



LÁ FHÉILE BRÍDE

Ag Ceiliúradh Cruthaitheachta na mBan

ST BRIGID'S DAY

Celebrating the Creativity of Women

FESTIVAL 2019

31st January to 4th February

Foreword by Ambassador Adrian O'Neill



In 2018 we held our first St Brigid's Day event at the Embassy to celebrate the creativity of women. It brought together many extraordinary women to talk about their experiences and demonstrate their talent. We were honoured that President Higgins and Sabina Higgins attended the event.

I am delighted that this year the Embassy is working with some of our Irish community partners in London on a full programme of events over several days to celebrate the pioneering and creative role of women in different aspects of life – inspired by the sense of renewal and creativity associated with St Brigid.

We will again have an Embassy event on 1st February, showcasing women who are making their mark in diverse fields. But there will also be events from our partners around St Brigid's Day, as detailed here. I hope this expanded programme will allow a wide variety of people to engage with and enjoy this celebration.

#StBrigidsDay

The Story of Brigid

The legend of the goddess Brigid begins in the mythology of pre-Christian Ireland, when she was known as the daughter of the chief of the gods, the Dagda. Brigid was a goddess in her own right and associated with healers, poets, smiths, childbirth and inspiration.

As Christianity spread through Ireland, the Celtic goddess Brigid shared her name with St Brigid of Kildare who was reputed to have mystical powers and performed miracles, including healing the sick. Her feast day on the 1st February - originally a pagan festival called Imbolc - marked the beginning of spring. Each Brigid represents a strong and powerful femininity, which we celebrate each year at the start of spring.

London St Brigid's Day Festival 2019

Thursday 31 January

ICC Hammersmith	6.30 – 8.30pm	ICC in collaboration with Barbara Stanley launches Old Voices, New Perceptions: Exhibitions of Irish Female Artists. Features the works of painters Margaret Egan, Deirdre Walsh, Hetty Lawlor, Julie Cusack, and sculptors Orla de Bri and Ana Duncan.
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Friday 1 February

London Irish Centre	10am - 4pm	Lunch and cross-generational events – bread making, singing circles and St Brigid's cross making.
12 Star Gallery, European Commission	3 – 6pm	Conclusion of Hamilton Gallery curated exhibition of paintings by Irish artists inspired by 'St Brigid's Day 1989'; a poem by the late Leland Bardwell. Poetry reading by Olwen Fouere, music by Caoimhe Kearins.
ICC Hammersmith	7.30 – 10pm	Troubles, Tragedy and Trauma - The latest Hammersmith Irish Cultural Centre annual conference on politics and society in Northern Ireland since the Good Friday Agreement has as its theme "Women in Northern Ireland Politics". Chaired by former President of Ireland Mary McAleese Participants: Margaret Ritchie, Michelle Gildernew MP, Avila Kilmurray, Claire Sugden and Sorcha Eastwood.
Embassy	6 – 10pm	St Brigid's Day event celebrating the creativity and talent of Irish women who are making their mark in diverse fields such as music, comedy, poetry, literature, theatre, business and entrepreneurship, and politics.

Saturday 2 February

London Irish Centre	5pm – 7.30pm	An all-female trad session, welcoming all musicians, led by Eimear McGeown & Friends.
London Irish Centre	7.30pm	St Brigid's Day Celebration - Intimate performances by Powerful Irish Women. A showcase hosted by Angela Scanlon with music and spoken word artists.
ICC Hammersmith	7pm - 10pm	Gas Gaelic Girls - Comedy Night. A hilarious night of Irish female stand-up comics hosted by Anna Clifford.

Sunday 3 February

Regent Street Cinema	3.45pm	Irish Women in Film & TV Panel discussion
Regent Street Cinema	6pm	UK Premiere of <i>Katie</i> - the much-anticipated film about the greatest female boxer of all time and incredible role-model Katie Taylor.

Monday 4 February

Selfridges & Co	6.30pm	Bord Bia sponsored St Brigid's supper with an Irish chef and Irish produce.
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Ag Ceiliúradh Cruthaitheachta na mBan | Celebrating the Creativity of Women



St Brigid's Day at the Embassy of Ireland

17 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7HR
Friday 1st February 6-10pm

Building on the success of last year's inaugural event, this year we will again welcome guests to the Embassy for an evening of celebration of the enormous talent and creativity of Irish women.

