

# Flax Art Studios, Northern Ireland

<http://flaxartstudios.org/>

Duration: 8 weeks

Start date: Anytime between September and December 2022

Flax Art Studios has been established for 31 years in Belfast, Flax continues to aim to significantly contribute to the regions' visual art practice through subsidised studio provision and resources, as the only studio dedicated to sculptural practice in Northern Ireland. Flax acts as a hub for professional development, international networking; and fostering greater understanding through outreach and engagement.

Flax has recently relocated its main headquarters to 29-33 Bedford Street and a satellite space in the heart of Belfast city centre. Flax provides studio space for seventy of the most exciting artists in NI reaching over 100 artists/creatives through its production and workshop membership programmes. The calibre and skills of its world-renowned artists is something which we celebrate and of which we are proud.

Flax Art Studios runs an International Residency programme since 1994, has developed an exchange programme with Art Center Ongoing, Tokyo, Japan and is working in collaboration to provide residencies specifically for disabled artists with University of Atypical, Coven Berlin and Videoclub Brighton. Flax's artists play a key role in the city's cultural infrastructure, concerned with its regeneration, and contribute to its re-imagining, addressing the social regeneration of communities-through head on engagement.

## 1/ FOCUS

The Good Friday Agreement or Belfast Agreement, is a pair of agreements signed on 10 April 1998 by the British and Irish governments that ended most of the violence of the Troubles, a political conflict in Northern Ireland that had ensued since the late 1960s. It was a major development in the Northern Ireland peace process of the 1990s. The aim was to establish a new devolved government for Northern Ireland in which unionists and nationalists would share power.

Fast forward to 2022 and the lingering dispute between the United Kingdom and the European Union over post-Brexit border arrangements could lead to the collapse of institutions around the two-decade old Northern Ireland peace agreement if the two sides cannot break the impasse.

Flax Art Studios is based in a city in transition. Colourful, complicated, messy ... and magnificent. This is a place with a long and complex history, a tapestry of narratives, and now a new story in the making. Flax is particularly interested in research/art work inspired by the new story of Belfast.

## 2/ PROGRAMME RESOURCES

The residency offers:

- Artist fees of £2100 per month.
- Furnished private accommodation in Belfast.
- Access to a studio in the city centre in Belford Street.

- If necessary, access to the only dedicated sculptural practice facility in Northern Ireland and a range of subsidised shared resources. 24-hour access to Studio Spaces with sculpture workshop facilities including wood, plaster, casting, digital fabrication, and textile.
- If necessary, access to Flax Art Studios industrial scale workshops – technician support will be provided.
- Administrative, technical, pastoral and curatorial support from Flax Art Studios team.
- Optional opportunity to show works/research in Flax Art Studios project space programme. Access to a project/experimental/shop front exhibition space at North Street satellite studio.
- Community support, facilitation and introductions by Flax Art Studios specific to the particular needs of the visiting artist.
- Opportunity to meet and network with Flax Art Studios international artists, Board Members and team.
- Round trip UK / France and local transports will be covered.