



Report on the O'Connell Plinth, City Hall

O'Connell Plinth - Sculpture Dublin

The temporary artwork RGB Sconce by Alan Phelan was due to be removed by early November after the completion of the yearlong temporary display on the O'Connell plinth outside City Hall. However, the artist has experienced delays in the transfer of the artwork to TU Dublin campus in Grangegorman due to the university changing the proposed location of the artwork within the campus. The artist has been urged to try expedite this matter as soon as possible. He has requested permission to leave it in place until the end of March this year.

Proposal from the Ukrainian Embassy to Ireland

In 2022, the Embassy of Ukraine to Ireland wrote to the Lord Mayor seeking that Dublin City Council would symbolically 'wrap' an historic statue with sandbags in recognition of the difficulties which Ukraine is facing at this time. Having examined the logistics of wrapping a statue and the implications for planning, logistics and conservation of the city's historic statues and monuments, the idea of 'wrapping' the O'Connell plinth outside City Hall is considered the most appropriate statement of support for culture and the arts in Ukraine. Consultation has taken place within Dublin City Council (planning, conservation architects and a civil engineer) and they have not raised any insurmountable objections to the proposal. The proposal is that this symbolic installation would be in place for six months. The Arts and Culture Advisory Group approved the proposal at its meeting in January. The Protocol Committee is asked to consider this proposal.

O'Connell Plinth – Temporary Commission

In response to the Protocol Committee and the Arts and Culture Advisory Group, consideration has been given to commissioning a new temporary artwork for display on the O'Connell plinth. Funding has been identified and it is proposed that a two stage open competition be organised. It is proposed that a selection panel composed of City Councillors, city officials and external art experts be convened for the short-listing and final selection of proposals. It is intended that the sculpture be in place for 12 months subject to planning issues. If approved the commissioning opportunity would be advertised in the first quarter of 2023. The Arts and Culture Advisory Group has approved the proposal. The Protocol Committee is asked to consider this proposal.

O'Connell Plinth – Long-term commissioning opportunities

Consideration has been given to the potential of the O'Connell plinth for the display of temporary commissions in the long-term. It is proposed that a temporary commission be in place for one out of every three years, thus allowing for a balance between the display of temporary artworks while also allowing the City Hall and plinth to stand as it has for a century or more. It was advised by planning that submitting a Part 8 for use of the plinth on an ongoing basis might be the best way to proceed. The Protocol Committee is asked to consider this proposal.

Ruairi Ó Cuív
Public Art Manager
9th February 2023.