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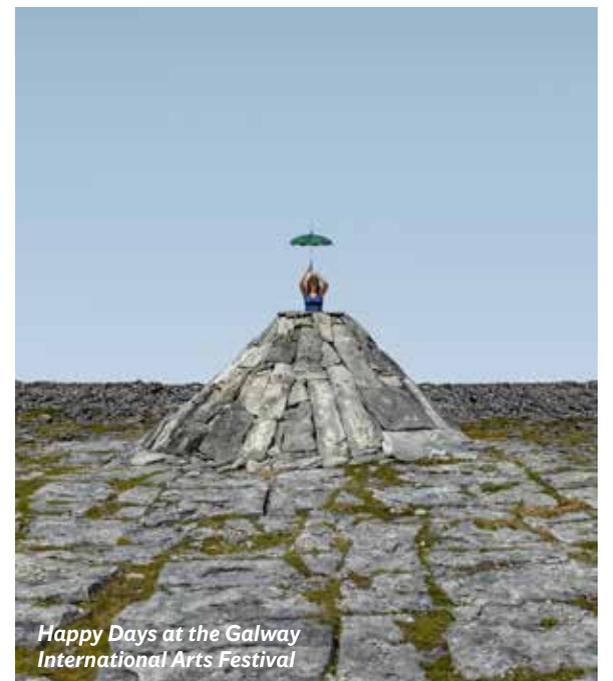
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Kieran Quinn at Hawkswell Theatre



Happy Days at the Galway
International Arts Festival

Resilience in the arts

Director of the Arts Council, Maureen Kennelly talks about the excitement that arts events are being staged live and online and how the Arts Council is supporting them

“It’s thrilling to hear of events being staged for real, live audiences,” says Maureen Kennelly. “Arts organisations’ standard of care for the public is really quite striking and instils me with confidence about a safe return to in-person performances.”

After what seems like a lifetime for artists and art lovers, arts shows, festivals, and all kinds of events from dance to street theatre are cautiously opening up for limited audiences for live performances, in line with Government guidelines. While online events have become the norm, there is nothing quite like sitting in a theatre for a live show.

Arts centres across the country have taken great care to create safe spaces in line with Government health advice. All of which have had the support from the Arts Council, the Government agency which encourages interest in Irish art and provides funding to Irish artists and arts organisations.

“Technical and front of house personnel in the arts are uniquely placed to present events safely for the public, as they tend to have particularly high standards in this area,” says Maureen. “Many have qualifications in health and safety, and they have amassed vast experience over the years, working across festivals and venues of every description. Arts organisations are taking tentative and careful steps back.”

Maureen says there is a great hunger from the public for the arts. A recent survey showed 61pc of people saying that the arts are essential for their wellbeing.

The Arts Council recently supported pilot live performances by the Irish Chamber Orchestra in University Concert Hall, Co Limerick and the Irish National Opera in Cork Opera House, and these were enthusiastically received by the public.

“In fact, they were very highly charged emotional events, with rapturous standing ovations for the performers when they first came on stage,” adds Maureen. “There was a great passion and emotional urgency to these events, and I think we will never take such happenings for granted again.”

Adapting and thriving

Live arts returning comes as a relief for Maureen whose appointment to Director of the Arts Council was announced on March 6th 2020, just days before the Covid-19 shutdown. She worked remotely for many months, so she understands the strange circumstances that artists have had to work through over the last



Maureen Kennelly

year and a half.

“Artists and workers in the arts have shown extraordinary resilience and resourcefulness,” says Maureen. “They have adapted imaginatively and have been generous and open in their approach to each other and to the public.”

“Staging events during the pandemic is far more expensive and their box office potential is often very limited, which makes Arts Council support even more essential.”

In this magazine, we are celebrating arts events live and online! Not only do live events create a cultural offering to entice people to an area where they spend money, but they also provide employment for artists and the many others involved in making them happen. But even more fundamental is the cultural, artistic and social impact.

“It makes us what we are – it tells the story of Ireland like no other medium can. You always can tell a thriving town or village by the health of its art scene. A community that invests in culture will inevitably prosper in education, industry and tourism, and in other areas.”

The Arts Council received significant additional funding from the Government in 2020 to help alleviate the impact of the crisis on artists and arts organisations, and

they are putting all those extra resources to good use. On pages 4-9, we have the events guide with a variety of exciting arts events, all supported by the Arts Council, coming up through August, September and October. From music performances to art exhibitions, and from theatre productions to festivals, there is something for everyone in all regions of Ireland.

“We have initiated a great programme called Faoin Speir which will see outdoor performances staged in several counties, including the wonderful aerial dance company *Fidget Feet* in Ennis, Co Clare. We are also supporting a great initiative called *Festival in a Van*, which involves the performance of live music and poetry nationwide over the coming weeks.

“There are so many gems across all art forms,” says Maureen. “Art that is true and convincing speaks best to me. I recall times that I listened to music, read poems or prose, or saw visual pieces and knew that I would see the world differently forever more because of those experiences. That’s an extraordinary gift and I am always amazed that artists can keep doing it. There is so much in the world that is yet to be discovered, so it is a resource that we can return to time and again.”

For more information, visit artscouncil.ie

Did you know?

- For the moment, the maximum number of people allowed in a theatre’s auditorium is 50. This means tickets for shows are in limited supply. Grab them before they go!
- The Arts Council supports organisations and individual artists through grant schemes and bursaries. In 2021, the Arts Council’s grant from the Irish Exchequer is €130 million and there are more than 30 awards and funding schemes this year, which enabled the Council to invest in the arts and to ensure that they can be brought through the pandemic intact. As well as direct funding, they also support people through a range of developmental initiatives in the areas of digital, mental wellbeing and fundraising.
- Many upcoming festivals and arts centres will combine live streaming with performances to small audiences.



Stephanie Appelhans at Ortús Festival

A thriving arts sector

We look at how the arts has been impacted by the last year and the great support from around the country

It has been a long and difficult 17 months for so many musicians, artists, actors, venue operators, crew and audiences alike. Covid-19 has had a profound professional and personal impact on artists and arts workers, with major structural impacts for organisations.

