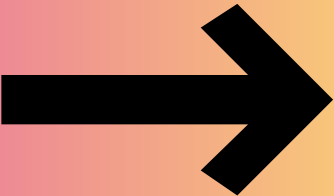


SOLAS NUA

Program of Events
January - June 2023

 **JUN**

DIRECTOR'S WELCOME



It's my honor to launch Solas Nua's January to June 2023 program with this beautiful brochure, which highlights all of the multi-disciplinary offerings that we have lined up for you.

A spotlight on women will kick off the year with *Imbolc*, a new work written and performed by Irish folk singer-songwriter Maija Sofia. Commissioned by Solas Nua especially for St. Brigid's Day, Maija will perform this piece live for the first time in Washington, D.C. We are also delighted to partner again with Dublin based theatre company Fishamble, to present Margaret McAuliffe's award winning *The Humours of Bandon*, the story of Annie, a 16-year-old Dubliner, as she charts us through the various successes and disappointments of her Irish Dancing life.


We will also focus on Northern Ireland, as we move into year two of the *Norman Houston Project*, dedicated to the memory of the former Director of the Northern Ireland Bureau in the US. The project includes the Capital Irish Film Festival's Award for the best short film from Northern Ireland, and the *Norman Houston Multi-disciplinary Commissioning Award*.

We continue to build on some of our old favorites, including *Irish Book Day* - which will be at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library in downtown D.C., our beloved *Play Reading Series* and the annual *Capital Irish Film Festival*, now in its 17th year. We also bring you a smorgasbord of online offerings, including the ever popular *CIFF@Home with NYU DC Dialogues*.

As always, Solas Nua is committed to bringing the best of contemporary Irish arts to D.C. and are deeply thankful to our valued supporters, your help goes directly into making projects happen. Our tagline is 'New Irish Arts' and we are proud to share all that is inspiring about globally diverse Ireland.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our partner venues in 2023!
Best Wishes

Miranda Driscoll
Executive Director, Solas Nua



JANUARY

SOLAS NUA PROGRAM

CIFF@HOME PRESENTS:

SCHOOL LIFE

FILM

WHEN: Wednesday January 25 - 6pm

WHERE: Online

PRICE: Free, donations welcome

John and Amanda teach Latin, English and Guitar at a fantastical stately-home-turned-school. Their nearly fifty year careers are drawing to a close for the teachers who have become legends with the mantra: *reading! rithmetic! rock n roll!* but for pupil and teacher alike, leaving is the hardest lesson to learn.

A pre-recorded Q&A with directors Neasa Ní Chianáin and David Rane will air on January 25th. The discussion will be moderated by Maedhbh Mc Cullagh, Director of the Capital Irish Film Festival.

Hand-picked by Solas Nua's Capital Irish Film Festival, CIFF@Home with NYU DC Dialogues is a bi-monthly, curated series of Irish film, followed by Q&As. Registration will give you access to an on-demand film link to view ahead of the live Q&A discussion.

MAIJA SOFIA

IMBOLC

MUSIC

WHEN:	Wednesday 01 February - 8pm (postponed from 2022)
WHERE:	St. Thomas' Parish, 1517 18th St NW, Washington, D.C., 20036
PRICE:	Tickets \$25

Solas Nua is delighted to present *Imbolc*, a new work written and performed by Irish folk singer-songwriter from County Galway, Maija Sofia. Commissioned by Solas Nua especially for St. Brigid's Day (Imbolc), for this unique event, Maija Sofia will perform this new piece live for the first time in the intimate, modernist setting of St. Thomas's Parish, an Episcopal church in Washington, D.C.

While working on this commission, Maija Sofia considered St. Brigid as a mystic, pagan feminist icon; a figure through which old Irish traditions, wisdoms and practices persisted in spite of the patriarchy of the Catholic Church in Ireland. Taking the 'Cailleach' (divine hag or witch) as a starting point, Maija looks at how St Brigid symbolizes a kind of secret resistant undercurrent of feminine, mystic and ecological forms of knowledge. The new

piece will be performed alongside Maija's other songs that deal with themes of feminist historical narratives and alternate forms of knowledge as well as older folk songs that contain similar themes of nature and witchcraft.

