

National College of Art and Design

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Living Authentically through the Craft of Hurl Making.

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I declare that this **Critical Cultures Research Project** is all my own work and that all sources have been fully acknowledged.

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Introduction (a seed is sewn)

A bunch of seeds (figure 1) resembling small, slender keys make their way down from the overhanging branches of the ash tree. Caught by a gust of wind, one separates from the bunch. The key travels alongside the breeze until its own resting



Figure 1: Seed of the ash tree (Gardenista, 2019)

space is found, away from the rest. This is where business begins. The craft and trade of hurl making depends on these humble beginnings of the key seed of the ash tree. Like the seed, most hurl making businesses have organic beginnings. They are run from their own small corner of the world – a workshop or shed on the outskirts of a village or town. The possibility of running a whole business from a galvanise shed has its own unique narrative interwoven with the ash tree material, the craftsman, the family and the community. Many of these businesses are family run and “became familiar features of the socio-economic landscape of Ireland in the second half of the nineteenth century” (O’Drisceoil cited in Keogh, 2008)

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The business is fully integrated into the lives, identity and routine of the family. It's difficult to draw a line between the business and the family, boundaries are blurred. In a study conducted by Carrigan and Buckley on family businesses, one rural respondent concluded,

the fact you can speak to the boss... he's the one running it, it's his business, so it depends, it matters to him, the kind of relationship he has... and that integrity...he is in a sense the brand, the person, the family, the brand, (Penny cited in Carrigan and Buckley, 2008, p.660)

This certainly creates interesting narratives and makes for an meaningful and grounded way of life – there is no disconnect between the values of the job and the craftman's own personal values. Martin Heidegger argued that Dasein (a human's existence) can be classed as either authentic or inauthentic. Authenticity can be achieved with knowing your own values and sticking by them – a 'Being can "choose' itself and win itself'. By contrast, inauthenticity is possible as Dasein can "lose itself and never win itself" (1962, p.43). It is easy to fall into an inauthentic way of life through most employments. For example, a secondary school teacher may strongly disagree with summative examinations, yet he or she still has to deliver the leaving cert curriculum to the students. It is important to say that inauthenticity is not a criticism, it is better defined as a description. Authentic living does not necessarily mean the values of the Being are positive, it is more that the values, be them good or bad, are carried through to all aspects of the Being's life. Self-employment by nature offers the chance for an individual to live an authentic life as it allows the worker to make his or her own decisions about every aspect of working life. It means the values of the Being as a worker are not separate from the values of the Being when they are not at work. There is no separation between the Being, the work and the workspace - they exist harmoniously. It allows the values of the Being to be seamless as it moves between life and work.

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This essay will explore hurl making and the authentic life. The unification of and the ongoing dialogue between several different aspects of the craft contribute to its authenticity. They include; the craftsman along with his identity and his values, the unique characteristics of the ash timber, the workspace reflecting lifestyle of the craftsman, the family of the craftsman and the customer - the person that will use the hurl. The impact of this alignment on the finished product and life of the maker will be explored intermittently through the narrative of the hurl making process.

Introduction to case study (Paul Maher Hurls)

Its half past nine on a November morning and the workshop door is opened. A layer of sunlight floods the space, sitting smoothly atop the sawdust covered furnishings. When he left school, my father, Paul Maher began making hurls in this space in 1983 with his brother and father. Based in Wexford, the shed they built for hurl making was, at first ‘a big, drafty building’ (Wexford Echo Newspaper, 2009, p.38). So when his brother left to pursue carpentry and soon after when his father had a stroke leaving him unable to work, Paul sectioned off just one area – the workshop. Paul works alone and enjoys this way of life.

