



West Cork Literary Festival

Friday 10 – 17 July 2026 / Bantry, Co. Cork

Leading the development of the arts in Ireland.



artscouncil.ie



WELCOME TO THE 2026 WEST CORK LITERARY FESTIVAL

This is our twenty-eighth festival and it's our biggest one yet with over 115 authors across 100 events. It's going to be an exciting and jam-packed week as we share with you everything we've been working on for the past year. Our West Cork Music team produces three world-class festivals – West Cork Chamber Music Festival, Masters of Tradition and West Cork Literary Festival – and Bantry really is the place to be every summer.

Our work is supported by our principal funders the Arts Council, Cork County Council and Fáilte Ireland as well as our many Irish and international programming partners. Enormous thanks to all of our writers for sharing your words and your ideas with us. We are delighted to welcome you to Bantry. May you have the most wonderful time here.

Thank you to everyone who supports the festival and authors by buying tickets and books, attending events and embracing the festival atmosphere. Come and discover new authors, meet fellow book lovers, enjoy a coffee or lunch in Bantry, swim in the sea, explore our town. Whether you're a local, a regular or a first-time visitor you are sure to have a wonderful time. Let's make this our best festival yet!

Eimear O'Herlihy
Festival Director



West Cork Literary Festival

Cork County Library and Arts Service welcome West Cork Literary Festival. This year's festival has an outstanding line up. As we celebrate Ireland's Presidency of the EU from July 2026 and the 100 year anniversary of Cork County Council Library Service, it is wonderful to see the programme featuring and showcasing the great literary heritage of Ireland and Europe.

Cork County Council's new Writers Block programme is being highlighted. In the past we selected one Writer in Residence each year to support writing groups across the county. This year we have a panel of Writers in Residence so that we can meet the geographical challenge of the county more effectively and also bring a broader range of writers' styles and experiences to our writing groups. We will also be taking the opportunity to celebrate 100 years of Cork County Library Service during WCLF 2026.

I would like to congratulate West Cork Music and the festival's Artistic Director Eimear O'Herlihy on this wonderful programme and the commitment to diverse writers, styles and themes. Thank you also to the County Arts Office, to the sponsors, local organisations, businesses, volunteers, Bantry Library Manager, Denis Murphy and his team.

I look forward to seeing you all in Bantry this summer and invite you to visit Bantry Library to help us celebrate this special anniversary.

Emer O'Brien

County Librarian,
Cork County Library and Arts Service



Our brochure is designed to give you an overview of everything that is happening during the festival week. For more information on each event and author please visit our website

This Year's Cover Art

Seán Keating, *The Window*, 1924. Collection **Crawford Art Gallery**, Cork. © Estate of Seán Keating, IVARO Dublin, 2026. www.crawfordartgallery.ie

All week / Bantry Library / Free

Exhibition: io, intentionally offline

Niamh Bagnell invited writers and artists to create something entirely in the non-digital and more than 30 international contributors physically posted or hand-delivered their creations to Cork. This is an exhibition of the original pieces, which will later be auctioned for *Medicins Sans Frontières*. Niamh and contributors **Niamh Boyce**, **Maeve Higgins** and **Billy O'Callaghan** will discuss the project on Wednesday at 5pm

All week except Tues / Forest & Flock / Free Letter Café

Pop into the Letter Café and write that letter to let someone know that you're thinking of them. Complimentary stationery, pens and postage available throughout the week.

During the week / Bantry Day Care Centre / Private Event

Arts For Health West Cork

Each year we partner with Arts for Health, West Cork, and writer, **E.R. Murray**, for a special private event with staff and participants at Bantry Day Care Centre. This project is funded by Arts for Health, West Cork which provides a managed and integrated arts programme for older people in healthcare settings.



Seán Keating, *The Window*, 1924. Collection Crawford Art Gallery, Cork. © Estate of Seán Keating, IVARO Dublin, 2026

io, intentionally offline; Niamh Boyce and Billy O'Callaghan

Friday 10 July / 13.00 / Bantry Library / Free
100 Years of Cork County Library

Cork County Library Service marks its 100th anniversary in 2026 and over the past one hundred years has become an integral part of towns and communities with twenty-five branch libraries and four mobile libraries across the county. Join us for a discussion with members of Writers Block, the new panel of Cork County Council writers-in-residence, about the importance of libraries and what their local library has meant to them.

Friday 10 July / 15.00-16.00 / Ma Murphys / Free
Writers Block Networking Session

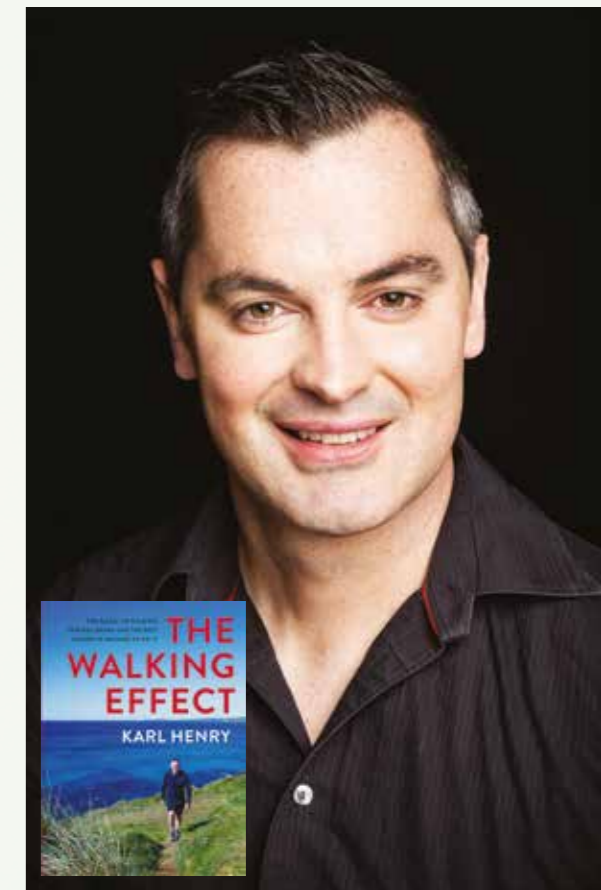
Writers Block is an ambitious new creative writing initiative that will bring communities across the county together through the written word. The writers appointed are **Kieran Crowley**, **Arnold Thomas Fanning**, **Matthew Geden**, **Patrick Holloway**, **Mary Noonan**, **Leeanne O'Donnell**, **Colm Scully**, **Molly Twomey**, and **Josh Wagner**. This panel of writers will be available to chat to at this informal networking session. *The Writers Block programme is managed by Cork County Council Library and Arts Service and supported by The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.*



Friday 10 July / 15.00 / Marino Church / €20

Karl Henry: The Walking Effect

In *The Walking Effect*, leading fitness expert **Karl Henry** inspires us all to embrace the power of walking and the supreme benefits it has on our physical and mental health. Karl's advice is for all ages and fitness levels as he covers everything from strolls to hikes and has excellent tips for those who haven't been exercising regularly and are keen to start walking. Karl shares his favourite walks around Ireland but West Cork takes centre stage in the book as all of the magnificent photos were taken at Long Strand, Castlefrenke and Lough Hyne.



Karl Henry

Friday 10 July / 17.00 / Bantry Library / Free
Opening Reception of the
28th West Cork Literary Festival

Join us as we welcome audience members, workshop participants, festival sponsors and supporters and of course the writers who will be with us over the course of the week.

Friday 10 July / 18.30 / Maritime Hotel / €16
Doire Press: Karen J McDonnell & John O'Donnell

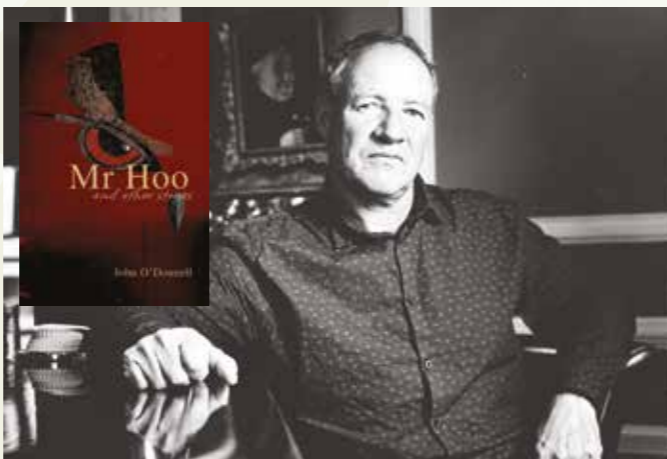
Welcome to our annual presentation of new writing published by **Doire Press**, a Connemara-based publisher of award-winning Irish poetry and short story collections. We are joined by poet **Karen J McDonnell** with her second collection *Tidal* and short story writer **John O'Donnell** author of *Mr Hoo & Other Stories*.

This event is supported by Doire Press



Friday 10 July / 20.00-22.00 / Ma Murphys / Free. Saor in aisce
Pop Up Gaeltacht

Join us for a Pop-Up Gaeltacht and practice whatever level of Irish you have. Cómhrá, craic agus scúps. Bígí Linn!



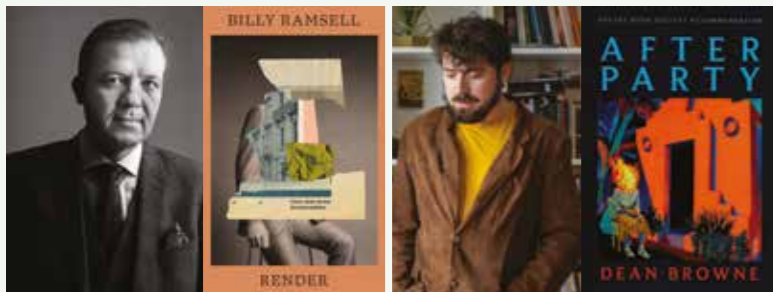
From top: Karen J McDonnell and John O'Donnell

Friday 10 July / 20.30 / Maritime Hotel / €25
Miriam O'Callaghan:
Miriam. Life, Work, Everything

Miriam O'Callaghan is one of Ireland's best-known and best-loved broadcasters, covering every election, referendum, major controversy and important public event for TV, and hosting an award-winning RTÉ radio show. *Miriam: Life, Work, Everything* is her wonderfully engaging, exceptionally honest and personal memoir. Miriam shares touching stories from her personal life – from the life-changing impact of losing her beloved sister and father in a matter of months, and the end of her first marriage that same year, to the joys and challenges of bringing eight children into the world and juggling a frenetically busy life ('give up on perfection' is her wise advice!).

"I started writing this book as an exclusively work memoir but the work and the personal kept overlapping. I don't know if that's because I'm a woman or a mother or both, or none of those reasons. I just know that for my story to be authentic and truthful, I couldn't simply focus on the work side of my life."



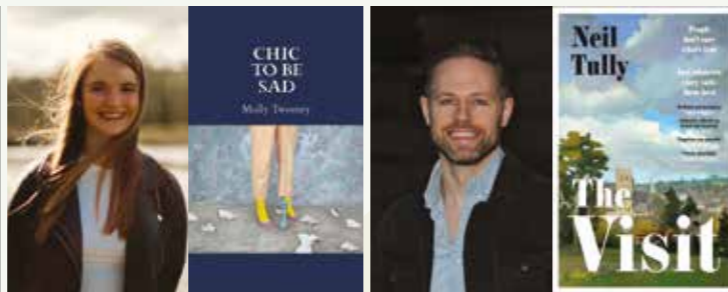


Saturday 11 July / 10.00 / Bantry House Loggia / €13
COFFEE & CHAT: Poetry with Dean Browne, Billy Ramsell & Molly Twomey

Cork has a wealth of incredible poets living within the city and county and it is an honour to bring three of them together. **Dean Browne, Billy Ramsell** and **Molly Twomey** will read from their latest collections *After Party*, *Render* and *Chic to be Sad*. Our morning Coffee & Chat series is presented in association with Bantry House

Saturday 11 July / 10.30 / Westlodge Hotel / Free
Bantry Book Club: July Meet-Up

The Bantry Book Club meets once a month. The July meet-up is open to members and non-members, so everyone is welcome to join in. See our website nearer the time for the July book.



