

LIVERPOOL

IRISH

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# CELEBRATE OUR 'KEY-TO-THE-DOOR' YEAR WITH US!

Join us during #LIF2023 as we celebrate, commemorate and memorialise 'anniversary', laying down memories for future recollections and considering our day-to-day rituals.

**Liverpool Irish Festival** has made it to twenty-one. Symbolically, this is the age when children pick up 'senior' status in the family. Customarily, keys were given to mark this birthday. This marker made us think about anniversary, commemoration and marking time.

It's perhaps not surprising that anniversaries are on our mind this year. We established ourselves in 2003, 20 years ago. It's 15-years since Liverpool became *European Capital of Culture*; 25-years since *The Good Friday Agreement* and 100-years of the Republic of Ireland.

The funerals of notable figures over the past year -and centenaries or other memorials- have shown how we offer respect to lives past. Inaugurations, coronations and installations show, perhaps, how we offer respect to people we hold in power. Votes, personal targets and ceremonies are often about looking ahead.

## 21 Festivals

Since our first Festival in 2003 (*Garva*, Tom Paulin, Eamon Coye, Sean McNamara); we've played host to dancers, singers, musicians, filmmakers, academics, activists and performers. Looking back through the brochures reminds us of the meta-perceptual helmets visit in 2015; *Kila* in 2018, John Spillane in 2012 and Ed Byrne and Damien Dempsey in 2008. We've had *The Irish Sea Sessions*, breakthrough films, competitions, exhibits and much more. Each year, we do our best to bring you different voices, strong discussions and entertainment. You can see all our previous programmes online (visit our *About* tab), or use this QR code.



## Day-to-day memory making

As well as commemorating the big events, we want to think about what do we do with day-to-day events? How do we create memories for ourselves that help us to mark time, create memories and show people we care? What are the day-to-day rituals we use to shape our days, keep us healthy and connected or fuel our minds? How do they build to create, share and highlight life-events? Anniversary seems to be key to this.

Whether it's

- a week since your first date or 60 years of marriage
  - your child's first day at school or World Book Day
  - your cousin's bar mitzvah or a Super Bowl party...
- ... people across the world have developed celebrations. These lay down memories, bring people together and document their time on this spinning ball we call Earth.

## Key moments

This year, as with any year, anniversaries straddle everything. They mark moments of peace and terror, love and hate, silence and noise. They document reconciliation, struggle, searches for justice and societal reform.

Key anniversaries we'll be considering within our programme include:

- 10-years since *The McAleese Report*
- 25-years since *The Good Friday Agreement*, the opening of Liverpool's new *Irish Centre* and the installation of the *Liverpool Irish Famine Memorial* in Liverpool
- 175-years since the seven-year migration caused by An Gorta Mór (the Irish Famine).

In looking back, we can see how far we have come, but -additionally- how far there is still to go.

## Markers

For the Festival we've created a timeline (see right), looking back at 5-year intervals. By no means is it a complete history of anniversaries (even of the years represented), but -even in this list- we see a world building towards a recognition of individual freedoms and one of swift technological advances. We bear witness to struggles for personal identity and (collective) societal change. We can see violent defiance and defiant positive change. As we consider our programme -and the anniversaries we looking back on making- we'll also think about what future timelines might look like and what we'd like them to say about us, today and in future. We invite you to join us in that vision, into laying out your hopes and aspirations and to thinking about what your next big milestone might be.

## Stories and a call to join us

Our Festival is made of stories about Irishness and reveals people searching for -and finding- their identity. We encourage you to join us in the physical and virtual spaces we build, in the hope you can celebrate, reflect and build with us. Use our handle @LivIrishFest or hashtag #LIF2023 on all platforms to get in touch or comment on the Festival as we go along. Our team can't wait to see you and share time with you. In the meantime, gabh cúram agus fuirich sàbhailte/take care and stay safe!



## Documentary recommendations

For readers with **BBC** television licences, **iPlayer** has the following documentaries available, which readers may find interesting.

- A one-off piece: *Northern Ireland's Peace Babies* (23 mins)
- A four-episode series of hour-long programmes, *Endgame in Ireland*
- Shown in April 2023: *The Agreement* is a 25-year reflection on *The Belfast Agreement*.



Please note, there will be many other documentaries available. The Festival has no **BBC** ties. These documentaries came to our attention, but a **Google** search will reveal others that might be accessible in your region.

## Timeline

This timeline looks briefly at the last 400-years, and -using 5-year intervals- offers some of the anniversaries that have passed. It is not a full history. Its purpose is to show us a snapshot of events that have shaped or shaken British and Irish lives, or those globally. In doing so, we see philosophical shifts, political activism and cultural icons move through time.



YEAR	YEARS	EVENT	YEAR	YEARS	EVENT	YEAR	YEARS	EVENT	YEAR	YEARS	EVENT
1603	420	Queen Elizabeth I dies, leaving a successional crisis and the contentious issue of Protestant leadership, over a formerly Catholic nation	1898	125	Oscar Wilde's <i>The Ballad of Reading Gaol</i> is released				1973	50	1.6m British workers joined the <b>Trade Union Congress</b> call to strike against poor pay and price rises leading to the 3-day week
1723	300	Adam Smith - 'The Father of Capitalism' - is born. Smith goes on to theorise free market economies	1908	115	The first <i>Ford Model-T</i> rolled off the shop floor in the USA	1948	75	<i>The Empire Windrush</i> arrives on British shores from Kingston, Jamaica, carrying 492 (official figure) Commonwealth citizens	1973	50	Concorde crosses the Atlantic for the first time
1773	250	American colonists reject <b>British East India Company</b> imports by dumping 342 chests of tea in to the harbour. This rebellious act became known as the Boston Tea Party	1918	105	British women over the age of 30 win the right to vote	1948	75	The <b>London Co-operative Society</b> opened its first supermarket at Manor Park (east London, UK). This was the first-time customers would serve themselves to stock from the shelves	1973	50	Hip-hop is born when DJ Kool Herc flipped the switch on musical breaks and MC'ing over breakdancing at a Sedgwick Avenue (Bronx, NY, USA) party
1798	225	The Irish Rebellion of 1798 takes place in and near County Wexford. Presbyterian radicals, Catholics and republicans joined forces against Anglican rulers, angry at their lock-out from power. The rebellion was suppressed by the British Army, with c.50,000 dead	1918	105	World War I is brought to an end	1948	75	The <b>London Co-operative Society</b> opened its first supermarket at Manor Park (east London, UK). This was the first-time customers would serve themselves to stock from the shelves	1973	50	<b>Irish In Britain</b> - a national membership network- is founded
1823	200	In Ireland, <b>The Catholic Association</b> is established to campaign for equal rights for Catholics	1923	100	Brendan Behan is born as Ireland becomes its own republic, following Home Rule political successes	1948	75	<i>The Republic of Ireland Act</i> repeals Britain's <i>External Relations Act</i> and introduces the <b>Dáil Éireann</b>	1973	50	London's Old Bailey (the Central Criminal Court of England and Wales) is targeted with two <b>Irish Republican Army (IRA)</b> bombs in an attack known as 'Bloody Thursday'. Between 180-220 people were thought to be injured
1833	190	<i>The Slavery Abolition Law</i> expanded <i>The Slave Trade Act</i> of 1807, making it illegal to purchase (or own) slaves within the British Empire (with two <b>East India Company</b> exceptions)	1923	100	Hitler's <i>Beer Hall Putsch</i> fails. His arrest and imprisonment lead to the production of <i>Mein Kampf</i>	1948	75	<i>The Universal Declaration of Human Rights</i> is signed by the <b>United Nations</b> , enshrining rights and freedoms to all humans	1973	50	<b>Pink Floyd</b> released <i>Dark Side of the Moon</i> ; Mike Oldfield releases <i>Tubular Bells</i> and Paul McCartney and <b>Wings</b> release <i>Band on the Run</i>
1838	185	After compensation payments to British colony slave owners, Britain's enslaved people were released. It took until 1865 for the last enslaved people in America to be released from bondage (Galveston, Texas). This is 31 years after <i>The Slave Trade Act</i>	1923	100	Howard Carter opened the crypt of Tutankhamun	1953	70	<i>James Bond</i> hits the shelves as Ian Fleming releases <i>Casino Royale</i> , the first of 12 Bond adventures	1973	50	<b>Roe vs Wade</b> changes the USA's (federal) constitution, generally protecting a woman's right to have an abortion. The reversal of <i>Roe vs Wade</i> in 2022 means that state laws are subject to change
1843	180	Charles Dickens releases <i>A Christmas Carol</i> . 18 months later, Irish people are forced from Ireland due to hunger and landlord debts	1923	100	<i>The Eiffel Tower</i> - and <i>Statue of Liberty</i> - designer Gustave Eiffel dies	1953	70	Signed in 1950, <i>The Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms</i> - commonly known as the <i>European Convention on Human Rights</i> - came in to force. That same year, England and Ireland join the EU	1973	50	<i>The Irish Marriage Bar</i> - forcing women to leave public service work at the point of marriage- is lifted
1848	175	The third of seven years of death and migration, attributed to the Irish Famine (1845-52), continues	1923	100	Turkey is founded as a new country after the fall of the Ottoman Empire	1963	60	American President John F. Kennedy is assassinated by Lee Harvey Oswald in <b>Dealey Plaza</b> (Dallas, Texas, USA)	1973	50	<i>The Paris Peace Accord</i> is signed by North and South Vietnam and the United States of America to officially end the Vietnam War
1873	150	Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis invent blue jeans and go in to production in Nevada (USA)	1923	100	WB Yeats is awarded a <i>Nobel Prize for Literature</i> and becomes a senator in the first <b>Seanad Éireann</b>	1963	60	Bristol's Bus Boycott creates a watershed moment for Black politics in Britain when activists forced the transport company to overturn their 'colour bar' policy. All colour bars were deemed illegal in the 1965 <i>Race Relations Act</i>	1973	50	The Spanish artist, Pablo Picasso, Chilean poet and diplomat, Pablo Neruda, and British author, JRR Tolkien, each pass away
1878	145	<b>Everton Football Club</b> is founded	1923	100	Walt and Fred Disney open <b>Disney Brothers Studio</b> . Cross-country, <b>Warner Brothers</b> opens	1963	60	John Lennon utters the immortal line "would the people in the cheaper seats clap your hands? And the rest of you, if you'd just rattle your jewellery" at a <i>Royal Command Performance at The Prince of Wales Theatre</i>	1973	50	Discussions for a power-sharing arrangement with the Northern Ireland Executive and the cross-border Council of Ireland were held at Sunningdale Park. Talks collapsed after Unionist backlashes and the 1974 general strike
1878	145	Thomas Edison patents the phonograph in America, beginning the race to develop the telephone with Alexander Graham Bell	1928	95	Alexander Fleming discovers penicillin in Edinburgh	1963	60	Martin Luther King Jr delivers his 'I Have a Dream' speech, during the March on Washington, on the steps of the <b>Lincoln Memorial</b> (Washington DC, USA)	1988	35	<b>The Ocean Steam Ship Company</b> - better known as <b>The Blue Funnel Line</b> - closed its services. The line was founded by the Holts, a Liverpool family
1893	130	<b>Conradh na Gaeilge</b> is founded	1933	90	Drive-in movie theatres open in the USA	1968	55	Catholic civil rights activists in Derry faced a baton charge from the <b>Royal Ulster Constabulary</b> (known to have a large Protestant majority) at a <b>Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association</b> march, leading to further riots	1988	35	<b>Liverpool TATE</b> opens, transforming a previously derelict warehouse in Albert Dock in to a James Stirling designed, contemporary gallery. In Oct 2023, <b>Liverpool TATE</b> will close for a 3-year renovation project...
1893	130	Oscar Wilde's <i>A Woman of No Importance</i> premieres at <b>The Haymarket Theatre</b> (London, UK)	1933	90	Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany	1968	55	Sirhan Sirhan assassinates Robert F. Kennedy at <b>The Ambassadors Hotel</b> (California, USA), 5-years after his brother, JFK, was murdered			
1893	130	Charlotte Perkins Gilman releases <i>The Yellow Wallpaper</i> , a book on female depression and childbirth, a ground breaking piece of feminist literature	1933	90	Hugh Gray (allegedly) captures the first photograph of the Loch Ness Monster, 45 years after it was said to have been seen for the first time by Alexander Macdonald	1973	50	(Britain's) <b>Open University</b> awards its first degrees			
1898	125	Lewis Carrol (children's author) and Aubrey Beardsley (decadent artist) -famed for his illustration of Oscar Wilde's work- die	1933	90	The United States District Court ruled <i>Ulysses</i> not to be obscene, opening the doors for its first mass market editions						
			1938	85	For Hallowe'en, Orson Wells's <i>War of the Worlds</i> is broadcast on the <b>CBS Radio Network</b> (New York, USA) generating over 12,500 articles in the following three weeks						
			1943	80	Lasting a year, a week and a day, Allied Forces invaded Sicily to reclaim it from fascist leaders						
			1943	80	Nikola Tesla - 'father of the alternating current' - passed away						
			1943	80	The anniversary of the Dam Busters' raid on the dams of the Ruhr Valley. Living on in history, they are well known as <i>No.617 Squadron RAF Bomber Command</i>						
			1948	75	Nye Bevan champions the opening of the UK's <b>National Health Service</b> following the <i>National Health Service Act</i> of 1946						
			1948	75	One year after helping to gain India's independence from Great Britain,						

CONTINUED  
ON PAGE 19





# POETRY:

Last year, Catherine Harvey worked with us to explore how Shakespeare handled the Irish. This year, Catherine's using her skills to take us on a poetry walk through anniversaries, connecting with our Festival theme.

Catherine was series producer of *Tongue and Talk: The Dialect Poets* on **BBC Radio 4**, which featured an episode on the poetry and language of Liverpool. Born in Liverpool, Catherine has traced her and her partner's family ancestry back through Ireland's history, to make connections with the Treaty, the Civil War and much more besides. She's worked extensively as an actor, writer and director in TV, film, theatre and radio and is also Visiting Professor of Shakespeare Studies at the **University of Niagara**.

Read Catherine's article below, with the poems referenced accessible on the page opposite.

There are so many commemorations this year. So, I hope you'll forgive me when I say that any poetic offerings suggested here are only the tip of a very large iceberg.

I'd like to start with *Where the World Begins* by David Ward, which explores the histories held within Liverpool - in the flow of the river and the lives it carries with it. David has long been part of Liverpool's literary scene, as co-founder of **The Windows Project** and **Smoke Magazine**. As his poem suggests, the port's part in the transatlantic slave trade has brought great prosperity and great pain.

## Slavery

It's 190 years since *The Slavery Abolition Act* of 1833. In his poem *On Exchange Flags*, writer and historian Greg Quiery takes us to the square where cotton brokers once conducted their business. (Readers can visit Exchange Flags, located just behind the Town Hall, bordered by Chapel Street, Exchange Street, Dale Street and Rumford Street). Originally from Co. Down, Greg has lived in Liverpool for over 50 years and was a member of the committee that established the *Liverpool Irish Famine Trail*.

## Famine

We're currently commemorating the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 7-year span of the Famine. And, if you only read one poem on the subject, I'd suggest *The Great Hunger* by Monaghan-born Patrick Kavanagh (who also penned *On Raglan Road*). The poem highlights -in stark and moving detail- the painful experiences of farmer Patrick Maguire.

Liverpool's *Irish Famine Trail* highlights resonant sites throughout the city. Sites such as Clarence

Dock, through which passed 1.3million Irish migrants, between 1845 and 1852, and the Famine Memorial (St Luke's Church). It also features the grave of Kitty Wilkinson, whose untiring work with the poor led to the establishment of, what is believed to be, the first public washhouse in the world. She's recalled in Matt Simpson's *Ancestors*. Simpson was from a Liverpool seafaring family himself. *Ancestors* summons the memory of those swept here, often unwillingly, on the tide. My own poem, *Saving the Last Potato*, was directly inspired by the connection my family has with Clarence Dock, as well as another commemoration: the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *European Convention of Human Rights*, which highlights everyone's right to safety.

## Migration

Liverpool has, for centuries, offered a home to travellers from all over the world. The city famously has the oldest Chinese community in Europe, due in part to **The Blue Funnel Line**. The company operated merchant ships for 122 years and played a significant role in both world wars. 2023 marks 35 years since its demise. In *Mersey River* -a poem through which the shape of the river literally runs- Jennifer Lee Tsai pays tribute to the Chinese sailors who worked for the company, often at great personal cost.

It's also 75 years since *The Empire Windrush* landed in Tilbury docks, heralding the arrival of half-a-million Caribbean people, attracted by Britain's appeal for skilled workers to help rebuild the country in the wake World War II. In *Anchored*, Liverpool poet Levi Tafari shares his parents' own experience. Read live at this year's *Liverpool Arts and Culture Race Equality Manifesto* launch, the complex story of migrants, whether invited or enforced, is brilliantly articulated.

## Nobel Prizes

Liverpool is a literary city. It's full of stories, music and verse. The Irish poet and playwright W.B. Yeats was no stranger, frequently passing through the port en route to his mother's native Sligo. And there must have been great celebration when, a hundred years ago, he became the first Irishman to win the *Nobel Prize for Literature*.

In 1923, Ireland was emerging from a long period of conflict. Yeats became a senator in the first **Seanad Éireann**, and the *Nobel Committee* made special mention of 'his always inspired poetry, which in a highly artistic form gives expression to the spirit of a whole nation.' There are so many wonderful Yeats poems that express that spirit but, since we're currently commemorating the centenary of the end of the Irish Civil War, I'd suggest looking at *The Stare's Nest by My Window*, which has since provided inspiration for many other writers. 'Stare' is a dialect word for a starling, and -as Seamus Heaney mentioned over 70-years later in his own *Nobel* acceptance speech- the poem explores the need on one hand for hardness and retribution while, on the other, a desire to hold onto sweetness and trust.

## Politics

Poets have long played a role in political life. We're now 25-years on from *The Good Friday Agreement*... and you may remember President Clinton quoting *The Cure at Troy* during his 1995 visit to Ireland; forever weaving Heaney's words into the fabric of the peace process:

...once in a lifetime  
The longed-for tidal wave  
Of justice can rise up...

## Rights and Freedoms

In 2023 we celebrate another literary anniversary: 125-years since the publication of Oscar Wilde's *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*. Written after his 2-year prison sentence, for what was then dubbed 'gross indecency' with men, it explores the nature of wrong and the shared suffering convicts face. It's now 20-years since the repeal of *Section 28*, which sought to prohibit 'the promotion of homosexuality' and, no less significantly, 10-years since same-sex marriage was legalised in Britain. It goes without saying that many of our greatest works of literature might have fallen within the remit of *Section 28*, not least huge swathes of Shakespeare, including a large proportion of his sonnets, written to the mysterious 'fair youth' he called 'the master-mistress of my passion.'

## Sport

I'd like to end by talking about football. It's a subject that's close to the hearts of many in Liverpool and, if you're one of them, you may know that 2023 marks 145-years since the founding of **Everton FC** as **St Domingo's FC**. This club that split 14 years later to form the splinter club we now know as **Liverpool FC**. In *Footy Poem*, Roger McGough explores -with his usual humour- the fractured loyalties this split still causes today.

And, finally, I'd like to pause to reflect on all of this year's anniversaries as we return to the football field with Paul Farley's *A Minute's Silence*.

**IRISH EXPERIMENTAL  
WRITING DAY**  
10am-1.30pm, Sun 22 Oct,  
**Museum of Liverpool**,  
£5 (includes refreshments),  
book online





# AN ANNIVERSARY COLLECTION

## Where the World Begins

Dave Ward, from *On the Edge of Rain* (2008).

This is where the world begins.  
This is where the river ends.  
The sea beyond the sea.  
The sea beyond the sea.  
The city's dark manacles hold us here,  
the sailors who never put to sea,  
delving out treasure  
from the depths of sunless holds.

Dock walls like fortresses  
hoarding the grain,  
hoarding the sugar,  
hoarding the pain.

Smell of diesel,  
smell of sea,  
smell of burgers,  
coffee and grease.

Suck of the estuary,  
suck of the sea,  
suck of the city inside.

## On Exchange Flags

Greg Quirey, was published by the Festival on 15 Oct 2020 (written Aug 2018). Use QR code or search *On Exchange Flags* on our site.



## The Great Hunger

Patrick Kavanagh's *The Great Hunger*, can be read in full on [allpoetry.com](http://allpoetry.com) where *On Raglan Road* is also available. Alternatively, use these QR codes.



## Ancestors

Matt Simpson, is available to read on pages 66-67 of *Getting Here* (1995), *Liverpool University Press*. His reference to Kitty reads:

If there's a heaven, then Kitty Wilkinson's  
among the meek turning a squeaky mangle  
like a barrel organ there.

## Saving the last potato

Catherine Harvey.

Wrapped in a blanket  
I sit on the warming rug  
It's distinctive firelit smell  
Still hot in memory.  
I love this -  
Bacon and eggs  
Roast potatoes -  
We always leave the last one in the dish  
In case of unexpected visitors -  
Someone in need my granny says  
Someone who might be hungry.

This is my home  
My family  
Our eyes fixed on the last potato  
Glowing in the firelight -  
Safe in my granny's front room -  
The nightmare creatures chased away  
Like shadows behind open doors.  
Sanctuary.  
The wind and waves now long ago  
That carried my gene pool -  
Hers -  
Starving, terrified across the sea  
To a land that promised  
An end to hunger  
An end to fear.

Today as I walk along the waterfront  
Modernized with money  
I notice a plaque marking their entry -  
Thousands of faces peering out of faded photos -  
Any one of them could be related -  
Leaping the wall that bound the water's edge  
To reach the home  
The family I take for granted  
And the last potato  
Glowing warm in firelight -  
A privilege  
A human right.

Perhaps we never know what safety is  
Until it's lost.

## Mersey River

Jennifer Lee Tsai, from her pamphlet *Kismet* (2019):

Listen	Some shattering in the void of my form
I hear your song	borne on the cry of a seagull
the river flows	entranced by
the sea's operatic language	which beguiles
A geography of otherness	This otherness
becomes me	I swim towards the coastline
clasping mementoes	from my grandfather
a Chinese passport	papers from the Blue
Funnel Line	photographs in sepia
grandmother's jade pendant	translucent white-green
Blemished sea shapes	rise and dissipate
twist and untwist	speckles split
the coastline	Beyond waste chemicals
breaking stabilities	on the scour
like phonetic entities	one pulse
through the murky field	alluvium birds
Listen	I want to hear you speak to me
I do not want the city	to forget you
or the other sailors	of Chinatown.

## Anchored

Levi Tafari. If you have a **BBC** licence, you can listen to Levi recite *Anchored* (2023) on **iPlayer**.



## The Stare's Nest by My Window

W B Yeats poem is Part IV of *Meditations in a Time of Civil War*, published in *The Tower* (1928), which can be read in full on [poetryascommemoration.ie](http://poetryascommemoration.ie) or by using the QR code, right.



## The Ballad of Reading Gaol

(1898), Oscar Wilde, can be read at [poetryfoundation.org](http://poetryfoundation.org) or by using the QR code, right.



## Footy Poem

Roger McGough. Watch Dan Ryan (Dublin) read the poem on **YouTube**.



## A Minute's Silence

(1998), Paul Farley's *A Minute's Silence*, was published in *The Boy From the Chemist is Here to See You*. Read the poem on [poetrybyheart.org.uk](http://poetrybyheart.org.uk) or by using QR code, right.







# MUSIC BOARD MAKES REGIONAL DIFFERENCE

*Liverpool Irish Festival* has long been supported by Liverpool City Council's culture team. **Culture Liverpool's Culture and Arts Investment Programme** subsidises our annual programme, along with 26 other organisations in Liverpool. Culture in Liverpool is hugely diverse, working regionally as well as setting international standards.

Kev McManus, wrote *Ceilis, Jigs and Ballads: Irish Music in Liverpool* (1994) while working at the **Institute of Popular Music**. He now works for **Culture Liverpool** as Head of **UNESCO City of Music** and reports to the **Liverpool City Region Music Board**. 2023 marks their five-year anniversary; so, who better to tell us how they've come on?





## Board/Bored?

I'm delighted to have been given this opportunity to tell you about the **Liverpool City Region Music Board**. I know, the mention of a 'board' may already have made some of you switch off(!), but please bear with me. This is one of those boards that actually *does* stuff. In fact, it is -in many ways- seen as a role model for how other cities and city regions should manage their music policy and delivery.

The Board came about after **Culture Liverpool** commissioned their first ever formal music strategy in 2018. Two key recommendations were the establishment of an independent music board and the creation of a Music Officer role. I was fortunate enough to be successful in earning the role, starting in late 2018, just as the **Music Board** was being pulled together.

## Who?

The **Music Board** is accountable to the Liverpool City Region Mayor, Steve Rotheram. Steve's a passionate lover and supporter of music; he's also clear about how important the sector is for the City Region.

Liverpool's **Music Board** is made up of individuals from across the sector; music businesses, artists, venue owners, festival promoters, music education, etc. Members are there not to represent themselves, or their business/organisation, but to use their experience and skills to benefit the sector as a whole across the city region.

The broad mission of the **Music Board** is to 'support the sustainable growth of the music sector in the city region'. After consultation with sector, the **Music Board** settled on key priorities, including areas such as skills and talent development, underpinning the whole programme with a genuinely inclusive approach.

As a group, we know the sector moves quickly. To that end we've recently reviewed our priorities, running a series of consultation sessions at venues in each of the city region's six boroughs.

## Gains

We've used these sessions to highlight the work we've supported and delivered by the **Music Board** since 2019. As a **Music Board**, we were successful in our bid for **Strategic Investment Funds (SIF)** from the Combined Authority. We found out about this just as the first lock down started. We immediately sought and gained permission from the Combined Authority to repurpose £150,000 of the funds to set up a COVID emergency fund.

Responding quickly to the needs of the sector, we supported over 50 businesses! The grants we gave helped businesses to navigate those first few incredibly difficult months of lockdown.

## Lobbying and collaboration

As well as supporting skills and talent development programmes, we've also led on campaigns such as advocating for late night bus services. Our conversations with venues told us that many employed staff that struggled to get home late at night due to the scarcity and/or expense of taxis.

Club and gig goers told us the same thing. This brought up the issues of safety for those being left in the city centre late at night. Consequently, the **Music Board** worked closely with **University of Liverpool** to build an evidence base, supporting the case for night buses and both the Combined Authority and **MerseyTravel** have been responsive. We're hopeful that a pilot of two weekend late night bus routes will be announced shortly.

## Music cities

When talking about Liverpool as a music city I always stress the diversity of our music offer. Festivals like the **Liverpool Irish Festival** are a key part of our amazing, all year-round rich musical offer. The incredible success of **Eurovision**, hosted by Liverpool on behalf of Ukraine earlier this year, demonstrated how important music is in this city. For me, music is part of the fabric of the city. We understand the importance of music and that is what makes us different: we are a *real* music city.

I'm sure that some of what makes Liverpool a unique music city is our status as a port. We've always welcomed people from all over the world to Liverpool. Their cultures and music help influence and shape the music that emerges from the city. My own view is that the Irish influence on Liverpool music is deep rooted and is still evident in music today.

## 'My, me, mine'

I -like many, many, others in Liverpool- was brought up in an Irish household by my Irish parents, who came to Liverpool in the 1950s for economic reasons. I have an Irish passport and am proud of my Irish heritage. The city's strong Irish connections are why the **Liverpool Irish Festival** has a special place in our rich musical calendar. As always, I'm looking forward to what is always a marvellous event with some memorable musical performances.



## LINKS

For further details on the work of the **Liverpool City Region Music Board** visit [lcrmusicboard.co.uk](http://lcrmusicboard.co.uk) Follow them on socials using: [@lcrmusicboard](https://twitter.com/lcrmusicboard)

Also see [liverpoolmusiccity.com](http://liverpoolmusiccity.com) for further details of what's happening musically in Liverpool City Region.



**NIGHTVISITING:**  
LISA LAMBE AND FRIENDS

7.30pm, Fri 20 Oct,  
*The Tung Auditorium* at  
*University of Liverpool*  
£14+fees



**YOU, ME AND THE  
YELLOW WALLPAPER**

Sue Rynhart's  
melodrama for voice  
*Sefton Park Palm House*,  
£18/£15 conc



**JOHN JOE KELLY: COMPLETE  
BEGINNERS BODHRÁN SKILLS**

10am-11.30am, Thurs  
26 Oct, *Liverpool  
Philharmonic  
Music Room*, £20





# THE Irish POST

THE VOICE OF THE IRISH IN BRITAIN.

Friday, February 13, 1970  
PRICE 1/-

Vol. 1 No. 1

## IRISH VOTE SHOULD BE PUT TO USE

### - says Mr. Colley at launching of THE IRISH POST

THE IRISH in Britain should use their voting power to support people who sympathised with the Irish viewpoint, said Mr. George Colley, Irish Minister for Industry and Commerce. He was speaking at a luncheon in Windsor to mark the launching of THE IRISH POST.

Mr. Colley said that the publication of THE IRISH POST marked a very important occasion for both Ireland and Britain. He was aware of the amount of work and money which had gone towards bringing THE IRISH POST into being. He was familiar too with the people behind the 'paper and he knew that the voice of the Irish in Britain' was being relayed through very capable hands.

THE IRISH POST, Mr. Colley continued, would help point out that the Irish community in Britain, now estimated at two million, could "flex some formidable political muscle".

### Influence Candidates

"It was unlikely", he said, "that as a body they would ever be unanimous about which political philosophy might be best for Britain. Allowing for this, they could certainly influence the attitude of individual candidates in areas where there is a numerous Irish vote."

There was no reason why the Irish in Britain could not emulate the Irish in America in using their voting power, he said. There was nothing in this attitude that was incompatible with their duty to their adopted country.

"British politicians whose deeds reflect a genuine understanding and appreciation of the fundamentals of an Irish situation cannot but forward a relationship and an atmosphere between the two countries which will be of benefit to both."

### Achieving Understanding

"There is evidence that the number of men in British politics who are trying to achieve such an understanding is on the increase. This fact in itself is an indication of the growing influence and stature of the Irish community here."

Mr. Colley went on to say that THE IRISH POST was also invaluable in the area of communication between Ireland and the Irish in Britain—"at a time when we at home have suddenly, if belatedly, become address will be published in



Watched by Bernard Beatty, Chairman of Irish Post Ltd., the Irish Minister for Industry and Commerce, Mr. George Colley, launches the printing of the first issue of THE IRISH POST.

### IN THIS ISSUE

TO MARK this first issue, B-1 Motorway joins with THE IRISH POST in offering readers a unique opportunity of travelling to Ireland with the entire family, plus your car. It's all free and, in addition there is ESO in pocket money. See page 5 and have a go at winning. It's quite simple. There is another free competition on page 18. Today's rugby international between Ireland and England is previewed on page 23—with some outstanding photographs. Gaelic games and other sports are dealt with in detail on pages 21, 22 and 24. Pages 14 and 16 provide valuable information in the fields of Finance and Business. Read what the Irish in Britain think in VIEWPOINT on page 9. This is an exclusive Michael

## Quintin Hogg at Irish Club

MR. QUINTIN HOGG, the Conservative Secretary, will speak at the Irish Club, London, on March 1, in Britain. He is expected to elaborate further on his party's attitude to Mr. Enoch Powell's recent speech on the Irish record as opposing Mr. Powell's proposals. He described them as "a prescription for more deaths".

