

Kildare Readers Festival



2nd - 8th October 2023

In association with the
Irish Writers Centre

-  KildareReadersFestival
-  KildareReaders
-  kildarereadersfestival
-  kildarereadersfestival.ie



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2017-2021



Welcome

Kildare County Library and Arts Service in association with the Irish Writers Centre invite you to join us for Kildare Readers' Festival this year. Our ethos is to connect our readers with authors and artists, working to bring the world of literature to our audiences through the provision of exciting, innovative and accessible events.

Since its beginnings in 2010, our festival audiences have continued to grow, and we look forward to presenting you with the very best from the world of literature and the arts.

Bookings

Weekend events at the Riverbank Arts Centre are FREE of charge, though bookings are essential through the Box Office at Riverbank Arts Centre.

 (045) 448 327

 www.riverbank.ie

Library events must be booked directly through participating libraries.

More information on the festival can be found at our website: www.kildarereadersfestival.ie or through Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

The Pleasure is All Mine with the Dennis O'Driscoll Awards

Saturday, 30 September / 11am / McAuley Place, Naas

The poet **Dennis O'Driscoll**, who died on Christmas Eve 2012, is still a much-missed force on the Irish and international poetry scene. In this talk, poet **Enda Wyley**, who knew Dennis and admired his poetry, will discuss the compassionate, knowing, quietly charismatic and often funny attributes of O'Driscoll's work, most poignantly present in his final collection of poetry, *Dear Life*, which includes the poem 'Memoir,' from which the title of this talk is taken. 'Now my/ whole life/ lies ahead/ of you. / No thanks/ at all are/ called for, / I assure you./ The pleasure/ is all mine.'

We will also present the prestigious **Dennis O'Driscoll Literary Bursary Awards** to this year's awardees **Ed O'Loughlin** (Established Writer) and **Eva Griffin** (Emerging Writer) who will discuss what this award will mean to their practice and read their work.

This year's awards were adjudicated by Writer in Residence 2022/2023 with Maynooth University/Kildare Library and Arts Services, **Catherine Talbot**.

This is Not About You Online Book Club with Rosemary Mac Cabe

Monday, 2 October / 8:30pm / Online

Kildare author, podcaster and internet personality **Rosemary Mac Cabe** will be chatting with journalist **Roe McDermott** about her #1 Irish bestseller debut *This Is Not About You: A Memoir*, a "life story in a series of love stories". Extra copies are available to borrow from selected Kildare libraries ahead of this special book club meeting.

Absent Friend John MacKenna

Tuesday, 3 October / 7pm / Athy Community Library

Absent Friend is a book about a thirty-year friendship between singer/songwriter Leonard Cohen and Irish writer **John MacKenna**. The book examines the roots of that friendship, which began with a first hearing of Cohen's work when MacKenna was recovering from meningitis in his late teens. Fifteen years later the pair would meet for the first time and establish a friendship that lasted until Cohen's death in 2016 and included their working together in Cohen's last months on the requiem *Between Your love and Mine*.

This event, as part of Kildare Readers' Festival, has MacKenna reading from the book and talking about the friendship, while singer Katie Jacques will perform some of Leonard Cohen's songs. Katie Jacques is a singer/songwriter who graduated from Cork School of Music last year. She was one of the lead singers in *Between Your Love and Mine*.

Introducing ‘Twiggy Woman.’ Oein DeBhairduin in conversation with Peadar Ó Guilín.

Tuesday, 3 October / 7pm / Celbridge Community Library

From award-winning author **Oein DeBhairduin**, *Twiggy Woman* is a collection of ghost stories rooted in the oral tradition of the Irish Traveller community. These chilling tales, collected by Oein from Traveller folklore, are re-envisioned and retold for modern times. Oein’s style is lyrical and beautiful, his perspective is rich and unique and

his writing appeals to a wide range of readers of all ages, backgrounds and interests.

In this exclusive preview of his new book, Oein will share some of his new work and discuss his unique style with **Peadar Ó Guilín**, fellow writer of curious stories.

In the White Country: Conversations with Murt Malone

Tuesday, 3 October / 7pm / Newbridge Community Library

Martin (Murt) Malone will discuss his fiction writing inspired by the Middle East. Martin served five tours of duty with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and one with the United Nations Iran–Iraq Military Observer Group. Martin has written four books of

fiction inspired by this time; *After Kafka*, *The Broken Cedar*, *Valley of the Peacock Angel*, and his latest *In the White Country*, *novella & stories*, in addition to a memoir of his time in the army, called *The Lebanon Diaries*.

An Tolg Liteartha

4 Deireadh Fómhair / 7pm / Riverbank Arts Centre

Móirmeacht liteartha na Gaeilge ag a gcuirfidh an sáchraltóir, Tristan Rosenstock (RTÉ), agallamh ar bhuaiteoirí na nGradam Foilsitheoireachta 2023 - **Gradam Réics Carló** (Leabhar na Bliana don Léitheoir Óg); **Gradam Uí Shúilleabháin** (Leabhar na Bliana don Léitheoir Fásta); agus **Gradam de Bhaldráithe** (Leabhar na Bliana do Shaothar Aistriúcháin go Gaeilge ó theanga eile).