Saturday 11 July / 11.00-12.00 / Maritime Hotel (first floor library) / Free
Quiet Reading Hour (daily Sat-Fri)

Inspired by the Seán Keating painting on our cover, the rise in Silent Book Clubs and the need to take a little time away from our phones and distractions, we're setting up a Quiet Reading Space for an hour a day. Please respect the peace and quiet of fellow readers during the dedicated hour. After that you're welcome to chat to one another about what you're reading.

Saturday 11 July / 11.30 / Bantry Bookshop / Free
Neil Tully: The Visit

The Visit is set in June 1963, at the time of John F Kennedy's momentous visit to New Ross. Against a backdrop of a country on the verge of profound social change and the magic that Kennedy's visit creates, it explores themes of shame and redemption, love and marriage, progress, and what happens to those that progress leaves behind.

Saturday 11 July / 13.00 / Bantry Library / Free
Jen Calleja & Caitríona Lally

How should a writer be? How do class, economics and available supports affect who gets to be a writer? Is it possible to make a living as an artist or writer? *Fair The Life-Art of Translation* by **Jen Calleja** is a satirical, refreshing and brilliantly playful mix of memoir and autofiction about learning the art of translation, being a bookworker in the publishing industry, growing up, family, and class. *Home Economics* is novelist **Caitríona Lally's** bold and thought-provoking memoir and it tackles head on failure, class, economics and ideas of what a writer should be.

Saturday 11 July / 14.30 / Marino Church / €18
Katriona O'Sullivan: Hungry: A Biography of my Body

Hungry, the powerful new memoir from Number One bestselling author **Katriona O'Sullivan**, delves into the complexities of body image, self-worth, and the relentless pursuit of acceptance. Told with stunning courage and vulnerability, *Hungry* is both a personal reckoning and a powerful reclaiming of body, voice and self. It is one woman's story – and a rallying cry for every woman who has ever felt she had to shrink to survive.

Saturday 11 July / 14.30-15.45 / Bantry Town / Max 12 / Free but ticketed
Historical Walking Tour

Learn about Bantry's fascinating history with tour guide, Noel O'Mahony, who will accompany you through the streets and explain the many aspects of this historic town's interesting past.

Please dress for the weather.



Saturday 11 July / 15.00-18.00 / Maritime Hotel / Max 10 / €25

Demystifying the Personal Essay: Ellen Brickley

From the *New York Times* to Sunday Miscellany, personal essays are endlessly popular, and the good news is that anybody can write one. **Ellen Brickley** will take you from generating ideas, to outlining an essay, to covering the conventions of essay writing and clichés to avoid, and finally discussing publication and funding opportunities in Ireland and abroad.

Saturday 11 July / 16.00 / Maritime Hotel / €18

Dearbhla Mescal: Finding Joy

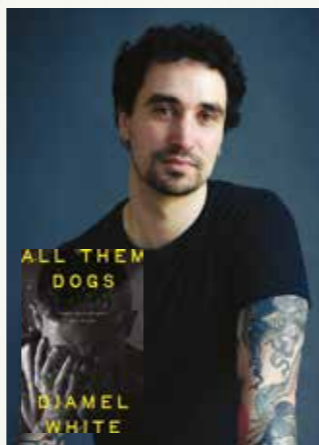
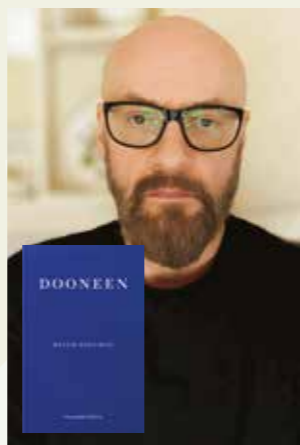
A poetry lover, a curator of joy and a wise woman with a deep sense of compassion, **Dearbhla Mescal** has inspired thousands online to slow down, savour the small moments and rediscover the beauty in everyday life. Now, in her first book, she invites us to join her on a journey of reflection and renewal through a tender and uplifting collection of poems and heartfelt musings. *Finding Joy: Capturing the Beauty of Ordinary Life in 28 Days* is beautifully illustrated by Steve Doogan.

Saturday 11 July / 17.00 / Bantry Library / Free

Keith Ridgway & Djamel White

With these incredible novels come and discover whole new versions of Dublin. *Dooneen* is the layered, allusive and wildly original new novel from **Keith Ridgway**, 'one of Ireland's best writers, in a country with no shortage of them.' (The Times). **Djamel White's** *All Them Dogs* is raw, colourful, and fizzing with a chaotic energy. He's a brutally brilliant new voice on the Irish scene, this is a view of Dublin you won't have seen before.

Clockwise from top left: Ellen Brickley, Dearbhla Mescal, Djamel White, Keith Ridgway



Saturday 11 July / 18.30-20.00 / Marino Church / €18

Grapevine

Grapevine brings together the best in Irish storytelling, spoken word, theatre and comedy to explore the art of telling stories in 2026. This event sold out quickly at last year's festival so don't miss your chance this time around. A crossroads for the spoken arts, Grapevine platforms seanchaithe, comics, writers, poets and performers from across the Irish cultural landscape.

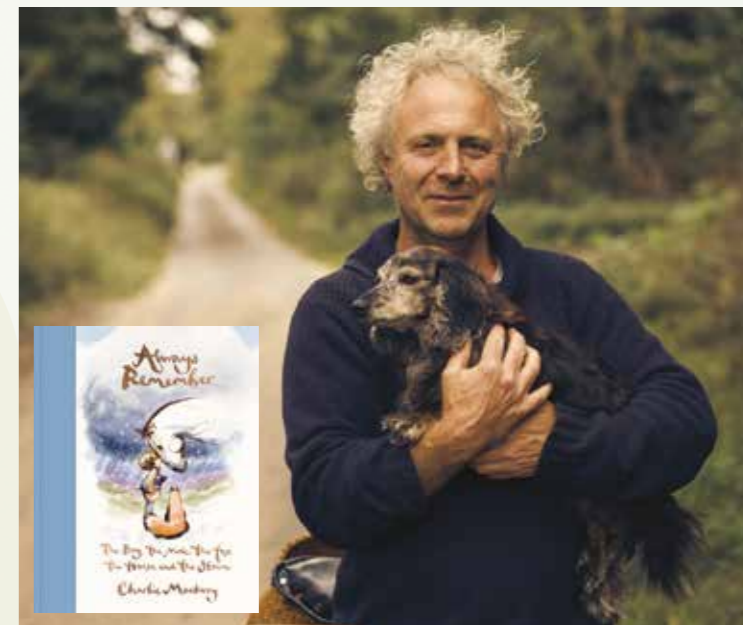
Saturday 11 July / 20.30 / Maritime Hotel / €20

Charlie Mackesy: Always Remember

Charlie Mackesy captured the hearts of millions of people all over the world and brought comfort to so many with his incredible book *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*. It is the bestselling adult non-fiction book of all time, with over ten million readers worldwide and now Charlie joins us with his gorgeous new book *Always Remember: The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, the Horse and the Storm* which revisits the much-loved world of his first book. As the four unlikely friends wander through the wilds again, they're not sure what they are looking for. They do know that life can be difficult, but that they love each other, and cake is often the answer. When the dark clouds come, can the boy remember what he needs to get through the storm?

Saturday 11 July / 22.00 / Ma Murphys / Free

Open Mic



Sunday 12 July / 09.00-10.15 / Bantry House / €15 (cash only, pay on day) / Age 15+ Yoga on the Lawn

Join us for the perfect start to your morning! Paul O'Donoghue has been practicing Yoga for more than 40 years and his classes focus on alignment and bringing a balance between the mind and body, strength and flexibility. This drop-in class is suitable for all levels. Please wear comfortable clothes and bring your own yoga mat and any additional equipment that you may need. The class will take place on the front lawn in Bantry House (with a bad weather Plan B) - check our social media the day before for weather updates.

Sunday 12 July / 10.00 / Bantry House Loggia / €13 COFFEE & CHAT: Mícheál Ó hAodha: Spring Seaweed

Máirtín Ó Direáin (1910-1988) was one of the foremost Irish-language poets of the twentieth century but he also wrote a remarkable piece of prose about his childhood and formative years on the Aran Islands. His distinctive voice brings readers close to island life while exploring universal themes of belonging, memory, and artistic creation. His collection of Irish-language essays *Feamainn Bhealtaine* was published in 1961 and has now been translated into English by **Mícheál Ó hAodha** and published as *Spring Seaweed: Feamainn Bhealtaine*.



Sunday 12 July / 12.00 / Marino Church / Free but ticketed The Island of Imagination: A Literary Tour of Ireland with Laureate for Irish Fiction Éilís Ní Dhuibhne

Laureate for Irish Fiction Éilís Ní Dhuibhne delves into contemporary Irish fiction on a journey of exploration to highlight literature emanating from every county in Ireland. Éilís will be joined by **Danielle McLaughlin** and **Mary Morrissy** in a conversation about their writing, as she stops off in West Cork as part of her Laureate series.

This event is in association with the Arts Council. The Laureate for Irish Fiction is an initiative of the Arts Council.



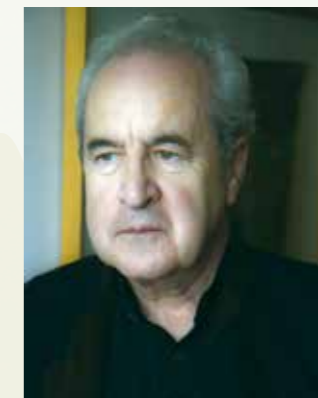
Sunday 12 July / 13.00 / St Brendan's Church / €18 We Are An Archipelago: Erin Fornoff, Patrick O'Laoghaire, Dominic Mullan & Oisín Walsh-Peelo

We Are An Archipelago is a dynamic, performed story, told in poetry, set to live score. It tells the (semi-true) story of ninety-nine year old Bill, who moves back to the little, strange island of his birth, where he meets Deena, a young pregnant woman fleeing a difficult past. Their gentle friendship sustains them as a hurricane - and a baby-arrive simultaneously. It is told in three voices, interspersed with songs and musical soundscapes, featuring spoken word performer **Erin Fornoff**, musician **Patrick O'Laoghaire** of I Have a Tribe on piano, vocals, and loop pedals, drummer **Dominic Mullan** of Mary Coughlan Band, and **Oisín Walsh-Peelo** of The Fynches on about five instruments.

Sunday 12 July / 15.00 / Maritime Hotel / €15 The Sentence and the Self, John Banville and Victoria Kennefick in conversation, for the Irish Writers Centre

Swimming out into a conversational ocean of literary and legacy, novelist **John Banville** and poet **Victoria Kennefick** come together on behalf of the **Irish Writers Centre** to explore the poetics of prose, passions, and the impossibility of doing anything else other than writing.

