



# Irish film makers showcased in Wales

**I**rish Film & TV UK (IFTUK) recently held its first regional Masters at Work event in Pontypridd, Wales.

The events give film fans a chance to hear from masters of their craft.

The Pontypridd event partnered with the SHOUT Cymru mental health arts festival at the YMa Arts Centre, the repurposed YMCA building.

SHOUT Cymru is the Welsh version of similar festivals held in London and Liverpool.

Ireland's Consul General in Wales Denise McQuade introduced an evening of award-winning films, masterclasses and conversation about women's voices in film and mental health awareness.

The event started with a screening of Denise Deegan's short film, *The Inn Keeper*.

It was followed by the Welsh premiere of Maeve Murphy's short film *St. Pancras Sunrise*.

It concluded with the Welsh premiere of Patricia Kelly's acclaimed full-length feature, *Verdigris*.

Ms. McQuade told *The Irish World*: "It's fantastic to be here.

"We work on promoting cultural links between Ireland and Wales and we're really pleased to have Irish films here in Pontypridd. It's wonderful.

"We're always looking for new opportunities to bring together Irish and Welsh people, Irish and Welsh filmmakers, Irish and Welsh culture, to build new connections and see what can come of it for the future.

"We've had a shared statement with the Welsh Government since 2021 and one of the focus areas of that is culture, language and heritage.

"We've just launched a new one for the period up to 2030 so we're always looking for new

ways to bring people together and collaborate.

"Wales and Ireland are very close - our history goes back thousands of years.

"We're always encouraging Irish artists, filmmakers, or performers on tour to think about Wales and make sure they make connections here because as well as an audience, there's a real interest in Ireland here in Wales.

"People here are keen to know what's going on in Ireland so there's all sorts of opportunities for working together, for learning from each other.

"The Consulate's always keen to support that.

"Irish film is going through a renaissance - there're so many good Irish films, so many good Irish filmmakers, so many good Irish actors.

"We're enormously proud of that.

"That has come, in part, from the significant investment that the (Irish government) has put into film.

"The Consulate is always really keen to support and promote Irish film here in Wales."

Patricia Kelly's debut film *Verdigris* is about mental health and coercive control as told through the unlikely friendship between a middle-aged woman and a teenage sex worker.

Patricia told *The Irish World*: "It's brilliant to have our Welsh premiere here.

"There's a lot of issues in the film that relate to mental health and it's crucial we address this and look at all the problems people have, how to help people, and what help is out there.

"We had a lovely screening and interesting questions from the audience afterwards. The film really resonated.

"Not to sound too highfalutin' but this is why we make art, to connect with people, to

talk about things that are not being addressed; to look at our shared humanity and the ways our own experience can touch somebody else.

"That has been one of the most unexpected and gratifying results of the film *Verdigris* being on the festival scene over the last 18 months.

"In our Q&A a young woman talked about getting out of a coercively controlling relationship.

"Other people have talked to me about different personal experiences they've had that are related to the themes of the film.

"People have said that it's a film that has really stayed with them."

*St Pancras Sunrise* is based on the real-life occupation of Holy Cross Church in King's Cross in 1982.

Maeve Murphy told *The Irish World*:

"It was the Welsh premiere, so it felt special like a premiere always does and it was wonderful to see it with the other two films.

"They blended well; they were complementary and really great Irish humanist/women's drama saying beautiful things in a really simple, effective way."

"All women deserve to be safe; all life deserves to be safe."

Denise Deegan said of her film *The Innkeeper*: "It was very important for me to write this because of something that happened in Dublin in relation to a homeless person that infuriated me.

"They were mistreated. If I had been a lawyer, I would have taken a pro bono case, but I am not so this story arrived to me and I wrote it and added a lot of humour because it's a great way to get a message across - distract people, make them laugh, make them really care about the character - and then drop a bomb at the end."