I couldn't give someone else orders and I couldn't take orders from someone else. (Wexford Echo Newspaper, 2009, p.38)

This means that Paul is the sole driving force for every aspect of the business. He is, first and foremost, the maker, however he is also the book-keeper, the dealer, the marketing manager, he sources the materials, cleans the space, and repairs the machines. The idea of one person driving every element of a business is documented in *The Wheelwright's Shop*, by George Sturt. Sturt was a schoolteacher who took over the management and trade of his father's wheelwright shop in 1884 when his father suddenly became too ill to run it. His book details his observations of the small business

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as well as the difficulty Sturt had with learning the craft as well as managing all the other aspects of the business in a short space of time. He found that the only way to learn the trade was to “live it” and fully integrate it into his life.

Every detail stood by itself , and had to be learned either by trial and error or by tradition (Strut, 1923, p.14)

It has taken years for Paul to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to run his hurl making business. It also blends fully into his home life. With the workshop (figure 2)



Figure 2: Paul in his workshop (photograph by the author, 2019).

situated in a yard between the home he grew up in and the home in which he now lives with his wife and three children, the hurl making business and family life all roll into one.

Felling and cutting the ash tree timber and the ‘Holy Juice’

The type of timber used to make hurls is ash. It is durable, yet light and pliable grain which is perfect for shock absorption. Most ash timber is imported from Wales, England or Germany, however, opportunities do arise in Ireland to fell and plank your own timber. For Paul, this is a task which is satisfying. In the same way as a painter would

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feel more ownership over a painting in which he or she had made the canvas stretcher from scratch, Paul feels more ownership over his product when he has sourced and prepared the materials himself. Each hurl is unique because each tree is unique. Hurls can only be made from the bottom of the trunk of the ash tree, where the grain curves outwards. The technique Paul uses to expose this curve of the grain is similar to the technique of the wheelwright's in Sturt's documentation;

'Trees were rarely crooked in more ways than one; and the object was so to open them at this one curve, this one crookedness, was preserved. ...he had arranged the cross cutting of the tree to take advantage of this curve. Thus, if a butt of ash had the shape of a wagon shaft, it was marked off the right length for that and then split from end to end so that there were two curved pieces' (1923, p.32)

Each tree has different features that need to be catered for in the cutting process. In felling and cutting his own ash timber, Paul has started making decisions about how the product will turn out from an earlier stage in the hurl making process. This improves the quality of the hurl and parallels with a tactical business approach. Most customers prefer the materials for their hurls to be sourced locally by the hurl maker as it serves as a mark of authenticity, it means they can trace their hurl back to the tree. Therefore, with a point of view of achieving customer satisfaction it is worth felling and preparing the timber locally.

Hurls can only be made from the bottom of the trunk of the ash tree, where the grain curves outwards. This means the tree needs to be cut from the very bottom, which proves to be dangerous. This risk is fatally documented in Patrick Deely's memoir, *The Hurl Maker's Son*,

'He cut right through, raising the chainsaw to nearly head height...now he lowered the saw and switched it off. The trunk fell harmlessly away but the upper section of the tree lurched, striking him on the left temple before he could step back.' (2016, p.6)

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While there are no official health and safety guidelines on the process, many hurl makers employ their own precautions – be them safety, superstitious or religious. When



Figure 3: Cutting the timber into planks at the circular saw (Photograph by the author, 2019).

cutting the timber into planks (figure 3), Paul keeps a bottle of holy water tucked behind the wooden beams of the lean-to shed that the circular saw resides in. It comes from St. David's Well which is nearby. Before planks are cut from the ash tree log, Paul has a religious ritual that he carries out with holy water, affectionately termed 'the holy juice', (Maher, 2019)

'I put holy water on the different things, on the tractor, on the blade, where I'm standing, where somebody else might be standing, and on the bench. It's just a ritual' (Maher, 2019).

This may contrast with the health and safety procedures employed in many 'modern' businesses and establishments. Paul has the authority to create and implement his own health and safety precautions as working on his own, he has only himself to answer to if there is an accident. This is an example of life values amalgamating with work values and thus achieving Heidegger's vision of authenticity. Paul's religious beliefs are extended into his working practice. For a man to put so much trust and faith in holy

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water to keep him safe seems ludicrous at first glance. However on closer inspection it is clear that the holy water is not the sole form of protection – Paul’s own skill and intuition gained from years of experience keep him out of harm’s way. The role of the holy water is to give peace of mind.

