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TULCA Festival of Visual Arts
Curated by Beulah Ezeugo
7-23 November 2025
Galway, Ireland

TULCA
FESTIVAL OF VISUAL ARTS

PATHOS GUIDING PRINCIPLES*

ENGAGING WITH CONFLICT THROUGH LITERATURE AND ART

KEY TERMS

Accessibility:

The ability of people from all aspects of society to attend and/or participate in an activity, with particular attention to those belonging to the protected groups outlined by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Artwork:

A piece of art in any genre or medium.

Conflict:

Armed/violent conflict(s), rather than interpersonal conflicts.

Output:

Any event, exhibition, show, performance, presentation or publication of an Artwork by a Practitioner or Organisation.

Organisation:

Any funding body, institution, or other body who works with Practitioners.

Practitioner:

Writers, theatre makers, composers, musicians, visual artists, and all professional individuals making art.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Pathologies of Violence: Inscriptions of Global Conflict in Irish Artistic Practice, 1922-present (PATHOS) is a Research Ireland-funded project exploring how conflict registers in literary and visual arts. In spring 2025, in collaboration with The Glucksman (Cork), PATHOS ran a series of workshops with thirteen creative practitioners. Using Research-Creation methodologies of dialogue, conversation, and walking, the workshop participants reflected on the ways conflict informs their practices, and their experiences working with cultural organisations on conflict-related topics. The Guiding Principles outline a set of values and corresponding questions sourced from this co-creation process, the participants of which are listed below.

PRINCIPLE #1 TRANSPARENCY

- » Who is involved in the Output? Can the Organisation facilitate peer-to-peer consultation between contributing Practitioners, if desired?
- » Is there transparency about the Organisation's programming, funding, and sponsorship?
- » Is there transparency about the rationale around terminology, used either in the Output itself or in informational/promotional texts (i.e. exclusion/inclusion of particular words, descriptors or phrases)?
- » If certain Artworks are excluded from an Output due to potential risks to the Practitioner, Organisation and/or the public, is that curatorial/editorial process transparent and consultative?

PRINCIPLE #2 CONSULTATION

- » Are there relevant Organisations already engaged with the conflict who can be consulted?
- » Is the Organisation familiar with any existing cultural boycotts, sanctions, charters or policies that are relevant to the Output?
- » Regarding public engagement, is there consultation with the Practitioner about appropriate topics, and suitably trained moderators who can manage unexpected or difficult questions?
- » Is there consultation with the Practitioner(s) about their comfort in commenting on current conflict situations as part of/in addition to their participation in the Output?

PRINCIPLE #3 SENSITIVITY

- » Does the context of conflict require a different risk assessment than is typical? For example, does the Output pose increased material risks to the safety of those involved and, if so, are additional supports in place?
- » Is the Organisation prepared for the possibility of changing or worsening conflict, and how this may affect the impact, production, or reception of an Output?
- » Can policies around publicity, therapeutic support, and other needs be revisited with the Practitioner, if necessary?

PRINCIPLE #4 EXPERTISE

- » Does the Organisation have the necessary expertise, experience and sensitivities to address the conflict? Can additional training be provided, if necessary?
- » Does the Practitioner engage with the proposed theme in their regular practice?
- » If an invitation involves activities outside the Practitioner's expertise, can the Organisation facilitate additional training or professional support, if necessary?

PRINCIPLE #5 ACCESSIBILITY

- » Can the Organisation undertake specific outreach work to identify, connect with, and facilitate participation by communities affected by the conflict(s)?
- » Can the Output, exhibition materials, or public engagement be made available in additional languages common to the communities involved?

PRINCIPLE #6 PUBLICITY

- » Are the expectations for publicity and promotion of the Output clear and agreed upon?
- » Is there a publicity, social media, and online abuse policy already in place? Does that policy need to be modified to accommodate the potentially heightened risks of conflict-related Outputs?
- » Does the documentation or recording of the Output or related programming pose material risks to the Practitioner and/or their families?
- » Is the Organisation familiar with any censorship laws in another national context that might affect the Practitioner?

