

24th Annual

# Donegal Bay and Blue Stacks Festival



Sept 26th - Oct 13 2024



BlueStacksFestival



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*Presented by Donegal County Council Culture Division*



Comhairle Contae  
Dhún na nGall  
Donegal County Council

# Fáilte | Welcome

Welcome to the 24th edition of this annual festival, which is presented by **Donegal County Council Culture Division**, in partnership with a range of arts organizations, cultural 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**.

## 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. **Mary McGettigan**, Donegal Town Community Chamber CLG. **John O'Connell**, Eclipse Cinemas, Bundoran.

**Maura Logue**, Dark Daughter Productions. **Deborah Cunningham**, The Bluestack Chorale and Donegal Voices. **Denise Blake**, Festival Literary Curator. **Shaun Byrne**, **Charlie Bonner**, One Night at Glenlough. **Kevin Lowery**, Shannon Carroll, Kevin Lowery Gallery. **Sinéad O'Donnell Carey**, **Valerie Bryce**, Soilse Festival of Light. **Caroline Harvey**, **Collie Mac Pháidín**, Donegal Bay Film Festival. **Christian Carbin**, **Art Kavanagh**, Donegal Drama

Circle. **Keith Mannion**, **Patsy O'Kane**, Treehouse Productions. **Dean Maywood**, Ghostlight Sessions. **Caoimhín Mac Aoidh**, **Rab Cherry**, Cairdeas na bhFidiléirí.

**Tommy Callaghan**, Manna Design.

**Frances Connaghan**, **William Colvin**, Donegal County Council Communications Office. **Mark Sweeney**, Snr. Executive Engineer, Roads, Donegal County Council. **Naoise Nolan**, Marketing Graduate, Donegal County Council Culture Division. **Andrew McNulty**, Arts & Cultural Diversity Officer, Donegal County Council. The staff at Bundoran Community Library – **Colin Drummond**, **Loretta Mauerhofer**, **Natasha Costello**, **Sarah O'Mahony**, **Anna Kujawa**.



Clár Éire Ildánach  
Creative Ireland  
Programme



*Cover: Luminous Rossnowlagh by Kevin Lowery, from the Between Land and Sea, Reflections on the North West Coast Exhibition. See P. 4.*



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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 27

**Venue:** St. Patrick's Parish Centre, **Donegal Town**

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €10 Tickets at Door

After another resounding success for the Mountcharles Opera Festival in their new home – 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 the programme covering from Dvorak through to Tom Cruise – You'll have to come along to see just how they make that connection!

As always, Deborah, Paul and Evan take the second half of the evening and this year mark the centenary of Puccini's death by bringing some of his most beautiful and well-known pieces to their audience.

**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, the Donegal Abbey Singers and is a popular tutor with the Donegal Music Education Partnership (DMEP).

BALOR ARTS CENTRE & DONEGAL BAY AND BLUE STACKS FESTIVAL PRESENTS

# One Night at Glenlough

Written by **Shaun Byrne**. Directed by **Charlie Bonner**.  
With **Frankie McCafferty** and **Aidan Moriarty**.

**Date:** Thursday - Friday, September 26 – 27

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

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €15

**Date:** Saturday September 28

**Venue:** Halla Mhuire, **Gleann Cholm Cille**

**Time:** 8.30pm • **Cost:** €10

**Date:** Sunday September 29

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

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €15



One Night at Glenlough is a new play by **Shaun Byrne** which premieres in the Balor Arts Centre, as part of the Donegal Bay and Blue Stacks Festival.

The plot deals with the summer acclaimed Welsh poet Dylan Thomas spent in Donegal in 1935, in the remote coastal region of Glenlough, near Glencolmcille.

Sent there on a retreat by his publisher after the overnight success of his first collection, this dark comedy follows Thomas's attempts to both dry out and compose new work, both of which are met with mixed results.

Visited in his remote cottage hideaway by Liam the Post, he finds himself battling demons real and imagined in this 'virtual poteen republic', as Thomas described his new home in a letter to a friend.

