



# One Small Step, One Giant Leap

Cleary and Connolly  
Per cent for Art Project  
with the pupils of St. Laurence's National School, Sallins





Neil Armstrong  
1930-2012

‘Public art, broadly defined, can take many forms and perform many functions. It may be an object of civic pride or a cause of stimulating debate. It may provide edification or entertainment. It may be a source of private pleasure and solace or popular self recognition and inclusion. While public art has traditionally been conceived primarily in terms of the plastic arts - most particularly permanent outdoor sculpture – a broader range of possibilities has been fruitfully explored in recent years. The scope of public art has widened to include not just sculpture’s close relations, architecture and painting, but also music, literature, film, video, multimedia and sound art, as well as the various performing arts including theatre, dance, opera, performance and live art.’

PUBLIC ART: PER CENT FOR ART SCHEME  
GENERAL NATIONAL GUIDELINES – 2004

The Per Cent for Art scheme is a government initiative, first introduced in 1988, whereby 1% (capped at €64,000) of the cost of any publicly funded capital, infrastructural and building development can be allocated to the commissioning of a work of art. The scheme both supports the work of Professional Artists whilst allowing the commissioning of Public Art.

This school Per Cent for Art Project ‘One Small Step, One Giant Leap’ was a participatory project commissioned under the Per Cent for Art Scheme and funded by the Department of Education and Skills.

Members of the Per Cent for Art Working Group:

School Principal: Noel Lanigan

Teachers: Bernie Moreau, Ide Kelly, Maria Fitzgibbon, Mary Keane, Rena Murphy

Parents’ Representative: Margaret Griffith

Chaired by: Rina Whyte

Members of the Selection Panel:

Professional Artist: Fifi Smith

Professional Artist: Margaret Fitzgibbons

School Principal: Noel Lanigan

Parents’ Representative: Margaret Griffith

Chaired by: Rina Whyte

Project Manager: Rina Whyte

Artists: Anne Cleary & Denis Connolly

# One Small Step, One Giant Leap

by

Cleary and Connolly

with the pupils of St. Laurence's National School, Sallins, County Kildare

Inspired by the words of Neil Armstrong

Financed by the Department of Education and Skills through the Per Cent for Art Scheme

Our practice of art is about working with people (often children) by bringing them into a participative/perceptive loop. This often centres around workshops where we prepare the material that will make up the final work. These have often been photo or film shoots, but more recently we have been making drawing projects, challenging children to represent what comes from their own imagination or the collective imagination of our society.

With a series of projects that began in 2009 we have been exploring the desire to fly and the idea of weightlessness, often working with trampolines and other gymnastics material. With 'One Small Step One Giant Leap' we continue this playful exploration of weightlessness - or rather the almost-weightlessness that Neil Armstrong and his fellow astronauts must have experienced when they walked on the surface of the Moon. Perhaps one day schoolchildren will be able to go to the moon and explore the real experience, but in the meantime, *moonwalks* have become part of our collective imagination, and perhaps it's much better that way because every man, woman and child has equal access to the experience!

Denis Connolly & Anne Cleary, November 2012

It is with great pleasure that I unveil our new artwork commissioned through the Per Cent for Art Scheme. It is titled 'One Small Step, One Giant Leap'. As we began the process of selecting an artwork for the school our main criterion was that it must be child centred. We had a great response from professional artists, with a very high standard being established in the many proposals we received. In the end the commission was awarded to Anne Cleary and Denis Connolly, known as Cleary-Connolly. Their proposal 'One Small Step, One Giant Leap' encapsulated perfectly the concept we were seeking - it centred around the small steps our infants take coming to school for the first time, their progress through the years until they take their final giant leap to secondary school and the wider world.

Not only was the concept child centred, the reality was too.

In March 2012 Anne and Denis visited our school and over the course of three days photographed all of the pupils leaping from a bench. They explained the idea to the children using images and recordings of the first moon landing and Neil Armstrong's famous words. They also explained the photographic process and cited the work of Eadweard Muybridge, a 19th century photographer, who had shown how movement could be implied using still photographs of a single subject. The work of Muybridge has been a central inspiration for the project.