Marking the hurl template, the rough cut and the workshop.

The timber is now moved to the workshop. Here, it will change form and



Figure 4: The outline of the hurl is marked on the plank (Photograph by the author, 2019).

function completely. A Perspex stencil is placed on top of the plank and the outline of the hurl is marked (figure 4). The bandsaw - a rotating blade, roughly cuts out this shape. The marked and worn machinery and tools present almost a timeline of the business – a chip off a handle, a slab of rough plaster holding together a joint, the small pile of sawdust gathered in the gap behind a blade. These details cannot be created consciously, they happen by a build-up of chance events over a long span of time. The renowned designers Charles and Ray Eames have a quote which captures the ordinary essence of these traces strikingly –

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‘...the uncommon beauty of common things...’ (Eames cited in Demetrios and Hartman, 2017. P.148)

Paul’s workshop emanates his own presence in these details. They are the essence of authentic existence which “is not something which floats above falling everydayness; existentially, it is only a modified way in which such everydayness is seized upon” (Heidegger, 1962, p.180). The craftsman is the workshop and the workshop is the craftsman, there is no gap, or separation between the two. The unique characteristics of the workshop space reflect the lifestyle and presence of the craftsman as well as the making process. Deely describes this idea beautifully in *The Hurley Maker’s Son*,

‘In the workshop I saw amid the lingering traces of his recent presence a handprint given definition by the sawdust on the metal leaf of the bandsaw.’ (2016, p.36)

The movements of the hurl maker are recorded in the sawdust and on the marked and worn machinery.

Furthermore, the workshop serves as a true representation of the origins of the product. The customer can see and engage in, the space where the hurl has been crafted. These workshops and sheds often look messy, chaotic and may leave an onlooker wondering as to how any work is ever done in such spaces. However, on closer inspection, it is clear these businesses have their own order that doesn’t adhere to modern urban enterprise narratives. More importantly, these spaces have a grounded, yet lively atmosphere – qualities that both satisfy the customer and make for a healthy working environment.

Heidegger brings forth the importance of the unique placement of tools in the workshop in his writings in ‘Being and Time’. He talks of the tools being ‘ready-to-hand’, in the space thus allowing them to be used in a flowing organic manner by the craftsman. For example, when the hammer touches the craftsman’s hand, it ceases to be

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an object and becomes a function, or a motion. (Heidegger, 1962, pp.101-102) Perhaps you could say the same statement in reverse; when the craftsman's hand touches the hammer, he ceases to be concerned with all other aspects of human life with exception to hammering the nails into timber. The workshop allows him to adapt this state - the space is all-engulfing. It allows the menial task of product production become the fine art of crafting an artistic artefact, the hurl.

Planing of the hurl, the drying out of the timber and the integration of family life.

Following the rough cut of the main shape of the hurl, Paul moves to a nearby wooden workbench. Amidst the many golden curls of wood shavings sits a handheld electric planer (figure 5). Within a minute, Paul has rid the hurl shape of all its rough



Figure 5: Planing the hurl at the workbench (Photograph by the author, 2019).

texture and right angled edges. It is still quite large and heavy, however it needs to be left alone for a day or two before it is fine sanded. This is to allow the wood to dry out thus making it lighter. The pause in production mirrors the calm of a pause from work.



Figure 6: Timber left to dry by the work bench (Photograph by the author, 2019)

The ‘hustle’ that is associated with inauthenticity (Heidegger, 1962, p.178) is ceased in order to allow the timber to dry (figure 6) and to concentrate on other aspects of the business as well as family life.

