

# From Druids to Dragons and Artists to Acrobats! Galway International Arts Festival announces 2023 programme



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The Pulse from **Gravity & Other Myths** featuring a company of over 60 performers with a choir of 30 female voices; a newly commissioned installation from **David Mach**; the return of **Colm Meaney** to the Irish stage after 40 years performing alongside his daughter **Brenda Meaney** in *Bedbound* from Landmark Productions and GIAF; an enormous **Dragon** wandering the streets of Galway City; epic theatre with **Druid O'Casey** directed by **Garry Hynes**; **Baxter Theatre** and **Handspring Puppets** *Life & Times of Michael K* from South Africa directed by **Lara Foot**; a stellar line up at the **Heineken® Big Top**; artists **Diana Copperwhite** and **Lorraine Tuck**; **Grafton Architects**; musicians **Martha Wainwright**, **KT Tunstall**, **Susan O'Neill**, **Robert Forster**, **James Yorkston** and **Nina Persson**; and **First Thought Talks** featuring **Lindsey Hilsum**, **Fintan O'Toole**, **Gaisu Yari** and a host of speakers are amongst just some of the highlights of the dazzling array of this year's programme.

Today Chief Executive **John Crumlish** and Artistic Director **Paul Fahy** announced the programme for Galway International Arts Festival 2023, its most ambitious programme in the Festival's 45 year-history. Celebrating on a larger scale than ever before across theatre, music, circus, dance, visual arts, comedy, street spectacle and talks over 14 exciting days and nights.

A copy of the Festival programme can be seen [HERE](#)

Chief Executive John Crumlisk said “As always it is a pleasure and a privilege to present the festival. We think this programme will make for a great two weeks and we are really looking forward to welcoming everyone to Galway this July to celebrate all this wonderful creativity that makes such great art possible.”

**Artistic Director Paul Fahy** said “We are hugely excited to present our most ambitious Festival programme to date. It is such an honour to work with so many wonderful artists and colleagues to deliver this programme and we are so grateful to them for their commitment, passion and brilliance. We look forward to welcoming our audiences to Galway this July for two wonderful weeks of great art and performance. There is simply nowhere quite like it during the Festival.”

### Theatre, Circus, Dance and Spectacle

Audiences will have a chance to experience O’Casey’s work as never before in the epic trilogy of *The Plough and the Stars*, *The Shadow of a Gunman* and *Juno and the Paycock* which will make up **Druid O’Casey**, directed by **Garry Hynes**. **Gravity & Other Myths** astounded audiences in 2019 with daring acrobatic feats in *Out of Chaos* and now make a very welcome return to Galway with the biggest indoor show ever presented by GIAF, *The Pulse*, featuring a company of 60 performers including the 30 strong, all-female *Orfeo Catalá* Choir. *The Pulse* is a hugely ambitious and monumental work of scale that has wowed critics with five-star reviews at the Adelaide and Edinburgh festivals will take place in the spectacular new **Festival Theatre** at the Kingfisher at the University of Galway.

**Landmark Productions** and **GIAF** join forces once again to present **Colm Meaney** and his daughter **Brenda Meaney** in a new production of Enda Walsh’s savagely funny play *Bedbound*, marking Colm’s return to the Irish stage for the first time in 40 years. South Africa’s **Baxter Theatre** and Tony Award-winning **Handspring Puppet Company** present a hugely ambitious theatrical staging of J.M. Coetzee’s novel, *Life & Times of Michael K*. From **Teac Damsa** and **Gate Theatre** comes a chance to see the huge hit *How to be a Dancer in Seventy-two Thousand Easy Lessons* written and choreographed by **Michael Keegan Dolan** and directed by **Rachael Poirier** and **Adam Silverman**. **Luke Murphy** blurs the lines between theatre, dance and psychological sci-fi thriller in *Volcano*, which premiered in GIAF 2021 for audiences of just eight people. Now larger audiences will get to experience this extraordinary, multi-award winning work. It’s *Ulysses for Children* in **Branar’s You’ll See...** and the legendary Irish Wake show *Dathanna Geala Amháin, Bright Colours Only*, by **Pauline Goldsmith** is resurrected in a unique translation into Irish from **Fíabín sa Taibhdhearc**. **Clare Barrett** returns to Galway in **Decadent** and Galway Arts Centre’s *Every Brilliant Thing* and a world premiere from **Brú Theatre**, *Not a World* starring **Raymond Keane** in an exciting new theatre work merging mask, music and movement.