This event is supported by the Irish Writers Centre



Clockwise from top: Mícheál Ó hAodha, Laureate for Irish Fiction Éilís Ní Dhuibhne, Mary Morrissy and Danielle McLaughlin



Sunday 12 July / 15.00-17.00 / Marino Church / €25

CBI: Writing for Children Masterclass



Children's Books Ireland in association with West Cork Literary Festival is proud to present this Properbook Masterclass on writing for children with illustrator **Paddy Donnelly** and author **Sarah Webb**, chaired by **Aoife Murray** from Children's Books Ireland. Suitable for children's writers and illustrators at all stages of their book career, from beginners to more experienced writers, all are welcome! Come with questions, leave with answers.

This event is presented in association with Children's Books Ireland.



Children's Books Ireland: Raising Voices Fellows

The six **Raising Voices Fellows** will join us during the festival. The fellowship aims to develop and support aspiring artists who make work for children and young adults and whose voices have been underrepresented in literature. WCLF is a proud partner alongside Children's Books Ireland, Illustrators Ireland, Publishing Ireland, the Dublin Book Festival and the Tyrone Guthrie Centre at Annagmakerrig.

Sunday 12 July / 17.00 / Maritime Hotel / €16

Rosaleen McDonagh: Contentious Spaces

Rosaleen McDonagh's debut novel delves into the inner lives of Traveller families on a site in Dublin over the course of one crucial week when they are due to be evicted by the local council, threatening not only their homes but also their history and the stories that have shaped them. Unflinching, *Contentious Spaces* is a haunting story about identity and loyalty, shame and resilience, grief and love, and the defiant power of voices that refuse to be silenced.



Sunday 12 July / 17.30-18.30 / Ma Murphys / Free
Children's Writers & Illustrators Meet-Up

If you love children's books and like nothing better than talking about books, writing and illustrating, this meet-up is for you! All welcome. This gathering will be hosted by children's author, **Sarah Webb** from Discover Irish Children's Books. Please note, this is a social occasion and not an event. If you are interested in finding out more about writing and publishing for children, the ProperBook event at 3pm today is the perfect match for you!

Sunday 12 July / 18.30 / Marino Church / €16

Margaret Busby: Part of the Story: Writings from Half a Century

This incredible collection is a rare self-portrait from a pioneering publisher, writer and cultural activist. It underscores **Margaret Busby's** powerful legacy and celebrates some of the people and places that have shaped her exceptional life. Margaret has been at the heart of cultural life in the UK for over 50 years. From becoming Britain's youngest and first Black woman publisher when she founded publishing house Allison & Busby in the 1960s, to editing the ground-breaking international anthologies *Daughters of Africa* and *New Daughters of Africa*, her many achievements are testament to her dedication to championing the lives and stories of others, particularly those throughout the world who have been marginalised by the mainstream.





Sunday 12 July / 20.30 / Maritime Hotel / €20
Emer McLysaght and Sarah Breen: Our Deadly Summer

Bestselling authors **Emer McLysaght** and **Sarah Breen** are back with their brand new standalone novel as they bring their trademark Aisling humour in a completely new direction. This is a hilarious and heartfelt story about friendship, young women and bad men. With noughties nostalgia and a dead body, it's the novel you didn't know you needed. Laura and Dee said they'd never let a man get in the way of their friendship. And now they haven't spoken since the day they buried a body together... It's a miracle only one person ends up dead and Dee is pretty sure she didn't mean to kill him. Laura, to her credit, never asked. Not until she sends an email, out of the blue, more than twenty years later. It's finally time to mend the biggest heartbreak of that summer; Laura wants her best friend back.

Sunday 12 July / 22.00 / Ma Murphys / Free Open Mic



Monday 13 July / 10.00 / Bantry House Loggia / €13
COFFEE & CHAT: Sacha Coward: Queer As Folklore

This is a celebration of queer history like you've never seen it before. **Sacha Coward** takes us on a wild ride from ancient Greece to the main stage of RuPaul's Drag Race, visiting cross-dressing pirates, radical fairies and the graves of the 'queerly departed' along the way. Queer communities have often sought refuge in the shadows and created safe spaces in underworlds. But these forgotten narratives tell stories of resilience that deserve to be heard.

Monday 13 July / 11.30 / Bantry Bookshop / Free
Conor Power: Hurling 1810

This novel is set against the background of a forgotten era in hurling history—when landlords controlled the game, and large sums of money were at stake. Seán O'Meara takes the pay of landlord Charles Kavanagh but feels he is betraying his father, who died in the 1798 Rebellion. He must forge a path between loyalty and betrayal on and off the pitch. Meanwhile Kavanagh is obsessed with keeping the ancient game going to bring cohesion and prevent the people from rebelling.

Monday 13 July / 13.00 / Bantry Library / Free
Raoul de Jong: Jaguarman

In his memoir *Jaguarman*, award-winning Dutch writer **Raoul de Jong** explores the land of his Surinamese father, the history of his ancestors and his search for the jaguarman. Follow Raoul's search for personal meaning through the magic and history of his forefathers' land, and, by reading the voices of those who spoke against it, an awareness of the dark shadow of colonial oppression. Following international acclaim, *Jaguarman* is now published for the first time in English. *This event is part of New Dutch Writing. Supported by the Dutch Foundation for Literature*

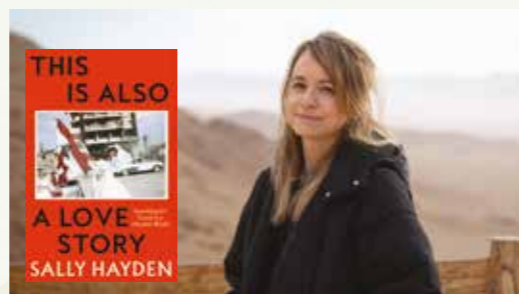
From top: Sacha Coward, Conor Power, Raoul de Jong



Monday 13 July / 14.30 / Marino Church / €18

Sally Hayden: This is Also a Love Story

We live in an era defined by crisis – whether it be war and displacement, or climate collapse and rapidly widening inequality. Award-winning international correspondent **Sally Hayden** has spent her career covering some of the darkest moments of our time, and yet even in the face of unimaginable adversity, she’s witnessed the love and care of everyday people. In her new book she dares us to recognise how connection, self-sacrifice and love can be found in even the most difficult of times, and – as a result – to question what might be needed to create a better world.



Monday 13 July / 15.00-17.00 / Maritime Hotel / €25

IWC Writers in the Region Poetry Masterclass with Victoria Kennefick

Join poet **Victoria Kennefick** for a special edition of the Irish Writers Centre’s Writers in the Regions. The theme of this two-hour masterclass is **‘Fear and Loathing: How to Transform Anxiety into Poems that Work’**. Join us for this immersive, generative workshop where we will focus, breathe and truly bear witness to the full spectrum of what it means to be human and make poems that will confront, soothe and dispel the crippling spectre of unacknowledged fear. This masterclass will be a lecture-style event with a Q&A at the end. *This event is supported by the Irish Writers’ Centre*



Monday 13 July / 17.00 / Marino Church / €16

Elaine Feeney & Kathleen MacMahon

Elaine Feeney and **Kathleen MacMahon** write some of the most beautiful and thought-provoking literary fiction coming out of Ireland. The female protagonists in *Let Me Go Mad in My Own Way* and *Other People’s Lives*, their latest novels, look back at the decisions they made in their youth and reckon with the memories stirred up. These novels will stay with you long after the last page.



Monday 13 July / 19.00 / Marino Church / €16

Gallery Goes: John Fitzgerald, Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin & Annemarie Ní Churreáin

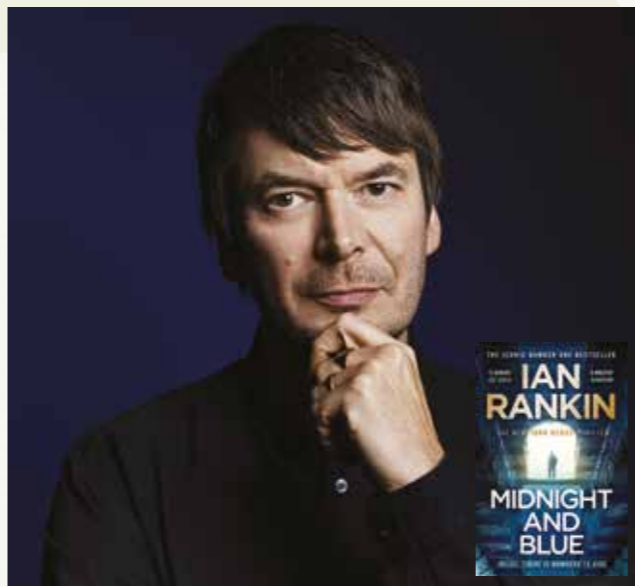
We are delighted to be one of the lucky festivals on this year’s **Gallery Goes** circuit as three incredible poets published by **The Gallery Press** come to West Cork. Join us for a magical hour of poetry with **John FitzGerald**, **Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin** and **Annemarie Ní Churreáin**, all reading from their latest collections, *Long Distance*, *New Selected Poems* and *Hymn to All the Restless Girls* respectively. *This event is supported by The Gallery Press*



Monday 13 July / 20.30 / Maritime Hotel / €25

Ian Rankin: Midnight and Blue

Midnight and Blue is the twenty-fifth John Rebus thriller from the iconic Number One bestseller, **Ian Rankin**. It is a masterfully executed twin-engine crime novel that combines his gold standard Edinburgh-based police procedurals and a tough, tightly-wound locked cell mystery. Ian’s work is known for its integrity and ambition, as well as the topical socio-political commentary, and *Midnight and Blue* continues the series with a sense of a generational changing of the guards, the march of technology and its potential to be saviour and predator, the pressure on public institutions through budget cuts and a decaying sense of civic duty. It’s a story about groups and institutions – boys’ clubs and girl groups, schools and prisons, gangs and territory, power and control.



Monday 13 July / 22.00 / Ma Murphys / Free Open Mic

Tuesday 14 July / 10.00 / Bantry House Loggia / €13

COFFEE & CHAT: **Korean literature with Anton Hur**

Anton Hur joins us to speak about translated literature from Korea and the life of a literary translator. He will also introduce our audiences to speculative fiction from Korea. Hear about his own novel *Toward Eternity* and his translations of *If We Cannot Go At The Speed of Light* by Kim Choyeop and *The Bird That Drinks Tears* (Book #1 of the *Heart of the Nhaga* series) by Lee Young-do.

This event is supported by the Literature Translation Institute of Korea



Tuesday 14 July / 11.30 / Bantry Bookshop / Free

Annmarie O'Connor: Twitch. My Life with Parkinson's

In 2021, *Irish Examiner* columnist, stylist, author and podcaster **Annmarie O'Connor** was diagnosed with early-onset Parkinson's disease, an incurable neurodegenerative condition broadly affecting movement and mental health. Though she no longer works as a stylist due to Parkinson's complications, *Twitch* outlines her journey from a life-altering diagnosis to becoming an inspirational activist and agent of change.



Tuesday 14 July / 13.00 / Bantry Library / Free

Geraldine Osborne: Somewhere Cold. A Year Living in the High Arctic

In 1989, West Cork doctor **Geraldine Osborne**, her artist husband Danny, and their young children – ages five, two, and one – embarked on an extraordinary adventure: to spend a year living in one of the most isolated parts of the world, the tiny Inuit settlement of Grise Fiord, over a thousand kilometres above the Arctic Circle. A compelling blend of travel narrative, family memoir and cultural observation, richly illustrated with Danny's photographs, *Somewhere Cold* is about pushing boundaries, embracing the unknown and discovering that sometimes the most valuable lessons come from unexpected places.