According to Arts Insight: The National Arts Engagement Survey 2020 by the Arts Council, while the arts have adapted through switching to online and blended forms of participation, these activities have not adequately filled the vacuum left by live arts events. The survey shows that while participation levels in the arts increased in 2020, through switching to online and blended forms, people missed live arts events. This survey found that almost half the population of Ireland are happy to go to live events before all restrictions are lifted.

Minister
Catherine Martin

Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin says, "We are doing what we love, what makes us Irish, connecting with people as we move together towards recovery."

From Carrickmacross, Co Monaghan, Minister Martin trained as a classical singer and performed nationally when she was younger. So, she knows the importance of live arts events.

"We must value the arts in terms of what they contribute to our economy and to our well-being. It's not just the artists, but those who make the events work backstage. "We'll do more and more pilot gigs until we get to the stage where we can reopen – and reopen for good."



Róisín McGarr

Róisín McGarr, Executive Director of Siamsa Tíre, The National Folk Theatre of Ireland, Tralee, Co Kerry says about staging live events at the theatre,

"The people we've spoken to have really missed live events. Some are cautious about indoor gatherings, but others are impatient to get back to their normal social lives. We are hopeful that our audiences will feel safe and comfortable coming into the building when the time comes. The arts are about enriching lives, and we're prioritising safety above all else."

Total funding for the arts and culture sector in 2021 is estimated to be €331 million. The additional funding includes a 2021 allocation

How does it feel to stage live events?

"This has been an incredibly challenging period, but our audiences have shown us tremendous support throughout. We are absolutely delighted to finally be able to welcome them, in person, again. The setting may be a little different, but our commitment to supporting great artists and presenting quality shows to our audiences remains."

- Seán Kelly, CEO of The Everyman, Co Cork

of €130 million for the Arts Council. This additional investment empowers the Arts Council to help artists, arts workers and arts organisations come through this crisis.

Surviving and thriving

How the arts flourish in spite of adversity

Hope has started to appear for the arts sector, with nearly half the population vaccinated, and many live indoor and outdoor events taking place. This means that theatre, music, dance, visual art, literature, film and so many other sectors are seeing a brighter future.

That is why the Arts Council of Ireland are reminding arts lovers around the country of what we have been missing. With their new campaign, they are celebrating the fact that whatever we have all been through, the arts will flourish – because it always has.

The campaign highlights artists' roles during difficult times. For example, during the Plague, Shakespeare made use of his quarantine time to write *Romeo and Juliet* "a plague on both your houses!". And even wrote *King Lear* – in one of his rants, the King calls his daughter Goneril "a plague sore, an embossed carbuncle in my / Corrupted blood". He also appears to have come up with *Macbeth* and *Antony and Cleopatra* during the Plague too!

In fact, the history of the arts is littered with examples of great artists that have faced and overcome adversity. These include James Joyce,

As the world went to war during 1914-1918, James Joyce was writing his magnum opus, *Ulysses*. He started plotting in one world, and the novel was completed in another.

The famed Mexican painter Frida Kahlo suffered grave injuries during a bus crash in 1925 and decided to take up painting during her long recovery. And the rest is history.

These artists and so many more flourished despite the challenges of their times. Art in villages, towns and cities all over Ireland, live and online, is flourishing now for everyone to enjoy with family and friends.

The Arts Council plays such a big role in keeping the arts in Ireland alive and thriving. Supporting artists of all ages: the up-and-comers, and the tried and tested, as well as art venues everywhere – these are keeping art alive in these difficult times.

Expect to see this Arts Council campaign online, in print and on the radio showing how great artists endured and ultimately overcame adversity. And that's exactly what artists are doing right now.

Visit artscouncil.ie for more information



EVENT GUIDE: MUNSTER



Spraoi's Fidget Feet: A Handful of Dreams



The Birds of Burden

Happy Days at Galway
International Arts Festival

Sara Baum, Alphabet of Birds



Olivia Hope



Curtis Hylton for Waterford Walls

Arts events across Ireland

Arts journalist Shauna McCrudden profiles the upcoming live events not to be missed!

Top 6 visual art exhibitions

A Way Home / Slí Abhaile by Olivia Hope
Mid-September through October, *Siamsa Tíre, The National Folk Theatre of Ireland, Co Kerry*

Children's book author, Olivia Hope has created a fantastic tale following the adventures of two siblings who meet a mysterious traveller, a cheeky píca, some lost souls, and a choir of banshees on Halloween night. She is now collaborating with award-winning illustrators to bring to life each scene or chapter of the story in their own unique artistic style. There will be 36 artworks from 16 illustrators in the final exhibition. The pieces will be displayed in the gallery at the eye level of the target audience, gradually moving up from floor work for babies to adult height by the end of the story.

Visit siamsatire.com

Waterford Walls International Street Art Festival

13th-22nd August, Co Waterford
Central to this festival is the transformative power of urban art. The festival's mission is to connect communities through the festival street art and improve the social and economic fabric of the greater community by bringing vibrancy and life to the city's walls.

This year will see a blended approach, showcasing 20 mural artists painting 20 large scale mural artworks, guided art trails, artist talks, and an exhibition. The 2021 festival will focus on gender balance, and also helping emerging artists pair up with established artists in their mentorship programme.

Visit thewallsproject.ie

La Place des Grands Abysses by Stephen Brandes
Until 4th September, Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre

This exhibition needs to be seen in person to truly appreciate it. It explores the interplay of word and visual language as a vehicle for storytelling. It includes a monumental drawing on flooring vinyl, large-scale digital collages printed on PVC, a series of short, animated slideshows, and a collection of smaller works on paper and painting.

Ann Davoren, Director of Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre says, "It is so good to have people in the galleries which are spacious and airy. People are really enjoying the experience of visiting and looking at art again. We also have a number of visual and dance artists working here in the studio and people can catch up with what they are doing online and in person when they visit."

Visit westcorkartscentre.com

The Alphabet of Birds by Sara Baume
9th September, St John's Theatre & Arts Centre, Co Kerry

In writer and artist Sara Baume's new audio-visual essay, *The Alphabet of Birds*, she covers obsessions and passions – the multitude of rituals that fill our daily lives with meaning. From Sunday Mass and sea swimming; bird alphabets and stone collecting; Goya and Monet; to the Stations of the Cross and the Sacred Heart of Jesus; bedrooms and bedsits; insomnia and parental love.