‘At certain times I make the dinner, collect the kids from school, clean the workshop, I have tea with my mother and bring in the sticks for her, I have a moment with the dog. The odd time we (my wife and I) go out for something to eat. Sometimes I’ve to go up to the shop, collect my father (from the nursing home) on a Wednesday, bring Kate (my daughter) to ballet on a Thursday.’ (Maher, 2019)

Self-employment makes it possible for Paul to choose his own working hours in accordance to the events of family life and the requirements of his craft. However, the hurl making business and family life tend not to be two separate entities – they are more like parallel tracks for a train moving in conjunction with each other. Where one goes, the other follows. When I interviewed my father on this topic, he struggled to see it. To him, the business and family life were quite separate. Yet, I think he may be so close to the situation that it is difficult to see it clearly. In my mother’s interview, she identified the impacts of the business on family life, both positive and negative immediately. This

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is perhaps because she has experience of working in a different career to hurl making.

She talked of the importance of accepting these impacts of ‘the business because it is intertwined in every aspect of your life’. (Maher, 2019)

‘The business is part of our family life, people call for hurls at any time during the day, we could be eating dinner, we could be heading out the gate, everybody is involved in some way. Customers can become friends. They are often in our family home, even to the point of sitting down and having tea with us. Hurls are in the kitchen, orders are taken in the house, there’s sawdust everywhere.’
(Maher, 2019)

When a family run a business, they do not consciously think about it often. It is more a case of a constant subconscious thought and effort to maintain it. The values, be they good or bad, of the family match the values of the business and vice versa which makes for authenticity.

Taxes, keeping the books and the kitchen table office.

It’s eight o clock in the evening and a mixture of sheets detailing orders for hurls,

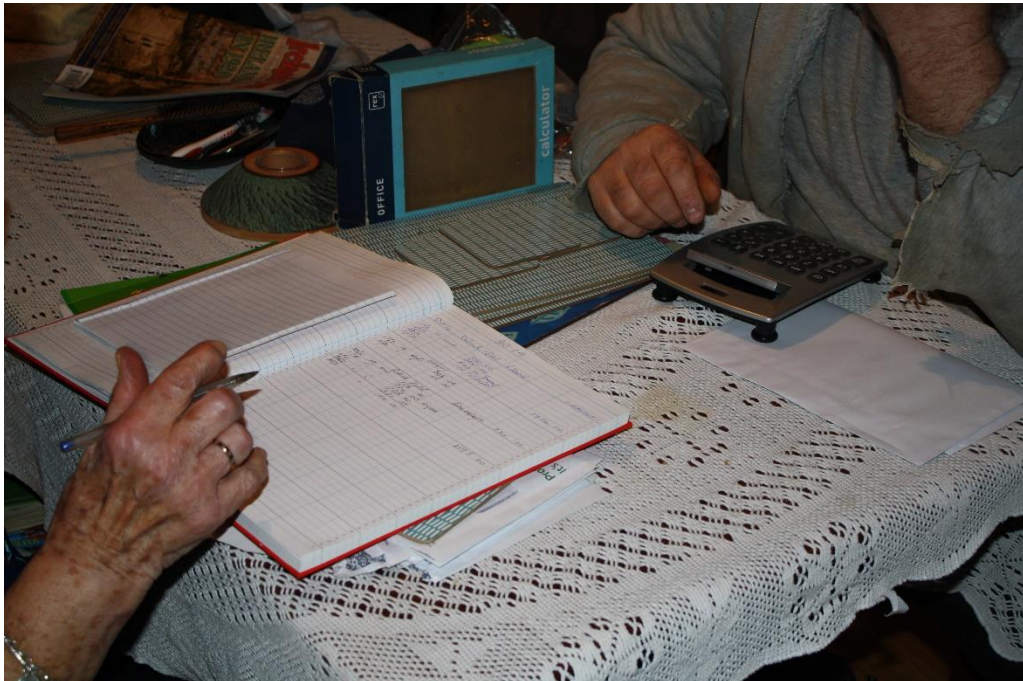


Figure 7: Paul and his mother updating the red account book (Photograph by the author, 2019)

homework and dinner fill the kitchen table. Hurls that have been broken and mended are

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stacked beside the cooker, the heat drying the glue. The dinner is cleared and the large red account book is updated (figure 7). Paul and his mother complete this task together. It is important that all the information is correct for two reasons; so Paul can see clearly how much money has come into the business and how much has gone out, as well as to make sure that the right amount of tax is being paid each year.