Solas Nua looks forward to welcoming Maija Sofia to a Washington DC stage for the first time, to premiere this ambitious new commission on February 1st, the ancient festival of Imbolc, to celebrate rebirth, renewal, the coming of Spring and the symbol of feminine energy.

Maija Sofia is a songwriter and artist from rural Galway. Her debut album 'Bath Time' was released in November 2019 through Trapped Animal Records. By turns arresting, intimate and strange, her songs are built around striking electric guitar, intricate lyrics, harp, analogue synth and more experimental instrumentation. The album was critically lauded as the arrival of a poignant, original new talent, receiving full-mark reviews and a nomination for the RTE Choice Award Irish Album of the Year. It was described in the Sunday Times as "quietly breathtaking [...] the arrival of a unique new voice."

Kindly supported by Culture Ireland.

'A real timeless quality is rare in so much of modern music, but the delicate timbre of Maija Sofia's music is impossible to ascribe to a particular moment. She doesn't occupy an easily identifiable space - there are few genres which could accurately pinpoint her sound - and the ease with which she weaves grand tales of mythos into short and delicate folk tunes suggests a true finesse. Her subject matter is seldom trivial - abuse, mythological stories, feminism and loss are considered with a confident serenity.'

- ANDREA CLEARY, THE IRISH TIMES

Maija Sofia, photo by Jilly McGrath



FEBRUARY

SOLAS NUA PROGRAM

CIARA ELIZABETH SMYTH

IRISHTOWN

PLAY READING

WHEN:	Saturday February 11 - 3pm
WHERE:	St. Thomas' Parish, 1517 18th St NW, Washington, D.C., 20036
PRICE:	Free, donations welcome

It's a week before the opening of a new Irish play on Broadway and in the rehearsal room, the cast are panicking. The writer's previous play was a smash hit, a drama set in Northern Ireland during the Troubles. She's been commissioned off the back of it and the producers expect another instant classic. Except her new play is about sexual harassment and talking seagulls. The cast are worried the script is dated, too weird and nowhere near Irish enough for American audiences. When the writer comes into the rehearsal room to watch a run, an argument erupts and the fate of the script hangs in the

balance. Not wanting to blow their shot on Broadway, the cast feel it is now their duty to devise an "Irish Play". *Irishtown* is a biting satire about theatre, consent and what it means to be Irish.

Join us for an afternoon with a new play read by some of DC's most talented performers, followed by a post-show discussion with Artistic Director of Theatre, Rex Daugherty. Chatting with audiences about the new scripts in the Play Reading Series is one of the most direct ways our community informs what shows we choose for full production. This is your invitation to be in the room where it happens!

MARCH

SOLAS NUA PROGRAM

CAPITAL IRISH FILM FESTIVAL

FILM

WHEN:	March 02 — 05
WHERE:	AFI Silver Theatre & Cultural Center in Silver Spring, MD.
PRICE:	Full access passes \$130 Individual tickets \$13

Solas Nua's annual *Capital Irish Film Festival*, now in its 17th year, presents the best of contemporary Irish cinema by filmmakers from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland to audiences in the D.C. metropolitan area. We are delighted to present the festival in partnership with the American Film Institute at their east coast home in the historic art deco Silver Theatre & Cultural Center, in Silver Spring, MD.

The four day festival showcases the latest Irish dramatic and documentary features, shorts, art films and animation releases, and we accept official submissions via Film Freeway. The 2023 festival will highlight Irish language, social change, migration and Northern Ireland. We are delighted to feature Soilsíú Films' Award-winning documentary *Young Plato*, an inspiring and

uplifting documentary about a Northern Ireland School Principal's efforts to interrupt the intergenerational trauma in the lives of his young pupils through the teaching of philosophy. We are excited to also introduce new programming strands including family oriented and experimental art films.

