

25th Annual

# Donegal Bay and Blue Stacks Festival

Sept 26th - Oct 12th 2025

**FREE**  
PROGRAMME



BlueStacksFestival



donegalcoco

*Presented by Donegal County Council Culture Division*



**Comhairle Contae  
Dhún na nGall**  
Donegal County Council

## Fáilte | Welcome

Welcome to the 25th. edition of this annual festival, which is presented by **Donegal County Council Culture Division**, in partnership with a range of arts organisations, venues and community groups, largely in the South and South West of the county.

The festival is funded by **Donegal County Council**, **The Arts Council** and **Creative Ireland**. **The Brian Friel Trust** and **The Brian Friel Centre** are assisted by **The Heritage Council**, **Donegal County Council** and **The Ireland Funds**.

## Ba mhaith linn buíochas a ghabháil chuig

**Ailis McIntyre**, Linda Clyne, Abbey Arts Centre, Ballyshannon. **Conor Malone**, Balor Arts Centre, Ballybofey. **Emer Keon**, Erne Enterprise Development CLG. **Emma Timoney**, OPW, Donegal Castle. **John O'Connell**, Eclipse Cinemas. **Emmet O'Doherty**, The Chasin' Bull. **Maura Logue**, Dark Daughter Productions. **Harriet Purkis** and The Brian Friel Trust. **Deborah Cunningham**, The Bluestack Chorale and Donegal Voices. **Shirley Anne Bonner**, **Celine McGlynn**, Frances Browne Literary Festival. **Chantal McCormack**, Fidget Feet Aerial Dance Theatre. **Caroline Harvey**, **Collie Mac Pháidín**, Donegal Bay Film Festival. **Caoimhín Mac Aoidh**, **Rab Cherry**, Cairdeas na bhFidiléirí. **Dr. Angela Byrne**, Royal Irish Academy. **Christian Carbin**, **Art Kavanagh**, Donegal Drama

Circle. **Geraldine Diver**, **John Travers**, **Ailis McIntyre**, Ballyshannon Drama Society. **Eithne Ní Ghallchobhair**. **Kevin Lowery**, **Shannon Carroll**, Kevin Lowery Gallery. **Keith Mannion**, **Patsy O'Kane**, Treehouse Productions. **Tommy Callaghan**, Manna Design. **Dermot Flynn**. **Frances Connaghan**, **William Colvin**, Donegal County Council Communications Office. **Mark Sweeney**, Snr. Executive Engineer, Roads, Donegal County Council. **Joseph Gallagher**, Heritage Officer, Donegal County Council. **Collette Beattie**, Conservation Officer, Donegal County Council. **Naiose Nolan**, Regional Cultural Centre, Donegal County Council. **Andrew McNulty**, Arts & Cultural Diversity Officer, Donegal County Council.



Clár Éire Idirnách  
Creative Ireland  
Programme



**DONEGAL**  
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Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann  
Royal Irish Academy



Funded by  
An Chomhairle Oidhreachta  
The Heritage Council



**Cover Illustration:** *Faith Healer*, by Dermot Flynn. Copyright Dermot Flynn. All Rights Reserved. From the Online Exhibition, *Brian Friel's Ballybeg*. See [www.brianfrielsballybeg.ie](http://www.brianfrielsballybeg.ie) Commissioned by Donegal County Council Heritage Office. See P. 10 for details of *Faith Healer* festival performance.

THE BLUESTACK CHORALE PRESENTS

# Songs for An Autumn Evening

The Bluestack Chorale with **Deborah Cunningham**, Soprano,  
**Paul Martin**, Baritone and **Evan McGarrigle**, Piano.

**Date:** Friday, September 26

**Venue:** Fáilte Ireland Tourist Office, The Quay, **Donegal Town**

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €15. Tickets at Door. Includes Refreshments

After another resounding success for the Mountcharles Opera Festival at Drumbeg House, Inver, this summer, The Bluestack Chorale are delighted to be back again for another Autumn festival season.



With their usual eclectic repertoire, there's always something for everyone's musical tastes and this year is no different with a programme celebrating the sea. As always, Deborah, Paul and Evan take the second half of the evening and this year introduce us to Offenbach's whimsical but dark Tales of Hoffman.

**Deborah Cunningham** holds a Recital Diploma from Trinity College, London. She is the founder of the Mountcharles Opera Festival and initiated the Donegal Voices choral ensemble in 2015.

**Paul Martin** is one of Donegal's premier baritones. He is musical director of The Bluestack Chorale and of St. Agatha's Choir, Donegal.

**Evan McGarrigle** is an award-winning pianist. He is much in demand as a solo performer and runs a successful music school in Carrick. A gifted music arranger, he is also director of the Donegal Voices ensemble and is a popular tutor with the Donegal Music Education Partnership (DMEP).

THE KEVIN LOWERY GALLERY & STUDIO PRESENTS

# Between Land and Sea, Reflections on the North West Coast

Curated by Shannon Carroll.