Tuesday 14 July / 14.30 / Marino Church / €18

Nussaibah Younis: Fundamentally

This incredible debut novel was shortlisted for the 2025 Women's Prize for Fiction and has been described by the *Sunday Times* as 'this year's funniest debut novel... Bridget Jones in Iraq.' Nussaibah is a peacebuilding practitioner and a globally recognised expert on contemporary Iraq, who, for several years, advised the Iraqi government on proposed programs to de-radicalise women affiliated with ISIS. *Fundamentally* is her biting original, wildly funny and wickedly sharp novel about an academic who's been dumped by her girlfriend, disowned by her puritanical mother and decides to accept a UN job rehabilitating ISIS women in Iraq.

Tuesday 14 July / 15.30 / Maritime Hotel / Free but ticketed

An Irish Writers Centre Information Session

Join us for an informal exploration of the Irish Writer Centre, the country's national resource centre for writers at all stages of their careers. Head of Programming, **Damien B. Donnelly**, takes us through their academy of courses, online and in-person, residencies, bursaries, regional roadshows, the National Mentoring and Evolution programmes and the international Debut Novel Competition. This event is supported by the Irish Writers Centre



Tuesday 14 July / 17.00 / Bantry Library / Free

Claire Adam & Ashley Hickson-Lovence

Set between Trinidad and England, *Love Forms* is **Claire Adam's** heart-aching novel about a mother searching for the daughter she left behind a lifetime ago. *Love Forms* was longlisted for the 2025 Booker Prize. **Ashley Hickson-Lovence's** *About To Fall Apart* is set across one weekend and is the exhilarating story of a man of mixed heritage – living on the Irish border – as he tries to stay positive, reconnect with his children and maybe, even, find his own birth mother. Both novelists write beautifully about families and about the bonds between parents and children, even when separated from one another since birth and when the children themselves become parents.



From top: Nussaibah Younis, Claire Adam and Ashley Hickson-Lovence



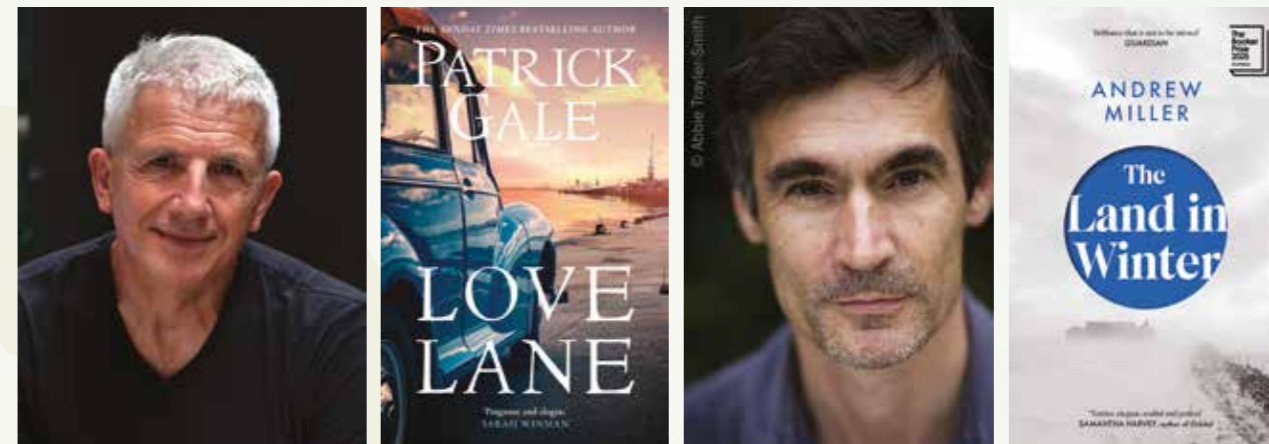
Tuesday 14 July / 18.00 / Marino Church / Free
Launch of the 2026 Fish Anthology

Out of thousands of entries and a demanding selection process, the **Fish Anthology** showcases the very best in contemporary writing. Don't miss the chance to hear these international prize-winning authors read their stories and poems live.

Tuesday 14 July / 18.30 / Maritime Hotel / €16

Crime Fiction: Jane Casey, Andrea Mara & Catherine Ryan Howard

There has been a fabulous explosion of 'Emerald Noir' in recent years with hugely successful crime writing coming out of Ireland and in particular female Irish crime writers have caught the world's attention. We are joined by three of the best, all of whom have brand new thrillers out this summer. **Andrea Mara's** *Such A Nice Girl* is published in May and this event will be your chance to get hot-off-the-presses copies of **Jane Casey's** *Everything She Didn't Say* and **Catherine Ryan Howard's** *Buyer Beware* as neither of these books will be officially published until two days after our event.



Tuesday 14 July / 20.30 / Maritime Hotel / €20
Patrick Gale & Andrew Miller

Join us for an evening of historical fiction (mid-twentieth century history!) with two of the finest masters of this craft. From beloved, bestselling author **Patrick Gale** comes a searing portrayal of escape and the power of love, home and a family. *Love Lane* is a brilliant new standalone novel featuring characters from Patrick's Costa-shortlisted novel *A Place Called Winter*.

The Land in Winter is **Andrew Miller's** masterful, page-turning examination of the minutiae of life. This book is a masterclass in storytelling – proof yet again that Andrew is one of the most dazzling chroniclers of the human heart. *The Land in Winter* was shortlisted for the 2025 Booker Prize and won the Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction.

Tuesday 14 July / 22.00 / Maritime Hotel / Free Open Mic



Wednesday 15 July / 10.00 / Bantry House Loggia / €13

COFFEE & CHAT: **Agnes Lidbeck & Nichola Smalley. Stories from Sweden**

Agnes Lidbeck's novel *All My Love*, translated from Swedish to English by **Nichola Smalley**, is a quietly unsettling exploration of class, friendship, and societal and political change. Petra and Johannes seem made for one another. A lawyer and a doctor. Well brought up, ambitious. Their friends Julia and Axel are different – from them, and from each other. Julia fights for her convictions. Axel manoeuvres his way to political power. Desire moves like an undertow between them all, dangerous and destabilising. *This event is supported by the Swedish Arts Council as part of the Stories From Sweden programme*

Wednesday 15 July / 12.00 / Marino Church / €12

Tareq Baconi: Fire In Every Direction

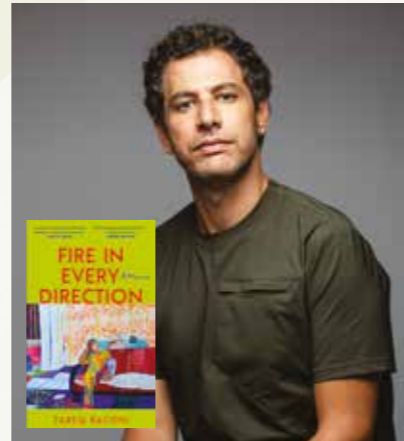
Palestinian writer, scholar, and activist **Tareq Baconi's** memoir is both a love story and a coming-of-age tale that spans countries and continents, and it balances humour and loss, nostalgia and hope, as it takes us from the Middle East to London, and from 1948 to the present. Living between the region and London, Tareq fits in neither and feels alienated from both. Queerness is policed back in Amman, just as his Palestinian-ness is abroad. These gradual estrangements escalate, forcing him to grapple with what it means to live in liminal spaces and rethink the meaning of home. Eventually, tracing the journey of his family before him, Tareq returns to Palestine.

Wednesday 15 July / 13.00 / Bantry Library / Free

BlowInk: Zine launch by immigrant writers in Clonakilty

BlowInk is a group of immigrant writers based in and around Clonakilty. **Matthew Geden** worked with participants from Spain, France, Pakistan, Poland, Israel and the Ukraine and the group spent time translating, sharing and writing new work in both English and their mother tongues. Their new zine using shelter as its central theme will be launched at this event. The zines contain work in several languages, with English versions, and are illustrated by the writers themselves.

From top: Agnes Lidbeck, Nichola Smalley (insert) and Tareq Baconi



From top: Ulrike Draesner and Rebecca Braun, Adrian Tinniswood, Andrew Cunning, Adiba Jaigirdar and Katherine O'Donnell

Wednesday 15 July / 13.00 / Maritime Hotel / Free but ticketed

Ulrike Draesner & Rebecca Braun: Channel Swimmer

Ulrike Draesner is one of Germany's most acclaimed poets and novelists. *Channel Swimmer* tells the story of Charles, an Oxford scientist on the eve of retirement, who decides to counter his wife's mid-life dream of an expanded marriage with his own: swimming the English Channel – at least once in his life. His Channel crossing turns into an ordeal, a rite of passage, and, ultimately, a tribute to the vagaries of love. *Translator Rebecca Braun will join us in person for this event and author Ulrike Draesner will join us remotely from Germany via a live video link-up.* *This event supported by the Goethe-Institut Irland*

Wednesday 15 July / 14.30 / Bantry House / €20

Adrian Tinniswood: The Houses of Guinness

Bestselling author and historian **Adrian Tinniswood** explores the histories of the legendary Guinness family – brewers, philanthropists, socialites – through their mansions and town houses. Did you know about the connection between Bantry House and the Guinness family as Lady Olivia, daughter of the third Earl of Bantry, married Sir Arthur Guinness? Come and join us in the magnificent setting of Bantry House to hear Adrian reveal what life was like for a dynasty that rose from ordinary beginnings in Georgian Dublin to become one of the most powerful families in the British Isles.

Wednesday 15 July / 15.00 / Maritime Hotel / €10

Beyond the Rainbow, an Irish Writers Centre panel discussion

In this **Irish Writers Centre** part panel discussion / part reading, we explore new writing from the LGBTQAI+ community who've broken down the boundaries of binary and finding form in the fluidity of who we are. Featuring the Irish Writers Centre International Debut Novel Competition 2025 winner **Andrew Cunning**; Bangladeshi/Irish writer **Adiba Jaigirdar**; and professor, activist and author of *Slant*, **Katherine O'Donnell**. *This event is supported by the Irish Writers Centre*



Wednesday 15 July / 17.00 / Bantry Library / Free io - intentionally offline

What happens when artists and writers detach entirely from screens and electronics and create something exclusively physical? **Niamh Bagnell** invited writers and artists to create something entirely in the non-digital and more than 30 international contributors physically posted or hand-delivered their creations to Cork. Join Niamh in conversation with **Niamh Boyce, Maeve Higgins** and **Billy O'Callaghan** as they discuss what it means to be an artist in the age of ai.

Wednesday 15 July / 18.00 / Maritime Hotel / Free Open Mic Matinee

A special early evening open mic. Read (max 3 minutes) of your own text, introduce your published work, or simply listen to others. All genres are welcome. This session is hosted by Nuala Murphy and the Cork Non-Fiction Writers Collective.

Wednesday 15 July / 18.30 / Marino Church / €16

Poetry Ireland: Nithy Kasa, Mícheál McCann & Jessica Traynor

Join us for a celebration of Irish poetry with incredible new collections from **Nithy Kasa, Mícheál McCann** and **Jessica Traynor**. Nithy's second collection *How to Make Love to a Colonised Body* is published by Doire Press in April 2026. In June 2026 The Gallery Press will publish *Lives of the Saints*, Mícheál's second collection, whilst Jessica's fourth collection *New Arcana* was published by Bloodaxe in September 2025. *This event is presented in association with Poetry Ireland / Éigse Éireann*



Wednesday 15 July / 20.00 / Ma Murphys / Free but ticketed Word on the Street, an Irish Writers Centre Spoken Word Showcase

With its fusions in rap, jazz, poetry and performance, and its engagement with all that is pressing, political and repressed, this year's Irish Writers Centre Spoken Word showcase features bilingual poet and writer **Julie Goo**, poet, performer and essayist **Holly Hughes**, Cork-based writer **Tim O'Driscoll** and West Cork poet and performer, **Catherine Ronan**.

