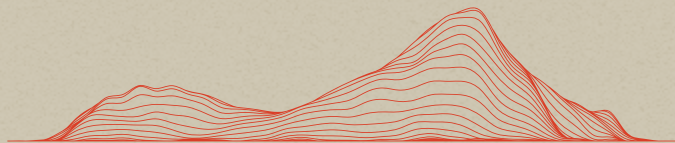


Derry City and Strabane District Council **presents**



ISLAND VOICES 2024

Writing Home

a series of lunchtime lectures exploring the very personal theme of 'home' in the work of local writers from the English, Irish and Ulster-Scots traditions.

26
SEPT

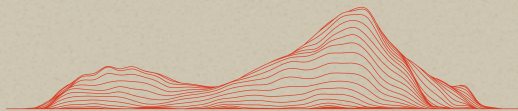
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Join us

www.derrystrabane.com/islandvoices





ISLAND VOICES 2024

“Home is what you take with you,
not what you leave behind.”

N.K. Jemisin, American writer



Writing Home

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Derry City and Strabane District Council presents Island Voices 2024 - a series of lunchtime lectures exploring the very personal theme of 'home' in the work of local writers from the English, Irish and Ulster-Scots traditions.

Featuring talks by Belfast-born Réaltán Ní Leannáin, Maureen Boyle from Sion Mills, and Alan Millar from the Laggan Valley in East Donegal, the series will explore identity and belonging within the context of our shared languages of English, Irish and Ulster-Scots.

/ Booking is essential:

Please book your place by contacting the Tower Museum (028) 7137 2411 or email tower@derrystrabane.com

/ Admission Free

/ Light refreshments from 12:30pm before each talk.

Join us

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From Birgu to Belfast

With Réaltán Ní Leannáin

Thursday 26 September 2024, 1pm

Tower Museum, Derry

Cití na gCártaí (Cois Life, 2019) traces a young Maltese woman's journey in the aftermath of the Great War as she enters into an arranged marriage with an Irish soldier stationed on the Mediterranean island during the fighting. The novel traces the similarities of culture and history between the two islands of Malta and Ireland, and follows her as she leaves her home in Birgu and arrives in her husband's homeplace in Belfast at a time of civil unrest in 1918.

The biggest and busiest city on the island, Belfast was a hub of industry, but the political aftermath of 1916 and the years leading up to the Civil War were to change all that. The novel explores the day to day difficulties faced by women in Ireland at that time and shows the control they were subjected to by cultural and societal norms.

Drawing on family memories and government archive material, the novel shows rather than tells about the complexities of life that *Cití* had to face. A young woman from another country, speaking another language and with another understanding of life, she attempts to navigate the new challenges that the unexpected situation throws at her.



Réaltán
Ní Leannáin

About the speaker:

Réaltán Ní Leannáin is the inaugural Irish Language Writer in Residence at Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin in Derry. She is well known for her prose writing, both novel and short story, as well as poetry and radio plays. Réaltán has had three books nominated for the annual An Post Leabhar na Blíana awards to date: ‘Cití na gCártaí’ in 2019, a short story collection ‘Inní’ (Éabhlóid, 2021) in 2021 and the anthology ‘Bláth na dTulach’ in 2022. Réaltán is the principal editor of ‘Bláth na dTulach’ (Éabhlóid, 2021), the Oireachtas-award winning anthology of short stories featuring contemporary writers from Ulster. Éabhlóid and Réaltán recently collaborated to record a podcast series of the same name, ‘Bláth na dTulach’, which is freely available on all the main distribution outlets. The stories in the collection can be freely read as well as listened to via the podcast’s website link.

/ Admission Free

/ Light refreshments from 12:30pm before each talk.

Writing 'Strabane' – Blessing a Town Into Poetry

With Maureen Boyle

Thursday 24 October 2024, 1pm

Tower Museum, Derry

In 2018 poet Maureen Boyle was commissioned by Radio 4 to write a poem on the town where her family came from for a series called 'Conversations on a Bench'. The poem was published in 2020 by Arlen House, Dublin, with photographs by her husband Malachi O'Doherty. A musical setting of the poem, by composer Una Monaghan, premiered online during the pandemic. Journalist Nuala Mc Cann described the poem as, 'a bittersweet, haunting love song to home'. In this talk, Maureen will explore the process of the poem's creation, the motivation to write it, the research involved and the process of translating research into poetry.

