



Cultúr Éireann
Culture Ireland

Promoting Irish Arts Worldwide

EDINBURGH

2026



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Culture Ireland

Established in 2005, Culture Ireland's mission is to promote Irish arts worldwide.

Through grant programmes and showcase initiatives, it supports and develops opportunities for Irish artists and companies to present their work across the globe. This includes international festivals, venues, galleries and arts markets including here at the Edinburgh Festivals, Celtic Connections, the Venice Art and Architecture Biennales, WOMEX World Music Expo and Frankfurt Book Fair.

Through this work, it builds relationships and networks with arts and cultural organisations, relevant public bodies, state agencies and government departments at home and abroad to advance the global impact of Irish artists. It also ensures that Ireland's cultural excellence is enjoyed by international audiences.

Culture Ireland runs a regular funding scheme to support the international presentation of work by Irish artists and companies. Applications are accepted from both participating artists and from international presenters.

Culture Ireland also operates *See Here*, a scheme to support the inward travel to Ireland of international presenters, curators and promoters to see new Irish work on the island of Ireland available for touring.

Full details of Culture Ireland's activities and grant schemes are available at: **www.cultureireland.ie**

Welcome | Fáilte



As Minister with responsibility for promoting Irish arts worldwide, I'm very pleased to introduce Culture Ireland's 2026 Edinburgh Showcase, once again presenting the best of emerging theatre and dance from across the island of Ireland.

Last year, I was privileged to visit Edinburgh during the Festival month and attended several productions featured in Culture Ireland's 2025 showcase. The audience and critical responses to those shows confirmed to me – once again – the high esteem in which Irish arts is held. Many of those productions - *Lost Lear*, *Anthem for Dissatisfaction*, *You'll See*, among others – continue to tour internationally with opportunities emerging from their Edinburgh success.

During my visit, I also saw at first hand, the valuable industry engagement and professional development opportunities that Culture Ireland's showcase facilitates and was heartened to hear from both artists and presenters about the value of Culture Ireland's showcasing.

Over the following pages, you'll read of the eight shows participating in this year's Edinburgh programme. I wish them well as they follow in the footsteps of Irish artists who have blazed the Edinburgh trail over many decades.

This booklet also features details of the many Irish writers who will feature at this year's Edinburgh International Book Festival. I'm hesitant about the phrase "golden age" but the current cohort of Irish writers is achieving astonishing successes across the globe.

All these performances and readings are a chance for new audiences and I know that the participating artists make the most of the opportunity.

As ever, we rely on the critical support and commitment of the venues and Festivals across Edinburgh as they welcome and support Irish artists. I want to thank sincerely those organisations including the Edinburgh Fringe Society and the Edinburgh International Book Festival, as well as key Fringe venues including Assembly, Summerhall, Traverse and Underbelly.

I also want to acknowledge the Irish Consulate in Edinburgh for both their amplification of Culture Ireland's work but also their support of Irish artists across the year.

Beir bua.

Patrick O'Donovan, TD

Minister for Culture, Communications and Sport



Fishamble: The New Play Company
in association with Lime Tree Theatre | Belltable, Galway
International Arts Festival and Traverse Theatre

For Dolores

By Eva O'Connor Director Jim Culleton
Starring Lara Mc Donnell and Catriona Faint
Set and Costume Design Alyson Cummins
Lighting Design Suzie Cummins
Composition and Sound Design Denis Clohessy

'When beautiful worlds collide'

Mo (the Scottish one) and Realtín (the Irish one) partied, played and blazed their way through the Edinburgh student dream. Set in Glasgow a couple of years later, For Dolores is about friendship, motherhood and coming to terms with your worst mistakes.

Like twin stars in obsessive orbit, it's a friendship, a rivalry and an adventure. Risk is a delicious pleasure: until it all explodes in the blink of an eye.

How far will they go for love?

Thursday 6 – Sunday 30 August

Various times (see schedule grid on back page)

Traverse Theatre

10 Cambridge St, Edinburgh EH1 2ED

Booking

www.traverse.co.uk/whats-on/event/for-dolores

T 0131 228 1404

Contact

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IMAGE: LOST LENS CAPS AND OISIN KEARNEY

Oisín Kearney & Gina Donnelly

Good With Faces

By Oisín Kearney Starring Patrick McBrearty and
Clodagh Mooney-Duggan Stage Management Caoimhe McGee
Sound Katie Richardson Lighting Jonathan M Daley
Intimacy Co-ordination Paula O'Reilly Set Ciaran Bagnall

Winner Solas Nua New Voices Award 2025.

