

Internship Report

Rachel Walker

I spent just 6 weeks (Nov-Dec 2012) working as an Intern at Deveron Arts as opposed to the usual period of 3 to 6 months. I was happily thrown into the deep end. From the first day I arrived on the job I found myself to be responsible for the artistic assistance for the production of the *Town is the Menu* a project from artist in residence Simon Preston. This was to be a new and interesting challenge to me as Simon was not at all from a previous arts background, but rather he was a Gastronomist, food and restaurant professional. This was an area of expertise that was indeed completely new to me. I found it to be equally interesting and challenging to work in the context of an arts organisation, on an arts project with a 'non-artist'. I threw myself into the work quickly and enthusiastically, and we both worked well together.

I have found working for Deveron Arts to be rewarding and stimulating. I had to learn to adapt quickly to my role and take on responsibility from the very first day in the job. I was able to take the lead and work on my own initiative when liaising with community groups in Huntly for example I established a link with the Community Kitchen in the Linden Centre. I have learned a lot in my short time here, however it would have been interesting to have worked with an artist in residence from the very outset of their project and seen the entire process of the project from beginning to end. I worry that I may have missed the potential to learn how the process works at Deveron Arts and the artists' project outcome achieved. I also feel that I could have fed into the artist's creative process perhaps better had I been there to converse with the artist and critique the process throughout. Coming in halfway through the project I felt I could not feed in to the project in a creative and constructive way and instead I was there to assist the process, the artist and the outcome.

I feel inspired by my time working at Deveron Arts. The team I worked with were incredibly supportive and stimulating. My workload was varied and interesting, I was given tasks which included some real challenges (e.g. the design and production of a small publication for The Town is the Menu project) but I was offered the support I needed and encouraged to take ownership over my work. The biggest challenge for me was liaising between the two different visions of the outcome. I worked very hard to try to ensure outcome that met the needs of all parties involved. I found this to be

a demanding but an ultimately rewarding challenge as the final result pleased everyone involved and gained much positive feedback from the public.

I greatly enjoyed and appreciated being given the scope and the ability to work independently and felt that Deveron Arts had a good approach to managing the workload between the two interns. I understand that the usual roles of Shadow Curator Intern and Project Intern were slightly merged or adapted for Elisabetta (6 month Intern) and myself for my period at Deveron Arts, and I can oblige that it worked very well for me, I feel that we were there to support one another and feed into each others daily work through conversations and sharing of tasks. It was good to have the ability to play on each of our own personal skills so that we could attribute our experience and knowledge to the tasks and collaborate on its outcome. I found this partnership to be stimulating and mutually supportive.

The team at Deveron Arts have been encouraging and inspirational. Talks with Claudia on our walking Lunch and regularly with the project manager Kate has helped me to think through and evaluate my practice, realise my potential and gain a greater confidence in my skills for the future. I will be leaving Deveron Arts with a clearer and enthusiastic plan for developing my own practice and shaping my career in 2013 within socially engaged art. Also I have gained some insight into the successful production of art in the greater community out with the city. With this new confidence I plan to begin work on planning my own curated projects out with the city of Glasgow and in the rural landscape and community I ultimately desire to live in.

I would like to come back to Deveron Arts in the new year, to keep up with what's happening and be a participant in future projects, I would definitely not like to see this as the end of my relationship with the organisation. Thank you to everyone for my experience.

Rachel Walker

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