PRINCIPLE #7 SUPPORTS

- » Can the Organisation provide counselling or therapeutic support as part of the Output's budget? How and in what circumstances can that support be offered to a Practitioner?
- » Is information about where to find therapeutic support made available? Can this information be provided in several languages, where appropriate?
- » Is a debrief planned following the Output? Can communication channels remain open after the Output's conclusion, and are the points of contact clear?

PATHOS TEAM:

Ailbhe McDaid (Principal Investigator)

Julie Morrissy (Postdoctoral Researcher and Poet)

Leah Smith (PhD Researcher)

GLUCKSMAN FACILITATOR:

Tadhg Crowley (Senior Curator)

PATHOS PARTICIPANTS:

Atoosa Pour Hosseini (Visual Artist)

Bassam Issa Al-Sabah (Visual Artist)

Chiamaka Enyi-Amadi (Writer, Editor, Arts Facilitator)

Ciarán O'Rourke (Writer)

Dragana Jurišić (Photographer, Writer)

Eoghan Ryan (Visual Artist)

Evgeny Shtorn (Writer)

Hannah Khalil (Playwright)

Miriam de Búrca (Visual Artist)

Olesya Zdorovetska (Performer, Composer, Curator)

Paul McKinley (Visual Artist)

Rita Duffy (Visual Artist)

Suad Aldarra (Writer)

*This document represents an abridged version. The complete Guiding Principles will be available on the PATHOS website at a later date (www.pathos-project.com).

“NOT A FIXED LINE”: CO-CREATING THE PATHOS GUIDING PRINCIPLES

By Ailbhe McDaid, Julie Morrissy, Leah Smith

INTRODUCTION

In spring 2025, the research team leading *Pathologies of Violence: Inscriptions of Global Conflict in Irish Artistic Practice* (PATHOS) hosted a series of artist-centered workshops at The Glucksman (Cork), against the backdrop of widespread and worsening global conflict and geopolitical instability. These circumstances were central to our workshop discussions and, in some cases, affected our practitioners directly. Thematically, the workshops were broadly concerned with making art about conflict, which included related discussions on artistic responsibility, witnessing, ethics and activism, and debates on the possibilities and limitations of art in times of conflict. The PATHOS participants spoke from differing proximities to conflict, sharing details from their artistic practices and professional experiences working on conflict-related themes. Though many discussions centred on steps that organisations could take, the PATHOS practitioners also reflected on their own ethical obligations. The Guiding Principles, and our research more generally, draw on the PATHOS participants' first-hand accounts, and on other writers and theorists, including Fred Moten, Hettie Judah, Stefano Harney, Maggie Nelson, Yohann Floch, and Marie Le Sourd. Though the workshop discussions were grounded in the Irish context, the issues raised are relevant to global arts practice.

After three days of wide-ranging and intensive conversation, in the final afternoon we asked the participants to suggest a set of questions to consider when working with practitioners from conflict backgrounds or on conflict-related themes. The responses were based on the practitioners' own experiences, and foregrounded PATHOS's concern with producing ethical, responsible, and responsive events on themes of conflict.

These discussions, along with our Practitioner Reflection Documents (a survey completed by participants after each workshop), informed the Guiding Principles. In this article, we extrapolate on the Guiding Principles by giving excerpts from the discussions which led to their creation. Our aim is to illuminate the very specific issues involved in making artwork in response to global conflicts, with particular sensitivity to those directly affected, whether that is the artists themselves, members of cultural organisations, or the public. Standard practices, such as fair and equitable remuneration for artists, are assumed to be in place. While most organisations have existing policies in relation to EDI and community values (example below), ongoing violent conflicts present new and nuanced concerns that require special consideration. Further, as Hettie Judah notes in *How Not to Exclude Artist Mothers (and other parents)*, “...the art world has no HR department” and “[little] protection exists for self-employed people in the creative industries” (20, 17).