## SHANNON CRUISING HOLIDAYS

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# TRANSFORMING THE MAC LUA ARCHIVE



## Changing the Irish Archival Landscape in Britain

Housed within *Special Collections* at the *University of Liverpool*, the *Mac Lua Archive* is a unique collection of historical documents. Relaying the social, cultural and political history of modern Ireland, the archive forms one of only two dedicated Irish Studies archives, found in England, Scotland or Wales. Its re-examination is led by the *Institute of Irish Studies*, to develop and promote the archive as a repository for Irish heritage in Britain.

25-years of private archive donations have built an archive comprising a wealth of rare and unseen source materials. The collection is of seminal importance to ongoing academic and public debates centered on recent British-Irish relations and shared history. Its contents reflect Liverpool's cultural heritage and the wider Irish community in Britain. This short article introduces the project.

### Socialising the archive: the *Mac Lua Archive* and Irish diaspora in Britain

Irish people form the largest migrant and ethnic group in modern British history. Nevertheless, their experiences -and the history of the Irish Diaspora in Britain- remain under-represented within contemporary Britain's archival landscape.

In Summer 2021, Liverpool's Special Collections and Institute of Irish Studies teams secured funding from the National Archives Archives Revealed scheme. The scheme required the teams to develop the Mac Lua Archive in to a contribution towards redressing this deficit. As well as enabling the collection to be rehoused within Special Collections -and fully catalogued for public use- resources were given to 'enhance civic potential' and improve public visibility of the archive. Doing so, would identify it as an important repository of Irish community memory in Britain.

### What's in the collection?

Whilst the collection contains a diverse selection of historical sources, and artefacts relating to Irish history, a particular strength lies in its materials relating to the experiences of the Irish Diaspora. Comprising...

- a complete forty-year series of the Irish community newspaper the *Irish Post*
- some 500 emigrant letters dated between 1920-1950 plus, numerous pamphlets, reports and minute-books documenting the development of Irish community organisation the archive's accumulated holdings constitute an unparalleled record. This complex combination of artefacts reflects the experiences, self-perceptions and community-building activities of Britain's largest post-war migrant ethnic minority group.

Consequently, the collection is a major resource for the academic study of the recent history of race, ethnicity and migration. It also underscores the Mac Lua Archive's potential, as a resource, for new public histories that engage broad audiences in reflecting on the Irish diaspora's significance in the making of modern Britain.

## Conflict, identity and cultural change in the post-war Irish diaspora

### Exhibiting the *Irish Post*

The *University of Liverpool* holds a mission to promote public awareness of shared cultures and histories in the North West region. In concert with the mission, scholars at the *Institute of Irish Studies* are devising plans to encourage engagement with the collection. In addition to digitising the artefacts, expanding public access to key components of the archive is critical. This includes plans for a series of public events, staged around the city over the next three years. Conceived to encourage local, non-academic audiences to interact with themed collections within the archive, these events will take a variety of formats. Typically, they'll involve transposing materials from the collection, into public settings. The work will be used to engage individuals and groups in reflection and critical dialogue, centered on important aspects of the Irish settlement experience in Britain.

### Mobility and access

A core tenet of the project is the development of a mobile exhibition. This will use the *Irish Post* to foster reflection on aspects of Irish community history in Britain, especially late twentieth century events. Established in 1970, the *Irish Post* was the primary community newspaper for c.1 million Irish migrants. Through its extensive coverage of The Troubles in Britain, it played a central role in reflecting and shaping reader's perceptions of the everyday impacts of the conflict in English cities. Focusing on the controversial impacts of the *Provisional Irish Republican* bombing campaign in England, including the *Prevention of Terrorism Acts*, this project will digitise key editorials, features articles, images and letter pages. These will be used in a new exhibition and public discussion events, encouraging local audiences to reflect upon the legacies of these events.

More generally, the exhibition explores wider aspects of change in Irish identities in Britain, covering an era of profound social and cultural transformation in English society. Atop its coverage of the Troubles, the *Irish Post* constitutes an unparalleled resource for documenting long-run changes in the demography, social status and cultural values of the Irish community. Focusing on changing attitudes towards religion, consumption, work, and gender identities *Exhibiting The Irish Post* (the working exhibition title) situates the development of the post-war Irish diaspora within patterns of social change. It encourages audiences to reflect on how the everyday meanings of 'Irishness in Britain' have evolved.

### Partnership

Developed in partnership with the *Liverpool Irish Centre*, *Irish Post*, the *Irish Consulate in Britain* and *Liverpool Irish Festival*, it's hoped the project meets a civic need for more inclusive public histories of Britain's recent past. The archive provides an apt opportunity to reflect on the significance of post-war Irish settlement in Britain. It's a collection of importance for both people of Irish heritage and wider audiences in Merseyside and the north west.

*The Institute of Irish Studies and Special Collections, University of Liverpool.*

### GUIDED TOURS OF MUSEUM'S IRISH COLLECTIONS

Two tours will leave at 10.30am, 12pm and 2.30pm, Sat 21 Oct,

*Museum of Liverpool* (meet under Atrium screen)



### IRISH CENTRE MEMORIES COFFEE MORNING

11 am, Mon 23 Oct,  
*Liverpool Irish Centre*, Free, but booking preferred







For a number of years, the Festival has shared information from *Ireland Reaching Out* ([irelandxo.com](http://irelandxo.com)) about how to use their genealogy tracker. Unlike many services, *Ireland Reaching Out* has inputting space for anecdotal messages, which can be searched. When trying to piece together long family histories, scraps of information can be extremely useful. One of their volunteer researchers, Carmel O'Callaghan, has used the system to produce an overview of one, famous Liverpool supporter.

# LIVERPOOL'S FOOTBALL TRANSFORMED BY IRISHMAN

Ireland xo  
reaching out

## John McKenna (1855-1936): Long histories

MacKenna is the English form of the Irish surname MacCionaoith.

Long ago, the family were originally based in Meath, but moved north into Clogher as mercenaries for the rulers there. As a result of their efforts, the MacKennas became lords of the Barony of Truagh. This area borders the modern counties of Tyrone and Monaghan. Truagh was (and still is) the heartland of the McKenna clan. They ruled this territory until Gaelic rule ended in Ulster in the 1600s and now the surname is found in over a quarter of the households in the civil parish of Donagh.

It was in Drumcaw (County Monaghan, Ireland) that Seán MacCionaoith, later known as John McKenna was born on 3 January 1855 to Patrick McKenna and Jane McCrudden. At the age of seventeen, he -like many thousands of Irish people- took the boat to Liverpool to look for work. Arriving in 1872, he got work in a grocer shop, stacking shelves and other various tasks.

## Pursuits

However, it was his interest in sport that was to shape his future. He enjoyed rifle shooting, and joined the 4<sup>th</sup> Lancashire Artillery Volunteers and became a battery sergeant major. In 1885 he was involved in setting up the regimental rugby club, after which he became a rugby player with *West Lancashire County Rugby Football Union*. He was well respected and his ability, as a man of vision and action, even then.

## An auspicious meeting

He felt his income as a player was insufficient and he became a vaccination officer for the *West Derby Union*, which managed several workhouses. At an Orange Order lodge meeting he met John Houlding, a local brewer and future Conservative mayor of Liverpool. The two men became friends sharing political and religious interests. Houlding invited McKenna to watch *Everton Football Club* play at Anfield. As a result, he became a regular at their games and his interest in rugby waned.

## Divisions

When Houlding split from *Everton FC* and formed *Liverpool FC*, McKenna became *Liverpool FC*'s joint secretary and took charge of their team affairs. In their first season they won the Lancashire League.

McKenna saw a notice inviting clubs to apply to join the Second Division of the *Football League*. Buoyed by their recent success, he suggested they apply. William Barclay -the administrative secretary- did not approve of them joining the *Football League*. Cunningly, McKenna completed the application using Barclay's name and address. When Barclay received a telegram, proclaiming that Liverpool was elected and inviting him to come to London the next day, McKenna had to explain himself.

He had to persuade Barclay, and the club directors, that this was the best option for the club. He succeeded and they sent him to London as their official representative. He returned with Liverpool on the season's fixture list. This move changed the history of the club.

## Success demands change

On 2 September 1893, *Liverpool FC* played their first Football League match, away to *Middlesbrough Ironopolis*, winning 2-0. McKenna was vindicated and *Liverpool FC* went on to win the Second Division title.

McKenna changed the club strip from blue and white to red shirts and black shorts and decided the club needed a first team manager. In 1896, he persuaded Tom Watson -who'd won three First Division League titles with *Sunderland FC*- to come and manage Liverpool. They won their First Division Leagues in 1901 and 1906.

McKenna proved to be an extremely capable administrator. He was vice chairman from 1900-1909; chairman from 1909-1914 (and again 1917-1919) and a director until 1922, when he retired from *Liverpool FC*. He was also part of the management committee of the *Football League* from 1902; vice president in 1908, becoming president in 1910, a position he held until his death in 1936. He was also vice president of the *Football Association*. Liverpool was always close to his heart and -as president of the *Football League*- he officially opened the newly roofed and extended Kop at Anfield.

## Passing

### Houlding

John Houlding died in 1902, ten years after the Everton/Liverpool split. It was McKenna, along with William Cuff, *Everton*'s equally brilliant administrator that helped heal the split. At Houlding's funeral three players from *Everton* and three from *Liverpool* were pallbearers and they carried his coffin into the church and to his grave in Everton Cemetery. This was the start of co-operation between the two clubs. The clubs launched joint programs and supported one another at various events. Cuff and McKenna became members of the *International Selection Committee* that picked the England team and they both worked hard to keep the game from corruption.

### McKenna

McKenna was strongly opposed to gambling. He fought in vain to keep the betting pools out of the games. He felt poor people would squander their meagre income in the hope of becoming wealthy. McKenna would lead the fight as president of the *Football League*. This fight would ultimately hasten his demise. In March 1936, after a special meeting in Manchester to discuss the pool issue, he slipped and fell at the railway platform.

A week later, he travelled to Inverness to watch a Scotland/England game, but on his journey home he became ill and was rushed to *Walton Hospital*. He died on 22 March 1936 aged 81.

His wife, Charlotte Maria had died in 1909. They had no family, however huge crowds turned up at *St. Margaret's Church* (Anfield, Liverpool), on 26 March 1936, in testament to McKenna's standing and reputation within the football fraternity. As at Cuff's funeral, three *Liverpool* and three *Everton* players followed McKenna's funeral casket down the aisle, while directors from both clubs were in attendance. Large crowds also gathered at *Smithdown Road Cemetery* where he was buried, while along the route, every house and shop had their blinds closed as a mark of respect.

## Tributes

There were many wonderful tributes paid to him including the following excerpt from his best friend, William Cuff, *Everton* chairman:

'He will live long in the memory of all who had anything to do with the governing of football. Fearless, outspoken, and absolutely honest, he was well-named 'Honest John'. The Football world in general is under a very deep sorrow'.

Almost a year later, Cuff unveiled a memorial plaque to John McKenna in the foyer at Anfield. In August 2011, in Glaslough (Co. Monaghan, Ireland), another plaque was unveiled near to where McKenna was born. Keith Faulkner, author of *Emerald Anfield*, said of McKenna's achievements that:

"The course of history has proven John McKenna to be one of the most powerful and successful men at *Liverpool Football Club* - the third most important figure, in my opinion, after only Bill Shankly and the club's founder John Houlding. The people of Monaghan should be proud of this history and proud of 'Honest' John McKenna - who is arguably the greatest Irishman who has ever been involved with the game of association football in Britain".

May he never walk alone.

A useful tutorial, on using *Ireland Reaching Out*'s services, recorded during #LIF2020 is available. Use the QR code to access it.



**FAMILY DAY**  
10am-5pm, Sat 21 Oct,  
*Museum of Liverpool*,  
Free, just turn up

**GUIDED TOURS OF MUSEUM'S IRISH COLLECTIONS**  
Two tours will leave at 10.30am,  
12pm and 2.30pm, Sat 21 Oct,  
*Museum of Liverpool*  
(meet under Atrium screen)





# TRAD SESSIONS IN LIVERPOOL

The Chair of *Liverpool Irish Festival* is one of the Festival's founders and a keen musician to boot. Below, John Chandler, speaks about where you can catch a session (seisiún in Gaeilge) in this great *UNESCO World Heritage Music City*.

Liverpool's Irish music heritage was highlighted in the *BBC's The Travel Show: Liverpool: The Greatest Showmen* in May 2023. For those readers with a *BBC* TV licence, the programme is still available on *iPlayer*, or using the QR code, right.



During the show I was quizzed by presenter Lee Adams - in the middle of a lively session in *The Saddle Inn*- about the impact and whereabouts of Irish music in the city.

I shared my view that Liverpool plays host to traditional music sessions most nights of the week, somewhere in the city. A little further research has shown that I'm not far wrong! Some of Liverpool's finest pubs continue to attract musicians, singers and audiences to their sessions. So much so, there are a number of social media pages dedicated to just this.

Among the most populated of those is the 'Liverpool/Irish Trad Sessions' *Facebook* page (search for that name). We'd recommend you checking this at any time of the year, for updates on the sessions that are running.

During the Festival, there's always at least one Friday session, in the fabulously quirky *Peter Kavanagh's* pub. If you've never been to a session, this is a fantastic introduction to a lively, fun and high-spirited night. Head there on Fri 20 Oct 2023, to whet your whistle (and again on Fri 27 Oct, should the mood take you).

*Shenanigan's*, like *The Saddle Inn*, is more central to Liverpool. There are tunes there, usually fortnightly on Wednesdays, run by Chris Boland

(new chair of Liverpool's *Comhaltas* Chapter). The closest of these to the Festival dates will be Wed 18 Oct 2023. *The Saddle* hosts sessions on Thursdays, whilst *The Edinburgh* crams in the usual suspects -along with visitors from all over the world- every Monday night. *The Liverpool Ceili Band* host tunes in *Kelly's Dispensary* (on Smithdown Road rather than Renshaw Street) on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month, whilst Lynny and Charlie McKeon are reviving *The Caledonia's* Tuesday sessions.

If this weren't enough, Charlie hosts another session in *The Beeswing* every Sunday afternoon (3-6pm). We've also come to expect trad music the *Liverpool Irish Centre*, usually on the third Sunday afternoon of the month (along with a raft of other music and activity all year long). Further afield, in Rainford, *The Junction* hosts a session on the first Thursday of every month.

This is only a snapshot view of where to play, sing or listen to trad music locally. I'm sure there will be others, too; all subject to confirmation. Liverpool's sessions tend to be cosy and welcoming so get there in good time to pull up a seat and enjoy a rich experience! Please check with venues and webpages before you set off on your quest for tunes.

If you're looking for a regular céilí, *Liverpool Irish Centre* runs one on the last Wednesday of every month, with live music and (explanatory) dance callers. The first dance starts at approximately 8.30pm, running until 11 pm. A large plated supper is included, for just £3!



**FAMILY DAY**  
10am-5pm, Sat 21 Oct,  
*Museum of Liverpool*,  
Free, just turn up

**PK'S SEISIÚN**  
9.30pm-late, Fri 20 Oct,  
*Peter Kavanagh's*,  
Free, just turn up

**BRANDIES BAND AND  
FACTOR 7: YEATS TO MUSIC**  
TBC 8pm, Sun 22 Oct,  
*LEAF Bold Street*,  
£12/£10conc

## TRAD LOCATIONS

Where web addresses are complicated, we have included a QR code instead.

### Kelly's Dispensary

154-158 Smithdown Road, Liverpool L15 3JR  
+44 (0) 151733 7672

**W:** [dockleafbar.co.uk/kellys-dispensary](http://dockleafbar.co.uk/kellys-dispensary)

**F:** @KellysDispensarySmithdown

**I:** @kellysdispensary

### Liverpool Irish Centre

6 Boundary Lane, Liverpool L6 5JG  
+44 (0) 151 263 1808

**W:** [liverpoolirishcentre.org](http://liverpoolirishcentre.org)

**F:** @LiverpoolIrishCentre

**X:** @LiverpoolIC

**I:** @liverpoolirishcentre

It is worth noting that *Comhaltas Liverpool* have a home at the *Centre*. Anyone wanting to get involved in Irish music, dance, singing or céilí/set dancing could make enquiries there. You can learn more about the organisation at [comhaltas.ie](http://comhaltas.ie)

### Peter Kavanagh's

2-6 Egerton Street, Liverpool L8 7LY  
+44 (0) 151 709 3443

**W:** [pubheritage.camra.org.uk/pubs/110](http://pubheritage.camra.org.uk/pubs/110)

**F:** See QR code, right

**X:** @peterkavanaghs



### Shenanigans

77 Tithebarn Street, Liverpool L2 2EN  
+44 (0) 151 255 0000

**W:** [shenanigansliverpool.co.uk](http://shenanigansliverpool.co.uk)

**F:** @shenanigansliverpool

**X:** @shenanigansliv

**I:** @shenanigansliverpool

### The Beeswing

208 Smithdown Road,  
Liverpool L15 3JT  
+44 (0) 151 352 1805

**F:** See QR code, right



### The Caledonia

22 Caledonia Street, Liverpool L7 7DX  
+44 (0) 151 306 2496

**W:** [thecaledonialiverpool.com](http://thecaledonialiverpool.com)

**F:** @caledonialiverpool

**X:** @thecaledonia

**I:** @thecaledonia

### The Junction

102 News Lane, Rainford, WA11 7JU  
+44 (0) 174 488 2868

**W:** [junctionpubrainford.co.uk/](http://junctionpubrainford.co.uk/)

**F:** @The-Junction-Pub-Rainford

**I:** @the\_junction\_pub\_rainford

### The Saddle Inn

13-15 Dale Street, Liverpool L2 2EZ  
+44 (0) 151 236 2029

**W:** [thesaddle-liverpool.foodanddrinksites.co.uk](http://thesaddle-liverpool.foodanddrinksites.co.uk)

**F:** @murrayj726



# BOUNDLESS TRANSITIONS

## EXHIBITION AND ONLINE TALK SERIES

This exhibition is a project run by **A-Maze Artists Collective**. It runs Thurs 5 Oct-Sun 29 Oct 2023, open 12pm-5pm, Wed-Sun at **APT Gallery, Deptford**.

*Boundless: Transitions* is an immersive multi-media exhibition. It features a range of live and streamed satellite events, including panel discussions (listed below), guided tours, presentations to schools and an interactive local arts trail.

The project explores intertwined environmental and sociological themes. It poses questions such as:

- How we can address the energy crisis?
- How can we reenvision and reshape our urban landscapes?
- How do we engage with migration and diaspora communities on a planetary and a local Deptford level?

Fion Gunn, co-lead artist, describes the exhibition as "a sensory journey of exploration, where narratives of the natural world and human world coincide and collide".

The artists will co-create with visitors and partners to present stories of displacement and trade. These include tales of migration; legacies of exchanges of ideas and beliefs across borders and multi-perspective histories of Empire.

**A-Maze Artists Collective** want to make a difference and demonstrate -to the communities engaging with the project- that the environment is not simply something external to us, but something of which we are all part.

Maureen Kendal, co-lead of the Collective said "from the outset we have included schools, universities, and community groups in the planning of the project. They will be active participants, mentored by our team so that all visitors to our exhibition can gain skills, insights, and have a transformative experience".

The artists -Chen Mei-Tsen, Fion Gunn, Alan Hudson, Ardern Hulme-Beaman, Shoran Jiang, Maureen Kendal, Audrey Mullins, Nazia Parvez and Freddie Sanders - will present interactive installations (both 2D and 3D), which feature embedded electronics, AI-generated elements and sensory soundscapes. The exhibition will include AR pop-ups accessible (via free downloadable apps) and a local arts trail, which uses **What3words** geocode.

*Boundless: Transitions* is supported using public funding from the **National Lottery**, through **Arts Council England**, and sponsorship from **Greenwings Project**. For more, visit: [worldsinflux.com](http://worldsinflux.com)

Fion Gunn was Artist in Residence for the **University of Liverpool's Institute of Irish Studies**, with an exhibition **-Arrivals/Departures-** at the **Victoria Gallery and Museum** in 2022. One year on, Fion's involved in an artist collective in the south. Working with new diaspora groups, her work still focusses on connection and linkages. Below, the new exhibit is outlined, along with the panel talks the collective will host.





# A-MAZE ARTISTS COLLECTIVE PANEL DISCUSSION BRIEFS

All discussions will be facilitated by Fion Gunn and run from 6pm-8pm on the dates listed.

## Sat 7 Oct - 1st panel discussion: 'The City & The City – Transitions & Diasporas'

Urban environments need to adapt to changes in industry, technology, culture and climate. Our 'work from home' culture has been encouraged by COVID, but this is existing and not new technology. COVID increased the take up and continues to affect the way we work. Urban landscapes need to adapt to these changes or be left behind.

Deptford can be seen as an area which has changed as a result of empire and diaspora. A fishing village changing into a naval port and now cultural changes brought about by immigration. The area has seen some funding supporting creative industries. The residents can and should be involved in shaping their environment. How will and should Deptford adapt for the future?

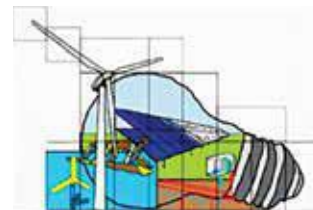
**Panel Speakers:** Thomas Picard who is a Paris based expert in 'Global Industry Initiatives & Standards strategy'; Chen Mei-Tsen, Taiwanese artist based in Taiwan and member of the collective and Nazia Parvez, British/Pakistani artist and service user expert based in the US - all confirmed.

## Thurs 19 Oct - 2nd panel discussion: 'The Future of Exhibiting'

Current traditional galleries work hard to encourage the public to visit, but still tend to present exhibitions as a series of rooms holding 2D and 3D objects and short text descriptions. Some include video.

To encourage a wider public interest there now exists cheap digital technology to create a more exciting and engaging experience. With GPS, mobile phones and social media we can extend the exhibition outside the physical gallery into surrounding streets and across the internet. Technology enables the nature of exhibitions to be immersive, the public can become part of the exhibition. Avatars can interact with viewers, virtual reality, augmented and mixed reality can create novel experiences, exhibitions can be based in a number of physical locations and connected across the internet.

**Panel Speakers:** Professor Jonny Freeman, *Goldsmith's University*; Alexandra Steinacker-Clark - *All About Art* podcast; Joris LeChene, Franco-British social communicator focusing on equality, diversity and inclusion; Jacob Deakin, creative technologist and graphic designer; Verity Babbs, arts writer and critic and presenter (to be confirmed).



## Sun 22 Oct - 3rd panel discussion: 'Deptford: Legacy of Empire' - Urban Transitions driven by population

Mapping has evolved over centuries as a wonderful tool for us to understand our world. However, it has also evolved as a driver and sustainer of Empire expansion, greed and war. Some give a pictorial suggestion of the world, while others have specific purposes, e.g., navigation. They have played a pivotal place in exploration, discovery and exploitation. They are used to bias our view of the world, to educate us and often to stop us from thinking about the impact of Empire -and the Age of Discovery- in general. Technology has allowed us to refine our view of the world and navigate our way through streets and through space. Accessible technology such as GPS, *Google maps* and *What3words* is now used widely both commercially and personally, however now we can view private properties and face a future of surveillance and a diminution of the right to privacy. We are in effect being colonised by 'the Empire of Technology'.

**Panel Speakers:** Shoran Jiang and Maureen Kendal (*A-Maze* artists) and others, to be confirmed.

## Sat 28 Oct - 4th panel discussion: 'An Ecological Vision for the future - Presenting our Co-creators'

We all have to change. Greenwashing is everywhere, e.g., fossil fuel companies claiming to be green, Qatar claiming to have a carbon neutral *Football World Cup*. Meanwhile climate change is happening faster than predicted, people are dying in forest fires and floods. Even Wall Street has flooded. Individuals, corporations and governments are keen to point the finger at others and do too little themselves. We can all change the way we live to help our futures and the futures of our children.

**Panel Speakers:** Chen Mei-Tsen, *A-Maze* artist, Professor Jonny Freeman (*Goldsmiths*), Esther (*Deptford Green School*), Lois Ghillie (*Stoke Newington School*), Alan Hudson, *A-Maze* artist, Rep from *Cockpit Studios* and others to be confirmed.

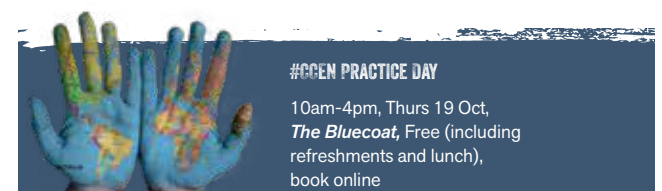
## Boundless: Transitions: an immersive multi-media interactive exhibition with collateral events

The project explores the theme of diaspora, in a planetary and a local (Deptford) context. It provides a sensory journey where narratives of the natural and human worlds coincide and collide. Stories of displacement include those of human/animal migrations; the movement of ideas and beliefs; the multi-perspective histories of Empire with its complex legacies and impacts.

Displacement/diaspora have shaped the mapping of our world culturally, socially, politically and philosophically since the dawn of the Anthropocene (migrations of plant/animal life on the planet predate human existence by millions of years).

Our exhibition and events promote deep engagement with the ideas and technologies used by the artists, in a space where co-creation is encouraged, where outcomes will be exciting and evolving.

Our artworks/installations will feature interactive embedded electronics, an immersive soundscape, 2D/3D works, projected films and olfactory elements. Alongside the physical exhibition we will create a virtual exhibition which can be accessed online, leaving a legacy of the project going forward.

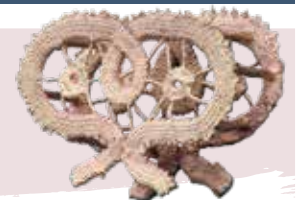


#CCEN PRACTICE DAY

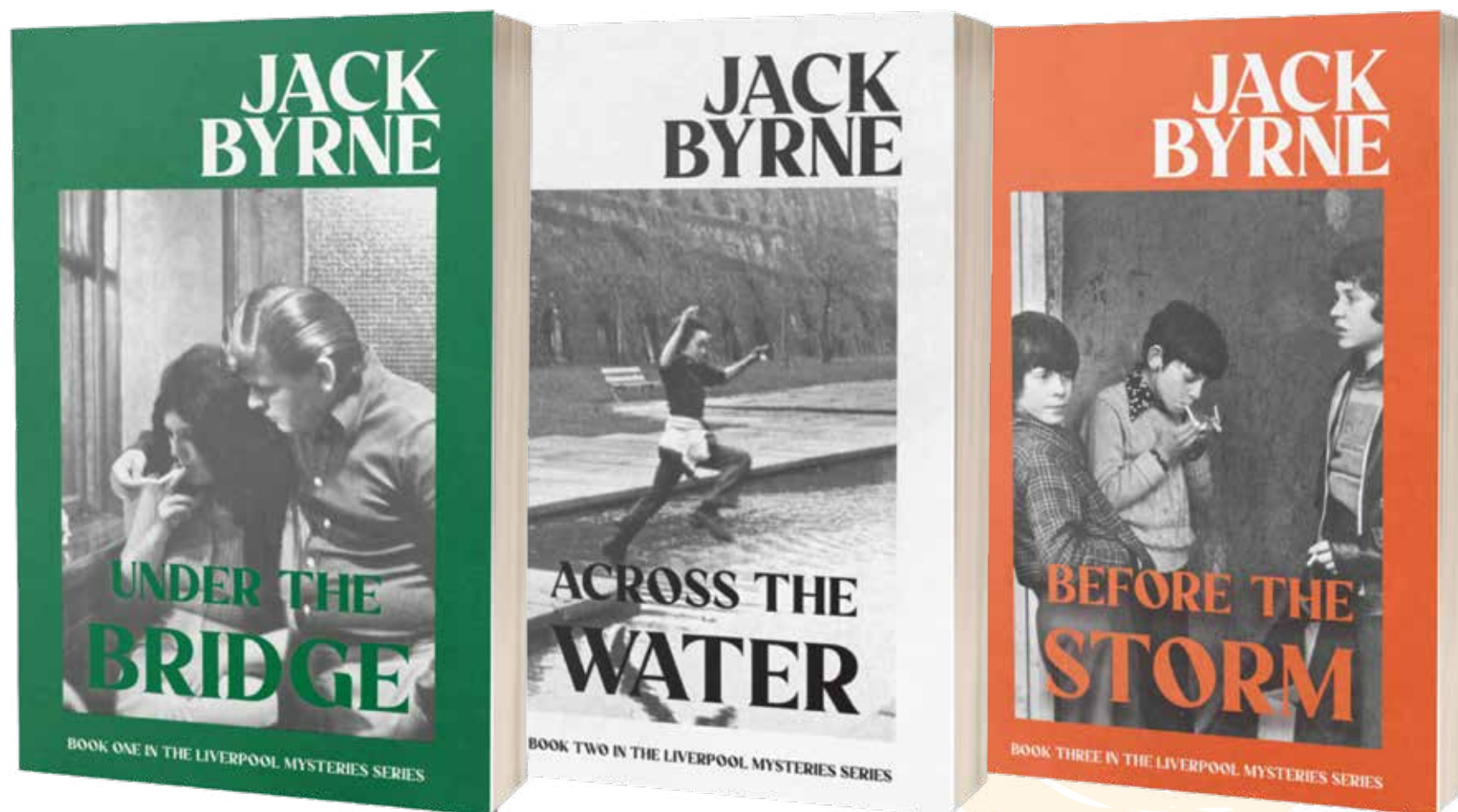
10am-4pm, Thurs 19 Oct, *The Bluecoat*, Free (including refreshments and lunch), book online

IN THE WINDOW: MEET THE ARTIST NIAMH GRIMES

11am, Fri 20 Oct, *Bluecoat Display Centre*, Free (suggested donation of £10 to go direct to the artist). Book by calling +44(0) 151 709 4014







# THE LIVERPOOL MYSTERIES TRILOGY

Jack Byrne is a Liverpool-Irish writer living abroad. Below he tells the stories of what drove him to write books on the subject of his ancestry and birthplace.

A robbery, a watch and an old man's death tie Speke in the 1970s, and Allerton in the 2000s, to the War of Independence in Ireland. This is all part of the plot of *Before The Storm*, the last book in the *Liverpool Mysteries* trilogy.

The three books together chart 100 years of Liverpool-Irish connection. The books -like the Irish sea- ebb and flow between Liverpool and Ireland. Three books, three bodies and three deaths, all investigated to reveal the history of Irish emigration to the UK, starting after the Second World War and going right on through 'The Troubles' to the 2000s.

## Irishness

My Irishness came late. It was delayed by tragedy and a commitment to class. The idea to which we attach our identity is not always chosen freely at first. It comes from the water we swim in, the roads we travel along and the events and people we meet. The identity we finally accept is in our hands. We determine who we are, not where and when we are.

