

GYPSY, ROMA AND
TRAVELLER
ARTS & CULTURE *2015*
NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM



ROMANI
CULTURAL & ARTS COMPANY

DELEGATE GUIDE

TUESDAY 7 JULY 2015 - G39, OXFORD STREET, CARDIFF,



Dear Delegate,

The Romani Cultural & Arts Company proudly welcomes you to the Gypsy, Roma & Traveller Arts & Culture National Symposium 2015. The event is hosted by g39 and features artists Daniel Baker and Shamus McPhee plus distinguished guests Dr Ethel Brooks, Associate Professor of Women's and Gender Studies and Sociology at Rutgers University, US and a Tate-TrAIN Transnational Fellow at the University of the Arts London, Dr Colin Clark of The University of the West of Scotland and Nick Capaldi, Chief Executive of Arts Council of Wales. The speakers will engage the audience in conversation regarding the current state of GRT arts and their implications for wider society.

This unique event takes place in the context of the Gypsy Maker project; an exciting new RCAC venture that facilitates the development of innovative works by established and emerging GRT artists. The project aims to stimulate dialogue across communities about the ways in which art continues to inform our lives. For this inaugural presentation of the project the RCAC has commissioned exhibitions of new work by Daniel Baker, Romani Gypsy and Shamus Mc Phee, Scottish Traveller.

This half-day symposium will be followed by a visit to Baker's exhibition 'Makeshifting: Structures of Mobility' at Art Central, Barry. The private view of McPhees exhibition 'Aspects of Gypsy Traveller Life' will take place in the evening at The Riverfront, Newport.



*Isaac Blake, Director, Romani Cultural & Arts Company
(as a child on the Shirenewton site, Cardiff)*

General Information



How to get to us

g39
Oxford St, CARDIFF, CF24 3DT
Tel: +44 (0) 29 2047 3633
www.g39.org

Bus

www.cardiffbus.com Routes 38 and 39 operate from the city centre to Newport Rd/City Rd bus stop, 1 minute's walk from g39

Train

www.nationalrail.co.uk Queen St Station is five minutes' walk from g39

Road

leave the M4 at J32 and join the A470 towards Cardiff City centre. After 4 miles turn left onto Boulevard de Nantes/ A4161 and follow the dual carriageway. After 1 mile turn left onto City Rd/ B4261. Take the 1st right onto Oxford Lane and the first left onto Oxford St.

Car parking

Limited off-road parking is available, please contact us in advance to book (first come, first served basis)

Air

[Cardiff International Airport](#) is 3/4 hr by road from g39. There are regular train and bus links from Bristol, Heathrow, Gatwick and other major UK airports.

Taxi

A number of firms provide taxi services from Cardiff city centre to g39. Taxi ranks are situated outside Cardiff Central railway station, near St David's Hall and at the bottom of Park Place.

Assistance and medical help

If you have any concerns during the day either speak to one of the stewards or someone in the registration area and you will be directed to the relevant staff. First Aid assistance will be available throughout the day.

Security

There is no cloakroom and storage facility available for delegates.

Refreshments

There are coffee breaks provided.

Mobile Phones

As a courtesy to speakers and other delegates, please ensure that all personal mobile devices are 'on silence' or are switched off during the events.

Evaluation Form

For quality assurance purposes and in order to improve our services, please complete the attached Evaluation Form and place in the relevant box at the registration desk at any point during the day. Page 3

Symposium Agenda



- 9.00 **Registration**
- 9.30 **Welcome & Official Opening**
Isaac Blake - Director of the Romani Cultural & Arts Company
Chris Brown - Co-director of g39
- 9.40 **Key Note Opening Speech**
Nick Capaldi - Chief Executive of Arts Council of Wales
- 10.00 **Panel I: Acting Out: Romani aesthetic practice and its wider implications**
Panel Participants: Dr Daniel Baker & Dr Ethel Brooks
- 11.30 **Break and networking opportunity**
- 11.45 **Panel II: Aspects of Gypsy Traveller Life and Art**
Panel Participants: Shamus McPhee & Dr Colin Clark
- 13.15 **Event Summary & Close**
Chris Brown, with Isaac Blake

The Romani Cultural & Arts Company is also grateful for the support of the following organisations and people:

The Allen Lane Foundation
Art Central Gallery (Performance & Development Services Vale of Glamorgan Council)
Arts Council of Wales
BBC Children in Need
The Cardiff Story Museum
g39
Heritage Lottery Fund
The Riverfront
Welsh Government
Christine Virginia Lee

Speaker Biographies



Dr Daniel Baker

Daniel Baker is an artist, curator and theorist. A Romani Gypsy born in Kent, he holds a PhD on the subject of Gypsy aesthetics from the Royal College of Art, London. Baker acted as exhibitor and advisor to the first and second Roma Pavilions; "Paradise Lost" and "Call the Witness" at the 52nd and 54th Venice Biennales respectively. Baker's practice examines the role of art in the enactment of social agency. His recent publications include *"We Roma: A Critical Reader in Contemporary art"* (2013) and *"Ex Libris"* (2009). Baker's work is exhibited internationally. His work can be found in collections across Europe, America, and Asia. Former Chair of the Gypsy Council (2006-9), Baker currently lives and works in London, UK.