The essay is inspired by short documentaries depicting artists at work on land and sea. To add to the live show feeling, a live soundtrack is performed throughout by musicians Irene Buckley and Elaine Howley. It is definitely something to see in person.

Visit stjohnstheatre.ie

Here is where I am by Claire Murphy
Until 21st August, South Tipperary Arts Centre

This photographic installation is from Claire Murphy's ongoing body of work that started during the pandemic, which also coincided with the period after the birth of her son.

She observes and documents the ordinary moments of her daily life, moments of contemplation, of in-between-ness, all through the analogue medium of 35mm film. The photos taken around her family home, where she spent her childhood, have a cinematic quality that present an intimate exploration of family, and of the pull home has on us and on our identity.

Visit southtipperartscentre.ie

Spraoi International Street Arts Festival
August-September, The Apple Market, Co Waterford

Spraoi has been selected to receive *In The Open - Faoin Spéir* funding from The Arts Council. The popular street arts spectacular is transformed from a three-day festival into a Spraoi Season presented at multiple sites across Waterford City and county throughout August. Spraoi features daily performances in Waterford City centre and along Waterford's acclaimed Greenway. This includes *Fidget Feet: A Handful of Dreams*, a heart-warming performance combining aerial and circus arts with live Irish traditional music and dance.

Closing Spraoi Season is Prism Spraoi, a spectacular outdoor performance structure presenting an ensemble of artists nightly in the grounds of Waterford Courthouse. Seven commissioned pieces of original music accompanied by live performers will feature nightly, echoing seven colours which merge and form white light. This will re-invigorate familiar streets.

Visit spraoi.com

Best live music shows

Bell X1
1st October, glór, Co Clare

Fans of Irish rock band Bell X1 will be happy to see their live tour kicking off in 2021 across theatres in Ireland. They will be debuting new material along with a lot of the favourites spanning over the last 20 years.

For this show, the band is collaborating with Dowry Strings, who specialise in cross-timbral and cross-genre collaborations, which has resulted in an incredible and quite moving live experience.

Visit glor.ie

Music on the Mall
August-September, Theatre Royal, Co Waterford

A series of live music gigs featuring Waterford musicians and bands in August and September, has been organised to promote some of the amazing work developed by local musicians during lockdown.

Artists include Yung Shakur who is playing on August 14th. He became widely known for his viral hit All-Ireland Hurling song *Swing* which took social media by storm in 2020. His influences include Eminem, Dr Dre, and 2Pac – he's a rising star! Or check out Birds of Burden on 27th August. Their blend of hard, driving rock and hypnotic meandering airs frame an almost diary-like lyrical intimacy, firmly rooted in the folk ballad tradition. We have all missed live music performances and these are the best of the best.

Visit theatreroyal.ie

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Iarla Ó Lionáird, Una Monaghan and Kevin Murphy



The Everyman Outdoors



Yung Shakur



Claire Murphy, Installation



Colm O'Regan



The best of online

Live is back but online events are still ongoing. Enjoy your art wherever you are

Town of Strangers by Treasa O'Brien

Until 20th September

glór presents a summer season of online film - *Summer Out West* showcases three critically acclaimed films unique to the west of Ireland.

Town of Strangers by award-winning Irish filmmaker Treasa O'Brien is a 'hybrid' feature film using auditions, observational documentary and magical realist dream scenes. It is a documentary of the imagination, with many scenes transcending the genres of documentary and fiction, going deep into the experience of migration and home through cinematic methods. Once purchased, films will be available for viewing for 48 hours.

Visit glor.ie

Taiscéal: An Animated Story

17th September

Artist Ana Colomer and scéalaí Niall de Búrca explore each other's styles and body of work, coming together to produce this animated tale online for Culture Night. An original story, written and narrated by Niall, comes to life through Ana's watercolour and digital animation.

From 4pm-11:30pm

Visit culturenight.ie

Kerry International Film Festival (KIFF)

14th-17th October

After the success of the 2020 online festival, KIFF is eager to explore this avenue further. Through their streaming service, YouTube, Zoom and more, there will be a full online programme of shorts, select features, documentaries, music films and animations.

Visit kerryfilmfestival.com

Colm O'Regan Stand Up Comedy

23rd October, Imagine Arts Festival, Theatre Royal, Co Waterford

Best-selling and critically acclaimed broadcaster, author and comedian Colm O'Regan is back on stage with a much-needed dose of comedy at Waterford's *Imagine Arts Festival*. He is the author of six best-selling books including the *Irish Mammy* trilogy, *Bolloxology* and the two Ann Devine novels.

The theatre is also running a 'So you think you're funny!' competition for an up-and-coming comic to win a paid support spot on the night. So, there will be double the laughs on the night.

Visit imagineartsfestival.com

Summertime Concerts

Until 28th August, Triskel Arts Centre, Cork City

On 14th August, two inimitable and formidable jazz musicians, Paul Dunlea and Cormac McCarthy, will join forces in a set to include both standards and original compositions. And on 28th August, the Hifilutin Flute Quartet will play everything from medieval to modern music, from classical works to the unexpected.

From September, the Centre will host concerts from long standing partners the National String Quartet Foundation and a Music Network collaboration featuring vocalist Iarla Ó Lionáird, harpist and sound artist Una Monaghan, and cellist Kevin Murphy. A wide variety for every type of music lover.

Visit triskelartscentre.ie

Dark Island by Brian Bolger

September, Siamsa Tíre, The National Folk Theatre of Ireland, Co Kerry

Siamsa Tíre is planning the live album launch of *Dark Island*, a sensitive reimagining of musical and written folk sources, which has been developed by Dublin Guitar Quartet founder and Crash Ensemble member, Brian Bolger, along with another of the Centre's Associate Artists, musician and filmmaker, Laura Sheeran.

Over the past few months, Brian has composed an eclectic 50-minute work for voice and ensemble accompaniment with pure instrumental passages, poetry, and spoken-word, including an Aisling poem written by Aodhagán Ó Rathaille, an Irish-language poet from Kerry. Brian is bringing together a group of performers to record the piece over August and a live performance to launch the album.