This event is supported by the Irish Writers Centre

Wednesday 15 July / 20.30 / Maritime Hotel / €20

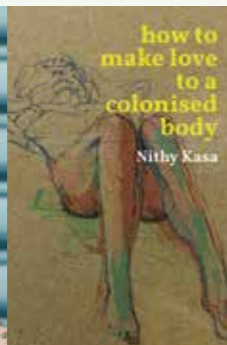
Jung Chang: Fly, Wild Swans

Fly, Wild Swans is the long-awaited sequel to **Jung Chang's Wild Swans**, a book that defined a generation through an epic personal history of Jung, her mother and grandmother – 'three daughters of China'. *Wild Swans* took us from her grandmother's birth in 1909 under the last emperor to the end of the Mao era in 1978 with Jung's emigration to Britain. At the time she was one of the first Chinese to leave Communist China for the West. Nearly half a century on, China has risen from a decrepit, isolated state to a global power. Through those decades, Jung's life has been intimately entwined with her native land. *Fly, Wild Swans* is the sequel and brings the story of Jung's family – along with that of China – up to date.

Wednesday 15 July / 22.00 / Maritime Hotel / Free Open Mic



From top left: Julie Goo, Holly Hughes, Tim O'Driscoll and Catherine Ronan. Jung Chang





Thursday 16 July / 10.00 / Bantry House Loggia / €13

COFFEE & CHAT: Nolwenn Le Blevennec: Friends and Lovers

Friends and Lovers is the second novel by French author and journalist **Nolwenn Le Blevennec** translated by **Madeleine Rogers**). Three friends, all exhausted young mothers living in Paris, escape to Tunisia for a New Year's getaway. Three years later, they reunite for another holiday, this time at a remote, disused lighthouse off the coast of Brittany. But the easy camaraderie of their earlier trip has faded. Tensions simmer and dynamics shift when it's revealed that one of them is writing a film inspired by their friendship.

This event is supported by the Ambassade de France en Irlande / Embassy of France in Ireland.



Thursday 16 July / 11.30 / Bantry Bookshop / Free

Shaunna Lee Lynch: The Goddess Complex

The Goddess Complex by debut Cork novelist **Shaunna Lee Lynch** is an unmissable feminist dystopia set in a future Ireland. Based on real Irish history, this thought-provoking new YA novel follows two very different young women, Elmagh and Amber, as they navigate a future Ireland where women's intuition is considered a dangerous mental illness. It is inspired by Shaunna's grandmother's experiences of the Magdalene laundries scandal in Ireland, where so-called 'fallen' women were condemned to institutions.



Thursday 16 July / 12.00 / Future Forests / €18

Sara Baume & Marion Coutts

Sara Baume and **Marion Coutts** are both visual artists as well as writers, and the power of art and nature to heal runs through both of their books. Marion's latest book, *What Did the Deep Sea Say?* is a stunning meditation on how the physical world and the ocean can bring us back to earth from the edge of grief. Sara's *Opening Night* will be published just in time for the festival, and it is a wholly original narrative, full of beauty and wisdom, about the nature of friendship and art.



Thursday 16 July / 13.00 / Bantry Library / Free
Everyone Started Singing: Poetry Showcase

Everyone Started Singing: Poems About Community is an anthology of work by established and emerging poets, as well as members of the Cork Migrant Centre and Fighting Words. All of the contributors either work, live or have an association with Cork City. Join the anthology's editor, **Jenny Mitchell**, and contributors **Imasha Costa**, **Daragh Fleming** and **Gerry Murphy**, as they perform poems to inspire questions about the meaning of community in unsettled times.

Thursday 16 July / 14.30 / Marino Church / €18
Daisy Fancourt: The Art Cure

Many of us consider making and consuming art to be a hobby, or even a luxury. But what if arts engagement – from classical music to salsa, poetry to pop concerts, galleries to graffiti – was in fact one of our most powerful tools for unlocking health and happiness? What if art could help you live longer – and even save your life? In *Art Cure: The Science of How the Arts Transform Our Health*, **Professor Daisy Fancourt** reveals how making and consuming art improves our health, makes us happier and can even help us live longer. Currently shortlisted for the Women's Prize for Non-Fiction 2026.

From left: Jenny Mitchell, Daragh Fleming, Gerry Murphy and Imasha Costa. Professor Daisy Fancourt

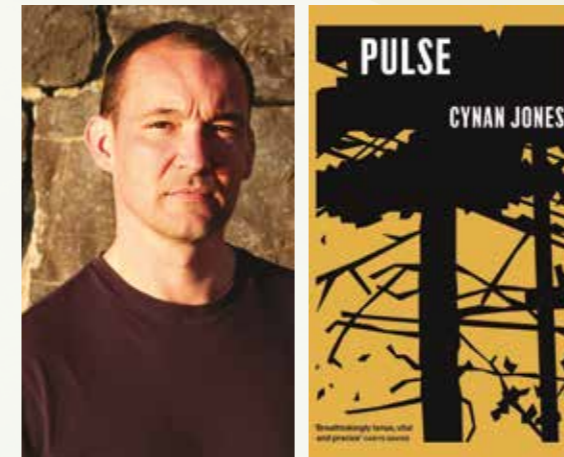


Thursday 16 July / 15.00-17.00 / Maritime Hotel / Max 18 / €10 / Age 18+
Irish Writers Centre Zine workshop with Annie Mar

Join **Annie Mar** from **Cork Zine Fest** and make a zine from start to finish on a special interest of your choosing, or on a project of yours that is in progress. Participants will learn two zine folding techniques and some writing and drawing prompts to flesh out the zine. We invite each participant to bring their own research material, writing, etc. We will supply materials, as well as a printer in the space so participants can print anything they want to include. *This event is supported by the Irish Writers Centre*

Thursday 16 / 15.00 / Maritime Hotel / Free
Readings from UCC's MA in Creative Writing

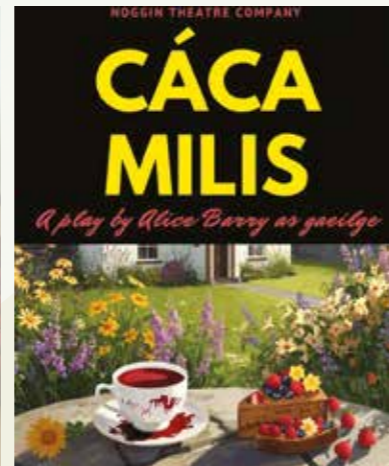
Join us for a showcase of short readings from fresh, dynamic and diverse emerging voices. Students from UCC's MA in Creative Writing, will read from their works-in-progress, introduced by **Eimear Ryan**, author and lecturer in creative writing. UCC's MA in Creative Writing is designed to enable writers to develop their practice in a supportive environment, and to give them the tools to unlock the book within, be it fiction, memoir or poetry. As well as honing the techniques and craft of creative writing, the MA introduces students to the publishing industry and Ireland's thriving community of literary practice.



Thursday 16 July / 17.00 / Bantry Library / Free
Cynan Jones: Pulse

This latest book by award-winning Welsh author **Cynan Jones**, is a brilliant collection of viscerally powerful short stories in which man is pitted against nature, against circumstance, and against himself. Fear, vulnerability, tension and resolve course through these arresting and indelible stories from one of the finest British writers at work today.

From top: Annie Mar, Cynan Jones



Thursday 16 July / 18.30 / Marino Church / Max 50 / €15
Poetry Happening about Community
with Jenny Mitchell

Join award-winning poet **Jenny Mitchell** to explore what community means in a world that seems ever-more uncertain. Participants will be given creative prompts to write about the joys and limitations of real or imaginary groups. Can poetry help us feel positive and empowered, especially if we have also felt invisible or overwhelmed? Participants will create and share space in a way that aims to build feelings of positivity. Seventy-five minute workshop followed by a forty-minute open mic. Open to new and experienced writers.

From left: Jenny Mitchell, Ailís De Barra

Thursday 16 July / 19.00-19.30 / Ma Murphys / €10
Cuireann Noggin Theatre Company Cáca Milis
le Ailís De Barra i láthair

While showing us how to bake a cake, Doireann peels back the layers of her life on an Irish farm. Her memory, provoked by the ingredients, recounts a past marked by hardship, murder and intrigue, but ultimately by profound realisation and love. This play is suitable for anyone with a love for a cúpla focail. Written to be understood, the play is performed in Irish, followed by a cuppa, cúpla focail and some cake (here's one I made earlier).

Thursday 16 July / 20.30 / Maritime Hotel / €20
Jonathan Coe: The Proof of my Innocence

The Proof of My Innocence is **Jonathan Coe's** blistering political critique wrapped up in a murder mystery. Darting between decades and genres this is a wickedly funny and razor-sharp novel. Chris is on the path to uncover a sinister think-tank, founded at Cambridge University in the 1980s, that's been scheming to push the British government in a more extreme direction. One that's finally poised to put their plans into action. He pursues his story to a conference in the Cotswolds, where events take a sinister turn and a murder enquiry is soon in progress. But will the solution lie in contemporary politics, or in a literary enigma that is almost forty years old?

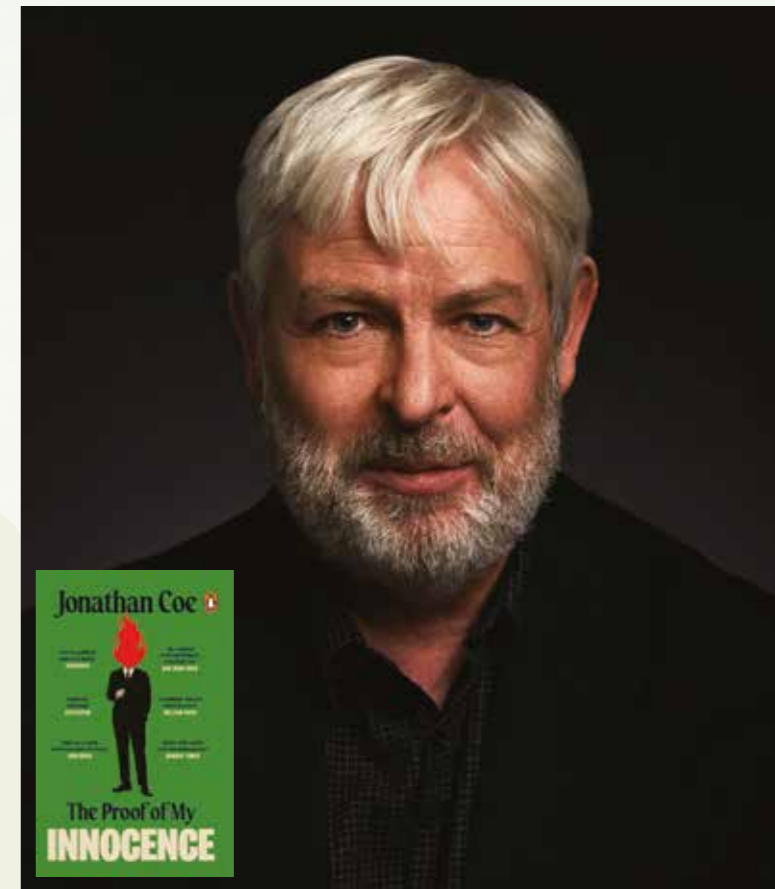
'The premier satirist of great British crapness is on killer form in this gag-a-minute mystery'

The Observer

'Coe channels his anger and frustration at the direction his country has taken, as well as his abiding love for it, into prose of enduring beauty'

The Guardian

Thursday 16 July / 22.00 / Maritime Hotel / Free
Open Mic



Jonathan Coe

Friday 17 July / 9.00 / Abbey Strand / Free Festival Swim

To really immerse yourself into beautiful West Cork join us for our annual festival swim in Bantry Bay. Bring a swimsuit, a towel and a sense of fun for this communal dip in the sea.