The artwork is printed using ceramic ink on twelve separate panes of glass. Depending on the angle from which it is viewed, it appears as detailed white dots, a photographic negative or ethereal figures of children leaping through the air.

The work has engaged all the school community, especially the pupils who are at its centre. It is a piece that rewards time and thought as it is multi-layered in process and meaning.

It has been a pleasure to work with the artists, Anne and Denis. Their professional approach, care and attention to detail have been inspirational. A special word of gratitude to our co-ordinator Rina Whyte, who has been involved with the project from the beginning. Her efficiency, organisation and clarity of thought have been second to none.

Finally I would like to thank our school community – staff, the artwork committee, pupils, parents and the Board of Management for their support and assistance throughout the project. It is my hope that *One Small Step, One Giant Leap* will continue to be an inspiring and thought provoking piece for generations to come.

Noel Lanagan  
Principal  
Sallins National School



*That's one small step for man,  
one giant leap for mankind!*

Neil Armstrong on the Moon, July 21, 1969





Neil Armstrong first step onto the moons surface, 1969

For Sallins our starting point is Neil Armstrong's famous words as he stepped down onto the surface of the Moon in 1969:

*That's one small step for man,  
one giant leap for mankind*

In 1972, Apollo 17 astronauts made a performance to show us how a step on the Moon's surface is a lot like a giant leap. Their leaping walk was accompanied by a song:

*I was strolling on the Moon one day  
In the merry merry month of...  
December... no... May*

Singing moonwalk during the Apollo 17 mission. 1972



# The Proposal

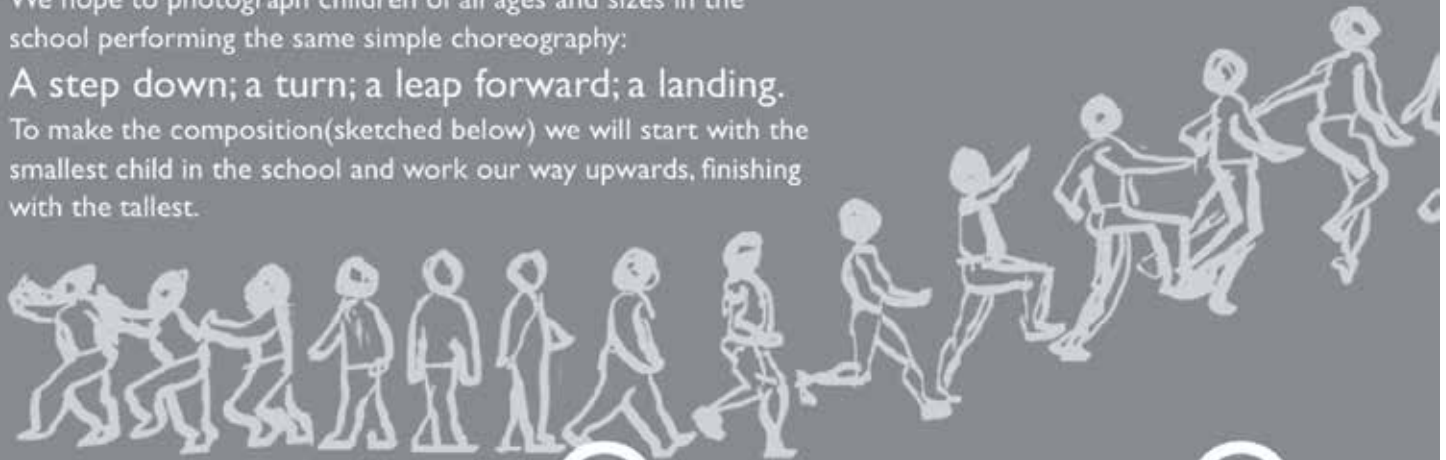


Screenshot of chronophotographic image processing from HD video

We hope to photograph children of all ages and sizes in the school performing the same simple choreography:

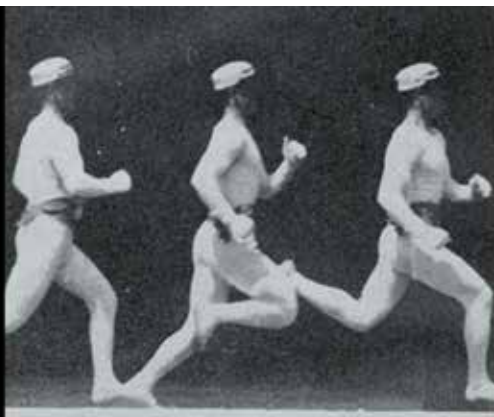
A step down; a turn; a leap forward; a landing.

