

Irish Film Festival 2024 Evaluation



13th - 17th November 2024



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PR Overview

Irish Film and Television UK (IFTUK) brought its annual festival to the heart of London from November 13 to 17, unveiling a line-up celebrating the very best in Irish filmmaking. The 2024 edition showcased a mix of feature narratives, documentaries and short films at Vue West End, Vue Piccadilly and the ICA.

The festival opened with a screening of Mrs Robinson at Vue West End with a red carpet to welcome director Aoife Kelleher and other filmmakers and producers. Times Radio and Videoblogg covered the opening night. Press in attendance included Charlotte O'Sullivan (The Evening Standard), Clare Fitzsimmons and Nick Webster (The Mirror), Matthew Kammara (Movies1), Jimmy Bernasconi (2XXFM) and Benjamin Scott (Mundo Pélículas).

The Mirror ran an online feature on Mrs Robinson. The festival was also covered by Business Doc Europe, British Cinematographer and Screen Daily, among others. There were ten reviews of films in the line up, many of these reviewers also attended screenings. David Hennessey of The Irish World, our media partner, interviewed eight filmmakers publishing articles in the weekly newspaper and online. David also published a general spread about all the films in the 2024 edition.

Local press were keen to cover the festival too. We got a double page spread in the Camden New Journal, as well as two online features. The Islington Tribune also covered the festival online.

Other press who attended throughout the festival include: Jennifer McShane (Freelancer - e.g. Irish Post), India Ysabel (Filmhounds Magazine), Latoya Austin (Franglais27), Jennifer Wilson (Film for Thought), Carla Aguilar López (Filmfilicos). The 40th anniversary screening of Neil Jordan's, The Company of Wolves, was attended by James Mottram (Aesthetica), Ryan Edgington (The Hatchards Podcast), Christopher Hartiss (Boys on Film), Tim Allen (Times Radio), Phil Marriott (Boys on Film) and Saskia Baron (The Arts Desk).

For the PR campaign we emailed over 500 contacts which included online magazines, Nationals/Internationals and trades. We also contacted 19 sports groups (Eat/Sleep/Cheer/Repeat), 10 journalism organisations (Ransom 79), 30 University film groups, Women in Film & TV, and several London-based Irish Influencers.

TV & Radio



Reach - 478k

Times Radio ran a package of the Mrs Robinson screening, interviewing Aoife Kelleher (director), Cormac Hargaden (producer), Michael Hayden (festival director) and Carey Fitzgerald (chair of IFTUK). The package went out on the Friday and trailed the weekend programme.



Videoblogg also covered the opening night, interviewing Aoife Kelleher, Cormac Hargaden (producer), Michael Hayden (festival director) and Carey Fitzgerald (chair of IFTUK) alongside XXX (composer).



ARTICLES

Mirror

Mary Robinson at 80 - an incredible female president who loathes Trump and made divorce legal

Mary Robinson became the first female president of Ireland in 1990, made divorce legal and, halfway through her term of office, enjoyed a 93% popularity rating.

Fran Bowden

The United States could be just days away from electing its first ever female president if the dead heat polls see the vote tip in favour of democratic candidate Kamala Harris.

One woman who understands the enormity of such a political first is 80-year-old Mary Robinson who, on 3 December 1990, became the first female president of Ireland - and also its first successful independent candidate, beating the favourite Fianna Fáil candidate Brian Lenihan.

"I was elected by the women of Ireland, who instead of rocking the cradle, rocked the system," she said. While she was the political leader of a far smaller nation, there is plenty to learn from Mrs Robinson, who in 1996 made divorce legal and, halfway through her term of office, enjoyed a 93% popularity rating. Like Ms Harris, she is fervently opposed to Donald Trump.

"The Trump administration was a disaster," she said. "Not only have we seen democracy at risk, but also women's rights going backwards, which is incredibly sad."

Mrs Robinson resigned her presidency in 1997 to become UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - a position she held until 2002. And only last week, she resigned as chairman of The Elders - a group of world leaders with the goal of combining their wisdom to tackle some of the world's toughest problems - having been a founding member, alongside Nelson Mandela, Graca Machel and Desmond Tutu. She remains a member, saying of her resignation as chairman: "Part of leadership is knowing when to stand down and make space for others."

The subject of a documentary film, Mrs Robinson, directed by Aoife Kelleher, which is being shown at the Irish Film Festival in London from 13 to 17 November, her main focus now is Project Dandelion, a women-led global campaign for climate justice, as part of The Elders.

And she's preparing herself to go to COP 29 - the UN climate change conference - in Azerbaijan on November 11, to battle for climate justice.

A reforming constitutional lawyer and senator in her early career, born into a deeply Catholic family, Mrs Robinson married a Protestant cartoonist, Nicholas Robinson, and her parents, both doctors, chose not to attend the marriage. Yet, she says her parents' influence helped her to become the groundbreaking woman she is today. In the Mrs Robinson film, she said: "I often joke that I learned very early about gender and human rights, being wedged between four brothers.

Mrs Robinson, directed by Aoife Kelleher, is being shown at the Irish Film Festival in London from 13 to 17 November.

"I was definitely a tomboy and I felt that I had to compete with my brothers in running, in football, in any sport we were playing.

"On top of that, I also had my parents constantly stressing that I had the same opportunities as my four brothers, which wasn't true in the wider Irish society I could see.

"The whole sense was I had more limited options. despite what my parents kept telling me. "Women's place was basically in the home as a mother, as a carer, as a wife.

"I was certainly aware there was a lot wrong with Irish society. The unfairness of being a girl, being a woman, being inferior, career. It really hit me very hard." Being smart was definitely her salvation. "I was aware from a very early age, I think, that I wasn't as good-looking as my four brothers. Therefore, I thought 'I'd better be as smart as I can be.'" she said.

Her enviable brain meant Mrs Robinson spent a year in law school at Harvard, in the US, in the late 1960s, where her interest in global affairs was truly nurtured. "I loved the teaching at Harvard," she said. "It was an incredible year in the law school."

"I was very engaged in the injustice and the scenes coming back from Vietnam. "Then in April (1968) Martin Luther King was assassinated. He was a hero of mine, and I was really devastated. "And then, just after I graduated, Robert Kennedy was assassinated. "Those two violent killings were hugely impactful. It was a very idealistic time. "Quite a number of my friends weren't going to go into top law schools and earning lots of money.

They were going into the civil rights programme or the poverty programme in the south of the country. "I look back on that year as above all else, giving me a sense that young people were prepared to take responsibility and make a difference. "That was so different from the Ireland that I knew so well, where you waited and you waited your turn. And if you were a woman, you didn't even have that much turn and you waited probably longer."

This early experience laid the foundations for a sterling political career that, like Ms Harris, saw her championing women's rights. Fighting for women, homosexuals and the underprivileged around the world, as well as now fighting to protect the planet, have been the pillars of her career.

But back in 1990, when she was elected president, there were very few reproductive rights for women in Ireland, there was no divorce, no marriage equality and homosexuality was still illegal. And, like Ms Harris, Mrs Robinson faced some fairly toxic slurs from male supporters of her main opponent.

One example which backfired happened shortly before election day - at a time when papers had the two main candidates polling equally at 43% - when a leading politician from Fianna Fáil, called Pdraig Flynn, went on a popular Saturday morning radio programme attacking her. He said: "Mary Robinson reconstructs herself to fit the fashion of the time. She was pretty well constructed before this campaign by her handlers. She has her new clothes and her new look and her new hair, too, and she has the new interest in family, being a mother and all that thing."

The attack horrified Mrs Robinson, who later recalled: "Pdraig Flynn attacked me in a very personal way, which hurt me afterwards, implying that I had a false persona just for the presidency. But it completely backfired. A lot of Fianna Fáil women rang me and asked to be disassociated from that. They were very hurt by it. It certainly got the women of Ireland out to vote."

For the first time in 70 years the Fianna Fáil candidate was defeated and by an ultra-liberal feminist in a very traditional Catholic country.

"I was determined I was going to try and make a difference and speak truth to power," said Mrs Robinson.

She also said: "Being Irish, I have no desire to build an empire. I want to have a rather small, effective office on behalf of human rights. I do intend to speak out. I do intend to stand up to bullies." And that she did. She also continued to make her mark with a series of 'firsts.'

In 1993 she became the first Irish President to formally visit Britain and shake hands with the Queen at Buckingham Palace. She also met Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Fein, although that was not open to photographers.

"I was very pleased when I learned that the Queen had sent a formal invitation to come and have tea," she said. "It really was a total breakthrough that I would be received in Buckingham Palace as President of Ireland, that the Queen would be photographed with me, the two of us, side by side."

She also visited desperate populations in countries including Somalia and Rwanda, where the genocidal killing of 94 left a deep stain on her soul.