We will be hosting a variety of talks, performances and panel discussions on the evening of 1st February to showcase trailblazing Irish women who are making their mark in diverse fields such as music, comedy, poetry, literature, theatre, business and entrepreneurship, and politics.

A dazzling array of talent will be on display in various spaces throughout our historic building with six sessions on the following themes:

- Modern Literature
- Business & Entrepreneurship
- An Exploration of Seamus Heaney's 'Hard-Pressed Brigid' with Marie & Catherine Heaney
- The Legend of Grace O'Malley with Anne Chambers and Joan Mulloy
- Theatre
- 2019: Challenges & Change

We are delighted that Áine Lawlor, Róisín Ingle, Amy Huberman, Denise Gough, Liz Nugent, Senator Lynn Ruane, Belinda McKeon and Marie and Catherine Heaney will be joining us, with many more outstanding women still to be announced.

St Brigid's Day wouldn't be complete without music, and we are thrilled that Loah, Daire Halpin and Tara O'Grady will be performing.

Lá Fhéile Bhríde celebrates the arrival of longer, brighter days, so it's an appropriate time to say goodbye to winter and celebrate the start of spring. For further information visit our website: www.dfa.ie/st-brigids-day-London

Irish Cultural Centre, Hammersmith

**Old Voices, New Perspectives Art Exhibition
Launch on Thursday 31st January, 6.30pm**

5 Black's Road, Hammersmith, London W6 9DT

In celebration of women's creativity on the occasion of St Brigid's Day, the Irish Cultural Centre in collaboration with the Barbara Stanley Gallery launches an exhibition of art works by female Irish artists,

The exhibition, encompassing painting and sculpture, will feature works by emerging and established artists including Margaret Egan, Deirdre Walsh, Orla de Brí, Hetty Lawlor, Julie Cusack and Ana Duncan.

The exhibition will also feature female artists from the community local to the Irish Cultural Centre in Hammersmith.

**Admission to the launch event
is free but by ticket only.**

Numbers are limited so reserve
early: www.irishculturalcentre.co.uk/whats-on

Admission to the exhibition at all
other times is free.

Dates of exhibition:

1st February - 29th March

Opening Times:

1st - 3rd February 10am - 5pm
and then daily Monday - Friday
4th February to 29th March
9am to 5.30pm

London Irish Centre

London Irish Centre are marking St Brigid's 2019 with a string of events celebrating Irish Women's Creativity on the 1st & 2nd February

50-52 Camden Square, London NW1 9XB

Friday 1st February | 10-4pm

Day Centre

Our Day Centre will be opening its doors to run a string of workshops, including St Brigid's cross making, Irish bread baking, singing circles, as well as lunch.

Saturday 2nd February | 5pm | Free

All-female Trad Session

On Saturday we will welcome all musicians for a free all-female trad session on Saturday, led by the highly talented flautist Eimear McGeown and friends.

Saturday 2nd February | 7.30pm | £15

St Brigid's Day Celebration - Intimate performances by powerful Irish women

On Saturday night we will be showcasing some of Ireland's greatest female talent for a very special evening, hosted by Angela Scanlon, including spoken word and music.

For further information, please visit www.londonirishcentre.org

Hamilton Gallery

Contemporary Exhibition - 90 Irish Women Artists
22nd January - 1st February

12 Star Gallery, Europe House, 32 Smith Square,
Westminster, London SW1P 3EU

The iconic early Christian symbol St Brigid has been chosen to serve as a catalyst for 90 invited Irish women artists to create an original painting for this exhibition.

Folk custom, the four seasons, women's lives and crafts, poetry, all intersect at the 1st of February feast-day of St Brigid in Ireland. What is celebrated is the rebirth of the living earth; it was usual in some places to turn a sod of earth with the spade, the work of cultivation beginning again. Many customs, especially around food and cattle, are connected with the day, but the best known was the making of St Brigid's crosses out of straw or rushes.

Women's political journey in the last century of Irish history makes it right to choose the day for special celebration of Irish women artists. The works of art are further held in focus by their relation to the poem "St Brigid's Day 1989" by Leland Bardwell, which positions the poet as observer, half outside the culture that she watches.

