



# ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATION & AWARDS

6pm (Eastern) Friday, April 23 2021  
**VIRTUAL**



**Culture Ireland**  
Cultúr Éireann

**Aer Lingus** 



Ancient Order of  
**HIBERNIANS**  
Irish • Catholic • American



**Foras na Gaeilge**



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North America

# ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATION & AWARDS



## An Arts And Culture First

**By Ray O'Hanlon**

Irish America's Aos Dána - artists and actors, poets and performers, step-dancers and scribes - will be feted this Friday April 23 at the inaugural Irish Echo Arts & Culture Awards.

The virtual event (from 6 p.m. Eastern) will pay homage to forty honorees who used Irish arts and culture to keep spirits high during the first long year of the pandemic. There will be a special shout out for literary luminaries, novelist Alice McDermott from Washington, D.C., and poet Thomas Lynch from Michigan.

The recipients of the Irish Arts & Culture Medal represent a veritable who's-who of Irish American endeavor including singer Ken O'Malley of Los Angeles who has staged a free virtual concert every Sunday for the past year; Megan Derrig, occupational physiotherapist from Chicago who uses Irish music to empower older people; Tony Reilly of Portland, Maine, founder of the American Irish Repertory Ensemble, whose recovery from a horrific road crash inspired a one-man play; Elizabeth Stack of Albany, NY, who led the move of the Irish American Heritage Museum during the worst of the pandemic and ensured activities continued unabated over the past year.

Another honoree will be the incomparable

Malachy McCourt, who will be presented with the Seanchaí Award.

Guest speaker at the event will be Democratic Congressman Conor Lamb from Pittsburgh, a tireless advocate for all things Irish American. Tickets (\$9) for the Arts & Culture awards can be obtained via our website at [www.irishecho.com](http://www.irishecho.com) where you can also vote for your Arts Hero of the Pandemic. Voting closes at noon on Friday, April 23.

Sponsors of the event, which will be coordinated from studios in Ireland, include Foras na Gaeilge, Ancient Order of Hibernians, Irish American Partnership, Culture Ireland, Aer Lingus, and the NI Bureau. Special awards from Foras na Gaeilge, for the person or group which did the most to promote the Irish language during lockdown, and from the AOH for the best community-orientated nominee, will also be presented.

Said Irish Echo Publisher Máirtín Ó Muilleoir: "Over the past year, our artists across the U.S. stood between the Irish American community and the Covid-19 chasm.

"Their determination and exuberance in these most testing of times pulled the community through. This Arts & Culture celebration allows all of Irish American to acknowledge their tireless efforts and to thank them for keeping spirits high."

The awards will be highlighted by a special supplement that will appear in next week's print issue of the Echo out on Wednesday, April 28. The supplement will also be posted live at [www.irishecho.com](http://www.irishecho.com) this Friday, April 23, in conjunction with the online event.



Novelist Alice McDermott.

*We congratulate all our Award Winners*

**Alex Boatright**

**Helen O'Leary**

**Kyle Darcy**

**Barry Stapleton**

**Bill Reilly & Tami Ellen McLaughlin**

**Brian O'Donovan**

**Caitlin Warbelow & Chris Ranney**

**Carson Elrod**

**Catriona Weafer**

**Christina Schaudel**

**Christopher Cooke**

**Ciaran O'Reilly & Charlotte Moore**

**Darraha Carr**

**Dawn O'Doherty & The Aisling Irish**

**Center Ceili Band and Ballad group**

**Diane V. Byrnes**

**Eamonn Wall**

**Elisa Jensen**

**Elizabeth Stack**

**Elizabeth O'Reilly**

**Freia Titland**

**Hilary Beirne**

**Jean Haney**

**John Nolan & Sean McMenamin**

**Ken O'Malley**

**Ken Fleming**

**Marcus Robinson**

**Maria Deasy**

**Mary kay Heneghan**

**Mary Sue Connolly**

**Maura Mulligan**

**Maureen Kennedy**

**Megan Derrig**

**Natalie Nugent & Cormac O'Se**

**Niall O'Leary**

**Patrick Redmond**

**Rodney Dickson**

**Soraya Hanzus and The New York**

**Studio of Irish Step Dance**

**Tim Martin**

**Tony Reilly**

**Turlough McConnell**

**Malachy McCourt**

**Thomas Lynch**

**Alice McDermott**

**Morgan Bullock**





Just a note to say  
**THANK YOU**



**Aisling Irish Community Center,  
Teachers Dawn Doherty & Frankie McCormick,**  
*for this wonderful opportunity to be part of  
something special in the community.*



**Thank you to  
our Sponsors,  
James Trading Group  
& The Tara Circle**



**From the families and  
all the members of the  
AISLING IRISH COMMUNITY CENTER  
CEILI BAND & BALLAD GROUP**



# ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATION & AWARDS

## CAITLIN WARBELOW

**Profession:** Violinist, fiddler, and entrepreneur. In non-Covid times, I'm the violinist/fiddler for the Tony Award-winning Broadway show "Come from Away". In March 2020, my partner Chris Ranney and I founded Tune Supply (<https://tune.supply>) to keep the traditional music community vibrant, supported, and connected, and to keep traditional musicians working, during the pandemic.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** While my career used to be primarily focused on my own performances in various venues, since the pandemic started it has been increasingly focused on using what resources I have to keep the trad music community going as a whole. This has involved a lot more logistical and managerial work, and a lot less playing, unfortunately!! But through it all, I've managed to keep leading virtual sessions every week (66 so far), as well as



performing on virtual concerts and teaching group and private classes. But what I'm most proud of is the work that Tune Supply has done to help others continue to practice their art. It's been near impossible for performing artists and session musicians (whether they are

professional or not!) to continue doing what they do (and paying the bills) when all venues are closed, and pubs aren't holding sessions. My creative energy during the pandemic has shifted away from personal performance, and towards building platforms, networks, and



opportunities so that we all can continue to play and enjoy music while physically apart.

Originally from Alaska, Caitlin now serves as the violinist/fiddler in the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical "Come From Away". An All-Ireland winner and New England Fiddle Champion who holds degrees from Columbia University (M.S., Urban Planning) and Boston University (B.A., Anthropology and B.Mus., Violin Performance), Caitlin's expertise lies not only in music, but also business and activism. Caitlin is on the faculty at the Irish Arts Center and the Swannanoa Gathering and maintains a private teaching studio. Caitlin performs as a symphony soloist and with numerous ensembles including Warbelow Range. With Chris Ranney, Caitlin is a co-founder of Tune Supply.



