



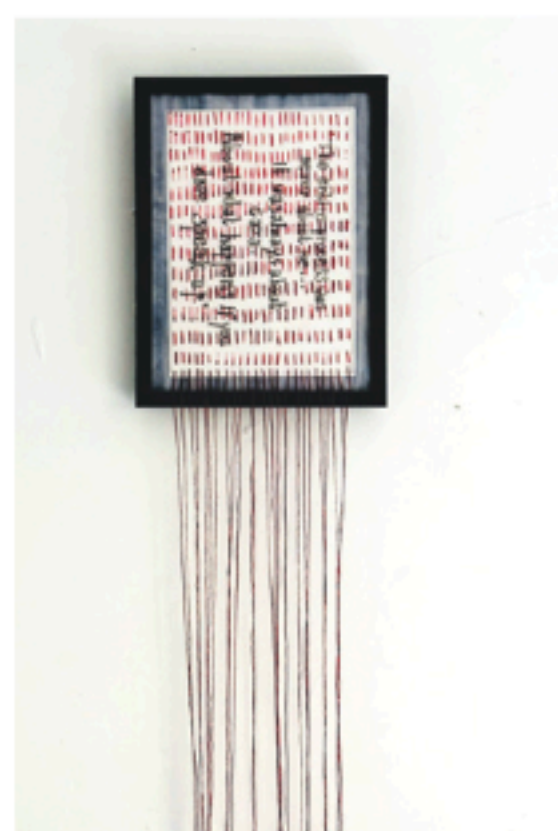
WITH
DAVID HENNESSY



Under a Changing Sky I - 40x30cm - Nua Artist - Anne Martin Walsh



The Sky is Falling - Installation - Photo transfer, acrylic, BFK Rives paper - Nua Artist - Maria Markham



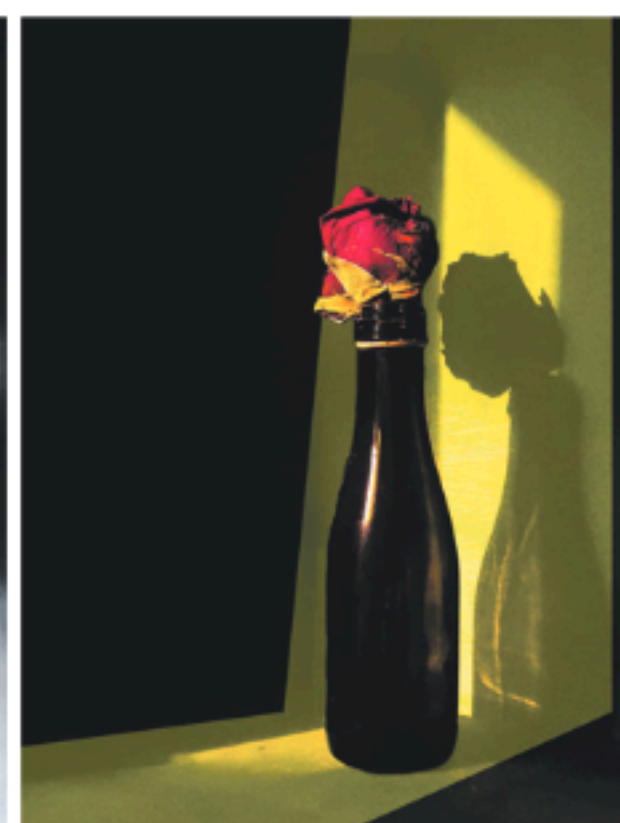
Speak Up - Textile and stitched - Nua Artist - Lucy Lambe



The susceptibility of heroism - Charcoal on paper - 65 x 50 cm - Nua Artist - Enrique Hernandez



Atmos II - 120x100cm - Spray Paint on Canvas - Nua Artist - Eamonn B Shanahan



Light spill - 30x20cm - Digital still life photomontage - Nua Artist - Caoimhe Ni Eanna

London debut for Irish arts collective

Irish arts group Nua Collective will this week make its London debut with the show *Under the Same Sky* at Candid Arts Centre in Islington, north London.

It comprises artists from Ireland and others from around the world with ties to Ireland.

The artists come from disciplines of painting, photography, printmaking, video, digital media, and installations.

The collective's London-based founder Eamonn B. Shanahan, from Tipperary, told *The Irish World*: "Bringing it to London is great because it's such a major international stage.

