



AMBER'S ONE MILLION STARS IRELAND

WOMEN PEACE WEAVERS EXHIBITION



Venue: EPIC Irish Emigration Museum, CHQ Custom House Quay, Dublin.

LOVE Installation: Open Friday 20th September for Culture Night Star Weaving Event 6pm – 10pm

Ireland's Peace Weavers Exhibition: Official Opening Saturday 21st Reception: 1pm until 3.30pm

Public viewing: Sunday 22nd 10 am – 4pm

One Million Stars Ireland Women Peace Weavers Exhibition

Amber Womens Refuge are delighted to present One Million Stars Ireland at the Irish Emigration Museum Dublin. This exhibition follows on from previous year's successful collaboration with many multi cultural community groups who have woven thousands of eight pointed stars in solidarity against DSGBV.

The exhibition uses Art as Activism to promote social change and will contains emotive, reflective artworks from participants, who perceive war and conflict as a form of gender based violence. Weavers this year have woven a collective amount of 88,000 stars to end gender based violence. This brings the nationwide total to 430,000 stars in solidarity.

This is the story of the communities that took part in this years International Day of Peace Peace project that was funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

Over 300 participants from 14 counties across Ireland participated in star weaving workshops from December 2023 to August 2024. The weaving groups created safe, reflective spaces.

"The stars give me hope that I will reunite with my daughters." Katlego Trio Gadiutlwe Botswana. Wexford Volunteer centre.

"The Stars make me more creative, bring beautiful memories to my life and refresh my mind." Katlego Ntsherisang Project Participant Botswana. Wexford Volunteer Centre.

Kilkenny's Multicultural Workshops

Registered Art Therapist Siobhan McQuillan working with Amber Womens Refuge, facilitated weekly star weaving workshops with 49 women and men from 10 different nationalities now living in Kilkenny. 30 workshops delivered at St Canice's Neighbourhood Hall, Kilkenny included 49 participants who wove 14,000 stars bringing the five year total county Kilkenny to 82,000.

The weaving groups created safe, reflective spaces for discussion. Many of the participants have fled war, violence and oppression in their home countries. The participants created a sculpture of the globe adorned from stars made during the workshops. This art piece reflects the desire for an end to gender based violence across the world. The globe is a symbol of solidarity against the violence inflicted on women and children during war.





“The workshops are a time that you can spend with friends, communicate and rest your soul, because weaving stars helps us to relax. I am very pleased to be involved in this project.”

Maria Voroniak.

*St Canice’s Neighbourhood Hall
Kilkenny.*





Donegal Volunteer Centre

Donegal Volunteer Centre have been weaving with the project since July 2023. They have delivered regular weave workshops within the community. They held an awareness raising exhibition for St Patricks Day 2024. This exhibition continues to tour Donegal and is currently in Lifford. Donegal have almost reached 10,200 a stars and are very committed to the project.

“The significance of the One Million Stars Ireland Project in Donegal County extends far beyond its artistic expression. It catalyses social change, bringing together diverse groups in the pursuit of a common goal: to end violence and promote a culture of compassion and understanding”.



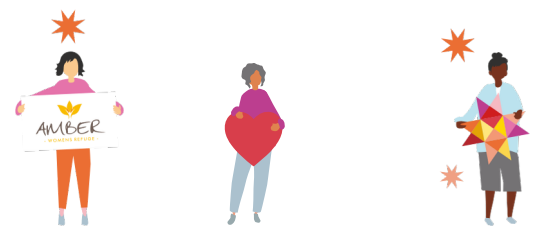
Waterford Volunteer Centre

In July 2023, Amber Women's Refuge facilitated a workshop in partnership with the Waterford Volunteer Centre at the Waterford Gallery of Art, where participants added messages to their stars, which were later framed. Since then, the Waterford Volunteer Centre has been actively conducting star weaving workshops in collaboration with various organizations in support of Amber's One Million Stars Ireland.

32 Participants and 30 workshops have been delivered including offsite workshops with schools and community groups culminating in 32,703 stars.



“Waterford Volunteer Centre are delighted to collaborate with Oasis House Womens’s Refuge in bringing the One Million Stars Ireland project to county Waterford”



Wexford Volunteer Centre

From January to July 2024, Wexford Volunteer Centre has woven over 20,000 stars as part of the One Million Stars Ireland project. Our dedicated team has also delivered more than 80 workshops, highlighting the importance of the project and teaching star weaving techniques.

These workshops were held across a variety of venues, including the Wexford Volunteer Centre, secondary schools, early school leaver facilities, disability services, international protection centres, community centres, and Men's and Women's Sheds. We've also engaged with numerous individuals and community groups. The response has been incredible, and we are delighted to announce that we have reached our goal of 32,000 stars !