Featuring acclaimed Ballybofey actor **Frankie McCafferty** as Liam and rising star **Aidan Moriarty** as Dylan Thomas with visionary direction by **Charlie Bonner**, this promises to be one not to be missed.



including The Abbey Theatre (The Plough and The Stars), Druid (The Black Pig's Dyke) and The Lyric, Belfast (Conversations On A Homecoming, Molly Sweeney, Waiting for Godot, The Playboy of the Western World and Observe The Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme)

His Film and TV roles include Philomena, Angela's Ashes, In The Name Of The Father Ballykissangel, Vikings, Ripper Street, Derry Girls and, most recently, Blue Lights.

**Aidan Moriarty** has earned many plaudits in a relatively short acting career to-date. Donegal audiences will have seen him in The Abbey Theatre / Lyric Theatre, Belfast co-production of Brian Friel's Translations, as well as in An Grianán Theatre's production of Friel's The Enemy Within, part of the Colmcille 1500 celebrations in 2021.

**Charlie Bonner** is a well-known actor and director from Ballybofey. He has performed in all of the leading theatres in Ireland including the Abbey Theatre (Philadelphia, Here I Come!, Macbeth) and The Lyric Belfast (Dancing At Lughnasa, The Playboy of The Western World).

For last year's festival, Charlie directed the hugely successful Civil War play, Drumboe (written by Kieran Kelly), which sold out its four night run at the Balor Arts Centre.

**Shaun Byrne** is an actor and playwright from Ballybofey, whose work has enjoyed tremendous success on the festival circuit.

Earlier this year, Ballyshannon Drama Society won their way to the RTÉ All Ireland Drama Festival in Athlone with his play, Margaret, on the life and times of Margaret Thatcher, with Best Actress Award-winning Rachel O'Connor in the title role.

*The production of One Night at Glenlough is co-funded by Creative Ireland/Éire Ildánach.*

THE KEVIN LOWERY GALLERY & STUDIO PRESENTS

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

Curated by Shannon Carroll.

Featuring works by **Jonathan Ball**, **Concepta Boyce**, **Lisa Callaghan**, **Aisling Clarke**, **Vicky Crawford**, **Gavin McCrea**, **Rory Gill**, **Darragh Gorman**, **Christine Harrison** and **Kevin Lowery**.

**Date:** Saturday September 28 – Sunday October 13

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

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

**Exhibition Opening:** Friday, September 27 6.00pm – 8.00pm. All Welcome

Artists from around the North West explore the deep connections between the environment and the lives of those who live along the remarkable Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim coastline. The exhibition explores the impact the ocean has had on shaping local art and culture and invites the audience to reflect on the importance of environmental and ecological preservation of our coastlines.



**Johnathan Ball** is a Kinlough-based craftsman working in glass and metal.

**Concepta Boyce** uses a combination of traditional and digital techniques in her work. **Donagh Gorman** is a surf photographer and maker living in Bundoran. **Lisa Callaghan's** work explores the connections between art, place and mental health. **Aisling Clarke** draws inspiration from coastal culture, plants and wildlife.

**Kevin Lowery** is driven to paint the rolling surf and ever changing skies around him. **Vicky Crawford** is a printmaker and musician, living in Drumkeeran. **Rory Gill** is an oil painter who lives on the Donegal Fermanagh border. **Gavin McCrea** is an artist and surfer, formerly of Tyrone. Originally from the South of England, **Christine Harrison** is a multi-disciplinary artist, now living in Donegal.

# John Colleary - Head Like a Shed

**Date:** Saturday September 28

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

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €20

**John Colleary** is one of Ireland's the most in-demand comics, performing sold-out shows at top comedy clubs and festivals all around the country. He has also co-written and starred in IFTA nominated shows including *The Savage Eye* (RTÉ 2) and *Irish Pictorial Weekly* (RTÉ 1). Other TV credits

include appearances on *Stand and Deliver* (Live from Róisín Dubh) and *The Panel* (RTÉ 1). A talented actor and mimic, John has featured as one third of *The Gusset Brothers* on the hugely popular *Tommy Tiernan Show*. He also scooped a recent IMRO Award for his topical sketch writing and performances on *Today FM's* drivetime flagship, *The Last Word*.