Featuring works by Michael Budd, Ruth Cadden, Vicky Crawford, Sinéad Gallagher, Marie O'Gara, Darragh Gorman, Christine Harrison, Kathryn Johnson, Olivia Jones, Su Kinnon, Dorothee Kolle, Carie Lainchbury, Kevin Lowery, Vanessa Marsh, Dana Sorokina, Rebecca Sweeney, Rikki Van Den Berg, Karen Webster, Gillian Wright.

**Date:** Saturday, September 27 – Sunday, October 12

**Venue:** Kevin Lowery Gallery & Studio, Bundoran Retail Park, **Bundoran**

**Time:** Open Daily 10.00am - 5.30pm • **Cost:** FREE

**Exhibition Opening:** Friday, September 26 6.00pm – 8.00pm. All Welcome

This exhibition invited artists to submit work that reflects on the deep ties between the environment and the lives of those who live along the remarkable Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim coastline.



Renowned for its ancient cliffs, expansive beaches, crashing waves and hidden enclaves, the region has inspired and captivated artists for generations. Its rugged shorelines are a testament to the enduring power of nature and its profound influence on the traditions of coastal communities. It is a place of contrasts, where isolation meets connection and resilience is woven into the fabric of everyday life

The featured works engage with the challenges and possibilities of living in an ongoing dialogue with the sea, the impact of the ocean in shaping local culture and reflect on the environmental and ecological preservation of our coastlines.

For further information or for queries about the exhibition, please contact the Gallery at E: [info@kevinlowery.ie](mailto:info@kevinlowery.ie). The exhibition may also be viewed online at the url: <https://kevinlowery.ie/pages/exhibition>

BALLYSHANNON DRAMA SOCIETY PRESENTS

# Calendar Girls

By **Tim Firth**. Directed by **Geraldine Diver**.

**Date:** Wednesday, October 1 – Saturday, October 4

**Venue:** Abbey Arts Centre, Tirconnail Street, **Ballyshannon**

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €20

**Gala Night in aid of Cancer Charities:** Saturday October 4 • **Cost:** €25

This stage version of the hugely popular film, is in turn based on the true story of a group of Yorkshire friends and members of the local Women's Institute who, following the death of one of their husbands from cancer, hit on a novel idea for raising funds for leukemia research.

To the horror of their partners and the bemusement of the local community, they propose to create a calendar where they tastefully pose nude while engaged in traditional Women's Institute activities like sewing, knitting and cupcake making. The plan sparks a media frenzy and brings both joy and tension to the women's lives. Ultimately though, it becomes a celebration of resilience, friendship and the power of ordinary women achieving something extraordinary.

The 2003 film, with Helen Mirren, Julie Walters, Geraldine James and Ciaran Hinds, was an enormous success and was followed by the stage version which enjoyed a nine-month, West End run in 2009.

In this eagerly anticipated production by Ballyshannon Drama Society, honouring the memory of award-winning actor and director **Rachel O'Connor** who sadly passed away in 2024, the cast includes **Christine Irvine, Tricia Keane, Laura McNulty, Deirdre Ferguson, Margaret Timoney, Moya Ferguson, Ailis McIntyre, Richard Hurst, Mark Kirby, Killian McManus, Terence McEaney, Sinéad Luke, Kay O'Dea** and **Regina Fahy**.



# Donegal Bay Film Festival

**Date:** Wednesday, October 1 & Thursday, October 2

**Venue:** Eclipse Cinemas, Bundoran

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** FREE

**Bookings:** Eventbrite



Bundoran film-maker **Caroline Harvey** has drawn together an exciting programme of short films and documentaries made by emerging filmmakers from the North and North West of Ireland.

## Wednesday – October 1st

**Naked Lights** – Wri/Dir: Jeda De Bri. **Turnaround** -Wri/Dir: **Aisling Byrne**. **Dembaya** – Dir. **Borja Guillot**. **Two For The Road** – Wri/Dir: **Lochlainn McKenna**. **Room Taken** – Dir: **TJ O’Grady Peyton**, Wri: **Mchael Whelan**. **Gaza In Colour** – Wri/Dir: **Various Gazan Children & Haneen Korez**.

## Thursday - October 2nd

**License For Nil** – Dir: **Shane Robinson**, Wri: **Shannon Welby**. **Abreaction** – Wri/Dir: **Akaki Devidze**. **Galar** – Wri/Dir: **Niall Duffy**. **Bad Vibes** – Wri/Dir: **Emily Foran**. **A Day in the Sun** – Wri/Dir: **Edwin Mullane**. **Tíolacadh** – Dir: **Sadbh Larkin Coyle & Sean Coyle**, Wri: **Sadbh Larkin Coyle**. **River On The Hill** – Wri/Dir: **Colm Herron**.

**In Naked Lights**, when a masked stranger threatens to burn down a 24-hour petrol station, disaffected nightshift attendant Emma is all that stands in his way.