Isaac Blake - Director - Romani Cultural & Arts Company, Cardiff

Born a Romani Gypsy, Isaac Blake is a professional choreographer and Artistic Director of the Romani Cultural and Arts Company, which is currently funded by the BBC Children in Need, Big Lottery, Cardiff City Council and Newport City Council. In 2000 he received a scholarship to attend a 3 year undergraduate Dance Theatre Course at Laban in London. While at LABAN, Isaac worked with numerous artists and companies including Adventures in Motions Pictures (AMP), DV8 and Rambert. Since graduating from LABAN, Isaac has furthered his studies in New York and has choreographed performances at the Wales Millennium Centre and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Utilising the skills as an Artistic Director Isaac Blake has raised the necessary funds to take arts development onto both Gypsy / Traveller sites and gadjo (non-Gypsy) communities across Wales. This project is close to his heart knowing how artistically barren these sites can be. But using arts Isaac has found a way to engage with children and young people.

Dr Ethel Brooks

Ethel Brooks is Romani-American. She is Professor of Women's and Gender Studies and Sociology at Rutgers University and a Tate-TrAIN Transnational Fellow at the University of the Arts London. Brooks was the Undergraduate Director of Women's and Gender Studies at Rutgers (2012-2014) and the US-UK Fulbright Distinguished Chair at the University of the Arts London (2011-2012). She is the author of [*Unraveling the Garment Industry: Transnational Organizing and Women's Work*](#), winner of the 2010 Outstanding Book from the Global Division of the Society for the Study of Social Problems. Brooks edited the Autograph/ABP Newspaper *Roma: Europe is Ours* (2013), the Comparative Symposium on "Romani Feminisms" for *Signs* (2012), and co-edited of the special issue of *WSQ* on "Activisms" (2007). She has contributed articles to a number of books and journals, including *We Roma*, *White Zinfandel*, *Nevi Sara Kali* and *International Working Class History*, *Sweatshop USA* and *Sociology Confronts the Holocaust*. Brooks is currently working on two book projects: *Disrupting the Nation: Land Tenure, Productivity and the Possibilities of a Romani Post-Coloniality*, and *(Mis)Recognitions and (Un)Acknowledgements: Visualities, Productivities and the Contours of Romani Feminism*, both of which focus on political economy, gender and racial formations, visual cultures, productivities, the right to the city, the increasing violence against Roma worldwide and the legacies of the Holocaust for Roma and Sinti.

Speaker Biographies



Chris Brown - Co-director of g39

Chris Brown (b 1973, Worcester, lives and works in Cardiff) is an artist, musician, co-founder and co-director of g39. He is responsible for strategic development of the organisation within Wales, the UK and beyond. From 2008-12 he was Magazine coordinator for a-n The artists information company. He studied Composition and Jazz at RWCMD (Cardiff) and is also a member of Go Faster Stripe, an independent publishing collective that promotes live comedy through its programme of live acts and DVD production.

Nick Capaldi - Chief Executive of Arts Council of Wales

Nick Capaldi has been Chief Executive of the Arts Council of Wales since September 2008. Prior to his appointment in Wales, he was Executive Director of Arts Council England South West, and before that Chief Executive of South West Arts. He has worked in orchestral administration and Festival management. He has also been a Board member of Culture South West, Chair of the Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (a pioneering public/private initiative that championed city centre regeneration) and Chair of Arts 2000 (an organisation promoting opportunities for individual artists). A graduate of Manchester's Chetham's Music School, the Royal College of Music and City University in London, Nick's career in the arts started as a professional musician in concert performances as well as broadcasts on radio and television. Nick is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

Dr Colin Robert Clark

Colin Robert Clark is Professor of Sociology & Social Policy at the University of the West of Scotland. Previous to taking up this post, in September 2013, he worked at the Universities of Strathclyde, Newcastle and Glasgow. Colin's PhD is from Edinburgh University where he was very lucky to work with the anthropologist Professor Judith Okely. Colin's primary research interests are located within the broad field of ethnic and racial studies and he has a specialist interest in Romani/Gypsy/Traveller Studies - indeed, most of his funded research and publications are in this particular area. Issues of mobility, identity, diversity and anti-racism are central to his research. Colin also has interests in intersectional approaches to social theory and research methods, as well as the practice and writing of ethnography. Colin's current work is mainly focused around European socio-economic and political 'concerns' regarding Roma migration, integration and citizenship. Recent publications include: Clark, C. 2014. 'Glasgow's Ellis Island? The integration and Stigmatisation of Govanhill's Roma population', *People, Place and Policy*, 8(1): 34-50 and Clark, C. and Taylor, R. 2014. 'Is Nomadism the problem? The social construction of Gypsies and Travellers as perpetrators of 'anti-social' behaviour in Britain', in Pickard, S. (Ed.) *Anti-Social Behaviour in Britain: Victorian and Contemporary Perspectives*, Basingstoke: Palgrave. Some of his other academic publications can be accessed here: <https://westscotland.academia.edu/ColinClark>. Colin also finds time to 'tweet': @profcolinclark

Speaker Biographies



Shamus McPhee

Shamus McPhee is a Scottish Traveller, artist and activist. He holds a M.A. in Celtic Hispanic Studies from Aberdeen University. Shamus was born at Bobbin Mill, a Gypsy Traveller site in Perthshire, Scotland where he lives until today. The site was part of an assimilationist experiment carried out by the Scottish authorities from the mid-1950s, which sought to quash the Scottish Gypsy Traveller community through a process of cultural denial. The encampment continues to act as site of resistance for Gypsy Travellers, and can be seen as symbolic of wider European Roma questions regarding social exclusion and the negotiation of cultural difference. McPhee's art practice draws upon his experience of growing up in the midst of the social injustice represented by the Bobbin Mill experiment. Shamus combines art and activism in his pursuit of cultural visibility and recognition. The role of the artist within the Gypsy community and as wider social commentator is explored through his work along with notions of how art might enable new ways of tackling long-standing questions. Shamus exhibited at the second Roma Pavilion "Call the Witness" at the 54th Venice Biennale in 2011.