## ALEX BOATRIGHT

**Profession:** Performing artist, teacher, and Artistic Director of the Baltimore-Washington Academy of Irish Culture.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** I have been teaching groups, private lessons, and festivals all via zoom until recently when we could do door to door mini concerts outside with the BWAIC students.

I founded the nonprofit school (BWAIC) with Mitch Fanning during the pandemic to provide the local kids with Irish language, dance, and music classes in a central space and to provide them with instruments to try for free via coordinating an instrument library for them.

Most of my quarantine work has been facilitating learning despite the circumstances online- whether adults or kids, groups or solo.

Washington DC based concertina and harp player, Alex Boatright, is the Artistic Director of the Baltimore-Washington Academy of Irish Culture. BWAIC is a non-profit school dedicated to creating equitable access for all children and teens to Irish music and cultural classes on all traditional instruments no matter their cultural, racial, or economic background.

Alex has been active in creating spaces for the FairPié movement in the USA and facilitating a lens that applies directly to benefiting marginalized US students and teachers.



## KYLE DARCY

**Profession:** Profession: Producer of vivid colorful pictures inside people's minds using only black ink on white paper.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** The pandemic prevented the release of UNDER THE IMPRESSION from being promoted with book signings and public library events. Fortunately, however, supporters of literature and the arts, such as the IRISH ECHO have done an awesome job elevating the KYLE DARCY brand. Receiving this award is truly humbling, because the worthiest recipients are the hard-working staff of the IRISH ECHO.

Kyle Darcy was born and raised in Belfast, Northern Ireland, but has called Boston, Massachusetts home for over thirty years. His 2010 debut novel, UNDER CURRENT CONDITIONS, made the BOSTON GLOBE BESTSELLERS LIST and created a loyal fan base with an appetite for more. Darcy's responded in June of 2020 with the prequel, UNDER THE IMPRESSION. Darcy's 2020 novel, UNDER THE IMPRESSION, begins in the waning days of World War II, as a group of Nazi elite escapes to South America. The gripping and fast paced narrative weaves through decades and continents into the worlds of drug cartels, terror organizations and intelligence communities. The story is a prequel to Darcy's debut novel, UNDER CURRENT CONDITIONS, which made the BOSTON GLOBE BESTSELLERS LIST.



## HELEN O' LEARY

**Profession:** Artist and Professor of Art PSU

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** I am currently in central PA, where I teach and sometimes live, having moved here from Jersey City last March. I have spent Covid living in my barn, and making pigments and dyes from plants within my immediate environment. I grew an extensive dye garden and am exploring sustainable materials for my practice. I have used the lockdown to immerse myself into the work, and to explore rural PA for content. Lots of exhibitions have been cancelled, my gallery in NY closed permanently, but I am working towards shows in NY this summer, solo at Patricia Sweetow in San Francisco in the fall, and Limerick City Gallery in 2022. I am very much looking forward to being able to travel home once all of this is behind us.

Helen O'Leary was born in Wexford she attended NCAD and earned a BFA and MFA at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, IL. She has been honored with a Civitella Ranieri Fellowship, The Rome Prize, American Academy in Rome, Hennessy Purchase Award, IMMA, Dublin, John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship; two Pollock-Krasner awards; the Joan Mitchell Award for painting and sculpture; Scholars medal Penn State University, Culturel Irlandaise fellowship, France; the Sam and Adele Golden fellowship, NY; ME; and Yaddo, NY. Mac Dowell, NY, Bogliasco, IT. She lives in State College, PA, Jersey City, NJ and Leitrim, Ireland.





# Ancient Order of **HIBERNIANS** Irish • Catholic • American



Founded in 1836 with membership in all 50 states, the Ancient Order of Hibernians is the largest Irish Organization in the United States, and the oldest and largest Irish-Catholic Organization in the United States.

## **Congratulations to our Arts and Culture Awardees!**

**Sue and  
Christopher Cooke**

**True Pandemic  
Heroes**

**Kept Irish Music  
alive online and live  
in North Carolina**

**Kept the Ancient  
Order of Hibernians  
in America, Inc. Live  
online and on target**



Every Sunday since lock down began, Chris Cooke hosted a weekly virtual Irish session. This includes local musicians as well as several regular guests that join us from Cape Cod, Seattle, South Carolina, Washington and California. Musicians Tommy Kegan, Charlie Muse, Alan Baker, Paul Davis and others have been of great help with the session and also allowed me to post videos of them playing sets of tunes which have been helpful to musicians that are new to Irish music.

His live performances included: his band playing with the local Irish Dance school for a driveway show for a 90th birthday party this summer, performed live/streamed concert at ball field for Irish Fest in the Forest, played for Thanksgiving Turkey Drive at D's Bottleshop, St. Patrick's performance at Yacht Club beverage house and St. Patrick's Day performance at Retirement Community, I will be performing for the Irish Arts and Culture Day in High Point, NC.

On top of this, Chris used his computer talents to assure a successful National Convention for the Ancient Order of Hibernians in American, one of the first major online events of the pandemic. Since then, he has managed over 20 webinars including Book Reviews, Irish American Heritage Month events, Freedom for all Ireland events and more.

Congratulations Christopher Cooke, AOH National Officer, AOH NC State President, and Friend of All.

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**"Ireland Unfree Shall Never be at Peace"**



# ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATION & AWARDS

## JEAN HANEY

**Profession:** Co-founder of Visual Integrity, a software company specialized in PDF and graphics technologies.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?**

For the Irish, St. Patrick's Day is the most anticipated celebration of the year. In 2020, it was the day that the world went dark. Parades were canceled, doors shut and people isolated in their homes. With all our plans for in-person events scrubbed, the Maine Irish Heritage Center needed a plan to weather the pandemic while staying connected to our community. As "the hub for all things Irish in Maine", we needed new ways to keep our Irish culture alive in Maine. We also needed to replace our primary fundraiser – the Claddagh Award, an in-person award banquet, with something equally effective. Our answer - a Livestream variety show – "The Best of All Things Irish in Maine 2020" which aired 11/22/2020. It was a hit with our community but more importantly, it extended our reach dramatically while also exceeding our fundraising expectations. Since then, we have produced a fun 2021 St. Patrick's Day Parade with the Irish American Club of Maine as well as a segment for the Irish embassy's "Shades of Green" St. Patrick's Day program. Personally, this has been exciting for me because I am able to combine my graphics and technology skills with my passion for Irish culture while working with an amazing team of

volunteers. It's been deeply satisfying to see how well-received our digital offerings have been and I expect that they have a regular spot in our events calendar even after all pandemic restrictions are happily lifted.