Friday 17 July / 10.00-17.00 / Bridge Street Community Café / Free Cork Zine Fest: Pop Up Zine Library

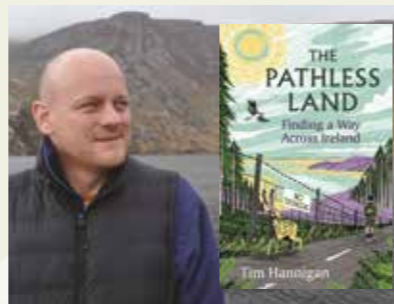
Sit down with a tea or coffee and browse through our curated zine library, where we have highlighted a selection of our very favourite zines. We can guarantee there will be something for everyone, and **Justine Lepage** from **Cork Zine Fest** will be on hand to make some recommendations if you are looking for your niche. This is a free, drop-in event.

Friday 17 July / 10.00 / Bantry House Loggia / €13 COFFEE & CHAT: Tim Hannigan. The Pathless Land

Ireland is a pathless land. Public access to the Irish countryside is more limited than almost anywhere else in Europe – no right to roam, no network of footpaths across the landscape and minimal legal protection for existing rights of way. When travel writer **Tim Hannigan** discovers a forgotten web of paths recorded on an old map of Ireland, he sets out on an epic journey on foot from Dingle, County Kerry to Burr Point, County Down, to find out how the country lost its ways. *The Pathless Land* is the result of Tim's quest to unravel the complexities of countryside access in Ireland and Britain.

Friday 17 July / 11.30 / Bantry Bookshop / Free Afric McGlinchey: À la Belle Étoile. The Odyssey of Jeanne Baré

À la Belle Étoile is a blazing narrative of female self-empowerment and survival in late 1700s France. This book-length poem sequence gives voice to a woman almost lost to history, who, through a chance encounter with a botanist, dared to carve her own space in a man's world. We hear the voice of Jeanne Baré as she voyages to exotic lands, until she returns home after seven years, becoming the first woman to have circumnavigated the world.

**Friday 17 July / 13.00 / Bantry Library / Free Launch of the 2026 From The Well Anthology**

From the Well is the annual short story competition organised by **Cork County Library and Arts Service**. Twenty stories are shortlisted by author and editor **Patrick Holloway** for publication in the anthology. The winner of the competition and two other shortlisted writers will read their stories in this event.

Friday 17 July / 13.00 / Marino Church / €15 Nikita Gill: Hekate. The Witch

A propulsive, electrifying and enraging retelling in verse of the life of Greek goddess Hekate, child of war turned all-powerful goddess of witchcraft and necromancy, by internationally bestselling Irish-Indian poet **Nikita Gill**. Born into a world on fire, Godling Hekate has never known safety. Taken by her mother Asteria to the Underworld, where Styx and Hades agree to raise her.

Friday 17 July / 14.15 / Whiddy Island / €25 Charlotte McConaghy & Eva Meijer

The trip to Whiddy Island is a highlight of the festival every year and this year we have a double treat for you with two incredible eco-fiction novels. Australian author **Charlotte McConaghy** is longlisted for the 2026 Women's Prize for Fiction for her novel *Wild Dark Shore*, a spectacularly choreographed eco-thriller set on a remote island in the Southern Ocean near Antarctica. Dutch author **Eva Meijer** joins us with their novel *Sea Now*, an urgent and lyrical portrait of a country underwater and a satirical look at governmental ineptitude in the face of climate change.

This event is supported by Creative Places West Cork Islands and Cork County Council and is part of New Dutch Writing, supported by the Dutch Foundation for Literature

The ticket price includes the return ferry to Whiddy Island. The ferry leaves Bantry Pier for Whiddy Island at 14.15 sharp. We will walk from Whiddy Pier to the Schoolhouse. The ferry will leave Whiddy at 16.30 to return to Bantry.



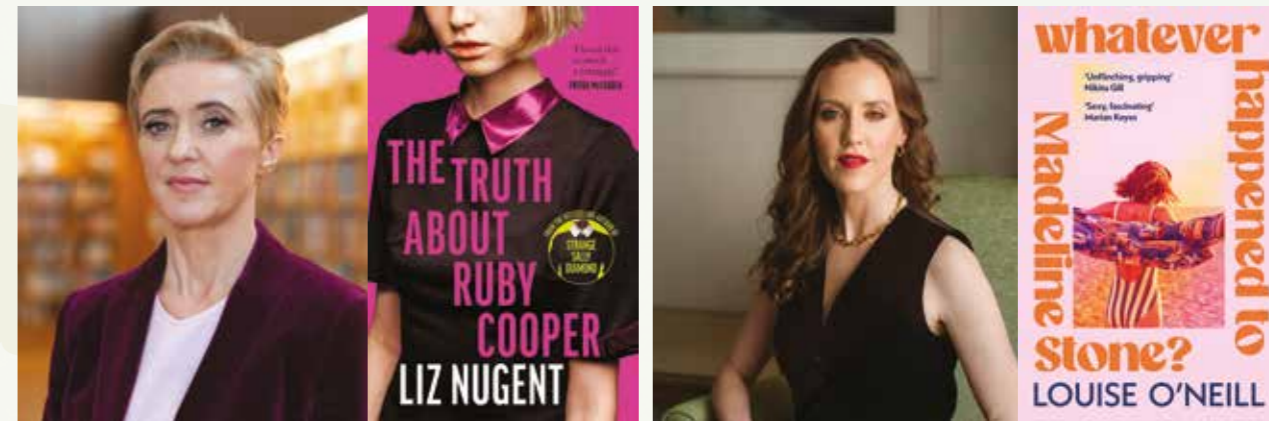


Friday 17 July / 17.00 / Bantry Library / Free Oona Frawley & Katie Goh

In their memoirs **Oona Frawley** and **Katie Goh** look back over their childhoods as the children of immigrants and what it means to be from two places and how that has shaped their identities. Oona's *This Interim Time* is a unique and deeply personal collection of intertwined, fragmented essays, and pieces of memoir, about the deaths and births, arrivals and departures that have shaped her life and transformed how she understands the world. Katie's memoir *Foreign Fruit: A Personal History of the Orange* uses the journey and cultivation of a single fruit – the orange – to reckon with her own identity and unpack themes of globalisation, colonialism and migration.

Friday 17 July / 18.30 / Marino Church / €16 John Suchet: In Search of Beethoven

In Search of Beethoven: A Personal Journey is journalist and broadcaster **John Suchet's** latest and most personal book dedicated to the life of the extraordinary composer. Part biography, part memoir, part travelogue, John draws on his own life and career as a foreign correspondent and news anchor to show how Beethoven's music has accompanied him through the best and worst of times, from a music-loving and adventurous teenager to a journalist entering Beirut in the grip of civil war. John traces Beethoven's footsteps to demonstrate the life-changing power of great music.



Friday 17 July / 20.30 / Maritime Hotel / €20 Liz Nugent & Louise O'Neill

New novels by **Liz Nugent** and **Louise O'Neill** are always a cause for celebration and so 2026 is really spoiling us. And what better way to draw a close to this year's festival than in the company of Liz and Louise as they discuss their new novels, *The Truth About Ruby Cooper* and *Whatever Happened to Madeline Stone?*, with **Maeve Higgins**.

In Liz's new novel *The Truth About Ruby Cooper*, Ruby and her sister, Erin, live an idyllic life in their close-knit church community in Boston. But when Ruby is sixteen, she is involved in an incident that causes her family's world to implode. Across decades, the fallout leaves a wake of destruction behind Ruby in Dublin and Erin in Boston and the past can't stay a secret forever.

Whatever Happened to Madeline Stone? is Louise's latest novel. Twin sisters Madeline and Chelsea Stone are stars of the 2022 AtomicKids sitcom *Double Trouble*, but it's Maddie who shines most brightly. Until Chelsea beats her sister out for the role of a lifetime and just as Chelsea's star reaches impossible new heights, Maddie disappears. In 2025 heart-breaking truths emerge about the year Maddie went missing and Chelsea feels a flicker of hope for the first time in years.

West Cork Literary Festival *at a glance*

Time	Title	Venue	Time	Title	Venue
FRIDAY 10 JULY			SUNDAY 12 JULY		
All week	Bantry Library: Exhibition	Bantry Library	09.00	Yoga on the Lawn	Bantry House
All week	Letter Café	Forest & Flock	10.00	Mícheál Ó hAodha	Bantry House Loggia
13.00	100 Years of Cork County Library	Bantry Library	11.30	Upside-Down Lighthouse: P. Donnelly	St Brendans Hall
15.00	Writers Block Networking Session	Ma Murphys	12.00	Laureate for Irish Fiction Éilís Ní Dhuibhne	Marino Church
15.00	Karl Henry	Marino Church	13.00	We Are An Archipelago	St Brendans Church
17.00	Opening Reception of WCLF	Bantry Library	15.00	IWC: John Banville & Victoria Kennefick	Maritime Hotel
18.30	Doire Press: K. McDonnell & J. O'Donnell	Maritime Hotel	15.00	CBI: Writing for Children Masterclass	Marino Church
20.00	Pop Up Gaeltacht	Ma Murphys	17.00	Rosaleen McDonagh	Maritime Hotel
20.30	Miriam O'Callaghan	Maritime Hotel	17.30	Children's Writers & Illustrators Meet-Up	Ma Murphys
SATURDAY 11 JULY			18.30	Margaret Busby	Marino Church
10.30	Bantry Book Club: July Meet-Up	Westlodge Hotel	20.30	Emer McLysaght and Sarah Breen	Maritime Hotel
11.00	Quiet Reading Hour (daily Sat-Fri)	Maritime Hotel	22.00	Open Mic	Ma Murphys
10.00	D. Browne, B.Ramsell, M. Twomey	Bantry House Loggia	MONDAY 13 JULY		
11.30	Neil Tully	Bantry Bookshop	10.00	Sacha Coward	Bantry House Loggia
12.00	Nina Peanut: Sarah Bowie	St Brendans Hall	11.30	Conor Power	Bantry Bookshop
13.00	Jen Calleja & Caitríona Lally	Bantry Library	12.00	Cluck: Evelien De Vlieger	St Brendans Hall
14.30	Katriona O'Sullivan	Marino Church	13.00	Raoul de Jong	Bantry Library
14.30	Historical Walking Tour	Bantry Town	14.30	Sally Hayden	Marino Church
15.00	Demystifying the Personal Essay	Maritime Hotel	15.00	IWC Poetry Masterclass / Victoria Kennefick	Maritime Hotel
16.00	Dearbhla Mescal	Maritime Hotel	17.00	Elaine Feeney & Kathleen MacMahon	Marino Church
17.00	Keith Ridgway & Djamel White	Bantry Library	19.00	Gallery Press: Poetry	Marino Church
18.30	Grapevine	Marino Church	20.30	Ian Rankin	Maritime Hotel
20.30	Charlie Mackesy	Maritime Hotel	22.00	Open Mic	Ma Murphys
22.00	Open Mic	Ma Murphys			