Mar chuid den ócáid, labhróidh Tristan leis na criticeoirí an **Dr. Liam Mac Amhlaigh** & an **tOllamh Triona Ní Shíocháin** (NUIM) maidir leis na leabhair buacacha agus cúrsaí litríochta na Gaeilge trí chéile.

Arna eagrú ag Leabharlanna Chill Dara i gcompháirt le hOllscoil Mhá Nuad, An tOireachtas agus RTÉ.

‘Óiche Airneál’ sa Leabharlann

5 Deireadh Fómhair / 7pm / Naas Community Library, Harbour View

Bígí linn i Leabharlann Nás na Ríogh le haghaidh ‘Óiche Airneál’ sa Leabharlann; oíche spreagúil comhrá, filíochta, amhránaíochta agus ceoil i nGaeilge. Beidh **Seán de Paor** ina óstach ar an ócáid. Beidh **Tadhg Mac Dhonnagáin**, údar, file agus Laureate na nÓg, **Áine Ní Ghlinn**, ina dteannta ar an oíche. Beidh ceol le linn na hoíche ag ealaíontóirí cumasacha áitiúla, **Nuala Mac Lochlainn** agus **muintir Uí Mhórdha**.

Join us in Naas Library for a ‘Social Night’ in the Library; an exciting evening of Irish conversation, poetry, song and music. Seán de Paor will host the event. He will be joined on the night by award winning author and musician Tadhg Mac Dhonnagáin, and author, poet and current Laureate na nÓg, Áine Ní Ghlinn. Music throughout the evening will be performed by local talented artists, Nuala Mac Lochlainn and the Moore Family.

Poetry and the Possibility of Home

Thursday, 5 October / 7pm / Maynooth Community Library

In this very special evening of poetry and conversation, two award-winning poets, **Nithy Kasa** and **Annemarie Ní Churreáin**, will read their work in discussion with host, **Catherine Gander**. In their probing, evocative, and richly imagistic poetry, both poets

speak of the power of dislocation and belonging, of loss and recovery, of memory and rebuilding. This unique event explores their journeys into the poetry, secrets, and promises that notions of 'home' can hold.

Writing Our Way to Brigit/Brigid

Tuesday, 3 October / 7pm / Kildare Town Community Library

Join us in Kildare Town Community Library for an evening of exclusive readings and performances by participants from the Writing Our Way to Brigit/Brigid workshops.

The group is delighted to be able to share with you a curated selection of

our creative writing which was written in 2023 as part of a series of linked creative writing workshops facilitated by **Dr Shauna Gilligan** at Kildare Town Library.

Gratefully supported by Brigid 1500 Creative Arts Grant/Kildare County Council.

Chat LGBT: A Question of Queer Irish Literature

Thursday, 5 October / 8pm / Riverbank Arts Centre

Katherine O'Donnell (*Slant*) and **Declan Toohey** (*Perpetual Comedown*) discuss and read from their debut novels which were published this year and add to the growing canon of queer Irish literature.

Slant by Katherine O'Donnell is a ground-breaking Irish lesbian love story, set across the decades from the 1980s AIDS crisis to the 2015 marriage referendum. Katherine O'Donnell's debut delivers a headbutt to the heart that reveals and celebrates all the kinds of love needed to sustain a life.

Perpetual Comedown is the debut novel from an unforgettable new voice in Irish fiction. In breathless prose, Declan Toohey weaves a contemporary yarn of academic intrigue and youthful irreverence, sexual fluidity and neurodiversity. Experimental, trippy, hilarious, compassionate, *Perpetual Comedown* is a riotous reckoning in the construction of the self.

ISL/Irish Sign Language interpretation will be available for this event.

Creeping It Real: The Rebirth of Female Horror

Friday, 6 October / 8pm / Riverbank Arts Centre

Join us for an evening with **Sophie White** and **Rick O'Shea** as they discuss Sophie's writing. Sophie's novel *Where I End* has recently won the Shirley Jackson Award which recognises "outstanding achievement in the literature of psychological suspense, horror, and the dark fantastic."

Where I End is a story of psychological and physical horror with a shattering ending. The story is concerned with family, isolation, neglect and the dangerously intoxicating nature of love.

ISL/Irish Sign Language interpretation will be available for this event.

Ten books with Eithne Hand and Gerry Stembridge

Saturday, 7 October / 10am / Riverbank Arts Centre

Join us for the ever popular Ten Books You Should Read! Our two guests, *Eithne Hand* and *Gerry Stembridge* will select five books each that they would recommend and why we should give

them a try.

ISL/Irish Sign Language interpretation will be available for this event.

The Deadwood Encore with Kathleen Murray and Ed O'Loughlin

Saturday, 7 October / 12 noon / Riverbank Arts Centre

Join acclaimed short story author, **Kathleen Murray** as she discusses her first novel, published by Harper Collins in 2022 and described as 'the Coen Brothers of Carlow' with author, journalist & correspondent **Ed O'Loughlin**. *The Deadwood Encore* tells

the story of Frank Whelan, a seventh son of a seventh son, and his journey of self-discovery. It is a novel about family, secrets, old magic, and the lengths people go to find their place in the world.