In 2023 short filmmakers from or living in Northern Ireland will automatically be entered into the running for the Norman Houston Short Film Award - an annual honor for the best new short film created by a filmmaker based in or from Northern Ireland. The Norman Houston Short Film Award is part of the Norman Houston Project - a project initiated by Solas Nua in Washington D.C., dedicated to the memory of Norman Houston, the former Director of the Northern Ireland Bureau (NIB), in the United States.

The *Capital Irish Film Festival* is supported by Culture Ireland, Screen Ireland, the Northern Ireland Bureau and the Embassy of Ireland.

FEBRUARY

SOLAS NUA PROGRAM

The board and staff are delighted to welcome our new Director of the Capital Irish Film Festival Maedhbh Mc Cullagh. This position, which is supported by the Government of Ireland's Emigrant Support Program, will see CIFF grow and evolve in line with Solas Nua's recent expansion and vision to commission, produce and present thought-provoking, ground-breaking work from Irish and Ireland-based artists.

'The festival films showcase the full humanity of the Irish people. They are tough without being mean, forgiving without being saccharine. Quiet, deadpan humor is never far from their lips. These films are almost all a welcome reprieve from the D.C. grind.'

- **WASHINGTON CITY PAPER**



Bruce Guthrie

MARCH

SOLAS NUA PROGRAM

IRISH BOOK DAY

INFORMATION

LÁ FHÉILE PÁDRAIG /
ST. PATRICK'S DAY

LITERATURE

WHEN:	Friday March 17 see times on solasnua.org
WHERE:	Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library, 901 G St NW, Washington, D.C., 20001
PRICE:	Free, donations welcome

Expanding on our long tradition of providing Washington D.C. with free Irish books on St. Patrick's Day, this year Solas Nua is delighted to partner with the D.C. Public Library, Politics and Prose Bookstore and Global Irish Studies at Georgetown University for a multi-strand series of events and activities at the Martin Luther

King Jr. Memorial Library, to celebrate Irish literature. Bring a friend, discover new Irish writing, attend a talk or just pick up a book for St. Patrick's Day (but leave the green beer at home!)

In partnership with D.C. Public Library, Politics and Prose Bookstore and Global Irish Studies at Georgetown University. Kindly supported by Dennis Houlihan and Mimi Conway.

Further details coming soon at solasnua.org

'Solas Nua's Irish Book Day is a literary pot of gold'
-RON CHARLES,
THE WASHINGTON POST

MAY

SOLAS NUA PROGRAM

MURDERED MEN DO BLEED AND DRIP

JENNIFER BARCLAY AND HANNAH KHALIL

PLAY READING

WHEN:	Saturday May 06 & Sunday May 07 - 11am
WHERE:	Atlas Performing Arts Center - 1333 H St NE, Washington, D.C., 20002
PRICE:	Free, donations welcome

Commissioned and produced in partnership with DC's Mosaic Theatre and Dublin-based Fishamble: The New Play Company. Co-written by Palestinian-Irish playwright Hannah Khalil and Irish-American playwright Jen Barclay.

In a duet across the Atlantic, two strangers are connected by their family history and the lies they've told to survive. This special workshop presentation features

simultaneous performances in Ireland and D.C., performing live in a hybrid of interconnected stories and technology. Interwoven monologues and scenes will be performed by two actors, one in D.C. and the other in Dublin, while audience members in both cities witness a live performer and a digital actor at the same time.

Joins us for this special sneak peek at a new work commissioned and produced by Mosaic Theatre, Solas Nua and Dublin-based Fishamble: The New Play Company.

'Catch super stories, haunting sounds and intriguing conversations at Solas Nua.'
- THE IRISH TIMES

MAY - JUNE

SOLAS NUA PROGRAM

MARGARET MCAULIFFE

THE HUMOURS OF BANDON

DIRECTED BY STEFANIE PREISSNER

THEATRE

WHEN:	May 31 - June 11
WHERE:	Atlas Performing Arts Center - 1333 H St NE, Washington, DC, 20002
PRICE:	PWYC - \$45

'Don't be afraid of that floor, hammer it!'