Before starting Visual Integrity, Jean spent 10 years working in technology companies driving product strategy, developing strategic business alliances, and marketing all types of software solutions. While living in Amsterdam during the '90s, she co-founded Visual Integrity which has become a leader in PDF conversion and creation solutions for developers. Today, living in Maine, she still actively manages the company, while also devoting volunteer time to help the Maine Irish Heritage Center navigate the pandemic through virtual programming, web-based membership and donor management, and collaboration tools so the team can work successfully from home.



## MEGAN DERRIG

**Profession:** I am a licensed and registered occupational therapist. Currently, I work in an assisted living facility where I empower older adults by motivating them to achieve what they once perceived impossible. As an occupational therapist, I help people engage in daily activities that are meaningful to them so that they can lead meaningful and purposeful lives. These activities can range from teaching someone how to get dressed, to improving their fine motor skills so that they could start knitting again.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?**

I routinely use music as a way to connect with my clients and elicit positivity in such discouraging times. As you may imagine working closely with a vulnerable population, the facility has not allowed any visitors since the pandemic's beginning back in March of last year. This isolation, while extremely important to keep residents safe, has provided little to no opportunities to connect with the outside world.

Several of my clients are of Irish descent and they have beautiful landscape pictures of Ireland all around their room. In addition, many of the clients have some form of cognitive deficit or dementia. Frequently I would ask questions surrounding their upbringing, or trips to Ireland to foster a therapeutic relationship. However, oftentimes their responses to my questions were limited as they simply could not remember and did not have their loved ones around to remind them. For instance, one day I was working with a client and she had mentioned her family being from County Mayo and I immediately reached down for my phone and began playing the song Green and Red of Mayo by the Saw Doctors. Once the music began playing, her eyes lit up and I watched her travel back in time to life before the coronavirus. While she did not remember the lyrics to the song, the hope, and joy that the song elicited truly evolved into the backbone of my treatment interventions. Her daughter was incredibly thankful for my ability to give her mother the opportunity to connect back to her cultural heritage and reminisce on old memories

from her years living in Ireland. In these unprecedented times, many of my clients have struggled to find meaning and purpose throughout their daily routine. Irish music has been an essential motivator as it elicits positive memories, reduces stress, and allows me the opportunity to connect my clients to the outside world.

Megan Derrig is a first-generation Irish American who grew up in Chicago, Illinois. Her father and all four of her grandparents were born and raised in Ireland. Megan graduated with a Master's degree in occupational therapy from Xavier University in 2019. Her passion for occupational therapy stems from her innate desire to help others achieve their goals and live meaningful lives. Currently, Megan works with the older adult population in an outpatient rehabilitation setting. She is extremely grateful for her Irish heritage as it has frequently helped her foster therapeutic relationships with many of her clients.



## CHRISTOPHER COOKE

**Profession:** I am a Health IT professional with experience working with numerous Electronic Medical Record Systems (EMRs) and Practice Management Systems. I currently work as an Automation Architect for a software company specializing in behavioral and mental health.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?**

Since the first week of the pandemic, I have run a weekly Virtual Irish Session over Zoom. We initially tested some programs like JamKazam to try and play together in real-time. Unfortunately, we found that we could not reliably get a connection with a low enough delay for the group to play together so we have stuck with using Zoom with each person taking their turn leading a song or set of tunes while everyone else follows along on mute. While we all miss being able to hear the whole group play together this format actually works pretty well with a Session since you normally have a leader for each tune that everyone else is following.

I also started a YouTube channel NClrish to post videos of songs and tunes played by me and other local musicians and to help promote Irish Culture and History in North Carolina where I live.

Ewes Tree, the Irish Folk Band I play in, has meet



regularly to practice. The four of us in the band are all members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) as well as the Knights of Columbus. We are very blest to have an outdoor pavilion available to us at our Knights of

Columbus Hall which has allowed us to safely meet in person to play music together. Thanks to the rollout of the vaccine, we were recently able to play for a retirement community on St. Patrick's Day which just happened to fall on the 2-week mark from their second vaccine shots. Another highlight for us this year was getting together with the Irish Dancers from Triggles Academy of Irish Dance to put on a driveway concert for a 90th Birthday Party.

I've been able to participate in some online streamed events including the Irish Fest in the Forest and the High Point Irish Arts and Culture Day concert. I also gave technical assistance for the Home for Christmas Virtual Concert put on by the Hudson Valley Irish Fest.

Over the last year I have been learning to play the highland bagpipes. With help from Joe Brady of Wake and District Pipes and Drums we are in the process of starting a new Pipe Band in Wake Forest, NC called an Gorta Mor Memorial Pipes and Drums.

Christopher Cooke is an Irish Musician originally from Fishkill, NY who now lives in Wake Forest, NC. He is a singer and multi-instrumentalist and plays with Ewes Tree Irish Band and is a member of the An Gorta Mor Memorial Pipes and Drums.

He is a proud member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) and is currently the AOH State President for North Carolina and serves on the AOH National Board as the Digital Coordinator.





Is í ár dteanga féin í.  
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# ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATION & AWARDS

## CHRISTINA SCHAUDEL

**Profession:** Academic Advisor for the Arts and Humanities. Adjunct Professor with the Performing Arts Department

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?**

Christina is a proud member (and alumni) of the SUNY Rockland Community College faculty and administrative staff. She graduated with her MFA in Acting from the Actors Studio Drama School at Pace University and will be starting her Doctoral Studies in Educational Leadership in June. She is an ever-constant advocate for the arts in education and continues to speak about the importance that the arts have in our everyday lives. She is first generation Irish-American, as her mother Mary hails from Co. Kerry, Ireland and serves as a key member of the Irish Heritage Committee at RCC.



## CIARAN O'REILLY

**Profession:** Theatre Producer/Director/Actor

Ciaran O'Reilly was born in Virginia, Co. Cavan. He co-founded The Irish Repertory Theatre, a New York institution serving 50,000 people annually, where he works as Producing Director actor and director. He has produced nearly 200 plays and musicals.

Ciaran has been honored with several prestigious theatrical awards including Drama Desk, Drama League, and the Eugene O'Neill Lifetime Achievement Award. President Michael D Higgins presented him with the Presidential Distinguished Service Award in 2019. An avid motorcyclist, he has made solo trips around the world and from the Arctic Ocean to Tierra Del Fuego in South America.

