

## **Tata Pume'' Episode Seven Arts, Culture Music.**

### **Interview One :**

**Ciarán Oglesby is speaking to Melanie Mcnerney who's the Project Coordinator with The Intercultural Fairytales Festival.**

**CO:** Melanie could you tell us about the Project?

**MM:** Yes it's the Intercultural Fairy tale Festival. It's the joining of Fairy Tale Stories and obviously a festival suggests that it's a party Atmosphere. And the Idea is that there is a language learning so to that end myself that's the Irish Contingency. and then there was the Czech group which were a Theater group from Prague The Deavlo Minar Theater.

And also the main Coordinator which were a group from Germany.

So you had your three languages there which was obviously German Czech and in our case English. Although myself and my colleague Nicola did our best to also include Irish as we felt it was pertinent.

**CO:** Could you explain to me how it would work, the Languages how would you get it across?

**MM :** Well what we did was we looked at Fairy tales in each Country. So we decided that our target audience were mainly Primary school children. Because Primary school children as everybody knows pick things up. They don't Question language learning like the way adults do. So because they were our target audience we decide well whats the easiest way? And we where doing it through Fairy tales and we looked at each country's own sort of Fairy Tale History and what was specific to Irish Fairy tales and what was specific to German and Czech Fairy Tales. And we constructed a play that had aspects from each Fairy Tale and we had the story of a little tailor who went on a trip through the three countries and on the way had various language learning elements and the idea was that we would have an interactive play and that the children would also participate in this.

CO: There's a nice mixture of the Arts there you have Art drama puppetry and music. Could you tell us a bit about that?

MM: Yes certainly well I'm an Art teacher. Secondary Art teacher although I work in special needs and Nicola is a Drama Teacher. And then we were also working with camp hill and they have a fairly good music teacher involved there. And basically when we were asked to host our end of it we were told Right! Obviously you have to you know keep going with the whole theme but basically we were giving a free reign so Nicola as the Drama teacher became the director for the play and devised the Story. Myself and my Students made all the sets and we also decorated the Venue. And then Jeel and his students did an awful lot of the Music that accompanied it so it really was a wonderful in house production that allowed people to tap into creativity that they didn't necessarily know they had and then have the chance to shine.

CO: And you were approached by the German contingent would I be correct?

MM : That's right yes

CO : And how did they express their original intention and aim behind the festival how would they define that?

MM : Well they had a few aims but the most important would be that there was a strong focus on learning about other Cultures as well as the language so that you were helping children at a very young age to accept different cultures and it was all about inclusion so and we actually came in very, very late in the Project because the research in the project had been running I think approximately two years and when we came into the Project we had to work in the other countries on their Festivals, Nicola and myself went over to Germany with a number of other people and I think we found out in April and I think the festival was in June or July it was a very, very quick turnaround but Yeah basically the funding that they got and they got 75% funding which I'm told is very unusual to get from the E.U. The Lingua fund but that the main reason that they got it was that they were so intrigued by the notion of the culture obviously and the language but also the fact that it was delving into each countries fairy tale the rich history that belonged to each country and that this would be a fantastic tool to use to help children learn it without even realizing that they were learning the language and about the other Cultures.

CO: That's very true indeed because if you're to follow I suppose Montessori original eh Philosophy would be that there's more of an emphasis actually on oral literature with children they pick it up more and they learn more from it because they actually embrace themselves because they'll use their imagination a lot more

MM : Oh definitely and you know we even saw that when we were running our festival there was a number of different things happening besides just the weekend Family days and I ran the Art workshops along with another girl Jane Lee and we focused on language and we had Primary schools from the area and we brought them in and it was just unbelievable how in an hour and a half you had children who probably never heard Czech before suddenly able to throw out a couple of phrases it was fantastic and by the end of it you know they were all then from the Drama workshop Nicola was building on that you know that the language acquisitions so by the end of it and they were all sitting there having their lunch They were able to say to the teachers you know like oh I am your hero and you know they were all fairy tale related phrases but at the same time the teachers were just so impressed and you know yourself that when you've got a two year old child that they just pick up words so fast and it totally progresses through primary school there's no fear you see I think

CO : Yes definitely and that's a very important point and finally Melanie do you feel that there's a healthy level of intercultural dialogue in Ireland today?

