

# SOLAS NUA

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## The Norman Houston Project

The Norman Houston Project is a new project that was initiated in 2022 by Solas Nua in Washington D.C., dedicated to the memory of Norman Houston, the former Director of the Northern Ireland Bureau (NIB), in the United States. It includes the Capital Irish Film Festival's Award for the best short film from Northern Ireland, and the Norman Houston Multi-disciplinary Commissioning Award.

### The Norman Houston Multi-disciplinary Commissioning Award

This Award is a bi-annual commission for a new work. This exciting opportunity is now open to artists working in any discipline on the island of Ireland. Individuals or small collectives are both eligible.

The commission will comprise of a **six-week** research and development residency in Washington D.C. on agreed dates between **12th June and 07th September 2023** with a studio at [STABLE Arts](#), travel and private accommodation provided (in year one), followed by a presentation of the new work produced for the commission (in year two). A presentation may include an exhibition, a performance, a staged reading, or a partial or full production. Expenses covered by the commission in year two will include production costs of up to \$15,000, artists fees, travel, accommodation and shipping. Provided there is space in the accommodation, artists in residence may invite partners / families to visit for short periods of time, at their own expense.

### Context for the award:

As an unwavering advocate for the arts in his beloved Northern Ireland and Ireland as a whole, Norman Houston, through his life and career, demonstrated his understanding that the artists who call Ireland home express the imagination, creativity, resilience and voice of the people of the island; beyond borders and across communities. Norman believed that it is through the arts that we see a reflection of our own lives in the lives of others, and that by engaging with the arts, we will build bridges of empathy and appreciation and hope for the future. He spent a significant part of his extraordinary life and career in promoting the importance and vitality that the role of the arts can play in all of our lives. He mentored young people from across the island of Ireland and always strived for inclusivity in his tireless efforts to promote peace in his hometown of Belfast.

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This award seeks to honor Norman and to ensure that his life, legacy, and love of the arts are remembered. Dublin-based visual artist Niamh McCann was selected for the inaugural Norman Houston Multi-disciplinary Commissioning Award in 2022.

## **About Solas Nua:**

Solas Nua - 'new light' in Irish, is a leading multidisciplinary arts organization that is dedicated exclusively to contemporary Irish arts. Based in Washington, D.C., our mission is to bring the best of contemporary Irish arts to U.S. audiences. Solas Nua is supported by the Government of Ireland's Emigrant Support Programme, Culture Ireland and the DC Commission for the Arts & Humanities.

## **About STABLE Arts:**

STABLE's mission is strengthening Washington DC's contemporary visual arts community by providing affordable and sustainable studio space, and collaborating with local, national, and international partners to provide programming and exhibition opportunities, fostering an engaged, diverse community in Washington, DC.

## **How to apply:**

Please submit **one pdf** containing the following documents:

1. A recent CV (no more than three pages).
2. Artist's statement (no more than one page).
3. A maximum of eight images and/or up to four video/audio links to relevant work or a recent sample of writing (no more than 10 pages). Large files should be sent via Google Drive.
4. Your preferred dates between 12th June and 07th September 2023 (duration 6 weeks).
5. A short proposal (no more than one page), to include why you are interested in this residency and commission. Consider the following in your answer:
  - What interests you about spending time in Washington DC.

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- Any relevant connections, conceptual or otherwise between Washington DC and Ireland. Any intentions to engage with local artists, organizations, the STABLE Arts or Solas Nua communities and / or Washington DC local communities.
- Details of any proposed performance or public engagement activities proposed during your stay.

All applications will be assessed by a panel and all applicants will be notified on the week of **January 16th 2023**. Please send applications via email only by **5pm ET (10pm GMT) on Thursday January 5th** to:

[contact@solasnua.org](mailto:contact@solasnua.org)

(with the subject heading The Norman Houston Multi-disciplinary Commissioning Award 2023).

**Please note** - applications will be accepted by email only. Applications that exceed or do not meet the required documentation will not be accepted. Applications will not be accepted after the deadline.

**This project is made possible with support from the Northern Ireland Bureau, the Embassy of Ireland and individual contributors.**