About the speaker:

Maureen Boyle began writing as a child in Sion Mills, County Tyrone, winning a UNESCO medal for a book of poems in 1979 at the age of eighteen. She studied in Trinity College, Dublin and has a Masters in Creative Writing from Queen's University Belfast. She has won various awards



Maureen Boyle

including the Ireland Chair of Poetry Prize, the Strokestown International Poetry Prize, the Fish Short Memoir Prize, the Inaugural Ireland Chair of Poetry Travel Bursary and Awards from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. Commissions include one to write a poem on the Crown Bar in Belfast for the BBC in 2008 and this year, for a poem on a painting in the O'Brien Collection in Washington. Some of her work has been translated into German, Flemish and recently French, by fellow-Strabane poet Aidan Coyle. She taught Creative Writing with the Open University and English in St Dominic's Grammar School in Belfast. She is a mentor in Memoir and Poetry at the Irish Writers' Centre in Dublin. She has two full collections of poetry, 'The Work of a Winter', 2017 and 'The Last Spring of the World', 2022, both published by Arlen House, Dublin.

/ Admission Free

/ Light refreshments from 12:30pm before each talk.

Hame an awa – Scots wurd in Irish toonlands

With Alan Millar

Thursday 28 November 2024, 1pm

Tower Museum, Derry

Born and reared in the Laggan of East Donegal, Millar explores the interconnections of locality and language running through his own work, using as his touchstone the glossary and subscribers list of Newton-Cunningham poet George Dugall's 'The Northern Cottage', published exactly 200 years ago this year. Through the words of the glossary and the townlands named on the subscribers list, we are transported back to a very familiar, yet strikingly different world. The glossary, filled with Ulster-Scots dialect still spoken today, is layered through with many words now lost to the Laggan, but still alive in other places, creating a sense of shared Scots language, running past into present, between Fintown and the Shetlands. The subscribers list teems with Irish townland names, giving the address of every person who bought Dugall's book. The subscribers may be long dead, but the townlands remain as intimately recognisable today as the day the book was printed. Join Alan on his anniversary journey through these idiosyncrasies, tracing their contemporary resonance through his own



Alan Millar

work and how his latest poetry project led him in the footsteps of St. Columba to the Hebrides and to Sligo.

About the speaker:

Alan Millar comes from the Laggan area of east Donegal and is now based in Ballymoney, Co Antrim. He is a journalist, writer and poet in Ulster-Scots and English. In 2021 he was winner of the Hugh MacDiarmid Tassie for Scots poetry and the inaugural Linenhall Library Ulster-Scots short story competition. In 2023 Alan was winner of the Linenhall Library Ulster-Scots poetry competition and had a top-placed Ulster-Scots poem in the inaugural Thomas Carnduff Shipyard Poetry Competition. The author writes an Ulster-Scots column for the Ballymoney Chronicle called 'Leid Loanen', or Language Lane. His first collection of poetry 'Echas frae tha Big Swilly Swally' was published in May 2023. He was nominated for Scots Writer of the Year, in the 2023 Scots Language Awards and is currently working on his ACNI - supported second poetry collection, 'Frae Erris tae Wrath'.

/ Admission Free

/ Light refreshments from 12:30pm before each talk.

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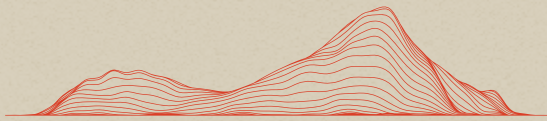
Further information

on Irish and Ulster-Scots available from

www.derrystrabane.com/gaeilge

www.derrystrabane.com/ulsterscots

ISLAND VOICES 2024



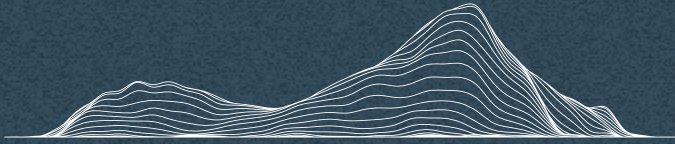
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This information is available upon request in a number of formats including large print, Braille, PDF, audio formats (CD, MP3, DAISY) and minority languages.

For further information
on alternative formats please contact
T: 028 71 253253 or
equality@derrystrabane.com



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