John will be especially familiar to fans of *Tommy Tiernan*, whom he has supported on the latter's hugely successful tours around Ireland in recent years, performing to thousands of comedy fans at *Vicar Street*, *Galway's Leisureland*, *The Marquee* in *Cork* and *Belfast's Waterfront Hall* among others.

He brings the *Head Like a Shed* show to the *Olympia Theatre*, *Dublin* early next year, but *Donegal* audiences can see it first in the *Abbey Arts Centre*. A night of fun not to be missed.

*"John Colleary is my favourite comic, I learned so much from him ... Playful, inventive and brilliant. The best."* - **Tommy Tiernan**.

*"Worth seeing again and again and again"* - **Capital Comedy**.



# Tara Howley & her Band

**Date:** Saturday September 28

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

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €20

Former Riverdance performer, **Tara Howley** from Kilfenora, County Clare, is a prolific, multi-award-winning instrumentalist, singer-songwriter and composer.

With a background in classical and traditional music, she spent seven years as lead uilleann piper, whistle and concertina player in Riverdance, with whom she toured to over thirty countries across Europe, Asia, America and Canada. She was also a featured soloist on the Riverdance 25th Anniversary album and DVD, which was recorded with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra.

Tara's other musical collaborations include the Grammy-nominated Afro Celt Sound System as well as performances with Sir James Galway, Bill Whelan, Steve Cooney and Sharon Shannon.

Since embarking on a solo career, Tara completed her first headline tour of Ireland to great acclaim last year as well as issuing a remarkable EP, *Down by The Sally Gardens*, with Malaysian saxophonist and uilleann piper **Faliq Auri**, which has been streamed in over 180 countries. Her current CD, *Tara Howley Take 2*, includes the iTunes hit, *Outlawed Tunes on Outlawed*, as well as beautiful interpretations of classic Irish and Scottish folk songs including *Raglan Road*, *She Moved Through The Fair* and *The Skye Boat Song*.

A keen social media diarist, Tara commands a significant online presence with over 290,000 followers across various platforms.





# Donegal Bay Film Festival

**Date:** Wednesday – Thursday, October 2-3

**Venue:** Eclipse Cinemas, **Bundoran**

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** FREE

**Bookings:** Eventbrite



Following last year's inaugural Donegal Bay Film Festival, curated by the late and much missed Marc Gegan, Bundoran film-maker **Caroline Harvey** has drawn together an exciting programme of short films and documentaries made by emerging film-makers from the North and North West of Ireland.

## Wednesday – October 2nd

**Morning After** – Dir: **Dorothy Duffy**. **Amygdala** -Dir: **Clem McInerney**. **Yara** – Dir: **James Doherty**. **The Crucible** – Dir: **Caroline Harvey**. **Simon** – Dir: **Ben Conway and Peter J. McCarthy**.

## Thursday - October 3

**The Girl and The Lion** – Dir: **Diana Cheung**. **Gerry** – Dir: **Sean Mullan**. **A Fairytale Romance** - Dir: **Kate Haley**. **Someone in Your Corner** - Dir: **Fiachra Ó Longáin**. **Cleaner** - Dir: **Edwin Mullane**.

***Morning After** tells of a young Donegal woman's experience of getting the morning-after pill in 2001.*

***Amygdala** follows surf photographer Conor Flanagan as he braves Ireland's*

*most dangerous waves to get the perfect shot.*

***Yara** is experimental film drama made with members of the Syrian Community in Donegal.*

***In The Crucible**, a storm makes landfall on the day of Hannah's surf assessment.*

***Simon** answers a phone call from his brother, who is in the midst of a mental breakdown, driving fast with his young daughter in the back seat.*

***In The Girl and The Lion**, Winnie is followed by a lion as she journeys through life in rural Northern Ireland, which hinders her efforts to fit in.*