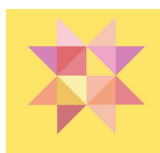
"The response has been incredible, and we're on track to reach our goal of 32,000 stars by the end of 2024!"



Online Workshops

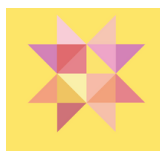
Online star weaving workshops were delivered from March 2023 until September 2024. The workshops established a safe space where participants living in different counties could connect and reflect. The workshops were a continuation of the multicultural weave workshops that began in 2021 which brought together weavers from direct provision centres across Ireland. A total of 24 workshops were held weekly throughout 2024. Some participants chose to create “creative response” images which form part of this exhibition. The participants included women from Syria, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Ireland. Thought provoking discussions we held on domestic violence, acts of war as a form of DSGBV and the damaging emotional and psychological impacts that it can have. S

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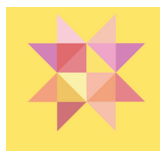


Rabia Shikko

Rabia is from Syria and lives in Ireland. Rabia has been taking part in online star weaving workshops since 2020.

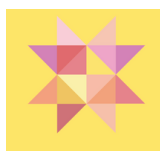


Triptych of 3 images. The triptych represents how being a victim of domestic abuse can take away your identity and leave you with nothing but through professional support you can start to build your life again and begin to find the person you were before the trauma.



Sadia Athar

Sadia is a Visual Artist from Pakistan and based in Co Longford. She has been working with different community organisations who work to create awareness through art in different ways. Her work can be followed on Instagram & Facebook @Art by Sadia Athar



Wings Of Hope and Freedom. The art piece of wings made from stars represents the strength and hope that the stars give to women. The stars are there to support women and lift them up so they can fly. I created these wings to express what I feel, that anyone can be in a difficult situation or relationship, and it is dark in that place but the stars symbolise the light and hope as they gather strength and find freedom. These wings are a message of hope to support women to find their power and freedom within and know they can fly as high as they want in their lives and there are others who will support them, cheer for them and look out for them.



Kinda Nassli

Kinda is from Syria and lives in Drogheda. Kinda is a former Syrian TV presenter. She is also a cultural awareness lecturer in Maynooth University and an Adult Education and Community MD student at Maynooth University. Kinda has been a facilitator, translator and star weaver with Amber's One Million Stars Ireland project since 2020. She has woven thousands of stars. Kinda is also a textile artist and has designed a wall hanging based on the traditional Syrian craft of carpet weaving.



Carry the Stars with Us. This bag made from stars represents a wish to keep the stars shining everywhere, spreading light, hope and solidarity. This exhibition piece explores new ways of repurposing and recycling stars while introducing the project to a wider audience through fashion accessories.



Stolen Beauty. The carpet represents the vibrant life and rich culture that Palestine has gifted to the world. Palestinian embroidery, created by the hands of women, is renowned for its distinct beauty and is a symbol of identity—a language of a civilized society with patterns that tell stories of each village and city.

However, this beauty has been overshadowed by the harsh reality of war and occupation. The land has been seized, lives have been lost, and the world's perception of Palestine has been tainted with images of death and destruction.

Through this piece, I aim to remind the world of Palestine's true essence: a place of beauty, colour, and resilience. Even as tanks roar and bombs fall, Palestinian women continue to create, choosing colours and designs as their own form of resistance and expression.



Kamar Alhamwi

Kamar has been a star weaver with the online groups since 2021, she is from Syria and lives in Kildare. Kamar enjoys expressing herself through visual art and has made reflective art pieces for this exhibition that explore her thoughts and feeling around the conflict in Palestine and how this effects women and children.



Peace for Palestine. Women are born free and nobody has the right to make them a slave. We think of the women in Palestine and the way their freedom is restricted and it breaks our hearts. Kamar Alhamwi.



Sumaya Alderee

Sumaya Alderee is from Syria and living in Galway. Sumaya has been part of the online weaving group for three years. She has woven thousands of stars and her stars have messages of solidarity for all women. Sumaya wanted share her experience of the star weaving workshops.

“It was a truly life-changing experience that gave me the strength and power to overcome the challenges and trauma I faced during the Syrian war and my journey as a refugee. The stories and experiences shared in the group about domestic violence against women gave me hope and helped me realize that women are strong and complete individuals who should not be overshadowed by anyone.