## HILARY BEIRNE

**Profession:** Chief Administrator, New York City's St Patrick's Day Parade

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** It has been difficult to operate what is considered the largest cultural Parade in the world during the pandemic. Because of the pandemic, we dramatically increased our use of social media. We ensured the tradition of the Irish marching on the streets of New York City every year since 1762 (259 years) remained intact. This was done by organizing two symbolic parades in 2020 and again in 2021 with members of the parade board, parade committee, essential workers, first responders, and the 69th Regiment.

In 2021, due to NY State covid-19 health guidelines which resulted in the inability to host any large-scale event, we produced not only the symbolic parade on March 17th honoring First Responders & Essential Workers, we also produced a virtual parade, a virtual journal, hosted a one-hour show, launched a social media St. Patrick's Day greeting campaign, and live-streamed the symbolic parade. All of these events were hosted on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and our newly redesigned website. The live-streamed symbolic parade alone was viewed by 198,000 with approx.



50% of the comments on March 17th coming from Ireland. In January, the Parade produced a one-hour TV show with the Catholic Faith network featuring the 2021 honorees which were broadcasted on local TV channels multiple times in March, in the lead-up to the parade in the New York area. All in, we amass a worldwide audience of over 500,000 across all media platforms. Because of the inability to host a large-scale parade, we diverted our efforts towards increased engagement of technology and social media, this was necessary in order to engage our traditional audience, but also it was done to increase the parade's profile and engagement with the younger generation. Engaging the younger generation at this level (technology wise) will ensure the future of the Parade for many years to come.

Hilary Beirne hails from Boyle, Co Roscommon. As the Chief Administrator of the Parade, he ensures the operations of the world's largest and oldest cultural Parade run smoothly every March 17th. Under his direction, the Parade has increased its engagement of technology and social media while maintaining the traditions of the Parade stretching back 259 years. With a team of dedicated volunteers, he coordinates the marching sequence of the parade, parade events and is responsible for press and social media announcements, and all Parade's publications. Mr. Beirne is also the Chairman of the St Patrick's Day Foundation, NYC.

## DARRAH CARR

**Profession:** Artistic Director of Darrah Carr Dance and Assistant Professor in the Conservatory of Dance at Purchase College, SUNY.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** Darrah Carr Dance has persevered in creatively and successfully pivoting their public performances, Arts in Education workshops, and Community Outreach programs to the online environment during the pandemic.

While maintaining a focus on their signature style of ModERIN – a unique blend of traditional Irish step and contemporary modern dance - the company also explored new themes of urban and rural environments given that their dancers were quarantined in many different places throughout New York City and the tri-state area.

Darrah Carr Dance shared pandemic projects widely on both national and

international virtual platforms presented by Irish Arts Center, Tune Supply, Irish American Writers & Artists, Dancer from the Dance Festival of Irish Choreography curated by John Scott, and Cáca Milis Cabaret at Wexford Arts Centre with Banshee, among others.

Meanwhile, Darrah Carr Dance's virtual performance during the Irish American Writers and Artists Transatlantic Salon was hailed by The Irish Echo as "during the lockdown, the company shot individual videos of their roles in backyards, parks, and apartments, demonstrating the power of dance to uplift in any setting." As Darrah Carr Dance pivoted to virtual performances, the company maintained focus on Arts in Education and Community Outreach programs with the goal of producing virtual events that are family friendly and readily available online.

Last October, Darrah Carr Dance filmed a socially distanced version of their Arts in Education lecture demonstration program at the Sugarloaf Performing Arts Center in order that they could continue their extensive work with K-12 schools through the rosters of Young Audiences New Jersey and Siegel Artist Management.

Artistic Director Darrah Carr was invited to share her experiences with transferring the company's Arts in Education programs to the online environment during a presentation at the virtual National Dance Education

Organization Conference in October. The company also transferred lecture-demonstrations on the history and contemporary practice of Irish step dance to the online environment with presentations over Zoom for New York University, Coffeyville Community College, Fei Tian College, and Warwick Center for the Performing Arts, among others.

While Darrah Carr Dance eagerly awaits the return to live performance and in-person teaching, the company will continue to rely on the power of dance to uplift spirits and to carry us forward.

Darrah Carr Dance itself is a Bessie-Award nominated Irish dance company based in New York City that specializes in ModERIN: a unique blend of traditional Irish step and contemporary modern dance. Performance highlights: "Good Morning America," "The Today Show," Carnegie Hall, Irish Arts Center, Irish Repertory Theatre, Duke Theater, New Victory Theater, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Celebrate Brooklyn, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, MASS MoCA, The Yard, and Dublin's Project Arts Centre. Artistic Director Darrah Carr, PhD, MFA, is an Assistant Professor in the Conservatory of Dance at Purchase College. Darrah Carr Dance is represented exclusively by Siegel Artist Management.







# *Comhghairdeas!*



IAW&A President  
Maria Deasy



IAW&A Director  
Darrah Carr



IAW&A Director  
Malachy McCourt

On your nomination in

## **Irish Echo's 2021 Arts & Culture Awards**

and for bringing your talent and heart to  
Irish American Writers & Artists

*Celebrate Irish Arts and Culture with Irish American Writers & Artist.*

Founded in 2008, IAW&A highlights and encourages Irish Americans who are active in the arts with twice-monthly salons and a vibrant community. In twelve years, IAW&A has become an important contributor to New York's Irish American arts scene.



# ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATION & AWARDS

## MARCUS ROBINSON

**Profession:** I have continued to make a film for JP Morgan about the demolition of their headquarters on Park Avenue in New York and the construction of the new high rise that will replace it. I have also been working on new paintings, commissioned as part of the JP Morgan project, and am working on a collection of paintings, reflecting the urban life of New York City and Brooklyn. I have been continuing to draw the human figure at life drawing sessions at Minerva's Studio on Canal Street in New York.

Marcus Robinson is from Belfast, Northern Ireland. He studied modern languages at Cambridge University and then lived in Paris for 16 years where he



specialized in architectural photography. His work was recognized for its unconventional and painterly qualities.

He currently lives and works in New York where he is creating a new, time-lapse film and collection of

paintings for JP Morgan Chase and continuing his 20-year body of work about the rebuilding of the World Trade Center. He is creating a new series of paintings of New York City and Brooklyn that reflect the urban life of the city.

## JOHN NOLAN

**Profession:** Retired in 2019 from career as Customs House Broker, Currently manager of Commodore John Barry Arts & Culture.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** Our club was shut down in March 2019 due to pandemic. We were allowed to re-open at 25% capacity in October, 2020,



then shut down again in November.