A West Cork cleaner uncovers a tightly held secret when navigating the fast-paced pressures of a holiday property **Turnaround**.

In the animated short, **Dembaya**, a young girl and her family flee their war-torn African village and seek refuge in Ireland.

**Two for The Road** sees young Oscar and his Dad embark on a chaotic road trip around 1990s Ireland.

**In Room Taken**, having just arrived in Ireland, Isaac finds an unexpected answer to his temporary homelessness.

**Gaza In Colour** is a series of short animations about daily life and stories from Gaza, created by Gazan children with animation tutor, Haneen Koraz.

In **License for Nil**, rookie TV license inspector Curtis and his easy-going partner are sent to collect fees on a remote, offshore island.

In **Abreaction**, a journalist investigates a series of mysterious kidnappings where the victims have no recollection of the event.

**Galar** ('Disease') is a social drama about the defective concrete blocks crisis in Donegal, told through the eyes of a father trying to protect his home and family.

**Bad Vibes** sees a young married couple attempt to rediscover their intimate relationship on a visit to an Ann Summers-inspired shop in Belfast.

**A Day in The Sun** sees a daughter coming to terms with the deteriorating health of her father by making the most of their time together.

**Tíolachadh** ('Divine Gift') is a story of a tentative healing between a father and his estranged daughter who returns to their Gaeltacht village after many years away.

In **River on The Hill** the search for a missing girl brings more than routine police work, as two detectives navigate a drug infested street.

ÓICHE AR LEITH SCÉALAÍOCHT IS CEOIL

# Reacaireacht sa Chaisleán

Eithne Ní Ghallchobhair, Steve Cooney, Dermot Byrne.

**Date:** Thursday, October 2

**Venue:** The Great Hall, Donegal Castle, **Donegal Town**

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €15. Booking via [www.abbeycentre.ie](http://www.abbeycentre.ie)

*Limited Accessibility Note: Please Note, Access to The Great Hall performance space is by Stairs only.*

Join us for a unique evening of storytelling from An Rúraíocht - the Ulster Cycle of mythological tales - the music of Turlough O'Carolan and a sparkling selection of tunes from the Donegal tradition, in the appropriate setting of Donegal Castle, the 15th. century seat of the O'Donnell's.

**Eithne Ní Ghallchobhair** specializes in telling stories from the Fionn and The Fianna cycle of folktales and the Ulster Cycle of Cú Chulainn and the Red Branch Knights. Eithne's recent publication, *Caithréim agus Tóir*, is a re-telling of the story of young lovers, Oisín Mac Fhionn and Niamh Cinn Óir (Arlen House, 2024).

**Steve Cooney** arrived in Ireland from Australia in the 1980s. Since then he has become a stalwart of the Irish traditional music scene, winning the Lifetime Achievement Award at the RTÉ Radio 1 Folk Awards in 2020. His recent, acclaimed recording, *Ceol Ársa Cláirsí*, is a selection of compositions by Turlough O'Carolan and other harpists, performed on guitar.

**Dermot Byrne** is a virtuoso accordion player who has toured the world as a member of Altan. Much influenced by the playing of Johnny Doherty and of the South West Donegal master fiddlers, he is equally renowned for his renditions of tunes from the French Canadian tradition.



# Donegal Voices - Choir and Orchestra

Conductor and Musical Director, **Evan McGarrigle**.

**Brahms' Requiem - Celebrating Ten Years of Donegal Voices**

**Date:** Friday, October 3 • **Venue:** St. Patrick's Church, **Donegal Town**

**Date:** Friday, October 10 • **Venue:** St. Connell's Church, **Glenties**

**Times:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** Retiring Collection

With an established reputation for excellence, The Donegal Voices, under their Conductor and Musical Director **Evan McGarrigle** perform one of the corner-stone pieces of the classical choral canon.



Johannes Brahms' Requiem was composed by Brahms following the death of his mother and of his friend Robert Schumann in 1865. A largescale composition for chorus, orchestra, soprano and baritone soloists, Requiem is the ideal work for Donegal Voices to showcase their consummate talents and celebrate their 10th. anniversary with verve and ambition.

The programme will also feature a new arrangement of the traditional air, The Lark in the Clear Air, by Andrew Batchelor, who was Donegal Voices' Conductor and Musical Director from 2015 to 2022.

The Donegal Voices will be accompanied by a 13-piece **Orchestra** comprising some of the most accomplished stringed and wind musicians working in classical music in Donegal and the North West of Ireland.

Soloists: **Deborah Cunningham**, Soprano. **Paul Martin**, Baritone.

**Donegal Voices** first performed in 2015 and have established themselves as one of the premier choral groups in the North West of Ireland. This exceptional 40 member vocal ensemble has performed works by, among others, Vivaldi (Gloria), Handel (Messiah), Beethoven (Mass in C), George Friderik Handel (The Hallelujah Chorus) and Joseph Haydn (Nelson Mass).