Solas Nua, with Fishamble: The New Play Company, presents the award-winning *The Humours of Bandon* this summer.

On the eve of the Irish Open championship, we meet Annie, a 16-year-old Dubliner, as she charts us through the various successes and disappointments of her Irish Dancing life. We share her mind numbing commitment and burning desire to win the Irish Open title. Will she win and, if so, in what way? From the confines of every parochial hall in Ireland, Irish Dancing champions are churned out at a massive rate. Medals and cups build up in drawing

rooms and Riverdance swells a national pride, but the public aren't privy to the blood, sweat and tears that pave the way to the first place podium.

The Humours of Bandon is a coming of age story, full of heart, humour and wisdom, for anyone who had a childhood passion that threatened to overwhelm their life.

The Humours of Bandon premiered at Bewleys Café Theatre @ Powerscourt as part of Show in a Bag an artist development initiative of Dublin Fringe Festival, Fishamble: The New Play Company and Irish Theatre Institute to resource theatre makers and actors.

This tour is produced by Fishamble: The New Play Company, and supported by Culture Ireland.

WINNER: Best Theatre Script
Writers' Guild of Ireland ZeBBie Awards
WINNER of the Little Gem Award
Dublin Fringe Festival 2016
NOMINATED: Best Performer
Dublin Fringe Festival 2016

'terrific one woman show... both writing and performance are by turns sharp, charming and hilarious... All round, a champion turn.'

★★★★

- THE IRISH TIMES

'...a delight... Margaret McAuliffe is a star... sit back and enjoy this emotional rollercoaster ride.'

★★★★★

- BROADWAY BABY



George Carter

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

(SUMMER)

This coming summer Solas Nua will once again offer an artist, working in any discipline, the opportunity to spend six weeks in residence with Solas Nua in Washington, D.C. , as part of the *Norman Houston Multi-disciplinary Commissioning Award*. The successful artist will be announced soon.

In partnership with STABLE Arts and supported by the Northern Ireland Bureau, the Embassy of Ireland and individual donors.

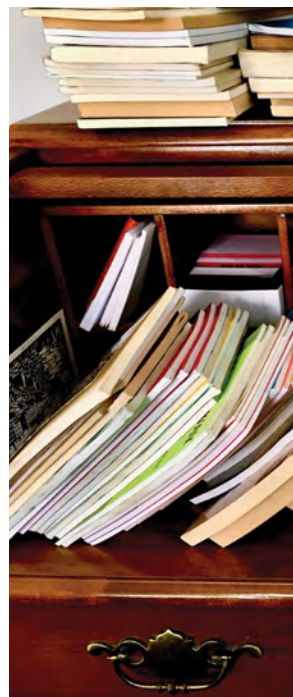


BI-MONTHLY BOOK GROUPS

WHEN: Every second month, on a Monday

Free bi-monthly book groups in four categories: Fiction, Non-Fiction, Poetry and Modern & Contemporary Classics. Activities go beyond monthly discussions of a book, the group regularly collaborates with the Solas Nua team, giving valuable input into programming ideas

There is no membership, anyone is free to join!





SOLAS NUA

DC Mayor's Arts Award for Innovation in the Arts

HELEN HAYES AWARD-WINNING COMPANY

“It exemplifies the international art scene as surely as any one country can.”

MARK JENKINS, THE WASHINGTON POST

“Their productions are always smart, thoughtful, and genuinely entertaining.”

DC THEATRE ARTS

“Best of the Year”

THE NEW YORK TIMES

SUPPORT US

Our activities are possible because of the generosity of our donors and volunteers. There are many ways to support - from joining Cáirde (Friends of) Solas Nua, a special group of patrons and supporters of contemporary Irish arts, to volunteering on specific projects. To find out more or to donate directly just scan this QR code.



Additional music performances and other one-off events will be scheduled throughout the year, please keep an eye on our website for up to date information!

To volunteer please email contact@solasnua.org

Covid Information: See solasnua.org for updates on Covid requirements.