MM : I think generally yeah I think that there's a lot of will to increase it but I think we've still an awful long way to go I think we think we're more culturally aware than we actually are I know for myself that I had my own preconceptions about you know what somebody from Prague might be like or even like friends of mine now I've got so many different nationalities that you have these preconceived notions and it's very good that there's starting to be broken down but I do think that we could do with more programmes you know to help that.

CO: Absolutely, wonderful Melanie McNerney Thank you for your time.

MM : It was lovely talking to you Thank you.

**For the second interview Jonathan Gallagher speaks to Andre Zacherig who plays music with the Magic Double Bass a Slovakian folk band.**

JG: Andre how long have you been living in Ireland and what influenced your decision to migrate here?

AZ: I've been living in Ireland four years in March it will be four years. And what brought me here was my friend they lived here and they see a couple people playing here music on the street and they ask me and one of my friend if we would like to join them to find a job here and some money and also play the music so I decided to come here because I wanted to go to study in Australia and I wanted some money so I said it would be nice to put all together some work and also some fun so that's why I decided to come here.

JG: Did you have a stereotype of Ireland or the Irish people before you came? Did your perception of the Irish identity change after you spent some time among the people here?

AZ: There are no stereotype of the Ireland or the people, what I know that was the Ireland famous for the Guinness and for the green color and just the change when I came here I found Irish people very, very friendly. I traveled around the world with the Band and I meet different Nationality's but I have to say that Irish people are very, very friendly I was very surprised when I came here and I spent some times with them I have a flatmate and also one of my neighbor a very good friend he took me to the community of the Irish people so I was very happy that I could know other people not just the Slovaks and Czechs but also the Irish.

JG: How did you find adapting to the language here did you have to prepare before you left, Did you take any classes?

AZ: I was studying English in Primary school because that was the part of the school that each pupil needs to learn two languages so he could choose English or German and my mother was English teacher so it was easier for me to pick up the English so she helped me very much and also I traveled as I said before I travel all around the World so English is the world language. So I use it and I didn't prepare before I came here like I know the English before so and what was the hard here eh probably the pronunciation of some words you know understand because Irish has different dialect of the words like if you hear the English people Irish people Australian everybody talks differently so thats what

I found really hard here but after a few months I really didn't see any difference.

JG: Did you find it hard to integrate into and adapt to Irish culture?

AZ: No Irish are similar than the Slovaks there are few difference here but as I said Irish are very friendly so there was no problem with anything. And what I have to adapt here as much as the weather because the weather is absolutely different there is rain there is winter wind and as you Irish say that in one day you can have four seasons. That was really difficult but I'm happy that I'm here because it's not too hot it's not too cold it's the best.

JG: How's the music you play received by the people here?

AZ: People like the music but they need to spend more time to listen because if they would spend just like five minutes it would be like strange music but if they spend like fifteen minutes just to see and listen and feel the rhythm they'll like it really when we organize some Slovak nights there were different Nationality's there were Irish French Hungarians Slovak Czech Polish and all Irish people was dancing standing and having a fun so people really like the music.

JG: What are the differences between the Irish Traditional music and the traditional music in Slovakia?

AZ: I would say rhythm and I didn't hear so many texts in Irish songs I just listen to music so I have to say that rhythm is a little bit different the style of the people how they play it the Musical instruments.

JG: Are there any similarities between those two different types of music?

AZ: I think the feeling of the people because Irish are very proud of their music if they're anywhere in the world they are so proud that they are Irish they go to see. And it's also about the Slovak music. Slovaks which are living in Foreign countries they really like the Slovak music, (P.T.O.)

Similarity I would say because I'm living in Ireland is the violin the musical instrument.

JG: Have you ever found the way you played influenced by traditional Irish music?

AZ: I like the Irish music I'm trying to learn I have lots of friends which play Irish music. We made a session that they were teaching me Irish music and I was teaching the Slovaks. Then we play everybody all together and I'm influenced by the Harmony I really like you know the songs how they are made and especially the harmony.

JG: Do you see a future for yourself and for foreign Traditional music here in Ireland?