Building on the intersectional feminist, artist-centric, and decolonial ethos of PATHOS, we offer the Guiding Principles to highlight contexts and examples of concerns relating specifically to artmaking and conflict, which may not be adequately covered in existing policies. Of course, conflicts are not static or homogenous, and all ethical approaches require frequent reevaluation for the benefit of everyone involved. Echoing Judah’s manifesto, our Guiding Principles too “...are an invitation to work thoughtfully and with respect...and [may sometimes]...read like requests for reasonable behaviour” (74-5). Nonetheless, it was clear from our discussions with the PATHOS participants that there is room for more thoughtfulness and nuance when it comes to policies and approaches addressing conflict-related art.

WORKSHOP DESIGN, METHODOLOGY & CONTEXTS

Invited practitioners were selected primarily based on artistic practices dealing with conflict and conflict-adjacent themes. Selection was also based on diversity of art form, background, gender, age/career stage, and proximities to conflict. Not all thirteen practitioners attended every workshop, but there was a core group of at least ten participants in each. Some PATHOS practitioners are currently, or were once, in a situation of “(en)forced mobility”, meaning that these artists “...may have moved to avoid censorship, persecution, armed conflict, natural disasters, violations of human rights, extreme poverty, or other difficulties that necessitated their departure from home” (Floch and Le Sourd, 4). Artists in (en)forced mobility may require untypical material supports to enable their full and safe participation in the production and dissemination of their work.

Irish arts organisations increasingly focus on diversity and representation in their programming and policies. However, these welcome and necessary initiatives should be accompanied by informed consideration of the circumstances of practitioners working on conflict-related themes. Existing EDI policies may be too general to address these very specific issues. The Guiding Principles highlight these issues, which are more pertinent during times of conflict, and provide a toolkit of sorts for all stages of planning a conflict-related project. While not every Principle and corresponding question will need to be addressed in every circumstance, the Guiding Principles offer a set of themes and concerns that repeatedly arose in our discussions around conflict-related art.

ANALYSIS OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE #1 TRANSPARENCY

For the practitioners, “transparency with the artist about... the programme they’re going to be part of” is a fundamental concern in participating in conflict-related outputs, as noted by playwright Hannah Khalil. Her comment relates to a desire for organisations to inform participants about the specifics of a commission/invitation from the early stages of planning, including information about other participants or perspectives that may be included in the programme. In the same vein, visual artist Miriam de Búrca advocated for “absolute transparency in terms of what the motivations are for the whole [output]”. Composer and performer Olesya Zdorovetska argued for transparency when “the [organisation] is even coming up with the programming in the first place”. These concerns often reflected instances of “both sides-ism”, i.e. institutions attempting to “balance” different sides of a conflict by programming work representing “both sides”. Zdorovetska spoke about the risk of arts programming potentially perpetuating propaganda or “celebrating” a nation in breach of international law. Such concerns also apply to nation states attempting to launder reputations (or indeed money) through forms of art washing. Thus, the Guiding Principles suggest that organisations be transparent about their choices in relation to funding from private donors, sanctioned regimes and/or other bodies that may be implicated in a conflict.

Use of language was also raised as a matter of transparency, with reference to permitted and preferred vocabulary around a conflict. Practitioners spoke about language or terms that

contravene the policies of national cultural organisations. Zdorovetska commented that the term “boycott” is not used in policies around art and culture because art should not be “boycotted”. Instead, the terms “put on hold” and “suspend cooperation for ethical reasons” can be preferential. Similarly, practitioners spoke of certain language being contractually restricted by a cultural institution. Given that practitioners often work outside of their own legal contexts, organisations could consider alerting practitioners to relevant laws or, indeed, any changes to free/protected speech which they may not reasonably be aware of.

