



**Culture Ireland**  
Cultúr Éireann

## **CELEBRATING 2017**



TEAC DAMSA'S PRODUCTION OF *SWAN LAKE - LOCH NA HEALA*. PHOTO: COLM HOGAN

Culture Ireland extends season's greetings to all at the end of a successful 2017. We celebrate a year during which we reached 3.5 million live audience members, 7 million online viewers, and had an increase in social media followers for the 450 Culture Ireland supported events presented in over 50 countries by Irish artists. A total of 169 presenters and programmers were supported to visit Ireland and experience Irish arts performing at home, generating further touring contracts for Irish artists.

Culture Ireland thanks all those who performed, participated and followed in 2017.

## Culture Ireland support of theatre kicked off in New York in January

with a sold out run of Druid's production of *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, attended by Minister Heather Humphreys. Irish theatre continued to shine in this city, a magnet for the performing arts, with a four week run by Fishamble: The New Play Company's production of *Charolais* by Noni Stapleton in 59E59 Theatres, New York.

New interpretations of Beckett won acclaim with *Beckett in the City: The Women Speak*, a site-specific performance in the Irish Arts Center, directed by Sarah Jane Scaife, and Gare St. Lazare's production of *The Beckett Trilogy* at Lincoln Center, New York. Slightly further afield the Moonfish Theatre's bilingual production of *Star of the Sea* toured to New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Massachusetts recalling the world of the Famine ship of 1847.



COISCÉIM DANCE THEATRE'S PRODUCTION OF *THE WOLF AND PETER*. PHOTO: ROS KAVANAGH

Other theatre highlights included CoisCéim Dance Theatre's production of *The Wolf and Peter* on tour in Australia, where Teac Damsa's highly acclaimed *Swan Lake - Loch na hEala* was also presented as part of an extensive tour which concluded in December in Sadler's Wells Theatre London. *Swan Lake - Loch na hEala* is promised to resume again

on the global circuit in 2018. European touring was strong with Dead Centre covering the European mainland with *Hamnet*, *Chekhov's First Play* and *LIPPY* while brokentalkers returned to Iceland to present *Have I No Mouth* in Iceland and Pan Pan Theatre presented *The Tempest* in Germany.

**Showcasing remains a critical means of gaining further career opportunities** and for the third time Culture Ireland led

a delegation including Irish bands to Folk Alliance International, the annual traditional and folk music showcase event in Kansas City to perform to over 2,500 artists and industry professionals from across North America. Arising from this connection, Folk Alliance selected Clonakilty as the destination for its first ever international conference outside of North America in September. Culture Ireland enabled 11 international presenters and programmers to attend and the appreciation of Irish bands in their home environment led to contracts for most of the performers in 2018.



LANKUM PERFORMING AT THEIR OFFWOMEX SHOWCASE AT WOMEX 2017 IN KATOWICE, POLAND

As part of its comprehensive Music Showcase portfolio, Culture Ireland supports attendance by Irish musicians at 15 other international Showcase events across a range of music genres including classical (Classical: NEXT, May 2017) and jazz (jazzahead!, April 2017). First Music Contact delivers the rock/indie music showcase programme including

Ireland's presence at Eurosonic, South by Southwest, and the newly established Ireland Week in Los Angeles in October. Also in October, Culture Ireland supported the attendance by 34 international music professionals at Hard Working Class Heroes, a showcase weekend in Dublin featuring 50 emerging music acts.

WOMEX (World Music Expo) in Katowice, Poland in October offered a new opportunity to Irish band, Lankum to showcase on the offWOMEX stage reaching some of the most important international professionals in world music.

In the Autumn, 47 international theatre professionals visited Dublin to participate in the Information Toolbox and International Theatre eXchange, meeting with Irish theatre makers and seeing shows in the festival season. Working in partnership with the Irish Theatre Institute, Culture Ireland's aim, to make these initiatives critical meeting points for Irish artists and international presenters, has already resulted in touring opportunities for Irish theatre companies in 2018.

**The Edinburgh Festivals draw hundreds of presenters** on an annual basis and so continues to offer an important platform for Irish performing artists. In 2017 Culture Ireland supported 22 Irish writers and 8 theatre and dance companies to present their work at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Edinburgh International Festival and Edinburgh International Book Festival coinciding with the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Edinburgh International Festival and the Fringe.



FISHAMBLE: THE NEW PLAY COMPANY'S PRODUCTION OF *THE HUMOURS OF BANDON* BY MARGARET MCAULIFFE. PHOTO: GEORGE CARTER

Once again Irish artists had marked success with *Hope Hunt & the Ascension into Lazarus* (Oona Doherty) winning a Total Theatre Award, *Eggsistentialism* (Joanne Ryan) winning both the Lustrum Award for Best Festival Moment and the Melbourne Fringe Tour Ready Award and *Lear* (John Scott Dance) winning the Herald Angel Award. Further touring contracts secured include

MALAPROP to London, Fishamble's *The Humours of Bandon* to the Brighton Festival and Oona Doherty's work on tour throughout Europe as part of the Aerowaves network.