By the mid seventies, I had chosen. I stood at the bus stop in Speke council estate, briefcase in hand, waiting for the bus to a grammar school. My parents had left for work before we got up. Two sisters were next to me, waiting for the bus to a local factory. I remembered Heath saying "it is the government or the miners" and being happy the miners won. A shop steward brother introduced me to Paul Mackintosh Foot and *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*. I couldn't decide between *Slade* and *T-Rex*, but did decide *The Communist Manifesto* spoke for me. The working class is still the spectre haunting Europe.

## Events

One of the events on my road was the suicide of an older brother in Ebrington barracks, Derry, in Nov, 1975. Three days before my fifteenth birthday, he used the rifle issued by Her Majesty's Government to kill an Irishman. Himself.

Our father left Wicklow, like tens of thousands of other social and economic migrants after WW2. He moved to Liverpool, where he met my mum. As a seaman, my mum's dad (also from Wicklow) was already shipping out of Garston.

My brother wasn't the first Irishman to die in the British army. In earlier times he would have been escaping poverty in Dublin or Belfast, and later the rest of the UK.

## Peter

The defining things about Peter were his love of sport, *Everton Football Club* and English nationalism. Maybe it was youthful rebellion, or the lack of Irish -as opposed to a Catholic- culture, but he became a supporter of Enoch Powell. The army was an escape from factory work or the dole, but also a mission to serve his queen and country. From the moment of his death, we could not talk about, share, or enquire of anything Irish, in fear of raising his ghost. I know our family's loss is just one of thousands on all sides. There are plenty of ghosts.

I wrote a poem called 'a mirror cracked'. It's long lost, but the central idea was the distorted image Peter must have come to have, of himself. In Derry, he saw the same terraced streets and houses as Garston. He saw the faces of neighbours, family and friends, with names as Irish as his own. Whether it was a sudden realisation, or a growing awareness of the disparity between who he was and what he was, doing doesn't matter. What matters is that it was finally resolved by taking his own humanity.



## Tragedy

The tragedy of an English born son of Irish parents, going to die in the *British Army* in Northern Ireland, came to encapsulate -for me- the failure not just of the Northern Irish state, but of the Southern state. Torn from the UK in fire and fury, it cost the lives of so many; only to see the welfare functions of the new state handed over to the Catholic church and the economy to a new breed of Irish capitalist.

The newly independent Republic failed my father and the tens of thousands, like him, who became migrants. Fleeing Ireland were many of the victims of trauma. They fled from the industrial schools, the laundries, the mother and baby homes, or were women escaping the social constraints imposed by rigid Catholicism.

## Opportunity

These past twenty years of *The Good Friday Agreement* were an opportunity to overcome the political divide -the walls and the barrier of armed struggle- to create a new country. The success has been the absence of war. The failure is the absence of a common experience. The material interests and the sectarian culture, that sees a layer of politicians and criminals making a good living atop the crumbling edifice of the northern Irish state, means it will not be an easy transition. There is enough blood in Irish soil to incorporate the celebration and commemoration of all traditions. The working class on the Falls and Shankill -in Derry and Garston- have always had their exploitation (and now food banks) in common. The hope of many was the removal of guns could lead to unity in the recognition of common class interests.

## Today

Ireland, for my kids, is catching crabs off Parnell Bridge in Wicklow, or dodging the surf in Brittas Bay. I hope in the future they are not visited by ghosts of the past. My three novels in *The Liverpool Mystery* trilogy are not the story of my family, but of families like mine, who have crossed the Irish sea to build new lives and families.



See Jack's website



Buy the books from *Northdox* or visit *Waterstones*, *News from Nowhere* or *Dead Ink Books*.



See Jack's 2021 interview with Liverpool-Belfastian historian, author and poet Greg Quiry

# LIVERPOOL IRISH FAMINE TRAIL

Get maps at  
[liverpoolirishfaminetrail.com](http://liverpoolirishfaminetrail.com)

BOOK  
ALSO  
AVAILABLE



### IRISH FAMINE MEMORIAL

11am, Sun 29 Oct,  
*St Luke's Bombed  
Out Church*,  
Free, just turn up

### GUIDED TOURS OF MUSEUM'S IRISH COLLECTIONS

Two tours will leave at 10.30am,  
12pm and 2.30pm, Sat 21 Oct,  
*Museum of Liverpool*, Free,  
booking required







# LIVERPOOL: A STORY FOR EVERYONE

Ged Melia is a local author and historian. He's keen to use his family history as a stepping stone for others to reach in to the past. Constantly inspired by the cheek-by-jowl existence of class and opportunity, Ged's work is beginning to give voice to those who have been missed from history or whose stories have been erased due to a 'lack of status'. His newest book, *Liverpool*, crosses the time of the Irish Famine (1845-52), 175-years ago.





**Liverpool, as its title suggests, is a book about the city and its people.**

Not the city that you know today, but the city of the 1840s; a city experiencing incredibly fast change, socially, politically, culturally, religiously and certainly economically. It was a city absorbing tens of thousands of Irish 'immigrants', or more accurately, 'migrants'.

As anyone with a rudimentary understanding of Irish history knows, Ireland was, at the time, still part of the United Kingdom. My own family's story was part of that bigger story of the city. The more I learned about the privations of living -or surviving- in mid-century Liverpool, the more encouraged I was to try and tell it.

## Contrasts

Liverpool in the 1840s was a city of sharp contrasts. The elite, the middle class, the gentry, the rich; theirs was an attenuated layer of wealth that poverty could never touch. They lived in one world, while the rest lived in another. The people, increasingly of Irish origin, lived most of their lives at the base of Maslow's pyramid\*, addressing only their 'physiological' need. Whatever they earned merely served to put food on the table and pay the rent on accommodation that hardly warranted the description 'shelter'. Their world was one of uncertain employment, religious prejudice, criminality, early death and disease... And luck played its part. Good luck was hard to come by, but bad luck came all too easily.

\* Interested? Scan the QR code, right.



## Rarity and class

Most of the material written about the Liverpool of that period tends to be technical or educational in approach. There are a few anecdotes here and there, perhaps a short story or two, but there are few novels. And there are fewer, if any, novels written that place the working class at the centre of the story. Novels written in the nineteenth century were generally written *by* the middle class, *for* the middle class.

The workers, no doubt, were deemed to be too uninteresting to play anything other than a servile part; a servant perhaps, a labourer, a footman, perhaps even a farmer. I can't think of anything written that places an illiterate dockerman or stonemason's labourer at the centre of a drama. Even in this century, dramatic presentation of the impoverished of past centuries is often layered with a coating of sugar. *Liverpool* is an attempt to address that imbalance.

## Liverpool's beginning

The book's first chapter finds our family living in Mayo on the west coast of Ireland. Life is hard, but perhaps just about bearable. They could live with the uncertainty of crop yields, and reluctantly bear the demands of the rent collector, but a growing threat of eviction forces a decision. Tales of a better life in America had woven their erratic way through a hundred repetitions to their remote settlement on the coast. So, that is where they would go. The chapter relates the story of the journey from Connacht to Dublin and Dublin to Liverpool. After that? Well, you would need to read on to discover what happens soon after their Clarence Dock arrival.

The story is anchored on real people and real events. As a local historian, I tend to enjoy researching the period I am writing about. I like to be able to not just tell the story, but walk the streets, see and describe the buildings. Criminality, religious strife and political tensions are interlaced within the family story.

At that time, Chartism -while less prominent in Liverpool- has spread across Lancashire. The Orangemen are still on the prowl, though threatened by a growing Irish contingent. Even Transatlantic slavery features. Perhaps most of all An Gorta Mór (The Great Hunger), a blight which lasted for several years, formed an unwelcome backdrop to the life of almost everyone in the city. It made an already difficult situation even worse.

### GUIDED TOURS OF MUSEUM'S IRISH COLLECTIONS

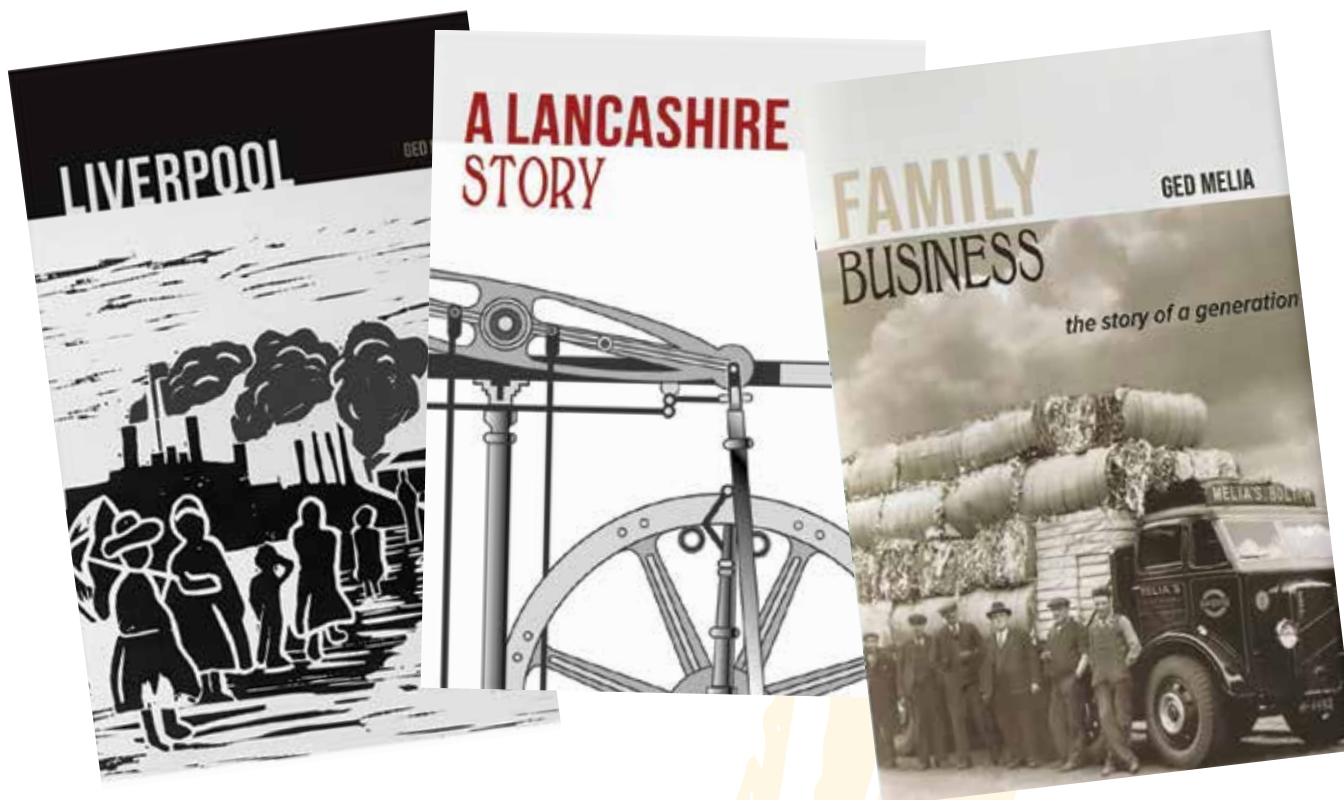
Two tours will leave at 10.30am, 12pm and 2.30pm, Sat 21 Oct, **Museum of Liverpool**, Free, booking required



More people -on reducing incomes- squeezed into the dark, damp, disease infested streets of Vauxhall, which meant more cholera, typhus and typhoid. Many died and yet some survived. Perhaps that is where the elusive 'good luck' could be found; one of the few instances.

## The third book

*Liverpool* is my third novel. Each one has been inspired by people and events in my own family's history. With the exception of a few names and dates the narrative is entirely a work of fiction, but might be closer to the truth than I care to admit. I also like to think that it could be the story of any Irish family who lived in Liverpool in the Irish Famine years. Change a few names and dates and it *could* be your family's tale.



## Book two

The two earlier novels are set in earlier periods. *A Lancashire Story* is based around family events between 1890 and 1920. It's the tale of how the son of an illiterate coal miner became educated, eventually becoming 'Chief Tenter' (Chief Steam Engineer) for two textile mills in Bolton. It begins to map out a younger version of the characters in *Family Business*, my first novel.

## Book one

There are several stories within this book. It's the chronicle of the birth, life and death of a family road haulage business; the story of the family generation living between 1920 and 1950 and the account of 'Great Uncle Ted'. Edward, or Ted, was one of those likeable philandering villains that many families seem to produce. His story is one of multiple women; at least one illegitimate child and a life journey that culminated in a three-year sentence in *Wakefield Prison*.

## Straddling generations

I have an ancestor who (almost certainly) died in the *Brownlow Hill Workhouse*; a daughter who is a scientist working at *Oxford University* and a son working at the cutting edge of web technology. Within the three novels, I've tried to fill in some of the story in between these two sharply contrasting situations. Even now, there is still much I could probably tell; a lot has happened in the last 180 years. When I look back over the last couple of centuries, a single phrase pops into my head: 'My God it's been a ride'.

## Read

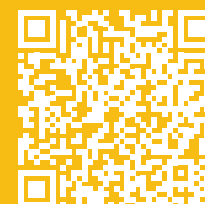
*Liverpool* is a challenging read, brutal even, in its presentation of the times. Nonetheless, I still hope and believe you will find it worthy of your time, once you have finished it.

If you would like to see some background material about all of my novels, please check out the website: [dmscollectables.co.uk/novels](https://dmscollectables.co.uk/novels)

For more background reading on the impact of the Famine in Liverpool, the Festival's own website page, 'Irish Famine Trail Map', is an easily digestible place to start:

[liverpoolirishfestival.com/liverpool-irish-famine-trail-map](https://liverpoolirishfestival.com/liverpool-irish-famine-trail-map)

Ged's book is available to buy on **Amazon**, just search "Ged Melia Liverpool" or scan the QR code below.



### FRÉA: REDRESSING IRISH CHURCH AND STATE INSTITUTIONS

1pm, Fri 27 Oct, Zoom online, Free, book online.



### IRISH FAMINE MEMORIAL

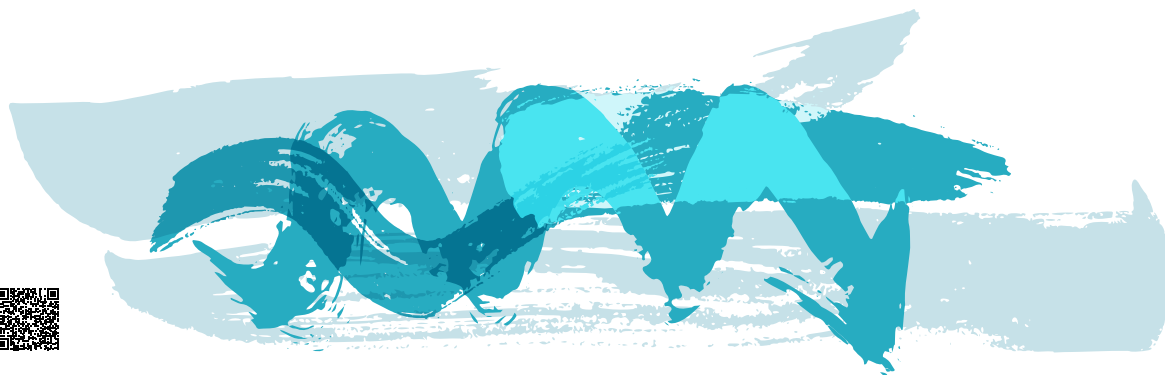
11am, Sun 29 Oct, *St Luke's Bombed Out Church*, Free, just turn up





## 125 years of art, culture and progress

2023 marks the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of Oscar Wilde's famous poem, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*. Scan the QR code (below right) to read all of it. He began writing this shortly after his release from prison, where he'd been incarcerated for the crime of loving other men. This was termed as 'gross indecency' under the 1885 *Labouchere Amendment to The Criminal Law Act*. Imprisoned for two years (May 1895-May 1897), Wilde was held in a number of English prisons, including *HMP Reading*. While incarcerated, he witnessed terrible acts of official cruelty. Additionally, he beheld tremendous acts of kindness, enacted by prisoners and even their captors.



# WILDE'S BALLAD OF READING GAOL

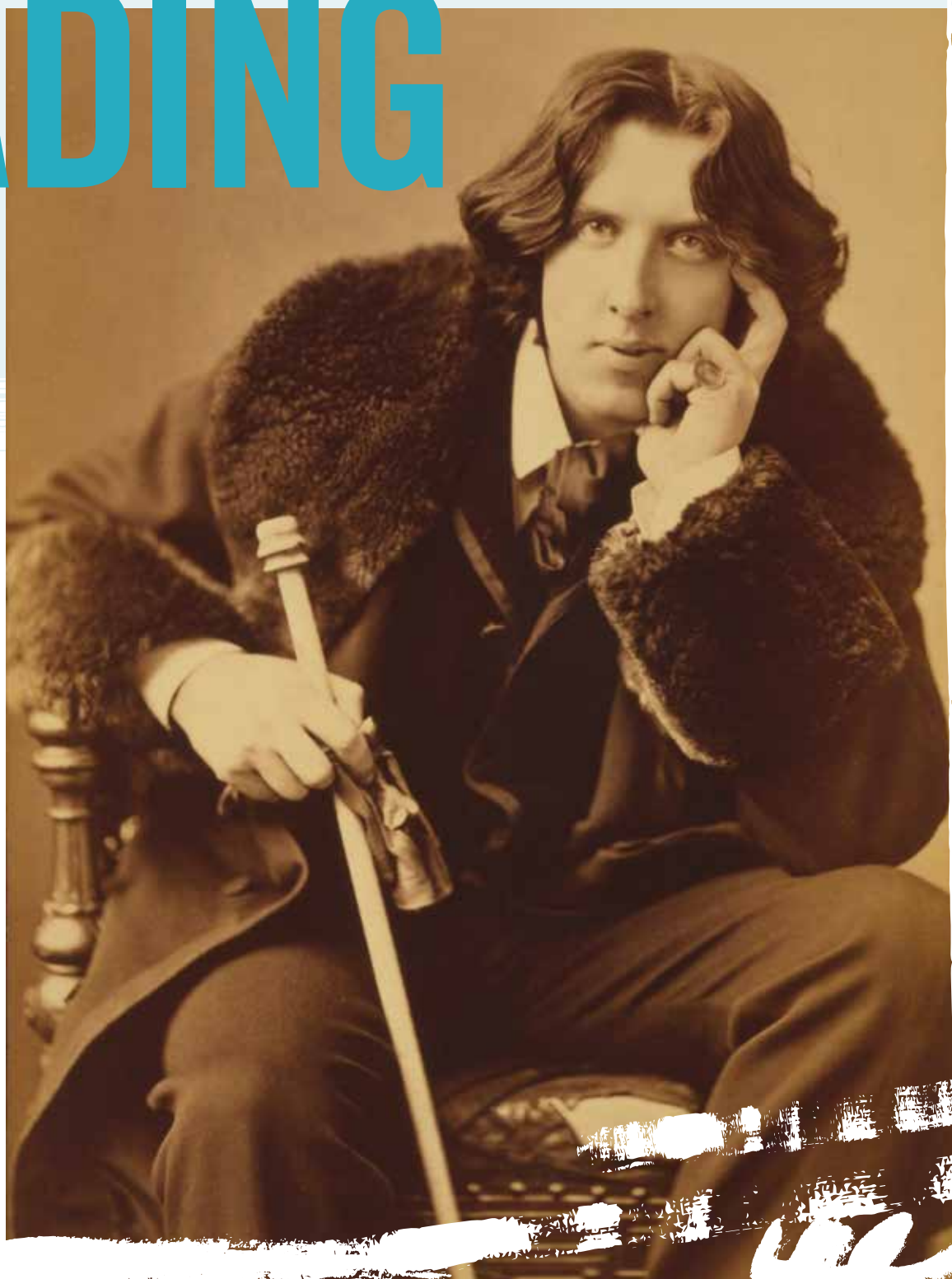
### In defence of kindness

This is notable in Wilde's letter of defence for Thomas Martin, a dismissed *Reading Gaol* warder. Mr. Martin was summarily sacked from his role for giving biscuits to a frightened, hungry child prisoner. Wilde pointed out Mr. Martin's offence was to have fed the smallest boy he'd seen in two years of incarceration. He argued that the weaponisation of hunger in prisons was made possible by the doctrinal assumption that 'because a thing is the rule it is right'. He condemned the Prison Board for its role as 'the primary source' of this cruelty and stated that its only outcome was simple terror.

### Respect in disrespectful circumstances

Martin's intervention -and Wilde's defense- are examples of the kind of decency and kindness that existed within the violent structures of the Victorian prison system. For Wilde, the greatest example of collective and humane action occurred during his stay in *Reading Gaol*. There, he beheld the reaction of prisoners to the execution of a soldier, Charles Thomas Wooldridge. Mr. Wooldridge was hanged on 7 July 1896 for murdering his wife the year before. Wilde was struck by his fellow prisoners' capacity for grace, on the eve of the execution. He recalled how they prayed for Wooldridge as he was about to face the gallows.

The warders with their shoes of felt  
Crept by each padlocked door,  
And peeped and saw, with eyes of awe,  
Gray figures on the floor,  
And wondered why men knelt to pray  
Who never prayed before.





## Authority injustices

For Wilde, the real injustice of the death penalty lay in the state's refusal to consider the humanity of inmates, particularly condemned men like Wooldridge. Seeing prisoners bent in prayer, on his wing of *Reading Gaol*, revealed to Wilde the human worth of society's outcasts. This silent act held up a mirror to the inflexibility of the carceral (prison) state, which matched the violence it sought to punish using its ultimate sanction: the death penalty. Any application of the hangman's noose, or 'rope of shame', was the ultimate act of state power:

For Man's grim Justice goes its way,  
And will not swerve aside:  
It slays the weak, it slays the strong,  
It has a deadly stride:  
With iron heel it slays the strong,  
The monstrous parricide\*! (ll.361-6)

\*Parricide – the killing of a parent of close relative.

## Cross-societal harm

Wilde regarded the indiscriminate violence of authority to be universally harmful, inflexible and irrational. Its lethal momentum, or 'deadly stride', conveys its immovable and unreasonable dynamic. This violent energy is met with the poet's reflection on the state's denial of freedom to prisoners. In his experience, liberation could be imagined by the inmates as akin to the free mobility of clouds, drifting above the prison yard...

I never saw sad men who looked  
With such a wistful eye  
Upon that little tent of blue  
We prisoners called the sky,  
And at every careless cloud that passed  
In happy freedom by.

## Against Christian morality

For Wilde even the most despairing had rights. This was true to him of Wooldridge because he 'was one of those/Whom Christ came down to save'. As the state performed its terrible duty, Wooldridge's death was lamented by the most marginalised and dispossessed in Victorian society; his fellow prisoners. 'His mourners will be outcast men/And outcasts always mourn'... Wilde continues by condemning the inhumanity of the penal system

This too I know - and wise it were  
If each could know the same -  
That every prison that men build  
Is built with bricks of shame,  
And bound with bars lest Christ should see  
How men their brothers maim.  
With bars they blur the gracious moon,  
And blind the goodly sun:  
And they do well to hide their Hell,  
For in it things are done  
That Son of God nor son of Man  
Ever should look upon. (ll. 547-58)

**WILDE'S THE BALLAD OF READING GAOL**  
125-years of art, culture and progress  
2pm, Mon 23 Oct, [Zoom online](#), Free, book online.  
Event meeting information will be sent to you ahead of the event



## The death penalty harms us all

For here, the poem shifts from a reflection on the death sentence to a broader condemnation of imprisonment. Here, Wilde reveals his most progressive proposal: when the state carries out violence against prisoners it has abandoned any claim to moral authority. This includes the death penalty or the act of incarceration itself. These punishments are in and of themselves flawed.

In Wilde's view, these acts degraded everyone who came into contact with the prison system. Whether exercised directly or indirectly, these applications of state power cultivated aggression, betrayal, and hypocrisy. He felt this to be true outside the prison's walls, within them and as a dehumanising phenomena that affected society as a whole.

## Contemporary relevance

The poem remains strikingly relevant today. Dire prison conditions in Ireland, Britain and many other countries are known to continue to harm the mental and physical health of inmates and their loved ones. Despite its perceived modernity, our most advanced capitalist nation -the USA- is also the world's most carceral state. There, children are still held in prisons, sometimes alongside adults. Over half of the USA's states reserve the death penalty, for people like Charles Thomas Wooldridge, who have been convicted of murder.

*The Ballad of Reading Gaol* is best understood within the context of Wilde's broader, progressive beliefs, rather than a silo of an individual and singular experience. He confronted homophobia in his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, exposed poverty in his short stories, criticised capitalism in his essay *The Soul of Man Under Socialism*, and advocated women's rights in his plays.

In many public lectures he called for the recognition of workers' rights, and demanded that the dignity of labour should be recognised.

In this poem, we find Wilde's compassionate reflections on the treatment of prisoners, who were among Victorian society's most marginalised figures. Today, prisoners remain under regimes within which the kind of institutional violence, described by Wilde, continues to punish rather than reform. In Wilde's time, as today, the struggle against injustice involved a broad approach, and just as Wilde did not fail to address violence against prisoners, children, and women in isolation, we should not either.



## Writer biography

Dr Deaglán Ó Donghaile, *Research Institute for Literature and Cultural History, Liverpool John Moores University*. Dr Ó Donghaile is the son of a political ex-prisoner. He is Reader in *Late Victorian Literature and Culture at Liverpool John Moores University* and author of *Oscar Wilde and the Radical Politics of the Fin de Siècle (Edinburgh University Press)*. He is currently writing a political biography of Wilde.

## ...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

YEAR	YEARS	EVENT
2003	20	The <b>Liverpool Irish Festival</b> is founded, running a four-day programme (23-26 Oct), much of which was at <i>The</i> (much-missed) <b>Flying Picket</b>
2008	15	Liverpool becomes <i>European Capital of Culture</i> and <b>Liverpool ONE</b> opens
2013	10	<b>Liverpool Central Library</b> reopens after a huge renovation project
2013	10	<i>Philomena</i> , a film about a former Irish institution resident (starring Judi Dench and Steve Coogan), is released. This comes in the same year as the <i>Report for the Inter-Departmental Committee to establish the Facts of State involvement with the Magdalen Laundries</i> (widely called <i>The McAleese Report</i> ) is issued
2013	10	Same-sex marriage is legalised in Great Britain. Two years on, Ireland will legalise same-sex marriage by a public referendum, being the first country in the world to do so by public mandate
2013	10	The world mourns the loss of Nelson Mandela (b.1918-d.2013) and Seamus Heaney (b.1939-d.2013)
2018	5	A referendum in Ireland changed the constitution to permit abortion during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, amending the UK's 1861 <i>Offences Against the Person Act</i>
2018	5	At least 83 people were wrongly deported by the UK's Home Office during <i>The Windrush Scandal</i> , leading to the eventual resignation of Home Secretary Amber Rudd
2018	5	Liverpool installs the first <i>UNESCO World Music City Music Board</i>
2022	1	People remembered Queen Elizabeth II, Pope Benedict XVI, Lord David Trimble, Cherry Valentine, Terry Neill, Ashling Murphy, Chloe Mithcell, Ashley Dale, Sam Rimmer, Olivia Pratt-Korbell and those killed at Creeslough, following their deaths, last year. We also remember those who have died in the Ukrainian-Russian War, begun by Vladimir Putin in 2022
2023	0	This year we have been sad to announce the passing of local historian Michael Kelly and singer, songwriter and activist and Sinéad O'Connor.
1988	35	<b>University of Liverpool's Institute of Irish Studies</b> is established following the 1985 <i>Anglo-Irish Agreement</i> , to encourage greater understanding and mutually enriching contact between the islands. It's a unique institution, designed around scholarship, outreach and policy impact
1993	30	Steven Spielberg's <i>Jurassic Park</i> is released
1993	30	<i>The Maastricht Treaty</i> -otherwise known as the <i>Treaty on European Union</i> or the foundation treaty- was rolled in to effect
1993	30	<i>The Sister of Our Lady of Charity</i> (High Park, Drumcondra, Dublin) sold part of their land to recover funds after some failed stock dealings. On commencing construction work, the new developer discovered 133 unmarked graves, with a further 22 being found later. Though slow to create action, this discovery -and the public outcry it raised- has led to official inquiries and commissions
1993	30	The <b>United Nations</b> appoint an Officer of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
1993	30	Warrington was targeted by <b>IRA</b> bombings, killing Jonathan Ball and Tim Parry and injuring 54
1998	25	<b>Google</b> is founded in Menlo Park (California, USA)
1998	25	Pope John Paul II formally apologises for the failure of the Roman Catholic Church to challenge the Nazis over the Holocaust
1998	25	Taro Chiezo's <i>Superlambanana</i> is installed in Williamson Square, Liverpool
1998	25	<i>The Good Friday/Belfast Agreement</i> is signed, based on the "parity of esteem" between nations
1998	25	The <b>Liverpool Irish Centre</b> reopens at St Michael's, having closed the <i>Wellington Rooms</i> in 1997
1998	25	The <b>Liverpool Irish Famine Trail</b> founded by the <b>Liverpool Great Hunger Commemoration Committee</b>
2003	20	Great Britain's repeal of <i>Section 28</i> ended the ban on the "promotion of homosexuality", permitting the discussion of LGBT culture in education and media
2003	20	The US military enter Iraq in search of 'Weapons of Mass Destruction' (WMDs), soon followed by British and other forces. To date over a 104, 000 people on all sides have died in the conflict and Iraq's political stability remains unstable



**CULTURAL MEMORY AND THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT**  
6pm, Thurs 26 Oct, TBC, FREE (limited spaces), book online



**CONFLICT, DIASPORA AND EMPIRE**  
Irish nationalism in Liverpool, 1912-1922.  
11am, Wed 25 Oct, Zoom online, Free, book online.



When Caelainn Hogan's non-fiction book about Irish institutions was released (*Republic of Shame*, 2019), it was compared to *The Handmaid's Tale*, a fiction. Margaret Atwood herself stated "at least in *The Handmaid's Tale* they value babies, mostly. Not so in the true stories here".

We were introduced to Caelainn last year. The amount of work she'd done with survivors and their experiences was meaningful, given reports on how official reports and commissions had omitted such testimony. The way audiences engaged with her detailed understanding - teamed with an empathetic but pragmatic pursuit of survivor dignity - made her a strong presenter on the subject.

We used this connection to invite Caelainn to reflect on what the 10-year anniversary of *The McAleese Report* means in practice. Below, Caelainn reflects on some of her encounters, the process and the work yet to be done.

**Trigger warning:** Though this article does not feature any individually graphic testimony or expletive language, it is about harm and hardship in Ireland's institutional facilities. It also details some of the responses. This could be upsetting for some readers. Please proceed with care.

# MCALEESE, INSTITUTIONS AND SURVIVORS 10-YEARS ON



## What does justice look like a decade on?

Ten-years ago, Ireland apologised for the Magdalene Laundries. These were a system of institutions that incarcerated thousands of women and girls. They stripped them of their names, forcing them to work unpaid; often washing clean the dirt of government departments. After all these years, what justice is there for survivors?