Later becoming a close ally of Nelson Mandela's, she once said: "You've got to deal with every country, and you've got to deal with them as urgently and as honestly as possible. "I've learned from people like Mandela. You don't make peace with your friends, you make peace with your enemies. You shake the hand and you find a way. "I'm a great believer in reaching out to everybody. However broken a country may seem to be, you have to build back.

"People live in a country. They have to go on living in it. They have to be encouraged to be able to move forward and come out of it."

Quitting the presidency in 1997 to become UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the government said her resignation "was not unexpected." In this new role, she became the first High Commissioner to visit Tibet, she criticised Ireland's immigration policy and the use of capital punishment in the US. And she extended her term so she could cover the World Conference against Racism in South Africa in 2001.

Mrs Robinson to open Irish Film Festival London

Nick Cunningham - 24 October 2024



Mrs Robinson by Aoife Kelleher

The Irish Film Festival London will open November 13 with Aoife Kelleher's feature documentary *Mrs Robinson*, described as "an illuminating portrait of Ireland's first female president Mary Robinson."

"With extraordinary access, the film reveals a singularly influential force whose gift for bridging differences was instrumental in bringing about seismic change in Ireland – a skill she would later bring to her roles as UN High Commissioner and chair of Nelson Mandela's independent group of world leaders, *The Elders*," write organisers. "Mrs Robinson pays tribute to a woman who remains actively committed to peace, justice, and human rights to this day," organisers add.

Festival Director Michael Hayden comments: "We aim to give audiences in London and the UK access to work they might not get to see otherwise. We celebrate new and emerging filmmakers, acknowledge the contributions of more established ones and embrace the plurality of voices sounding in an evolving society. I am pleased to present a programme that I hope does all these things, and I am excited about hearing what our audiences make of it."

Elsewhere, the festival continues to highlight compelling female perspectives with *Housewife of the Year*. Ciarán Cassidy's frank and eye-opening documentary lifts the lid on one of Ireland's most controversial and criticised shows. Cassidy charts the competition's rise and fall against the backdrop of vast societal shifts in attitudes towards women and marriage.

Tanya Doyle's feel-good sports doc *EAT/SLEEP/CHEER/REPEAT* focuses on a troupe of male and female cheerleaders from Galway as they chase the dream of reaching Orlando, USA, for the World Championships of Cheer. Alessandra Celesia's CPH: DOX 2024 winning documentary *The Flats* follows the residents of a run-down estate in the heart of Belfast. Depicting characters haunted by past violence, the film offers a compassionate portrait of a community grappling with its troubled past, and dares us to hope.

Colm Quinn's gripping investigative documentary *Ransom 79* relives a shocking moment when, in 1979, Ireland's Department of Agriculture received a demand for £5m by blackmailers threatening to release foot-and-mouth disease into the country's livestock. More than simply true crime, the film is a heartfelt tribute to the extraordinary RTÉ journalist Charlie Bird, who ran with the scoop while suffering from motor-neuron disease.

The festival also presents *Perennial Light* by visionary Cork filmmaker Colin Hickey. A meditation on grief and healing, the film combines live sequences, gorgeously photographed in black and white, with delicate animations by Paolo Chianta, "confirming Hickey as one of Ireland's most expressive and vital directorial voices today." Alongside the Public Programme there will be an additional collection of Irish Films available on the IFTUK App. The Irish Film Festival will be followed by the Irish Film & Television UK Awards on Monday, 18 November. This red-carpet event will take place at the Embassy of Ireland.

Awards include Best Feature Documentary, to be mulled over by jurors Andrew Gallimore (Director of *One Night In Millstreet*), Róisín Geraghty (Producer of *Sunlight*), Mark Costello (IFTUK Advisory Group) and chaired by Michael Hayden (Festival Director).

BRITISH CINEMATOGRAPHER

Irish Film Festival, London showcases the best of Irish cinema



Irish Film and Television UK (IFTUK) is to bring its annual festival to the heart of London from November 13 to 17, unveiling a line-up that celebrates the very best in Irish filmmaking. Taking place at Vue West End, Vue Piccadilly and the ICA, Irish Film Festival London will showcase a mix of feature narrative, documentaries and short films shedding fresh light on the country's culturally dynamic past, present and future.

The festival opens with Aoife Kelleher's feature documentary *Mrs Robinson*, an illuminating portrait of Ireland's first female president Mary Robinson. With extraordinary access, the film reveals a singularly influential force whose gift for bridging differences was instrumental in bringing about seismic change in Ireland – a skill she would later bring to her roles as UN High Commissioner and chair of Nelson Mandela's independent group of world leaders, *The Elders*. *Mrs Robinson* pays tribute to a woman who remains actively committed to peace, justice, and human rights to this day.

From the highest echelons of Irish politics to the grit of the land itself, the festival is set to close with Christopher Andrews' visceral feature debut *Bring Them Down*, a thriller set on a farm starring Barry Keoghan, Christopher Abbott and Colm Meaney. Shot in Wicklow, the film stunningly evokes rural Ireland through a nail-biting story of feuding shepherds, marking Andrews as an exciting name to watch.

Festival Director Michael Hayden comments: "The success of films such as *Kneecap*, *That They May Face the Rising Sun* and *Small Things Like These* has meant 2024 has been another bumper year for Irish cinema. Yet beyond the big hitters, there is a wealth of work being made in Ireland that does not get seen beyond its shores. This is the reason the Irish Film Festival London exists. We aim to give audiences in London and the UK access to work they might not get to see otherwise. We celebrate new and emerging filmmakers, acknowledge the contributions of more established ones and embrace the plurality of voices sounding in an evolving society. I am pleased to present a programme that I hope does all these things, and I am excited about hearing what our audiences make of it."

As well as spotlighting new talent, the festival will celebrate the 40th anniversary of Neil Jordan's hugely influential classic *The Company of Wolves*, with an exclusive screening. A cinematic breakthrough on its release in 1984, this unsettling Freudian fantasy, co-written with renowned author Angela Carter, is still lauded for its astonishing use of non-digital practical effects. The screening will be followed by a Q&A with the director Neil Jordan.

Meanwhile, jumping off from its opening film, the festival continues to highlight compelling female perspectives with *Housewife of the Year*. Ciarán Cassidy's frank and eye-opening documentary lifts the lid on one of Ireland's most controversial and criticised shows. Cassidy charts the competition's rise and fall against the backdrop of vast societal shifts in attitudes towards women and marriage.

Tanya Doyle's feel-good sports documentary *EAT / SLEEP / CHEER / REPEAT* focuses on a troupe of male and female cheerleaders from Galway as they chase the dream of reaching Orlando, USA, for the World Championships of Cheer. An altogether darker foray into the world of sports comes with Maurice O'Carroll's white-knuckle boxing drama *Swing Bout*. Starring Ciara Berkeley as an ambitious fighter with her eye on the prize, the story unpacks a tangled web of corruption, scandal, misogyny and accusations of murder.

Alessandra Celesia's remarkable CPH: DOX 2024 winning documentary *The Flats* follows the residents of a run-down estate in the heart of Belfast. Depicting characters haunted by past violence, the film offers a compassionate portrait of a community grappling with its troubled past, and dares us to hope.

Marion Quinn hits the festival with her long anticipated second feature *Twig*, an urban reimagining of the Greek tragedy, *Antigone*. Set in Dublin's dark, criminal underbelly, the film features Sade Malone in an electrifying performance as the title character, torn between loyalty and love.

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The festival is also proud to present *Perennial Light* by visionary Cork filmmaker Colin Hickey. A meditation on grief and healing, the film combines live sequences, gorgeously photographed in black and white, with delicate animations by Paolo Chianta, confirming Hickey as one of Ireland's most expressive and vital directorial voices today.

Winner of Best New Irish Feature at the Cork International Film Festival in 2023, Paul Mercier's biting satire *Prospect House* makes a welcome addition to the line-up. Starring Barry Ward as a hot-headed director who leads an artistic collective in trying to save an 18th century mansion, the film was shot on location in Enniscoie House, Mayo.

In the meantime, Dermot Malone seamlessly weaves between past and present in his striking debut feature *King Frankie*. Subtly political, the film is propelled by Peter Coonan's superb performance as a grieving taxi driver who once rode the tail of the Celtic Tiger as an ambitious businessman.

Dedicated to showcasing emerging talent, the festival will also include two New Irish Shorts programmes at the ICA, with six films about land and identity showing on November 15th, and seven films about fate and kinship on November 16th. There are also three shorts selected to play before features, including *Our Father*, the directorial debut of celebrated comedian and actor Aisling Bea. Her film will play before *Swing Bout* on Saturday 16 November at 18:00.

Alongside the Public Programme there will be an additional collection of Irish Films available on the IFTUK App. The Irish Film Festival will be followed by the Irish Film & Television UK Awards on Monday, 18 November. This star-studded, red-carpet event will take place at the Embassy of Ireland.