Garrick has tidied her living room and put out the good biscuits. But social worker Hegarty is there to interrogate. Why has her son got a mysterious bruise? Is she fit to care for him? What is she hiding? As power shifts and facades drop it becomes clear Garrick and Hegarty desperately need each other.

A taut thriller, a struggle for power between a worried mother and concerned social worker. But who is telling the truth? A complex interrogation of parenting, power and what it means to care.

★★★★ 'Full of punchy twists [...] a slick production that makes great use of the instruments at its disposal' The Irish Times

Friday 7 – Monday 31 August

Preview 6th August | No shows on 18, 25 August
4.20pm | 60 minutes

Tech Cube Zero

Summerhall Arts, 1 Summerhall Place, Edinburgh

Booking

<https://festival.summerhallarts.co.uk/events/good-with-faces/>

Contact

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NAF Dance

Ham Sandwiches and Discipline

By Nóra Ní Anluain Fay

Starring Nóra Ní Anluain Fay and Ben Sullivan

Witness the passionate drive of the GAA, Ireland's national sports, fused with dance, disco and comedy in Ham Sandwiches and Discipline.

From mummies' sideline screaming, manic pundits, stadium crisp eating and teenage club socials, we delve into what makes this sport a national tradition. While injecting this hive of Irishness with campiness and humour we glimpse at what growing up in Ireland can be like and what can shape a national identity. After a national and international festival tour this infectiously joyous theatrical explosion makes its UK premiere.

'A Must-See,' The Irish Times, RTÉ Culture and District Magazine

'An innovative dance, sketch and slapstick outing that brings theatre and sport into curious harmony,' The Irish Independent

19 – 31 August 2026

55 minutes

Assembly George Square

Studio Two, George Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9LH

Bookingwww.assemblyfestival.com/whats-on**T** +44 131 623 3030 | +44 131 623 303**E** info@assemblyfestival.com**Contact**Nóra Ní Anluain Fay *Lead Artist***T** +353 086 270 7284**E** nafdance@gmail.comwww.nafdance.com



Joy Nesbitt

Julius Caesar Variety Show

Written and Performed by Joy Nesbitt

Cast Pattie Maguire, Lore Adewusi, Daniel Mahon, Ultan Pringle,

Conrad Jones-Brangan Produced by Ois O'Donoghue

Original Lighting Design by Pedro Pacheco

Set and Costume Design by Jack Rogers

Sound Design by Martha Knight

Julius Caesar Variety Show is the worst audition you've ever had. A Black actor, a woman actor, and a straight white male actor walk into a Shakespeare audition in a condemned theatre space. Amidst a riot outside the theatre, three auditionees attempt to impress an intensely respected director set on reinventing the play in 'unorthodox' styles. As the audition unfolds, the actors' identities are called into the audition room and exploited for better performances.

Thursday 6 – Monday 31 August

No show 17, 24 August

4:45pm | 60 Minutes

Summerhall

1, Summerhall, Edinburgh EH9 1PL

Booking

<https://festival.summerhallarts.co.uk/events/julius-caesar-variety-show/>

www.edfringe.com/tickets/whats-on/julius-caesar-variety-show

Contact

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www.joynesbitt.com





PHOTO: OWEN CLARKE

Martha Knight

The King of All Birds

Written and Performed by **Martha Knight**

Directed by **Joy Nesbitt** Produced by **Ois O'Donoghue**

Original Lighting Design **Jess Fitzsimmons Kane**

Set and Costume Design **Jack Rogers**

Sound Engineering **Tobi Barry**

Who is the king of all birds? This tongue-in-cheek gig for voice and vocoder by award-winning sound artist Martha Knight is a love letter to the history of flight. Based on the phenomenon of aerial photos being displayed in Irish homes from the 1960s, the one-woman play expands this story to include explorations of ancient mythological birds, bringing us to the present, where airplanes and satellites rule the sky. Conjuring tales through traditional Irish music, using live electronics and effects to bring the ancient Irish tradition of song into the present day.

★★★★ Irish Times

Thursday 6 – Monday 31 August

No show 17, 24 August

1:40pm | 60 Minutes

Summerhall

1, Summerhall, Edinburgh EH9 1PL

Booking

<https://festival.summerhallarts.co.uk/events/the-king-of-all-birds/>

www.edfringe.com/tickets/whats-on/the-king-of-all-birds

Contact

Ois O'Donoghue Producer

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www.marthaknight.net/about





PHOTO: DANIEL BYRNE

Benjamin Reilly

Mortal Sin

By Benjamin Reilly Director Lee Coffey

Cast Benjamin Reilly, Isolde Fenton

Lighting Design Eoin Byrne Set Design Jenny Whyte

JFK'S been shot and Colm and Peggy want a day off school. Sure, they got one when the Pope died!