"That we can bring all the artists together to that one space is fantastic, getting as many people to see the work with as few boundaries as possible, that people can just look at it and take what they want from it.

"What's great about London is it is a very metropolitan society where they're pretty accepting no matter what your background is and they're pretty open to what you bring to the table and will respond to it equally as open."

The collective has exhibited across Europe, in the US and in the UK and

Ireland.

Eamonn studied at the Crawford School of Art in Cork and the Central School of Speech and Drama in London.

He said the five-year old original collective, which started during the pandemic, grew to something more international because of social media.

"The initial call out was that you had to be either a resident of Ireland or have some connection to Ireland whether, genetic or generational or whatever.

"One of our artists, Katrína Tračuma, is Latvian. She spent six years studying in Ireland and then lived there another three or four years before moving back to Latvia.

"Those connections are what brings the Irishness to it.

"I work a lot with different cultural organisations and arts offices in Ireland to see how much culture is embedded within our society and how extensive that is across multiple disciplines whether that's visual art, theatre, music, poetry, whatever.

"There's so much in Ireland because we are innately storytellers.

"Katrína is so passionate about Ireland because of how she was able to

connect that ethos and values we have in Ireland and the beliefs we have in the creative arts.

"We do that as Irish people very, very well and we're very passionate people.

"Katrína coined a term a couple of years ago, activism - essentially activism through art and we have quite a heavy, focused connection to climate.

"Ireland is very passionate about certain things and we see that very much in what's happening around the world right now politically."

Asked what he would like people to take from the exhibition Eamonn says: "Irish people are very good at sharing stories and ideas.

"We are presenting ideas some of them slightly controversial, some of them not so, and you just take what you want from it.

"The idea is for somebody to go into that exhibition without premeditated ideas and see something for themselves and take their own view."

Nua Collective's *Under the Same Sky* will be at the Candid Arts Trust in Islington from 20- 23 November. See candidarts.com and nuacollective.com.

The flagship Irish cinematic event Irish Film Festival London closed on Sunday evening after five days of feature films, documentaries and short films at West End cinemas.

Many of the film makers took part in Question-and-Answer sessions afterwards.

An associated awards ceremony was held at The Century Club on Shaftesbury Avenue.

The festival launched with a screening of Lance Daly's *Trad* at VUE West End.

Director Daly told *The Irish World*: "It's a brilliant event.

"I've come and shown a lot of other films in London and there's always a good Irish community here."

Trad cast member Labhras Sonnia Cholm Learrai said: "There's been times I've been here watching movies, but I wouldn't think the day would come I'd be one behind the scenes myself."

On Thursday Eamonn Murphy's directorial debut, *Solitary*, was screened at VUE Piccadilly. It is about an aging farmer who finds himself isolated and threatened by rural crime.

Eamonn told *The Irish World*: "It's amazing to be here at the Irish Film Festival in London. It's so nice to see festivals overseas supporting Irish filmmakers and artists."

"The reaction has been very strong especially from people in rural areas who might not necessarily be affected by rural crime but know people who have.

"There's been a very positive response to seeing that reflected on screen.

"It's not like he's lost in the mountains, he's just on his home farm, but the nearest neighbour is probably a ten-minute drive away so if anything does happen, even if he slips, help isn't nearby.

"It's only when you put yourself in that vulnerable position you really start to empathise with that character."

Gerry Herbert, who plays 'Brendan' in *Solitary*, added: "We were shooting in the middle of a rural community who were very welcoming but what was noticeable was, even though the community is thriving during the day, when an individual, particularly an individual of a certain age, goes back to live by themselves in their house and there's nobody around them, then the threat is implicit.

"But in the film and in the script, it's not just implicit, it becomes actual.

"That's where the engine for the story comes from - how Brendan deals with that nighttime threat whilst still nominally being a member of the community."

Solitary was followed by Irish language credit union heist drama, *Aontas*, starring Carrie Crowley, Bríd Brennan, and Eva-Jane Gaffney.

Producer Órfhlaith Ní Chearnáigh told *The Irish World*:

"It has just been remarkable. You would think a wee Irish credit union is so distinctly Irish, but the themes

and the story is very universal, and it just proves a good story is a good story - doesn't matter if it's in Irish, doesn't matter if it's set in Ireland.

"If it's written well, directed well, shot well and the cast is as stellar as our cast is, there's no limit to where it can go.