To make the composition (sketched below) we will start with the smallest child in the school and work our way upwards, finishing with the tallest.

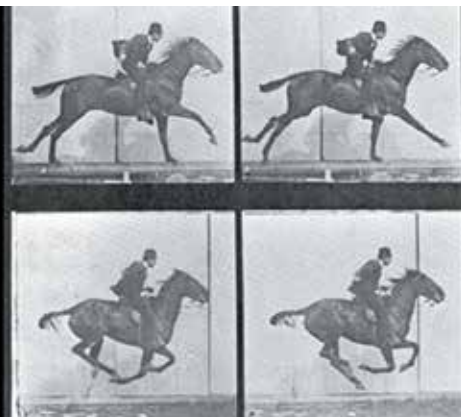


One Small Step One

Unlike Muybridge, who took a series of distinct images with a rack of cameras, Marey exposed a single negative plate several times in a row. He had to work in a dark environment (otherwise the plate would get overexposed) and with figures dressed in white so they could be captured with a short exposure.



*Marey*



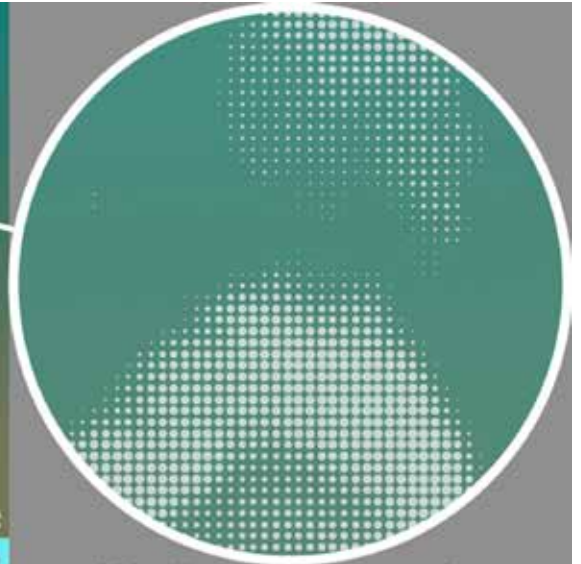
*Muybridge*



# Giant Leap



Outside  
Inside



We will print the image on glass using only white halftone dots.

The image will be perceived as negative from the inside and positive from the outside. Outside, the white dots - front-lit by daylight against the relatively dark interior - will read as white. Inside the opaque dots - with daylight behind - will appear dark. In the evening-time, of course, the same principle will work in reverse.

# Continuity/ Aspiration/ Inclusion

*One Small Step One Giant Leap* is a participatory art project, inviting children of St. Laurence's National School, Sallins to re-enact one of the most inspirational of moments in human history, the moment when Neil Armstrong stepped onto the moon, in order to help us create a truly inspirational artwork that will serve as a reminder of human endeavor for many generations.

While visiting St. Laurence's National School in January I became very aware of a strong sense of continuity that crystallised around certain aspects of the school: the memorial garden; the existing mural: the canal and the noise from passing trains, tying Sallins into the continuity of Ireland's industrial heritage. It is clear that continuity was a powerful force in the school, and something that the artwork should address.

Inclusiveness too is clearly a strong part the school ethos, and aspiration towards excellence—evident everywhere, from the ambitious science projects on the notice boards, to the wide-ranging sport activities undertaken within the school.

Responding to these three imperatives - Aspiration, Inclusion, and Continuity - we sought to elaborate an art project that would allow participation from all the children, while resulting in a lasting work that would be an inspiration to pupils for many years to come.