The exhibition is a dynamic and vibrant contemporary response, to the import and changing cultural significance of powerful traditional female symbolism not just in Ireland, but in all contemporary societies.

Organised by Hamilton Gallery, Sligo, Ireland, with the support of the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade and the Irish Embassy to the United Kingdom.

Visit www.hamiltongallery.ie for further information.

Irish Cultural Centre, Hammersmith

Troubles, Tragedy and Trauma: Conference
Friday February 1st 7.30pm

5 Black's Road, Hammersmith, London W6 9DT

The latest Hammersmith Irish Cultural Centre annual conference on politics and society in Northern Ireland since the Good Friday Agreement has as its theme "Women in Northern Ireland Politics". The conference will explore the personal and political journeys of leading female political figures from Northern Ireland.

For most of its existence, politics in Northern Ireland was almost exclusively male dominated. However, since the Good Friday Agreement there has been a substantial increase in the number and influence of women politicians to the extent that the leaders of three major political parties are female.

- **Former President of Ireland, Mary McAleese** in Chair
- **Sorcha Eastwood**, Alliance Party candidate
- **Michelle Gildernew MP**, Sinn Féin, former Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Northern Ireland Executive
- **Avila Kilmurray**, Founding member, Women's Coalition
- **Margaret Ritchie**, former Leader, SDLP
- **Claire Sugden**, Independent Unionist MLA, former Minister for Justice in the NI Executive

Saturday 2nd February | 7pm | £8

Gas Gaelic Girls – All Female Comedy Night

A unique all-female line up of hilarious comedians, hosted by the boisterous and hysterically funny Irish comic Anna Clifford.

Irish Film London

Regent Street Cinema, 307 Regent Street,
London, W1B 2HW

Mother and baby Irish film screenings

The St Brigid's Day festivities kick off with a city-wide collaboration, drawing various cinemas together to mark the week leading up to February 1st, by scheduling Irish films during their mother and baby screenings.

These sessions are designed for mothers with babies, who are made to feel comfortable to breastfeed or to soothe their babies as necessary. Please check www.irishfilmlondon.com for participating cinemas' details.

Sunday 3rd February | 3.45pm

Irish Women in Film & TV Panel discussion

Bringing together the monumental forces of the UK & Ireland's two major networks for women in Film & Television, IFL will celebrate some of Ireland's most successful female professionals both behind and in front of the camera.

Join them at their cinematic home, Regent Street Cinema, for a Sunday afternoon fireside chat with a fascinating and fabulous panel of women from both networks, including Dr. Susan Liddy and Anne Morrison and more guests to be announced. The discussion will be followed by a networking reception.

Sunday 3rd February | 6.00pm

UK Premiere of *Katie*

Finally, sit back and enjoy the UK Premiere screening of the much-anticipated film about the greatest female boxer of all time and incredible role-model Katie Taylor. The screening will be accompanied by a Q&A with the film's director Ross Whitaker.

Bord Bia

The Irish Food Board hosts

Creativity of Women dinner with Anna Haugh

Monday 4th February, 18:30 | £60

**The Corner Restaurant and Champagne Bar, Selfridges,
400 Oxford Street, London, W1A 1AB**

Bord Bia, the Irish Food Board, is delighted to host an evening showcasing the best of Irish food with outstanding chef Anna Haugh at the helm. Darina Allen, Ireland's most loved cook and author, will join on the evening as the Guest of Honour.

Dublin chef Anna Haugh has been working in London for 10 years with celebrated chefs Philip Howard at The Square and Shane Osborne at Pied a Terre before opening London House for Gordon Ramsay. Anna's most recent role was executive chef in the iconic Soho restaurant Bob Bob Ricard.

Ahead of the opening of her new restaurant, Myrtle, in Spring 2019, Anna will be creating a menu that is inspired by Ireland and using produce created by women. This exclusive dinner will be a celebration of Irish women in food and drink, highlighting the creativity and innovation in this industry from the producers through to the chefs.

Space at this event is limited, and tickets will be allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis at www.eventbrite.co.uk

For more information please contact Roisin Keane at roisin.keane@bordbia.ie, or 020 7307 3555



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha
agus Trádála
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Culture Ireland
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