### Rose

A few years ago, during lockdown, I stood in a survivor's front garden in Dublin. My laptop was balanced on a wall so she could safely watch the state apologise, yet again. This time apologies were given to survivors of the mother and baby institutions, where many women sent to Magdalene Laundries were forcibly separated from their children.

Survivors weren't even given a copy of the investigation's final report to read before the announcement. Their access wasn't considered. "I just want justice", Rose said, shaking her head at those in power, their words ringing hollow.

Rose was sent twice to the Tuam Mother and Baby Institution, where hundreds of children died and the remains of many still lie in sewage chambers. After being separated from her second child, Rose became a woman the church and state considered a "multiple offender". She was sent to the Galway Magdalene Laundry.

## What were the Magdalene Laundries?

The Magdalene Laundries operated in Ireland from the 1700s. The first Magdalene institution was opened in London years before the first Irish asylum. Nevertheless, Westminster has resisted calls for investigations into forced adoption and has never fully investigated the Magdalene Laundries across Britain. Magdalene institutions were set up in a number of countries that were colonised by Britain and by France, where Catholic nuns who set up institutions in Ireland were trained and sent from.

Under the nascent Irish state, religious orders received public funding and contracts for the incarceration and unpaid labour of women and girls. The Laundries operated until the 1990s in Ireland.

The final report of the inquiry\* into the Magdalene Laundries, led by Senator Martin McAleese, was published in 2013. It found that at least 10,000 women and girls were put into these institutions, between the state's founding and 1996 when the last closed. The closure of the last followed the discovery, 3-years earlier, of 155 bodies at a former Laundry run by *Our Lady of Charity*, leading to a public outcry for an official intervention and explanation.

\*The Inter-Departmental Committee to establish the facts of State involvement with the Magdalene Laundries. Access with the QR code, right.



The state was responsible for sending a quarter of those incarcerated to these institutions. Laundries were part of a wider system of industrial schools, and mother and baby institutions, where survivors describe endemic abuse and dehumanisation.

## Power and misdirection

For my book, *Republic of Shame*, I spoke with many survivors of the Laundries and documented how authorities treated them. An internal government memo, regarding admission of two teens to a *Good Shepherd Laundry* in Limerick, described them as 'mental defectives'. One was a 17-year-old who had given birth; the other only 14-years-old.

A letter sent in the 1950s from a county council to the *Department of Health* described a patient, sent to *High Park Laundry*, as:

'an unmarried lady who has given birth to two or more children and whose moral rehabilitation would prevent her becoming a health and social problem'.

These mothers were incarcerated in Laundries to prevent them becoming a "burden" on the taxpayer. Other "penitents" were simply born in an institution, were victims of sexual abuse or assault, had a disability or were just considered difficult or unruly.

## What redress could look like

After *The McAleese Report*, the state set up a redress scheme, based on a review by former High Court Judge John Quirke. The review spoke to more than 300 Magdalene survivors and upheld their claims of forced and unpaid labour. The four religious orders that ran these institutions were asked repeatedly to contribute to redress, but refused. Some argued that the records they offered survivors, searching for information, acted as a form of redress.

When Rose applied for her records from the *Sisters of Mercy*, who ran the *Galway Laundry*, they sent back only a single line from a ledger. It stated that nuns from Tuam sent her to the Magdalene Laundry, and under cause: "Penitent - twice". Her two children were treated as offences. Access to this information wasn't easy. Despite today's Government speaking about "survivor-led solutions" -and after huge resources spent on official investigations- survivors still have to struggle for full access to their information.

## Continued injustices

The state spent tens of millions on the Magdalene redress scheme, much paid to lawyers rather than survivors. In 2013, the government expected the scheme to cost €58-million. The four religious orders issued statements expressing regret for any hurt experienced in their institutions, with caveats about the nuns providing a refuge in good faith. They still refused to pay redress, while continuing to receive public money, despite their combined gross assets being valued at €1.5-billion.

When *The McAleese Report* was published, there were 58 Magdalene survivors still living in the "care" of the same nuns that ran the Laundries and on the same grounds in which they were incarcerated. Judge Quirke noted that the nuns were worried that redress paid to these women might jeopardise their own state funding.

I spoke to one woman -born in Ireland's largest mother and baby institution- then forced to work in a Magdalene Laundry most of her life. She was still living behind the walls of a facility, run by the same nuns that failed inspections by health authorities.



## Rights to information from the publicly funded

In *Republic of Shame*, I write about an exchange between researchers for the McAleese inquiry and the *Sisters of Our Lady of Charity*. The latter received public money to run a nursing home on the grounds of their former *High Park Laundry*. A researcher phoned the nuns to ask about these Magdalene survivors, to be told no information would be provided. He emailed, noting the refusal, pointing out the nuns were receiving public funding. This sparked an official panic within the health service, with the researcher accused of 'stirring up a very sensitive situation'. McAleese himself wrote to the nuns, apologising for 'confusion and distress' caused, emphasising the nuns' 'invaluable assistance'. Simultaneously, it signaled the weakness of the inquiry to compel information.

Such religious orders still maintain control over survivors' records and arbitrate information when it comes to survivors applying for redress.

30-years ago, the exhumation on the grounds of *High Park Magdalene Laundry* found the remains of 155 people. It was a mass grave, of women incarcerated there, with as many as eighty unidentified. The remains were hurriedly cremated and reburied in a communal plot in Glasnevin cemetery. Many women who died in the Laundries, buried in mass graves, would have remained unidentified if not for the work of *Justice for Magdalenes Research* ([jfmresearch.com](http://jfmresearch.com)). There are still families seeking to remove their loved ones' remains to bury them with other loved ones.

## Seeking justice

After the McAleese inquiry, *Justice for Magdalenes Research* issued a counter-report to *The McAleese Report*. The group was 'deeply troubled' that 793-pages of transcribed survivor testimony, which the group provided, was seemingly ignored. They said *The McAleese Report* marginalised 'the women's lived experiences in these institutions, minimising the physical and psychological abuse suffered, while evading human rights violations'.

The 2021 *Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes Final Report* has also been criticised for disregarding survivor testimony as evidence. The report put blame on families and fathers rather than Church and State.

## Rose

Rose told me the father of her daughter came to visit her in Tuam, but the nuns wouldn't allow him see his child. There were men denied the right to raise their children, even when they fought for it in the courts. Many families never knew their daughters were sent away to institutions by doctors, priests, religious crisis pregnancy agencies and social workers.

## Elizabeth

A decade after the McAleese inquiry, survivors of the Laundries are still seeking justice and still being denied. Just this year, the *UN Committee Against Torture* ruled against Elizabeth Coppin. Elizabeth has claimed the Irish state failed to investigate allegations of the torture and ill treatment she suffered, while incarcerated, in three different Laundries.

**FRÉA: REDRESSING IRISH CHURCH AND STATE INSTITUTIONS**  
1pm, Fri 27 Oct, [Zoom](#) online, Free, book online



**YOU, ME AND THE YELLOW WALLPAPER**  
Sue Rynhart's melodrama for voice, [Sefton Park Palm House](#), £18/£15 conc



## Continuing issues of state-led institutionalisation

Survivors gave testimony, reliving trauma so that the same injustices would never be repeated. But what systems of institutionalisation are we normalising today? The first "family hub" - an institutional emergency accommodation for homeless families- was opened on the grounds of the *High Park Laundry*.

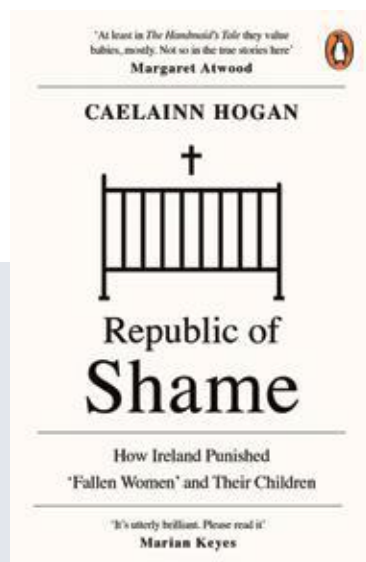
Ireland still warehouses people seeking international protection. While the state has promised to move away from "congregated" settings for older people or people with additional needs, many still remain -effectively- institutionalised. Religious orders that incarcerated women and girls involved in prostitution in Laundries set up an organisation that receives public funding for anti-prostitution initiatives. These often uphold the criminalisation of sex work, which many sex workers themselves say is harmful.

Tiled crosses and huge fans are still visible on the walls of the Magdalene Laundry on Sean McDermott Street, the last to close in the country. Long vacant, this former institution will soon be turned into a 'site of conscience', but more still needs to be done for survivors, especially those who are still vulnerable and marginalised.

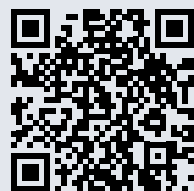
## Morality in question

A survivor I know was sent to a Magdalene Laundry as a child. She'd been being physically and sexually abused in an industrial school. She later gave birth in a mother and baby home institution. She is homeless today. What justice has the state or the church offered her?

Caelainn Hogan, 2023.



Readers can find out more about Caelainn and her book using the following QR code or visiting [Penguin Books](#) and searching for the author. [penguin.co.uk](http://penguin.co.uk)



# SUPPORT SERVICES

If you have been affected by any of the content of this article, please consider consulting one of the following services:

### Connect Counselling

An anonymous professional telephone counselling service for survivors of physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Freephone in the UK and Northern Ireland +44 (0) 800 477 477 77 [connectcounselling.ie](http://connectcounselling.ie)

### ICAP

*ICAP* is the only specialist British-based counselling and psychotherapy service supporting people from the Irish community facing a range of emotional issues, including depression, anxiety and stress. Helpline: +44 (0) 207 272 7906 [icap.org.uk](http://icap.org.uk)

### Irish Community Care and/or Fréa

Assisting with gaining access to the Irish Government's payment scheme for mothers and children who were resident in specific institutions, they also offer some advice in accessing records and other aspects of the redress scheme. There is more information here:

[frea.org.uk/motherandbabyhomes](http://frea.org.uk/motherandbabyhomes)

### Justice for Magdalenes Research

A resource for people affected by and interested in Ireland's Magdalene Institutions, is accessible here: [jfmresearch.com](http://jfmresearch.com)

### Mother and Baby Homes Commission of Investigation

To access the Irish Government's report and additional information, visit [gov.ie/en/collection/mbhcoi](http://gov.ie/en/collection/mbhcoi)

### My Data Rights

A resource for people affected by the 'historical' human rights violations in Ireland provides information for survivors of the Irish industrial and reformatory schools about using GDPR protocols to gain access to personal information. The website contains downloadable guides and template letters for requesting personal data and for complaining to the *Data Protection Commission* if necessary. This is a project of the *Human Rights Law Clinic* at the *Irish Centre for Human Rights, NUI Galway*. [mydatarights.ie](http://mydatarights.ie)

### The Samaritans

*The Samaritans* offer a non-judgmental listening service, whatever you are going through. Call free, 24/7 in the UK, on 116 123. [samaritans.org](http://samaritans.org)

### Sexual Violence Support (North West)

A service to help locate the relevant support services for those who have suffered sexual violence across the North West: [sexualviolencesupport.co.uk](http://sexualviolencesupport.co.uk)

### The Survivors Trust

*The Survivors Trust* has 120 member organisations based in the UK and Ireland which provide specialist support for women, men and children who have survived rape, sexual violence or childhood sexual abuse.

### Tuam Home Survivors Network

Survivors helping survivors. [tuamhomesurvivors.com](http://tuamhomesurvivors.com)

This information was tested and accessible on 4 Sept 2023.

It is not an exhaustive list of services available.

You are not alone. Make contact. You will be heard.



# #LIF2023 EXHIBITIONS

## IRISH MYTH AND LEGEND

♀ ♥ ♀ ψ

Available during Library opening hours across the Festival and throughout Nov, **St Helen's Library at Heart of Glass**, Free, just turn up.

In 2020 **Gael Linn** and **An tUltach** partnered with the **Liverpool Irish Festival** to create a one-off creative commission to celebrate Irish language and folklore. Selected for this commission, was storyteller and artist Nuala Monaghan. The resulting work tells five key stories from Irish myth and legend, each with an artwork to help communicate the power of the story. Initially shown at **The Reader** (Calderstones Park), the exhibition connected Liverpool with Ireland through thousands of years of use and symbolism. This exhibit reveals the connections folklore continues to have with our modern world. Now on display with **St Helen's Libraries**, we hope to spread the connection in to the region.



## LIVER HARP AND SEEK: PAM SULLIVAN

♀ ♥ ♀ ψ

In this limited-edition series of miniature works, Pamela takes the Festival's Liver Harp, creating a small gift for people to find.

Celebrating 21-years of the Liver Harp (for 21 Festivals), Pam's Liver Harps relate some of the anniversaries important to Liverpool and Ireland's shared history. Liver Harps will be hidden in trees, under benches, on walls and across Liverpool's town centre. Liver Harp seekers should think about points of relevance to the Festival and Liverpool Irish Famine Trail. Each Liver Harp will boast a QR code, so people can scan them to report where they found theirs. Anyone who finds a Liver Harp may keep it. Additionally, seekers/finders can take a photo, upload to social media and tag @LivIrishFest and hashtag #LIF2023. The gifts offer a little knowledge and provide a lovely keepsake.



## IN THE WINDOW: NÍAMH GRIMES

♀ ψ

The **Bluecoat Display Centre** and **Liverpool Irish Festival** are delighted to announce our 2023 maker: Níamh Grimes. This continues our annual *In The Window* partnership.

A recent graduate from **Manchester Metropolitan University**, Níamh is an artist jeweller. Her work explores ideas of folk history, tactile memory and ritual. Specialising in metal casting -used in conjunction with other jewellery making processes- Níamh creates wearable objects. In each she celebrates the magical thinking of bygone days, in an endeavor to nurture belonging and protection. Níamh incorporates inherited and found objects into her -often talismanic- works. Such objects have recently included salt crystals, quenched coal and vials of anointed oil, set into cast brass.

Spanning the month, Níamh's pieces will be on show throughout October, with a blend of exhibition and retail pieces. We'll host a *Meet the Maker* event, at **Bluecoat Display Centre**, at 11am on Fri 20 Oct 2023.



## MATERIALS LIBRARY

Mon 16 Oct-Fri 3 Nov. **Everyman Street Café.**

Free, open during business hours. No booking necessary

Over the years, Liverpool Irish Festival has amassed something of an archive of books and papers, journals and materials. Though we weren't been able to share it during the COVID years we're back to showcasing the archive in the fully accessible and friendly drop-in space at **Everyman Street Café**.

There'll be colouring sheets for the kids; fiction for light reads and some historic tomes for a deeper interrogation of identity.

By no means a full library, this is a resource for anyone to dip in and out of, to while away a half-term afternoon or a bit of time over lunch.

## BRAVE MAEVE: CHILDREN'S BOOK

Available during Centre opening hours across the Festival, **Liverpool Irish Centre**, Free, just turn up.

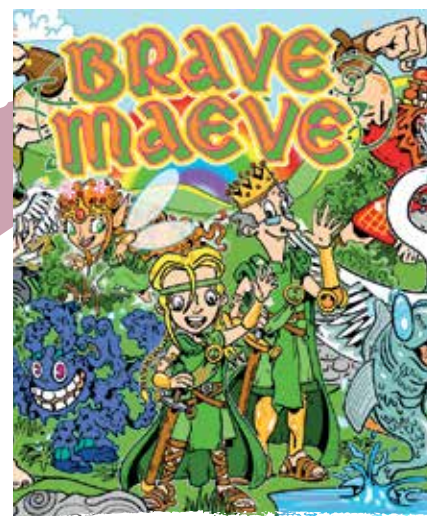
Follow *Brave Maeve* as she adventures through enchanted places, encountering characters from Irish myth and legend.

Commissioned by the Festival, **Gael Linn** and **An tUltach**; written and illustrated by Stuart Harrison, in Liverpool, the book features his friend's daughter. *Brave Maeve* celebrates characters from thousands of years of Irish and Liverpoolian folklore, in an energetic romp through time and tale.

Stu will chat about his book and give kids a chance to pose with an illustrated Brave Maeve, sword, Tir Na nÓg book and/or púca at

- the **Liverpool Irish Festival** launch (19 Oct)
- the **Family Day** at **Museum of Liverpool** (21 Oct)
- a writer's reading at **The Williamson** (28 Oct)
- and **Samhain Céilí** at **Liverpool Irish Centre** (29 Oct).

We'll be giving away *Brave Maeve* copies at the **Family Day** and **Samhain Céilí**. The book can be bought on **Kindle**. Remaining copies will be available for £4.99 + P&P from our online shop [liverpoolirishfestival.com/shop](http://liverpoolirishfestival.com/shop)





# #LIF2023 EVENTS

## ACCESSING TICKETS

Where we stipulate that 'booking is required' you can access ticket sites via the Festival's website. When we state 'book online' all tickets can be accessed via [liverpoolirishfestival.com/events](https://liverpoolirishfestival.com/events). Please note we work in numerous venues so links may take you to venue websites or *Eventbrite* booking pages. This is normal.

Just search our event pages for the event you're looking for and the booking link will take you to the official ticket vendor. Events are listed chronologically. All events are in 2023, unless otherwise stated.

### Bursary tickets

The Festival is aware ticket prices can prevent people from attending. We have done as much as we can to keep all costs to a minimum. However, if you are unable to attend, on the basis of cost, you may request a bursary (free) place. Your enquiry should be marked 'Bursary request' (or similar) and addressed to [emma@liverpoolirishfestival.com](mailto:emma@liverpoolirishfestival.com) who will treat your request with absolute confidentiality. Where it is possible to provide you with a free ticket (based on lead-time and availability) you will be notified and a ticket left in your name to collect from the venue's box office.

This is an honour system, designed to help those who need it most. We ask that people are respectful of this. Your support in ticket buying assists us to deliver a generous Festival, with reduced barriers to access.

### Strands of work to look out for

The #LIF2023 programme crosses artistic disciplines, from niche to popular. Throughout the Festival we are making links to anniversary – whether these are daily rituals through to centenary commemorations. We hope you'll find something to please and surprise, entertain and challenge you; whether via music, family activities, theatre or discussion.

To help quickly identify art forms, use our colour key.

## EVENTS KEY

FILM, ARTS AND ANIMATION

PERFORMANCE, LITERATURE AND POETRY

MUSIC & SONG

TALKS AND TOURS

COMMUNITY, FAMILY AND SPORT

LIVERPOOL IRISH FAMINE TRAIL AND AN GORTA MÓR



To identify work strands, use these symbols:

♀ In:Visible Women and mixed-race lives

♥ Family

📍 Nook and cranny spaces

♣ Liverpool Irish Famine Trail, identity and heritage



## INDIECORK PRESENTS Ó'BHÉAL

Dir. Ciara Nic Chormaic (2023).

Irish language with English subtitles

7pm, Wed 18 Oct, *The Box* at FACT,

£10/£8 conc, book online ♀ ♣

UK Premiere, introduced by Mick Hannigan

(*IndieCork Film Festival*) in celebration

of 50-years of hip-hop and *Black History Month*.

*Ó Bhéal* - meaning 'oral' - is a cinematic exploration of the rise of hip-hop and electronic artists in Ireland. Embracing oral traditions of folklore, ancient poetry and sean-nós singing, it's created a new fusion sound, a culture clash through music.

An ensemble piece, the film features Irish-language rappers Seán 'Mory' Ó Muirgheasa and Oisín Mac, producer and multi-instrumentalist Fehdah, and Limerick rapper Strange Boy. This beautiful black and white film delves deep into these four artists' process and how they are breaking new ground in Irish music. Through insightful interviews, intimate portrayals of the creative process of each artist as they work on tracks in studio, and visceral live performances, *Ó Bhéal* tells the story of a moment in time in the Irish musical landscape.

## #CCEN PRACTICE DAY

10am-4pm, Thurs 19 Oct,  
*The Bluecoat*, Free (including refreshments and lunch), book online ♣

The *Cultural Connectedness Exchange Network* links Irish creatives with people who commission Irish linked work. This practice day brings independent creatives and programmers together. Here, we'll discuss making resonant work in diaspora communities; joy in developing work; curating programmes, and representation for Irish creatives.

Artist led activities and talks will be held in *The Bluecoat's* Garden Room and participants will be provided with a lunch. Full details of the day will be available on the booking page.

This event has received support from the Irish Government's *Department for Foreign Affairs Emigrant Support Programme*.



## #LIF2023: LAUNCH

6pm-7.30pm, Thurs 19 Oct,  
*Liverpool Irish Centre*, Free (including arrival drink), book online ♥ ♀ ♣

Meet the Festival team and our #LIF2023 artists. Hear about the programme and meet with friends. *The Centre*, our natural home, provides a convivial space in which to toast 'sláinte' (health) to all those who join us, have helped us and will be with us for Festivals ahead. Book ahead to ensure you have the best seats and to claim your arrival refreshment! This event is supported by *The Irish World*.

## THE LONDON LASSES AT 25

8pm, Thurs 19 Oct, *Liverpool Irish Centre*, £15/£12 conc, book online ♣

This concert sees internationally-renowned traditional Irish band *The London Lasses* celebrating the release of their 25th Anniversary Album, *LL25*. Featuring all new material, it includes both past and present band members. Since first getting together for an informal tour of the US (1997), the band have performed at some of the biggest festivals and venues in the world. This would go on to include *The Royal Albert Hall* (London), where they played the first ever *BBC Proms céili*; *Cambridge Folk Festival*; *Dublin City Hall*, *The Concertgebouw* (Amsterdam), *Philadelphia Irish Festival* and *Glastonbury*.

It's been 13 years since they last performed at *Liverpool Irish Festival* (when they hosted a sell-out night at *Sefton Park Palm House*). This is a reunion you won't want to miss and a fitting opener for the opening night of the Festival.

Remember to book this separately from the #LIF2023 Launch.



## IN THE WINDOW: MEET THE ARTIST – NIAMH GRIMES

11am, Fri 20 Oct, *Bluecoat Display Centre*, Free (suggested donation of £10 to go direct to the artist), book by calling +44(0) 151 709 4014 ♀ ♥ ♣

The *Bluecoat Display Centre* and *Liverpool Irish Festival* are delighted to announce our 2023 maker: **Niamh Grimes**, continuing our annual *In The Window* partnership. This event provides visitors with the chance to chat with Niamh directly about her work. Refreshments will be provided on arrival.

*Friends of the Bluecoat Display Centre* will receive a 10% discount on all purchases during the event.

Booking is required. Please call +44(0) 151 709 4014, to book a place, or stop by the gallery to reserve a space with a member of staff. This event has a recommended donation price of £10 per ticket, providing a speaker fee for Niamh.





## NIGHTVISITING: LISA LAMBE AND FRIENDS

Doors 7.30pm, acts begin at 8pm,  
Fri 20 Oct, *The Tung Auditorium at University of Liverpool*, £14+fees, book online ♀♂  
Internationally acclaimed Irish folk singer and actor Lisa Lambe brings her new project, *NightVisiting*, to the *Liverpool Irish Festival*.

Lisa is accompanied by Mike Brookfield (guitar), Tim Doyle (fiddle, pipes and concertina) and Claire Sherry (mandolin, fiddle and banjo). Lisa is supported by Úna Quinn and Neil Campbell, who will premiere a specially commissioned song at the event.

Picture it: Lisa Lambe sits in a working inglenook, with her palms together as if addressing a small group. Based on Lisa's work with the *National Folklore Collection* – and her recent MA in Irish Folklore – this internationally acclaimed Irish folk singer and actor brings us her new project, *NightVisiting*. Lisa collaborates with renowned traditional musicians alongside local contributors. This creates a unique performance bespoke to each venue she visits. There she celebrates the old songs, stories and tunes from around the hearth.

*NightVisiting* connects audiences to the social role night-time house visits once played in Ireland's oral traditions and folklore and in the preservation of its songs and stories. From tender love songs to the bawdy; to songs of loss and longing; *NightVisiting* reflects on nostalgia and togetherness.

Readers interested in this event, might also like Maz O'Connor's song workshops and/or Sue Rynhart's *You, Me or the Wallpaper*. See listings.



# FAMILY DAY

10am-5pm, Sat 21 Oct, *Museum of Liverpool*, Free, just turn up ♀♂♂  
A Festival-staple and must-see; we invite you to pop-by –or indeed, spend the day with us– at the *Museum of Liverpool* (Pier Head). There, we've a veritable array of activity to entertain kids (and adults) of all ages.

*The Armagh Rhymers* return with their exclusive *Liver Bird* story. We'll introduce visitors to *Little Globy*, a carbon boffin-extraordinaire and a global ambassador for green actions. The *Bolger-Cunningham Dance School* will give it their all in the morning, before the *George Ferguson School for Irish Dance* team up with *Melody Makers*, to produce junior and senior dance sets.

There's be craft workshops in education spaces and Irish Trails through the museum's collections, led by volunteers from the *Liverpool Irish Famine Trail* (see listing for booking details). Visitors should also watch our for photo opportunities with *Brave Maeve* and creator Stu Harrison.

The day puts the Irish of Liverpool at the heart of everything – the programme, the museum building and the city. Atrium schedule (subject to change):

11:00 *Bolger Cunningham Dance School*  
12:00 *The Armagh Rhymers*  
13:00-13:15 *Little Globy* poetry  
13:20 *The Armagh Rhymers*  
14:20 *Melody Makers* and the *George Ferguson School for Irish Dance* junior set  
15:05 Break/*Little Globy* poetry  
15:15 *Melody Makers* and the *George Ferguson School for Irish Dance* junior set  
16:00 *The Armagh Rhymers*

*The Family Day* is sponsored by *Tourism Ireland* and held in partnership with *National Museums Liverpool*. As part of the *Family* programme, you might also like the *Samhain Céilí* (Sun 29 Oct).



## PK'S SEISIÚN

9.30pm-late, Fri 20 Oct, *Peter Kavanagh's*, Free, just turn up ♀♂♂  
Completely informal opportunity to come a long for a tune. The first seisiún of two in the Festival, the other takes place the following Fri (27 Oct 2022).

Bring an instrument, your voice and a will to play along. There'll be Festival friends to help bring the gang together, whilst a fully stocked bar –in one of the most historic and quirkiest pubs in Liverpool– eases you towards the dawn. This event gets busy quickly and sometimes it is 'standing room only', so be prepared to 'hotch up' and swap places so everyone can get a piece of the action.



## GUIDED TOURS OF MUSEUM'S IRISH COLLECTIONS

Two tours will leave at 10.30am, 12pm and 2.30pm, Sat 21 Oct, *Museum of Liverpool* (meet under the Atrium's big screen), ♀♂♂  
Free (donation recommended), booking necessary as spaces are limited  
In 2021, *Liverpool Irish Festival* began our custodianship of the *Liverpool Irish Famine Trail*. We formed a volunteer *History Research Group* (who've since undertaken 1,300+ hours of research) and released a book: *Liverpool Irish Famine Trail: Revive* (available in the Museum's gift shop or here: [liverpoolirishfestival.com/shop/](http://liverpoolirishfestival.com/shop/)).

Having trained the group in tour creation and management –and thoroughly researching the objects on display– the *History Research Group* will lead tours of the *Museum of Liverpool's* Irish objects.

Visitors who book for these in-person tour will additionally take in *The Pilotage Building*, just outside the Museum. Tours are anticipated to take approximately 45-60mins, depending on audience questions. These activities have been made possible with funds from *The National Lottery Heritage Fund*.

Visitors can undertake the Irish objects tour as a self-guided trail, which requires no booking (see guide map: [liverpoolirishfestival.com/events/self-guided-irish-trail/](http://liverpoolirishfestival.com/events/self-guided-irish-trail/)). Paper maps can be collected (for free) from leaflet holders at the Museum.



## TONY BIRTILL: COMRÁDAÍ AGUS DEARTHÁIR (COMRADE AND BROTHER)

7pm, Sat 21 Oct, *Liverpool Irish Centre*, Free, just turn up ♀♂  
On 21 Oct 2021, Liverpool (and Ireland) lost a great Irish Language supporter; Tony Birtill. His invaluable contribution to the conservation, promotion and teaching of the Irish Language on Merseyside will be remembered for many years to come.

A Gaeilgeoir (fluent Irish speaker) and walking enthusiast, Tony was also a keen historian, linguist and educator. Marking two years since he passed, this lecture celebrates a life cruelly cut short. Tony's library (maintained at the *Liverpool Irish Centre*) was created by *Conradh Na Gaeilge Learpholl* in May 2022. It's open for use by all those with an interest in the Irish language. Enter to music from Tony's friends; before hearing from those who knew Tony best, in a space he knew all too well. This year's memorial lecture: *Comrádaí agus Deartháir (Comrade and Brother)* will be, fittingly, delivered by his sister Angela Birtill.





# IN REAL LIFE EVENTS.

## TRAVEL, SAFETY AND GREEN CREDENTIALS

### Regional and national travel, accommodation and green agendas

We encourage anyone attending from outside the region to use the greenest methods of travel, such as rail and coach services. Tickets from all train providers can be obtained from [thetrainline.com](http://thetrainline.com). When finding accommodation in Liverpool, please look for those that have carbon neutral policies or environmentally friendly intention statements. Having undertaken *Carbon Literacy Training* in 2021 - and joined *Shift* (Liverpool's climate emergency response network)-the Festival has a duty to try and effect positive climate change. We welcome your support.

### Public transport and venue information

Below we've provided travel information to each of our venues. Visit [Merseytravel](http://Merseytravel) for local bus and train times and routes [www.merseytravel.gov.uk](http://www.merseytravel.gov.uk). Bus route information is based on arriving at venues from *Liverpool Lime Street Station* (L1 1JD). Walking times use the estimated journey times provided by *Google Maps* (walking from *Liverpool Lime Street Station*).

For those who can, and are confident enough, we recommend electric vehicles to cut down carbon emissions. For details on Liverpool's *CityBike* (pay as you ride) hire scheme visit: [citybikeliverpool.co.uk](http://citybikeliverpool.co.uk) Liverpool also has an electric scooter hire scheme. You must be 18 to ride and have a driving licence. Please check the scooter hire map to ensure they'll work through to your chosen destination as there are city parameters to consider, as well as their power range. More here: [voiscooters.com/how-to-vo](http://voiscooters.com/how-to-vo)

### What3words

*What3Words* is a locational reference that simplifies GPS coordinates into a three-word code, representing 3m<sup>2</sup> of the earth's surface. We have tried to provide this for the entrance to each of our venues. You can use *What3Words* in conjunction with *Apple Maps*, *Google Maps* and *Compass*.

### Traffic in Liverpool, roadworks and the green agenda

At the time of writing, Liverpool centre's road improvement works are 'improving', but there are still a number. This makes it difficult to provide foolproof road traffic management information. A key recommendation from the Festival is to use public transport, where and whenever possible. If 10% of Festival visitors used public transport instead of cars, collectively we'll save 3.28 tonnes in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from entering the world! Imagine, if 100% went for public transport we could save 32.8 tonnes in carbon emissions; the same as the weight of 18 average cars!

