



## **BRIGHTER FUTURES Project Outline**

### **Context**

Established in 2000 Brighter Futures is an arts education initiative which works with Transition Year students through secondary schools in Dublin to create and perform the largest pageant in St Patrick's Festival Parade. Through its first five years Brighter Futures has involved more than 5500 young people and more than 80 schools in St Patrick's Festival. The first two years of the project led to students taking part in the opening event of the Festival. In 2003, 2004 & 2005 students designed and performed their own pageant as part of the St Patrick's Festival Parade.

### **Aims of Brighter Futures Project**

- 1) To provide opportunities for young people to develop skills, become involved in the arts and explore fresh means of expression.
- 2) To facilitate communication between students from different parts of the city and differing socio-cultural backgrounds.
- 3) To create a self-sustaining celebration as part of the St. Patrick's Festival programme.
- 4) To create links between professional artists and young people.
- 5) To develop a progression route for artists to get involved with the festival and for a number of younger artists to gain experience in the Brighter Futures Project as deliverers of arts projects
- 6) To create awareness of a national cultural identity and a connection with Dublin for the young people involved

### **Structure**

The Brighter Futures project runs from October - March each year. The initial stages of the project involve artists visiting schools to explain the project and receive feedback & ideas from students. From each school two students are selected to make up a Student Forum. The Student Forum meets with artists for additional workshops. Members of the Student Forum work as ambassadors for the project liaising between the artists and the schools to develop the project with their peers.

A weeklong series of artists' workshops for the Artistic Team take place in December. These facilitate development of the project and prototyping of design & performance elements.

The Artistic Team works with all participating students in 3 day workshops in schools following the developmental stage. During workshops in schools artists oversee the creation of specially designed props and costumes for the Festival Parade. By participating in performance and choreography workshops, the students are facilitated to think creatively, engage in collective decision-making, work in teams and use practical planning skills to realise their ambitions.

Final rehearsals for all participating schools complete the project in March. A piece of new music is commissioned for the Brighter Futures pageant each year with students also having an input in this. In 2005 students digitally documented their involvement in the project and produced a documentary. This feature of the project will be retained in coming years.

The artistic team who design, develop and deliver Brighter Futures with students include an Artistic Director, Lead Designer, Musical Director, a team of visual and performance artists and a number of trainee assistant artists.

Brighter Futures is a once in a lifetime chance for students to push creative boundaries and expand their artistic visions. Working closely with professional artists they have the opportunity to create a pageant for the biggest and most spectacular event in their national festival. Over its five years of existence Brighter Futures has grown, refined and developed. In 2005 the Brighter Futures pageant was awarded the Parade Premier Pageant Award by a panel of international judges.



**Brighter Futures 2005**  
**“The Nutterfly Effect”**