‘Myself and mammy did the books from day one. Once every month at the least. Writing in the accounts into a red book that we have, direct debits, lodgment, bank transfers, sorting out cheques to lodge and writing it all in the ledger.’
(Maher, 2019)

A large amount of work similar to this is done at the kitchen table, there is no official office. Once it is complete, the documents are stored away in specific places for safe keeping and easy access. Dockets are kept in the glove compartment of the jeep, receipts are kept in a bag underneath the couch, books and order copies are kept in the cupboard beside the table. It seems chaotic, but it works due to consistency. Deely describes his father’s ‘office’ in a similar way in *The Hurley Maker’s Son*. He reminisces on the ‘the small backroom porch he... used as an office’ (2016, p.9). This blurred line between workspace and living space is not always healthy, however it allows Paul to manage all aspects of the business. Working on accounts is quite different task to crafting the hurls. It requires more mental agility and less physical skill. As previously mentioned, Paul classes himself as first and foremost, the maker. However he also needs work at elements of the business such as the accounts. Here, it is clear that the separation of man and work is non-existent. Paul is the authentic embodiment of the business.

Fine sanding of the hurl and acquired intuition

A day has passed and the timber is now dry enough to work with again. The belt sander, a waist high rectangular machine that operates to spin a loop of sandpaper at

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high speed, sits underneath the large window in the workshop. Paul spends six to seven minutes running each hurl over the sander in almost a dance-like circular motion. He



Figure 8: Paul using the bandsaw to mould the hurl (Photograph by the author, 2019)

flattens the boss (the part of the hurl that hits the ball) and tapers the handle. This makes the hurl completely smooth and rounded. It also serves as a way for Paul to mould each hurl with unique features in accordance with the way the grain of the wood falls as well as the individual requirements of the customer (figure 8). This is what differentiates a hand crafted product from a mass produced product. Here, the amalgamation of four aspects contribute to authenticity; uniting the identity of the hurl maker, the particular qualities of the ash, the layout of the workspace and the values of the customer. As with all crafts, hurl making is the craftsman's response to the material (the ash) and the customer within the bounds of the workspace. The hurl is an extension of the craftsman, they are united. 'The work is cut to his (the craftsman's) figure; he 'is' there along with it as the work emerges.' (Heidegger, 1962, p.100) Heidegger talks of this 'relatedness' in a similar way with a cabinetmaker,

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‘If he is to become a true cabinetmaker, he makes himself answer and respond above all to the different kinds of wood and to the shapes slumbering in the wood – to wood as it enters into the man’s dwelling with all the hidden riches of its nature. In fact, this relatedness to wood is what maintains the whole craft. Without that relatedness, this craft will never be anything but empty busywork,’ (Heidegger cited in Jarvis, 1999. P.12)

This is what separates hurl making and other similar crafts from modern production lines – the ongoing dialogue between the craftsman, the material and the desires of the customer. Authenticity is reflected through this seamless channel of communication. This idea is present in design practice also. In his book, *The Reflective Practitioner*, Schön describes it as ‘back talk’, The designer makes the first move in shaping ‘the situation in accordance with his initial appreciation of it, the situation “talks back,” and he responds to the situation’s back-talk’ (1983, p.79).

Although the sander is situated beside the window to allow maximum light to see the wood clearly, the fine sanding of the hurl is more of a tactile skill. Sturt described the sensation of this tactile skills saying ‘My own eyes know because my own hands have felt, but I cannot teach an outsider’ (1923, p.17). Like many tasks in the process of hurl making, knowledge of fine sanding is acquired with years of practise. Great pieces of craft are made with intuition and perception of the craftsman, rather than learned reasoning.