Concerns were also flagged about transparency and artistic autonomy regarding the selection of artworks in the context of exhibition, broadcast and/or publication, although practitioners held differing opinions about the role of the organisation in these instances. Writer and photographer Dragana Jurišić objected to organisations putting “safety fences” around artists in the process of artmaking. Visual artist Rita Duffy spoke about an incident in which an artwork responding to violence in an ongoing conflict, which she witnessed firsthand, was omitted from an exhibition. Duffy said, “There was obviously a conversation going on behind the scenes, you know, where they didn’t want to show [the drawing]. They were fine with the other stuff, but that particular drawing – we’ll just leave that in a cupboard...”. The curators’ decision, which presumably arose from potential risk to the artist and the audience, was left unexplained. This example, and Jurišić’s objection, call for frank, open and honest communication with the artist, who should be part of any conversations around concerns relating to their artwork or artmaking processes.

PRINCIPLE #2 CONSULTATION

The Guiding Principles are entangled and overlapping, particularly consultation, transparency and expertise. Practitioners repeatedly sought more engagement between organisations and communities affected by a conflict, and for organisations to consult with their peers in arts and cultural programming who have specific expertise on a conflict. Zdorovetska was exasperated at the lack of knowledge around existing policies for conflict situations, noting that, "...these policies are available online and through the official portals and the consultations are free". She added that the historical contexts of certain conflicts are poorly understood, and organisations may need more training or education in collaborating around a particular conflict. She argued, "[Organisations could] facilitate better awareness in the cultural field, the more communication there is, the better it facilitates the climate that ultimately provides safe space to create...". That critique was affirmed by writer Chiamaka Enyi-Amadi and de Búrca who both felt that the burden should be taken off individual artists to explain conflicts, and that the organisation should take an active role in educating themselves and the communities they serve.

Consultation is also central to the topic of wellbeing. Khalil noted the potentially changing needs of artists and the need for regular consultation. She gave the example of a collaborator's hesitancy around publicity on a project, specifically about their name being used. As the project progressed, the collaborator became more comfortable and relaxed their initial position. Equally, it is possible that an artist may need to restrict publicity in light of changing circumstances. In the context of conflict, the practitioners

advocated for regular check-ins, especially when a conflict is ongoing. Practitioners also acknowledged the artist's responsibility for consultation, especially when responding to or representing "real life" subjects in their work. Jurišič spoke about potential risks to individual subjects depicted in an artwork, noting the need for artists to "...discuss potential danger [with subjects] before the work [is] published". As a multidirectional principle, consultation serves a variety of relationships – between the practitioner and the organisation, between the practitioner and artistic subject, between practitioners themselves, and indeed from organisation to organisation. The responsibility should not solely fall on the organisation; however, the organisation is often best positioned to embed and facilitate consultation in these circumstances.

PRINCIPLE #3 SENSITIVITY

Sensitivity is especially important in conflicts that are ongoing and rapidly changing. All parties should be aware that unfolding events may affect the delivery of an output in its timeline, scope, content, and/or presentation. Sensitivity also requires organisations and practitioners to recognise the nuanced, deeply historical, and highly personal nature of conflict experiences. Emphasising the multidirectionality of sensitivity as a principle, de Búrca reflected, "[I] continuously step back from what I am doing to make sure it is not exploitative or intrusive. I try not to be too overt or crass...". Zdorovetska echoed this sentiment, saying, "...I always question [how] the work fits the current discourse, how timely the message is and if the maker takes responsibility for the perspective they offer". Although the practitioners were mindful of their own responsibilities when it comes to

sensitivity, they also discussed ill-considered requests from organisations, with Khalil asserting: “[D]on’t ask artists in times of conflict to speak to, to respond to that conflict while it’s happening. I find it really difficult [to be asked] can you write something short and rapid in response, just a scene.” Her discomfort was echoed by other practitioners.