***Gerry** is a documentary film following an elderly pigeon breeder as he stops in the evening sun to watch his friends fly.*

***In A Fairytale Romance**, a mermaid's dream of love takes a dark turn when her prince is not what she expected.*

***Someone In Your Corner** is a documentary on Commonwealth medal-winning boxer Sean McGlinchey.*

***In Cleaner**, a mundane household accident forces a domestic cleaner to add emergency child-minding to her list of duties.*

THE GHOSTLIGHT SESSIONS AND DONEGAL BAY AND BLUE STACKS FESTIVAL PRESENTS

# Without Willow

with **Laura McFadden**, Cello & **Rhys McBride**, Bass.

## Sarah E. Cullen

with **Rúairí Friel**, Guitar, **Michael Cullen**, Bass & **Mark McGirr**, Drums.

**Date:** Thursday, October 3

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

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €15

**Without Willow** - **Karen Kelly**, Vocals and **Simon McCafferty**, Guitar - are an exceptional acoustic folk, singer-songwriting duo from Letterkenny and Drumkeen respectively. Earlier this year, they released their splendid debut album, *Left Behind*, to great critical acclaim as well as extensive national radio airplay. Guest musicians on the album included the late, great Ted Ponsonby, Laura McFadden, Orri McBrearty and Mark McGirr.

**Sarah E. Cullen** is a multi-instrumentalist, singer and songwriter from Carrigart. Her CD, *Notes for the Wonderground*, released in 2020 under the name *The Reflection Box*, was a BBC Radio Ulster Album of the Week. Sarah performs with the band *Silver Winged They Fly* and is a founder member of the Irish-Rajasthani *Citadels of The Sun* ensemble, who have performed in Donegal (Earagail Arts Festival), Derry, Rajasthan, Glasgow (Celtic Connections) and Belfast in recent years.



# Donegal Voices

Conductor and Musical Director, Evan McGarrigle.

## From Messiah to McGarrigle

**Date:** Friday October 4 • **Venue:** St. Patrick's Church, **Donegal Town**

**Date:** Friday October 11 • **Venue:** St. Patrick's Church, **Ballyshannon**

**Date:** Friday October 18 • **Venue:** St. Connell's Church, **Glenties**

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

With a growing reputation for excellence, The Donegal Voices, under their Conductor and Musical Director **Evan McGarrigle**, perform a selection of choral works to gladden the heart and indeed, raise passions!



Handel's Messiah is undoubtedly one of the favourite works in the classical choral canon, Part III of which is included in the programme along with works by Rachmaninoff and Liszt. Soloists drawn from within the choir include **Fiona Wasson** - Mezzo Soprano, **Deborah Cunningham** – Soprano, **Barry Naughton** – Tenor and **Paul Martin** – Baritone.

The evening will be rounded off with a performance of the Donegal anthem O'Donnell Abú!, which has been arranged by Evan McGarrigle especially for this event, marking the celebrations of **Donegal 550**.

**Donegal Voices** first performed in 2015 and have by now established themselves as one of the premier choral groups in the North West of Ireland. Since then, this exceptional 30 member vocal ensemble has performed works by, among others, JS Bach (Magnificat in D), Vivaldi (Gloria), Beethoven (Mass in C), George Friderik Handel (Coronation Anthems and The Hallelujah Chorus), Mozart ( Mass in C Major), Mendelssohn (Christus, Opus 97) and Joseph Haydn (Nelson Mass).

CUIREANN CAIRDEAS NA BHFIDLÉIRÍ I LÁTHAIR

## The 42nd Annual Donegal Fiddlers Glenties Gathering

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**Date:** Friday October 4 – Sunday October 6

**Venue:** The Highlands Hotel, Glenties

[www.donegalfiddlemusic.ie](http://www.donegalfiddlemusic.ie)



This major gathering of fiddle players was established in 1983 and is held annually in The Highlands Hotel, Glenties. The popular event is for anyone interested in fiddle music and the formal programme includes classes, a concert with special guest fiddle players, talks and occasional recitals.