We re-opened again in January, but only at 25% capacity. There are still no concerts or dances, but we hosted a mass to commemorate Bloody Sunday, and served as a polling place on election day on November 2, 2020. We also hosted blood drives for American Red Cross. As soon as covid restrictions are lifted we hope to get back to hosting dances, concerts, lectures and community meetings.

I was born in 1949, the youngest of 4 children to Bridie White from Ennistymon, County Clare and Daniel Nolan whose parents emigrated from Counties Kildare and Wicklow. I graduated from LaSalle College in 1971. My wife Mary and I have six children: Michael, Paul, Julia, Daniel, Margaret and Elizabeth and four grandchildren: Christopher, Darcy, Matthew, and Lydia. I spent most of my career as a Customs House Broker in Philadelphia. Our family has been involved with the Commodore Barry Club since the early 80's. It has been a great resource for our family to learn about our Irish heritage.

## NATALIE NUGENT AND CORMAC O'SE

**Profession:** Actor, Speaker, Writer, Presenter. Executive Director, Celtic Junction Arts Center 2016-present. Founders of Celtic Junction Arts Center

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** Reinvention! I lead a team of dedicated board and staff members. When the pandemic hit, we pivoted together. Celtic Junction's Concerts became LiveStreams. Our Irish College classes became Zoom Rooms. The Eoin McKiernan Library expanded its already sound virtual services. Celtic Junction Outreach Program connected with regional, national and international partners to discuss best practice, make online collaborations and to forge plans for the future. Grant support became paramount, and we were honored with a local supporter's \$100,000 matching donor challenge, which we are still working towards. We founded an ongoing series of Social Justice Seminars. We invested in equipment so we could support our community with high-quality video production. We are building an outdoor stage so we can

bring everyone together safely this summer, and we are planning an expansion of a dedicated Education Center for fall. It has all been a humbling and exhausting experience - but it has been a beautiful process seeing our community active and together.

Natalie and Cormac are the founders of Celtic Junction Arts Center in St. Paul, MN. Cormac was born in Dublin, Ireland, growing up in an intense study of traditional music and dance. He was cast in the original performance of Riverdance, going on to add 6 years touring the world with

Riverdance The Show, giving more than 2000 performances, across four continents to over two million people. He is also Director and Founder of O'Shea Irish Dance (established 2005). Natalie is founder and Executive Director of the Celtic Junction Arts Center of Minnesota, and an active member of Irish Network, the Midwest and National Irish Cultural Centres of North America (NICCoNA), representing Minnesota nationally and internationally. She is an actor, speaker, and presenter; founded CJAC's Social Justice Seminars, and is writer and director of three annual theatrical productions.



## ELISA JENSEN

Place of birth: Bridgeport, CT, USA

**Profession:** Artist, Art Instructor, Curator

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** In March of 2020 I curated a show at the Green Door Gallery celebrating Irish artists, but just after the opening the pandemic hit. For months amazing work by Sean Scully, Elizabeth O'Reilly, Dennis Farrell, Rodney Dickson and others sat ignored, but not forgotten, in the darkened space. The curating of shows may have paused, but the creation of art certainly did not. I moved my studio to my home and began working on small paintings of the view out of my window. I focused on how the spring light illuminated the leaves and branches of the trees coming into bloom; how the summer sun flattened the view of the brick buildings in the back of

my Brooklyn home; how the winter solstice found the snow general and glistening around Brooklyn. The seasons revolving around Greenpoint became yearlong project during which my paintings reflected the mood and quality of light that marks each season.

Elisa Jensen lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She has received awards from the New York Foundation for the Arts, The National Academy Museum, The American Academy of Arts and Letters and The Revson Foundation. She has shown extensively in New York and in Europe and her work has been featured in Whitehot Magazine, Hyperallergic, Artcritical.com, The New York Sun, New York Daily News, and The New York Times. She has curated several exhibitions at the Green Door Gallery at the Divine Mercy Parish, Brooklyn. She currently teaches at the New York Studio School and Pratt Institute.



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# ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATION & AWARDS



## CAITRÍONA WEAFER

**Profession:** Teacher

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** As I was home and had more time, I resolved to make more classes available during the pandemic and so, free of charge through The Gaelic League LA, I added classes in poetry, stories, conversation, mythology, and test preparation in Irish on Zoom so I was teaching six days a week remotely. I also started working with Let's Learn Irish in DC. Zoom made Irish available anytime, anywhere. I now have a student from Italy who, because of the time difference, gets up in the middle of the night to join the class. Students from Iceland, Greece, Perú, the US, Canada, Ireland, from all over the world are learning Irish with me and it is SO heart-warming. I have produced so many lessons (on movies, on books, on sport, on crafts) it is incredible and truly rewarding. The miracle is that each student shares the knowledge and the joy of learning Irish with others. Over a hundred attended

the free online LA Immersion Weekend. It is a group effort.

Huge thanks to The Gaelic League, LA, and Let's Learn Irish who challenge me and help me grow in my learning of how to teach Irish as best I can. I miss the monthly Céilís and weekly dance classes we had but hope to get back to dance as soon as it is safe to do so. Céilí Nua continues the dance classes online. Bless them!

Born and raised in Ireland, I'm a primary school (B. Ed. H.Dip) and Irish dance teacher (TMRF). While teaching in Ireland, I took students to Carraroe in Connemara where I taught summer classes in an Irish college. I lived in Japan and then taught Japanese in Dublin. In the States, I got a degree in Spanish (MA) and taught Spanish in Community College and High School as well as Japanese in Middle School. I now focus on Irish as our language is a treasure well worth saving and sharing. I work with The Gaelic League LA and Let's Learn Irish.

## CARSON ELROD

**Profession:** I'm a professional actor, teacher, activist, and organizer.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** It's been incredibly difficult. I lost three jobs over a 24-hour period in March of 2020. So much acting necessitates collaboration and the kind of brilliance in performative storytelling that can only happen when actors are sharing physical space together. I have done several ZOOM "readings" that have been nice, but they're nothing like the intimate, spontaneous, and thrilling experiences that can only be had together and in person.

Other than the practice of my art, I've become an activist and organizer on behalf of the entire Arts & Culture sector in the country. I founded Be An #ArtsHero with a few friends and have spent the greater part of

the pandemic participating in lobbying, demonstrations, and campaigns designed to call attention to the importance of relieving and sustaining our devastated industry and the 2.7 million Arts Workers who remain totally unemployed.