THE BRIAN FRIEL CENTRE PRESENTS

# Celebrating Brian Friel – An Evening of Readings

With **Adrian Dunbar, Sinéad Cusack, Stephen Rea and Denis Conway.**  
Directed by **Conall Morrison.**

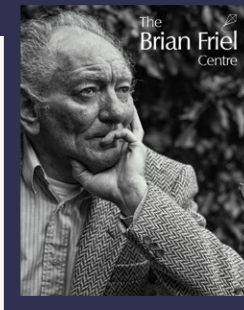
**Date:** Friday, October 3

**Venue:** The Highlands Hotel, **Glenties**

**Time:** 8.00pm (Doors 7.30pm)

**Cost:** FREE. Booking via [www.abbeycentre.ie](http://www.abbeycentre.ie)

On the tenth anniversary of his passing, come join a gathering to celebrate the life and works of legendary playwright, Brian Friel, in a programme of readings from his short stories, plays and diary entries, by a selection of Ireland's finest actors who were among his close friends and associates. This event is a great opportunity to experience the world of one of Ireland's most beloved writers. From powerful plays to short stories, Friel's writings have touched hearts worldwide.



**Brian Friel** was born in near Omagh, Co. Tyrone in 1929 and lived most of his life in Greencastle, Co. Donegal, until his death in October 2015. He wrote 37 plays in his lifetime including *Philadelphia, Here I Come!*, *Translations*, *Dancing at Lughnasa* and *Faith Healer*. Thirteen of his plays are set in the fictional village of Ballybeg, considered by many to be inspired by Glenties, his mother's family home place, where he spent many summers as young boy and returned to regularly throughout his adult life.

**The Brian Friel Centre** project is currently being undertaken by the Brian Friel Trust and partners, including Donegal County Council, who are working together to create a dedicated Brian Friel Centre at a refurbished Glenties Courthouse and to restore and conserve Brian Friel's maternal homestead, The Laurels, also in Glenties.

THE BRIAN FRIEL CENTRE PRESENTS

# Brian Friel Remembered – Readings from The Stories & Plays

**Date:** Saturday, October 4

**Venue:** The Laurels Cottage & Garden, **Glenties**

**Time:** 11.00am • **Cost:** FREE

*Open Air, Standing Event. Car Parking only at St. Columba's Comprehensive School, Glenties. F94 C421. No Dogs, except Assistance Dogs.*



Brian Friel's maternal homestead, The Laurels, has recently undergone an extensive conservation and refurbishment and its garden re-set to a design by award-winning designer Diarmuid Gavin. The project has been funded by The Heritage Council and Donegal County Council.

This will be the first public event to be held in the location that inspired one of Friel's best loved plays, *Dancing at Lughnasa*.

THE BRIAN FRIEL CENTRE &amp; BLOOD IN THE ALLEY PRODUCTIONS PRESENT

# Faith Healer

Written by **Brian Friel**. Directed by **Geoff Gould**.  
 With **Seamus O'Rourke**, **Orla Fitzgerald**, **Michael Patric**.

**Date:** Saturday, October 4**Venue:** The Market Hall, **Glenties****Time:** 7.30pm (Doors 7.00pm)**Cost:** €25. Booking via [www.abbeycentre.ie](http://www.abbeycentre.ie)

*Limited Access Notice: Please Note, Access to the first-floor performance space is by Stairs Only.*

'Fantastic Francis Hardy. Faith Healer. One Night Only'. There are many who believe Faith Healer is Brian Friel's greatest play. Francis 'Frank' Hardy is a healer, travelling to remote corners in Wales, Scotland and Ireland, hoping to heal those who wish to be healed. His wife Grace and his cockney manager Teddy weave their versions of their life with Frank and a terrible event into a haunting performance. Truths, lies, deception and murder all collide to provide a dark journey into a psychic landscape that compels and enthrals.

**Seamus O'Rourke**, who plays the part of Frank, is a much-loved writer, actor and director from County Leitrim. He has toured his own self-penned plays – among them Pdraig Potts, The Ballad of Mossy Flood and The Handyman - the length and breadth of Ireland to great acclaim.

**Orla Fitzgerald**, who plays the part of Grace, will be well known to television audiences from her role as Orla Walsh in the popular BBC 3 comedy series, The Young Offenders. Her theatre credits include plays for The Gate Theatre (The New Electric Ballroom), The Lyric Belfast (The Playboy of the Western World) and Fishamble Theatre Company (Inside The GPO).

**Michael Patric**, who plays Teddy, played the part of young Cáit's errant father in the Oscar nominated Irish language film, An Cailín Ciúin. Among his most recent performing credits is his self-penned play, Sugar, inspired by his time at the former Irish Sugar factory in Mallow, which closed in 2006.