Visit siamsatire.com

A World of Music

13th August, The Everyman, Co Cork

With a group of musicians from the much-loved Cork Pops Orchestra, Evelyn Grant (RTÉ lyric FM), will be joined by a special guest, *Voice of Ireland* winner Keith Hanley. Keith has starred in many of The Everyman pantomimes and is looking forward to singing to a live audience once again.

This outdoor, seated, and socially distanced performance includes the Cork Pops Orchestra who create programmes that span a wide range of wonderful music, from all genres and cultures. The rhythms and melodies from times past and present will fill the air at Elizabeth Fort for this very special concert.

Visit everymancork.com

Top 4 stage shows

A Wilde Fan by Myles Breen

11th September, St John's Theatre & Arts Centre, Co Kerry

Through his plays, poetry, prose and extraordinary life, Oscar Wilde has been a constant source of inspiration and obsession for acclaimed actor Myles Breen. Directed by Liam O'Brien and featuring excerpts from Wilde's writings alongside Breen's trademark wit and flair, *A Wilde Fan* is a personal and theatrical take on one of history's greatest artists, by his biggest fan.

"Be yourself; everyone else is already taken!"

Visit stjohnstheatre.ie

Bosco's Garden

15th August, Paula Lambert Puppet Theatre, The Everyman, Co Cork

People of a certain age growing up in Ireland will fondly remember our puppet pal, Bosco. And now *Bosco's Garden* is part of The Everyman Outdoors at Elizabeth Fort programme.

Bosco is Bosco, not a boy, not a girl, just a Bosco: a cheeky, lovely, funny, slightly-cracked, irrepressible, eternal five-year-old who lives in a box and who loves nothing more than to just be Bosco and meet all the boys and girls.

Paula Lambert has been travelling the country for the past 42 years bringing puppet theatre to the children of Ireland for the first time. With this production, you will see why Bosco remains a firm favourite for each new generation.

Visit everymancork.com

'Where is my Mind' with Niall Breslin

1st October, Lime Tree Theatre, Co Limerick

Niall 'Bressie' Breslin is one of Ireland's most formidable and inspiring mental health advocates. Now, he is taking his hit podcast *Where Is My Mind* on the road for live performances. The show will take an irreverent, entertaining, and in-depth look inside our heads. No stranger to the stage, the chart-topping singer turned best-selling author, and former professional athlete has been continuing his popular podcast for years and the live shows will only increase its impact.

Visit limetreetheatre.ie

EVENT GUIDE: ULSTER AND CONNACHT



Arts events across Ireland

Arts journalist Shauna McCrudden profiles the upcoming live events not to be missed!

Top 3 literary favourites

In Middletown by Mikel Murfi

12th August, An Grianán Theatre Co Donegal

➔ This new solo show, written and performed by Mikel Murfi is performed outdoors on the back of a specially adapted truck. Murfi plays a furniture removals man who packs up his 'life' onto the back of his vehicle, pulls the door behind him and never returns to life as he knew it. This is a gentle reflection on the search for solitude, simplicity, and the things that make us truly happy. The show will also be performed at Hawk's Well Theatre in Co Sligo.

An Grianán, an integral part of Donegal's cultural landscape, will also be hosting John Grant on 15th October. This stripped-back live show will see John perform solo, playing songs from across his celebrated career.

Visit angrianan.com

Wild Atlantic Words

5th–10th October, Co Mayo

➔ This literary festival aims to celebrate the literary heritage of the iconic coastline over several days of readings, recitals, debates and reflection, while also acknowledging new and emerging writers. This year's line-up includes Tommie Gorman, Daithí Ó Corráin, Eunan O'Halpin, Senator Marie Louise O'Donnell, and many more special guests yet to be announced. A highlight of the festival will be the launch of recently retired Mayo footballer Andy Moran's forthcoming book. This year's event will include the 2021 Wild Atlantic Words short story competition, judged by JP McHugh.

Visit wildatlanticwords.ie

**'I Build My Own Island' by Alison Pilkington**

Closing 26th September, The Model, Co Sligo

➔ Sligo-born artist Alison Pilkington's new show, *I Build My Own Island*, is at once playful and disconcerting. It teases out themes that are both universal and deeply personal.

A series of recurring characters inhabit surreal landscapes that evoke lakeshores, seashores and distant mountain ranges. Pilkington draws on the poetry of WB Yeats to the paintings of El Greco and the cinematic imagery of Ridley Scott and Andrei Tarkovsky. All of these collide in a body of work that explores Alison's connections to Sligo.

Admission is free and there is no need to book.

Visit themodel.ie

3 best musical performances

Music performances

August–September, Hawk's Well Theatre, Co Sligo

➔ If you're looking for live music shows this year, the Safe & Sound Summer Sessions continue with an intimate performance from the Farrell siblings: Sean, Sinead, Niamh and Deirdre on 20th August. Trad music, along with a shared appreciation for folk and country music, shapes much of their musical influence.

Maeve McGowan, Acting Director, Hawk's Well Theatre, Sligo says, "People have really been engaging with us online throughout lockdown. The arts are hugely important in the North West. Our first live event this summer: *Open Up: The Show Goes On* was a great success with customers reporting that they felt very comfortable and safe being in the venue. Artists are delighted to get the opportunity to perform live in front of an audience again."

Visit hawkswell.com

Back at the Dock

23rd July–5th September, The Dock, Carrick on Shannon, Co Leitrim

➔ Live shows can bring people together and help people socialise again in pods with friends and family and soak up the joy of live sounds. Live performances are coming to The Dock with the aptly named *Back at the Dock*, a series of intimate performances that will showcase local talent alongside well-established names.

The series will run this year outdoors in a covered walled area at The Dock. From Shane Meehan and Mick Mulvey to young musicians Gan Ainm and their spectacular traditional Irish music, this is a live show not to be missed!

Visit thedock.ie

Culture Night

17th September, Hawk's Well Theatre, Co Sligo

➔ Dervish front lady Cathy Jordan will present a very special concert showcasing *Songs from Sligo* on Culture Night. She has been working on this concert as part of her short residency at the theatre this year. There's also the much anticipated new Music Network collaboration featuring vocalist Iarla O' Lionáird, harpist and sound artist Una Monaghan, and cellist Kevin Murphy.

Visit hawkswell.com



Cathy Jordan

Five best festivals

A roundup of the very best festivals this summer and autumn

Galway International Arts Festival

28th August–18th September, Co Galway

➔ This festival features exciting live in-person arts experiences across theatre, music and visual arts.