ISL/Irish Sign Language interpretation will be available for this event.

Saved by Words Writing Workshop

Saturday, 7 October / 2-5pm / Newbridge Community Library

Join award-winning author **Lynn Buckle** for a masterclass in how to embed nature, ecology, and climate crisis solutions into your stories. Whether you write poetry, historical fiction, crime, romance, sci-fi, or literary prose, learn how words can alter the behaviour of individuals and society, towards a more sustainable way of living. Deep-dive into

this specialist workshop on solution-based creative writing and help save the future of the planet through your stories. Suitable for all levels of writing experience.

Accessibility: This is an ISL interpreted event. Loop system available for hearing-aid users. Wheelchair accessible.

Tangled Webs – Book Launch with Maria McDonald

Saturday, 7 October / 5:30pm / Riverbank Arts Centre

Join us for the launch of **Maria McDonald's** new novel *Tangled Webs*.

Jane Best and Agnes Williams are known in Belfast for taking in lodgers at Riverdale House, the business they started together after losing their husbands in the Anglo-Zulu War. For forty years, they've welcomed young women in need of a respectable place to stay in the city—including unfortunate cases like young Iris Seoin, who's come

here to get away from her abuser.

When a man shows up at the lodging house looking for Iris, he experiences a flash of recognition. He knows these two. He knows their past. And he knows what they're hiding.

For Jane and Agnes, everything is at stake. But if they succeed in burying this blackmailer, will their secret stay buried with him?

Poor: Grit, courage, and the life-changing value of self-belief

Saturday, 7 October / 8pm / Riverbank Arts Centre

Join **Katriona O'Sullivan** for a discussion on Katriona's book *Poor*. *Poor* is a memoir describing the impact of childhood poverty. Katriona's story recounts her journey from poverty, teenage pregnancy, homelessness to graduating with a PhD from Trinity College Dublin and becoming an award-winning lecturer whose work challenges

barriers to education. *Poor* is her stirring argument for the importance of giving hope, practical support and meaningful opportunities to children.

ISL/Irish Sign Language interpretation will be available for this event.

Sunday Morning Session: Judith Mok & Michael O'Loughlin in conversation with Dermot Bolger

Sunday, 8 October / 10.30am – 12pm / Riverbank Arts Centre

Writer and soprano, **Judith Mok** was born in Holland and studied at the Royal Conservatory of the Hague. She has toured the world as a classical soprano, moving to Dublin in 2002, where she is a leading voice coach working with noted singers from the classical and pop worlds. Her books include the novels *De Beul* (2000) and *Gael* (2006), and her extraordinary memoir, *The State of Dark*, (2022). *The State of Dark* is a moving, beautifully written memoir of a Second-Generation survivor, as the Holocaust continues to be a living presence in European life and culture. She is married to the writer Michael O'Loughlin.

Poet, translator, critic, screenwriter and commentator, **Michael O'Loughlin** was born in Dublin in 1958. His poetry

collections include *Stalingrad: The Street Dictionary* (1980), *Another Nation* (1996), *In This Life* (2011), *Poems 1980-2015* (2017) and *Liberty Hall* (2021). He has lived in Barcelona (where he first met his wife, writer and soprano Judith Mok); in Amsterdam and, since 2002, has lived in Dublin. From the youthful collections which ushered in a new urban aesthetic in Irish poetry, to his later explorations of European history and identity, O'Loughlin has earned a reputation as one of Ireland's most important poets, whose work has an exceptionally strong international outlook and a fierce dedication to social and historical justice.

ISL/Irish Sign Language interpretation will be available for this event.



Sign up to the library newsletter or contact your local Kildare library to find out all about our programme of children's events happening throughout the month of October in all Kildare libraries as part of Children's Books Festival.

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| Saturday, 30 September | | |
| The Pleasure is All Mine with the Dennis O'Driscoll Awards | 11am | McAuley Place, Naas |
| Monday, 2 October | | |
| This Is Not About You – Online Book Club with Rosemary Mac Cabe | 8:30pm | Online |
| Tuesday, 3 October | | |
| Absent Friend - John MacKenna | 7pm | Athy Community Library |
| Introducing 'Twiggy Woman.' Oein DeBhairduin in conversation with Peadar Ó Guilín | 7pm | Celbridge Community Library |
| Wednesday, 4 October | | |
| An Tolg Liteartha | 7pm | Riverbank Arts Centre |
| Thursday, 5 October | | |
| 'Oíche Airneál' sa Leabharlann | 7pm | Naas Community Library |
| Poetry and the Possibility of Home | 7pm | Maynooth Community Library |
| Writing Our Way to Brigit/Brigid | 7pm | Kildare Town Community Library |
| Chat LGBT: A Question of Queer Irish Literature | 8pm | Riverbank Arts Centre |
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| Tangled Webs – Book Launch with Maria McDonald | 5:30pm | Riverbank Arts Centre |
| Poor: Grit, courage, and the life-changing value of self-belief | 8pm | Riverbank Arts Centre |
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