### Real life eventing and COVID-19

At the time of writing, compulsory COVID-19 mask-wearing and social distancing has ceased. However, if we've learned anything since 2020 it's how quickly things can change. The Festival's events will be subject to whatever government regulations are placed on venues, according to scale and ventilation capabilities. Please ensure you're able and willing to comply with prevailing guidance. We'll do our best to proceed with events, subject to regulations. *Liverpool Irish Festival* works in partnership with our venues to employ what we believe to be best practice for their spaces. We hope you'll appreciate efforts made to keep you safe and help us with on-site requests.



## VENUES

### The Bluecoat

School Lane, Liverpool L1 3BX.  
+44(0) 151 702 5324

W: [thebluecoat.org.uk](http://thebluecoat.org.uk)  
F: @thebluecoat  
T: @thebluecoat

**Bus route** 21, 433, 7, 79, 86A all drop off on Hanover Street. Coming from Lime Street there are no direct bus services as both are so central. Walking is recommended for those that can  
**Closest train station** Liverpool Central  
**Walk time from Lime Street** 7min walk via Elliot and Parker Streets  
**What3words** point.clean.rule



### Bluecoat Display Centre

50-51 College Lane, Liverpool L1 3BZ.  
+44(0) 151 709 4014

W: [bluecoatdisplaycentre.com](http://bluecoatdisplaycentre.com)  
F: @Bluecoat-Display-Centre  
T: @BluecoatDisplay

**Bus route** 21, 433, 7, 79, 86A all drop off on Hanover Street. Coming from Lime Street there are no direct bus services as both are so central. Walking is recommended for those that can  
**Closest train station** Liverpool Central  
**Walk time from Lime Street** 8-minute walk via Lime Street, Ranelagh Street, Hanover Street and College Lane. During business hours, you can also use directions for Bluecoat, cutting through the venue's Courtyard, building and garden to access  
**What 3words** anyway.songs.crisis

### John Mitchel's GAA pitch

Greenbank Lane, Liverpool L17 1AG.  
+44 (0) 7834 224 369

W: [hclubinfo.ie/club/john-mitchels-gfc](http://hclubinfo.ie/club/john-mitchels-gfc)  
F: @johnmitchelsliverpool  
T: @JohnMitchelsGAA

**Bus route** take the 75, 86Q or 86A from Elliot Street (stop GB) to Borrowdale Road (on Smithdown Road). Walk on from the stop, crossing Smithdown Road and turning right on Greenbank Road. Follow down to Greenbank Lane and turn right. *John Mitchel's Pitch* is on the right

**Closest train station** Mossley Hill Station  
**Walk from Lime Street** 1hr3mins. Follow directions for *Sefton Park Palm House* until reaching Princes Park Gates. Head left to Croxteth Road and continue all the way along to Mossley Hill Drive. Walk on until meeting Greenbank Lane; turn left. *John Mitchel's Pitch* will be on your left  
**What3words** flank.wide.weedy

### Leaf on Bold Street

65-67 Bold Street, Liverpool.  
+44 (0) 707 7747

W: [thisisleaf.co.uk/bold-st-menu](http://thisisleaf.co.uk/bold-st-menu)  
F: @LEAFonBoldSt  
T: @leafonboldst

**Bus route** 82 drops on Renshaw Street, directly outside the steps of the St Luke's Church. 75, 86A, 86C and 86 Q all drop on Leece Street, opposite the Church gardens. With your back to the Church, looking downhill is Bold Street. You are short walk from *Leaf*, which is on the right-hand side  
**Closest train station** Liverpool Central  
**Walk from Lime Street** 9-minutes, using Lime Street to Renshaw Street, turning right on Heathfield Street and left on to Bold Street  
**What3words** belly.cloak.human

### Liverpool Arts Bar and Hope Street Theatre

22 Hope Street, Liverpool L1 9BY.  
+44(0) 151 345 6855  
+44(0) 344 561 0622

W: [liverpoolartsbar.com/](http://liverpoolartsbar.com/)  
and [hopestreettheatre.com/](http://hopestreettheatre.com/)  
F: @ticketquarter  
T: @TicketQuarter

**Bus route** 7, 75, 79 all drop on Brownlow Hill, whilst the 86A, 86C and 86Q drop on Hardman Street, a short walk away (using Hope Street).  
**Closest train station** Liverpool Central  
**Walk time from Lime Street** 13-minutes, using Lime Street, Brownlow Hill and Mount Pleasant.  
**What3words** sentences.values.perky

### Liverpool Central Library

William Brown Street, Liverpool L3 8EW.  
+44 (0) 151 233 3069

W: [liverpool.gov.uk/libraries/find-a-library/central-library](http://liverpool.gov.uk/libraries/find-a-library/central-library)  
F: @liverpoollib  
T: @Lpoolcentlib

**Bus route** Coming from Lime Street there are no direct bus services as both are so central. Walking is recommended for those that can. Queens Square is the closest bus terminus.

**Closest train station** Lime Street Station  
**Walk from Lime Street** 4-minute walk, using Lord Nelson Street, Lime Street and William Brown Street  
**What3words** agents.open.month



CONTINUED ON PAGE 32...



# LIVERPOOL IRISH FESTIVAL 2023 EVENT PLAN


	WED 18 OCT	THU 19 OCT	FRI 20 OCT	SAT 21 OCT	SUN 22 OCT	MON 23 OCT
9AM						
10AM	<p>Follow <b>@LivIrishFest</b> Tag #LIF2023</p> 					
11AM			 <p><b>IN THE WINDOW: MEET THE ARTIST – NIAMH GRIMES</b> <i>Bluecoat Display Centre</i></p>			
12PM						
1PM						
2PM						
3PM						
4PM						
5PM						
6PM						
7PM	 <p><b>#LIF2023 LAUNCH</b> <i>Liverpool Irish Centre</i></p>					
8PM	<p><b>INDIECORK PRESENTS Ó'BHÉAL</b> <i>The Box at FACT,</i></p> 					
9PM						
10PM						
11PM						
12AM						

## FAMILY DAY

*Museum of Liverpool*



**IRISH EXPERIMENTAL WRITING DAY**  
*Museum of Liverpool*



**ULYSSES: FILM SCREENING (1967, 120MINS)**  
*Museum of Liverpool*





**IRISH CENTRE MEMORIES COFFEE MORNING**  
*Liverpool Irish Centre*

**WILDE'S BALLAD OF READING GAOL**  
*Zoom online*

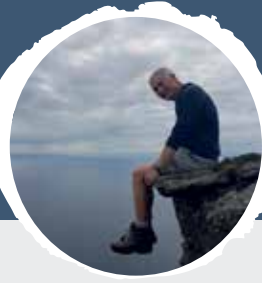


**DOORS**

**NORTH CIRCULAR (2021, 86 MINS)**  
*The Box at FACT*




**TONY BIRTILL: COMRÁDAÍ AGUS DEARTHÁIR (COMRADE AND BROTHER)**  
*Liverpool Irish Centre*



**DOORS**

**NIGHTVISITING: LISA LAMBE AND FRIENDS**  
*The Tung Auditorium, UOL*



**PK'S SEISIÚN**  
*Peter Kavanagh's*



**THE LONDON LASSES AT 25**  
*Liverpool Irish Centre*




**...CONTINUED ON PAGE 31**



# KIDS' SECTION RANNOG LENNAI

## WORD SEARCH

This year's Festival theme is 'anniversary'.  
Below are lots of events, births and passings that we are commemorating.  
Can you find all 40 in the word search?

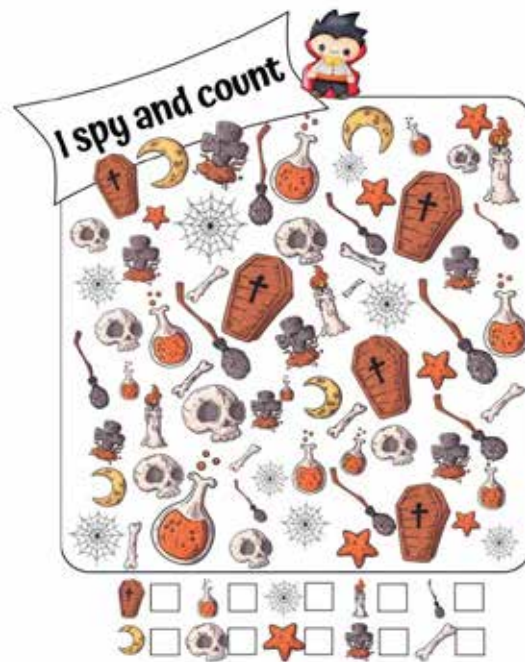
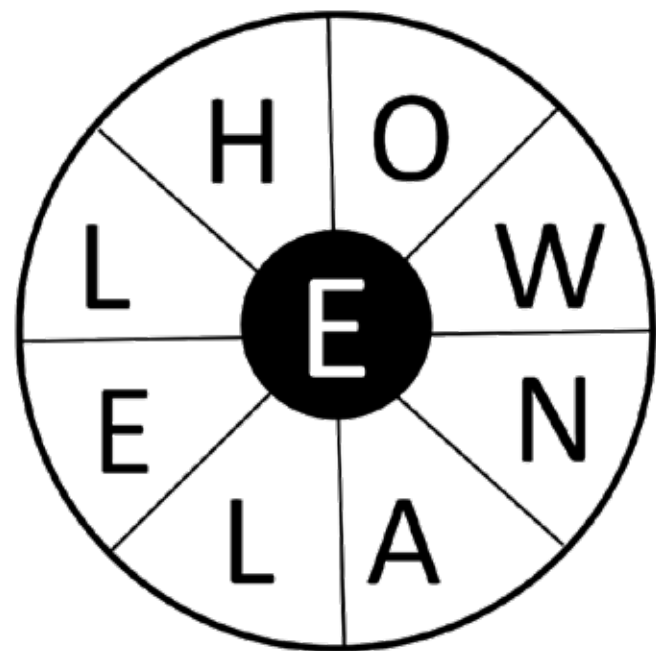
CTHEEMP IREWINDRUSHHTQC FWB JAV JA  
BOSTONTEAPARTYKNYWFQMEMCCFCTLP  
QWQGOODFRIDAYAGREEMENTROQZLBOR  
ZSINÉADOCNNORRRNVCSBFLQBIXRPR  
PHONOGRAPHGCAPITALOFCULTUREEDV  
STDUTQIRTHESLAVETRADEACTYBWNCV  
VLJOHNFKENNEDYUDKCYAUPONURADLF  
RIZKCONRADHNAEILGEDCSEEARASW  
MVGFFVVLUGLTSVOCOKZEHSVRYVRNEA  
QEVERTONFOOTBALLCLUBFJNOUEIBAR  
PRXSGQIEMLNOPENUNIVERSITYMNEMO  
PPWTEGQSDOIDDMSANGORTAMÓRAGHUF  
LOPIDRUCOQTEFUCPUHRMDNKVETAST  
IOQVOAJOMSPBPQJYMNLDMIVVWVONHH  
VLNAWOMANOFNOIMPORTANCESRENGEE  
EILLTQWGTHTESLAVERYABOLITIONLAW  
RRDFYQPVCMECUOGUSTAVEEIFFELHNO  
PIJWBQVTWWAYBHFOJSMFPLIRQUEUER  
OSKQACHRISTMASCAROLVOMONLQEPYL  
OHOTTHEYELLOWWALLPAPERXGFPYHYD  
LCOVZATNIJXCMETLQELWUMVXGBUOLS  
TELDISNEYBROTHERSSTUDIOXEDFPHV  
ANHADCWUCIOFYKIRISHMARRIAGEBAR  
TTEXADAMSMITHBQIJURASSICPARKTY  
ERRCOOKGGXKQOJWAHIKIKNSBEDFLQG  
MECCWUSPDÁILÉIREANNGAZSGOOGLEN  
NATIONALHEALTHSERVICEWORLDWARI  
HANELSONMANDELAKUJACANDEPBKBJI  
APHILOMENAEEJJPSDZZFORDMODEL TW  
BCSUPERLAMBANANA FWKPOKCPK WCOA

Good Friday Agreement  
Adam Smith  
The Slavery Abolition Law  
Boston Tea Party  
The Slave Trade Act  
A Christmas Carol  
An Gorta Mór  
Everton Football Club  
Phonograph  
Conradh Na Gaeilge  
A Woman of No Importance  
The Yellow Wallpaper  
Ford Model T  
World War I  
Brendan Behan  
Gustave Eiffel  
Disney Brothers Studio  
War of the Worlds  
National Health Service  
The Empire Windrush

Dáil Éireann  
John F Kennedy  
Open University  
DJ Kool Herc  
Hip-hop  
Irish Marriage Bar  
Liverpool TATE  
Jurassic Park  
Warrington  
Google  
Superlambanana  
Liverpool Irish Centre  
Festival  
Capital of Culture  
Philomena  
Nelson Mandela  
Seamus Heaney  
UNESCO  
Sinéad O'Connor  
Brave Maeve

## WORD WHEEL

How many words can you find in the word wheel? You need to find as many words as you can with 2 letters or more and all words must have the letter in the middle of the wheel in them. You get one point for every letter. Can you find the 9 letter word? Double points for that one if you can.



(c) Printables4Mom.com

WANT TO CHECK YOUR ANSWERS? See bottom of Page 29 For Full answer list. Don't peek before you've given this your best go!



# KIDS SECTION / RANNÓG LENNAÍ



LIVERPOOL  
IRISH FESTIVAL

An tUlach  
CNAH DROMA CHAERIGE ULADH

Gael Linn

(c) Stuart Harrison



## THE 1923 DINOSAUR EGG FIND AND ANCIENT ANIMALS

One hundred years ago in 1923, dinosaur egg fossils were discovered by the American Museum of Natural History during an expedition to the Gobi Desert in Mongolia. At the time, there was a wave of publicity with newspapers competing for exclusive coverage on what was believed to be the first dinosaur egg fossil find. However, a few decades earlier in 1859 a French priest documented his discovery of the fossils of dinosaur eggshells whilst exploring the geology and palaeontology (the study of ancient life) in the foothills of the Pyrenees Mountains in France.

Thirty years ago in 1993, the movie Jurassic Park (a science fiction themed movie based on dinosaurs living in a wildlife park) was shown in cinemas for the first time. Jurassic Park went on to break box office records and certainly added more spark to our interest in the science of palaeontology.

Throughout the world, we are still discovering dinosaur fossils and our interest in historic life holds no bounds.

Millions of years ago, dinosaurs lived in supercontinent called Pangaea which eventually broke up and continents and countries including Ireland and the United Kingdom were formed.

Ireland was last land linked to the United Kingdom about 14,000 BC.

By this time, dinosaurs were long gone there were other inhabitants such as wolves, bears, elk, wildcats and European lynx.

Wolves have an important role in Irish mythology and were considered sacred to some. The last wolf said to have been killed in Ireland was in 1786, almost a hundred years after wolves became extinct in Britain. The native Irish language (*An Ghaeilge*) has a number of names for a wolf, one of which being *mac tíre* which translates as "son of the land". *Mac* meaning son is term of endearment in Irish and *tíre* which derives from *tír* means land or country. This description provides a more positive perspective as opposed to the stories we hear about the big bad wolf!

There is a place in County Leitrim called *Poll na mBéar* which is known as cave of the bears where brown bear fossils were discovered.

Did you know that there once was a penguin type animal in Ireland and the UK? The Great Auk were once a familiar sight but due to hunting this flightless bird became extinct in the early 19th century.

Unfortunately due to factors such as deforestation, hunting, the introduction of non native species (such as grey squirrels and sika deer), ecosystems have been altered leading to the decline as well as the extinction of native wildlife.

The ancient Irish language has descriptive and interesting vocabulary relating to nature. A beekeeper is *beachaire* which literally means a carer of bees. This use of the word "aire" meaning "care" within *beachaire* gives the feeling that as well as keeping bees you really need to look after them well. The Irish word for fisherman *iascaire* also contains "aire" and gives the impression that we should fish in a sustainable manner. Thinking about our ancestors positive relationship with nature expressed through words and sayings can perhaps enable us to have a more positive perspective on nature and appreciate our relationship with the land.

(c) Alan Riney

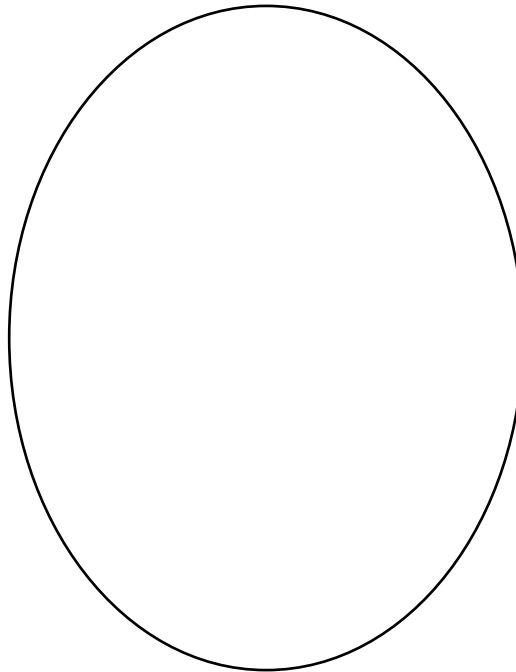
### Name the animal challenge

*Madra allta* meaning wise dog is one of several words in the Irish language words for wolf. *Madra* being the Irish for dog.

Can you work out what the animals are below based on the literal translation from the Irish language.

	An Ghaeilge	Literal Translation	English
	<i>Madra allta</i>	Wise dog	Wolf
1	Madra Crainn	Tree dog	
2	Madra uisce	Water dog	
3	Madra Rua	Red dog	

### WHY NOT DESIGN YOUR OWN DINOSAUR EGG BELOW



### DID YOU KNOW?

Alligators and crocodiles are archosaurs which date back over 250 million years ago. They are more closely related to dinosaurs than other living reptiles such as snakes and turtles.

Dinosaurs lived in a time known as the Mesozoic era from 245 to 66 million years ago. This was millions of years before the first modern humans appeared.

### ANSWERS TO THE WORD SEARCH ON PAGE 27

Turn upside down to reveal all the answers. Point scores:

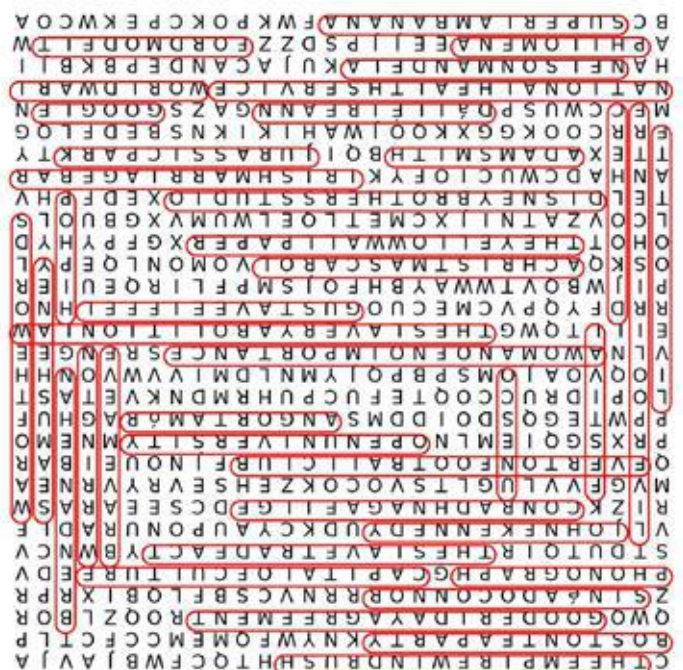
40: Top marks! We hope someone gives you a biscuit!

35-39: Really well done, A.

20-30: You've done well; this was hard!

10-20: Why don't you leave it for a week and have another go?

0-10: Maybe this puzzle was for someone much, much older than you! Have a go at the word wheel.



WANT TO CHECK YOUR ANIMAL ANSWERS? See bottom of Page 30. Don't peek before you've given this your best go!



# KIDS SECTION / RANNÓG LENNAÍ

## PUMPKIN PAPER CHAIN

Step 1. Cut the strips of paper

Step 2. Tape, glue, or staple the ends together to make a loop.

Step 3. Insert a second strip of paper into the loop.

Step 4. Tape, glue or staple this strip to make an interconnected loop and repeat.



Answers to the Name the animal challenge : 1 Squirrel, 2 Otter, 3 Fox

(c) TheCraftatHomeFamily.com



TUE 24 OCT	WED 25 OCT	THU 26 OCT	FRI 27 OCT	SAT 28 OCT	SUN 29 OCT
<p><b>SONG WORKSHOPS WITH MAZ O'CONNOR</b> <i>Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room</i></p>  <p><b>SONG WORKSHOPS WITH MAZ O'CONNOR</b> <i>Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room</i></p>	<p><b>CONFLICT, DIASPORA AND EMPIRE</b> Irish nationalism in Liverpool, 1912-1922. <i>Zoom online</i></p>  <p><b>GREEN &amp; BLUE</b> <i>St Helens Library at Heart of Glass</i></p> 	<p><b>JOHN JOE: INTERMEDIATE BODHRÁN SKILLS</b> <i>Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room</i></p>  <p><b>JOHN JOE: INTERMEDIATE BODHRÁN SKILLS</b> <i>Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room</i></p>	<p><b>FRÉA: REDRESSING IRISH CHURCH AND STATE INSTITUTIONS</b> <i>Zoom online</i></p>  <p><b>LIVERPOOL ENGLISH WITH TONY CROWLEY</b> <i>Liverpool Central Library</i></p>  <p><b>PK'S SEISIÚN</b> <i>Peter Kavanagh's</i></p> 	<p><b>SCOTLAND ROAD WALKING TOUR</b> <i>Liverpool Central Librar,</i></p>  <p><b>GAA: GIVE IT A GO!</b> 1-4pm <i>John Mitchell's ground</i></p>  <p><b>BRAVE MAEVE: WRITER READING FOR KIDS</b></p>  <p><b>SOUTH LIVERPOOL WALKING TOUR</b> <i>St Luke's Bomed Out Church</i></p>  <p><b>BRENDAN: SON OF DUBLIN</b> <i>The Tung Auditorium, UOL</i> 7.30pm doors 8pm performance</p> 	<p><b>IRISH FAMINE MEMORIAL</b> <i>St Luke's Bomed Out Church</i></p>  <p><b>SAMHAIN CÉILÍ</b> <i>Liverpool Irish Centre</i></p>  <p><b>BRANDIES BAND AND FACTOR 7: YEATS TO MUSIC</b> <i>LEAF of Bold Street</i></p> 
<p><b>TWO PLAYS @ LEAF</b></p> <p><b>A BOLT FROM D'BLUE</b> <i>LEAF on Bold Street</i></p> <p><b>FOR THE LOVE OF MARY</b> <i>LEAF on Bold Street</i></p>  	<p><b>YOU, ME OR THE WALLPAPER</b> <i>Sefton Park Palm House</i></p> 	<p><b>CULTURAL MEMORY AND THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT</b> <i>UOL</i></p>  <p><b>GREEN &amp; BLUE</b> <i>Hope Street Theatre</i></p> 			

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Don't forget to visit our website to find out more about this year's programme!



Scan QR code using a smartphone camera to visit our online event pages

All dates and times should be verified before travel and may be subject to change. See online event listings for final confirmation.

[liverpoolirishfestival.com](http://liverpoolirishfestival.com)



## Liverpool Everyman

5-11 Hope Street, Liverpool L1 9BH.  
+44(0) 151 709 4776

W: [everymanplayhouse.com](http://everymanplayhouse.com)  
F: @everymanplayhouse  
T: @liveveryplay

**Bus route** 7, 75, 79 all drop on Brownlow Hill, whilst the 86A, 86C and 86Q drop on Hardman Street, a short walk away (using Hope Street)  
**Closest train station** Liverpool Central  
**Walk time from Lime Street** 13-minutes, using Lime Street, Brownlow Hill and Mount Pleasant  
**What 3words** regard.bells.sulk



## Liverpool Irish Centre

6 Boundary Lane, Liverpool L6 5JG.  
+44 (0) 151 263 1808

W: [liverpoolirishcentre.org](http://liverpoolirishcentre.org)  
F: @LiverpoolIrishCentre  
T: @LiverpoolIC

**Bus route** 18, drop off Conwy Drive.  
**Closest train station** Liverpool Lime Street. 30 min walk via West Derby Road  
**Walk time from Lime Street** 30-minute walks using Lord Nelson Street, Pudsey Street, London Road, Moss Street, Brunswick Road, West Derby Road and Boundary Lane  
**What3words** before.wiser.ground



## Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room

Hope Street, Liverpool L1 9BP.  
+44 (0) 151 709 3789

W: [liverpoolphil.com/music-room](http://liverpoolphil.com/music-room)  
F: @LiverpoolPhilharmonic  
T: @LiverpoolPhil

**Bus route** 75, 86A, 86C, 86Q dropping off on Hardman Street  
**Closest train station** Liverpool Central  
**Walk time from Lime Street** 14-minute walk using Renshaw Street, Leece Street, Hardman Street and Hope Street  
**What3words** value.back.fairly



## Museum of Liverpool

Pier Head, Liverpool Waterfront, Liverpool L3 1DG.  
+44 (0) 151 478 4545

W: [liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](http://liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)  
F: @museumofliverpool  
T: @NML\_Muse

**Bus route** 10A Q, 18, 407, 432, 433 and 437, all running from Queens Square Bus Station all drop bear Liverpool James Street Station, leaving a short walk to the venue  
**Closest train station** Liverpool James Street  
**Walk time from Lime Street** 19-minute walk, using Skelhorne Street, Elliot Street, Parker Street, Church Street, Lord Street, James Street and Mann Island  
**What Three Words** twist.zeal.hike



## Online – usually Zoom

Any **Zoom** event we run will require you to register on our events pages. We will then send you a link, entry number and pass code for all our events

W: [liverpoolirishfestival.com/events](http://liverpoolirishfestival.com/events)  
F: @LivIrishFest  
T: @LivIrishFest

**Travel details** Not applicable

## Peter Kavanagh's (PKs)

2-6 Egerton Street, Liverpool L8 7LY.  
+44 (0) 151 709 3443

W: [whatpub.com/pubs/MER/13/](http://whatpub.com/pubs/MER/13/)  
F: @PeterKavanaghs  
T: @PeterKavanaghs

**Bus route** 78, 80, 80A, 86Q, 86A, 86C, all dropping on Catharine Street  
**Closest train station** Liverpool Central  
**Walk time from Lime Street** 23-minute walk using Renshaw Street, Berry Street, Upper Duke Street, Canning Street and Catherine Street  
**What3words** range.spill.tulip



## Sefton Park Palm House

Sefton Park Palm House  
Sefton Park, Liverpool L17 1AP.  
+44 (0) 151 726 9304

W: [palmhouse.org.uk](http://palmhouse.org.uk)  
F: @seftonpark.palmhouse  
T: @The\_Palmhouse

**Bus route** Take the 75 from Elliot Street (stop GB) to Halkyn Avenue (Stop A). Walk back on the direction of travel and cross Ullet Road, turning left along Halkyn Avenue. When you meet Croxteth Drive turn right and take the first foot path in to the park. Follow this until you reach the **Palm House**  
**Closest train station** Lime Street Station  
**Walk from Lime Street** 58-minute walk via Lime, Renshaw and Berry Streets to Upper Duke Street. Travelling uphill stay on this road, crossing Hope Street on to Canning Street. Turn right on Catharine Street, crossing on to Princes Road. Keep walking until you meet Princes Park Gates and carry on through the park keeping the lawns to the right. Exit on Windermere Terrace on to Sefton Park Road. Follow to Aigburth Drive and enter the Sefton Park on Croxteth Drive. Walking through the park head to the Eros Fountain and follow signage to **Sefton Park Palm House**  
**What3words** nasel.haven.older



## St Helens Library at World of Glass



**St Helens Library at The World of Glass**, Chalton Way East, St Helens, WA10 1BX.  
+44 (0)1744 676 954

W: [sthelens.gov.uk/article/7307/St-Helens-Library](http://sthelens.gov.uk/article/7307/St-Helens-Library)  
F: @St-Helens-Library  
T: @sthelenscouncil

**Bus route** 10Q, 10A Q from Fraser Street  
**Closest train station** St Helens Central (*Northern* or *Transpennine Express* services)  
**Walk from Lime Street** 4hr 12-minutes. A hard walk for a committed walker, we expect anyone wanting to do this will have their own map!  
**What3words** strutting.cement.dressing

## St Luke's (The Bombed-Out) Church



Leece Street, Liverpool L1 2TR.  
+44 (0) 15 374 0366

W: [slboc.com](http://slboc.com)  
F: @StLukesBombedOutChurch  
T: @stlukesboc

**Bus route** 82 drops on Renshaw Street, directly outside the steps of the Church. 75, 86A, 86C and 86 Q all drop on Leece Street, opposite the Church gardens.  
**Closest train station** Liverpool Central  
**Walk from Lime Street** 9-minute walk, along Lime Street, Renshaw Street and on to Berry Street or Leece Street, depending on your choice of entrance  
**What3words** island.cloud.serve (Leece Street entrance); tried.rocky.brings (Berry Street/step entrance)

## The Box at FACT Liverpool



88 Wood Street, Liverpool L1 4DQ.  
+44 (0)151 707 4444

W: [fact.co.uk](http://fact.co.uk)  
F: @FACTliverpool  
T: @fact\_liverpool

**Bus route** 82 drops on Renshaw Street, directly outside the steps of the St Luke's Church. 75, 86A, 86C and 86 Q all drop on Leece Street, opposite the Church gardens. With your back to the Church, looking downhill is Bold Street. If you walk down Bold Street and turn left down Ropewalks Square towards Back Colquit Street, you will see **FACT** directly ahead of you on the corner of Wood and Colquit Streets  
**Closest train station** Lime Street Station  
**Walk from Lime Street** 10-minutes, turn left out of Lime Street Station walking towards Renshaw Street. Turn right on Nowington and follow to Bold Street. Turn left there and follow the dog-leg across Bold Street to Slater Street. Take your first left on Wood Street and k until you meet Back Colquit Street. **FACT** is on the right-hand corner  
**What3words** lawn.elder.dart



## The Tung Auditorium



60 Oxford Street, Liverpool, L7 3NY.  
+44 (0) 794 1500

W: [thetungauditorium.com](http://thetungauditorium.com)  
F: @TheTungAuditorium  
T: @TungAuditorium

**Bus route** Bus routes 6, 7, 79, 61, 79C and 699 all stop nearby. You can plan your route to The Tung Auditorium via public transport on **Merseytravel's Journey Planner** or you can call **Traveline** on 0871 200 2233

**Closest train station** 14-minute walk from Liverpool Central Station or 15 minutes from Liverpool Lime Street  
**Walk from Lime Street** 15-20-minutes, head left out of Lime Street Station, traveling uphill on Skelhorne Street. Turn left on Copperas Hill and turn right on Clarence Street, passing through the **LJMU** campus. Take a left on Mount Pleasant, continuing uphill past Abercromby Square. The Tung Auditorium is on the corner of Oxford and Grove Streets  
**What3words** trials.gloves.proud

## The Williamson Art Gallery and Museum



Slaley Road, Birkenhead CH43 4UE.  
+44 (0) 151 66 3537

W: [williamsonartgallery.org](http://williamsonartgallery.org)  
F: @williamsonartgallery  
T: @WilliamsonArt

**Bus route** Collect the 464, 471Q or 472Q from Whitechapel (Liverpool), alighting at the Shaw Street stop on Borough Road (outside Birkenhead Library). Walk in the same direction as the bus was travelling, turning right on Balls Road. Keep on up Balls Road, crossing Oxtan Road to meet Slaley Road. **The Williamson** is on your right at this junction.  
**Closest train station** Birkenhead Central  
**Walk from Lime Street** Due to the River Mersey it is not possible to walk from Lime Street. For those who want to use the train, alight at Birkenhead Central. Walk up Borough Road (head towards the flyover) until Shaw Street and follow instructions for bus route above.  
**What3words** brick.solo.boil



## LATE EDITION...

### Chester Lane Gallery



Four Acre Lane, St Helens, WA9 4DE.  
+44 (0)1744 677081

W: [sthelens.gov.uk/article/7312/Chester-Lane-Library](http://sthelens.gov.uk/article/7312/Chester-Lane-Library)  
F: pages/Chester-lane-Library/357189577675829  
T: @sthelenscouncil

**Bus route** None known at this time (from Liverpool City Centre)  
**Closest train station** Lea Green (Transpennine Express services). Turn out of the station on to Marshalls Cross Road. Turn right on to Chester Lane and left at the library when you see it, on the left  
**Walk time from Lime Street** 4hr 21-minutes. A hard walk for a committed walker, we expect anyone wanting to do this will have their own map!  
**What 3words** shelving.uttering.easels



## IRISH EXPERIMENTAL WRITING DAY

10am-1.30pm, Sun 22 Oct, *Museum of Liverpool*,

£5 (includes refreshments), book online ♣

Irish poet and author, Pascal O'Loughlin, and *National Poetry Library* librarian, Chis McCabe, lead an informal writing and reading workshop inspired by James Joyce's *Ulysses*. 2023 marks over a century since its first publication in Paris and 90-years since the United States District Court ruled *Ulysses* not to be obscene, the latter judgement opened the doors for its first mass market editions.