AZ: Yes I see the future of the Slovak Traditional music in Ireland there is lots of Slovaks here so we're trying to bring them a little bit of the Home a lot of people who live here when they were in Slovakia they didn't listen to Slovak Traditional music and now when they are coming and they are watching us and they can sing with us. They are amazed because that's something what is bringing home here to Ireland. It's everywhere in the world not just in Ireland and myself if I see the future I would like to stay here but I'm not making any plans because you never know what can happen so now I'm here I'm enjoying my life enjoying the music community I'm happy here.

JG: Do you think there's more of a need for Inter cultural Dialogue here in Ireland?

AZ: Yes definitely I don't know if you Irish people see but from my side I can see that there is xenophobia that Irish people not everybody I'm not saying everybody but they are not happy that we the "Foreigners" taking their Jobs because all people which are here from the foreign countries they are taking they are working here and it means that sometimes these people from foreign countries they will go to work for less money like the Irish so the employer's will take the foreigners. So it's kind of Xenophobia I would say it's here and I think this needs big dialogue between Irish Ireland and other Nationalities.

JG: Thank you Andre.

**For the third interview on the Arts. Ciarán speaks with Sarah Tuck a Director of an organization named Create.**

**Question 1 :** Sarah could you tell our listeners about Create?

**Answer :** Create is the National development agency for Collaborative Arts and we're based in the Liberties in Dublin. And we have obviously a National remit and collaborative arts it's very much it's an artist of any Art form discipline directly collaborating with the community and that can either be a community of place like a Geographical location or a community of Interest a Pigeon club for example. To actually create a contemporary piece of work in which the community are kind of directly a participant and they're co authors of the work.

**Question 2 :** Could you tell us about the Aims and the emphasis of the Organization?

**Answer :** The Ethos of the Organization is very much we work in partnership and in consultation with a wide range of communities and other stake holders and that kind of informs our ethos. And obviously our ethos is very much that you know there's a kind of notion of cultural Democracy and this kind of very exciting and increasing collaborative Arts has become a very significant contemporary arts practice in an of itself and it actually embodies ideas of kind of a democracy around Arts and access to the Arts.

**Question 3 :** Could you tell us about the current project you are undertaking the cultural diversity and the arts research project which you are doing in collaboration with the Arts council and the national action plan against Racism?

**Answer :** The Project itself is specifically for the Arts council but its being funded through the national action plan against racism which is part of the department of Justice of quality and law reform. So basically we were very much tasked with undertaking research and consultation to systematically understand on the ground what's happening, and to provide evidence based recommendations from which the Art's council may be able to write a policy in this area. It's a very big task how do you go about this. So what we did we appointed Rossan Berutcha who's based in Calcutta. Who journeyed over to Ireland and he did a series of round table consultations with Art's Organizations and subsequent to that there's also been Dr. Daniel Jewsbury an Dr. Susanna Chan they undertook basically desk top research to understand the kind of the change demographics of Ireland and then they undertook consultations for the most part this was Dr. Daniel Dewsbury with minority ethnic and cultural groups resident in Ireland and we also had the change institute based in London in England and they undertook a kind of an international research so that basically Ireland could be in the position of learning from what has and what hasn't worked in other countries and the other countries that we identified with and the research has been undertaken New Zealand India Hungary and England.

**Question 4 :** And how have we figured in this?

**Answer :** Obviously in Ireland its a relatively new history everything is quite temporizing so if you compare it to England you know it's a completely different history so basically we've to learn if you choose to do option A what are what are potential outcomes for people. So basically it was to learn from countries with a more kind of mature history and from countries like Hungary which is also embryonic and has no state policy in this area at the moment. So it wasn't really a way of saying as a metric of either being punitive like Ireland hasn't done this or Ireland has done this it wasn't as a metric of comparison it was to understand what the potential options at a policy level that could be adopted that would be really effective. Sensitive to the very particular history and circumstances of Ireland so it was kind of two fold in a way.

**Comment by Ciaran** we can't ask you anything about that because you've yet to publish these or document these/

**Reply :** Well all these as you can imagine all these kind of consultation research has now to be synthesized in to kind of one report and that will be submitted to the arts council by the end of January from which it will be for the

Arts council to then determine from the evidence based recommendations a possible policy area and potential action plans. I probably should say that we looked at this not simply as minority ethnic and cultural groups participating as audiences. We've got a very holistic approach that was very much participants as audience as arts administrators so basically all our kind of HR policies of people that actually want to work in the Arts. And also as Arts Practitioner so the three kind of areas of Arts as audience arts as somebody who's actually working at an administrative role rather like myself or indeed as someone who actually defines himself as an arts practitioner

**Comment by Ciarán :** It's a very Big project isn't it

**Reply :** It is a big one yes and we commenced it was formally launched as a research project February of this year so it's been a year that's the length of time for the body of this work.