THE BRIAN FRIEL CENTRE AND THE IRISH REPERTORY THEATRE, NEW YORK, PRESENTS

# Mapping The Land: The Literary Landscape of Brian Friel

**Date:** Friday, October 3 - Sunday, October 5

**Venue:** Lúghnasa Creative Arts Centre, Ballybeg House, Main Street, **Glentias**

**Time:** 11.00am to 5.00pm Daily • **Cost:** FREE



Curated by Sarah Moran, with design by Muireann Lalor, Mapping the Land: The Literary Landscape of Brian Friel explores the life and work of master Irish playwright Brian Friel, from his early fiction in *The New Yorker* to his enduring influence on world theatre. The exhibition was created as part of the Irish Repertory Theatre of New York's Friel Project season of 2023-2024. It features personal letters, photographs and manuscripts, demonstrating the playwright's deep connection to the Donegal landscape and its people, his evolution as a writer and the events that inspired his plays.

**Sarah Moran** is an actor, writer and researcher from Dublin. **Muireann Lalor** is a New York-based designer and art director. She is Director of Marketing at the Irish Repertory Theatre.

CUIREANN CAIRDEAS NA BHFIDLÉIRÍ I LÁTHAIR

## The 43rd Annual

# Donegal Fiddlers Glenties Gathering

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**Date:** Friday, October 3 – Sunday, October 5

**Venue:** The Highlands Hotel, Glenties

**www.donegalfiddlemusic.ie**



This major gathering of fiddle players was established in 1983 and is held annually in the Highlands Hotel, Glenties. As always, there is a great line up of fiddle players from both near and far, with a weekend full of classes, talks, sessions and a fantastic Saturday night Fiddle Concert.

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## Fiddle Masterclass

**Date:** Saturday, October 4 & Sunday, October 5 • **Time:** 10.30am to 12.30pm

**Venue:** The Highlands Hotel, Glenties • **Cost:** €15 (For the 2 days)

**Booking:** Please Book in Advance at Email [info@donegalfiddlemusic.ie](mailto:info@donegalfiddlemusic.ie) or by Text to 086 3409019.

**Troy MacGillivray and Andrea Beaton** (Cape Breton)

**Date:** Saturday, October 4 • **Time:** 2.30pm – 4.00pm

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## Talk: The Fiddle Music of Cape Breton

with **Andrea Beaton** and **Troy MacGillivray**.

**Date:** Saturday, October 4

**Venue:** The Highlands Hotel, Glenties

**Time:** 12.30pm – 1.30pm • **Cost:** FREE

The fiddle music of Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, is strongly rooted in the Scottish and Irish traditions, following waves of emigration from these shores in the 18th. and 19th. centuries.

## Donegal Fiddlers Concert

Featuring two fine young fiddle players from Killybegs and Dunkineely, a master from Gaoth Dobhair and special guests from Nova Scotia and Cape Breton.

**Date:** Saturday, October 4

**Venue:** The Highlands Hotel, **Glenties**

**Time:** 9.00pm • **Cost:** €15

**Bookings:** Tickets At Door.

No Advance Booking.



**Éabha McGuinness** is from Killybegs and is set for a career in music. Currently studying for a BA in Irish Music at University of Limerick, she has been attending Cairdeas na bhFidiléirí events since 2017. She hosted her own programme on Raidió na Gaeltachta this summer.



**Brandon Shovlin** is a young fiddle player from Dunkineely. A prodigious talent, he won the Under 18 Fiddle competition at this year's Ulster Fleadh.

**Ciarán Ó Maonaigh** is from Gaoth Dobhair and is a member of the illustrious Mooney musical family. He is a very highly regarded solo fiddle player who has also plays with Fidil, The High Seas and in a duet with his wife, concertina player Caitlín Nic Gabhann. His parallel career as a film documentary maker has seen him create award-winning works for TG4, RTÉ and Aniar TV among others. He released only his second solo CD, *Cailte sa Cheol*, this summer.

**Andrea Beaton** comes from a long line of Cape Breton musicians, composers and dancers. An award-winning fiddler, composer and recording artist, she is renowned for her powerful bow and driving playing style.

**Troy MacGillivray** was raised in Lanark, in the North East of Nova Scotia, an area steeped in the Scottish Highlands tradition. A hugely talented performer on both fiddle and piano with five award winning albums his credit, Troy is a regular visitor to Europe, performing at Celtic Connections, Shetland Folk and Denmark's Tønder festivals.

# Vital Voices

**Felispeaks, Colm Keegan, Mirenda Rosenburg, Sinéad O'Brien, Maura Logue and Paddy Donoghue**

**An Evening of Intercultural Expression through Word, Story & Song.**

**Date:** Wednesday, October 8

**Venue:** Abbey Arts Centre, Tírconnail Street, **Ballyshannon**

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** FREE

This special gathering platforms poets, playwrights, performers and storytellers from Ireland and beyond who are shaping culture and conversation through their work.

**Felispeaks** (aka Felicia Olusanya) is a Nigerian-Irish poet who has performed at Cúirt International Festival, Other Voices and the National Concert Hall. Their best-known poem, For Our Mothers, is on the Leaving Certificate English Curriculum.