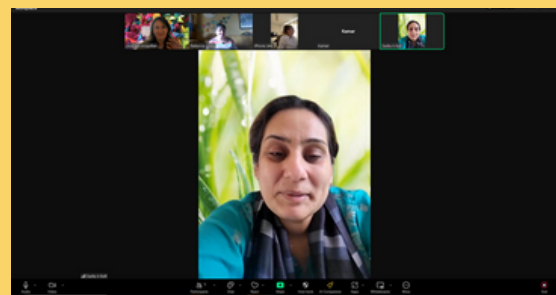
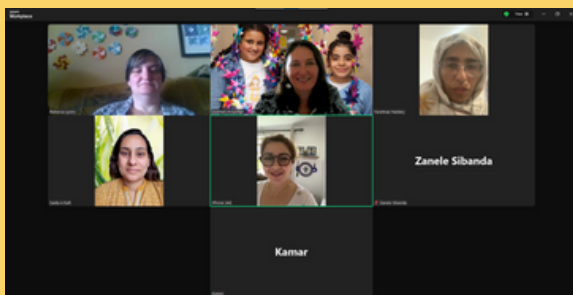
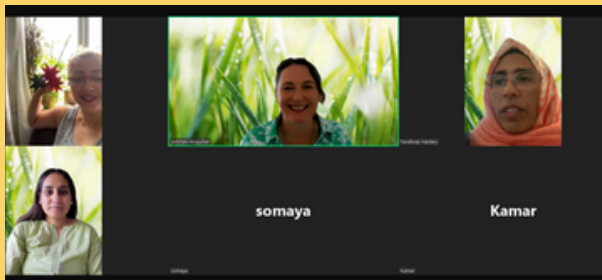
I hope that our voices as women are heard and that we are recognized for the strength we possess. I would like to express my gratitude to Siobhan for being such an amazing woman who helped us, and also to Kinda and the rest of the group for being there for me. I believe that by weaving stars, we can make a difference and help women who are victims of domestic violence.”

Farahnaz Haidary

Farahnaz Haidary is a committed women's and human rights activist with 14 years of experience in Afghanistan. She also worked in the Afghan government for 8 years, rising to a senior leadership role at the Afghanistan Supreme Audit Office. When the Taliban took control, Farahnaz left Afghanistan but continued her activism. She improved her English at UCC and worked as a conference director with the UCC Fáilte Refugees Society. Using her experiences from Afghanistan and Ireland, she founded and now runs the Domhan Green Society, which supports migrants in Ireland.



Farahnaz is also pursuing a Master's degree in Human Rights and Equality at Mary Immaculate College. Farahnaz joined the One Million Stars Ireland online weaving workshops in June 2024 and collaborates closely with the One Million Stars Ireland Project.



County Kerry's Star Weaving Story

Rebecca Lyons is a visual artist based in Tralee, Co. Kerry. She received her BA in Fine Art from Crawford College of Art and Design in 2002. Rebecca completed a BTEC in Fine Art Management at Kensington and Chelsea College in 2004 and did an Introduction to Curating Course in Central Saint Martin's in 2006. She returned to Ireland in 2013 and studied a NFQ in Digital Media in the IT Tralee in 2014; followed by a master's in creative media in 2015.



Rebecca is influenced by Origami as a main source of inspiration. "I love paper as a material, it is fragile and yet strong and durable. Turning a square sheet of paper into something you would not think possible at times is fascinating." Rebecca unique origami stars form part of this exhibition.



Rebecca facilitated star weave groups with participants from with Adapt Kerry Women's Refuge, Jigsaw Kerry, Transition Year students from St. Brigid's Secondary School Killarney, Volunteer Kerry, Ukrainian women living in Killarney, Liz Browne Artist and Kerry travellers health community development project to create Kerry Volunteer Services, NEWKD Craft Circle, Kerry Womens group and International Protection Applicants living in Killorglin over 4,000 origami stars.

Migrant Women and One Million Stars Ireland : AkiDwA with Amber Women's Refuge



AkiDwA hosted workshops throughout June and July with facilitators Iliana Alvarenga-Contreras (El Salvador) and Shaakya Anand-Vembar (India) in 3 locations in Dublin; The North East Inner City Community Hall, Killarney Court, Synge Street Direct Provision Accommodation Centre, and Mount Saint Mary's Direct Provision Accommodation Centre, Dundrum, Dublin.

All of the women live in Direct Provision accommodation in Dublin, Participants came from Somalia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Burundi, Botswana, South Africa, Sudan, and Mexico.

"It's still not safe for us at the accommodation centres, even after I escaped my home country because of domestic violence." Anonymous Star Weaver

"I'm enjoying getting to know other women from this (accommodation) centre through this activity, because normally I wouldn't interact with them.