This year, like 2020, includes an enhanced digital element, which will see a number of live streams and view on-demand events. The line-up includes 10 premieres and commissions, including a funny and moving new play from Enda Walsh, *Medicine*, and a new production of *Happy Days* performed in the Irish language in the stunning landscape of Inis Oírr. (Read more about the festival on page 10)

Visit giaf.ie

Clones Film Festival

21st–24th October, Clones, Co Monaghan

➔ Watch the best films, with the best atmosphere, in a town that is small enough to appreciate the guests! With films and music to keep attendees entertained, this will be a fun Bank Holiday weekend.

Celebrating the 20th annual event, a highlight of the weekend is the competition of short fiction, short documentary, and short animation films.

Visit clonesfilmfestival.com

Westport Festival of Chamber Music 2021

10th–12th September, Co Mayo

➔ This year's festival features the finest of performers from across Ireland, the UK and Europe. With a diverse range of pieces with everything from the famous masters to some wonderful works by less well-known composers including Hugh Tinney on piano, the Carducci Quartet and many more all playing with some surprises along the way, this can't be missed.

Visit westportchambermusic.ie

Ortús Chamber Music Festival

3rd–5th September, Co Cork

➔ This weekend will be filled with chamber music from both Irish and international musicians. The festival highlights the musical ability and innovation of young Irish musicians and composers, while bridging connections with musicians around the world.

Visit ortusfestival.ie

Baboró International Arts Festival for Children

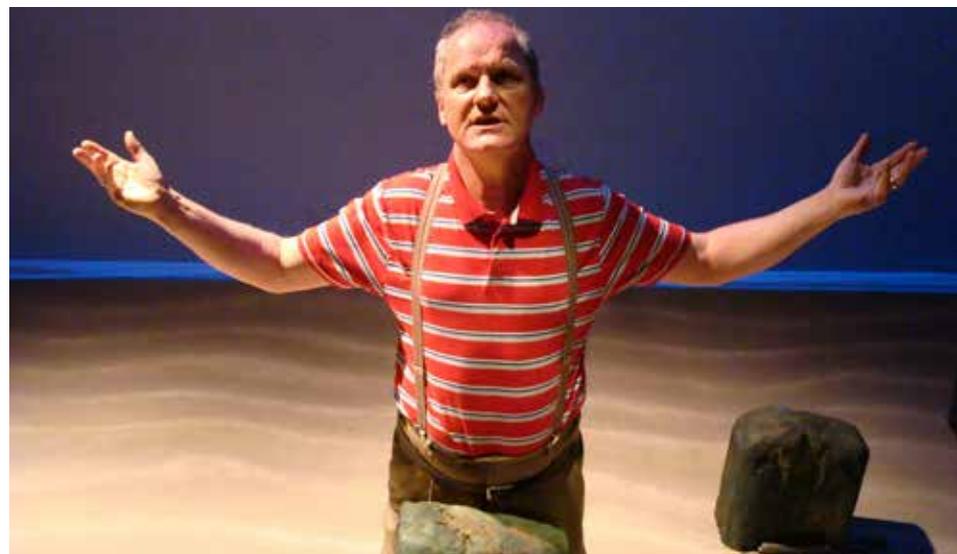
4th–17th October, Co Galway

➔ Celebrating 25 years, this festival is devoted exclusively to children and families and includes theatre, dance, puppetry, music, art and literature.

Visit baboro.ie

SPONSORED

EVENT GUIDE: DUBLIN



Dublin's must-visit events

Journalist Clodagh Dooley profiles the upcoming events not to be missed across Dublin

4 of the best stage shows

The Chronicles of Oggie

Until 14th August, Smock Alley Theatre
 The Chronicles of Oggie, a hilarious and heart-breaking story about small town life, was written and performed by one of Ireland's most prolific actors, Peter Gowen, who had roles in *Love/Hate*, *Fair City*, *Charlie*, and *The Butcher Boy*. Although not autobiographical, the play is inspired by Peter's experiences of growing up in Youghal, Cork and follows the story of orphan Pakie and his revenge on the authorities who subjected him to a beating during his education years. Expect both tears of laughter and sadness.

Smock Alley Theatre has opened the play to limited audiences for €20 a ticket, and Lucy Ryan, Director of Programming of Dublin's Smock Alley Theatre tells me, "Dublin has been significantly impacted by the closure of the arts and cultural sector over the past 17 months. As wonderful as some of the streaming options have been, it's become more apparent that being in a room with people is such an intrinsic part of the theatre experience and is good for the soul, even when well-distanced and masked! We can't wait to welcome people back to Smock."

Visit smockalley.com

Walls and Windows

27th August-11th September, at the Abbey Theatre

Directed by Jason Byrne and written by Rosaleen McDonagh, *Walls and Windows* is a beautiful, but complex, love story which examines how external circumstances pull people apart, when they want to be together. Couple Julia and John want to live their lives with their two sons, but the outside world and racism puts paid to their plans. The play features a stellar cast, with Hazel Clifford, John Connors, Hilda Fay, SORCHA FOX, Ruairi Heading, Myles Maher, Ericka Roe and Nyree Yergainharsian.

Tickets for live performances are €30 and selling fast, however, luckily everyone can enjoy the action from their own living rooms, with live performances live-streamed for €25 from the Abbey stage on 27th and 28th August. The play will also be available on-demand for €20 from 29th August until 11th September.

Visit abbeytheatre.ie

Othello

7th-22nd October, Mill Theatre

William Shakespeare's timeless tragedy *Othello* will be brought to life at the Mill Theatre in Dundrum this October. Directed by Geoff O'Keeffe, who previously directed other Shakespeare productions including *Romeo and Juliet* and *King Lear*, *Othello* is a story about jealousy and revenge. When Othello, the highly regarded General, secretly marries Desdemona, soldier Iago manipulates Othello into believing his wife is unfaithful. This leads to Othello's jealousy to consume him, resulting in murder.

Not only will the fast-paced and visually engaging production resonate with Leaving Cert students, but it's a gripping watch for students and non-students alike. Public evening performances are on Saturday 9th and 16th October, with admission €20/€18. School weekday shows are available at 10am and 1:30pm for €15 per ticket.