**Colm Keegan** is a Dublin poet and playwright whose work bridges community and stage.

**Mirenda Rosenberg** is a Donegal based, American singer-songwriter blending soul, storytelling and advocacy.

**Sinéad O'Brien** is a storyteller and theatre maker whose Edinburgh Fringe show, No One Is Coming, uses epic Irish mythology to explore mental health and identity.

**Maura Logue** is a writer and performer. Her play, Lady Morgan and Lola Montez, will be performed in Donegal Castle as part of the festival.

**Paddy Donoghue** is a Donegal poet whose recent collection, Leave Taking, reflects on time, place and legacy.



## 3 On the Bund

**Date:** Wednesday, October 8

**Venue:** Balor Arts Centre, Main Street, **Ballybofey**

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €20/€15 Concession

3 On the Bund are a rising young traditional band, with strong Donegal connections. For singer and concertina player, **Susan Coleman**, this is very much a hometown gig, as she hails from nearby Castlefin, while keyboards and fiddle player **Ella McGrory** is from Culdaff, Inishowen. Their fellow band members include **Rebecca McCarthy Kent** from Waterford on fiddle, uilleann piper **Simon Pfisterer** from Bavaria and guitarist **Sean Kelliher** from Killarney.



They met at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick, where all five were studying Irish Traditional Music Performance. Blending tradition with innovation, their complex layered arrangements include both traditional and newly composed material, played with energy and passion.

As well as performing extensively across Ireland, they have toured in the UK, Europe, the US and Asia. They released their debut CD, *Frenzy*, in 2022 and are currently working on their second.

*"Powerful, Energetic, Vibrant."* - *Irish Music Magazine.*

*"One of the most memorable, dynamic performances of recent years."*  
- *Birmingham Tradfest.*

DONEGAL DRAMA CIRCLE

# The Odd Couple (Female Version)

Written by **Neil Simon**. Directed by **Christian Carbin**.  
Lighting Director, **Art Kavanagh**.

**Date:** Thursday, October 9 – Saturday, October 11

**Venue:** Leghowney Community Hall, Leghowney, **Donegal Town**

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €15. Tickets At Door.

The Odd Couple is one of Neil Simon's best-loved and most successful comedies. It was first performed on Broadway in 1965, with the legendary Walter Matthau and Art Carney in the lead roles. The plot revolves around two mismatched roommates – the neat, neurotic and uptight Felix Unger and the slovenly, easy-going Oscar Madison. Separated and divorced respectively, the pair host a weekly poker game with an equally eccentric group of friends and stage a hilarious attempt to befriend the occupants of the upstairs apartment, the English-born Pigeon Sisters.

In 1985, Neil Simon revised the play for a female cast. In The Female Odd Couple, the ill-assorted roommates are Florence Unger and Olive Madison. The poker game becomes Trivial Pursuit, with the players becoming girlfriends Mikey, Sylvie, Vera and Renee. The Pigeon sisters became the Spanish-born, Costazuela brothers, Manolo and Jesus. The show ran for a year on Broadway with Rita Moreno as Olive and Sally Struthers as Florence.

In this Donegal Drama Circle production, **Emer McMullin** is Olive Madison, **Suzanne Thomas** is Florence Unger, **Aoife Cassidy** is Sylvie, **Rhiannon Kerrigan** is Vera, **Rebecca O'Connor** is Renee, **Ciara Boyle** is Mikey and the **Costazuela Brothers, Manolo** and **Jesus**, are played by **Seamus McHugh** and **Conor Friery**.



# Launch of Ballyshannon Historic Towns Atlas

With **Dr. Angela Byrne** and **Dr. Easkey Britton**.

**Date:** Thursday, October 9

**Venue:** Abbey Arts Centre, Tirconnail Street, **Ballyshannon**

**Time:** 6.00pm • **Cost:** FREE

The **Royal Irish Academy (RIA)** and **Donegal County Council Heritage Office** extend an open invitation to attend the Launch of Irish Historic Towns Atlas No. 32, Ballyshannon.



The event will feature an illustrated talk by author **Dr. Angela Byrne** on *Hidden Histories: Vanished Traces of Ballyshannon's Past*, in advance of a Launch Reception with Guest Speaker, **Dr. Easkey Britton**.

It will also include another opportunity to enjoy the **Ballyshannon Mall Through Time** exhibition, created by **Dr. Angela Byrne** as part of her research for the Historic Towns Atlas project, supported by Ballyshannon Regeneration Group.

The **Irish Historic Towns Atlas** series was established by the RIA with the aim of recording the topographical development of a selection of Irish towns. Part of a wider European scheme, it allows Irish towns to be studied in their European context.

**Dr. Angela Byrne** has held research, lecturing and curatorial positions at Ulster University, University of Greenwich and the EPIC Irish Emigration Museum. She now works on the RIA's Dictionary of Irish Biography project.