Members of the jury for the Irish Film & Television UK Awards include: Best feature film: Maeve Murphy (Director *Silent Grace*), Paul FitzSimons (Producer *Verdigris*), Steven Greenfields (IFTUK Board), Chaired by Michael Hayden (Festival Director). Best feature documentary: Andrew Gallimore (Director *One Night in Millstreet*), Róisín Geraghty (Producer *Sunlight*), Mark Costello (IFTUK Advisory Group) Chaired by Michael Hayden (Festival Director) Best short film: Sadhbh Murphy (Network TV Ireland), Kevin Law (IFTUK Advisory Group), Chaired by Natasha Orlando Kappler (Shorts Programmer). Other jurors to be confirmed.

This year's partners are Screen Ireland, Culture Ireland, Tourism Ireland, 560 Media, The Century Club, The Irish Film Institute and The Government of Ireland Emigration Support Programme.

NEWS

Reservoir Docs adds 'Mrs Robinson', 'Green Is The New Red' to its slate (exclusive)

BY GEOFFREY MACNAB | 25 OCTOBER 2024



Reservoir Docs adds 'Mrs Robinson', 'Green Is The New Red' to its slate (exclusive)
Reservoir Docs has snapped up international rights to Aoife Kelleher's feature documentary Mrs Robinson, which pays tribute to Ireland's first female president Mary Robinson and explores her pivotal role in fostering reconciliation in Ireland.

The film, which premiered in the Galway Film Fleadh, will open next month's Irish Film Festival in London (November 13-17).

It tells the story of how reforming constitutional lawyer and senator Mary Robinson won the Irish Presidential vote in 1990 and how, in her later role as UN High Commissioner, she took on perpetrators of human-rights abuses all over the world.

It is produced by Cormac Hargaden and Trisha Canning for Loosehorse, with executive producers including Pat Mitchell (co-founder of Project Dandelion), Geralyn Dreyfous, Lyn Davis Lear, Regina K. Scully, Ruth Ann Harnisch and Melony Lewis. The film was funded by Screen Ireland and the Fiscal Sponsorship programme of the Utah Film Center.

Bono and Irish singer songwriters Gemma Doherty and Morgan MacIntyre of Saint Sister contributed a specially recorded song, 'Women Of The World', to the soundtrack.

"Engagement, female empowerment and quality, this is really what attracted us to the project almost four years ago now," said Anaïs Clanet, head of sales and acquisitions at Reservoir Docs. "It's a very important film about one of the strongest women we know, she deserves to be widely recognised."

Clanet also confirmed Reservoir Docs is handling international rights on IDFA international competition title Green Is The New Red, directed by Anna Recalde Miranda. Focusing on the assassination of more than 2,000 environmentalists and land defenders in Latin America since 2012, Green Is The New Red explores the roots of this violence.

The feature doc a is a coproduction between France, Italy, Paraguay and Sweden. Producers are Isabelle Chesneau, Hernán Mazzeo for Lardux Films with Mónica Hernández Rejón as impact producer.

10 THE IRISH WORLD | 11 NOVEMBER 2016

FILM FESTIVAL

By David Hennessy

'Here's to you, Mrs Robinson'



One of the purposes of the film was to encourage us all to reflect on how far Ireland has come and how far we still have to go.

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COMING UP Business News

Complete varifocals from £110

Plus a free second pair

Very smart varifocals

You're better off with Specsavers

12 THE IRISH WORLD | 11 NOVEMBER 2016

NEW FILM

By David Hennessy

LOCHLANN MCKENNA on his personal short film *Two For The Road* which stars Steve Wall and is about to screen at Irish Film Festival London



There were people I'd never met before in books of years. They were like, 'I just meant to meet you' they really connected with it.

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12 THE IRISH WORLD | 11 NOVEMBER 2016

NEW FILM

By David Hennessy

Rising star ISABELLE CONNOLLY on starring in TV-winning and Oscar-qualified short film *Under the Surface* and being compared to Saoirse Ronan and IVE HEWSON



My main job was just observing and reacting as opposed to actually acting. Hopefully, it came across.

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12 THE IRISH WORLD | 11 NOVEMBER 2016

NEW FILM

By David Hennessy

Fifteen-year-old actress KATELYN ROSE DOWNEY on her short film *Clouds* which incorporates her other love of Irish dancing and acting in the new *Blade Runner* series



FIRST STEPS

Clouds was the first time I'd ever seen anything with Irish dancing as a main focal point of the story and it was really, really special to me to be a part of it because I've always loved Irish dancing.

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NEW FILM

By David Hennessy

What's coming on in your World?



PROUDLY SERVING OUR IRISH COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN SINCE 1987

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14 THE IRISH WORLD | 11 NOVEMBER 2016

NEW FILM

By David Hennessy

Stars of film and TV celebrate Irish screen talent in London



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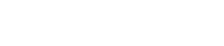
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LIFESTYLE ENTERTAINMENT FILM LATEST NEWS LOCAL NEWS

Irish Film and TV UK unveils programme for this year's festival

By David Hennessy - 23/10/2024



Irish Film and TV UK, formerly known as Irish Film London, have announced the details of their forthcoming annual festival which takes place 13- 17 November unveiling a line-up that celebrates the very best in Irish filmmaking with big names such as Neil Jordan.

Taking place at Vue West End, Vue Piccadilly and the ICA, Irish Film Festival London will showcase a mix of feature narrative, documentaries and short films shedding fresh light on the country's culturally dynamic past, present and future.

The festival opens with Aoife Kelleher's feature documentary *Mrs Robinson*, an illuminating portrait of Ireland's first female president Mary Robinson. With extraordinary access, the film reveals a singularly influential force whose gift for bridging differences was instrumental in bringing about seismic change in Ireland – a skill she would later bring to her roles as UN High Commissioner and chair of Nelson Mandela's independent group of world leaders, The Elders. *Mrs Robinson* pays tribute to a woman who remains actively committed to peace, justice, and human rights to this day.

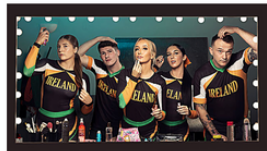


Mrs Robinson.

From the highest echelons of Irish politics to the grit of the land itself, the festival will close with Christopher Andrews' visceral feature debut *Bring Them Down*, a thriller set on a farm starring Barry Keoghan, Christopher Abbott and Colm Meaney. Shot in Wicklow, the film stunningly depicts rural Ireland through a nail-biting story of feuding shepherds, marking Andrews as an exciting name to watch.

Festival Director Michael Hayden comments: "The success of films such as *Kneecap*, *That They May Face the Rising Sun* and *Small Things Like These* has meant 2024 has been another bumper year for Irish cinema. Yet beyond the big hitters, there is a wealth of work being made in Ireland that does not get seen beyond its shores. This is the reason the Irish Film Festival London exists. We aim to give audiences in London and the UK access to work they might not get to see otherwise. We celebrate new and emerging filmmakers, acknowledge the contributions of more established ones and embrace the plurality of voices sounding in an evolving society. I am pleased to present a programme that I hope does all these things, and I am excited about hearing what our audiences make of it."

As well as spotlighting new talent, the festival will celebrate the 40th anniversary of Neil Jordan's hugely influential classic *The Company of Wolves* with an exclusive screening. A cinematic breakthrough on its release in 1984, this unsettling Freudian fantasy, co-written with renowned author Angela Carter, is still lauded for its astonishing use of non-digital practical effects. The screening will be followed by a Q&A with the director Neil Jordan and producer Steven Wooley.



Eat/ Sleep/ Cheer/ Repeat

The festival also continues to highlight compelling female perspectives with *Housewife of the Year*. Clárán Cassidy's frank and eye-opening documentary lifts the lid on one of Ireland's most controversial and criticised shows. Cassidy charts the competition's rise and fall against the backdrop of vast societal shifts in attitudes towards women and marriage.



Bring Them Down.

Tanya Doyle's feel-good sports documentary *Eat/ Sleep/ Cheer/ Repeat* focuses on a troupe of male and female cheerleaders from Galway as they chase the dream of reaching Orlando, USA, for the World Championships of cheer. An altogether darker foray into the world of sports comes with Maurice O'Carroll's white-knuckle boxing drama *Swing Bout*. Starring Ciara Berkeley as an ambitious fighter with her eye on the prize, the story unpacks a tangled web of corruption, scandal, misogyny and accusations of murder.

Alessandra Cesesia's remarkable CPH: DOX 2024 winning documentary *The Flats* follows the residents of a run-down estate in the heart of Belfast. Depicting characters haunted by past violence, the film offers a compassionate portrait of a community grappling with its troubled past, and dares us to hope.