In this workshop, participants will look at Irish experimental writing from the 20th and 21st centuries. Through close reading and loose, informal exploration we'll investigate how modes of writing outside the mainstream can add to our reading and writing practices, enriching our art and having fun on the way.

By the end of the day attendees will have:

- investigated new and exciting ways to describe the world around them and their very particular and peculiar place in it
- explored the limits of language where the unsayable and the indescribable somehow are said, somehow are described
- pondered how failure and success in writing are opposite sides of the same coin
- developed new practices to carry into their writing and reading lives.

The workshop is suitable for writers aged 16+, with some experience of creative writing, who are serious about their craft. It's not necessary to be previously published.

It would be advantageous for participants to have an understanding of the importance of *Ulysses* to contemporary literature (but a close read of the *Ulysses Wikipedia* entry would suffice). The workshop leaders suggest RTE's 1982 radio version as an additional starting point, available by scanning the QR code, right. Highly recommended (though with a note of caution about explicit content) for its style and expression, is Episode 18, which works as a standalone piece.



## ULYSSES: FILM SCREENING (1967, 120MINS) ♣

2pm, Sun 22 Oct, *Museum of Liverpool*,

Free (places limited), book online

A rare opportunity to see Joseph Strick's 1967 film adaptation of the book. After the screening, viewers have the chance to discuss the film's merits and/or failings with Irish poet and writer, Pascal O'Loughlin, and *National Poetry Library* librarian, Chis McCabe.

## IRISH CENTRE MEMORIES COFFEE MORNING

11 am, Mon 23 Oct, *Liverpool Irish Centre*, Free, but booking preferred.

See details below ♡ ♣ ♣

Come along to the *Liverpool Irish Centre* for a very special coffee morning. 2024 marks 25-years in our current location. We're preparing to celebrate by reminiscing about the important role *The Centre* has played within the Liverpool Irish community.

We invite you to share your memories of the old Irish Centre at Mount Pleasant and the current Irish Centre. There will be mini exhibitions of memorabilia, photographs and videos. If you have anything to contribute, you're welcome to bring it along. Sandwiches and cakes will be provided by *Homebaked* (Anfield).

The event is completely free, but please contact us if you wish to attend with any dietary requirements so we can cater for all: Email [louise@liverpoolirishcentre.org](mailto:louise@liverpoolirishcentre.org) or call +44(0)151 263 1808.



## WILDE'S THE BALLAD OF READING GAOL

125-years of art, culture and progress

2pm, Mon 23 Oct, *Zoom online*, Free, book online. ♡ ♣

Event meeting information will be sent to you ahead of the event

In this talk, Dr Deaglán Ó Donghaile (*Liverpool John Moores University*) will discuss Oscar Wilde's 1898 poem; *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*. He'll consider its relevance as a work of literary genius and immense cultural importance.

The poem is a powerful expression of protest and dissent, contradicting the widely-held belief Wilde emerged from prison in 1897 as a broken man.

Shortly after his release, Wilde wrote to the press condemning the treatment of child prisoners, simultaneously composing this poem, which stands as one of the greatest condemnations of capital punishment ever written. Deaglán will explain how Wilde emerged from prison, deeply committed to human rights, determined to apply his literary writing to the cause of progress. Additionally, he'll explore the enduring relevance of Wilde's ideas on the need for a humane culture and society.



## NORTH CIRCULAR (2022, 85 MINS)

Doors 6.30pm. Film starts at 7pm with Q&A to follow, Mon 23 Oct, *The Box at FACT Liverpool*, £10/£8 conc, book online ♡ ♣

Those in power write the history. Those who struggle write the songs.

A multiple award-winning documentary musical travelling the length of Dublin's fabled North Circular Road, where local characters share their powerful and emotive stories, accompanied by traditional ballads and folk music that add to the narrative. *North Circular* conjures the ghosts of the past, while engaging with the conflicts and celebrations of today, with a little bit of Dublin humour thrown in.

Travelling from Phoenix Park to Dublin Port, *North Circular* explores the history, music and streetscapes of a street that links some of the country's most beloved and infamous places. Told in black and white 4:3 Academy ratio, the film evokes narratives from city and national history; from colonialism, to mental health, to the struggle for women's liberation. Simultaneously, it engages in urgent issues of today, including the battle to save the legendary Cobblestone Pub - the centre of Dublin's recent folk revival- from destruction at the hands of cynical property developers. The *Liverpool Irish Festival* screening marks the second anniversary of the 'Cobblestone Uprising' AKA the 'Dublin is Dying' campaign.

The film includes musical performances from artists local to the North Circular, including John Francis Flynn, Séan Ó Túama, Eoghan O'Ceannabháin, Ian Lynch & Gemma Dunleavy.

This special event includes discussion and Q&A with the film's director Luke McManus, in conversation with Dr Nessa Johnston, *University of Liverpool*. The event is supported by *The Institute of Irish Studies, University of Liverpool*.



## SONG WORKSHOPS WITH MAZ O'CONNOR

9.30am and 12.30pm, Tue 24 Oct, *Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room*, £15/£12 conc ♡ ♣

Join singer and composer Maz O'Connor for an accessible, creative workshop. During the workshop, Maz will explore how to turn stories from your family history into original songs.

Maz is the composer of a new folk musical, *The Wife of Michael Cleary*, which recently won the *Stiles + Drewe Prize*. With over ten-years of experience in songwriting, she'll guide you through creating your own song.

No prior experience or instruments needed. We recommend bringing photographs or an object that relates to your family history to use as stimuli. This workshop is supported by *Arts Council England*.



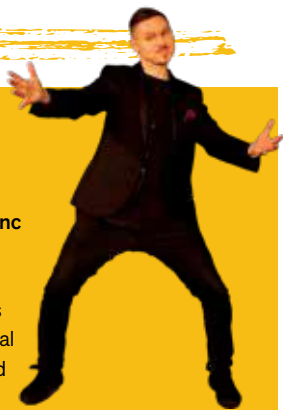


## TWO PLAYS

### *A Bolt from d'Blue*

7pm, Tue 24 Oct, LEAF on Bold Street, £12/£10conc or joint evening ticket £20/£15 conc (for this and *For the Love of Mary*) ♀ ♀ ♀

In this powerful one-man show, *A Bolt From d'Blue*, David Gilna (writer, actor) recounts his early dreams of being a performer; his family history; his first arrival to the USA and, of course, the moment that changed his life forever: being struck by lightning. 25-years after it happened, Gilna deftly guides us through the humour and horror of this near-death experience. He weaves the trauma of this life-changing event into a poignant and unforgettable show. For anyone seeking hope -or a teary-eyed laugh- *A Bolt From d'Blue* is not to be missed.



### *For the Love of Mary*

9.30 pm, Tue 24 Oct, LEAF on Bold Street, £12/£10conc or joint evening ticket £20/£15 conc (for this and *A Bolt from d'Blue*) ♀ ♀ ♀

*For The Love of Mary* tells the story of Irish womanhood and all its challenges. Viewed through the lens of a woman from a Protestant/Unionist background -displaced by The Troubles into a Nationalist community- she embarks upon a journey to uncover what lies beneath one of the world's most iconic mothers.

*For the Love of Mary* has received support from Arts Council Northern Ireland, Culture Ireland, Derry City and Strabane, Irish Writers Centre and University of Atypical.



## CONFLICT, DIASPORA AND EMPIRE

Irish nationalism in Liverpool, 1912-1922.

11am, Wed 25 Oct, Zoom online, Free, book online.

Event meeting information will be sent to bookers ahead of the event

The actions of Irish nationalists in Britain are often characterised as a 'sideshow' to the revolutionary events in Ireland between 1912 and 1922. This original study argues, conversely, that Irish nationalism in Britain was integral to contemporary Irish and British assessments of the Irish Revolution between the *Third Home Rule Bill* and *The Anglo-Irish Treaty*.

In this centenary lecture, Dr. Darragh Gannon charts the development of Irish nationalism across the Irish Sea over the course of a historic decade in United Kingdom history – from constitutional crisis, to war and revolution. Taking Liverpool as its focus, this lecture documents successive Home Rule and *IRA* campaigns, coordinated by John Redmond and Michael Collins respectively, and examines the mobilisation of Irish migrant communities in Britain in response to major political crises, from the Ulster crisis to the First World War. The Irish Revolution, this study concludes, was defined by political conflicts, and cultures, across the Irish Sea.

Dr Darragh Gannon is Head of Irish Studies at *University College Dublin*.



## GREEN & BLUE

4pm and 8pm, Wed 25 Oct, St Helens Library at Chester Lane Library, 2 paid showings at 4pm and 8pm: £8 general admission/£7 library card holders/£5 conc, book online ♀ ♀ ♀



The award-winning *Green & Blue* explores the painful and humorous realities faced by the individuals who patrolled the border during the height of the conflict. An officer from the *Royal Ulster Constabulary* (in his green uniform) and Eddie from *An Garda Síochána* (resplendent in blue), communicate via crackly radios until an explosive incident forces them to meet across a field only farmers know the location of.

Focusing on what it's like to be hunted, when you're protecting a man-made line on the ground, the play looks at the societal and human cost of borders.

*Green & Blue* is based on real-life interviews with former serving officers.

## YOU, ME AND THE YELLOW WALLPAPER

Sue Rynhart's melodrama for voice Doors 7.30pm for an 8pm performance, Wed 25 Oct, Sefton Park Palm House, £18/£15 conc, book online ♀ ♀ ♀ ♀

Marking 130 years since the publication of feminist writer Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wallpaper*, Sue Rynhart's melodrama for voice takes the stage.

Sue returns to Festival after a four-year hiatus, having completed a residency at *Centre Culturel Irlandais*, Paris. Known for her unique voice -and extraordinary blend of opera and jazz- Sue is an award-winning musician who is not to be missed. Witty, poignant and generous, viewers can't help leaving wanting more.



## JOHN JOE KELLY: COMPLETE BEGINNERS BODHRÁN SKILLS

10am-11.30am, Thurs 26 Oct, Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room, £20, book online ♡ ♀

John Joe Kelly is a master bodhrán player, involved in world music and the folk music scene, especially as a member of *Flook*. This is a rare opportunity to get tuition from the man himself, in a relatively intimate setting.

Participants will need to bring their own bodhrán and tipper to play. Advice on purchasing bodhrán can be found here: [mcneelamusic.com/irish-bodhran-for-sale/](http://mcneelamusic.com/irish-bodhran-for-sale/)

Another vendor is *Hobgoblins*: [hobgoblin.com/percussion/bodhran](http://hobgoblin.com/percussion/bodhran). John Joe encourages people not to go for a very expensive bodhrán to begin, but to try one out and get a feel for playing before investing in something expensive. Bodhrán are available on *eBay* and *Amazon* from as little as £25.

The 10am class is for complete beginners. Those with a little more skill should consider the intermediate to advanced class later in the day.



## JOHN JOE KELLY: INTERMEDIATE/ADVANCED BODHRÁN SKILLS

12.30-2.30pm, Thurs 26 Oct, Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room, £20, book online ♡ ♀

John Joe Kelly is a master bodhrán player, involved in world music and the folk music scene, especially as a member of *Flook*. This is a rare opportunity to get tuition from the man himself, in a relatively intimate setting.

Participants will need to bring their own bodhrán and tipper to play. Advice on purchasing bodhrán can be found here: [mcneelamusic.com/irish-bodhran-for-sale/](http://mcneelamusic.com/irish-bodhran-for-sale/)

Another vendor is *Hobgoblins*: [hobgoblin.com/percussion/bodhran](http://hobgoblin.com/percussion/bodhran). John Joe encourages people not to go for a very expensive bodhrán to begin, but to try one out and get a feel for playing before investing in something expensive. Bodhrán are available on *eBay* and *Amazon* from as little as £25.

The 12.30pm class is for intermediate to advanced players. Those just starting out should consider the complete beginners' class earlier in the day.



Scan QR code using a smartphone camera to visit our website

Don't forget to visit our website to find out more about this year's programme!

[liverpoolirishfestival.com](http://liverpoolirishfestival.com)

All dates and times should be verified before travel and may be subject to change. See online event listing for final confirmation.





# IRISH CREATIVE WRITING

## HALLOWEEN

### OCTOBER HALF TERM 2023

Join ArtsGroupie CIC and unleash your creativity with our brilliantly fun Creative Writing Workshops

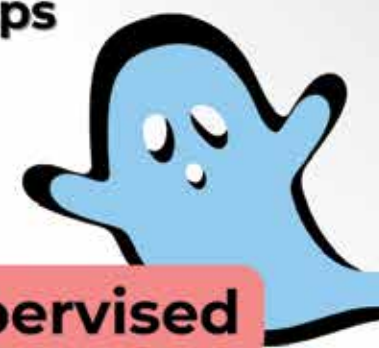


**FREE!**

**Creative and Fun**

**Children Age 9-12**

**Safe and Supervised**



**Liverpool Irish Centre**  
6 Boundary Lane, Liverpool, L6 5JG

To Sign Up Email  
[ArtGroupie@outlook.com](mailto:ArtGroupie@outlook.com)

#### November 2023 Tour

Sat 4th **Liverpool** Metal Culture, Edge Hill Station  
Sat 18th **Liverpool** The Reader, Calderstones  
Sun 19th **Salford** Kings Arms  
Thu 23rd **Liverpool** Athenaeum  
Sat 25th **Lancaster** The Storey

# The Signalman

A Ghost Story by Charles Dickens

An ArtsGroupie CIC Production  
Adapted and Directed by David Griffiths



Tickets available at [ArtsGroupie.org](https://www.ArtsGroupie.org)





## CULTURAL MEMORY AND THE GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT ♡ ♣

6pm, Thurs 26 Oct, Venue *TBC*, FREE (limited spaces), book online  
25-years ago, *The Belfast Agreement* was signed. It had taken 25 years to get from the *Sunningdale Agreement* to this peace settlement. The new accord was built on self-determinism and parity of esteem and would become known as *The Good Friday Agreement*. Signed between two governments and 8 political parties, how did this political behemoth affect those who had to live within its terms? What would the cultural memory and legacy of this defining document be?

Moya Cannon (Donegal poet), Gail McConnell (Belfast poet), Greg Quiery (Liverpool-based Belfastian poet and historian) and others share their experiences, through their art and recollections.

This is a partnership event with the *University of Liverpool's Institute of Irish Studies*.

## GREEN & BLUE

8pm, Thurs 26 Oct, Fri 27 and Sat 28 Oct, *Hope Street Theatre*, £19.50/£17.50 conc, book online

The award-winning *Green & Blue* explores the painful and humorous realities faced by the individuals who patrolled the border during the height of the conflict. An officer from the *Royal Ulster Constabulary* (in his green uniform) and Eddie from *An Garda Síochána* (resplendent in blue), communicate via crackly radios until an explosive incident forces them to meet across a field only farmers know the location of.

Focusing on what it's like to be hunted, when you're protecting a man-made line on the ground, the play looks at the societal and human cost of borders.

*Green & Blue* is based on real-life interviews with former serving officers.



## FRÉA: REDRESSING IRISH CHURCH AND STATE INSTITUTIONS

1pm, Fri 27 Oct, *Zoom online*, Free, book online.

Event meeting information will be sent to you ahead of the event ♣ ♡ ♣

From the Irish State's foundation (1922), until 1998, *Mother and Baby* and *County Homes* existed across Ireland. Institutions -designed to accommodate single mothers, pregnant women or those risking destitution- became places of neglect, degradation, suffering and loneliness. Significantly, rates of infant mortality outstripped those of the wider population.

Following the discovery of the remains of 796 children, illegally buried on the site of the *Bonn Secours Home* in Tuam (County Galway) -and campaigns from former residents of the homes- a *Commission of Investigation* was established by the Irish Government. This was followed by the enactment of several pieces of legislation, aimed at responding to former residents' experiences.

It's believed 38,000 people will be eligible to access these schemes. Additionally, it's estimated 40% of these live in Britain.

- With today's legislation in place, what effects are the systems having?
- What were the experiences of former residents and how are they being addressed?
- Where can people access the schemes or gain help to access them?

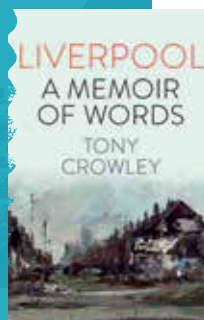
During our online event, *Fréa* will explore former resident experiences and share the Government's response. The event will help people understand how they access these systems and ways they can advocate for former residents.

## LIVERPOOL ENGLISH WITH TONY CROWLEY

6pm, Fri 27 Oct, *Liverpool Central Library* (Fourth Floor conference suite), Free (spaces limited), book online ♡ ♣

Tony Crowley's *Liverpool: A Memoir of Words* is a work of creative non-fiction. It combines the study of language in Liverpool with social history, the history of the English language and personal memoir. A beautifully written book it's based on a lifetime's academic research. Within its pages, it explores the relationship between language and memory, and demonstrates the ways in which words are enmeshed in history and history in words.

During this book launch, the author will discuss the influence of Ireland both on the language of Liverpool and on the story of language in Liverpool.



## PK'S SEISIÚN

9.30pm-late, Fri 27 Oct, ♡ ♣ ♣

*Peter Kavanagh's*, Free, just turn up  
Completely informal opportunity to come a long for a tune. The second seisiún of two in the Festival, the other takes place here the Fri prior (20 Oct 2022).

Bring an instrument, your voice and a will to play along. There'll be Festival friends to help bring the gang together, whilst a fully stocked bar -in one of the most historic and quirkiest pubs in Liverpool- eases you towards the dawn. This event gets busy quickly and sometimes it is 'standing room only', so be prepared to 'hotch up' and swap places so everyone can get a piece of the action.

## SCOTLAND ROAD WALKING TOUR

10am, Sat 28 Oct, *Central Library*, £12/£8conc, book online ♡ ♣ ♣

This 2-hour walk through the former heartland of Liverpool's Irish community considers schools, statues and graveyards.

It explores what remains of the area's rich heritage, rousing some old ghosts along the way.

Led by historian Greg Quiery, this walk explores the dense history of a world-famous district. Featuring stories of heroic men and women; footballers and rock stars; two hidden statues; a graveyard and the legends of 'Dandy Pat' and James Carling. The walk ends at *St Anthony's Church*, a short bus ride from town.

Those interested in this walk, may also be interested in the in-person *South Liverpool walk* (see event listing and book early to avoid disappointment) or the self-guided *Liverpool Irish Famine Trail* [liverpoolirishfaminetrail.com](http://liverpoolirishfaminetrail.com), accompanied by the Festival's book *Liverpool Irish Famine Trail: Revive*, available online at [liverpoolirishfestival.com/shop](http://liverpoolirishfestival.com/shop).

This is an outdoor walk in October; please be weather prepared, comfortable and hydrated. We will observe COVID-19 regulations, as at the date of the walk, and ask all walkers to comply with prevailing guidance.

Ticket holders should join Greg outside *Liverpool Central Library* ready for the walk start time.



## GAA: GIVE IT A GO!

1pm-4pm, Sat 28 Oct, *John Mitchel's ground*, Free, just turn up in your sports kit ready to play ♡ ♣ ♣  
Open to all age groups, whether you're a keen Gaelic Football player or have never heard of the game!

Come along to our 'give it a go' Festival session.

Our *John Mitchel's GAA* coaches will be there to welcome everyone, providing a great opportunity to find out a bit more about the game and our club; with a chance to meet our members and play a bit of Gaelic Football. There'll be 'blitz' sessions for young ones, from fully qualified and checked coaches (guardians to stay throughout). From 2-4pm, people can participate in or watch the Lancashire Underage Gaelic Football Blitz.

For more details on the club follow *Facebook @johnmitchelsliverpool* and *Twitter @JohnMitchelsGAA*







## SOUTH LIVERPOOL WALKING TOUR

2pm, Sat 28 Oct, *St Luke's Bombed Out Church*,

£12/£8conc, book online ♡ ♡ ♡

On this 2-hour walk you'll discover Irish connections to many of the historic Hope Street and Rodney Street buildings, hearing from some of the colourful characters who populated them.

Led by historian Greg Quiery, early booking is advised to avoid disappointment.

Anyone interested in this may also like the in-person *Scotland Road walk* (see event listing) or the self-guided *Liverpool Irish Famine Trail* [liverpoolirishfaminetrail.com](http://liverpoolirishfaminetrail.com), accompanied by the Festival's book *Liverpool Irish Famine Trail: Revive*, available online at [liverpoolirishfestival.com/shop](http://liverpoolirishfestival.com/shop).

This is an outdoor walk in October; please be weather prepared, comfortable and hydrated. We will observe COVID-19 regulations, as at the date of the walk, and ask all walkers to comply with prevailing guidance.

## BRENDAN: SON OF DUBLIN

7.30pm, Sat 28 Oct, *The Tung Auditorium*, £15/£12conc/£5 student tickets + booking fee, book online ♡ ♡

It's a 100-years since Irish playwright Brendan Behan was born. From humble Dublin origins, Behan became one of the great twentieth century writers. His work includes *Borstal Boy*, *The Quare Fellow* and *The Hostage*.

Behan's story transcends his bohemian reputation as a hard-drinking, hard-living Irishman who died -prematurely- aged 41. The universal themes he wrote about remain relevant today. Justice and reform; the power of "outsiders" to catalyse societal change and relationships.

Maintaining the ground-breaking grit, realism and dark humour that features in his writing, *Brendan: Son of Dublin* is presented by **Fat Dan Productions**. This freshly told new musical-drama is semi-staged with live music. Premiering in the north as part of #LIF2023, the production is supported by the **University of Liverpool's Institute of Irish Studies**.

Writers: John Merrigan and Danielle Merrigan. Director/visual artist: Pamela Howard. Musical Director: Brian Hughes.



## BRAVE MAEVE: WRITER READING FOR KIDS

3pm, Sat 28 Oct, Gallery 11 at *The Williamson Art Gallery and Museum*, Free, just turn up ♡ ♡ ♡

*Brave Maeve* is a Liverpool girl. She's taken on an amazing adventure, through Irish folklore, when something is stolen from her Grandad Mac by a pesky púca.

A richly illustrated book, it will be voiced by author and artist Stu Harrison. Witty, energetic and designed for kids aged 7-11, this is a fun afternoon event to spend with your child or grandchild. We'll also have colouring sheets available.

Stu will bring some of his illustrated cut outs, so kids can pose with a sword, Brave Maeve and púca. Bring your cameras! Book copies will be available to buy (£4.99) and have signed.

This event was made possible with a co-commissioning fund with **Gael Linn** and **An tUltach**.



## IRISH FAMINE MEMORIAL

11am, Sun 29 Oct, *St Luke's Bombed Out Church*, Free, just turn up ♡ ♡ ♡

Over the last couple of years, Liverpool Irish Festival has been working on revitalising the *Liverpool Irish Famine Trail*, which includes the *Irish Famine Memorial*.

Today, the Liverpool Great Hunger Commemoration Committee and Liverpool Irish Centre, in partnership with the Festival, lead a *Famine Memorial Service* to mark 175-years since the start of the seven-years of Famine in Ireland, lasting 1847-1852. There will be speeches, readings and music at the memorial ground.

Everyone is welcome. However, we would note that this is an outside event and we may have difficulties with sound if it is rainy or windy. We recommend dressing for the weather and bringing seats or walking aids as required. This is a standing service of roughly 30-minutes. People may gather in advance of the service.

These activities have been made possible with funds from The National Lottery Heritage Fund.



## SAMHAIN CÉILÍ

4pm-7pm, Sun 29 Oct, *Liverpool Irish Centre*, Free (space limited), just turn up ♡ ♡

**Comhaltas** and **ArtsGroupie CIC** take it turns playing (spooky) fun games and music, to dance and play along with, whilst the veil between our world and 'the Other' is at its thinnest. We invite you to bring along the kids -in their best creepy dress-up (or not)- and hope adults will play along.

With gift bags for the first 50 children -and scarily silly prizes for the best Samhain costumes- we encourage eye patches and false teeth, skull-masks and props (store bought or otherwise). Grab the face paint, some plastic spiders and last year's glitter slime; practice your deepest, scariest 'Wohooo' and strap your neck-bolts on ready for the silliest Monster's Ball of the season!

Activities are mainly geared for kids between 4-12 years old, with adult supervision. Kids aged 18-118 years old are welcome, but require child-supervision! Only pretend broken hips on this dance floor, please!



## BRANDIES BAND AND FACTOR 7: YEATS TO MUSIC

8pm, Sun 22 Oct, *LEAF Bold Street*, £12/£10conc, book online ♡ ♡ ♡

Sparkling voices, bright melodies and W.B. Yeats' greatest poems; they all come together in *Yeats to Music*.

Our performers are a bunch of charming Belgians (not kidding), who love Irish poetry. So much so, they released an album of 10 original folk songs, based on poems by Yeats.

Rise and go and celebrate the centenary of Yeats being awarded the *Nobel Prize for Literature* with **Brandies Band** and the wonderful voices of **Factor 7**. Sing along with the chorus of *Words*; be touched by *Never Give all the Heart* and clap along with *The Song of Wandering Aengus*. No better way to round off the weekend than attending this joyful concert.





# WHY DO ARTISTS GIVE AWAY THEIR



## Examples

The idea of artists giving away their art is nothing new. You can look back to Van Gogh famously exchanging a painting for his lunch. Picasso drew a dove on a napkin, so a young couple could pay their bill. You could argue Banksy gives his art away for free, until it's hacked off its wall and sold at auction to the highest bidder.

## Why do I do what I do?

As I reach my mid-fifties, I find myself reflecting on my practice. I doubt and support myself, often in equal measure, asking myself why I do what I do? I'm not alone. Many artists and creatives do this; some spend no time at all on introspection, whilst others do it to distraction.

In the parlance of *Arts Council England*, I'm a mixed heritage, mid-career, female artist. The main earner during my childhood was my nan. She was a cleaner. I assume that makes me working class. So, why do I draw, paint, create things and place them in the public realm, giving my art away to complete strangers? I've tried to intellectualise why, on many occasions, but -in reality- it's just something I do. Nothing more than that.

## I, (re)Boot

I broke my ankle at the beginning of summer and found myself with lots of time on my hands. I planned to clean my house, organise my art materials and perhaps even create some new work. Of course, I did none of this! I sat with my big boot on watching *Netflix* and *Sky* documentaries.

In my defense, I went on 'a deep dive'. I watched programmes about art and what it means. I poured over the ancient histories of lost civilisations; considered the recklessness and the avarice, the beauty and the corruption. Every last documentary and article I read could be reduced to one thing: we need to leave our mark, let others know that we were there and that we mattered.





As a celebration of our 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, we've commissioned Pamela Sullivan to create objects that celebrate important anniversaries. Using the 'hide-and-see' approach we used last year, with *The Forgotten*, members of the public will be able to hunt, locate and report their finding of specially created, one off art pieces. Below, Pam tells us why giving art away is important to her.

# WORK FOR FREE?

## Recommended

Three documentaries stood out, leaving an indelible mark and capturing my imagination:

- *Unknown: Cave of Bones* (**Netflix**, search for the programme title) tracks a research team across 8-years, discovering our oldest human 'like' ancestors
- The **BBC's**, *Oceans Apart: Art in the Pacific with James Fox* ([bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0bk9tt2](http://bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0bk9tt2))
- Nan Goldin's stunningly beautiful and haunting film, *All the Beauty and the Bloodshed*, available on **iPlayer** (search for the programme title).

These three, from the raft I watched, have stayed with me. Covering very different themes, they all come back to the need for people to make and leave their mark. A need to document, inform, warn, create and leave a pictorial history. From cave walls, deep burial chambers, pyramids, churches, galleries and museums, through to today, where art is displayed on bodies, street corners, walls and derelict buildings.

All these marks share an idea. Nan Goldin, in particular, documented her life and made a stand against the corrupt pharmaceutical culture in the USA. She talks -and worries- about destroying her career, but felt she had to make a stand. She did so by confronting the very galleries that displayed her work. Nan was driven by an innate and inefaceable need to do the right thing.

## Social conscience

Throughout my career, I've created work with a social conscience. I always have something to say and I always need to say something. I can't just let this world with its unfairness and inequalities pass me by.

The *Free Art Friday Movement* is nothing new. In its current form, it emerged as a kick back against 'Black Friday' and the abhorrent consumerism that came with it. Artists -all around the world- produce and place free art on the street for anyone and everyone to find. These acts of giving, place a little piece of creativity in to a world where art works are seen as a commodity only the very wealthy and privileged can afford.

This is the act of artists making their mark and sharing an idea. By giving it away in thoughtful and self-managed ways, artists take back their art by giving it to those who may never have previously engaged with an art gallery (or an artist) before. This small act of kindness feels powerful and important in an era of greed and coldness.

## The Forgotten

I was proud to be part of last year's *Liverpool Irish Festival*. I was commissioned to produce a series of small porcelain houses for people to find and take home. These little pieces of art commemorated -and reminded people- of the Irish famine. The houses embodied the strength of the Irish people and their resilience in the face of incredible hardships. I made a mark that represented this idea and shared it across the city. See more by scanning the QR, above right.