**Dr. Easkey Britton** is a social ecologist whose writings focus the connections between humans, our wellbeing and the health of the planet. Her publications include *Ebb and Flow, Salt Water in The Blood* and *50 Things To Do By The Sea*.

DARK DAUGHTER PRODUCTIONS

# Lady Morgan & Lola Montez

## An Imagined Conversation

Written and Directed by **Maura Logue**.Performed by **Marianne Fahy** and **Maura Logue**.**Date:** Friday, October 10**Venue:** The Great Hall, Donegal Castle, **Donegal Town****Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €15 Booking via [www.abbeycentre.ie](http://www.abbeycentre.ie)

*Limited Accessibility Note: Please Note, Access to The Great Hall performance space is by Stairs only.*

You are invited to eavesdrop on an imagined conversation between two wild Irish girls of the North West - Lady Morgan (aka Sydney Owenson 1718-1859) and Lola Montez (aka Elizabeth Gilbert 1821 -1861).

**Sydney Owenson** was a noted novelist and harpist who spent her formative years in Sligo. As a young woman she performed on the North West's garrison towns circuit, including Ballyshannon where the last fatal duel in the town was fought in her honour. Her novels, including *The Wild Irish Girl* and *O'Donnell: A National Tale*, with their strong nationalist and feminist leanings, attracted controversy and admiration in equal measure.

**Elizabeth Gilbert**, from Grange, fled Ireland at an early age. Re-inventing

herself as Lola Montez, Spanish dancer, she performed all over Europe attracting the attentions of a string of admirers including the King of Bavaria who made her a Countess. The ultimate femme fatale, she retired to the East Coast of America to deliver a moral lecture tour, before her untimely death at the age of 39.

In this presentation by Dark Daughter Productions, the part of Lady Morgan is played by **Marianne Fahy** and Lola Montez is played by **Maura Logue**. The play premiered at the Hawkswell Theatre earlier this year, as part of the Bealtaine Festival.



TREEHOUSE LIVE PRESENTS

# WineMom

With DJ Joe Pepper



**Date:** Friday, October 10

**Venue:** The Chasin' Bull, **Bundoran**

**Time:** 10.30pm – 2.00am • **Cost:** €5



Indie rock four piece, **WineMom**, have sold out headline shows at The Workmans in Dublin and The Social in London and have supported Deacon Blue, Altered Images, Jane's Addiction and Kingfishr among others. Led by front woman **Rosanna Harrington** (Guitar and Vocals), the Dublin based band includes **Millie Moloney** on Bass, **Reese Martin** on Drums and **Matthew Marshall** on Lead Guitar.

They've released four singles to-date including the latest, Hello (Far Cry), hailed by **Hotpress** as 'incredibly bouncy and anthemic tune of effervescent guitar riffs ... catchy bass lines and honey rich vocals'.

TREEHOUSE LIVE PRESENTS

# T.A. Narrative

With DJ Cozy Joe



**Date:** Saturday, October 11

**Venue:** The Chasin' Bull, Bundoran

**Time:** 10.30pm – 2.00am • **Cost:** €5



**T.A. Narrative** are a music project from Limerick led by **Tara Nix** and **Anna Murphy** who have worked together under various guises in Irish punk scene bands, as well as touring and recording in the US. They create emotive and dynamic pop songs, blending electronic beats with live instruments in wildly engaging stage performances.

Following a highly praised set at the recent All Together Now festival, they launch their new EP, *Hearts Drive Forward*, in a headline show at Dolan's Warehouse on Halloween night.

ERNE ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT CLG & DARK DAUGHTER PRODUCTIONS PRESENT

# Púcalicious Carnival Parade

**Date:** Saturday, October 11

**Venue:** Market Street, Castle Street, William Allingham Bridge, **Ballyshannon**

**Time:** 7.30pm-8.30pm • **Cost:** FREE

*Parking Restrictions and Traffic Diversions will be in place along the Parade Route from 6.30pm to 9.00pm. Warm Clothing Advisable*

Echoing the stories of William Allingham and Bram Stoker, over 200 performers will take to the streets of Ballyshannon in a riot of colour, sound and movement to celebrate the folklore of **An Púca** and other shapeshifting creatures of the night, with Inishowen Carnival and a host of local and visiting performers and groups.



The Parade will also remember the achievements of **The Kildoney Fishermen** who, one hundred years ago this year, won a celebrated court battle against the private ownership of salmon fishing rights on the Erne Estuary.

Co-ordinated by **Maura Logue** of **Dark Daughter Productions**, the Parade will feature one of Ireland's top street arts companies, **Inishowen Carnival** and the **Aislingí Dancers**, as well as **Ballyshannon Mens Shed**, **Rosstown Rogue Pirates**, **In Your Space Circus**, **ATU Sligo Performing Arts**, **Michelle Belle School of Dance**, **Stars of The West**, **Killybegs Accordion Band** and **Foresters Hall Youth Drama**.