Carson Elrod: BROADWAY: Peter And The Starcatcher, Reckless, Noises Off. LINCOLN CENTER: The Merry Widow (The Metropolitan Opera) OFF-BROADWAY: Important Hats of the 20th Century, The Explorer's Club (Lortel Nomination), Comic Potential, House/Garden, Based On A Totally True Story, (Manhattan Theatre Club) Lives Of The Saints, All In The Timing (Primary Stages) The Heir Apparent, The Liar (Classic Stage Company), The Tempest, Measure For Measure, All's Well That Ends Well (The PUBLIC/NYSF) Waiting For Godot (NY Fringe). FILM: Kissing Jessica Stein, Wedding Crashers. Co-Founder Be An #ArtsHero. MFA: NYU BA: KU



## MARY SUE CONNOLLY

**Profession:** Documentary Filmmaker

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** I was in Ireland when the lockdown went into effect. All of the film festivals that I was scheduled to attend after March 2020 had either been cancelled or become virtual, so I decided to stay in Ireland and before long I found myself in the edit room, digging into some of my earlier projects as well as revisiting some of the footage from my current film. I participated in festival events remotely, which was a very different experience. As the schools had shut their doors, I also became a teacher for my six-year-old. I decided to use the video format for homeschooling. We made numerous short videos about our environment in Ireland, which involved foraging, local history and folklore.

Mary Sue Connolly is an Irish born filmmaker, editor and producer. She has been an editor/producer for television since 2004, working for CNN, CBS & CBS Television Distribution. During her time at CBS, Mary Sue edited numerous award-winning investigative reports, including the Exceptional Merit in Media Awards, the National Headliner Award, the Clarion Award and the National Press Club

Award. She has made two feature length documentaries as well as numerous short docs. Mary Sue's latest documentary Overdosed, about the US opioid crisis, was screened and won awards in major festivals across North America.



## KEN FLEMING

Place of birth: Fort Bragg, NC

**Profession:** Co-Owner of a team building company called Group

Dynamix

Founder/Executive Director of the Traditional Irish Music Education Society

Founder/Director of the O'Flaherty Irish Music Retreat

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** I organized a virtual music camp (O'Flaherty Retreat) in October 2020. My wife and I host a weekly virtual session. My family meets weekly for dinner and tunes. I created TeachIR to help Irish music tutors and students to connect.

Ken Fleming has played and promoted Irish music for more than four decades. His love of Irish music led him to help create the North Texas Irish Festival in 1981 and the Southwest Celtic Music Association in 1983 of which he was the founding director and founding president respectively.

In 2004, he began the O'Flaherty Irish Music Retreat and afterwards formed the Traditional Irish Music Education Society. In 2008, he founded the O'Flaherty Irish Music Youth Camp, and in 2012, helped start the North Texas School of Irish Music.

He performs regularly with his family in an ensemble called "KinFolk."







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# ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATION & AWARDS

## MARIA E. DEASY

**Profession:** Actress ~Writer ~ Producer. President of Irish American Writers & Artists.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** Like so many, I've transferred my onstage life to an online screen, but I will say that I am both grateful and inspired by the work I've seen all around the Irish community. As President of Irish American Writers & Artists, I've been enormously proud of the hard work by the Board and the Membership to keep our work engaged and our spirits lifted. We began with a Virtual St. Patrick's Day 2020 that successfully grew into "Dancing At The Crossroads," an ongoing platform for members of the Irish community to submit their creative work: the "crossroads" were our social media sites where our community shared writing, recorded and live performances, and artwork. In true IAW&A seanachí spirit, we created a landing page for the Irish diaspora from Rome to California (and everything in between). At the same time, we continued to produce our twice-monthly salons – now on-line. Over several months, IAW&A also launched several special events including Irish Cawffee Tawk, an informal members' gathering, The Fortune Society's "The Castle," featuring a talkback with Malachy McCourt and WBAI's David Rothenberg, and a St. Stephen's Day Salon with special guest Phil Coulter. And in January, Vice President Brendan Costello and I were featured in the "Producing in A Pandemic" segment of Origin Theatre's 1st Irish Festival.

Most significantly, we were able to produce our yearly fundraiser, the Eugene O'Neill Lifetime Achievement Award ceremony, honoring the actress and writer Kate Mulgrew. All of this required enormous creativity, flexibility, and humor as we navigated our way, filming segments outside in Times Square, at Rosie O'Grady's in midtown, in Connolly's West 46th St. second floor bar, and outside my front stoop on the Upper West Side.



While proud of my leadership role at IAW&A, one of the most personally satisfying aspects of these endeavors has been the opportunity to continue practicing my craft as an actress and writer. Early in the pandemic, I sang a few bars of "She Moved Through the Fair" for the Irish Rep's "The Show Must Go Online," filming myself in the woods behind my NJ grade school. (I had temporarily relocated to care for my parents, who had to get used to having a singer vocalize in the house again!) I was also happy to be cast as Carole in an original monologue by playwright Sheila Walsh for one of the IAW&A salons, and as Dr. Kathleen Lynn in Thom Molyneaux's "Women of Kilmainham." I acted in Turlough McConnell's "Eugene O'Neill: An Irish American Boyhood" alongside Ciaran Byrne and Colin Ryan, and I performed my original piece "You Make Me Feel Like A Natural Woman in A Pandemic" at an IAW&A salon. I later used that piece to create a poem for the SAOL Project in Dublin's "Poems in a Pandemic - Photographs in

Sisterhood" in celebration of International Women's Day.

Currently, I am working on 7-minute musical vignette with my good friend Deborah De Furia, a screenwriter based in Rome. Our tiny musical tracks our pandemic moments as longtime friends. The piece, which we will also perform, is part of a longer musical that a group of Brown University theatre alumni are co-writing as an on-line benefit for The Actors Fund. This evolved out of an informal reunion of students who attended Brown in the late 80s and 90s. Many of us had not seen each other in person since graduation, so the pandemic did in fact bring many former friends back in touch.

Finally, for St. Patrick's Day 2021, I was asked to be one of three presenters for the NY Irish Center's March 17th celebration, hosting a 45-minute segment of interviews and broadcasts. I could not have chosen a more touching way to celebrate the day than at the wonderful NYIC with family as some of my guests -- including the concert pianist Darragh Brogan and Liam Jegou, Ireland's Olympian who is headed for the Tokyo Games in August. I cannot wait to reconnect in person with all those near and far – and of course to again perform live with an audience actually in the room!