‘A good wheelwright knew by art but not by reasoning the proportion to keep the spokes and the felloes;... He felt it, in his bones. It was a perception with him. But there was no science in it; no reasoning’ (Sturt, 1923, p.15).

It’s not something that can be learned through observation, the only way to master the technique is to learn through doing. Through practise, the craftsman becomes familiar with the ash timber and the tools that shape it. They all work in harmony to create the product.

Linseed oil, the branding stamp and customer anecdotes

On completion of the fine sanding, the brand name, Maher, is stamped in ink onto the part of the hurl where the handle widens into to boss (figure 9). Finally, a small



Figure 9: The 'Maher' ink stamp is applied to the hurl (Photograph by the author, 2019)

amount of linseed oil is rubbed over the hurl with a cloth (figure 10). This highlights the

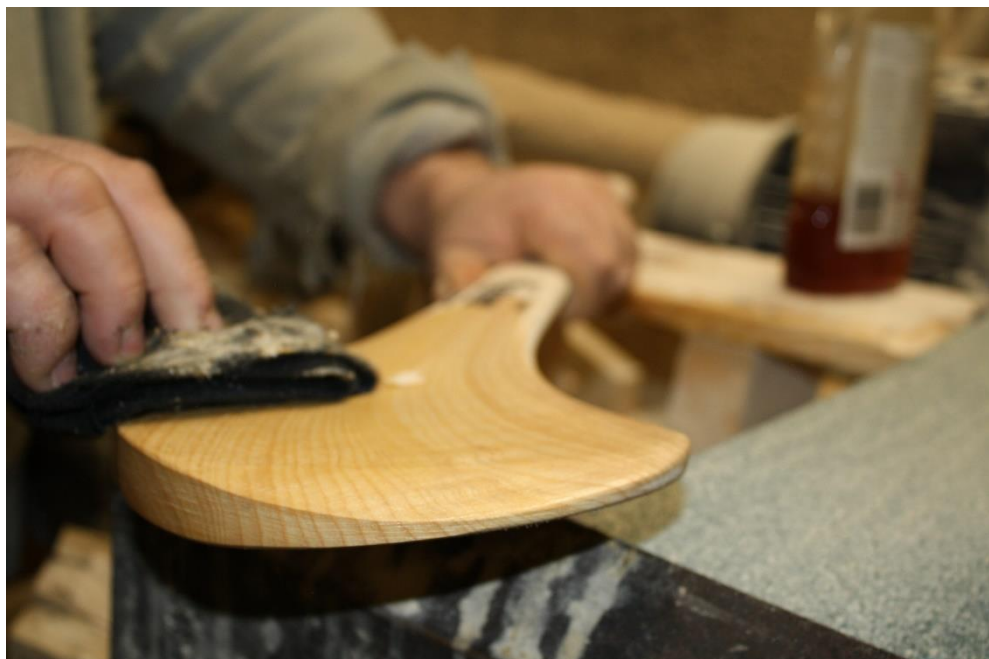


Figure 10: Linseed oil is applied to the hurl with a cloth (Photograph by the author, 2019)

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grain of the wood so the customers can see it clearly. It also seals the hurl, preventing it from becoming too dry or too wet. This simple task completes the process. Some hurls are made on request for customers and others are made to be put on sale for walk in customers. Each player has particular requirements for a hurl. For example, they might want a specifically shaped boss, or a certain weight, or a certain curve in the grain. In the same way that there is no separation of the hurl maker and the hurl, there is little separation between the player and the hurl. Each hurl maker has their own unique style of hurl which can either attract or deter customers. Usually, the customer trusts and gets to know a certain hurl maker which they stay loyal to. Contacts build up through word of mouth, it takes years to become well known and established.