Offering a platform for new work by artists from the North West, the Carnival Parade will showcase designs and performances by **Orson Sterritt**, **Maurice McLaughlin**, **Angel Gallagher**, **Corrie McDermot**, **Regan Fitzpatrick**, **Órla McSharry**, **Amy O'Hara**, **Eoghan Hegarty**, **Caoimhe Davidson**, **Bronagh Gallagher**, **Niamh O'Brien** and members of **Creative Hands Leitrim**, as well as by Carnival regulars **Fiona Maria Fitzpatrick**, **Claire Falconer** and **Sherrie Scott**.

IN ASSOCIATION WITH FRANCES BROWNE LITERARY FESTIVAL

# The Tale of Merrymind

Story by **Frances Browne**. Adapted by **Dr. Shirley Ann Bonner**.  
Devised and Presented by **Fidget Feet Aerial Dance Theatre**

**Date:** Saturday, October 1 & Sunday, October 2

**Venue:** St. Columba's College, **Stranorlar**

**Time:** Saturday 3.00pm & 5.00pm Sunday 1.00pm & 3.30pm

**Cost:** 5/€15 Family. Booking at [www.francesbrowneliteraryfestival.com](http://www.francesbrowneliteraryfestival.com)

*Outdoor Performance. Dress Appropriately. Duration 40 mins.*

Fidget Feet Aerial Dance Theatre bring Frances Browne's much loved children's story to vibrant life through aerial performance, contemporary dance, music and storytelling.

Set long ago in the North Country, young Merrymind buys a battered old fiddle at the Midsummer Fair. Many years later, fiddle in hand, he leaves his village for to find his fortune, unaware that, with the help of the Nightspinners, the instrument may have magical powers and its music may change the world around him.

**Fidget Feet Aerial Dance Theatre** are Ireland's first and foremost aerial performance company. Founded by Ballybofey choreographer Chantal McCormick, they have hosted the tremendously successful Irish Aerial Dance Festival in Donegal since 2010. Their current production, *Home*, was a highlight of this summer's Earagail Arts Festival.

**Dr. Shirley-Anne Bonner** is a native of Stranorlar. She is longtime admirer of the work of Frances Browne and the holder of a Ph.D. from the University of Galway, where she has been developing theatre practices to recover the legacies of marginalised Irish women writers.



FRANCES BROWNE LITERARY FESTIVAL PRESENTS

# Michael Harding & Dubhán Ó Longáin, In Conversation

**Date:** Sunday, October 12

**Venue:** Balor Arts Centre, **Ballybofey**

**Time:** 7.00pm • **Cost:** €20

Join Michael Harding and local writer Dubhán Ó Longáin as they discuss Michael's distinguished career as well as his reflections on life, creativity and the importance of the Irish language in both their lives.

A native of County Cavan, **Michael Harding** is an award-winning writer, playwright and performer. For almost twenty years, he has contributed a much-loved column to The Irish Times. His plays have been staged by the Abbey Theatre (Strawboys, Úna Pooka) and Fishamble Theatre (The Tinker's Curse) and his memoir series, which includes the best-selling *Staring at Lakes* and the current *I Loved Him From The Day He Died*, has been praised as a profound personal reflection on love, loss and the human experience.

**Dubhán Ó Longáin** is a poet, writer, researcher and Irish language teacher from Donegal. He has won awards for his academic research, his poetry and his short stories. His most recent poetry collection, *IDEO Locator*, was published in 2020 by Coiscéim. He undertook reading tour of America earlier this year and contributes regular articles on Irish folklore to the journal, *Nós*.



## Bookáil | Booking

For most **Festival events**, tickets will be available for purchase at the venue on the evening of the performance. To avoid disappointment, however, please plan to arrive at the venue at least 20 minutes before the advertised showtime.

**Limited Accessibility Note:** Please Note that as a historic building, access to the Great Hall performance space at **Donegal Castle** is by Stairs Only Access to the first-floor performance space at **Glenties Market Hall** is also by Stairs Only.

- **Tickets and Booking at The Abbey Arts Centre, Ballyshannon**  
**Tel: 071 9851375 | [www.abbeycentre.ie](http://www.abbeycentre.ie)**
  - » *Calendar Girls, Reacaireacht sa Chaisleán, Vital Voices, Lady Morgan and Lola Montez.*
  - » **Booking essential for the Celebrating Brian Friel event and Blood in The Alley's production of Faith Healer in Glenties.**
- **Tickets and Booking at Balor Arts Centre, Ballybofey.**  
**Tel: 074 9131840 | [www.balorartscentre.com](http://www.balorartscentre.com)**
  - » *3 on The Bund, Michael Harding and Dubhán Ó Longáin In Conversation*
- **Tickets and Booking at Frances Browne Literary Festival.**  
**[www.francesbrowneliteraryfestival.com](http://www.francesbrowneliteraryfestival.com)**
  - » *The Tale of Merrymind*

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For more information visit:  
[donegalbaybluestacks.com](http://donegalbaybluestacks.com)



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