## 2023

For this year's Festival, I will again create some small pieces of art and I will leave them out for members of the public to find. This year each piece will commemorate the people, events anniversaries that have happened in Ireland and Liverpool, celebrating the Festival's last 21-years and commemorating it gaining its 'key-to-the-door'.

Though we're keeping the details under wraps for now, these iconic little pieces will certainly capture people's imaginations. With them, I'll be making my mark and sharing my belief that: art is important and available for anyone who wants to find it.

Each piece will bear a QR code. Please scan it and send us your story. We'll want to know how and where you found the piece; how did you come to be in the area and who you'll share it with.

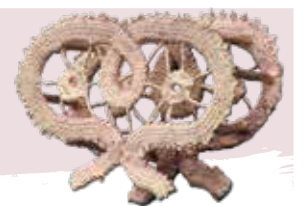
Happy Hunting!

**Pamela Sullivan, 2023.**

### IN THE WINDOW: MEET THE ARTIST – NÍAMH GRIMES

11am, Fri 20 Oct, *Bluecoat Display Centre*, Free (suggested donation of £10 to go direct to the artist),

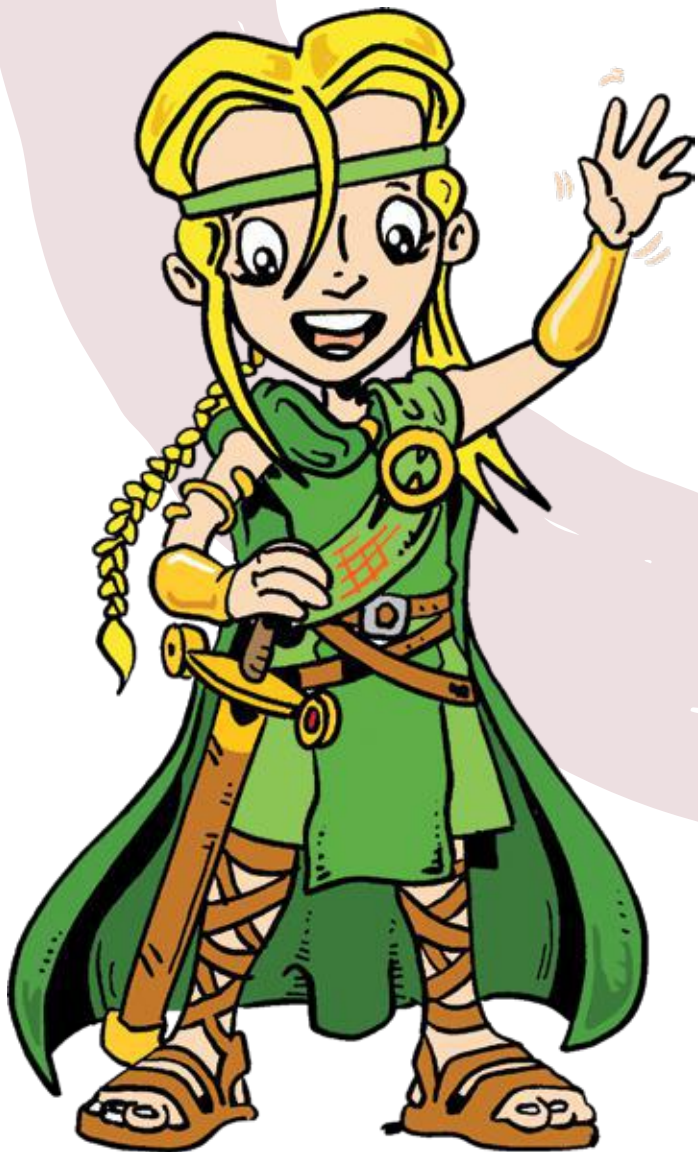
Book by calling +44(0) 151 709 4014





# BRAVE MAEVE

## A CHILDREN'S BOOK



Stu Harrison is a Liverpool-based artist, working in illustration.

When you meet him, you'll be swept up, in a world busier than a Black Friday sale. Stu's immersed in comic culture and has the energy of a Hallowe'en bag of *Haribo*. So, who better to create a kids' book than him?

Stu applied to our open-call Irish-language commission, run annually in partnership with *Gael Linn* and *An tUtach*. When it came through, we were blown away! Consequently, we commissioned Stu to produce a children's book: *Brave Maeve*. It's available to buy now on *Kindle* (just search *Brave Maeve*). Additionally, there'll be 250 hard copies available during #LIF2023. Look out for copies at the *Family Day* and *Samhain Céilí*.

*Brave Maeve* connects 6,000-years of Irish folklore to today. This celebratory work ties beautifully with anniversary and legacy, commemorating thousands-of-years of storytelling, culture and history.

### Leprechauns – an overview

Leprechauns: they're cute and cuddly. They pop up, cheerily, each St Patrick's day with a Guinness, a smile and a sly sense of humour. They look grand in their shamrock-green top hats and orange beards...

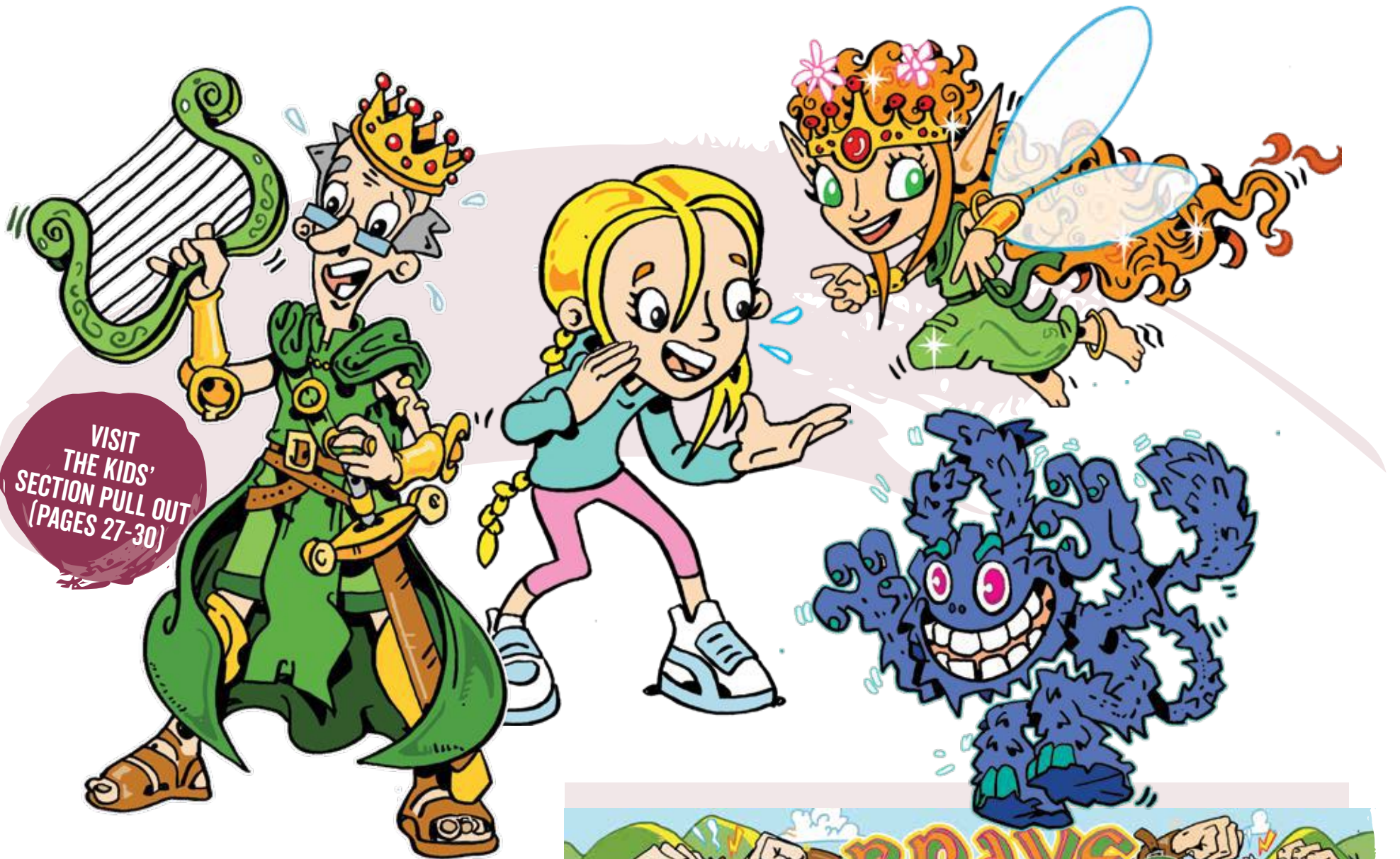
...But, what would you say if I told you the origin began differently to today's 'Disney-fied' cliché? Meet the ancestor of the leprechaun: the púca. These shape-changing, supernatural goblins are bringers of good and bad fortune. They "were wicked-minded, black-looking, bad things... [they'd] come in the form of wild colts, with chains hanging about them, [harming] unwary travellers" (Keightley, Thomas (1880), *The Fairy Mythology*). Thus, ancient Irish folklore often differs from commercial interpretations seen today. Look deeper and its both magical, fantastical, spooky and sometimes downright terrifying!

### 'Stu' is he?

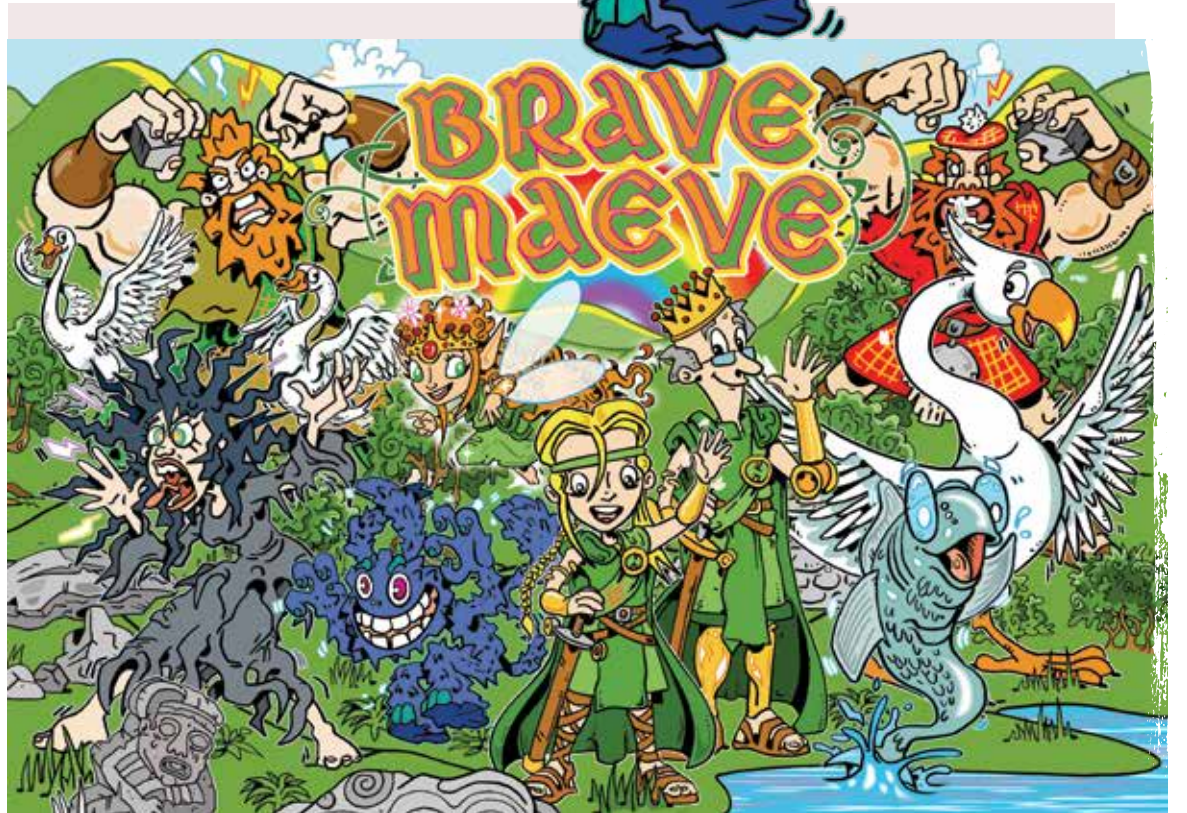
A quick introduction to me: Stuart Harrison. I'm a kids' book writer and illustrator. I like researching material. I'm often asked to refresh certain subjects in fun, contemporary ways to help children -who may not be attracted to the topic- learn. Recently, in a job for *Oxford University Press*, I reimagined a Shakespeare play in the style of games avatars. We told the story of *Romeo and Juliet* using online social media formats. Using comic strips or cartoons is a great approach to make subjects accessible and more entertaining. Similarly, when I worked for *Scholastic*, I illustrated books to teach foreign readers to speak English, using skateboarding skeletons! A free CD helped readers listen along with the comic strip.

I saw *Liverpool Irish Festival's* advert, seeking inventive ways to promote Gaeilge (Irish language). The prompt helped me come up with a bilingual format, which included English in one speech bubble and Gaeilge in another. This meant the reader could easily read both -and learn- while being entertained by a fast-paced yarn.





VISIT THE KIDS' SECTION PULL OUT (PAGES 27-30)



### Motivations

I decided I wanted to produce a kids' book; the subject matter had to be instantly exciting. I planned an irreverent, quick-flowing story; brimming with energy. When I started my research, into ancient Irish myths, I was spoiled for choice! There were so many fascinating characters, locations and stories to include; but I only had about 15-pages! What plot-type would allow a wealth of material and who would be my leading character? Could I squeeze in references to Liverpool and did we have any of our own mythical creatures?

My studio is at **The Bluecoat**. **The Bluecoat** is the UK's oldest art centre and Liverpool's oldest building. An imperious golden Liver Bird sits over the main entrance, greeting all visitors. I was sketching away when my pal, Nicky, called in with her niece, Maeve.

Maeve proceeded to jump about the room; opine about my artwork and generally jazz things up a bit. Hmmm. Maybe this gal could be the one to face up to a pesky púca and take a trip, to Tir Na nÓg (The Land of the Young)?

### Storytime

Plotwise, I'd send Maeve on a perilous quest, via a portal, into the ancient Irish 'otherworld'. There she would fight for the return of her grandad's mobile phone, stolen by a púca. Grandad Mac had been happily minding his own business in Anfield during Hallowe'en. Hallowe'en cunningly allowed me to allude to the origin of Samhain and a quest would let me include multiple folktales.

Without a thought for her own safety, Maeve embarked on a rough and tumble chase through a fantastical realm. On the journey she meets some truly amazing figures from Irish myth, as the cheeky púca evades her clutches.

### Hopes

I hope I've created a book filled with a bit of mythical (and local) magic. It would be nice to think I'd educated -or reminded- my readers about the rich folklore of Ireland. Now has anyone seen my phone? It was here a minute ago...

For more information on Stu, visit [stu-art.biz](http://stu-art.biz)

### Buy Brave Maeve

*Brave Maeve* is available to buy on **Kindle** for £4.99. The Festival has printed 250 hard copies. Any left after the Festival will be available in the Festival's online shop ([liverpoolirishfestival.com/shop](http://liverpoolirishfestival.com/shop)), for £4.99 plus post and packaging.



**BRAVE MAEVE: WRITER READING FOR KIDS**  
3pm, Sat 28 Oct, Gallery 11 at **The Williamson Art Gallery and Museum**, Free, just turn up



**SAMHAIN CEILI**  
4pm-7pm, Sun 29 Oct, **Liverpool Irish Centre**, Free (space limited), just turn up







# ROUTE TO MARKET

In 2022, with partners *Gael Linn* and *An tUltach*, the Festival ran an open commission for an Irish language project. The winning submission would be delivered during #LIF2022, which took 'hunger' as its core theme. Run as an open call, we were thrilled to receive a fiercely ambitious project plan. Generated by *Dogleap Productions* and its creative director, Connor Richmond, *Reroot* was born. What followed was a behemoth project. It involved scores of people and resulted in two animated films; one in Gaeilge and one in English. *Reroot* has now featured in many international film festivals, winning awards and delighting audiences. Here, Connor takes us through the process of mounting his project. He also shares the highs and lows of *Reroot's* development, one year on.





## Reroot's route to market

*Reroot* follows an ensemble of discarded objects, quirky weeds and wildflowers. Plastic Bottle is thrown into a weed-filled patch of urban wasteland, under a Belfast carriageway. She's down-in-the-dumps and homesick. Ever the optimist, she tries to fit in with the eco-community, making friends with the wild lives growing around her. After meeting a (not-so-prickly) Nettle, a comforting Claddagh Ring and a fearless Face Mask, they learn it's okay not to be okay. We're allowed not to know our way; we're all wildflowers in this world.

Connor, director/producer: "My desire for *Reroot* was to provide viewers –young and old– with an opportunity to talk about difference in a positive, celebratory way. I wanted to share some messages about remembering our natural world. I used the film to discuss cultural heritage, carbon foot printing and the importance of minding ourselves (and the minds of others). Today, we're battling with issues of division and diversity and our natural world is suffering. *Reroot* remembers we're all part of one eco-community; all waving one flag, together!"

Claire Handley, writer of *Reroot*, says "*Reroot* is about belonging, identity and finding your place in a world where we can often feel adrift, whilst underlining the societal goal of sustainability, where we can all co-exist on Earth, together".

## Stars

The film features a star-studded cast of contemporary talent, including the bi-lingual line-up of

- Siobhán McSweeney – *Extraordinary*, *Redemption* and *Derry Girls*
- Orla Mullan - *Hope Street*, *Marcella* and *The Fall*
- Sadbh Breathnach - *Sol*
- Liam Fox – *Emmerdale*, *Dinnerladies* and *Coronation Street*
- Aaron Barashi - *Thomas and Friends: All Engines Go* and *Ladybird & Bee*
- and Liverpool-actor Philip S McGuinness - *Coronation Street*, *The Responder* and *The Alienist*, who voiced in the English version

and

- Morgan C Jones - *Harry Wild*, *Magpie Murders* and *Boys From County Hell*
- Aidan McCann - *Clean Sweep*, *Bad Sisters* and *The Holiday*
- and Diona Doherty - *Soft Border Patrol*, *Penance* and *Give My Head Peace*, who voiced in the Irish version.

The number of investors (see below) demonstrates that although the project was 'only' a short film, it required a lot of financial backing. There was a lot of friendly favour-pulling. Producing short-form content brings many pressures, but producing an animation -in two languages- added further complexity to the production and post-production process.

## Career progression

Connor continues: "I've produced live-action short films before, but never a short animation and certainly not in two languages! This was made more difficult because I'm not a native Gaeilge speaker! However, I'm passionate about the language. I'm fascinated by the impermanency of identity and our craving for belonging and community. The cast and crew's hunger to shine a spotlight on this hyper-regional and yet globally tangible story spurred me on. With fire in my belly, and help from a committed crew, we ploughed ahead. Our aim was to centralise and normalise -rather than marginalize- the Irish language through storytelling. We 'rerooted' paths in people's psyches, by making the film accessible, fun and informative, using a 'local for global' story".

Connor's an emerging filmmaker from Northern Ireland. Alongside working as development in scripted drama development for *Two Cities Television*, the makers of the recent hit drama *Blue Lights (BBC One)*. He also runs his own company, *Dogleap Productions*. As well as these shows, Connor has worked in children's animation, on

- *Pablo* – *Cbeebies* and *RTÉ Jr*
- *Sol* – *TG4*, *BBC Alba* and *S4C*, and
- *Ladybird & Bee* – *RTÉ Jr* for *Paper Owl Films*.

Connor began as third assistant director and the script supervisor's assistant on *Emmerdale (ITV)*. He's since production coordinated the feature film *Boys From County Hell*. He was script secretary on *LOLA*; script assistant on *A Bump Along the Way* and worked as a reader for *Mammoth Screen* and *UK Film Festival*. He's now studying a PGPD in *Script Development* at the *National Film and Television School (NFTS)* in Beaconsfield. Through the *NFTS*, he is also a temporary shadow script editor for *BBC Writersroom's Drama Room 2023* programme.

## Home voices

*Reroot* was made by an entirely Northern Irish creative team. The film was written by children's TV writer, Claire Handley. The animation was directed by Liam Wheatcroft; animated by Jessica Maple and edited by Charlotte Kieran. Storyboarded by Rosie Cash, it was art directed and designed by Maebh McHugh. The Irish-language voiceover was directed by Clíodhna Ní Chorráin, with a musical score composed by Calum McCormick.

Connor explains, "Although the script was first written in English, the translation process was an organic part of the animation pipeline". This meant parts of the process had to be flexible. We cast three roles using bi-lingual talent. This interesting creative condition, required from the actors, is unconventional for a short-form medium. When the film was finished, we ensured subtitled versions were available. This supports accessibility, but also translation and -of course- education! Irish-language open captions were embedded onto the English and Irish films, and the same for the English!"

\* Pre-production, production and post-production process.

## Plaudits

Since the film's premiere at #LIF2022, *Reroot* has been screened at seven other film festivals internationally. It launched in the *New Irish Cinema* category at the *Belfast Film Festival* –the filmmaker's and crew's home territory. Then, the short was shown in the *Irish Professionals* category in

- *Animation Dingle* (Kerry)
- *Achill Island Film Festival* (Connacht)
- *Cannes Film Awards* (France) and
- most recently, at the *London Director Awards*.

It will go on to be shown at *Kerry International Film Fest* and *REX Animation Festival* in Stockholm.

During the *London Director Awards*, *Reroot* was listed within the best 150 projects from more than 1500 submissions. This means *Reroot* made a shortlist of the top 10% of films! It was also selected for *Nenagh Children's Film Festival* (Tipperary). There, it came second for *Outstanding Voiceover Character Performance* and Connor contributed to a 'Meet the Filmmakers' panel. Featuring at *Intuition Earth Film Festival* (Austria), *Reroot* was made a finalist in the *Animated Film* and *Environmental Film* categories.

Expected to continue to perform well on the international festival stage, the creative team are enjoying the recent successes. Like the discreet messaging on the plastic bottle artwork ('dóchas', which translates as 'hope'), they are hopeful for more screen time around the world. The big wish now is the potential development of the characters in a TV series format.

Connor concludes:

"*Reroot* was such a collaborative project. There was a huge amount of professional learning for me! It would be remiss of me not to remember and remind everyone else that it would not have been possible without the unflagging dedication, drive, talent, and kindness of so many people and parties; from cast, to crew, to financiers, to investors, to followers, to friends. Everyone helped to plant the seed and let this small film -with a big heart and soul- take root, grow, and flourish! Thank you everyone for making it a dream!"

## Credits

*Reroot* was executive produced by *DAL Productions* and *Gallagher Films*, with additional funding from executive producers *Northern Ireland Screen* through their *Irish Language Broadcast Fund*; *CelAction*; *Turning Point NI*; *Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council* through their *Creative Practitioner's Bursary*; *Aisling Ghéar Theatre Company*; and independent financier -Cherry Love- from *Lovely Looks Boutique* (Limavady).



**INDIEPORK PRESENTS O'BHÉAL**  
Irish language with English subtitles 7pm, Wed 18 Oct, *The Box* at *FACT*, £10/£8 conc, book online

**NORTH CIRCULAR**  
Doors 6.30pm. Film starts at 7pm with Q&A to follow, Mon 23 Oct, *The Box* at *FACT Liverpool*, £10/£8 conc, book online

**BRAVE MAEVE: WRITER READING FOR KIDS**  
3pm, Sat 28 Oct, *The Williamson Art Gallery and Museum*, Free, just turn up



# MY LIVERPOOL IRISH EXPERIENCE: CARRIE BARRETT

Festivals get the opportunity to work with all sorts of people, often from all sorts of places. This work allows us to introduce artists to one another and foster long-term relationship. We watch careers develop and see people's stars rise. When we met Carrie Barrett in Cork, 5-years ago, she was just stepping in to her ascent; recognising her voice and putting it to work. In 2022, we had her shadow our Director across the Festival. We aimed for Carrie to meet as many 'Liverpool' people as possible; see the inner-workings of our operation and test her toes in Mersey-waters. Here, Carrie reflects on the time she's spent with us.

I first attended the *Liverpool Irish Festival* in 2018, performing works I'd written for the *In:Visible Women* segment of the Festival. During my brief time there, I attended as many of the Festival events that I could squeeze in.

## Sights and sounds: Part one

A particular highlight, for me, was a gathering of the Liverpool Irish community who shared their experiences and those of their descendants. Each story was different in description, but the experience was shared. Themes of displacement, loss, poverty, exclusion and shame echoed through. Although the pain was palpable, the feeling in the room was one of understanding, connection and catharsis. I felt humbled and honoured to witness these stories and spend time with our now aging ex-pats, whose heart and souls played a pivotal role in the diverse cultural community that is Liverpool today.

## Part two

Four years later, I returned to Liverpool as resident artist for the Festival.

The resonance of the stories I heard -of those who fled to foreign shores, not knowing what future lay in store for them- from the 1930s right through to the eighties (when I was born) was very much alive in me. As such, stepping foot on Liverpool soil felt like stepping through a portal. A portal that takes you to a place and space in time that feels like Ireland wearing the weight of the cloaked emigrant experience.

## Influence

The Irish influence is very much imbedded in Liverpool culture. The streets are filled with Irish bars; traditional Irish music echoes onto the streets. Irish accents and turns of phrases are not unusual to hear. Our influence and contribution extend to the city's architecture, thanks to the likes of Robert Cain's investment in the 'most ornate' *Philharmonic Dining Rooms* and the physical authority of *The Metropolitan Cathedral*, often known 'Paddy's Wigwam'. The Irish influence and presence are tangible.

## Hunger

2022's Festival theme of 'hunger' delved deep into the Liverpool Irish experience. Conversations and events explored how the Irish Famine changed the face of Liverpool forever, when 1.2m people crossed the sea in hope of refuge. Images of women, men and children collapsing on the Royal Albert Dock of Liverpool, dying of starvation, typhus and cholera -like an apocalyptic scene- flooded my mind.

The sheer terror of lay Liverpudlians -helplessly witnessing their home being overrun by this 'Irish infestation'- must have felt hopeless. Hapless victims of their monarch's actions and without help from their ministry, the residents did what they could to help the victims of coercive genocide. Housing them in makeshift basement slums, opening soup kitchens and burying the dead in paupers' graves was all necessary.

Britain's chickens had come home to roost. It was the irreproachable citizens that were to bear the brunt of the burden. Amid these horror scenes, wonderful stories emerged of people who stepped up to help the city deal with this plague and create legacies in the city, notables such as Dr Duncan Father Nugent and others.

Carrie is a facilitator, dramatist and playwright from Limerick in Cork, ROI. You can see more about her on the *National Academy of Dramatic Art* by using the QR code, right.



## Movers and shakers

I spoke with a local playwright John Maguire, who wrote a play about one such heroine called Kitty Wilkinson. She was an immigrant, from Derry, now revered as the 'Saint of the Slums' and 'Queen of the Washhouse'. In 1778, as just a young girl, she sailed to Liverpool with her family. They lost her father and baby sister during the crossing due to a storm at sea, breaking her mother's heart. At age 11, Kitty went to work in a cotton mill.

In 1832 she took it upon herself to help the sick and dying, making made porridge to feed starving children. She gave up her home to the sick. Vivaly, she shared her boiler -the only one in the community- with her neighbours. Not only this, she would disinfect their clothes and sheets in chloride and lime, staving off the cholera epidemic. Successfully campaigning for a public bath and wash house (opened 1842), Kitty's work with homeless children and sanitation is honourable. John's play *Kitty Wilkinson: Queen of the Washhouse* toured earlier this year.

## Characters beyond the Famine

I attended the Festival's *Irish Famine Trail's Revive: a Research Relay* event. Presented by the Trail's *History Research Group*, they revealed the stories they'd found linked to the Trail's sites. Here, I learned of characters such as 'Dandy Pat'. Born in Wexford (1854), he was so named for his stylish outfits and white hat and is recognised for his involvement in the development of working-class provisions. Agnes Jones -who lived through the Great Hunger- became the first nurse superintendent of the *Brownlow Hill Workhouse* (1865), a role which would reform workhouses and welfare across Victorian institutions.

I was surprised to hear the stark history of the Irish and Scouse experience, juxtaposed with the kindness and altruism of the local and Irish heroines and heroes. Several of these stand -cast in bronzed brilliance- for all of Liverpool to see. These stories and experiences imprinted on me a grà (love) and respect for the people of Liverpool.

## Community resilience

It's evident the Liverpool Irish community is thriving and continuing to affect the culture of their own diaspora, as well as Liverpool as a whole. This is thanks to projects such as the *Liverpool Irish Festival*, the *Liverpool Irish Centre*, *The Mersey Mash* podcast and local artists such as John Maguire (*ArtsGroupie CIC*).

Their dedication and implementation of progressive conversations and expressive works is imperative for the understating and evolution of 'Irishness'. This is as important in Liverpool as in all diaspora communities. Despite best efforts and the time that has passed, the resonance of intergenerational trauma is still tangible. The sense of loss and longing (for a home that's becoming an abstract esoteric sentiment rather than 'a place') reverberated through the Festival. It was there in story, song, poetry and people. While I experienced this, I felt more connected to -and appreciative of- my Irishness than I ever have at 'home.'

As homage to the Liverpool Irish diaspora, I have written the following piece:

## Home

Isolation in a nation of millions  
Incessant longing for belonging  
To find the missing peace  
feel at ease, sink into the seat of her soul  
become part of the whole

A magnetic pull craving to be full,  
from her bounty, drink in her smell  
hear her ancestors tell their story  
shame and glory, eradication of kin  
run and hide a piece of her deep inside  
passed to child  
imprinted on his soul

Raging waves crash against her shore  
shout no more,  
go within her cave of truth and listen  
feed again from land once barren,  
feast on the salt of the earth  
seasoned by the tears of forefathers and mothers  
her fertile soil awaits your return

Carrie Barrett, 4 Nov 2022.





# MORE THAN TIME IN THE SPACE BETWEEN



Jean Maskell's new book, *The Space Between* explores the distance between people and places through short stories, poetry and painting.

The *Decade of Centenaries*, commemorating Ireland's path to home rule, led her to reflect on the life of her mother and family in Wexford. Doing so, reminded Jean of how memories, passed down, can so easily disappear over time. History is often marked by the anniversaries of headline events. However, the unreported day-to-day experiences and memories, of ordinary people, also deserve telling.

One of her recounted stories recalls the Black and Tans shooting at her mother, then a small child, playing behind the garden hedge.

## Betwixt and between

As a woman of Irish-English heritage descent, Jean is aware of the feeling of belonging to two countries. "Going home" means leaving the other home behind. This fills the physical distance with reflection and emotions.

"I hope this collection will resonate with the Irish diaspora. My aim is for the reader to make of the words whatever means something to them. Whilst much of my work references Wexford, I seek to tell a story -sometimes obvious, but often hidden- and share emotions that are universal to all cultures.