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### Fiddle Masterclass

**Date:** Saturday October 5 & Sunday October 6 • **Time:** 10.40am 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.

**Advanced Level Class with Bruce MacGregor** (Inverness, Scotland).

**Date:** Saturday October 5 • **Time:** 2.30pm – 4.00pm

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### Talk: The Fiddle Music of Simon Fraser

With **Bruce MacGregor** (Inverness, Scotland).

**Date:** Saturday, October 5

**Venue:** The Highlands Hotel, Glenties

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

Captain Simon Fraser (1773-1852) was a noted fiddle player and collector from Inverness. He collected over 230 tunes which were published in 1816 as, 'The Airs and Melodies Peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland.'

## Donegal Fiddlers Concert

**Aoibhín O'Dea, Conor Caldwell**  
and **Bruce MacGregor**.

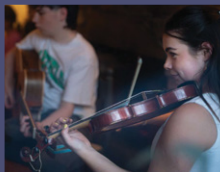
**Date:** Saturday October 5

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

**Time:** 9.00pm • **Cost:** €15

**Bookings:** Tickets At Door.

No Advance Booking.



**Aoibhín O'Dea** is a young fiddle player and singer from Gaath Dobhair. She learned her music from local musicians and singers, performing from a young age with highly accomplished traditional ensemble An Crann Óg, under the guidance of Caitlín Joe Jack Uí Dhuibhir.

**Conor Caldwell** is a fiddle player from Belfast who is currently Course Director for the MA in Irish Traditional Music Performance at the Irish World Academy in the University of Limerick. His collaboration with fellow fiddler Danny Diamond, North, was described as a 'long-playing delight' by Siobhán Long in The Irish Times.

Conor's latest release, *Oh Listen To The Band*, is an exploration of the influence of the emerging jazz idioms of the 1920s on Irish traditional music of the time. The recording features archival material from legendary performers such as John Doherty, Josie McDermott and Con Cassidy, which he has re-imagined with contemporary traditional and jazz musicians.

**Bruce MacGregor**, a native of Inverness, is a pupil of the legendary fiddle teacher Donald Riddell MBE. He formed the multi-award winning Highland fiddle super group *Blazin' Fiddles* in 1998. Still going strong, they were voted Best Folk Band at the Scots Trad Music Awards last year.

Bruce also composes music for theatre, film, television and, latterly, for computer games, including the hit computer game, *Assassin's Creed III*, which will doubtless attract a whole new audience to this year's Glenties Fiddlers Gathering!

ERNE ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT CLG & DARK DAUGHTER PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

# Myths and Legends Carnival Parade

**Date:** Saturday, October 5

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

**Time:** 7.30pm-8.30pm

**Cost:** FREE

The annual Donegal Bay and Blue Stacks Festival Carnival Parade, back after an extended break, is one of the highlights of the cultural calendar in Ballyshannon and South Donegal.

Over 200 performers, will take to the streets in a riot of colour, sound and movement to celebrate the myths and legends around Ballyshannon's maritime heritage connection to the O'Donnell's, Chieftains of Donegal.

Co-ordinated by **Maura Logue** of **Dark Daughter Productions**, the Parade will feature **Inishowen Carnival, Killybegs Accordion Band, Tanya Ward's Aislingí Dancers, the Michelle Belle School of Dance, Stars of the West, the Ballytour group, Ballyshannon Street Band** and the **Stephanie Pawula Samba Band**.

New carnival work by emerging artists **Becca Devens, Anna Maltseva, Caoimhe Davidson, Niamh Ní Bhriain, Coy-Style** and **Maria Molloy** will also be showcased. A series of specially



created works by Ballyshannon musician and composer, **Keith Mannion** (aka Slow Place Like Home), will soundtrack the Parade.

## Carnival Village

The Carnival Parade will culminate in a family friendly Carnival Village in the Market Yard (Upper) Carpark featuring **Dr. Proctor, Joe Daly the Magician, Charlie Gallagher Celtic Warrior, Louise Connaghan** (Play - Make Believe), **Scallywags** and the **Donegal African Male Voices Choir**.