Visit milltheatre.ie

Neptune Calling

21st August-10th September, Draíocht, Blanchardstown

This immersive piece written by Eoghan Quinn and directed by Tracy Martin is perfect for the times we live in, being performed in various outdoor settings. *Neptune Calling* is based on an aspiring journalist, Sara, who develops a love for sea swimming during the pandemic. But she starts hearing a voice from the sea, calling her name. Can she refuse its pull? Through *Neptune Calling*, a mixture of sensory experiences awaits, with the beautiful script voiced by Aoibheann McCann and Geraldine Plunkett and a choreographed movement piece performed by dancer Robyn Byrne. Plus, tickets are free!

Keep an eye on the websites of both Draíocht in Blanchardstown and The Civic in Tallaght for more exciting upcoming performances. Michael Barker-Caven, Artistic Director, The Civic, says, "We hear all the time, via social media and phone calls, how hungry our audience is to get back to what they love best - being in The Civic among an audience, enjoying and living out those shared moments that only live performance brings."

Visit draiocht.ie and civictheatre.ie

Visit draiocht.ie and civictheatre.ie

The best of the visual arts

Dublin Fringe Festival

11th-26th September

One of Ireland's most popular contemporary performing arts festivals, the Dublin Fringe Festival will make a return this September. Last year's festival had 23 shows against 77 the year before, but with a mix of theatre, outdoor and digital performances, it was a success. And this year, the festival is planning both live in-person events and remote art projects that play with form and encourage active spectatorship across artistic disciplines.

Cian O'Brien, Artistic Director, and Sara Greavu, Curator of Visual Arts at Dublin's Project Arts Centre (projectartscentre.ie), say, "We're really looking forward to this year's Fringe Festival and the exciting line-up that is coming to Project Arts Centre! Join us for an intimate evening of agile grooves and otherworldly sound with Fehdah, comedic confession with Joanne McNally, a fearless and savagely comedic MASTERCLASS with Adrienne Truscott and *Brokentaklers* and *Where Sat the Lovers*, a new live work from theatre-making collective Malaprop."

Visit fringefest.com

Parr's Ireland: 40 Years of Photography

Until 4th September, Gallery of Photography Ireland

Since 1979, for 40 years, esteemed British photographer Martin Parr, who lived in Boyle in Roscommon for a period, has been photographing Ireland. The Gallery of Photography Ireland presents this first survey exhibition of Parr's photography, which showcases the rapidly transforming landscape of Irish life, charting the abrupt shift from Catholic novenas and country fairs to tech start-ups and café lattes. The exhibition also charts Parr's own approach to photography, from his beginnings with traditional black-and-white early images, to colour photography in the 1980s. A fascinating representation of the then and now. Admission is free. Opening hours are Wednesday-Saturday 11am-5.45pm.

Visit galleryofphotography.ie



Once Before I Go opens at the Gate Theatre on 1st October as part of the Dublin Theatre Festival. Image by: Seán Gilmartin/Tonie Walsh Personal Collection, Irish Queer Archive

Dublin Theatre Festival

30th September-17th October

The annual Dublin Theatre Festival showcases the best of Irish theatre, with a programme of exceptional theatrical experiences that will appeal to the diverse communities and visitors that make up the city of Dublin. This year's full programme is yet to be announced, but throughout the past six decades, Dublin Theatre has welcomed artists and audiences from all over the world and this year will be no different, whether that's online or in person.

Keep updated on dublintheatrefestival.ie

EVENT GUIDE: LEINSTER



Karan Casey. Image by Ruth Medjber, @ruthlessimagery.



Events in Leinster

Journalist Clodagh Dooley shares some great events not to be missed in Leinster

3 on-stage shows to check out

Everything is Grand, and I am Completely Okay

12th August, Moat Theatre, Co Kildare

Written and performed by Conor Burke and directed by IFTA nominee Lesley Conroy, *Everything Is Grand and I am Completely Okay*, is a one-person play about growing up and the lessons we learn along the way. Malachy, who has just turned 25, is dealing with the death of his brother and struggling to come to terms with all that he is - and everything he is not. *Everything Is Grand and I am Completely Okay* is Conor's fifth play and it was selected for development by Dublin Fringe, as part of Fringe Lab 50, which supports artists as they continue crafting ideas during the pandemic. Tickets cost €12 or there's an offer for four tickets for €40.

Visit moattheatre.ticketsolve.com/shows

I Walked into My Head by Karan Casey

5th-8th August, Watergate Theatre, Co Kilkenny

The Kilkenny Arts Festival always has a fantastic programme and this year's festival takes place from 5th-15th August, with a mixture of indoor, outdoor and online events. Taking place during the Kilkenny Arts Festival is *I Walked into My Head*, a brand-new show that's part song-poem, part music performance. Folk and traditional music legend Karan Casey is walking the corridors of her mind, looking for her voice, constantly challenging herself to find answers to broader societal questions.

In this performance, she explores the darkly humorous, and sometimes joyful, exploration of the trials and tribulations of life as a singer, from airports, van journeys and sessions to grief, motherhood and the unrealistic expectations of a female muse. Tickets are €25 (preview on 5th August at 7:30pm is €15). The show takes place at 7:30pm on 6th August, 3pm and 6pm on 7th August and 3pm on 8th August.

Visit kilkennyarts.ie/programme/i-walked-into-my-head

Alice and the Wolf

23rd November, Mullingar Arts Centre, Co Louth

Take the family to *Alice and the Wolf*, a play by Tom Swift, presented by Barnstorm Theatre Company. In this remarkable telling, Alice spends virtually all her time in Wolf Wood, the world's deepest, darkest online game. Her dad isn't around, her mother's gone to Canada to meet a lumberjack, and her best friend dumped her for a YouTube star. But what happens when the people you meet online come looking for you in real life? Who can you trust, and who is the Big Bad Wolf? This re-telling of the Little Red Riding Hood story is a digital fairy tale that's both funny and full of dark twists. Suitable for nine years of age and over.