‘You build up contacts over the years and through word of mouth people ring you up. People might see your hurl and just like the look of it.’ (Wexford Echo Newspaper, 2009, p.38)

Part of the attraction of customers to Paul’s business is that they can see clearly the parallels between Paul the person, the hurls he makes and the space he works in. They can walk into the space and be physically surrounded by the authenticity of the hurl making process.

‘I first heard about Maher Handmade Hurls from a friend who drives up 2 hours especially to buy his hurls here every year.’ (Nolan cited in Maher Handmade Hurls, 2019)

This brings us back to the idea of the craftsman being the embodiment of the entire business. Although Maher Hurls uses many of the contemporary forms of marketing (for example; a website, social media pages and business cards), the main form of brand marketing, and the most successful, is Paul himself. When a customer walks into the workshop to buy a hurl, they could stay for over an hour just chatting about everything and anything. Each customer ‘big and small’ (Maher, 2019) has their own interesting anecdote to tell and a place for them to do this is in the workshop with

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Paul. ‘Everybody has something different to say, everybody can tell you some type of a story’ (Maher, 2019). For this reason, customers often become family friends. As there are no closing hours, if it suits a customer to call over for a hurl at 3 o clock in the morning, they are welcome to do so. Naturally, this means that customers get to know the rest of the family and even the home of the family. Hence, the family as a whole becomes a symbol of the Maher Hurl brand. The blend of family life and working life can be clearly seen by the customer. This blend conveys an honesty and authenticity that is not visible in many modern enterprises.

‘A good family name is a powerful brand and can communicate strong values such as trust, integrity, honesty and reliability to the consumer;’ (Carrigan and Buckley, 2008)

Conclusion

When asked if he would like his business to grow in popularity, worth and production in the coming years, Paul responded, ‘it’s not going to grow, I have it the way I want it’ (2019). This contentedness is the final element of authenticity. While it is likely that the business will change gradually in the future, it will change only in accordance to how Paul’s ideas and values alter as he gets older. The dialogue is ongoing between the craftsman, the product, the workspace, the family and the customer – their rolling narratives will be forever in conjunction with one another.

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Appendices

Interviews:

-Paul Maher, 6th December 2019

1. Discuss your workshop. Do you enjoy spending time there?

It's a square room, low ceiling, cobwebs, dust, dirt, timber. At times I enjoy it, not always. It's just nice being in it, I don't know, because it's mine. I'm not compelled to stay in it because I don't work to a certain amount of hours. I like being my own boss, I don't like taking orders. I don't like being told what to do, I like to be asked, not told, old dogs for a hard road. It's nice to be able to come and go whenever you want, get up late or go to bed late. It's about 20 by 14 by 8 foot high, which is very small. There's three racks for hurls, 2 saws, 2 sanders and a bench. And an assortment of old tools that are never used. I keep them just because they're there, some could be 100 years old – nostalgia reasons.

2. Talk about the religious elements in your workplace.

The 'holy juice' is a bottle of holy water from the blessed well down the road. The holy picture was being thrown out by my mother so I just saved it. And the child of Prague was there since the time began. It's only been outside twice, once when I was married and once when the workshop was being filmed by How It's Made so the show wouldn't be associated with any religion. I put holy water on the different things, on the tractor, on the blade, where I'm standing, where somebody else might be standing, and one the bench. It's just a ritual. Oh and on the timber that I'm sawing as well as it can break or fly off. It's only every happened a couple of times. A tooth can fly off the blade, sure anything could happen you could fall going down the step there and break your neck.

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3. Would you prefer to cut your own timber or import it in planks from another country? Do you think it makes a difference to the finished product?

The timber you cut yourself is better timber, its better texture, needn't necessarily be better in grain. It's nice to be able to cut your own timber, it's nice to do it all from start to finish, especially if you cut down the tree yourself, then you're really doing it from start to finish.

4. Discuss the opening and closing hours of the business. Do you feel under pressure to work a certain amount of hours per day? Do you enjoy the freedom of making your own hours?