Marion Quinn hits the festival with her long anticipated second feature *Twig*, an urban reimagining of the Greek tragedy, *Antigone*. Set in Dublin's dark, criminal underbelly, the film features Sade Malone in an electrifying performance as the title character, torn between loyalty and love.

Colm Quinn's gripping investigative documentary *Ransome 79* relives a shocking moment when, in 1979, Ireland's Department of Agriculture received a demand for £5m by blackmailers threatening to release foot-and-mouth disease into the country's livestock. More than simply true crime, the film is a heartfelt tribute to the extraordinary RTÉ journalist Charlie Bird, who ran with the scoop while suffering from motor-neuron disease.

The festival is also proud to present *Perennial Light* by visionary Cork filmmaker Colin Hickey. A meditation on grief and healing, the film combines live sequences, gorgeously photographed in black and white, with delicate animations by Paolo Chianta, confirming Hickey as one of Ireland's most expressive and vital directorial voices today.

Winner of Best New Irish Feature at the Cork International Film Festival in 2023, Paul Mercier's biting satire *Prospect House* makes a welcome addition to the line-up. Starring Barry Ward as a hot-headed director who leads an artistic collective in trying to save an 18th century mansion, the film was shot on location in Enniscoe House, Mayo.



Company of Wolves

Dermot Malone seamlessly weaves between past and present in his striking debut feature *King Frankie*. Subtly political, the film is propelled by Peter Coonan's superb performance as a grieving taxi driver who once rode the tail of the Celtic Tiger as an ambitious businessman.

Dedicated to showcasing emerging talent, the festival will also include two New Irish Shorts programmes at the ICA, with six films about land and identity showing on November 15th, and seven films about fate and kinship on November 17th. There are also three shorts selected to play before features, including *Our Father*, the directorial debut of celebrated comedian and actor Aisling Bea.

Alongside the Public Programme there will be an additional collection of Irish Films available on the IFTUK App.

The Irish Film Festival will be followed by the Irish Film & Television UK Awards on Monday, 18 November. The star-studded, red-carpet event will take place at the Embassy of Ireland. Members of the jury for Best Feature Film include Maeve Murphy (who is interviewed here about her short film *St Pancras Sunrise*), Paul FitzSimons who is producer Verdigris which was Best Film at last year's festival), Steven Greenfields of the IFTUK Board and festival director Michael Hayden.

Andrew Gallimore, director of last year's winning documentary *One Night In Millstreet* will join the jury for Best Feature Documentary.

Irish Film Festival London runs 13- 17 November.

This year's partners are Screen Ireland, Culture Ireland, Tourism Ireland, 560 Media, The Century Club, The Irish Film Institute and The Government of Ireland Emigration Support Programme.

For more information, [click here](#).

THE IRISH WORLD

Home > Lifestyle > Entertainment > IFUK celebrates Irish film talent

IFUK celebrate Irish film talent

By David Hennessy · 03/12/2024



By David Hennessy

The annual Irish Film Festival London returned 13-17 November.

The festival is the flagship event from Irish Film and TV UK, formerly Irish Film London, and boasted a programme of feature films, documentaries, short films and Q and As with film makers.

There was also a mix of established names like The Crying Game film making great Neil Jordan and well known comedian, writer and actor Aisling Bea and more up and coming names such as Sade Malone who has been named by Screen International as a Star of Tomorrow.

While many film makers travelled over from Ireland, it was a full circle moment for some who used to live in London and were now getting to exhibit their work here.

The festival got underway on Wednesday 13 November with a screening of the Mary Robinson documentary, Mrs Robinson at VUE West End.



Director Aoife Kelleher told The Irish World on the night: "It is so exciting to be here tonight.

"It is such an honour to have Mrs. Robinson be the opening film of the festival.

"I've screened at the festival before.

"It's such a local crowd.

"It really does feel like a homecoming, the reception of the London Irish community is so warm.

"It's just a wonderful festival.

"It's just wonderful.

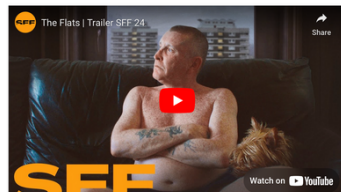
"Mary was elected in 1990, I was eight years old at the time and it was a moment that really percolated down to girls my age: That sense of just big doors being thrown open and so much that had not been a possibility for girls and women, for the LGBTQ+ community, for disadvantaged communities across Ireland, there was a sense that finally, the country could be theirs as well."

The films continued on Thursday with Belfast documentary The Flats at VUE Piccadilly.

Producer Jeremiah Cullinane said: "It's the first time we've shown the film in London and just really pleased to get a lovely reaction from the audience."

Asked if the director Alessandra Celesia being Italian gave her a unique viewpoint Jeremiah said: "I think the fact that first of all, that she's a lady and second of all that she's an Italian and third of all, that she's just a little bit unusual as a person and a little bit disarming as a person opened a lot of doors for her.

"It gave her access, not only physically opening doors to people's apartments and flats but I think doors to people's souls that they were willing to open up and reveal themselves to her in a way that certainly I would never be able to and many people, possibly many Irish people, would not have been able to."



This was followed by Prospect House starring Barry Ward.

Producer Anne Gately said: "It really is wonderful to be here."

Director Paul Mercier added: "It went down really well with them.

"We had it in Germany as well and it went down there so it travels, which is unusual.

"You wouldn't think it would because it's so local, but it does."

Friday the films continued with Twig, a Dublin gangland retelling of Greek tragedy, Antigone.

Sade Malone, who stars, told The Irish World: "It's so exciting. I've been a massive fan of the festival for so many years, so to be here with a film like Twig is incredible.

"It's beautiful and overwhelming to see a live reaction of something that you created so long ago, and the fact it can touch people in any way is amazing."



Friday night concluded with the documentary, Housewife of the Year.

Director Cárán Cassidy said: "It's great to be here."

The film addresses a misogyny that existed in Ireland at the time.

"There was an extremity and a fundamentalism that existed at that time. The film addresses that. But I do think for women, I think there's still a huge amount that needs to be done by Irish society.

"And I think everybody in the team is really, really aware of this.

"This is an examination of a shift or a tilt but it wasn't definitely any sort of solution or breakthrough."

Saturday kicked off with the Irish cheerleading documentary, Eat/ Sleep/ Cheer/ Repeat.

Tanya Doyle told The Irish World: "It's great to have Eat/ Sleep/ Cheer/ Repeat here at the Irish Film Festival in London.

"We're really delighted that it's here and it's lovely to bring it to a slightly different audience but an audience that has a great understanding of the world in which this documentary takes place.

"It's a portrait of a time in life.

"It is about being at that crossroads in life and not knowing where you're gonna go, what you want to do, and how to pursue your dreams and your goals.

"It's a film that I suppose a lot of different people can either see themselves in or can understand the dilemmas that the characters are experiencing in the film."



There was then a poignant screening of Ransom '79 which in addition to being the story of an extortion attempt is also the story of late RTE reporter Charlie Bird's final story.

Director Colm Quinn told The Irish World: "It's great to be here with the film.

"It was a privilege to be able to work on it.

"Charlie covered so many major stories over the course of his career.

"He was a legend.

"To be part of helping him to tell his final story was a privilege.

"It was a story that meant a lot to him.

"He was determined that he wanted to tell it and it was a privilege to be able to help him to tell it."

"But I think the process of actually making the film when he was facing what he was facing sort of gave him a real sense of purpose and meaning.

"I think that was what drove us all on really."

Colin Murphy, who can be seen in the film working with Charlie, said: "It's always exciting to come to London for an artistic or cultural event.

"It's bittersweet because we would love to have Charlie with us and I know how much of a kick he'd get out of it."

On the poignancy and sadness of seeing Charlie, who was known to be so eloquent, unable to speak Colin said: "I think what we're really watching is somebody survive.

"It's kind of triumphant so in that sense, I think the film's very upbeat.

"This is a man, who lived through his voice, literally losing his voice but finding other ways to have voice.

"It's about somebody determined to keep doing the thing that identifies him, that he identifies by, until it's literally wrested away from him."

Charlie didn't get to see the completed film but saw how it was progressing.

"About two weeks before he actually died, I went out to see him. I went out.

"I brought the laptop out to him in Wicklow to show him and his wife, Claire.

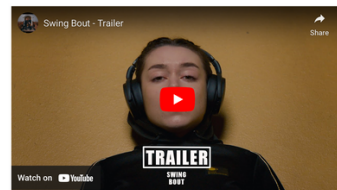
"I got a shock when I went in because it was the first time I'd seen him fully prone.

"Up to then, he'd been a bit more mobile.

"But as soon as I opened the laptop and pressed play, his face just lit up.

"At this stage, he'd given up on the voice recorder. He'd kind of given up on the notepad.

"He was very, very debilitated but he absolutely engaged with it in his head, in his eyes, and radiated joy at seeing it, and pride."