***Please Note:** Parking Restrictions and Traffic Diversions will be in place along the Parade Route from 6.30pm to 9.00pm. Please co-operate with Carnival Stewards and An Garda Síochána at all times. Warm Clothing is Advisable.*

*Co-funded by Creative Ireland/Éire Ildánach.*

# Jarlath Regan - Life is a Work In Progress

**Date:** Saturday October 5

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

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €27

Long before he became Ireland's favourite Irishman Abroad, **Jarlath Regan** was known to Balor Arts Centre audiences as the hilarious MC of their monthly Balor Comedy Club. Today, he is one of the biggest names on the Irish comedy circuit, with a growing reputation internationally thanks to his enormously popular Irishman Abroad podcast, a string of high profile television appearances and sellout tours across Ireland, the UK and most recently, the East Coast of America.



Jarlath's Yer Man show sold out three nights in Dublin's Olympia Theatre earlier this year and his compilation show, Jarlath Regan in Bits, has already sold out its forthcoming run there in January 2025.

With **Life is a Work In Progress**, Jarlath is looking forward to sharing his brand new collection of jokes, stories and hilarious tales with a Donegal audience. In a world full of overwhelming bleakness and unrelenting negative news, it makes sense to take a break and make space for laughter by coming to see the man **The Examiner** calls 'the jewel in Ireland's comedy crown.'

*"Side-splitting stuff. Causes hysteria in the room." - Metro.*

*"A master at work." - Patrick Kielty, The Late Late Show, RTÉ 1.*

*"The man radiates warmth while projecting deliciously dark greeting cards, which are thoroughly recommended for Christmas or hostage situations." - The Scotsman.*

DARK DAUGHTER PRODUCTIONS

# Nora Gallagher & The Drumshee Play Actors

Written and Performed by **Maura Logue**

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**Date:** Thursday October 10

**Venue:** Dorrian's Imperial Hotel, Main Street, **Ballyshannon**

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €10

**Date:** Friday October 11

**Venue:** Atlantic Apartotel, Main Street, **Bundoran**

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €10

Maura Logue's lovable 1960s Donegal country girl is back in the third instalment of her **Drumshee Series** and this time it's all about the art of performance. The year is 1961 and Drumshee dry dancehall is about to host its first ever drama production. As ever, Nora Gallagher, Cloakroom Girl, has a bird's eye view of the proceedings.

Join Nora on a comedic journey with the newly formed Drumshee Play Actors, from Casting Call to Opening Night and enjoy the hilarious drama as it unfolds, on and off the stage.

**Maura Logue** is an actor, playwright, theatre director and producer from Donegal. Founder and artistic director of Dark Daughter Productions, she has created many memorable theatre works for the Festival including 2019's The Housekeeper and 2016's Mother Courage. She has directed the annual Donegal Bay and Blue Stacks Festival Carnival Parade since 2001. She first developed the popular Nora Gallagher Drumshee series as an online theatre piece for the 2020 festival.





DONEGAL DRAMA CIRCLE

# The Factory Girls

Written by **Frank McGuinness**. Directed by **Christian Carbin**.  
Lighting Director, **Art Kavanagh**.

**Date:** Thursday October 10 - Saturday October 12

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

**Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €14 Tickets At Door.

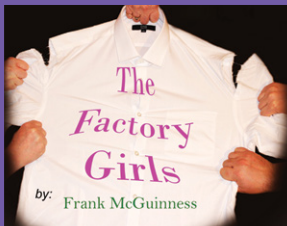
The Factory Girls is the play that brought Buncrana playwright, Frank McGuinness to national and international prominence.

Set in a struggling clothing factory in Donegal, matters come to a head when the owner demands a particularly onerous hike in productivity - 'a dozen shirts in 13 minutes' - from his long-serving, all female staff. A strike is threatened and when the union rep from Dublin fails to calm the situation, the girls down tools and stage a sit-in in the boss's office, with mixed results.