As Khalil’s comment implies, sensitivity should extend to recognising boundaries between personal experience and professional practice. Particular concerns were flagged around expectations from organisations relating to work that does indeed respond to direct experience of conflict, but where a practitioner does not wish to comment outside of the artwork itself. Al-Sabah gave an example involving a suggestion that one of their family members take part in a public event about the work, a request which they deemed inappropriate. Al-Sabah explained, “I remember [the curator] being like you should do an artist’s talk with your [family] and I was like ‘absolutely not’...[my family member is] not going to be comfortable. I’m not going to be comfortable, so it’s almost like a question of how do you care for someone who is taking the risk?”. Conflict-related art often explores experiences that are real and direct – these experiences do not exist solely in the abstract context of art and should be understood and respected as such. Further, and as outlined in the Publicity principle below, one permission should not be deemed to lead to another. As Khalil notes in Principle #2 Consultation, there should be regular checks and communication with the artist.

Another pressing issue specific to conflict-related programming is potential material risk to family members. Enyi-Amadi expressed that migrant artists “...have to contend with risks to the safety of their friends and family members

living in conflict zones, under oppressive political regimes or other dangerous circumstances”. She observed that such risks are heightened in “solo artistic work”, versus forms of collective action, such as taking part in protests. De Búrca added, “The assumption needs to be made from the outset that the person might have safety concerns. I think that’s [it]—always check”. Crucially, as with all of the principles herein, sensitivity is an ongoing process that must be alert to changing circumstance; in Khalil’s words, “It’s complicated. It’s not a fixed line for people [...] I think it has to be an ongoing conversation. That’s the main thing.”

PRINCIPLE #4 EXPERTISE

Intersectionality underpins these Guiding Principles, and many of the concerns raised by practitioners relate to wider issues relating to diversity and inclusion within the cultural sector. Al-Sabah noted, “Artists who fall outside the historical mainstream, by virtue of race, gender, or sexuality, are frequently burdened with the label of being ‘political’, not because of their work, but because of who they are. The art world, after all, has long been built around a specific set of perspectives, privileging certain voices while treating others as exceptions. In this context, the act of creating as an outsider can itself be framed as a political provocation, regardless of the artist’s actual intentions. The result is a double standard: some artists are allowed to be just artists, while others are continually defined by their differences”. Practitioners expressed concerns around the reasoning for invitations to certain artists to respond to conflict or political situations, especially if their practices might not generally engage with such topics. Engaging artists with diverse identities to meet an organisation’s brief was seen by

practitioners as potentially problematic, with practitioners exhorting organisations to engage with artists on the basis of their individual artistic expertise.

Our discussions also addressed whether organisations already possess suitable expertise in relation to a particular conflict, and whether additional training or peer consultation with other cultural organisations might be beneficial.

The participants further spoke about instances in which artists are asked to undertake activities beyond their usual expertise as practitioners, for example, engaging with community groups affected by conflict, with no provision of additional supports. Jurišič spoke of her experience on a community project with people living in Direct Provision, noting that it did not go smoothly. She said:

“I don’t put the blame on the [organisation] because I don’t think they knew what they were getting themselves into, and neither did I. But the thing was a valuable learning experience. But in this situation where you have people who are severely traumatised and still living in a horrendous situation, you need people—social workers, not just artists because the artists can’t do all those things”.

Her example speaks to the need both for expertise and for additional supports for practitioners working in ways that are not usual in their practice, or for which they lack formal training. Other practitioners had similar experiences: Enyi-Amadi spoke about feeling “a burden on the artist to be the educator, to be the psychologist, the informed social worker, to be the marketer”. De Búrca reiterated the risks, suggesting that, “It can actually be inappropriate sometimes...you’re not a counsellor or therapist, you can cause more harm than good”. The various supports and resources required

for conflict-related art should be considered in the planning stages of a project and ideally included in budgets and funding applications.