This was followed by the boxing drama Swing Bout which was preceded by the short Our Father which was directed by Aisling Bea.

Aisling Bea told The Irish World: "We are so excited.

"This is my directorial debut.

"It's our little baby, myself and Claire Duffy who's absolutely incredible.

"She's an amazing actress and writer who I've been lucky enough to work with for the last five years and this is our first little project together.

"It's a story close to Claire's heart.

"It's an LGBTQ+ story in that it's about someone who is religious but also is grappling with their sexuality and family, and what that means to come out and be truthful."

On the wealth of Irish talent that can be seen at the moment Aisling said: "I think it represents a confidence, a generational confidence that understands that there's no reason we shouldn't be in the same spaces as people from America or Canada or France or Australia or wherever in the world.

"I think each ten years, each generation of Irish people have been getting more and more confident and professional with their work.

"In music as well, look at bands like The Fontaines DC, who are incredible and their confidence in their own roots and being Irish is incredible to see as well."

On the strong London Irish community that she is part of Aisling added: "I love my community.

"I think the London Irish is a whole category of its own.

"The London Irish have a long history here and there is something about the community that I feel hugely attached to.

"I hope we add to British society and I'm pretty sure we do."

Maurice O'Carroll, writer/ director of Swing Bout, told The Irish World: "It's actually great to be here because I used to dig roads outside here once upon a time on night shift and I always imagined being inside the cinema so to bring the film over here, it's actually a huge moment for me."

Christie Cronin, from the cast of Swing Bout, said: "I was living in London for four or five years and have family here so it's so cool to be back at the Irish Film Festival and to be having a film here.

"It's a nice little full circle moment."

Megan Haly of the Swing Bout cast added: "It's just so lovely to have a UK audience but also feel an Irish community in London as well, which is so great."

On what drew her to the film Megan said: "I grew up watching Katie Taylor fight.

"Something that definitely drew me to the story was that it was female led.

"We spoke to some boxers.

"All boxers have a story and usually have a reason why they're fighting.

"Digging into that really helped.

"It was really exciting part of the job."

Saturday came to a close with King Frankie, starring Peter Coonan.

Peter Coonan told The Irish World: "It's a real honour to be here.

"This is my third feature in this festival.

"It's incredible they're supporting Irish movies year in year out, and it's always good fun to come to London."

Asked about the strong Irish talent that can be seen now Peter said: "I think all eyes are in Ireland at the moment.

"I mean, Cillian's new film Small Things Like These, Saoirse's producing her own movies, Paul is obviously at the height of his game but then you have Bad Sisters and you have a plethora of Irish actors who are performing at the very top level, and are writers as well and directors.

"I really think it's a moment for Ireland.

"I think we're telling uniquely different stories as well, now we're telling universal tales that aren't just the old Irish stories from 20, 30, years ago.

"I think we're really kind of tapping into something universal where we're challenging big issues but on a personal level that have a universal theme.

"I think in the next 10 years is going to be very strong for Irish films.

"I would love to be back again (at this festival) and I'd love to keep making movies that are holding the mirror up to our society and asking tough questions."

The final day of the festival got underway with Colin Hickey's experimental dialogue free film featuring animation, Perennial Light.

Colin Hickey said: "I studied here in London 20 years ago.

"I did a course here at the London Film Academy and then after that, I worked in the film business for a few years, made some short films, and I left about 15 years ago so to be back here now screening a film at a cinema that I used to go to is really a great feeling. I'm very happy.

"It is my first time screening in London.

"Just on a personal level, it's a huge thing to be here.

"It's great to be amongst a lot of really good films."



This was followed by a 40th anniversary screening of Neil Jordan's The Company of Wolves.

Neil Jordan told The Irish World: "Delightful (to be here).

"It's lovely to see the movie, see all the people who worked in it, many of whom are dead now actually, but it was lovely to see.

"It was quite interesting to see it after 40 years.

"It's a beautiful kind of fable, a beautiful fairy tale.

"It's an interesting riff on fairy tales in general and I thought it was rather interesting to see."

On the wealth of film making talent Ireland now has Jordan added: "There is a lot. There's quite a lot.

"Years ago when I made this movie, you were almost like a freak if you made a movie in Ireland, but now a lot of people are doing it which is great."

The festival came to a close with the bilingual rural thriller, Bring Them Down where the cast included Barry Keoghan, Colin Meany and Christopher Abbott.

Producer Julian Forde said: "We're very proud to be here tonight at the Irish Film Festival London with Bring Them Down, really pleased that the film could be shared here with this great audience and excited to see the reaction."

Producer Jacob Swan Hyam added: "Very happy for the film to be screened at another festival and for it to just reach a wider audience and to be at the Irish London Film Festival."

The festival came to a close with the Irish Film London Awards at the Irish Embassy.

The Irish World was filming at the festival and the awards so keep looking out for our videos from the events.

Home > Lifestyle > Entertainment > Irish Film and TV UK unveil programme for this year's festival

LIFESTYLE ENTERTAINMENT FILM LATEST NEWS LOCAL NEWS

Irish Film and TV UK unveil programme for this year's festival

By David Hennessy - 23/10/2024



The Flats

Home > Lifestyle > Entertainment > Cheers for the memories

LIFESTYLE ENTERTAINMENT FILM

Cheers for the memories

By David Hennessy - 16/11/2024



Tanya Doyle told David Hennessy about her documentary on the sport of cheerleading in Ireland.

When she embarked on her documentary Eat Sleep Cheer Repeat, Tanya Doyle thought she was going to spend a year making a documentary profile of the little known cheerleading scene in Ireland.

Home > Lifestyle > Entertainment > A portrait of a bygone Ireland

LIFESTYLE ENTERTAINMENT FITNESS

A portrait of a bygone Ireland

By David Hennessy - 13/11/2024



Ciarán Cassidy told David Hennessy about his documentary Housewife of the Year ahead of it coming to Irish Film Festival London.

Directed by Ciarán Cassidy, *Housewife of the Year* tells the story of Ireland's treatment of women through the prism of the live televised competition where a generation of Irish women competed in front of a live audience for the title of 'Housewife of the Year'.

From 1967 up until as recently as 1995 the Housewife of the Year ran in Ireland.

Home > Lifestyle > Entertainment > Under the surface

LIFESTYLE ENTERTAINMENT FILM LATEST

Under the surface

By David Hennessy - 10/11/2024



Rising star Isabelle Connolly told David Hennessy about starring in IFTA-winning and Oscar qualified short film CALF, her forthcoming roles in big series and being compared to Saoirse Ronan and Eve Hewson.

Home > Lifestyle > Entertainment > And here's to you, Mrs Robinson

LIFESTYLE ENTERTAINMENT FILM NEWS HEADLINES LATEST LOCAL NEWS

And here's to you, Mrs Robinson

By David Hennessy - 10/11/2024



Mrs Robinson

Aoife Kelleher told David Hennessy about her documentary about Ireland's first female President which is set to open Irish Film Festival London.

The forthcoming Irish Film Festival London will open with the documentary, Mrs Robinson.

Aoife Kelleher's documentary tells the story of Mary Robinson, Ireland's first female President.

Home > Lifestyle > Entertainment > First steps

LIFESTYLE ENTERTAINMENT FILM

First steps

By David Hennessy - 10/11/2024



Up and coming actress Katelyn Rose Downey told David Hennessy about her short film Clodagh which incorporates her other love of Irish dancing and acting with big names like Joey King and in the Blade Runner franchise.

Katelyn Rose Downey from Knocklyon in Dublin is a young talent to watch out for.

At just 15 years old, she has already appeared in The Princess alongside Hollywood star, Joey King, horror film The Nun II and the RTE series, Clean Sweep.

Home > Lifestyle > Entertainment > Charlie Bird's last story

LIFESTYLE ENTERTAINMENT FILM

Charlie Bird's last story

By David Hennessy - 16/11/2024



Film maker Colm Quinn told David Hennessy about his documentary Ransom '79 which depicts the late journalist Charlie Bird on the trail of his final story.

Colm Quinn's Ransom '79, which screens at Irish Film Festival London, is an extraordinary true crime story and one that had remained secret for decades.

It is the story of an attempt by a criminal gang to extort millions from the Irish government by threatening an outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease.

Home > Lifestyle > Entertainment > Star of tomorrow

LIFESTYLE ENTERTAINMENT FILM

Star of tomorrow

By David Hennessy - 15/11/2024



By David Hennessy

Sade Malone turns in a powerhouse performance in the title role of Twig showing just why she has been named as one of Screen International's Stars of Tomorrow.

The 27-year-old already has screen credits like Tin Star and Hope Street.

He has also starred in a production of John B Keane's Sive alongside Fionnuala Flanagan at the Gaiety in Dublin.