Follow two best friends as they stage a protest in the tiny village of Cundannon to honour the slain U.S president.

A bold, heartfelt, and hilarious exploration of growing up different in an Ireland where the Church controls everything from classrooms to confession. *Mortal Sin* is ultimately a celebration of friendship; a small but defiant stand against the shame that shaped a generation.

Colm and Peggy stick it to the man ... well, Sister Assumpta anyway!

★★★★★ 'A stunning double act' Reviews Hub

★★★★ 'Hilariously touching... superbly thoughtful... a heartfelt delight'
Arts Review

'A very special new talent' Sunday Independent

Wednesday 5 – Monday 31 August

No shows on 10, 17, 24 August | 50 minutes

Wee Room Gilded Balloon Teviot

Booking

<https://tickets.gildedballoon.co.uk/>

Contact

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PHOTO: ADAM DONOVAN

Oh!Scare Wilde Productions

The Pigeon Factory

By Aaron O'Neill Director Dee Finn Performer Aaron O'Neill
Sound Design Adam Donovan Set Design Hannah Lane
Pigeon Design Séana Coveney

Walden has a pretty good life. Happily married to his mannequin wife, he works his pigeon children into the ground and feasts upon their eggs for sustenance. Walden is doing everything he's supposed to do – so why does he feel so empty? Can his fantasies about his pigeons sustain him? Or must he face up to a great hurt done to him in the past? *The Pigeon Factory* is a darkly absurd one-man show that explores work, family and finding purpose in a broken society.

The play debuted at Cork Midsummer Festival 2023. It was revived in Cork, Dublin, and the West Cork Fit-Up Festival in 2024, and at Cork Fringe Festival in 2026.

★★★★ 'Ingenious, consistently entertaining' Irish Times

Wednesday 5 August – Sunday 30 August

12.55pm every day except Monday 17 August
60 minutes

Underbelly Cowgate

Jelly Belly stage, 66 Cowgate, Edinburgh, EH1 1JX

Booking

www.underbellyedinburgh.co.uk/events/event/the-pigeon-factory#performance

E boxoffice@underbelly.co.uk

Contact

Aaron O'Neill *Artistic director/writer/performer*

E ohscarewildeproductions@gmail.com

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www.ohscarewildeproductions.com





Bethan Rose & Berserk Theatre

Spin Cycle: The Lesbian Lauderette Play

By Zofia Zerphy Directed by Bethan Rose
Cast Rhiannon Bell and Zofia Zerphy

Spin Cycle: The Lesbian Laundrette Play makes its Edinburgh Fringe debut, bringing a queer absurdist story to the stage. Packed with heart, wit and emotional depth, the play presents a liminal world where past and present collide in the space of a single wash cycle, allowing forgotten memories to be rinsed clean.

Eyes lock. Hearts thump. But something is off. This snappy two-hander explores love, memory, class and Irish identity against the thrum of washing machines that cleanse our clothes, lives, and actions.

Off West End's 2026 OffFest award-winner, *Spin Cycle* champions Irish heritage and queer and gender non-conforming characters.

★★★★★ 'A seriously refreshing show on queer love, whirring memory and finding the truth in it all' A Youngish Perspective

Saturday 8 – Monday 31 August

Previews 5–7 | No shows on 17 August

2:25pm | 1 hr

Underbelly Clover

Bristo Square, University of Edinburgh, Bristo Pl,
Edinburgh EH8 9YL

Booking

<https://underbellyedinburgh.co.uk/whatson-all>

Contact

Bethan Rose

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EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL 2026

For 2026, Culture Ireland is delighted to extend its long established partnership with the Book Festival, now based at the Edinburgh Futures Institute.

This year, in addition to providing support for the attendance of Irish writers, we are also supporting a sustainable travel pilot. The Festival has invited a number of Irish writers to experience possible travel alternatives by making their way to the Festival overland while measuring their carbon footprint and the barriers they face en route.

A selection of Irish writers appearing at the Festival is featured in the following pages.