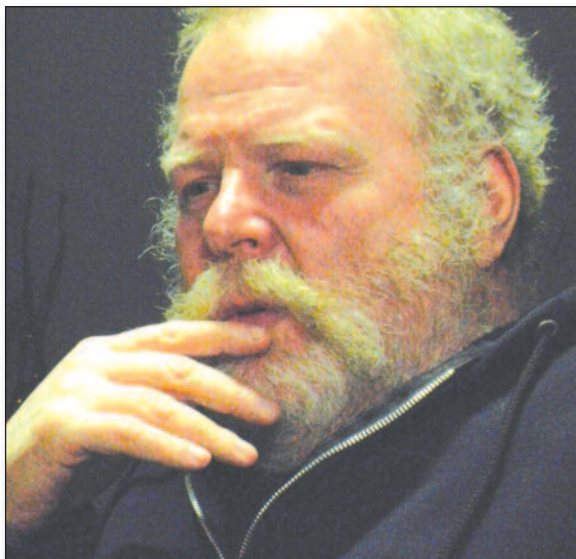
Maria Deasy is a New York-based actress, who has performed at The Roundabout, the Lucille Lortel, and Theatre for The New City, among many others. Her film and tv appearances include "Aimy In A Cage" starring Crispin Glover; Barry Levinson's "Sleepers;" the television show "30 Rock;" and several soaps. Maria won the Bairbre Dowling Spirit of the Festival Award at Origin Theatre's 2019 1st Irish Festival and also received Best Actress nominations at 1st Irish that year and in 2018. While her parents harken from beautiful County Mayo, Maria is both a native New Yorker and a Jersey Girl. [www.mariadeasy.com](http://www.mariadeasy.com)



## CHARLOTTE MOORE

**Profession:** Artistic Director, Irish Repertory Theatre  
**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** Directing plays remotely

Charlotte Moore is the Artistic Director of Irish Repertory Theatre in NY, an award-winning Off-Broadway company she co-founded in 1988 with Ciarán O'Reilly. With Irish Rep, she has directed over 80 productions. As an actor, Ms. Moore appeared in 11 Broadway shows, receiving 2 Tony Award nominations. She has been listed as one of the "Top 50 Power Women" in Irish America Magazine. Charlotte was named "Director of the Year" by The Wall Street Journal in 2011. Ms. Moore was recently inducted into the Irish America Hall of Fame, and received Ireland's Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad.



## RODNEY DICKSON

**Profession:** artist

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** It has been hard to work during the pandemic, lots of time but lacking the spark that comes from life and participating in the world. I have done about as much as normal but not more even though I have had more time than usual.

I was born in Northern Ireland U.K. in 1956 and studied Fine Art in Liverpool Art School England from 1979 - 1983 graduating with a BA Honors 1st Class. Since then I have worked as a professional artist and lived in Holland, England and since 1997 in New York, USA. I have exhibited my work regularly internationally and it is held in private and public collections in Asia, Europe and USA. Most recently two paintings acquired by The Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin, donated by David McKee.



## KEN O'MALLEY

**Profession:** Irish singer, musician, story teller, teacher, actor, producer and Ireland tours.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** I have performed a live stream show on Facebook every single Sunday since March 20, 2020 from 2 - 3pm PST at <https://www.facebook.com/kenomalleyirishmusic/live> Have continued producing and recording with my band Celtic Pink Floyd.

Ken O'Malley arrived in Los Angeles from Dublin in 1974 at the age of twenty and has been playing, singing, acting, teaching and producing Irish Celtic music ever since. Throughout his career, he has appeared in feature films, television, plays and stage productions and has performed throughout the US and Europe. Ken is a valued historian of Irish music, history and culture and is in constant demand for his wealth of knowledge and experience. He is one of the best-known tour guides to Ireland and leads several group trips annually. For more information visit [www.kenomalley.com](http://www.kenomalley.com)



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# ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATION & AWARDS

## PATRICK MICHAEL REDMOND

**Profession:** Graphic designer, artist, author, entrepreneur, creativity and arts advocate, former art director, retired educator

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** Since I have been working in the field of art and design for 55 years, the pandemic has provided an ideal opportunity to continue a sabbatical I had begun prior to the start of the pandemic. During this time I have been able to further prepare for future exhibitions that have been cancelled by galleries and books in development that have been postponed. In the process, I was revisiting some of my past Irish-related or Irish-American-related projects, including: providing design for a commemorative Waterford® Crystal, winning the prize of an expense-paid trip to Ireland; designing the cover of the special Mid-List Press gift edition of famed Irish-American William A. Nolen, M.D.'s book "The Making of a Surgeon"; cover design for Bridget Haggerty's book "The Traditional Irish Wedding", the 1999 version published by Wolfhound Press, Dublin, and Irish Books & Media, Minneapolis; catalog design consulting for Irish Books & Media; book cover and book design for Paul R. O'Connor's 1992 book "Loom-Controlled Double Weave, From the Notebook of a Double Weaver," published by Dos Tejedoras Fiber Arts Publications, Saint Paul,



Minnesota; the exhibition of my design for 11 published Textile and Fiber Arts in the Pat O'Connor Memorial Library at the Textile Center, "A national center for fiber art"; projects related to noted Irish American artist, Eugene Larkin, who had also been co-advisor for my Master's degree program at the University of Minnesota... I had provided numerous examples of design and art for his 1988 basic visual composition and design textbook "Design, the search for unity: two- and three-dimensional design, drawing and color," published by William C. Brown Publishers, Dubuque, Iowa; my wine label design, featuring a woodcut by Eugene Larkin, for Alexis Bailly Vineyard's "Hastings Reserve", Hastings, Minnesota; and many other art and design projects for a wide range of clients. I have also been more involved in writing, for example, my "Memoir: Now seventy, I recall visiting my ancestral homeland, Ireland, as a young artist/designer".