Book tickets by emailing boxoffice@mullingartscentre.ie

3 immersive arts experiences

Birr Vintage Week & Arts Festival

14th-20th August, Birr, Co Offaly

I live approximately 25 minutes from Birr in Co Offaly, so every year I attend the annual Birr Vintage Week & Arts Festival, which is always bustling with exhibitions, events and street performers. Last year saw the launch of virtual Vintage Week, but this year, the organisers are doing everything they can to bring the 'Spirit of Vintage' to Birr despite the current pandemic times.

Emma Nee Haslam, Manager at Birr Theatre & Arts Centre and a member of Birr Festivals Collective, tells me "The 53rd annual Birr Vintage Week & Arts Festival (14th-20th August) will include two open-air professionally curated galleries, a pop-up Street Theatre, a community window trail and illuminations on buildings and geodesic domes for outdoor events."

Birr will host two other unique events, including the 8th annual Scripts Ireland's Playwriting Festival (12th-15th August). This brings New Theatre to life on stage and a welcome return of an audience to the beautiful Birr Theatre & Arts Centre for Pat Kinevane's *Before*.

Emma adds, "The domes will also provide exciting outdoor staging for Bruno Caproni & Julian Evans and The Far Flung Trio



during the fifth annual Birr Festival of Music (20th-22th August). We look forward to the festival atmosphere that we all know and love. This kickstarts the arts programming for the rest of the year, along with two more Birr festivals, OFFline Film Festival and Hullabaloo! Offaly's Children's Arts Festival, will take place in October.

"Our audiences miss the live performance and I feel people are looking forward to getting back to in-person events knowing that we, the festivals and venues, are taking the appropriate protocols to facilitate this."

Visit birrvintageweek.com and birrtheatre.com

OFA MIND

Nightly from 4th August-15th August, Mermaid Arts Centre, Bray, Co Wicklow

OFA MIND, by award-winning artists Listen and Breathe, is a live audio experience for audiences of 50 people on Bray's iconic seafront: part flash mob, part silent disco, part meditation. Commissioned by Mermaid Arts Centre, *OFA MIND* captures the changing spirit of our lives and was born out of a nostalgia for seeing and being seen at Mass on Sunday, yoga class on Wednesday, or the GAA on Saturday!

The immersive experience invites you to reconnect with nature and find your place in the crowd again. Guided by a live narrator and set to a score of local voices, sounds and music, the audience will gather at the Victorian bandstand for this outdoor walking experience, using their own smartphone and headphones. Detailed instructions and a link to join the performance will be sent to your email 24 hours before your start time. Tickets are €15 and the event starts at 7:30pm daily (matinees at 3pm on weekends).

Julie Kelleher, Artistic Director & CEO at Mermaid Arts Centre, Bray is delighted to welcome such live events back, "There's no doubt in my mind that people all over Wicklow, like many people nationwide, have felt the gaping absence of the arts experiences in their lives. My hope is that the promise of soul-feeding connection, gathering with friends, and experiences that inspire wonder, pleasure and debate, will draw people to in-person events in numbers."

Visit mermaidartscentre.ie

Sherlock Holmes and the Anaverna Adventure

4th-8th August, An Táin Arts Centre Productions, Dundalk, Co Louth

Everyone's favourite detective Sherlock Holmes and his faithful sidekick Dr Watson visit Anaverna House in Dundalk, Co Louth to solve the 'mystery of Anaverna' before a family curse dooms its newest heir. The ensemble cast of this interactive outdoor show, brought to you by An Táin Arts Centre Productions, leads the audience in completing tasks and puzzles to move the story around the beautiful grounds of Anaverna House. Suitable for ages five years and over. Tickets are €13.50 for adults and €7 for children. A family ticket is €30 (two adults and two children or one adult and three children), plus €1.50 booking fee per ticket. As this show is outdoors, dress appropriately for the unpredictable Irish weather!

Visit antain.ie

4 top visual arts exhibitions by female Irish artists

Woman in the Machine

Until 12th September, VISUAL Carlow

Woman in the Machine was inspired by the creativity of female pioneers working in sound, electronics and engineering in the former Braun factory in Carlow back in the 70s. The exhibition explores aspects of our relationship to technology and the virtual world. *Woman in the Machine* features works by a variety of artists working in sound, film, electronics, photography, light, sculpture, painting, performance and on digital platforms.

The works presented were selected through Carlow Arts Festival and VISUAL's annual open submission ARTWORKS 2021; from the Arts Council Collection; and by invitation to create new work in response to the former Braun Factory site. Admission to the exhibition is free and the gallery is open Tuesday-Saturday from 11am-5:30pm and Sunday from 2pm-5pm.

Visit visualcarlow.ie to book tickets and see womaninthemachine.com

SPONSORED



**A delicate bond which is also a gap
by Isabel Nolan**

Until 28th August, Solstice Arts Centre in Navan, Meath

➔ A delicate bond which is also a gap is an exhibition by Irish artist Isabel Nolan at Solstice Arts Centre, which ranges across a vast span of time. It begins with woven images of the 40,000-year-old sculpture "Löwenmensch" and concludes with a stunning 3x5 metre tapestry depicting the disintegration of the sun.

Belinda Quirke, Director at Solstice Arts Centre, says, "The exhibition includes new textile work, sculptures, drawings, painting and text, which were created during Covid restrictions. On 21st August, we will also host an artist talk with Isabel, which is not to be missed."

Belinda says the Centre is also very excited about Heritage Week (14th-22nd August), "During Heritage Week, we will host outdoor adult and family workshops at the Devenish Lands, Dowth. Then in September, we present work by artist Elaine Hoey, who creates interactive based virtual installations. Our Café and Cinema programme is also up and running.

"We have enjoyed many catch-ups with our visitors who are excited to get involved with workshops and other events. They've missed us as much as we've missed them, and it's great to see the centre begin to buzz again."

Visit solsticeartscentre.ie

**In the marl-walled court of the fairyqueen
by Laura Ní Fhlaibhín**

Saturday 8th August, Courthouse Arts Centre, Tinahely, Co Wicklow

➔ The Courthouse Arts Centre has an exciting programme of exhibitions and intimate performances over the coming months. Check out the exhibition by Wexford-based visual artist Laura Ní Fhlaibhín titled in the marl-walled court of the fairyqueen, which was curated by Anne Mullee.