Full Festival information is available here
www.edbookfest.co.uk

Booking
boxoffice@edbookfest.co.uk



Anne Enright
Attention

Saturday 15 August

10am - 11am

Edinburgh Futures Institute
Venue T



**Doireann Ní Ghríofa
and Daisy Johnson**
Kindred Spirits

Saturday 15 August

6:45pm – 7:45pm

Edinburgh Futures Institute
Venue NW



Jan Carson
Magical Realism

Tuesday 18 August

5pm - 7pm

Edinburgh Futures Institute
Venue A



Donal Ryan
Where Are the Kings

Tuesday 18 August

5:30pm – 6:30pm

Edinburgh Futures Institute
Courtyard Theatre



**Ashley Hickson-Lovence
and Matthew Rice**
Art/Work

Tuesday 18 August

7:15 pm – 8:15pm

Edinburgh Futures Institute
Venue B



Sara Baume
Opening Night

Thursday 20 August

2pm - 3pm

Edinburgh Futures Institute
Venue B



**Patrick Freyne
and Séamas O'Reilly**
Deadly Serious

Friday 21 August

6:15pm – 7:15pm

Edinburgh Futures Institute

Venue B



Non-Fiction Reporting
*A Workshop with
Sally Hayden*

Wednesday 26 August

3pm – 4:30pm

Edinburgh Futures Institute

Venue A



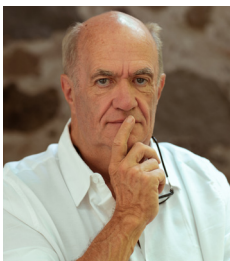
**Hannah Lavery,
Jennifer Wong and
Nidhi Zak/Aria Eipe**
Migratory Patterns

Thursday 27 August

3:45pm – 4:45pm

Edinburgh Futures Institute

Venue B



Colm Tóibín
The News from Dublin

Friday 28 August

3:15pm – 4:15pm

Edinburgh Futures Institute
Venue T



**Major Doodle Alert
with Sarah Bowie**

Sunday 30 August

3:30pm – 4:30pm

Edinburgh Futures Institute
Venue B



Ard-Chonsalacht na hÉireann | Dún Éideann
Consulate General of Ireland | Edinburgh

SHOW	VENUE	WED 05 AUG	THURS 06 AUG	FRI 07 AUG
For Dolores Fishamble: The New Play Company	Traverse Theatre Traverse 2		3:15pm (PR)	3:15pm
Good With Faces Oisín Kearney and Gina Donnelly	Summerhall Tech Cube Zero		4:20pm (PR)	4:20pm
Ham Sandwiches and Discipline NAF Dance	Assembly George Square Studio Two			
Julius Caesar Variety Show Joy Nesbitt	Summerhall Red Lecture Theatre		4:45pm (PR)	4:45pm
The King of All Birds Martha Knight	Summerhall Former Gent's Locker Room		1:40pm (PR)	1:40pm
Mortal Sin Benjamin Reilly	Gilded Balloon Teviot Wee Room	12:20pm	12:20pm	12:20pm
The Pigeon Factory Oh!Scare Wilde Productions	Underbelly Cowgate Jelly Belly stage	12:55pm	12:55pm	12:55pm
Spin Cycle: The Lesbian Launderette Play Bethan Rose & Berserk Theatre	Underbelly Bristo Square Clover	2:25pm (PR)	2:25pm (PR)	2:25pm (PR)
Anne Enright: Attention	Edinburgh Futures Institute Venue T			
Doireann Ní Ghríofa & Daisy Johnson: Kindred Spirits	Edinburgh Futures Institute Venue NW			
Jan Carson: Magical Realism	Edinburgh Futures Institute Venue A			
Donal Ryan: Where Are the Kings	Edinburgh Futures Institute Courtyard Theatre			
Ashley Hickson-Lovence & Matthew Rice: Art/Work	Edinburgh Futures Institute Venue B			
Sara Baume: Opening Night	Edinburgh Futures Institute Venue B			
Patrick Freyne & Séamas O'Reilly: Deadly Serious	Edinburgh Futures Institute Venue B			
Non-Fiction Reporting: A Workshop with Sally Hayden	Edinburgh Futures Institute Venue A			
Hannah Lavery, Jennifer Wong & Nidhi Zak/Aria Eipe: Migratory Patterns	Edinburgh Futures Institute Venue B			
Colm Tóibín: The News from Dublin	Edinburgh Futures Institute Venue T			

SAT 08 AUG	SUN 09 AUG	MON 10 AUG	TUES 11 AUG	WED 12 AUG	THURS 13 AUG	FRI 14 AUG	SAT 15 AUG	SUN 16 AUG	MON 17 AUG	TUES 18 AUG	WED 19 AUG	THURS 20 AUG	FRI 21 AUG	SAT 22 AUG	SUN 23 AUG	MON 24 AUG	TUES 25 AUG	WED 26 AUG	THURS 27 AUG	FRI 28 AUG	SAT 29 AUG	SUN 30 AUG	MON 31 AUG
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