Home > Lifestyle > Entertainment > A Greek tragedy on the streets of Dublin

LIFESTYLE ENTERTAINMENT FILM

A Greek tragedy on the streets of Dublin

By David Hennessy - 13/11/2024



Writer/director Marian Quinn told David Hennessy about Twig which is set to screen at Irish Film Festival London.

Twig, a retelling of the Greek tragedy Antigone in gangland Dublin, will screen at this week's Irish Film Festival London.

In Sophocles' original, two brothers fighting on the same side in the Thebes civil war die fighting each other for the throne which leads King Creon to proclaim that Eteocles will be honoured while his brother Polynices will be publicly shamed.

It's all green on the screen as movie festival celebrates Irish storytelling

We speak to director of the Irish Film Festival London, Michael Hayden



THE borough's long standing links with Ireland is set to be celebrated this week at the annual Irish Film Festival – with a programme that includes an in depth biography of Ireland's first female president, Mary Robinson.

The Irish leader visited Camden Town when she was first elected in 1993 – and spoke of the importance of the Anglo-Irish diaspora.

Festival director Michael Hayden told the New Journal how Irish films had found a dedicated audience in London, but there was so much more that did not get released, and the festival is an open door to explore a vast range of filmmaking.

He said: "We are conscious of the Irish success stories we have seen recently. In the past couple of years, we have had a strong Irish presence at the Oscars.

"There are films now that are films of the year – Kneecap, That They May Face the Rising Sun. These are big stories and UK audiences have warmed to that. But there is a lot more work being made that does not get the publicity or distribution.



Michael Hayden

"The Irish film industry has its own flavour and culture – and that can be both a strength and an issue when it comes to showing Irish films to GB audiences. Sometimes it does not translate – it is not a given."

The festival takes over the Vue Piccadilly and runs through until Sunday night.

The Mrs Robinson documentary highlights evolution in Irish society. Mr Hayden said: "It is an intimate portrait of her life and time, and is about an elemental change that came to create a modern Ireland."

The documentary Housewife of the Year, a TV show on RTE that ran from the 1960s to the 1990s, also discusses equality.

"They had a competition where these women would come on and show what great housewives they were. The film illustrates a feminist history of Ireland, talking about the Magdalen laundries and the abortion referendum," said the director.

Eat Sleep Cheer Repeat follows the journey of a cheerleading team from a small Galway village who travel to America to compete in a prestigious competition.

READERS OFFER

The Irish Film Festival, London would like to offer Camden New Journal readers a special 20% discount code (Friend) for all films in the festival from November 13-17.

Go to: <https://iftuk.com/>

Mr Hayden added: "It is an incredible trip they go on, and it is hugely entertaining."

Other films explore Ireland's violent past.

In Ransom '79 we are invited to join a community who grew up in the shadows of the Troubles. It tells the story of how, in 1979, a shadowy group of criminals tried to blackmail the Irish government into handing over £5m – or face the horror of foot and mouth disease spread around the country.

Mr Hayden said: "The government had to take the threat seriously. The film follows the story of journalist Charlie Bird, who set out to uncover the truth. "It is an incredible piece of nonfiction storytelling. "Charlie had motor neurone disease and died recently. This is a tribute to him."

And the programme shows how talent can be nurtured with the right support.

He said: "There is the suggestion that Irish films punch above their weight. It is in a healthy place – there was a lot of investment. It means when Cillian Murphy wins an Oscar, it isn't that surprising when you think of the hard work that paved the way.

"And there are a lot of other reasons. Irish culture celebrates story telling."



The boom in Irish film stems back to a decision taken in 1982 by Screen Ireland to fund films.

"Before 1982, there was no Irish film industry," explains Mr Hayden. This was because of a mixture of the influence of the Catholic church, the poverty many experienced, and the fact making films was just not a priority in terms of a way of telling national stories.

"It means it has a relatively recent history – but it also shows that there is no surprise Irish people win Oscars and we are producing films like Kneecap."

Mrs Robinson: loving picture of a woman who changed Irish society Documentary tells the inspirational story of former president

Thursday, 14th November — By Dan Carrier



MRS ROBINSON
Directed by Aoife Kelleher
Certificate: 12a

☆☆☆☆

IN a contemporary world where we have strongman presidents closing down borders, pursuing aggressive and attritional policies and anger and fighting seems to be the fall-back position, a film that tells the story of a democratically elected leader who is the absolute antithesis of such demagogic figures is most welcome.

While the film title draws no doubt on *The Graduate*, the title could have easily been *There's Something About Mary* – because indeed there is.

Mrs Robinson, screened this week at the Irish Film Festival in Piccadilly, is a biography with that takes the inspirational story of Mary Robinson, the Irish president between 1990 and 1997.

It's more a loving picture of a woman who changed Irish society. It's a consideration of what makes a genuine humanist – how you can use your talents and experiences for the good of everyone. That is *Mrs Robinson* in a nutshell.

We learn of a childhood of competing against four brothers: her parents told her she could do whatever they did and was worth as much as them. Empowering words for the period – but also something which, on reflection, she says was patently untrue.

She was born into an Ireland that was a church-based, patriarchal society. She became a lawyer, focusing on the constitution – not solely academic when considered in the context of the Troubles – and then won a post as senator.

In 1990 she won the top job. It was the first time Fianna Fáil had not won the presidency, and ushered in a new sense of modernity. Described as “fearless about walking into difficult situations,” we learn she is both tough and cultured, serious but party loving. “She knows how to party as hard as she does work,” we are told.

Talking heads give the viewers an idea of the challenges overcome.

After stepping down, Mary took her talent beyond the Irish borders, chasing down human rights abusers, and today is the chairwoman of *The Elders*, a social justice body established by Nelson Mandela.

Musician Peter Gabriel was a co-founder of the *Elders* project. He says: “She always has been this strong, feisty, spirited person who goes in and fights for people, who need support.” That comes over in this celebratory story. Let's all be a little more like Mary


Cinerama

A Panorama of Film, Theatre and TV



News

Are you ready for this year's Irish Film Festival in London?

29th October 2024 ·  by Neil Baker

SHARE       

Irish Film and Television UK (IFTUK) is delighted to bring its annual festival to the heart of London from November 13 to 17 at Vue West End, Vue Piccadilly and the ICA. [BOOK TICKETS.](#)


TOP



IRISH FILM FESTIVAL, LONDON SHOWCASES THE BEST OF IRISH CINEMA



Don't miss the best of Irish cinema! Plus exclusive 40th Anniversary screening of Neil Jordan's *The Company of Wolves*

 Mundo Películas | 30 octobre, 2024

Irish Film and Television UK (IFTUK) is delighted to bring its annual festival to the heart of London from November 13 to 17, unveiling a line-up that celebrates the very best in Irish filmmaking. Taking place at Vue West End, Vue Piccadilly and the ICA, Irish Film Festival London will showcase a mix of feature narrative, documentaries and short films shedding fresh light on the country's culturally dynamic past, present and future.

[Schedule & tickets here](#)

The festival opens with Aoife Kelleher's feature documentary *Mrs Robinson*, an illuminating portrait of Ireland's first female president Mary Robinson. With extraordinary access, the film reveals a singularly influential force whose gift for bridging differences was instrumental in bringing about seismic change in Ireland – a skill she would later bring to her roles as UN High Commissioner and chair of Nelson Mandela's independent group of world leaders, The Elders.

Mrs Robinson pays tribute to a woman who remains actively committed to peace, justice, and human rights to this day.

REVIEWS



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Review: Mrs Robinson. The documentary of a real-life hero



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Award-Winning Production Company | In-Depth Media Coverage and Cultural Conversations

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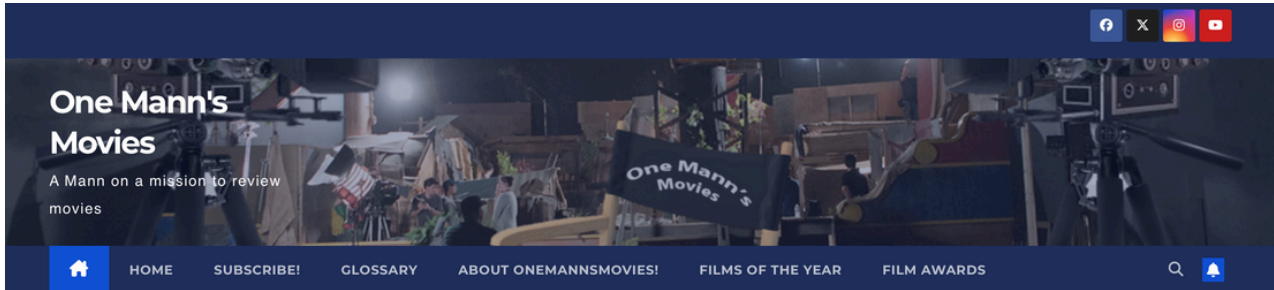
A film still from 'EAT/SLEEP/CHEER/REPEAT' showing four young women in black and green cheerleader outfits with 'IRELAND' written on them, standing in a room with string lights.