## Culture Ireland delivered the Culture Programme associated with the State Visits by President Higgins

to Cuba, Australia and New Zealand throughout 2017. In



YE VAGABONDS PERFORMING AT A SPECIAL EVENT TO MARK THE STATE VISIT IN SYDNEY

Cuba, artists, led by Liam Ó Maonlaí, performed in Havana, collaborated with Cuban musicians, and held workshops with students from the Escuela Nacional de Arte. In Australia, Declan O'Rourke performed for the President in Canberra, duo Ye Vagabonds made a special appearance at a tourism focused event in Sydney and Irish musicians, including Alan Doherty, Gerry

Paul, Pauline Scanlon and Tóla Custy, performed in Auckland, Christchurch and at the Te Papa Museum in Wellington in a unique collaboration with the Maori supergroup, Trinity Roots.

**Irish literature continues to excel globally.** With Culture Ireland support Literature Ireland attended the London, Beijing, Göteborg and Frankfurt book fairs. In 2017 Literature Ireland



LITERATURE IRELAND STAND AT THE LONDON BOOK FAIR

supported the translation of almost 90 of works of Irish literature into world languages. Highlights include the Danish translations of Sara Baume's *Spill Simmer Falter Wither* and Mike McCormack's *Solar Bones*, the traditional Chinese edition of Seamus Deane's *Reading in the Dark*, Mary Costello's *Academy Street* in Vietnamese and the

Swedish translation of Sally Rooney's *Conversations with Friends*. Children's Books Ireland was supported to deliver Ireland's presence at the Bologna Children's Book Fair. Irish writers and poets were in demand to perform globally, including as part of the focus on Ireland at the 20th Singapore Writers Festival 2017.

**At the 57<sup>th</sup> Venice Art Biennale,** Jesse Jones' exhibition *Tremble Tremble* was visited by President Higgins in a year which drew record visitor numbers of 615,000. The exhibition



JESSE JONES, *TREMBLE TREMBLE*, 2017  
FILM, SCULPTURE, MOVING CURTAIN, SOUND AND LIGHT  
SCENOGRAPHY. INSTALLATION VIEW, VENICE BIENNALE.

subsequently travelled to LASALLE's Institute of Contemporary Arts, Singapore where it continues to present an ambitious aspect of Ireland's contemporary artistic discourse. Richard Mosse who previously represented Ireland at the Venice Biennale exhibited his recent work *Incoming*, focused on migration, at London's Barbican to strong critical acclaim.



## In a year where Irish film further strengthened its global reputation



CHARLOTTE VEGA AS RACHEL IN *THE LODGERS* SCREENED AT THE TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL IN SEPTEMBER 2017

Culture Ireland supported Irish film to be presented across the world. High profile film festivals including Toronto International Film Festival, Tribeca and Sundance Film Festivals showed the best of recent Irish film while Edinburgh International Film Festival and Newport Beach Film Festivals had special spotlights on Irish film with many Irish film artists in attendance.

## Ireland's two international cultural centres

– Centre Culturel, Paris and the Irish Arts Centre, New York continue to be



FÊTE DE LA MUSIQUE CELEBRATIONS AT THE CENTRE CULTUREL IRLANDAIS IN JUNE 2017

supported by Culture Ireland as important hubs for Irish artists visiting these two global capitals of arts and culture. In Centre Culturel Irlandais, Irish artists performed year round and had a particularly successful Fête de la Musique with 5,000 Parisians in the historic courtyard enjoying its line-up of three different concerts: indie-folk, traditional Irish and original big band ska.

The Irish Arts Center in New York, as it prepares to break ground on a landmark new facility in Spring 2018, presented an even stronger annual programme of quality contemporary Irish arts across all art forms. As a flagship for Irish arts, the Irish Arts Center

continued to develop and promote ongoing touring of artists from New York to key venues in other US cities in an exciting new collaboration between Liam Ó Maonlaí and iconic jazz vocalist singer Cassandra Wilson.

### Macnas was invited to close Hull's year as UK City of

**Culture**, an event which drew thousands onto the streets for their magical parade. This flagship project, *Land of Green Ginger Unleashed*, reinforced Macnas' global reputation as masters of storytelling and street performance with the 30-strong crew of performers and technicians from Galway joined by participants from local communities.



LAND OF GREEN GINGER UNLEASHED - MACNAS AT THE UK CITY OF CULTURE IN HULL, NOVEMBER 2017

### Finally in December, Ireland celebrates as Uilleann Piping

has been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The decision is testament to the community of Uilleann Pipers across Ireland and globally who ensured that the instrument continued to be made, played and enjoyed over many centuries.



ACTOR BRENDAN GLEESON CELEBRATES PIPING'S UNESCO INSCRIPTION WITH NA PÍOBAIRÍ UILLEANN