Drawing on research undertaken during two residencies at the studio housed in Tinahely's Market House - formerly the Courthouse and Gaol - in the marl-walled court of the fairyqueen exists both as a text and as a suite of votive objects. From clay 'spirit creatures' to wall drawings, tiny bronzes, commemorative plates and an embroidered flag bearing the emblem of a hare. Ní Fhlaibhín's discovery of the use of marl clay as a primary material for building rudimentary houses prior to the Famine, provides a starting point for her explorations into aspects of the colonial judiciary, the fate of Famine-era 'criminals', and the historic exploitation of the area's natural assets.

Denise McGrath, Artistic Director at The Courthouse Arts Centre, says, "We are delighted to welcome our audience back into our beautiful building. We know people are craving live, interactive experiences."

Visit courthousearts.ie

**The Age of Reason/Unreason (Part 3)
by Na Cailleacha**

16th August-6th October, Wexford Arts Centre

➔ Na Cailleacha (Irish for 'the witches') are a collective of eight older women, all based in Ireland but originally from Holland, England and Switzerland, as well as Ireland. The collective is made up of artists Helen Comerford, Barbara Freeman, Patricia Hurl, Maria Levinge, Therry Rudin, and Gerda Teljeur, art historian/curator Catherine Marshall, and composer Carole Nelson, all of whom are over 70 years old.

Their exhibition, the first-ever showing of work from the collective, is the result of a month-long residency they undertook together at the Ballinglen Arts Foundation in Co Mayo last September. They explore ways of working together, taking stock of their collective experience over many years. They focus on attitudes to ageing and to the wider community, their bodies and how they relate to culture and heritage, and their experience of Covid-related isolation.

Elizabeth Whyte, Executive Director Wexford Arts Centre, says, "For visual arts, you cannot replace the impact of an artwork from viewing it in a gallery in person. The social role that art centres play in the community is so important for positive wellbeing, and that is why online can never replace the 'in person' experience. However, we have invested in digital equipment, so we can still offer a hybrid programme to enhance outreach online, as well as live programme delivery. We look forward to being a vibrant bustling creative hub in the Wexford community once again."

Visit wexfordartscentre.ie/na-cailleacha



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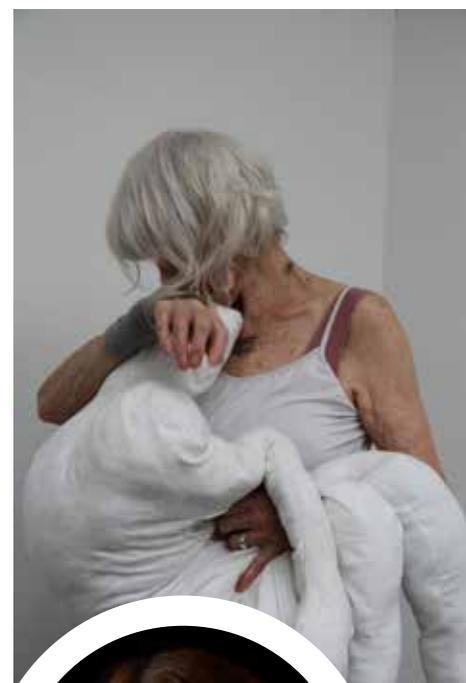
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Visit wexfordartscentre.ie/na-cailleacha





"The object of art is to give life shape." – William Shakespeare

The arts, and cultural activities, can enhance the quality of many people's lives – they bring about personal enjoyment, enriching perspectives and a sense of community. While the pandemic has had a huge impact on the arts sector, there's no doubt the arts have still been there for us throughout. The arts in all its forms has been our endlessly supporting and entertaining companion, from literature and poetry to films and online performances.

Now, people are beginning to come together again to experience the unbridled joy and conversations only live performances can bring. However, Covid-19 still lingers. So, before you book your tickets, here are the current guidelines and some important updates you should keep in mind:

Attendees

Currently, the maximum number of people allowable in a theatre or arts centre auditorium is 50 audience members. So if you're planning on booking tickets for a show, do be conscious that they are likely to sell out quickly. At the moment, larger indoor events, such as large concerts and shows, are not permitted, while a maximum of 200 people can attend organised outdoor events at venues.

Distance matters

All attendees must wear face coverings and avoid shaking hands or making close contact with others in indoor arts settings. In theatres with allocated seating, and all of the correct protocols in place, a 1-metre distance between attendees applies in seated cafés and auditoria. The 2-metre rule applies in uncontrolled areas, such as foyers and circulation areas.

Creating a safe experience

Arts centres, theatres and festival organisers

Keeping safe while enjoying the arts

We share the post-Covid safety measures put in place and all you need to know about attendance guidelines



are going above and beyond to ensure audiences attending live events stay safe. For example, the Abbey Theatre in Dublin has undertaken a medical audit of the building to ensure it is up to Government standards for Covid-19 safety. Like most theatres, the Abbey Theatre is a large, high ceiling venue with fresh air supply ventilation in place, meaning air is not re-circulated.

Meanwhile, hand sanitising systems will be available in all arts centres and theatres

across Ireland, to help reduce the risk of contamination. Every effort is being made by arts establishments to prevent the further spread of the virus by putting in place preventative measures and good hygiene practices for visitors, volunteers and audience members alike.

Booking tickets

Many shows will require advance booking. And when it comes to exhibitions, time slots

may also need to be booked in advance, as capacity will likely be limited. Once tickets are booked, some theatres may have special protocols in place.

For example, to assist with physical distancing, Birr Theatre in Co Offaly asks customers to stagger their arrival to the theatre. Those with surnames beginning with A-H should aim to arrive at 7:45pm (or 15 minutes before the curtain). Those with surnames beginning with I-P should aim to arrive at 7:50pm (or 10 minutes before the curtain) and Q-Z surnames aim at 7:55pm (or five minutes before the curtain).

And remember...

It is recommended that you take time to familiarise yourself with the individual theatre guidelines by visiting their websites, or call ahead for more information. You can also keep up-to-date on the latest guidelines for live performances on the Arts Council website (artscouncil.ie) and check out hse.ie for more information on Coronavirus. If you are feeling unwell or are experiencing any symptoms related to Covid-19, stay at home.

Everyone has a part to play in stopping the spread of Covid-19, and everyone should play their part so that Irish people can come together and share the experience of a live performance in theatres once again.

As Oscar Wilde said, "I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being."