"It's a testament to the writing, the directing and everything.

"We're growing the pool of Irish language actors, Irish language crew as well, producers, directors, writers who speak Irish, who are writing and directing, producing through Irish.

"As someone who's very passionate about Irish language, we're part of a bigger picture because it's a language that has been under threat.

"Part of a healthy living language is there's culture and arts in it and we feel we're one small part of that. That's very special.

"It's just amazing to think where we're going to be in another 10, 15, 20 years."

Claire Frances Byrne, who won awards at the festival before for short films screened her feature-length debut *Ready or Not* on Friday.

Claire Frances Byrne told *The Irish World*: "I have loved this festival for a long time."

She said *Ready or Not* is a coming-of-age drama that deals with the topic of consent with teenagers.

"We should be more comfortable talking about this because it's not going away.

"We need to have these conversations a bit more so we're trying to bring a bit of a lightness to that and be true to the Dublin sense of humour and the Dublin way of coping."

Writer Lynn Ruane added: "I tell working class stories and narratives, but we wanted to find a topic that cuts across all different types of people, all ages, communities, everything - sexual consent doesn't discriminate in terms of a topic that has to be addressed and approached.

"I wanted to write it in the world I live in and love and grew up in - working class Dublin in an era and a period that were my most formative years, the '90s.

"It's a difficult subject but people often face into difficult things with grace and humour and sometimes we forget to put the grace and humour into the most difficult topics.

"This film tries to do that and does it well.

"There's lots of young people who aren't getting to talk openly and honestly and transparently about their young lives, especially when it comes to sex.

"There's still a Catholic hangover in Ireland.

"We're not fully comfortable yet with the idea of very openly talking about sex with a very young age group.

"This film, even though set in the '90s, is very relevant today and I hope it will create and facilitate many conversations at many kitchen tables."

Fourteen-year-old Ruby Conway Dunne, from Cabra, who stars as 'Katie' in *Ready or Not* added: "It was my first time being the lead in a feature



Follow us on
social media

@theirishworld



(LEFT) Lisa Barros D'Sa and Glenn Leyburn, the directors of *Saipan*, with cast member Niall McNamee

(RIGHT) Cast of *Ready Or Not*

PHOTOS: DAVID HENNESSY



Irish Film Festival London Five days of Irish feature films, documentaries and shorts in London's West End

so that was so exciting. I took it very seriously. I wanted everything to be perfect. I asked as many questions as I could before every single take.

"I'm so glad at how it came out. I'm very proud of it. It should be shown in schools, especially for young girls. It's just a story that needs to be told."

Friday night's festival events closed with Dennis Harvey and Lars Loven's documentary *Celtic Utopia* about a new wave of Irish folk musicians.

Amazing

Branwen, a musician who features in the film, said: "There's something magic about the film. It's amazing to be part of a generation where we're finally allowed to be proud of being Irish."

Sean-nós singer Naoise Mac Cathmhaoil who is also featured in the film, added: "It's just fantastic to see this new generation coming through and to be part of that generation that's turning around saying, 'No, we're proud to be Irish. We're proud of who we are and we're going to sell it to the world.'"

Branwen continued: "There's things we never talked about like The Famine or The Civil War."

"The silence has been loud for generations."

"That's why there's so much creative energy nowadays, especially in the North. It's like a renaissance."

Naoise added: "We spoke about things like immigration, - immigrants are not the problem. We've been forced to emigrate for far too long."

"It's the government and the style of governance we have that needs to change because it just should not be the case that time and time again, generation after generation is forced to emigrate."

"The homelessness crisis, our healthcare system, public transport - all these things need to change."

"Hopefully this Irish music revival, Irish cultural revival, will give us some pride but let's just make sure it goes in the



A good story is a good story - doesn't matter if it's in Irish, doesn't matter if it's set in Ireland. If it's written well, directed well, shot well and the cast is as stellar as our cast is, there's no limit to where it can go.

right direction, not in the right wing."

On Saturday Andrew Gallimore's documentary *In the Opinion of the Censor* looked at films that were censored and banned films in Ireland and how that reflected the culture at the time.

Andrew said: "If you look at some of the social legislation passed in Ireland in the past 20 or 30 years, Ireland has gone from this very Catholic insular nation to one of the most socially progressive countries in Europe."

"Even in film classification, Ireland is very much leading in terms of sophisticated classification."