**Question 5 :** Who else has been involved in the Project?

**Answer :** There's been in terms of kind of governance of the project there has been a steering group which has representatives from the department of Arts sports and Tourism, department of Justice equality and law reform the Art's council and arts practitioners we've had all the stages of governance that you would expect to be attached to such a project

**Question 6 :** Do you think personally that there's a healthy level of intercultural dialogue taking place in Ireland today?

**Answer :** Yes in many ways of course there is. The Arts I think are uniquely placed because as you're probably aware in arts practice there's a kind of quality of hybridity

In arts practice where there's a kind of quite naturally you know piece of Literature may reference other cultural traditions you know things aren't so kind of uniquely bounded by an idea of nation so that's a quite common place in a way within arts practice. So I think Arts are uniquely they have a history of being Intercultural in any case I mean that is the history of arts practice. Obviously with the hope is that there will be increasing the notion of arts in civil society that actually there is that we understand any barriers or hindrances to participation in all the three areas I spoke of are absolutely minimized and if there are any barriers that those barriers are understood and then actions are

then taking you know put forward that actually dissolve those barriers so it's actually being proactive rather than being passive and I think as much as society is being proactive around Intercultural Dialogue than actually the change can be effective.

**Question 6 :** And on that note, as I've myself the great thing about the Art's is that they have the potential to transcend the false or imaginary boundaries of language and stereotypes. Could you highlight any incidences where you experienced this first hand?

**Answer :** That's big, I mean I think you can experience that as an audience numerous times when you go to the theater or go to a gallery there was one production I personally really enjoyed which was by a young company called Broken Torkas an Irish company and it was called Track. Done in conjunction with in partnership I believe with an project arts center in Dublin and it was a very simple idea but it was actually beautifully executed and there was something actually very it was quite an eloquent production and what you did was you went to the project arts center and you were given headphones you were made an invitation so this young Chinese guy ah and you were given a badge which was in Chinese imagining in terms of your name. You went for a walk and you were listening so you're walking through the streets of Dublin and you're been giving instructions now so cross the road here now take a right and then you came to O'Connell street and then the voice changed it was a woman's voice and the woman was saying am I the woman sitting in front of you eating a sandwich an I the woman in Burger King sitting at the window. Your eye kept following all these opportunities for disclosure whether that was her or not and then this young woman came and sat in front and said I am who you're thinking of. There was a kind of very subtle play on how to hear someone's voice and what Identity would you presume would belong to that voice and then she was joined by a man holding balloons and then you followed them to a restaurant which was on Moore Street and then there was a kind of a Lunch for everyone of the Audience as a kind of closing celebratory moment it was very, very simple it was extremely pleasurable and it was really about imagination it wasn't a kind of polemical attack on you know stereotyping it was far more subtle than that but it just kind of provoked questions which in a very gentle way and in a way that was quite moving.

**Question 7 :** Will the various minority and ethnic and cultural groups how will they be effected by these policies do you think?

**Answer :** The police will be one that the Arts council will pen themselves we're not writing policies for the Arts council the Arts council write their policy. I mean everyone's hope is that theater and gallery's when you go to the Theater Suddenly you're not moving to a space that doesn't look like the city that you've just stepped into the theater from. That somehow you know you don't move into a space which is on the outside the city kind of dissolved and you're into something that doesn't represent you know, it's just curiously different. There will be I mean as everyone will understand if your a writer that there's going to be new cadences of speech which eh writers will be capturing you know a generation growing up in Blancherdstown there will be new phraseology there will be new kind of street slang which will be representative of the mix of people who are first generation born in Ireland and an older generation you know all of that the Arts will naturally both be innovative but also be responsive to so naturally even without policy at a very much organic level change will take place in terms of how Art is because society is different to how it was twenty years ago so there's actually no stopping it you know there's no stopping change but there's also the policies would really be there the desire would be that the policies are in place as a metric of an understanding and also as a metric of a kind of a view process to make sure that actually in terms of a sense of democracy and the Arts and culture of democracy that this is actually working they're aren't people being marginalized but all of this is really about the idea of not there being a kind of separate provision for but actually that everything is mainstreamed and that no one is denied an access to or is in any way disadvantaged in terms of ethnicity or cultural group