The Factory Girls has been lauded for its depiction of the banter between the women workers and the manner in which they band together in the face of adversity, which Frank McGuinness has credited as deriving from the insights gained from observing his mother and her sisters while growing up in Donegal.

In this Donegal Drama Circle production, **Suzanne Thomas** is Ellen, **Emer McMullin** is Una, **Ciará Boyle** is Vera, **Rhiannon Kerrigan** is Rebecca and **Laura McNulty** is Rosemary, with **Seamus McHugh** as the Union Rep, **Rohan and Conor Friery** as Bonner, the factory owner.

**Frank McGuinness's** plays - including *Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme*, *Carthaginians* and *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* - have been produced all over the world. He has created acclaimed adaptations of classic works by Ibsen, Lorca and Molière, as well as writing the screenplay for the film of Brian Friel's *Dancing at Lughnasa*.



DONEGAL TOWN COMMUNITY CHAMBER PRESENTS

# Soilse Festival of Light

Illuminated Sculpture Trail and Carnival Parade

**Date:** Friday October 11 and Saturday October 12

**Venue:** Various Locations, **Donegal Town**

**Time:** 7.00pm • **Cost:** FREE

The Soilse Festival of Light is a highlight of the **Donegal Town 550** programme. A weekend of community celebration and outdoor spectacle on a theme of the River Eske and the sea.

## Illuminated Sculpture Trail

*Friday -Saturday 7.00pm – 10.00pm*

The Illuminated Sculpture Trail will see large-scale works in a variety of locations throughout Donegal Town, including The Pier, The Diamond, Hamilton's Yard, Donegal Castle, The Castle Bridge and the Railway Heritage Centre. The sculptures were created over the course of a workshop programme with local artists and community participants.

## Carnival Parade

*Saturday 7.30pm – 8.30pm*

The Soilse Carnival Parade will commence from and return to the Waterbus Office via The Diamond, Main Street and Castle Street. Among the groups performing will be Studio S, Theatre and Performing Arts (TAPA) and a variety of community groups from Donegal Town.

## Get Involved

Making Workshops take place on Mondays (7.00pm-10pm) and Saturdays (10.00am-1.00pm) in The Sewing Room, Unit 7, Donegal Town Shopping Centre. To participate in the Workshops or the Carnival, T: 087. 9116079 or E: [soilsedonegal@gmail.com](mailto:soilsedonegal@gmail.com) Over 18s only.



TREEHOUSE LIVE AND DONEGAL BAY AND BLUE STACKS FESTIVAL PRESENTS

# TRAMP

With support, **Final Girl**.**Date:** Friday October 11**Venue:** Balor Arts Centre, **Ballybofey****Time:** 8.00pm • **Cost:** €10

**TRAMP** are a border-hopping, indie quartet with members from Donegal, Derry and Tyrone. Winners of the BBC Introducing Artist of the Year Award in 2023, the band's recently released single, *The Birds (Lowered Suspension)*, quickens the already high levels of anticipation for their forthcoming debut EP, *The Bird-Cat-Dog Metaphor*, due at the end of October.



Self-proclaimed 'genre-queer', 'Donegal-accented' and 'as exciting and energetic as a zumba class' (no standing about at a Tramp gig!), they cite *Big Thief*, *Sinéad O'Connor* and *Pavement* as early influences. Their music has been hailed as 'stunning...combining a potent melodic indie rock with the blissed-out noise of grunge' (*Louder Than War*).

Tramp are **Siánna Lafferty**, **Fionnbarr Doran**, **Elle McFadden** and **Ciaran McCay**. They play the Ireland Music Week festival in Dublin on October 4th. and the BBC Introducing Live event at the Mandela Hall, Belfast on October 25th.

**Final Girl** (formerly known as *Polxroid*) are a four-piece band from Ballybofey, who are turning heads with their catchy punk melodies set against a backdrop of unflinching distortion and fleeting pop sensibilities. With a DIY approach and a memorable live sound that's been described as 'garage punk beside a haunted house', the band are currently in the process of recording their debut EP. Final Girl are **Catherine Gallagher**, **Ciarán Coleman**, **Conor Duffy** and **Sean Coleman**.