"It's come a long way in 100 years."

It was followed by Donncha Gilmore's feature film debut, *Girls & Boys*, a love story featuring a character who is transgender.

Donncha told *The Irish World*: "The nugget of it came from my own experiences of sports and drama and being friends with a lot of straight people and knowing a lot of queer people and the tension between those two communities sometimes."

"As you get older, sometimes a divide occurs between kids who are straight and queer that wasn't there when they were younger."

"The innocence is gone."

"I wanted to show people grappling with that and missing people they used to be close with."

Donncha said: "I've received a lot of personal messages from people, a lot of them from queer communities, telling me how much they loved it and how much it resonated with them."

Actress Liath Hannon, who stars in *Girls & Boys*, said: "It's just a very beautiful love story where one of the characters happens to be trans - that's what makes it so exciting and revolutionary, it doesn't make it any kind of issue. It just is."

Liath's co-star Adam Lunnon-Collery added: "It's a very Irish story. It's a very Dublin-centric story. Dublin is

one of the heroes of the film but it's also very universal."

"It's exciting to see it outside of Ireland for the first time."

Aoife Kelleher screened her documentary *Testimony* about the Justice for Magdalenes campaign.

Aoife said: "I was here last year with my documentary Mrs. Robinson and to be back with *Testimony*, it's just wonderful."

"It's such an important issue and we have some of our survivors and contributors in the audience."

"It was a story I felt really needed to be told."

"There have been beautiful films made on not dissimilar topics, but the focus with *Testimony* is on the (Irish) State failures and the work that remains to be done if Ireland is really going to engage in a serious process of truth and reconciliation."

Glenn Leyburn and Lisa Barros D'Sa, the directors of *Saipan* about Roy Keane and Mick McCarthy's bust up during the soccer World Cup, were also returning to the festival having previously shown their feature films *Good Vibrations* and *Ordinary Love*.

Lisa said: "Hopefully this is an audience who will really enjoy the film, get a bit of a kick out of it."

"Obviously it is a story that football lovers may well know but it's a film about the psychology of two interesting characters, a shipwreck story about two people far away from home having to confront things about themselves. It's about national identity."

"We really hoped a huge audience would connect with it and that seems to be the case so far."

London-Irish singer-songwriter and actor Niall McNamee, who plays Ireland's 2002 goalkeeper Alan Kelly, added: "Being an Irish fella who's lived in London for a good while, it feels like a full circle moment."

"I'm a massive soccer fan. I just adore the Irish team so much so to be part of that is

IRISH FILM FESTIVAL LONDON AWARD WINNERS

Best Feature Film:
Aontas

Best Documentary:
Testimony

Best Short Film:
Three Kennings

The Ros Hubbard Award for Acting:
Niamh McCormack

The Suil Eile Award for Outstanding Contribution to Irish cinema:
Brenda Fricker

class.

"Alan Kelly is a legend, and I've got to know him a little bit through it. It's a scary story to be part of in a way but it's good."

"Everyone remembers this and maybe the story wouldn't be so deep if we'd qualified for a World Cup since, but we haven't."

"In the world, forget just Ireland, it's one of the biggest World Cup stories that ever happened."

On Sunday, the final day of film screenings, the day began with Jose Miguel Jimenez's documentary *Amanda*, about the artist, Amanda Cullen a survivor who uses her art as her therapy.

Amanda told *The Irish World*: "The feeling in the room was amazing."

Jose added: "The conversation that the film invites is happening so I'm happy about that."

Powerful

Amanda added: "I hope I've gotten across that the creative route is a powerful route."

"It won't hurt you whereas the legal system, does hurt you. It takes all your money, and it doesn't give you results."

"The arts are more powerful than politics."

It was followed by a screening of Cathal Black's 1995 film, *Korea*, an adaptation of a John McGahern story starring a nineteen-year-old Andrew Scott at the beginning of his career in his first film role.

Cathal Black told *The Irish World*: "It was interesting to see it with a not so familiar audience and to come out of your comfort zone. I was very happy and I thought it looked well."

"Having been involved with it quite intimately, it's always a bit of a shock to see your work and one can get very critical, but it was good."

"Once we put the camera on (Andrew) we just thought, 'Wow, this guy is going to be quite big.'"

The festival closed with a screening of feature film *The Swallow* starring Brenda Fricker as an artist coming to terms with her life.