TUESDAY 14 JULY

Time	Title	Venue
10.00	Anton Hur	Bantry House Loggia
11.30	Annmairie O'Connor	Bantry Bookshop
12.00	Puffling and the Stormy Sea: Gerry Daly	St Brendans Hall
13.00	Geraldine Osborne	Bantry Library
14.30	Nussaibah Younis	Marino Church
15.30	IWC Information Session	Maritime Hotel
17.00	Claire Adam & Ashley Hickson-Lovence	Bantry Library
18.00	Launch of the Fish Anthology	Marino Church
18.30	J. Casey, A. Mara & C. Ryan Howard	Maritime Hotel
20.30	Patrick Gale & Andrew Miller	Maritime Hotel
22.00	Open Mic	Maritime Hotel
WEDNESDAY 15 JULY		
10.00	Agnes Lidbeck & Nichola Smalley	Bantry House Loggia
11.30	The Bookshop Sisters: Sarah Webb	Bantry Bookshop
12.00	Tareq Baconi	Marino Church
13.00	Blowink zine launch with Matthew Geden	Bantry Library
13.00	Ulrike Draesner & Rebecca Braun	Maritime Hotel
14.30	Adrian Tinniswood	Bantry House
15.00	Rainbow Library workshop	St Brendans Hall
15.00	IWC Beyond The Rainbow	Maritime Hotel
16.30	Rainbow Library: Anthology launch	St Brendans Hall
17.00	io - intentionally offline	Bantry Library
18.00	Open Mic Matinee	Maritime Hotel
18.30	N. Kasa, M. McCann & J. Traynor	Marino Church
20.00	IWC Word on the Street	Ma Murphys
20.30	Jung Chang	Maritime Hotel
22.00	Open Mic	Maritime Hotel

Time	Title	Venue
THURSDAY 16 JULY		
10.00	Nolwenn Le Blévennec	Bantry House Loggia
11.30	Shaunna Lee Lynch	Bantry Bookshop
12.00	Sara Baume & Marion Coutts	Future Forests
13.00	Everyone Started Singing: Poetry Showcase	Bantry Library
14.00	Frank The Monster: M. Strandberg	St Brendans Hall
14.30	Daisy Fancourt	Marino Church
15.00	IWC: Zine Workshop	Maritime Hotel
15.00	Readings from UCC's MA in Creative Writing	Maritime Hotel
17.00	Cynan Jones	Bantry Library
18.30	Jenny Mitchell: Poetry Happening	Marino Church
19.00	Alice Barry: Cáca Milis	Ma Murphys
20.30	Jonathan Coe	Maritime Hotel
22.00	Open Mic	Maritime Hotel
FRIDAY 17 JULY		
09.00	Festival Swim	Abbey Strand
10.00	Pop Up Zine Library	Bridge Street Community Café
10.00	Tim Hannigan	Bantry House Loggia
11.30	Afric McGlinchey	Bantry Bookshop
12.00	The Lonely Only Dinosaur: O. Hope	St Brendans Hall
13.00	From The Well	Bantry Library
13.00	Nikita Gill	Marino Church
14.15	Charlotte McConaghy & Eva Meijer	Whiddy Island
17.00	Oona Frawley & Katie Goh	Bantry Library
18.30	John Suchet	Marino Church
20.30	Liz Nugent & Louise O'Neill	Maritime Hotel



WORKSHOPS

Scan the QR code or

Booking: +353 (0)27 52788

Book online: www.westcorkmusic.ie/LFworkshops

For detailed course outlines and tutor biographies please visit our website. All workshops are for three days, run from 9.30 to 14.30 daily and are for maximum 15 participants.

Workshop participants will be entitled to purchase tickets to other WCLF events for a reduced rate of €12 per event. This discount is only available on the door 15 minutes prior to each event and is subject to availability. Excludes other three-day workshops.

Our workshop programme is aimed at both novice and experienced writers. Workshops are run by experienced tutors many of whom are award-winning writers and/or teach creative writing at third level and offer immense value to participating writers. Please note that as with any workshop scenario, each tutor will have their own unique teaching style.

Conditions of Sale: Every effort will be made to ensure that the programme will proceed as advertised however West Cork Literary Festival accepts no responsibility for any changes made due to circumstances beyond its control. Once purchased tickets cannot be exchanged or refunded. Refund will only be given in case of a cancelled event. Full T&Cs on our website

Left: Jessica Traynor, Tim Hannigan



Poetry / Jessica Traynor

€245 / Monday 13 to Wednesday 15 / Maritime Hotel

In times of turmoil, we often look to the world around us for signs. Join award-winning poet **Jessica Traynor** for a poetry writing workshop that engages with signs, symbols, and methods of divination to generate new work that reflects the world we live in today. Beginning each day with a series of prompts to generate new work, and focusing on close readings and feedback on poets' existing work, you will leave with a series of poems in progress, and some more polished work. Ideal for poets with some experience of publication who are open to sharing work for group feedback, and looking for new sources of inspiration.

Novel Writing / Claire Adam

€245 / Tuesday 14 to Thursday 16 / Bantry Courthouse

Join Booker-longlisted novelist **Claire Adam** for an intermediate-level workshop – open to all, but best suited to people with a work in progress, whether a novel or short story. The goal is to help you with your work in progress. Ideal for writers seeking fresh perspectives and momentum on an existing manuscript in the inspiring setting of West Cork. We'll talk about what your characters want and how to find the key turning points in your story – the 'once in a lifetime' moments – and the importance of specificity. We'll do some writing exercises in class, and sharing with the group will be optional.

Travel Writing: Place, People and the Past / Tim Hannigan

€260 (incl ferry) / Tuesday 14 to Thursday 16 / Whiddy Island

How can we best combine the personal experience of movement through a landscape with the other stories it contains? Join award-winning travel and history writer **Tim Hannigan** to explore the techniques and challenges of travel writing that engages with history and the lives of others. The workshop is open to both new and more experienced writers. There is no requirement to submit writing in advance. Some of the workshop will take place outdoors – weather permitting – so bring suitable clothing and footwear.

This workshop is supported by Creative Places West Cork Islands and Cork County Council



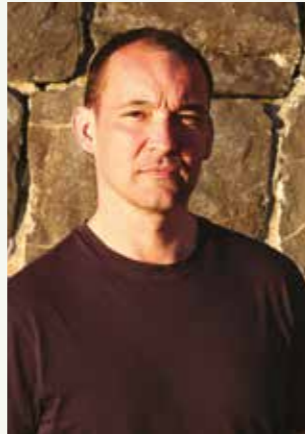
Claire Adam



Raise Your Short Story Game / Cynan Jones

€245 / Wednesday 15 to Friday 17 / Curious Keys

Join acclaimed Welsh writer **Cynan Jones** for a workshop that will help give you the tools and motivation to make your short stories stronger. Hands-on teaching sessions will get you working with the words themselves, with the why and what of your writing, and with key elements of good fiction such as structure, tone and impact. You'll dig into the writing you've already done to find possibilities you might not have seen, provoke your characters, and set them into a compelling world. During the workshop, each participant will also benefit from a 1-1 clinic to discuss a work in progress.



Creative Non-Fiction / Katie Goh

€245 / Wednesday 15 to Friday 17

Christian Fellowship Church

Join author and journalist **Katie Goh** for a three-day creative non-fiction writing workshop. Maybe you have lots of ideas for essays but no idea how to start, or you've been thinking about a non-fiction book idea for years but struggling to get words down. This workshop will help get your non-fiction writing project going. Each day will include a different talk and discussion on genre, structure and voice, alongside writing exercises with prompts. The workshop will also include information on next steps for publishing or developing non-fiction book proposals with an opportunity to ask questions.



YOUNG ADULT & CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL

Our Children's and Young Adult events are free of charge and last for one hour. Events with a ticket symbol have a limited capacity and should be booked in advance to avoid disappointment.

Other events are drop-in on the day. Booking is recommended for children and their adults for Sarah Bowie's event. For other ticketed events, only children need to book tickets and accompanying adults do not need to book a seat. Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian for the duration of events in St Brendan's School Hall.



Free but ticketed

For more info
Scan the QR code
or

Booking:
+353 (0)27 52788

www.westcorkliteraryfestival.ie



Saturday 11 / 12.00 / St Brendans School Hall / Ages 8-12 **Nina Peanut: Sarah Bowie**



Join bestselling writer and illustrator **Sarah Bowie** for a fastpaced cartooning workshop. Sarah is the creator of the smash-hit *Nina Peanut* series, superstarinthemaking, frozenpizza chef, creative genius, and proud owner of the world's stinkiest cat. Grab your pencils and get ready for quickfire drawing challenges, expert tips and insight into how graphic novels are made - all to help you design your very own comics character. An inspiring and fun session that proves anyone can draw!

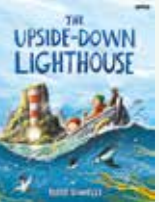


Sunday 12 / 11.30 / St Brendans School Hall / Ages 4-8

The Upside-Down Lighthouse: Paddy Donnelly



Bestselling author-illustrator **Paddy Donnelly** joins us for a truly topsy-turvy storytime and drawing workshop. On a mysterious, foggy island, way out at sea, stands an upside-down lighthouse! On this island, birds swim and fish fly. Stars shine during the day and waterfalls fall upwards! *The Upside-Down Lighthouse* is a follow up to *The Golden Hare* - winner of the Children's Book of the Year at the 2024 An Post Irish Book Awards. Paddy will be reading his stories, sharing amazing animal facts and will lead the children in a range of upside-down, back to front and inside-out drawing activities. Paddy claims to be able to draw any animal upside down, so come along and challenge him!





Monday 13 / 12.00 / St Brendans School Hall / Ages 6-12

Cluck, The Eggstraordinary Story of Chickens: Evelien De Vlieger

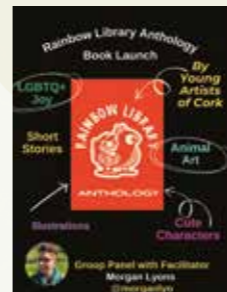
Join Belgian author **Evelien De Vlieger** to find out everything you ever wanted to know about chickens with her book *Cluck, The Eggstraordinary Story of Chickens*, (translated by Michele Hutchison). Jan Hamstra's beautiful linocut illustrations bring all the amazing chicken facts to life. Find out about chickens' dinosaur origins, how to categorize their feathers and how to say cock-a-doodle-doo in 20 languages! Take Evelien's chicken quiz and design and draw your own bird. Older children can also make a tiny chicken book from a single sheet of paper. This event is supported by Flanders Literature as part of their Flip Through Flanders programme



Tuesday 14 / 12.00 / St Brendans School Hall / Ages 4-8

Puffling and the Stormy Sea & What's That Spooky Sound?: Gerry Daly

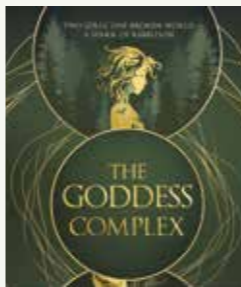
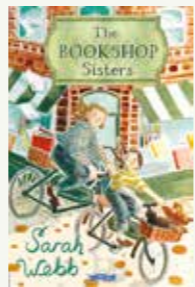
Join author and illustrator **Gerry Daly** for a fun adventure with the wildlife of the Skellig Islands. Help the little puffling get back home in *Puffling and the Stormy Sea*, the latest of the bestselling *Puffling* picture book series. Plus even more animal fun in the woods from Gerry's brand new book, *What's That Spooky Sound?* Children will love this draw-along session with puppets and interactive storytelling.