PRINCIPLE #5 ACCESSIBILITY

Conflict presents specific barriers that may be outside the usual parameters of accessibility. Violent conflict also encompasses many spatial dimensions: it often involves land disputes that lead to displacement and protracted asylum applications. In Ireland, the Direct Provision system sees displaced people living on extremely limited stipends and often in geographically remote places. Such structural and infrastructural marginalisation requires specific consideration of the very communities most affected by conflict. Special attention should be given to dismantling such barriers for artists and audiences who can be cut off from participating. Practitioners emphasised that organisations should be proactive around accessibility and audience engagement, particularly in relation to cultural diversity. Enyi-Amadi spoke of her experiences whereby “... institutions commission you to produce work in order to fit their criteria of decolonising their programme and bringing a more culturally diverse audience into their space”, again transferring the “burden” onto the practitioner to “market the work and bring your friends and family”. Suggestions to improve accessibility for communities affected by conflict included hosting events at times accessible via public transport, covering transport costs, and/or chartering transport. Likewise, efforts could be made to reach out to communities of people displaced by conflict, ideally via existing organisations as per the Consultation principle, to facilitate suitable access. Language may also be a factor in

accessibility, and practitioners remarked on the importance of translations of texts, exhibition materials, and events in the languages common to the communities involved.

PRINCIPLE #6 PUBLICITY

While publicity is an integral part of successful arts programming, delivering conflict-related content requires careful consideration of existing policies. As such, the Publicity principle overlaps with Sensitivity and Consultation but also incurs particular risks that should be addressed with individual practitioners, especially around online activity and social media. Organisations and, indeed, practitioners need to be aware of the ‘borderless’ nature and reach of digital content. Again, consultation on the parameters of publicity is the best strategy. For example, a writer might be comfortable with a poem appearing in a print journal with a small circulation, or reading at the launch, but the same writer may not be comfortable with having their photograph posted on social media: one permission should not be assumed to lead to another. Writer Suad Aldarra, who described her art as a form of activism, explained, “...It also comes with a price that it made my return home more complicated since I speak about politics and religion, two taboo subjects [there]”. Publicity policies may need to be altered or reviewed for conflict situations, particularly where censorship laws and the dissemination of work may limit the practitioner’s ability to return home.

The practitioners expressed a wish for agency around their online presence as it pertains to their practices. Al-Sabah spoke in reference to the circulation of digital images and artworks. They noted, “...I don’t always want my image used...”. Zdorovetska spoke about her discomfort about posting

promotional material on social media while there is an ongoing conflict in a practitioner's country of origin: "...everyone asks why you have a black circle instead of a profile portrait on social media. I guess...it is for ethical reasons...somehow it is hard psychologically to self-promote, exposing my 'happy face' while my family, friends and colleagues in Ukraine are endangered and physically dying... because I'm in Ireland. I'm in safety". Expectations around publicity and promotion cannot be uniform in these circumstances, since individual practitioners will have particular concerns for themselves and, potentially, their families, depending on the conflict situation to which their work responds. Consultation on publicity is essential, and agreements between practitioners and organisations may need to be revisited in the context of ongoing conflict and potential safety risks.

PRINCIPLE #7 SUPPORTS

Supports are broadly conceived in the Guiding Principles to include personal supports, such as therapy or counselling, and professional supports for specific tasks and responsibilities, as detailed at Principle #4 Expertise. De Búrca noted that the provision of supports is multidirectional, in that "[i]t protects everybody, doesn't it?...It protects the institution, the people, the community and the artist to have someone who actually has the training, who has the qualification to deal with these very sensitive things". It may be useful to include budget lines for relevant supports to bring awareness to funding bodies that additional resources may be necessary in the context of conflict. Practitioners, however, expressed differing opinions on whether organisations should be obliged to provide therapeutic supports. Al-Sabah was uncertain about where the onus should lie, saying: "I wonder if it's an institutional

question or if there needs to be a seminar of how to protect yourself as an artist, like how much of yourself should you give up in the work...but is it like are you asking the institution to offer therapy?”. Visual artist Paul McKinley agreed: “It’s the responsibility of the artist really...If you’re taking that leap and making work about things that you may need therapy on after, that’s up to you and you deal with the aftermath”. Others felt that the organisations should at least make an offer of supports. Khalil commented, “I think asking the artist what they want...like what support do they need, do they need counselling, do they need, I don’t know what, whatever kind of support it might be. Like give them the option and let them choose because they’re adults”.

