts-based approaches to dealing with conflict, as part of the Transforming Violence Module offered to Year 3 students of Politics and International Studies at Ulster University (Belfast). It follows on from two collaborative seminars held in [2025](#) and [2024](#). In this year's session, Roberta offered the students a guided tour of the [Aftershocks Exhibition](#) at the Belfast School of Art and introduced them to the work of Conflict Textiles more broadly. As part of the seminar, Roberta facilitated a hands-on activity, giving the students the opportunity to learn about attempts to deal with the past through the materiality of textiles and to reflect upon arpilleras as a means to express lived experiences of conflict and its aftershocks.



Roberta Bacic (L) outlines the work of Conflict Textiles, in the Atrium of the Belfast School of Art (Ulster University).



Roberta (L) offers an overview of the Aftershocks exhibition.



Students from Ulster University take some time to look at the arpilleras on display while Roberta (R) tells the story behind each piece.



Roberta (R) invites students to select a fabric doll, outlining the circumstances in which each one was made.



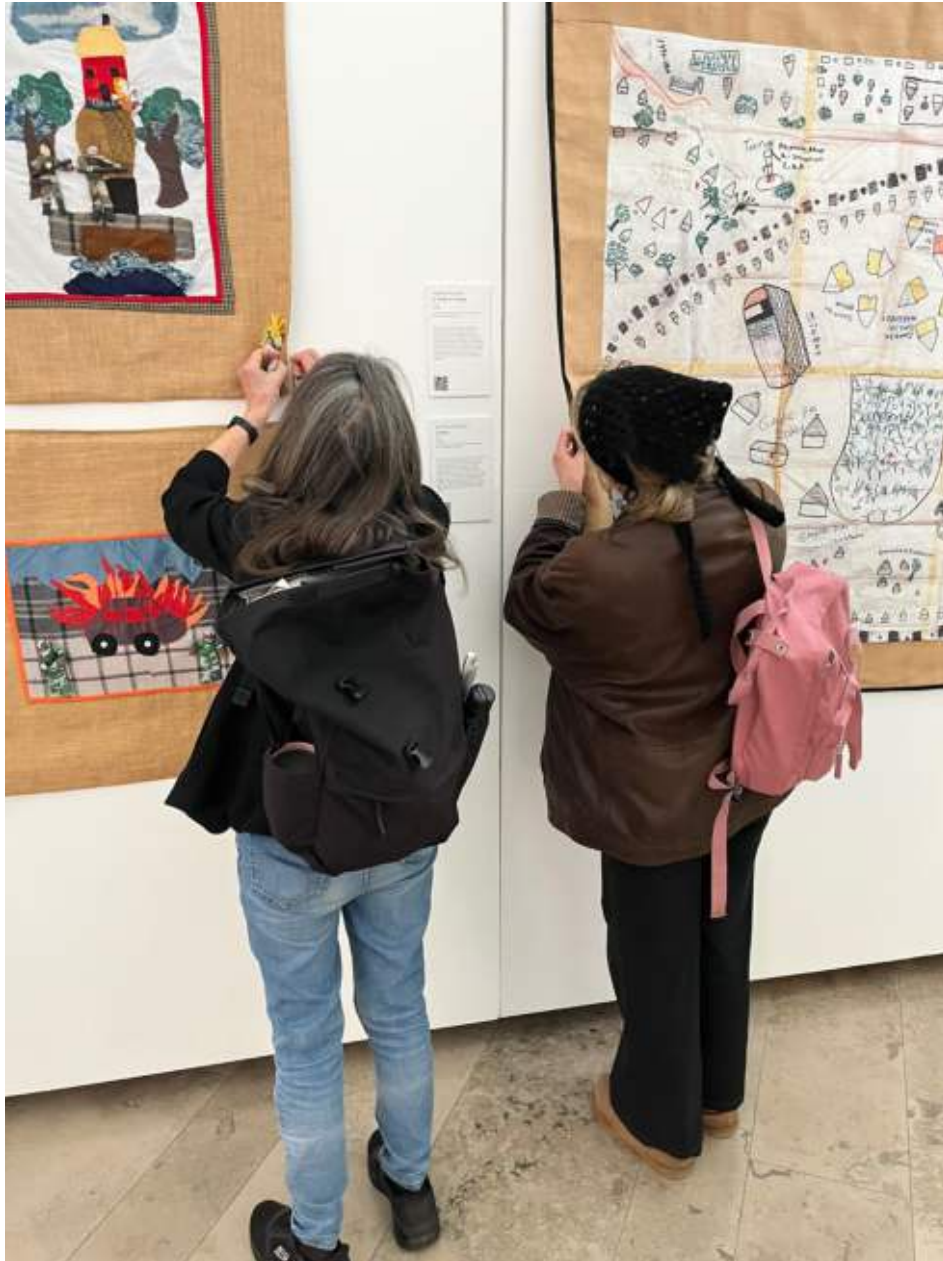
Students return to the arpilleras and consider which one resonates most with the story of their dolls.



Several students chose to pin their dolls onto arpilleras depicting aftershocks of the Troubles, reflecting a strong resonance with lived experience in Northern Ireland.



Several other students selected an arpillera from Mampuján (Colombia), explaining how the vibrancy and resilience of the dolls resonated with that piece, in particular.



Roberta (L) and a student from Ulster University (R) pin a fabric doll on to arpilleras which form part of the Aftershocks Exhibition.

At the end of the session, Roberta invited students to offer just one word to sum up the most important lessons they learned, which included the following:

courage
visions
memory
resilience
resistance
peace

This was a meaningful, participatory learning activity, giving students an opportunity to engage with and reflect on the lived experience of conflict and the materiality of textiles.

Photos and text by Dr. Claire Wright
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