Get up in the morning go to the workshop, close it at night and come in, it's as simple as that. There's no opening and closing hours, if someone wants to call at 3 o'clock in the morning, they can. I don't feel pressure, I make a certain amount of hurls per day, only if someone wants a certain type of model, I try to get the best possible timber for them. I just try to make a certain amount of hurls per day regardless of the size and some days I don't make any at all. At certain times I make the dinner, collect the kids from school, clean the workshop, I have tea with my mother and bring in the sticks for her, I have a moment with the dog. The odd time we go out for something to eat. Sometimes I've to go up to the shop, collect my father (from the nursing home) on a Wednesday, bring Kate (my daughter) to ballet on a Thursday.

5. Do you feel that running a business from home impacts on your family life?

Discuss both the positive and negative impacts.

Its handy to be around to be able to collect the kids from school and to look after them when they were younger. Flexibility. Have lot of freedom, I've no one to answer to. You can stop and start as you want is the main thing.

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6. Comment on life as a self-employer. Is it lonely?

I wouldn't think its lonely, I see customers anyway. Its grand until you've to pay the bills, you're accountable for your own destiny there. I always envisaged myself being self-employed. I dont think I had the brains to do anything else. I do everything only the accounts. I make the hurls, do the books, send them to the accountant to finalise them, you've to get in money, make a decision on whether you should give credit to someone, order timber when you think the time is right, don't run out of timber, order blades, belts, stuff like that, meet customer, talk to them, treat them all the same big or small.

7. Comment on the future. Would you like the business to grow? Do you think you will ever change career or retire?

It's not going to grow, I have it the way I want it. I'm not going to change or do anything else. I do plan to retire but I'm not going to get rid of the workshop so I can go out and make any other little things that I want to.

8. What kind of relationship do you have with the customers? Do you enjoy interacting with them?

Grand because most of the come back the second time, the ones that don't come back - I don't know why, I don't know if they're satisfied or not. Yeah, everybody has something different to say, everybody can tell you some type of a story. You talk to yourself a lot. I have a staff meeting about once a day! Just to see how it's going like. It can be annoying if you treat someone really well and they go elsewhere, however it's their own choice. That and chasing money is a negative aspect.

9. Comment on the GAA.

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No, if you worked in Cadburys would you go home and eat chocolate? If you were ploughing fields all week and were going for a drive on a Sunday would you stop to look at a ploughed field? No. When you Make hurls you need to have an interest away from the GAA. The two things are associated so you have to get away from it someway.

10. Do your family and friends help with the business? How?

Family does yes. In the IT department, in the Facebook and all that. Apart from the family, it a one man show. Myself and mammy did the books from day one, once every month at the very least. Writing in the accounts into a red book that we have, direct debits, lodgement, bank transfers, sorting out check to lodge and writing it all in the ledger.

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-Carmel Maher, 6th December 2019

1. Discuss the balance of business and family life. Does the business make an impact on family life? How so? Comment on both the positive and negative aspects.

The business does make an impact on family life because its run from our family home. But most of this impact is positive because it gives flexibility to enjoy family life and make a living. You're not tied to hours its very flexible. The business is part of our family life, people call for hurls at any time during the day, we could be eating dinner, we could be heading out the gate, everybody is involved in some way. Customers can become friends. They are often in our family home, even to the point of sitting down and having tea with us. Hurls are in the kitchen, orders are taken in the house, there's sawdust everywhere. When the doorbell rings it's more likely to be someone looking for a hurl than a personal visit. Negative aspect is that you could be just going out the gate, you're never on time for anything because the hurls are priority. You can't get away from the work even if you want to, you have to leave the home to take a break from it all which is unusual. You have to accept the business because it is intertwined in every aspect of your life I think it's nice that both of us could be at home with the kids almost all the time, if you're going on holidays you can pick whatever time you want and we can have our meals together. Everyone feels a part of the business in some way, even when the kids were small they could still help out a bit. They always know that their daddy was in the workshop, if I was away in work they always knew he was there to look after them, it gave them a sense of security. I feel that they're very close to him because of it.

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