The question of therapeutic support was important for practitioners whose work involves community outreach or engagement. Zdorovetska reflected that “[y]ou never know who’s in front of you, especially when you’re working with [people who are] vulnerable from their experiences, PTSD and all that stuff”. Jurišić recalled her own experience: “When you’re working with vulnerable communities, like 15 people who come from really traumatic backgrounds, shit is bound to happen, you can’t escape”. She further emphasised the importance “... [of having] people in the group who are trauma-trained or resolving conflict or stuff which comes up in big settings in communities”. In such contexts and where possible, supports should be offered through appropriate channels, such as existing community-embedded services that can offer ongoing and effective aftercare in their continued engagement. Practitioners were also aware of the financial implications for organisations in providing supports, with Enyi-Amadi asking, “Is the institution providing the resources to the community support worker or are they asking for it directly from the funder?...Do you have a team or is it just the artist?”.

Aftercare for the practitioner was also considered, whether formal or informal. Practitioners emphasised the value of peer-to-peer support and felt that organisations could facilitate post-output debriefs which may be less onerous and more appropriate than providing individual therapeutic supports, for example. Al-Sabah asserted, “It’s much easier to talk to other artists about their experiences”. Other supports were flagged as desirable – such as including contact details for external support services on public-facing materials, particularly when the content of an output could potentially be distressing to audience members from affected communities, or indeed members of the cultural organisation. Throughout the discussions, the reality of limited resources was central, and these suggestions are tempered against well-understood budget constraints and institutional limitations. The possibilities proposed here – the integration of peer-to-peer supports into institutional models, budget lines for therapeutic supports where possible, provision of external support service details – acknowledge the financial limitations within which organisations operate and suggest multidirectional and differentiated approaches.

CONCLUSION

In designing the PATHOS workshops, analysing the discussions, and formulating the Guiding Principles, we recognise the material realities of organisations producing art for public dissemination, just as we do for practitioners. The above discussions were sensitive to those challenges, particularly in relation to resources and funding. The Guiding Principles and corresponding questions are intended to examine the gaps of existing policies, to present new ways of thinking through those gaps together with practitioners, and to nurture new

ways of listening to each other when it comes to the sensitive and pressing nature of conflict-related art. We are also clear-sighted about the limitations of the PATHOS workshops and what they can achieve. Maggie Nelson writes:

“...the fantasy that, had the care been good enough (from the artist, from the curator, the museum, the university, the teacher, etc.), we would not have been exposed to the bad thing and would not now be suffering...is not an accurate, fruitful, or fair model...[It] risks reducing care to giving, protecting, fixing, rather than treating it as a negotiation of needs that involves assuming strength in the other, resisting the temptation to provide all the answers...allowing for the fact that our desires for others may chafe against what those others want for themselves...without losing an underlying conviction of fellowship and love.” (70)

PATHOS invests in exactly the type of ‘fellowship’ to which Nelson points – one that insists on the importance of working toward new solutions together, while at the same time acknowledging that no workshop or research project can completely resolve the myriad of challenges in the essential work of producing art about conflict. The PATHOS Guiding Principles are a means of acknowledging and minimising the risks for those involved, returning us to Al-Sabah’s question: “How do we care for someone who is taking the risk?” The Guiding Principles and associated questions offer a multidirectional toolkit to think through those risks for artists, organisations and audiences with care.

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TULCA Festival of Visual Arts
Earlswell Court
Cross Street Lower
Galway
Ireland

www.tulca.ie
info@tulca.ie