EAT/SLEEP/CHEER/REPEAT
Film, Irish Film Festival London 2024

A film still from 'Prospect House: Fragile Fiction' showing a person walking away on a long, straight path that stretches into the distance under a clear blue sky.

A film still from 'Mrs. Robinson: The Blueprint of Leadership' showing a woman with short dark hair, wearing a dark blue pinstriped suit jacket over a white collared shirt and a red top, looking directly at the camera.

REVIEWS



One Mann's Movies

A Mann on a mission to review movies

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COMM SPECIALS

The Irish Film Festival – London Showcases The Best Of Irish Cinema.

NOV 12, 2024

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This Wednesday (13th November 2024) sees the start of "The Irish Film Festival" in London. This runs through until next Sunday. There looks to be a good selection of films to go to see, most happening at the Vue West End and the Vue Piccadilly.

As Sophie Toumazis writes...

"Irish cinema has been booming, with films like *"Kneecap"*, *"That They May Face the Rising Sun"* and *"Small Things Like These"* (my review to follow shortly) proving really popular. However, this festival aims to shine a light on films that remain largely unseen outside of Ireland. With 350,000 people of Irish descent living in London alone, this is a great opportunity to showcase new and established Irish talent.

- "Mrs Robinson" is the first feature-length documentary about Ireland's first female president who transformed the lives of women in the country.
- The 40th anniversary screening of Neil Jordan's *"Company of Wolves"* will include a Q&A with the director. This iconic film launched Jordan's career and began to put Irish film on the map.
- EAT/SLEEP/CHEER/REPEAT is an uplifting documentary which follows a troupe of male and female cheerleaders from Galway as they chase the dream of reaching Orlando, USA, for the World Championships of Cheer.
- "Housewife of the Year", Ciarán Cassidy's frank and eye-opening documentary lifts the lid on one of Ireland's most popular, controversial and criticised TV shows.
- The festival will also screen the CPH: DOX 2024 award-winning and powerful documentary *"The Flats"*, directed by Alessandra Celessi, following the residents of a run-down estate in the heart of Belfast."

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Plus...

I would also add to Sophie's list the film that closes out the festival, *"Bring Them Down"* (click for my review) starring Barry Keoghan and Christopher Abbott. I saw this at the LFF a few weeks ago and would rate it.



Barry Keoghan and Christopher Abbott in "Bring Them Down", closing out the festival on Sunday evening. (Source: MUBI).

You can find the listing of the films being shown here: <https://iffuk.com/schedule> which provides the links to buy tickets.

See links to main article [here](#) and links to reviews on photos

FILM REVIEW

Swing Bout ('15'): A Boxing Movie For People Who Hate Boxing Movies.

NOV 18, 2024

Share 0



A One Mann's Movies review of "Swing Bout" (2024) (From the 2024 Irish Film Festival, London).

The 3rd film I saw at the Irish Film Festival last weekend and the first non-documentary. "Swing Bout" is a gripping and brilliantly realised drama that is obviously filmed on a shoestring budget but is extraordinarily clever in getting around those limitations.

Bob the Movie Man Rating:

Rating: ★★★★★

FILM REVIEW

Ransom '79 ('12): Two Extraordinary Stories, Past and Present, Intertwine.

NOV 18, 2024

Share 2



A One Mann's Movies review of "Ransom '79" (2024) (From the 2024 Irish Film Festival, London).

"Ransom '79" was the second film I saw this week at the Irish Film Festival in London. It is another documentary but as the festival's director Michael Hayden commented on introducing the film, "It plays out like a thriller". And he was right.

Bob the Movie Man Rating:

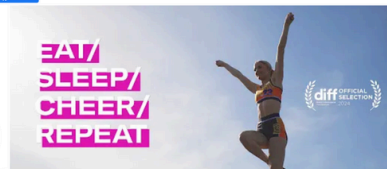
Rating: ★★★★★

FILM REVIEW

EAT / SLEEP / CHEER / REPEAT (12A): Good Craic On The Cheerleading Path To The Championships.

NOV 17, 2024

Share 0



A One Mann's Movies review of "Eat / Sleep / Cheer / Repeat" (2024) (From the 2024 Irish Film Festival, London).

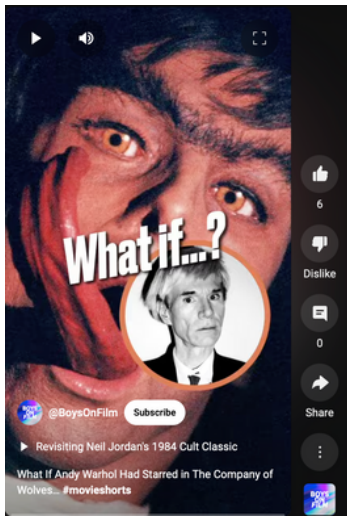
With thanks to the organisers for the press pass, I attended one day of the Irish Film Festival being held in London. The first film I'm seeing is "Eat / Sleep / Cheer / Repeat" – a documentary on the subject of cheerleading. If the director had been a middle-aged bloke, I would have asked in the film's Q&A – [Mubi](https://mubi.com) – "What first attracted you to making a film about a bunch of cute 18-year-old cheerleaders?". But, as it was, the director is the very polite and sensible Tarys Doyle and a great job she has done with this documentary.

Bob the Movie Man Rating:

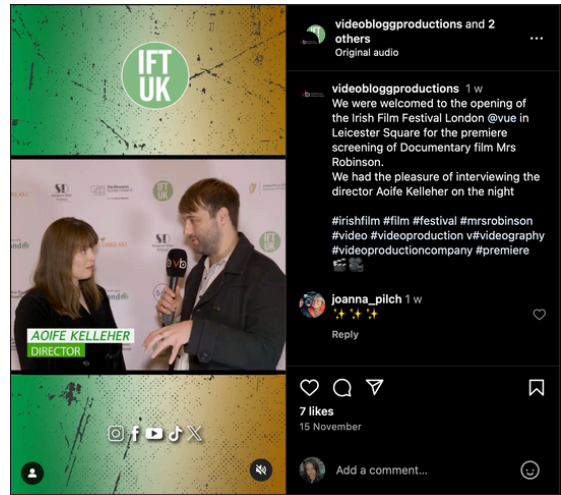
Rating: ★★★★★

Social Media

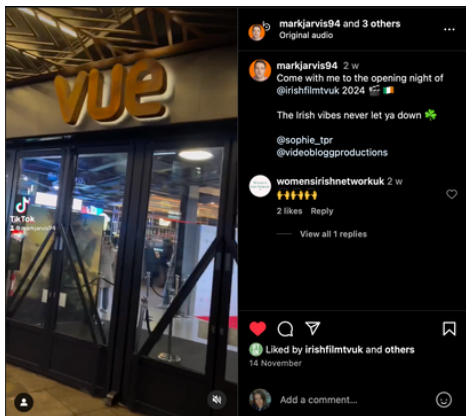
We worked closely with the social media team, supplying assets where possible and requesting videos from filmmakers to help with publicity. We also contacted bloggers, influencers and a range of associations and societies to boost coverage.



Boys On Film - covered Company of Wolves and Bring Them Down on their youtube channel + socials



Mark Jarvis took us with him to the opening night of @irishfilmtvuk 2024 🇮🇪



@Videoblogg Productions were welcomed to the opening of the Irish Film Festival London at Vue in Leicester Square for the premiere screening of Documentary film Mrs Robinson and interviewed the director Aoife Kelleher on the night



Some words from Ransom 79 director Colin Murphy on his film showing @vue_cinema Piccadilly



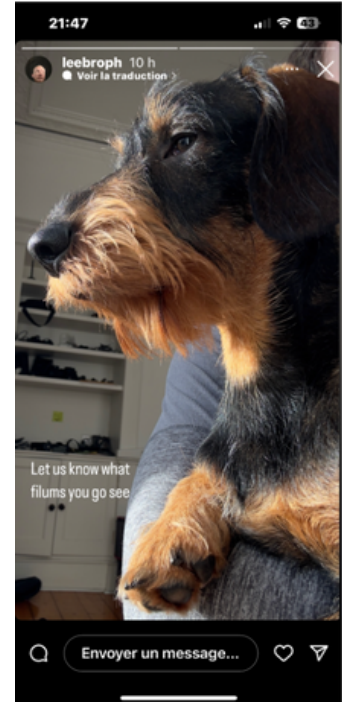
A wee word from @tanya.doyle director of Eat/Sleep/Cheer/Repeat, a perfect film to start your weekend with. Screening @vue_cinema Piccadilly