IN CONVERSATION

# Denise Blake, Brian McGilloway and Una Mannion

**Date:** Sunday, October 13

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

**Time:** 3.00pm • **Cost:** €10

Continuing the Festival's popular In Conversation literary series, poet Denise Blake talks to best-selling crime writer Brian McGilloway and award-winning novelist, Una Mannion.

**Brian McGilloway** is the New York Times bestselling author of twelve crime novels, including the DS Lucy Black thrillers and the Inspector Ben Devlin mystery series. His latest novel, *The Empty Room*, was a Sunday Times bestseller while his previous, *The Last Crossing*, won Highly Commended in Theakston's Old Peculiar Crime Novel of the Year in 2021.

**Una Mannion** was born in Philadelphia and now lives in Sligo. Her debut novel, *A Crooked Tree*, made the Irish bestsellers list, was shortlisted for the Irish Book Awards and won the Kate O'Brien Prize. Her second novel, *Tell Me What I Am*, was shortlisted for the Encore Awards and was the winner of the prestigious Gold Dagger at the CWA Dagger Awards.

**Denise Blake** is the Donegal Bay and Blue Stacks Festival's Literary Curator. She is a poet and creative writing facilitator and a regular contributor to RTÉ Radio 1's Sunday Miscellany series. Denise has published three collections of poetry to-date, including *How to Sing Without Getting Dizzy* and *Take a Deep Breath*, with Summer Palace Press and *Invocation*, with Revival Press.



# One Million Stars

## Exhibition and Workshop Series

**Date:** Friday September 28 – Saturday October 12

**Venue:** Bundoran Community Library, Station Road, **Bundoran**

*Tue & Fri:* 9.30am to 1.00pm & 2.00pm to 5.30pm.

*Wed:* 12:30pm to 5:30pm & 6.30pm to 8.00pm

*Sat:* 10.00am to 2.30pm

**Contact:** 0719829665 or bundoranlibrary@donegallibraries.ie

**Cost:** FREE

**One Million Stars** Ireland is an inclusive, visual arts project connecting communities across Ireland in solidarity against domestic abuse and all forms of violence.

Earlier this year, Donegal County Council Arts Service, Donegal Volunteer Centre and the Regional Cultural Centre worked with Ukrainian visual artist **Hannah Pidhaliuk** and groups from Direct Provision Centres, Women's groups, community groups and other social inclusion groups throughout Donegal, to create an installation of over six thousand hand-made stars.



The resulting installation and live workshop series took place at the Regional Cultural Centre in March and has since been seen at Buncrana Community Library and Lifford Old Courthouse, adding further to the store of decorative stars created and providing a safe space for community conversations around domestic abuse and violence.

One Million Stars at Bundoran Community Library will be a live exhibition accompanied by a series star-making workshops with artist facilitator Hannah Pidhaliuk. Please contact **Andrew McNulty**, Arts & Cultural Diversity Officer, Donegal County Council at E: [andrewmcnulty@donegalcoco.ie](mailto:andrewmcnulty@donegalcoco.ie) for further information on workshop times.

## Bookáil | Booking

For all **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. Should you wish, you may also Book certain performances in advance, at the venues below

- **Tickets and Booking at Abbey Arts Centre, Ballyshannon.**  
Tel: 071 9851375 | [www.abbeycentre.ie](http://www.abbeycentre.ie)
- **Tickets and Booking at Balor Arts Centre, Ballybofey.**  
Tel: 074 9131840 | [www.balorartscentre.com](http://www.balorartscentre.com)

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# SANDHOUSE

Hotel & Marine Spa



**Sponsors of:**

## **Denise Blake, Brian McGilloway and Una Mannion in Conversation**

**Date:** Sunday October 13

**Venue:** Abbey Arts Centre, Ballyshannon

**Time:** 3.00pm • **Cost:** €10

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