Anonymous Star Weaver



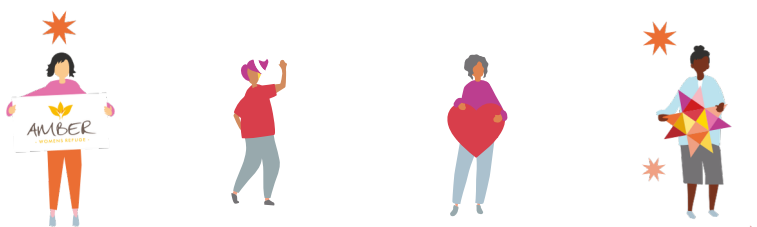
Emmalene Blake

Emmalene Blake is a Dublin based street artist has painted at events such as Electric Picnic, Dublin Fringe Festival, Baboró International Festival, Waterford Walls, Knockanstockan, All City Tivoli Jams, First Fortnight Festival, Hit The North Festival, The Beatyard, Consentfest and Cruthú Arts Festival. Emmalene's clients include Universal Music, Aiken Promotions, Warner Music, Singular Artists, Disney, Brown Thomas, Amnesty International, Concern Worldwide, Trócaire, RTE, The Square Town Centre, The Ink Factory, Street66, The New Children's Hospital and Grangegorman Development Agency.

As well as events and commissions, Emmalene paints passion pieces often influenced by current national and international events and issues, including human rights campaigns, environmental issues, mental health awareness and homelessness. Emmalene's work has garnered attention from national and international media such as CNN, BBC World News, China Global Television Network, Agence-France Presse, The Huffington Post (UK & France), The Independent (UK & Ireland), RTE, Teen Vogue, The Irish Times, The Guardian, Newstalk, Irish Tatler, Daily Mirror (UK), Irish Daily Mirror, BBC (UK), Joe.ie, Journal.ie, Hotpress, The Sun, Evoke.ie, Lovin.ie, and more.

Emmalene's work has been featured in many exhibitions throughout Ireland and the UK and we are delighted Emmalene's has collaborated with One Million Stars Ireland.

Emmalene's mural is based on a photo taken by Palestinian photographer Mahmoud Bassam, a depiction of a murdered child in Palestine being held by her grieving mother. White and silver eight pointed stars woven by Ireland Star Weavers with One Million Stars Ireland surround the figure and are a representation of the solidarity, the light, the hope and community support. The two very different mediums symbolically convey the two extremes of the death, sorrow, grief and mourning held within the light and hope and solidarity.



The story of Amber's One Million Stars Ireland project

Amber's One Million Stars Ireland project is an inclusive community arts project connecting communities across Ireland in solidarity against domestic abuse and all forms of violence. Each eight-point star woven represents light, hope and solidarity against violence, promoting our project's eight points of healthy love within relationships.

Amber's One Million Stars Ireland project is part of the global One Billion Stars project, founded in Australia in 2012 by artist Maryann Talia Pau after the rape and murder of an Irish woman living in Melbourne. The project was brought to Ireland by Art Therapist Siobhan McQuillan and Amber Women's Refuge Kilkenny. The project is now in its fifth year, participants across the 26 counties and Northern Ireland have taken part. Together we have woven 430,000 stars. Each star is a visual petition against gender based violence.

Siobhan McQuillan One Million Stars Ireland Project Lead

Siobhan is a registered art therapist with the Irish Association of Creative Arts Therapists and Associate member of the British Association of Arts Therapists. Siobhan is committed to connecting communities through the healing power of art and using art as activism to create social change. Siobhan has previously worked as an art therapist in social work and educational settings in Scotland and Australia. In January 2021, she was awarded an IACP approved Diploma in Integrative Adolescent Psychotherapy.



Amber's LOVE Installation.

The LOVE installation was launched in during the 16 Days of Activism 2020. The first venue was MacDonagh Junction in County Kilkenny, Since then it has travelled to 15 sites, the most recent at SETU Carlow Campus.

We are delighted to bring the installation to EPIC Museum Dublin.

The installation is adorned with thousands of handwoven eight pointed stars, raising awareness of healthy love in relationships. Members of the public are invited to tie their woven star in solidarity against gender based violence. A special thank you to Donegal, Wexford, Waterford and Kilkenny Volunteer Centres who have tied stars to the LOVE installation in preparation for this exhibition.



“The One Million Stars Ireland project has offered me the opportunity of meeting and working with different people from different backgrounds and countries. It has been a great experience working together towards achieving the same goal of solidarity against violence and promoting a peaceful society.”

Akeem Lawal, St Canice's Neighbourhood Hall.



For more information on One Million Stars Ireland please visit www.onemillionstarsireland.ie

Tag us in your photos of the exhibition #onemillionstarsireland



@irelandstarweavers



@irelandstarweaverstoendviolence

Thank you to all the people & organisations who made this exhibition possible and all the star weave communities across the country.



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth



kcetb
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Chill Chainnigh agus Cheatharlach
Kilkenny and Carlow
Education and Training Board



**Volunteer
Ireland**
Obair Dheonach Éireann



**Fr. McGrath
Family Resource
Centre**



**CULTURE
NIGHT**



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