**Question 8 :** And finally Sarah what do you feel are the biggest challenges impeding Intercultural dialogue?

**Answer :** The biggest challenges impeding intercultural dialogue would always be in any society would be racism and whether that racism is a benine racism which is paternalistic but never the less racism or a very hostile racism I think any society always has to be vigilant around managing and ensuring that those kind of languages and vocabularies which actually are very kind of you know

epistemologically you know the linguistic level are actually injurious are not permitted you know but not permitted in such a way that doesn't at the same time prevent people from actively talking and talking through problems that they have do you know what I mean so there is absolutely a need for vigilance around those kind of languages that anyone would be injured by being named in such a way because language has a very brutal consequence and if people are comfortable with the language which is injurious then you can always be assured that other access which is a basic kind of civil rights are also systematically being denied so that will always be the hindrance and if that ever immerses in any other country that's always going to be the most significant barrier to intercultural dialogue. Sarah Tuck Thank you.

**For our forth and final Interview for The Arts Jonathan speaks to Edith Andrews from the school of Art Culture and Policy in U.C.D.**

**Question 1 :** How do museum displays within Ireland and Germany reflect immigration to those countries?

**Answer :** They have various different approaches and historical museums and in galleries as well in Germany and Ireland of course the historical experiences in both country's shape the displays as well as educational programmes in those institutions but to varying extents you have a new educational programmes and new displays and museums both in Germany and Ireland dealing with cultural diversity and immigration into those countries.

**Question 2 :** What would be the most noticeable differences to have these perspective museums in these countries approach cultural diversity?

**Answer :** Well in Germany for a very long time the heritage sector and museums as well were dominated by the immediate past world war two in coming to terms with the third Reich the history of the third Reich and only then more recently of course the fall of the wall and two different countries joining in together east and west Germany and the legacies of those historical events so only in the last five to six years really migration and cultural diversity in Germany have been looked at to more extents in Museums there was a large

exhibition for example in the German historical Museum in Berlin in 2005 and 2006 on Migration and the history of Migration into Germany and for the first time now at around this time in 2005 and 2006 the German Government acknowledged that Germany is an immigration Country or immigration Nation and people come to stay as well which previously had been ignored really so now it is reflected in some Museums also in the Rural area in Western Germany you have a new museum that just opened up in 2007. The rural Museum and there will be a large display on Migration into this area as well so different so called guest workers that move to this area in the 1950's 60's 70's and their stories and histories are portrayed in those displays.

The difference in Ireland then would be that of course that for decades Irish Museums have tried to come to terms with the colonial past and the country and that was of course reflected in displays and for a long time the focus has really been on Irish distinctly Irish features the so called Celtic history for a long time Celtic Art and the nationalist history the struggle for independence which dominated displays in historical Museums as well as Archeology which Archaeological objects which link in to an ancient distant past basically that was to connect to the Present and the Present independent Ireland as well trying to find it's new roots or trying to find it's new position as well as an Independent Nation after independence.

**Question 3 :** What sort of Educational programmes are being organized to promote cultural diversity?

**Answer :** Well Germany have developments now in Berlin for example to introduce guided tours within Museums and on heritage sites that are led by people young people as well teenagers and young people with the migration background so they might have been second generation with ethnically Turkish parents who came to Germany maybe in the 50's 60's 70's and those people young people would now give guided tours on German history as well in Berlin. There are also workshops that deal with the topic of Migration in a broader sense and they're directed towards school groups primary and secondary school groups and what the main question in these workshops would be what we perceive as strange and what we perceive as uncommon to our own culture to our own background customs habits and so on and to negotiate and to discuss this within this workshop so often the children are invited to talk to people with Migration backgrounds as well to talk about their own feeling on what's strange to them what's different to them and to maybe discuss as well what could be changed as well to bring people with different culture backgrounds together in their school in their community in their Neighborhood.

Thank You Edith.