Wednesday 15 / 11.30 / Bantry Bookshop / Ages 9+

The Bookshop Sisters: Sarah Webb

Have you got what it takes to be a brilliant young bookseller? Find out in this fun interactive event with award-winning author and bookseller, **Sarah Webb**. Travel back to Ireland in the 1950s to a time when things were very different, especially for girls and women. Discover some of the amazing writers and artists who have lived and worked around Baggot Street, like Mary Lavin and Patrick Kavanagh who both feature in *The Bookshop Sisters*. You will find out how a bookshop is run and pick the perfect job for you. Would you make a great delivery person, goods in manager, or children's bookseller? With photographs, quizzes and games, this is the perfect event for any young or young at heart book or history fan!



Wednesday 15 / 15.00 / St Brendans School Hall / Ages 14-18

Rainbow Library Workshop

Join writer **Morgan Lyons** for an artistic workshop. Participants will draw, write and create art together in a safe space, with materials and prompts provided. Rainbow Library is a group of young LGBTQIA+ writers and artists who meet monthly in Cork County Library, in a neurodivergent friendly environment. No experience needed, beginner artists welcome. Rainbow Library is proudly supported by Cork County Council and Creative Ireland



Wednesday 15 / 16.30 / St Brendans School Hall / YA

Rainbow Library Anthology Launch

Join the young artists of Rainbow Library as they launch their latest anthology. There will be a panel discussion where members of the group discuss their practice, signed copies of the anthologies available to the audience members, and a Q&A session about Rainbow Library and how to join. Rainbow Library is a group for young LGBTQIA+ artists and writers, aged 14-23, with monthly workshops in a neurodivergent friendly space. The panel will be moderated by lead facilitator **Morgan Lyons**. Rainbow Library is proudly supported by Cork County Council and Creative Ireland



Thursday 16 / 11.30 / Bantry Bookshop / YA+

Shaunna Lee Lynch: The Goddess Complex

The Goddess Complex by debut Cork novelist **Shaunna Lee Lynch** is an unmissable feminist dystopia set in a future Ireland. Based on real Irish history, this thought-provoking new YA novel follows two very different young women, Elmagh and Amber, as they navigate a future Ireland where women's intuition is considered a dangerous mental illness. It is inspired by Shaunna's grandmother's experiences of the Magdalene laundries scandal in Ireland, where so-called 'fallen' women were condemned to institutions.



Thursday 16 / 14.00 / St Brendans School Hall / Ages 6+

Frank The Monster: Mats Strandberg

Join Swedish author **Mats Strandberg** and discover *Frank The Monster*, his gripping adventure series about trying to belong. A boy-turned-cuddly werewolf discovers his identity and finds his pack of misfit monster friends. These spooky-cute chapter books offer horror with heart to entice young readers and build a bridge to independent reading. Come along for an afternoon of storytelling and the chance to draw your own monster. The books are illustrated by **Sofia Falkenheim** and translated by **Julia Marshall**.

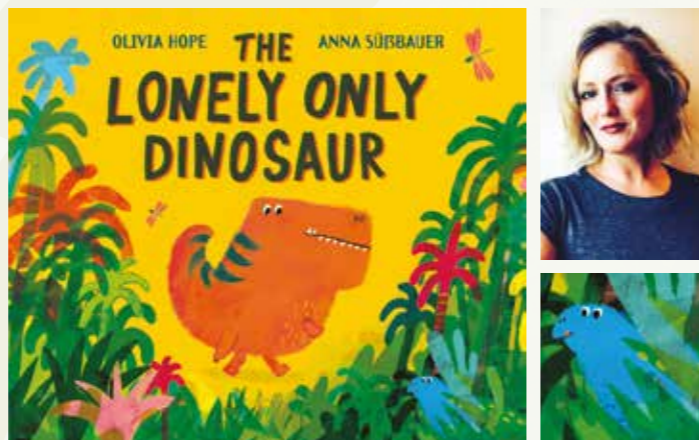
This event is supported by the Swedish Arts Council as part of the Stories From Sweden programme



Friday 17 / 12.00 / St Brendans School Hall / Ages 4-10

The Lonely Only Dinosaur: Olivia Hope

In an interactive feast for the senses, children and parents join Marsha the Megalosaurus on her quest to make a friend, inspired by *The Lonely Only Dinosaur*, written by **Olivia Hope** and illustrated by **Anna Süßbauer**. Learn about amazing fossils in the Ireland, including two special dinosaur fossils, and then turn yourself into a stomping, roaring dinosaur too! Children (and grown-ups!) can create their own colourful dinosaur feet and a dinosaur puppet head, and do a dinosaurs' favourite dance. **Do the Dino Dance!** is an interactive, engaging and colourful craft and dance session for children. Stomp along and find your own roar!



West Cork Literary Festival

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Get 1 week free Priority Booking
Reserved seating in front section
at Main Evening Events *

Exclusive Friends Newsletters

Invitation to Festival Opening Reception

Invitation to attend one Evening Event,
with a wine reception beforehand

Free Draw for signed copies of books

*Advance booking only, max 2 seats per membership



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WEST CORK
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West Cork
Literary Festival

MASTERS
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TRADITION



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Sound: **Matt and Darragh Purcell & Ronan Crowe** of **Purcell Audio**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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West Cork Music gratefully acknowledges the generous sponsorship of Creative Places West Cork Islands and Poetry Ireland.

The West Cork Literary Festival would like to thank the following for their support and encouragement: the management and staff, Maritime Hotel; Denis Murphy and staff, Bantry Library; Cammy Harley, Bantry Bookshop; Brian Murphy, Principal of St Brendan’s School; Brigitte and Julie Shelswell-White, Bantry House; Diarmaid Murphy, Marino Church; Paul Willoughby, St Brendan’s Church Marlene Enright, Curious Keys Music School; Catherine O’Sullivan, Bantry Courthouse; Carmel Reaney, Christian Fellowship Church; Maria Collard and Matt Keane, Future Forests; Bernie O’Sullivan, Forest & Flock; Nuala Kenny, Bridge Street Community Café; Hannah and Rachel Dare, Organico; Tim O’Leary, Whiddy Island Ferry; Jean Kearney, Louise Barker and Molly Barker of Kearney Melia Barker Communications; Sunoco; The Irish Examiner; Noel O’Mahony; Ma Murphy’s Bar; Elizabeth Goldrick; Marie Guillot; Jenni deBie; Alice Barry; Aisling Arundel; Erin Connally; Paul O’Donoghue; Lia Curtin; Annie McCarthy; Kate Whalley; Mariamne Everett; Joan O’Donovan; Mick Cremin, Cremins Coaches; Bernie Wallace; Ian McDonagh and all in the Cork County Council Arts Office; Emer O’Brien and all in the Cork County Library and Arts Service; and all of the publicists, agents and personal assistants who assisted us in putting together the programme.

Thank you to Mary McCarthy and Michael Waldron of the Crawford Galley, the estate of Seán Keating and IVARO Dublin for permission to reproduce his painting ‘*The Window*’ (*detail*) on the cover of this brochure.

Thank you and welcome to our Festival Friends: Ciara Banks, Mari Caulfield, Eda Colbert, Hazel Daniells, Stephanie Devlin, Kerry Dineen, Candice Foss, Simon Hauxwell, Fidelma Kelly, Kalene Kenefick, Doris Mause, Caroline Randles, Kate Roberts, Lillian Starbuck, Leah Stetson and Armen Vartian

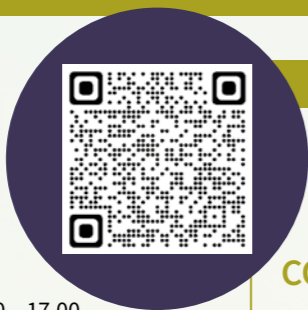
We would like to thank all of the writers, tutors and introducers who will join us this year and all of the writers who weren’t able to make it (we’ll ask you again!)

A special thanks to the Festival volunteers who give their time and energy to the Festival each year

BOOKING INFORMATION

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To book online
Scan the QR code
or visit us at
www.westcorkliteraryfestival.ie



Phone us at **+353 (0)27 52788**
Box Office Open: Monday to Friday 9.30 – 17.00

West Cork Literary Festival
13 Glengarriff Road, Bantry, Co. Cork, P75 HW72

Follow us on social media, join our e-newsletter or check our website to keep informed of any last minute changes to the line-up.

DIGITAL DELIVERY OF TICKETS

This year all WCLF events will have digital tickets only. So no more waiting for your tickets to arrive by post or queueing to collect your pre-booked tickets at our venues.

Simply bring your confirmation email with you on your phone, bring the copy you print at home or add your digital ticket to your Apple or Google Wallet.

When an event is not sold out, remaining tickets will still be available for purchase on the door.

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CONDITIONS OF SALE

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Once purchased, tickets cannot be exchanged or refunded. Refund will only be given in case of a cancelled event.

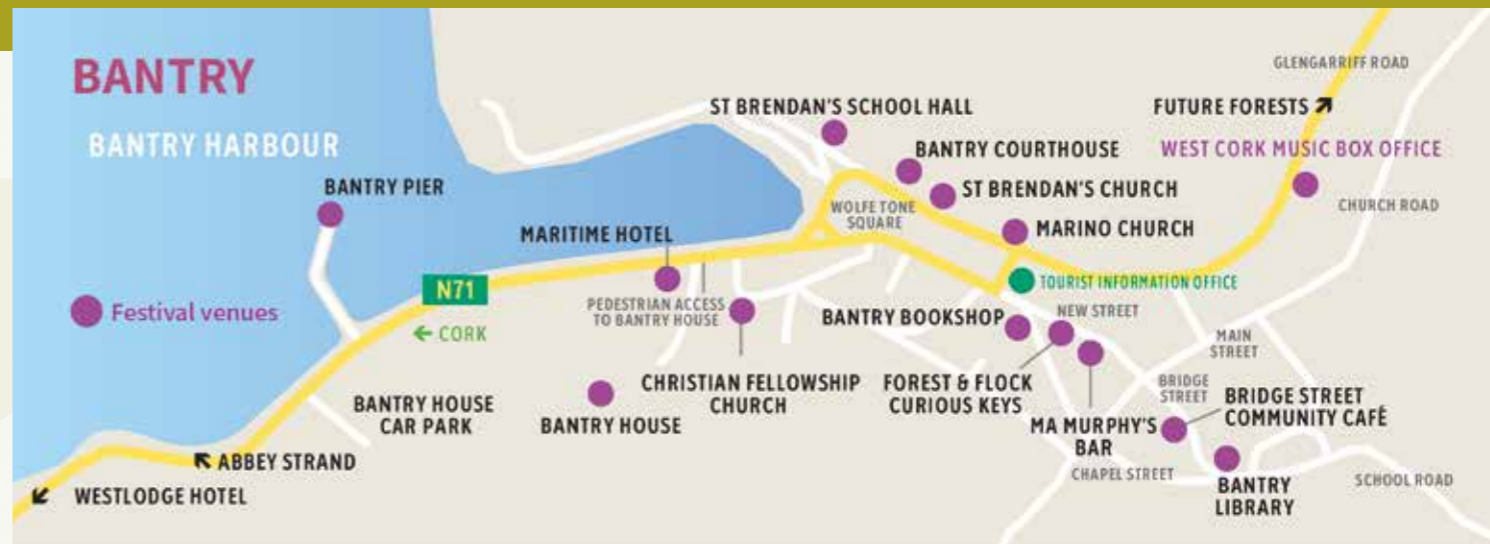
Late-comers will not be admitted until a suitable break in the event. Late admission cannot be guaranteed.

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West Cork Literary Festival

Friday 10 – 17 July 2026 / Bantry, Co. Cork





West Cork Literary Festival

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West Cork Music is supported by Cork County Council's Economic Development Fund

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