*Cloakroom* will be the tenth in the series of immersive theatre installations (*Rooms*) by **Enda Walsh**, in collaboration with **Paul Fahy**. This time it’s 1972 and a young woman voiced by **Zara Devlin** works in the cloakroom in her local dancehall. Her life long search for real love is about to come to an end.

The celebrations continue outdoors. An enormous *Dragon* will wander the streets as **Planète Vapeur** brings their fantastic and magical world to Galway, while music lovers can again pop on their headphones for a **Silent Disco Walking Tour** through the city centre.

### Visual Arts and Architecture

The Festival is delighted to welcome back **David Mach** who wowed audiences in 2018 and 2012 with his evocative installations *Rock ‘n’ Roll* and *Precious Light*. Known for his imposing and provocative public art constructed from mass produced materials including car tyres, newspapers and coat hangers, David Mach will premiere a new site-specific exhibition of work commissioned by GIAF, *The Oligarch’s Nightmare*. Visual arts exhibitions and installations also include *Onomatopoeia* from **Diana Cooperwhite**, a site-specific seaside installation *Wordspace* from **Grafton Architects** [**Yvonne Farrell** and **Shelley McNamara**]; **B+** [aka **Brian Cross**] outdoor exhibition celebrating 50 years of hip-hop and an intensely moving and powerful photographic exhibition from **Lorraine Tuck** telling the story of her family living with autism disorder and intellectual disability and much more.

### Music

The Heineken® Big Top is back in full force at Fisheries Field once again with a line up featuring **Pavement**, **The Saw Doctors**, **Kettama**, **The Coronas**, **Fat Freddy’s Drop**, **Bell X1** and **Kaiser Chiefs**.

The eclectic music line up in venues around Galway will include at Róisín Dubh – **Susan O’Neill, All Twins, Junior Brother, Ailbhe Reddy**; at Monroe’s Live – **Martha Wainwright, James Yorkston and Nina Persson, Stomptown Brass, Jenny Greene, KT Tunstall, Something Happens**; at St Nicholas’ Church – **Resurgam, The English Cornett and Sackbutt Ensemble**, and at various venues: **Strings Attached with ConTempo Quartet** and special guests including the world premiere of a new work by **Bill Whelan**. For the full, jam packed music line up at venues across Galway see [giaf.ie](http://giaf.ie)

### **First Thought**

First Thought, the Festival talks platform is back with intriguing conversations including; Channel 4 News’ International Editor **Lindsey Hlum** on *Ukraine v Russia*; *The Hospital Manager who ‘Doesn’t do Trolleys’* with **Grace Rothwell** from Waterford General Hospital; **Martha Wainwright** on love, loss motherhood, divorce and more; **James Shapiro** on his forthcoming book on the US Federal Theatre Project; discussions on housing; **Elaine Burke** on tech developments we need to know about and a dive into female writing in Northern Ireland.

### **Festival Garden**

Relax in the Festival Garden in Eyre Square where artists and audiences can mingle, enjoy great food, cocktails and occasional sets from DJs and live sets from guest artists.

**Ciara Sugrue, Head of Festivals at Fáilte Ireland** said, *“With a spectacular programme planned celebrating our culture, people and places, the Galway International Arts Festival will give visitors the opportunity to experience the very best of Galway. Festivals and events play a key role in delivering brilliant visitor experiences, providing a unique reason for visitors to choose a destination and increasing footfall for local businesses, supporting jobs and revenue generation for Galway and its surrounding areas.”*

### **Booking**

Friends Booking from Tuesday 16 May

General Booking opens 10am Wednesday 17 May

Book Online from 17 May at [giaf.ie](http://giaf.ie)

Or in person from Wednesday 28 June at the Festival Box Office, 31. Eyre Square

Galway International Arts Festival would like to acknowledge the support of its principal funding agencies the Arts Council and Fáilte Ireland; its Drinks Partner Heineken; and Education Partner University of Galway.

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