Anne Cleary, December 2011



*l'Apesanteur, Sorgues 2010*



*Leap, COLAi, London 2011*



*We Can Fly, St. Nicolas School, Ballina, 2010*



*Rococo Leap, Cavan, 2012*





The Process



Workshops, April 2012

# Project Development







## OUR STRATEGY

Continuity exists on many levels; local, global, historic... there are some moments in history that belong to the whole of the human family: one of these is the moment when Neil Armstrong stepped from his lunar module onto the moon's surface. This is one of the most inspirational moments in history, a moment when aspirations really were fulfilled, and humanity overcame obstacles to achieve its goals. We suggested recreating this extraordinary moment with each child in the school, through a simple action...One Small Step, and One Giant Leap.

## THE PROCESS

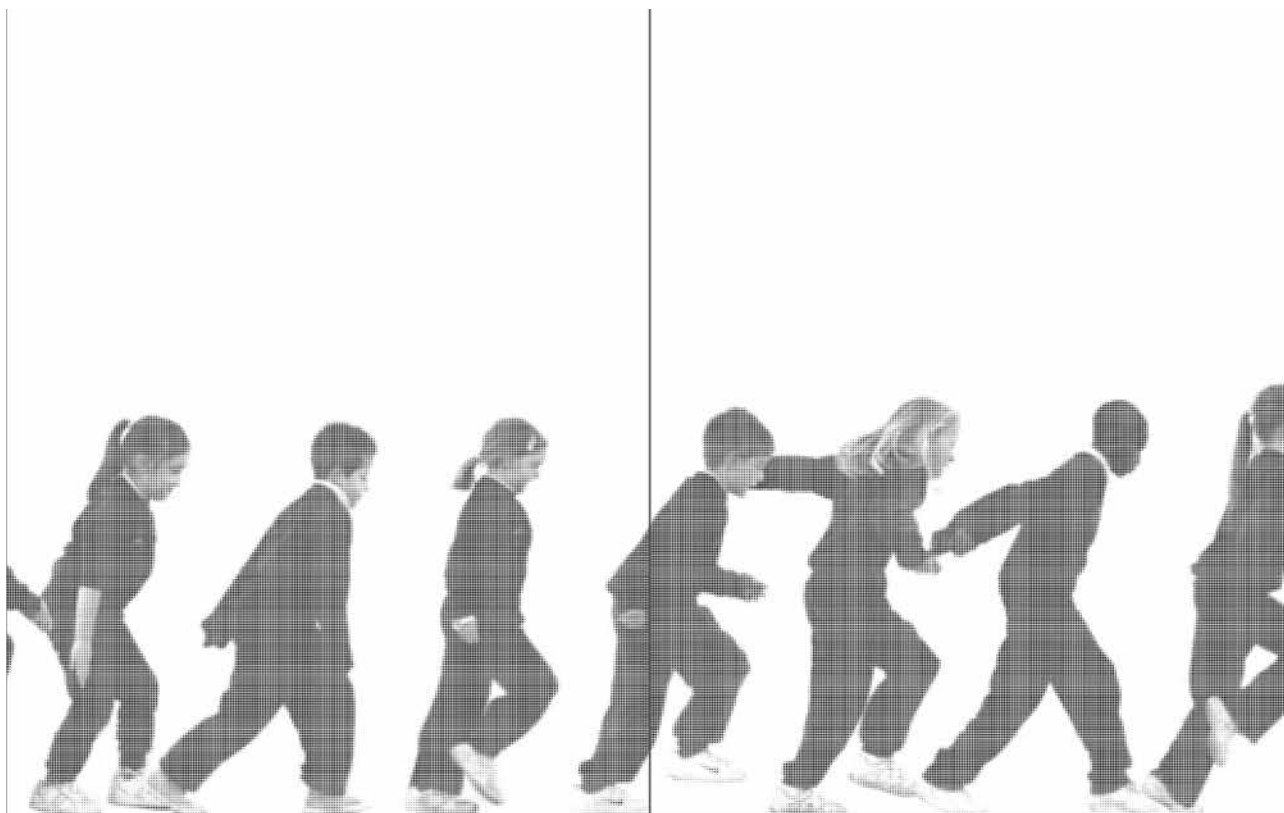
We asked children of all ages and sizes in the school to perform the same simple choreography: A step down; a leap forward; a landing.