Social Media



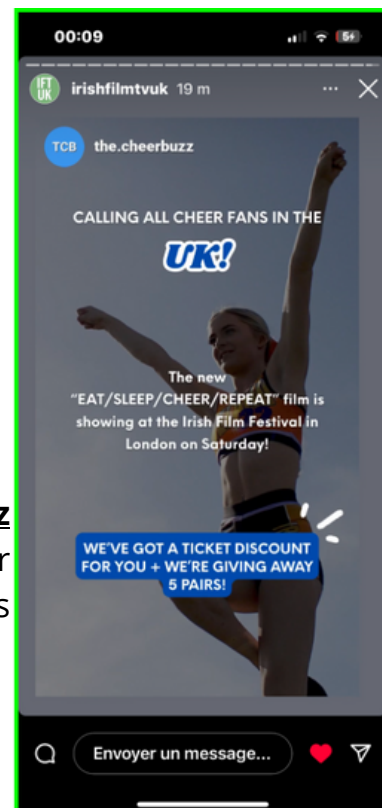
India Ysabel covered the festival on her stories
22k followers

Lee Brophy - Irish comic, actor and writer - advertised on his stories
28.2k followers



City University Film society advertised on stories and put in whatsapp chats

The Cheer Buzz shared it across their social media channels



Listings



Irish Film Festival was listed in the Metro Must See Moments on the 8th of November.
(Cutting unavailable)



Press Release



IRISH FILM FESTIVAL, LONDON SHOWCASES THE BEST OF IRISH CINEMA

*Plus exclusive 40th Anniversary screening of Neil Jordan's *The Company of Wolves**

13th - 17th November, 2024

Schedule & tickets [here](#)

www.iftuk.com | [@iftuk_](https://twitter.com/iftuk_)



Irish Film and Television UK (IFTUK) is delighted to bring its annual festival to the heart of London from November 13 to 17, unveiling a line-up that celebrates the very best in Irish filmmaking. Taking place at Vue West End, Vue Piccadilly and the ICA, Irish Film Festival London will showcase a mix of feature narrative, documentaries and short films shedding fresh light on the country's culturally dynamic past, present and future.

The festival opens with Aoife Kelleher's feature documentary *Mrs Robinson*, an illuminating portrait of Ireland's first female president Mary Robinson. With extraordinary access, the film reveals a singularly influential force whose gift for bridging differences was instrumental in bringing about seismic change in Ireland – a skill she would later bring to her roles as UN High Commissioner and chair of Nelson Mandela's independent group of world leaders, The Elders.

Mrs Robinson pays tribute to a woman who remains actively committed to peace, justice, and human rights to this day.

From the highest echelons of Irish politics to the grit of the land itself, the festival is set to close with Christopher Andrews' visceral feature debut *Bring Them Down*, a thriller set on a farm starring Barry Keoghan, Christopher Abbott and Colm Meaney. Shot in Wicklow, the film stunningly evokes rural Ireland through a nail-biting story of feuding shepherds, marking Andrews as an exciting name to watch.

Festival Director Michael Hayden comments: "The success of films such as *Kneecap*, *That They May Face the Rising Sun* and *Small Things Like These* has meant 2024 has been another bumper year for Irish cinema. Yet beyond the big hitters, there is a wealth of work being made in Ireland that does not get seen beyond its shores. This is the reason the Irish Film Festival London exists. We aim to give audiences in London and the UK access to work they might not get to see otherwise. We celebrate new and emerging filmmakers, acknowledge the contributions of more established ones and embrace the plurality of voices sounding in an evolving society. I am pleased to present a programme that I hope does all these things, and I am excited about hearing what our audiences make of it."

As well as spotlighting new talent, the festival will celebrate the 40th anniversary of Neil Jordan's hugely influential classic *The Company of Wolves*, with an exclusive screening. A cinematic breakthrough on its release in 1984, this unsettling Freudian fantasy, co-written with renowned author Angela Carter, is still lauded for its astonishing use of non-digital practical effects. The screening will be followed by a Q&A with the director Neil Jordan.

Meanwhile, jumping off from its opening film, the festival continues to highlight compelling female perspectives with *Housewife of the Year*. Ciarán Cassidy's frank and eye-opening documentary lifts the lid on one of Ireland's most controversial and criticised shows. Cassidy charts the competition's rise and fall against the backdrop of vast societal shifts in attitudes towards women and marriage.

Tanya Doyle's feel-good sports documentary *EAT / SLEEP / CHEER / REPEAT* focuses on a troupe of male and female cheerleaders from Galway as they chase the dream of reaching Orlando, USA, for the World Championships of Cheer. An altogether darker foray into the world of sports comes with Maurice O'Carroll's white-knuckle boxing drama *Swing Bout*. Starring Ciara Berkeley as an ambitious fighter with her eye on the prize, the story unpacks a tangled web of corruption, scandal, misogyny and accusations of murder.

Alessandra Celesia's remarkable CPH: DOX 2024 winning documentary [The Flats](#) follows the residents of a run-down estate in the heart of Belfast. Depicting characters haunted by past violence, the film offers a compassionate portrait of a community grappling with its troubled past, and dares us to hope.

Marion Quinn hits the festival with her long anticipated second feature [Twig](#), an urban reimagining of the Greek tragedy, Antigone. Set in Dublin's dark, criminal underbelly, the film features Sade Malone in an electrifying performance as the title character, torn between loyalty and love.

Colm Quinn's gripping investigative documentary [Ransom 79](#) relives a shocking moment when, in 1979, Ireland's Department of Agriculture received a demand for £5m by blackmailers threatening to release foot-and-mouth disease into the country's livestock. More than simply true crime, the film is a heartfelt tribute to the extraordinary RTÉ journalist Charlie Bird, who ran with the scoop while suffering from motor-neuron disease.

The festival is also proud to present [Perennial Light](#) by visionary Cork filmmaker Colin Hickey. A meditation on grief and healing, the film combines live sequences, gorgeously photographed in black and white, with delicate animations by Paolo Chianta, confirming Hickey as one of Ireland's most expressive and vital directorial voices today.

Winner of Best New Irish Feature at the Cork International Film Festival in 2023, Paul Mercier's biting satire [Prospect House](#) makes a welcome addition to the line-up. Starring Barry Ward as a hot-headed director who leads an artistic collective in trying to save an 18th century mansion, the film was shot on location in Enniscoe House, Mayo.

In the meantime, Dermot Malone seamlessly weaves between past and present in his striking debut feature [King Frankie](#). Subtly political, the film is propelled by Peter Coonan's superb performance as a grieving taxi driver who once rode the tail of the Celtic Tiger as an ambitious businessman.

Dedicated to showcasing emerging talent, the festival will also include two New Irish Shorts programmes at the ICA, with six films about land and identity showing on November 15th, and seven films about fate and kinship on November 16th. There are also three shorts selected to play before features, including *Our Father*, the directorial debut of celebrated comedian and actor Aisling Bea. Her film will play before [Swing Bout](#) on Saturday 16 November at 18:00.

Alongside the Public Programme there will be an additional collection of Irish Films available on the IFTUK App.

The Irish Film Festival will be followed by the Irish Film & Television UK Awards on Monday, 18 November. This star-studded, red-carpet event will take place at the Embassy of Ireland.

Members of the jury for the Irish Film & Television UK Awards include:

Best feature film: Maeve Murphy (Director *Silent Grace*), Paul FitzSimons (Producer *Verdigris*), Steven Greenfields (IFTUK Board), Chaired by Michael Hayden (Festival Director).

Best feature documentary: Andrew Gallimore (Director *One Night In Millstreet*), Róisín Geraghty (Producer *Sunlight*), Mark Costello (IFTUK Advisory Group) Chaired by Michael Hayden (Festival Director) **Best short film:** Sadhbh Murphy (Network TV Ireland), Kevin Law (IFTUK Advisory Group), Chaired by Natasha Orlando Kappler (Shorts Programmer). Other jurors to be confirmed.

This year's partners are *Screen Ireland, Culture Ireland, Tourism Ireland, 560 Media, The Century Club, The Irish Film Institute and The Government of Ireland Emigration Support Programme.*

About

Formerly known as Irish Film London, Irish Film & Television UK (IFTUK) showcases and celebrates the best of Irish culture through world-class Irish film, television and animation throughout the UK. With festivals and year-round activities. IFTUK ensures Irish filmmakers have a credible platform in the UK, be they established voices or young artists taking their first steps into film production. The organisation also encourages collaboration and supports Irish filmmakers living and working in the UK, as well as holding workshops and seminars throughout the year to inform, educate and engage with the Irish diaspora and those interested in Irish culture.

For more information, interviews and images contact Sophie Toumazis at tpr media consultants sophie@tpr-media.com (+44 7974 428858) or Charlotte Maher charlotte@tpr-media.com