"Being part of *Liverpool Irish Festival's Cultural Connectedness Exchange Network* really encouraged me to bring this collection of my work together".

The book additionally explores the idea that the space between sea and sky; between countries; between people; between the living and those who have gone before. This space need not be a 'nothingness'; for there is always more... and hope.

## Proceeds

All proceeds from the book are being donated to *Wexford Marine Watch*, a suicide prevention initiative, and to *Wexford Tidy Towns* environmental charity.

In Liverpool *The Space Between* is available to purchase from the independent bookshop: *News From Nowhere* (Bold Street).

More on the book can be found at [jeanmaskell.com](http://jeanmaskell.com)



Image credit: Jean Maskell presenting her book to George Lawlor, Cathaoirleach of Wexford County Council and Chair of Wexford Marine Watch.

## TWO PLAYS A BOLT FROM D'BLU

7pm, Tue 24 Oct, *LEAF on Bold Street*,  
£12/£10 conc or joint evening ticket  
£20/£15 conc (for this and  
*For the Love of Mary*)

## FOR THE LOVE OF MARY

9.30 pm, all other info as above.



## LIVERPOOL A MEMOIR OF WORDS TONY CROWLEY

## LIVERPOOL ENGLISH WITH TONY CROWLEY

6pm, Fri 27 Oct, *Liverpool Central Library* (4th Floor conference suite),  
Free (spaces limited), book online









It's the first time Lisa will deliver live performances of this music outside of Ireland. The show embraces the old tradition of gathering around the hearth of an Irish home. This tradition peaked after An Gorta Mór (1850s) and slowed as electricity came to rural Ireland (1940s). In Latin, the word 'Communitas' meant the sharing and intimacy developed among people who experience liminality as a group. *Nightvisiting* embodies this concept.

Lisa's show reimagines and celebrates the communal songs and stories, sung and recited by hearthside. It covers songs of loss and grief; songs and tunes of the Irish Famine; songs of emigration, love and marriage. Below, Lisa Lambe interrogates *Nightvisiting*, sharing a little of what make this music so poignant.

#### Bothántaíocht, scoraíochting, airneáin

- Bothántaíocht - going to visit summer houses in the hill; for entertainment at nighttime, connected with transhumance (seasonal movement of livestock)
- Scoraíocht - nighttime gathering for entertainment
- Airneáin - nightvisiting for storytelling, singing and dancing.

#### Visiting: in the context of the Irish Famine (1845-52)

In 1850, the collector and antiquarian George Petrie (b. Dublin 1790, d. Dublin 1866) noted that an "awful unwanted silence" consumed the land of Ireland".

Music had died out and a dreadful silence fell over the land. The collective and communal memory -of those consumed by the Irish Famine- were too traumatised to speak and few wanted to listen. The voices were underfoot.

The songs and stories, which once painted the moonlit roadsides and boreens (natural country roads) in rural Ireland, were slowly being erased by the Great Hunger. Oftentimes, memory -and a separation from home- is what encouraged those outside Ireland (who made it beyond the coffin ships) to sing; to write down and to remember those songs that were part of the ordinary and the everyday.



For more information about Lisa Lambe and her band: [lisalambe.ie](http://lisalambe.ie)

#### The dark

In the years after An Gorta Mór, men and women -and boys and girls- might take their bicycle to a nearby rambling house (the house holding the Nightvisit) using their local boreens. There they'd talk and share the old songs; the stories; the gossip of the town, the village or the area.

Sometimes the lady of the house served tea with a substantial slice of brown bread. Cards were played; music was made; songs were sung. It is noted in one account, from County Leitrim (from *The National Folklore Collection*), that the ramblers would leave for the breen and road home 'at around 10 o'clock'. With the weather being so cold it was said 'I'm sure they get perished along the way'.

The road home was the same breen, the same path, walked by thousands to coffin ships 175-years ago.

On these roadsides, it was said that a lot of interactions happened with The Otherworld; including 'The Good People' (the fairies) after dark. Before electricity -often with only moonlight lighting the road home- there were many happenings, remembered and shared with neighbours and crafted in to into handwritten manuscripts by visiting collectors.

#### Protection

Oftentimes, a man travelling the road home alone, would carry crumbs in his pocket for fear of 'The Hungry Grass'. If he came upon 'The Hungry Grass', he would fall. Only by placing the breadcrumbs on the grass -in honour of the Irish Famine voices underfoot- would he be able to stand up and continue his onward journey. There are many stories of The Good People asking for a game of cards or inviting those they meet to a hurling match challenge. Many with magical twists.

Those who remained in Ireland remembered those lost daily. They recalled the 'American wakes'; the sad and angry ballads; the oldest and the saddest songs and lamentations of farewell. It is something that could easily be evoked in America -or Liverpool- for those Irish who left and never returned.

**YOU, ME AND THE YELLOW WALLPAPER**  
Sue Rynhart's melodrama for voice  
Doors 7.30pm for an 8pm performance,  
Wed 25 Oct, Sefton Park Palm House,  
£18/£15 conc, book online



#### The Nightvisit

For many, the Nightvisit was the beating heart of the community. They provided a time to gather, and feel part of a community. With many songs of loss in the Irish repertoire, songs of love also appeared in abundance.

The oldest Gaelic love song *Dónal Óg* features in the *Nightvisiting* show, accompanied many other beautiful songs, including *Blackwaterside*, *The Galway Shawl*, *Skibbereen*, *Matt Hyland* and *The Parting Glass*. These are interweaved with many magical moments from tunes from County Clare, including *Junior Crehan's Favourite*, also known as *Knot on the Cord*. When asked about the genesis of the show, I say:

"*Nightvisiting* is what our ancestors did every evening, before the rural electrification of Ireland. With my show, I want to take the audience back 80-, 90-, 100-years with the songs. I offer the context of the material alongside stories of the Famine. Of love, of emigration, of marriages and of farewell... The musicians accompanying me (Mike Brookfield, Tim Doyle and Claire Sherry) evoke the soundscape. From underscore, to tunes, to songs... the stories take us down those boreens and allow us all -in a modern auditorium- to go *Nightvisiting*. It's a concept I hope to continue to develop. I'm evolving it on an on-going basis. I am so honoured to be coming to Liverpool with the show. There I'll remember the Famine, within the material, and allow the audience a moment with it to remember".

In the heart of Liverpool, a city that witnessed the arrival of almost 1.3-million Irish, *Nightvisiting* pays homage to the resilience of the music and stories.

#### Partnership

This event is delivered with *The Institute of Irish Studies at University of Liverpool*. Special thanks go to Gerry Diver, Lisa Lambe and her team, who've helped to make this article and event happen. Additional thanks go to the staff at *The Tung Auditorium*.



Every year, *Liverpool Irish Festival* partners with *Bluecoat Display Centre* to select an Irish maker, whose work we exhibit in October. This year, Níamh Grimes's delicately made jewellery was selected for its links to Irish superstition and the protection it provides the wearer.

Considering how personal everyday rituals build towards seasonal, anniversary or celebratory events, Níamh's work connects with our theme of anniversary, on a deep, year-round level. The protection her work provides develops care, connection with seasons and with one another. Below, Níamh unravels her metallic philosophical thread for us, so we can see inside the making, mystery and magic.

(For reference, there's a short glossary further down the page).



# IN THE WINDOW:

# NÍAMH GRIMES

I'm an artist jeweller living and working in Manchester. I specialise in metal casting (predominantly investment casting). I use these processes in conjunction with others to create wearable objects, which are deeply imbued with historical and ritual narratives. Additionally, I use inherited and found objects to preserve and reimagine stories and customs of the past.

Recently, my work has been inspired by traditional superstitious Irish folk customs -especially those surrounding 'The Otherworld'- producing contemporary, ritual objects. These wearable pieces connect me with my ancestors by re-imagining the protective practices they used over generations. They also encourage the wearer to create mindful, personal everyday rituals. Doing so helps us to connect with seasonality and to welcome small forms of celebration.

## Weaving traditional and contemporary practices

Weaving the folk wisdom and practices of our ancestors into our contemporary lives deepens our understanding of cultural heritage. Simultaneously, this nurtures our sense of identity and belonging. Understanding ancient customs through their crafts gives us the opportunity to relate intimately to bygone days. Looking at the folklore; folk music and art; dialects and beliefs in small communities creates connection between times. These stories and crafts are tools for archiving history. They familiarise us with the people and landscapes from which we came. Such pursuits embody the driving force of my research and practice.







## Context

The body of work presented during *In The Window* focusses on past Irish folk customs. Especially those surrounding people's belief in 'The Otherworld'; a mostly invisible realm existing parallel to our own. The Otherworld was home to fairies like the Bean Sidhe (banshee), the púca and other unearthly beings. These creatures were thought to make their way into our mortal world. Here, they'd offer domestic help, play tricks, forbode death and -sometimes- even kidnap humans.

My Irish background is a constant source of inspiration. I want to unearth how it might have felt to live in a time when everyday rituals were intertwined with the appeasement of the 'Good Folk'. Therefore, my works relate to some of the objects connected to these customs. This includes handmade lace, quenched coal, iron, salt crystals and vials of anointed oil. Pieces explore how such objects harbour tactile and collective memory and how their stories might change when they become adornments for the body.

### Using found objects to imbue meaning

Each found object -or material I've incorporated- tells a story of protective ritual. The small pieces of quenched coal recall an old rural Irish custom. People would take a coal from the hearth of a friend or family member, quenching it in a bucket of water, and keeping it in a pocket to ensure safety on their walk home. Similarly, iron -in the form of nails and horseshoes- were positioned over beds and doorways to ward off otherworldly threats. Salt was sometimes sprinkled at domestic thresholds and stitched into corners of children's clothing for protection.

The casts and forms within this collection are inspired by traditional Irish lace. They behave as a web, connecting references to Irish folk history, material culture and spiritual beliefs. Irish lacemaking is believed to have been popularised by the wealthiest members of society, whose own pieces were imported from Venice in the Middle Ages. These inspired designs which -later- became known as 'traditionally Irish'. Despite its aristocratic origins, lacemaking became a common craft. It was often practiced by young girls hoping to financially support their families.



## Questions arising

The idea of circles of women, meticulously working on lace cuffs and trims made me consider: what environment did lacemaking provide for these craftspeople? Did it behave as a conduit for discussing personal and local matters? If so, how many conversations were populated by musings on local folklore? About beliefs surrounding The Otherworld or sharing rituals one might use to ensure good fortune? And -most importantly- how did these tales, beliefs and practices tie people to the landscapes they called home?

## Poetry

'*The Underbay*' (poem below) was written in response to a visit I took to Galway Bay. The meeting of the water and earth, at this place, appeared to me as a threshold. In a literal sense it was a changing of landscapes, from solid ground to sea. Beyond this however, I couldn't help feeling how the bay might inspire beliefs and stories of it being a gateway between our world and The Otherworld.

*When the grey, frothing tongues of saltwater lick my ankles above  
hiding weever fish, In places where hands and feet long to become  
hooves and tails,  
The ring of braided rowan tracing my eye,  
The gorse oil still evident from its fruit-scent on my fingers,  
The coal dust lining my pocket,  
Hold me to this stone you sheltered inside, by the dancing of your hearth.*

## Excavation, renewal and futures

My practice is a constant excavation process. Through it, I inspect personal narratives relating to my heritage; the folk beliefs I grew up around and their ancient roots. Tactility and materiality are intrinsic to my work. I often use these characteristics to try to trigger blood memory and to charge the works with talismanic properties.

Metal casting, to me, feels like an alchemical method of preserving that which is eroding with time. It reimagines these stories. The original object is destroyed, leaving behind an 'immortal' version made from metal. When I combine my casts, with found or inherited materials, I must consider how each item alters the other's history to create a new reality.

I hope this reaction inspires others with an eagerness to reconnect with the magical thinking held by their ancestors. This is what tied them to their homelands, offering a sense of identity and belonging. On a personal level, my work reinforces an eternal tie between myself and the landscapes, beliefs, rituals and now absent people who came before me.



# GLOSSARY

### Bean Sidhe or Banshee

A fairy whose keening (sorrow-filled singing) is thought to foretell death, usually in the family.

### Blood memory

Our ancestral/genetic connection to our native language(s), songs, spirituality, and teachings. Blood memory may be observed as the feelings of comfort and familiarity experienced when we're near to these things.

### Casting

A process in which liquid metal is poured in to a mould. Once cold and solid, the metal cast is removed revealing a 3D shape. There are various types of casting involving different mould materials for different molten metals.

### Collective memory

Collective memory refers to the shared pool of memories, knowledge and information of a social group that is significantly associated with the group's identity.

### Folk customs

Behaviours and beliefs associated as traditional to a group. Typically encompasses the likes of storytelling, spiritual beliefs, celebrations and material culture, including traditional crafts native to the group.

### Good Folk

Also referred to as 'fairies' in Irish folklore and tradition. The spirit beings who inhabit the Celtic Otherworld and sometimes pass through or pay visits to people living in our mortal world. The term 'The Good Folk' is deemed more respectful than 'Fairies', which people in some localities believed would anger the beings.

### The Otherworld

The realm in Celtic mythology where deities and/or the dead live.

### Púca

Naughty creatures that can change shape and like to create mayhem.

### Tactile memory

The memories and associations we have in response to tactile stimuli and the feeling of touching certain objects.

### IN THE WINDOW: MEET THE ARTIST – NÍAMH GRIMES

11am, Fri 20 Oct, *Bluecoat Display Centre*, Free (suggested donation £10 for the artist), Call to book: +44(0) 151 709 4014





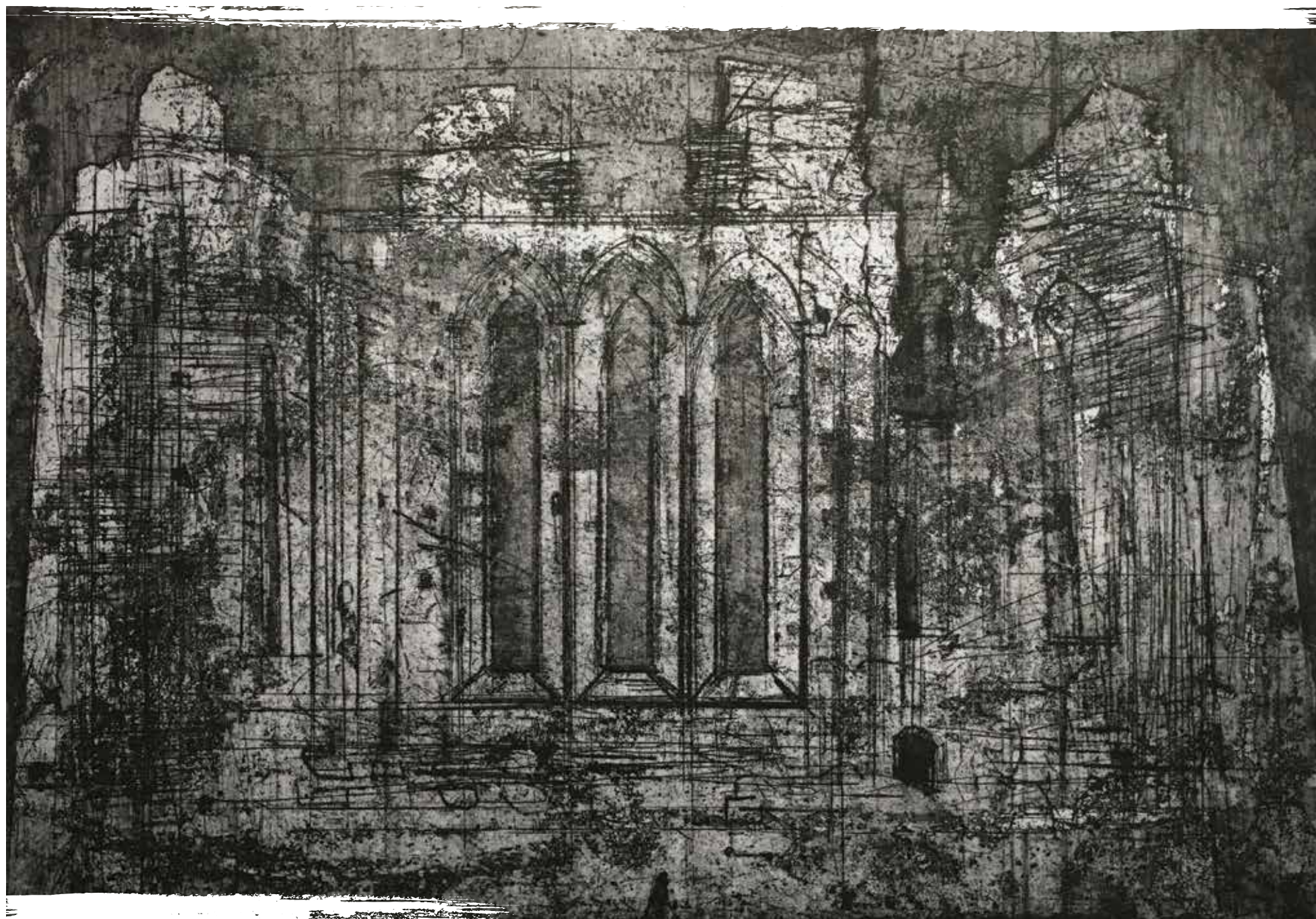
Last year, *Liverpool Irish Festival* presented an exhibition of etchings and monotypes by Northern Irish Wirral-based artist Martin McCoy. Shown at *The Williamson Art Gallery and Museum*, the exhibition took its inspiration from the medieval story *Buile Suibhne*. Taking motifs of the landscape described in the story, Martin's prints provided a contemplation on our relationship to place. Additionally, they called on viewers to consider the role of location in shaping identity and influencing emotional states.

A year on, we caught up with Martin to ask him about his experience with *Sweeney's Unquiet Islands*. Below, Martin reflects on responses to his exhibit and gives us an insight into the direction of his new studio work.

To recap Martin's exhibition, readers can view the exhibition catalogue, using this QR code.



# REFLECTIONS: SWEENEY'S UNQUIET ISLANDS, ONE YEAR ON







In making the *Sweeney* series many themes emerged from the text. Not least was the experience of dispossession and isolation felt by those that have, for one reason or another, left their homes and their normal lives. Sweeney is forced to do the same in the story. Using my experience, I thought about what place meant for me. I thought, particularly, about my relationship to the north of Ireland (where I'm originally from) and its troubled history.

Although I left Northern Ireland over thirty years ago, I still retain a deep connection to its land and investment in its culture. I hoped that, in some way, the exhibition's content might arouse similar emotions in the viewer about places that hold meaning for them, too. Many of the responses I had to the work -both during and since the show- seem to suggest that this was, to some degree, achieved.

### Places, deep mapping, layered interests

Places are important to us. To quote from *Pilgrimage*, the first volume of Tim Robinson's *Stones of Aran*: "if we think of all the place names that humanity has applied to the surface of this planet as constituting a single vast fingerprint, can we neglect even its most minute particularities in trying to identify ourselves?"

It is these *minute particularities* that hold so much interest for me. The manner in which they -in the gradual addition of physical and metaphysical layers over time- create our personal sense of place, wherever it may be.

The idea of 'aspects beneath the surface' often seems to drive my work. It's a concept that resonates with the medium of printmaking. I see printmaking as palimpsest (the image being made of many effacing layers, through which you partially retain the view of another).

### Influence and motive

Robinson's work is certainly an important influence for me. The concept of 'deep mapping', with which Robinson's work is very much associated, is "an attempt to record everything you might ever want to say about a place". Although an impossible project, it motivates me to try.

I'm attempting to articulate my thoughts about where I come from in a visual language. Like Robinson's, my outputs take shape in a somewhat oblique rather than dogmatic way. I hope this gives room for related themes and conversations to emerge.

Through the choice of subject, and the rendering of motif, themes such as belonging, versions of nationhood and the experience of diaspora arise. In the case of Northern Ireland, the legacy of divided communities, the tragedy of lost cultures and the search for common ground -although perhaps not immediately obvious to the viewer- are never far from the surface.

### Think, make, reveal

As a visual artist, the best place for my thinking is in the studio. It's in the improvisatory act of *making*. The last year has been one of experimentation and development, across my print making and painting practices. The work is still very much in development, but builds on the techniques and ideas explored in the *Sweeney* series.

Traditional soft ground etching and aquatint methods have been combined with colour experiments and mark making on multiple plates with the aim of creating layers of marks that suggest rather than illustrate. They're an attempt challenge our traditional perceptions of landscape and what binds us to place. They invite viewers to take on a more imaginative and receptive state. They ask you to acknowledge the varied layers and poetry of place, rather than simply elicit nostalgia.

This process of studio improvisation, experiment and discovery, feels so central to making my making new work. It is perhaps best summed by the artist William Kentridge: "from the act of making, parts of the world and parts of us are revealed that we neither expected nor expressed until we saw them".

### Artist biography

Martin McCoy (b. Belfast, 1967) studied fine art in Manchester (1985-1989), developing his practice in painting. In his early years, Martin's primary focus became motifs of landscape and figure, with particular emphasis on working en plein air (outside). Although Martin remains based in Merseyside (North west England), he returns regularly to Ireland. There he maintains his connection with the Irish landscape, Irish history and contemporary Irish visual arts. He's found that literature -and particularly poetry- has become increasingly important in the development of his practice.

Martin's paintings incorporate traditional oils, as well as experiments with mixed media and collage. Printmaking techniques include intaglio printing processes, such as hard and soft ground etching; aquatint with spit-bite and sugar-lift; dry point and carborundum, often combining processes on a single plate. He is an active member of *Hot Bed Press* (Salford) and studio member at *Make Hamilton* (Birkenhead).

### Hot Bed Press

*Hot Bed Press* (Salford) is one of the largest and best equipped open-access print workshops in the UK. They've been providing expert facilities, and support for printmakers, since 1994.

As well as membership and access options they offer a range of courses in print and book arts. The large open-plan workshop boasts specialist facilities for screen-printing, etching, relief printing, letterpress and book arts, as well as 21 artists' studios.

[hotbedpress.org](http://hotbedpress.org)

The Festival's thanks go to *The Williamson Art Gallery and Museum* who originally held the exhibit and have continued to be great supporters of the Festival and Martin's work.

[williamsonartgallery.org](http://williamsonartgallery.org)

### References

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3. Kentridge, W. (2014). *Six Drawing Lessons: the Charles Eliot Lectures*, 2012. Cambridge, Massachusetts: *Harvard University Press*.

#### WILDE'S THE BALLAD OF READING GAOL

125-years of art, culture and progress  
2pm, Mon 23 Oct, *Zoom online*, Free, book online. Event meeting information will be sent to you ahead of the event



#### ULYSSES: FILM SCREENING (1967, 120MINS)

2pm, Sun 22 Oct, *Museum of Liverpool*, Free (places limited), book online



# TONY BIRTILL

## AN ONGOING IRISH LEGACY FOR LIVERPOOL



Thomas Ryan (*Conradh na Gaeilge Learpholl*) remembers his friend, peer and fellow Gael; considering the legacy he's left behind.

### Tony Birtill Library at Liverpool Irish Centre

In May 2022, *Conradh na Gaeilge Learpholl* proudly announced their creation of the *Tony Birtill Library*. Located in the *Liverpool Irish Centre's* Heritage Room, the library honours our friend and teacher, Tony Birtill, who died 20 21 October 2021.

### The Man

Tony was a Gael through-and-through. He was an enthusiastic teacher of the Irish Language and a good friend to all those learning it. His life was closely intertwined with the Irish community in Liverpool throughout his adult life.

An ever-present face at *Liverpool Irish Centre*, Tony taught classes there every Thursday night. As well as being involved in the work of *Liverpool Irish Festival* (trustee), he was a committed historian of the area, and its Irish links, being the author of the widely acclaimed book *A Hidden History: The Irish Language in Liverpool*.

### Book Collection

Tony left a huge collection of books behind him. The books in the *Tony Birtill Library* are only a selection of Tony's wide collection of books on the language, culture and history of Ireland. *Conradh Na Gaeilge* are delighted to make these available to the next generations of foghlaimoírí (Irish learners) in Merseyside.

Tony most certainly would have approved of this use of his books. Most of his remaining book collection, which could not be accommodated in his library at the *Irish Centre*, were donated to the *University of Liverpool's Institute of Irish Studies* library.

Tony's library contains a wide selection of books, including books for children; easy readers for adults and textbooks such as *Learning Irish*, *Gaeilge Gan Stró*, *Enjoy Irish* and *Now You're Talking*.

### Accessing the library

Since it opened, readers have been able to borrow books for up to a month. To access the library, simply ask a member of the centre's staff.

Keep using the Irish language and keep it alive in Liverpool!

"Leatsa an Teanga, léigh í agus labhair í".

"It's your Language, so read it and speak it!".

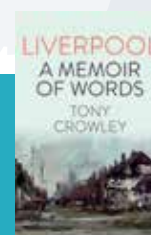
### Memorial Package

In 2022, *Conradh na Gaeilge Learpholl*, *The Institute of Irish Studies* at the *University of Liverpool*, *Oideas Gael* (Donegal), *Liverpool Irish Festival* and *Liverpool Irish Centre*, worked collaboratively to build a memorial package in Tony's name. In doing so, we memorialised our friend, teacher and lifelong supporter of the Irish Language. We'll share details of the 2023 memorial package at a tribute to Tony on 21 Oct 2023.



IRISH FAMINE MEMORIAL

11 am, Sun 29 Oct, *St Luke's Bomed Out Church*, Free, just turn up



LIVERPOOL ENGLISH WITH TONY CROWLEY

6pm, Fri 27 Oct, *Liverpool Central Library* (4th Floor conference suite), Free (spaces limited), book online



# Exhibition coming to Liverpool!

## 50 years of the Irish in Britain

Irish **50** YEARS  
in Britain  
1973 - 2023

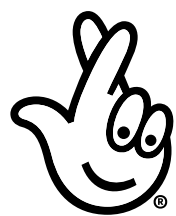


**The Florrie | 377 Mill St | Liverpool | L8 4R**

**Opens Wednesday 8 November until Sunday 12 November | Free entry | All welcome**

Come along and hear stories of the lives and experiences of the Irish community over the past 50 years in this specially curated national exhibition of personal oral histories.

An open house celebration of the unique contribution of Irish migration to modern Britain.



Made possible with

**Heritage Fund**

The exhibition is part of a heritage project created by the national charity, Irish in Britain, with the support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund, to mark its 50th anniversary.

Also touring to:

<b>London:</b>	Irish Cultural Centre	1-5 Nov
<b>Leeds:</b>	Slung Low	15-19 Nov
<b>Birmingham:</b>	ThinkTank	22-26 Nov

[www.irishinbritain.org](http://www.irishinbritain.org)



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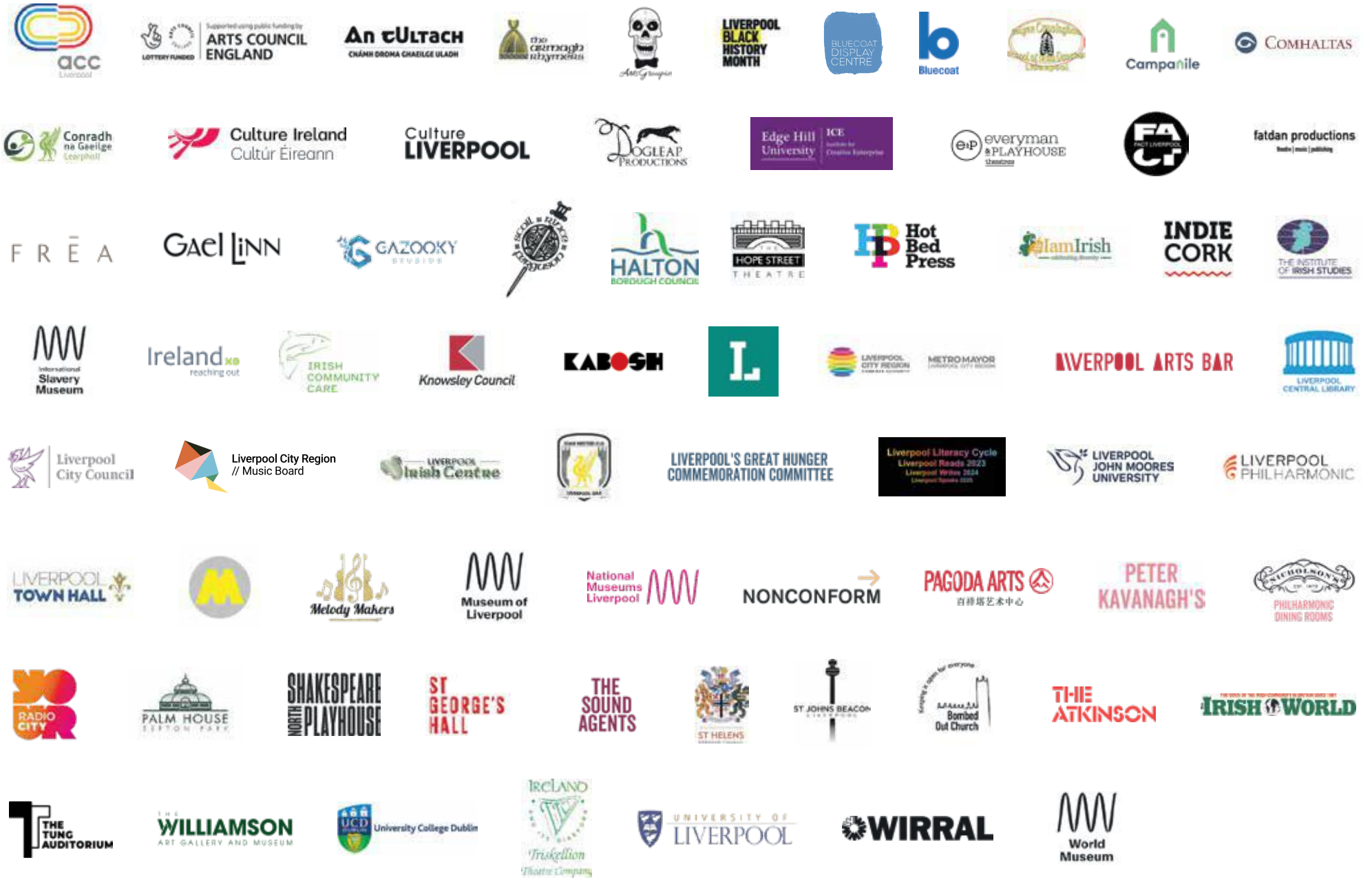
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**About:** The *Liverpool Irish Festival* (registered charity No.110126, Company No. 4800736) is governed by a volunteer board, chaired by John Chandler, an original founder. We receive regular funding from Liverpool City Council's *Culture Arts Investment Programme* and the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs *Emigrant Support Programme*. In 2020, we were recipients of HM Government's *Cultural Recovery Funding: #HereForCulture*.

We have been fortunate to receive a second round of *National Lottery Heritage Funds* for work on the *Liverpool Irish Famine Trail*, which we will be developing until 2024 under this project. *Tourism Ireland* are a Festival sponsor and we are pleased to have *The Irish World* as a media partner. To each we say thank you and go raib maith agat/may you have goodness.