We started with the smallest children in the school and over three days worked our way upwards, photographing every single child do their giant leap, right up to the tallest.

These photographs, several thousand in total, were to be the raw material for the artwork, *One Small Step, One Giant Leap*.

Anne Cleary

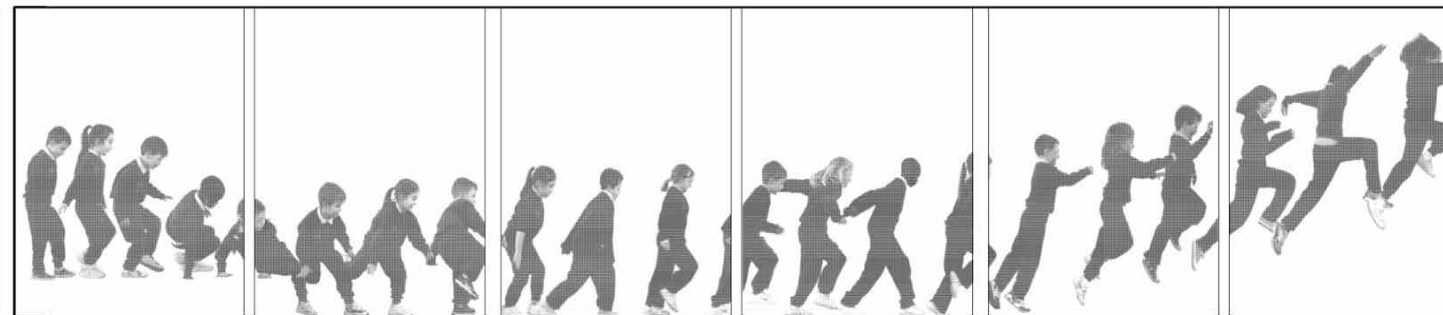


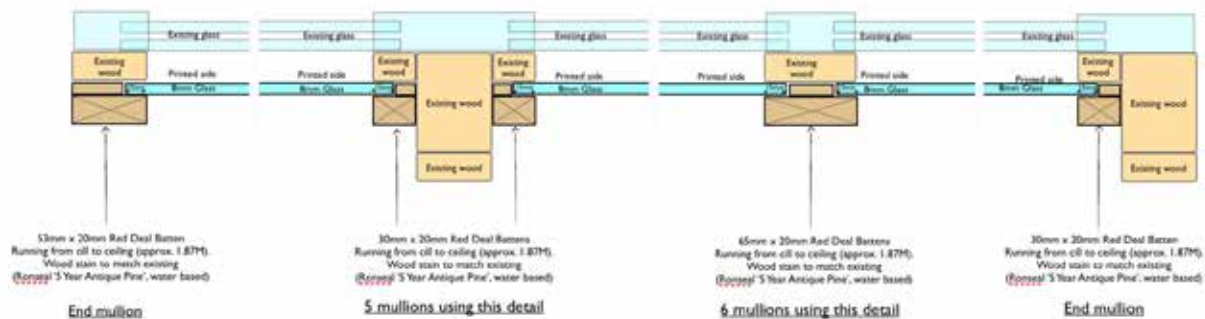






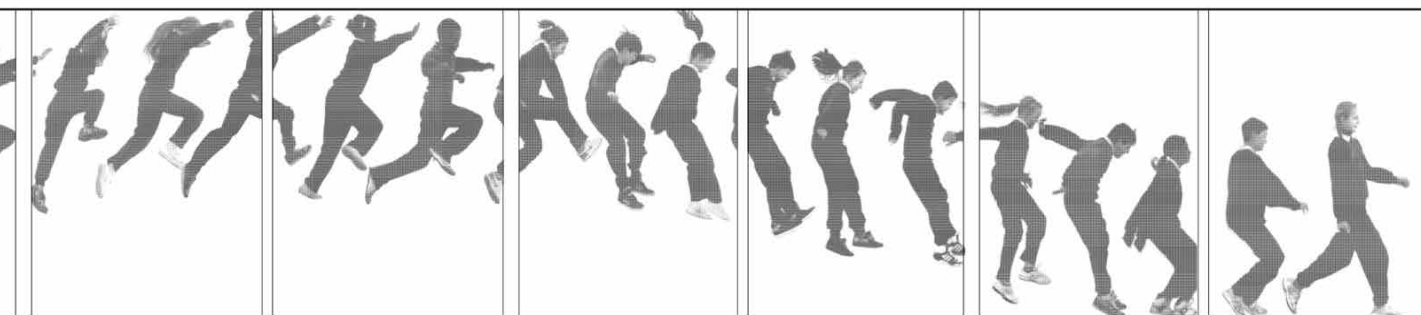


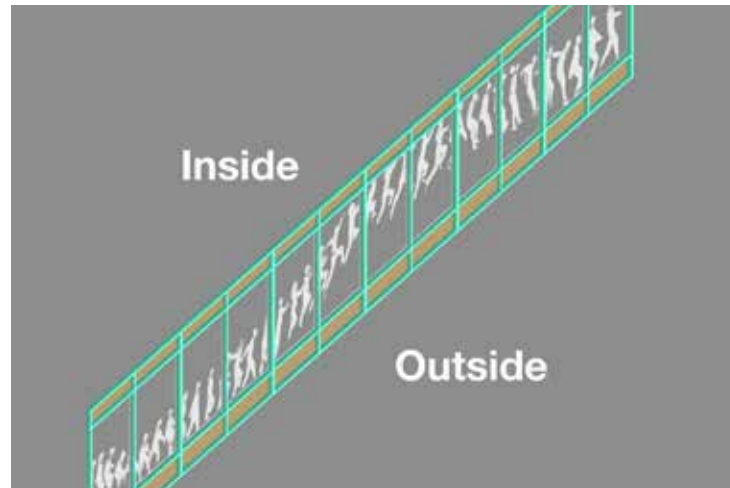




## Window Details for Sallins

Anne Cleary and Denis Connolly 57 Bd Barbès 75018 Paris Tel +33 1 42592948 Mobile 085 1222259 [connollycleary@noos.fr](mailto:connollycleary@noos.fr) [www.connolly-cleary.com](http://www.connolly-cleary.com)







Installation





The Artwork







# Related School Projects









Neil Armstrong,  
NASA-JSC, Mail  
Code CB, 2101  
NASA Rd. 1,  
Houston, TX77058,  
USA.

Sallins National School, Sallins,  
Co. Kildare, Ireland.  
08-11-2012

08-11-2012

Dear Neil Armstrong's Fan Club,

We are a fifth class from Sallins National School. Our ages in the class range from 10 to 12 years of age. We recently studied the life of Neil Armstrong in school. We were very sorry to hear of his passing on the 25th August, 2012.

Recently, in our school we took part in an art project in which two artists visited our school. The artists took images of us all walking along benches and jumping. Some of these images were then printed on glass along one of the school corridors using halftone dots. The inspiration for this project came from Neil Armstrong's historic words after landing on the moon.

We named our art project as a result 'One Small Step, One Giant Leap'. This name was appropriate because of the small step into primary school and the giant leap we take through primary school into the rest of our lives.

We would greatly appreciate a reply to our letter as we really enjoyed learning about Neil Armstrong's journey in life.

Yours faithfully,

Fifth Class, Ms. Culhane, Room 16.





I was invited by the school principal Mr. Lani-gan and Kildare County Council Library and Arts Services as part of the Children's book Festival to get involved with a series of Illustration and animation workshops for the 'One Small Step, One Giant Leap' project.

The most challenging aspect was to come up with an idea that both linked in with the Installation project and could quickly get the children involved. After some consideration it was decided to produce a short looping animation of a Spaceman walking on the moon. The original piece was created in Adobe Flash. The individual frames were then printed out and were coloured in with Crayola twist-able crayons. The colour range was limited as much as possible to have all the student work as consistent across all the participating classes.

The final artwork was then scanned into a computer and edited into a video file. The final video will be produced onto a DVD for the school and will also be uploaded and posted to YouTube and the artist's blog website when finished. It will be hoped the children will be very proud of their specially produced animation piece and share it with family and friends.

David Butler

The work in progress and final video can be viewed on <http://www.anithingartist.com/search/label/Sallins>