My numerous and varied commentaries or articles, unrelated to Irish or Irish-American topics, such as one pertaining to the Minneapolis Institute of Art online Modernism collection, have also been published at the NAEA (National Art Education Association) "Collaborate" website, and, in The Art Exchange, an Art Educators of Minnesota (AEM) Publication; my extensive memoir "Re: AIGA Minnesota Design Camp® 40th Anniversary, An Early Past President's Perspective" was published at the AIGA Minnesota Design Camp® 2020 website, under "Escape (virtually) Up North"; my related article "AIGA Minnesota Design Camp® 40th Anniversary (1980-2020)...", was

included in The Art Exchange, an Art Educators of Minnesota Publication; my "Boundary Waters, A sanctuary for souls and stars," was published in the Minneapolis StarTribune, September 20, 2020. My tribute, "A leading illustration, art, graphic design, and education exemplar passes on: Milton Glaser (1929-2020)", was published in NAEA, National Art Education Association, "Collaborate", July 16, 2020; and my related comment was included at Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, NY, website tribute Re: legendary designer Milton Glaser (1929-2020). In addition to my own ongoing work as a designer and artist, at the beginning of the pandemic I had served as a judge for the five-state (Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota) Printing Industry Midwest 2020 "Star Awards" competition. I have updated my MCAD (Minneapolis College of Art & Design) Alumni Profile webpage at <https://mcad.edu/alumni-profile/patrick-redmond>. My writing has also been published in various Irish American periodicals. A retrospective and various books, publications, and websites are in development, details to be announced.

Award-winning graphic designer and artist Patrick Michael Redmond, M.A., Patrick Redmond Design, has held positions as creative Art Director at Norwest (Wells Fargo); a Senior Art Director at Carlson; a Graphic Designer for Goldstein Museum of Design, InterDesign, and De brey Design; cofounded COMCEPT; was Artist-In-Residence and Graphic Designer-In-Residence in rural and greater Minnesota; and taught at the University of Minnesota, MCAD, CVA, and University of Wisconsin-Stout. He is a past President, past Board Member, and member of the Minnesota Chapter of AIGA, "the professional association for design"™. See: [www.PatrickRedmondDesign.com](http://www.PatrickRedmondDesign.com).

## MAUREEN KENNEDY

**Profession:** My role at the Cincinnati Irish Center is that of Artistic and Programming Director. As an actress, director, producer and choreographer I enlisted my talent and partnership of Actors, Musicians, Poets, Writers and Volunteers to provide weekly cultural offerings to the Center's Patrons, Members and new participants.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** This focus resulted in many changes ie; development of Zoom virtual productions, including a Bloomsday reenactment by the Irish American Theater Company, with poetry selection read by the Ambassador of Ireland in DC, Dan Mulhall. Also, we offered 'Shades of Green' from the Embassy. Uplifting Poetry was selected & added to each weekly newsletter using various Irish & local poets.

Two of the favorites are from Listowel, County Kerry; Billy Keane's Poem "Starman", and Mick MacConnell's song "Only the Rivers Run Free".

Musicians, solicited through countless hours of calls, resulted in forwarded musical clips for our community including: Billow Wood, Larry Kirwan, Jig Jam, We Banjo 3, The Merry Plough Boys, Derek Warfield and the Young Wolfe Tones, Aoife Scott, Pat Waters, The Town Pants, Mick McEvilly and Mai Hernon, Joanie Madden of Cherish the Ladies.

Actors Neil O'Shea sent "Irish Writers Perform" from Irish Writers Museum. "The Playwright and Actor Perform" was zoomed in only to Cincinnati from Dermot Bulger Director/playwright/writer/poet and Ray Yeats Actor/ Irish Arts Officer Dublin City. Michael James Ford and Barbrie NiChaoime delivered an absolutely brilliant



adaptation of Oscar Wilde's "The Happy Prince" & "The Selfish Giant" and added a Q&A live conversation about their work with our community, and John McDonough from Irish American Writers and Artists NYC filmed and presented virtually "Off the Meter and On the Record" on our Big Screen and by "home Delivery" then answered questions at the end of the play. Additionally, we promoted and recommended Plays presented by Fishamble, Dublin, Irish Rep Theatre NYC, Druid Theatre Galway, and others.

When outdoor space was safe, we set up outdoor

stages and hosted "drive-in your car for outdoor concerts" with; The Drowsy Lads, The Lost Celts, & FinTan plus we created "Sundays in the Garden" featuring live music during good weather. We added to our visual arts collection the original American edition of The Book of Kells.

We planned the recent St. Patrick's Day starting with a Mass, followed by 6 rooms spread for social distanced spaces, all preregistered, wearing masks, following rules using hand sanitizer for safety. We showcased local live musicians, dancers, pipers and St Patrick himself who told his story, and offered catered meals that were pre ordered and served inside sanitized boxes. This resulted in 'constant contact' which made a significant impact on our viability through increased donations and membership retention.

Maureen A Kennedy is the Founder of the Irish American Theater Company, (IATC) and Co-Founder of the Cincinnati Irish Heritage Center (2009) serving as Director and Vice-President.

Maureen has enjoyed a lifelong involvement in theater and dance. performing throughout Europe and the US. Maureen was a founding members of NoHo Arts District, North Hollywood, California, and a founding member of the Columbia Tusculum Arts Corridor.

She is most proud of IATC's 2017 winning of 8 awards at the Acting Irish International Theatre Festival. The company travels yearly to Canada, across the US and to Ireland.

Maureen can be found at the Irish Heritage Center every day, or conducting public relations interviews on TV and Radio. With the passion she holds for everything Irish, Maureen is building an Irish Center in perpetuity for future generations to enjoy.







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Thank you to your amazing teachers  
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**From Team Aisling**

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*A big thank you to Dawn and Frankie for everything they do in keeping the tradition alive*

From the Board and Staff at the Aisling Irish Community Center



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# ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATION & AWARDS

## SORAYA HANZUS

**The New York Studio of Irish Step Dance Profession** Owner, The New York Studio of Irish Step Dance

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** The New York Studio of Irish Step Dance has been committed to keeping its students and community at large engaged and entertained throughout the pandemic. The school wanted to lift everyone's spirits by sharing how dancers celebrated their St. Patrick's Day seasons socially distanced in both 2020 and 2021 via its #HowDoYouCelebrate initiative and encouraged students to submit photos and videos for its "25 Days of Irish Dance" Instagram challenge. It also encouraged its dance family to host Instagram Takeovers - with students taking control of the school's social media account for the day and sharing their talents with the dance community.

The school hosted virtual holiday showcases giving students the opportunity to perform at home

during the Halloween, Christmas and St. Patrick's Day seasons to songs of their choice - from Thriller, to Deck the Halls, to Tell Me Ma - with peers, friends and family tuned in from across the country to watch. Despite being physically apart, St. Patrick's Day was another success - entertaining crowds virtually either live or via prerecorded group footage for CraicFest, Irish Network NYC, Irish American Association of Westchester and The Alzheimer's Foundation of America, among others. The school also taught Irish dance virtually to companies like nonprofit One to World. The first-ever Irish

Dance Day on September 17 was another big hit featuring six dancers taking over the school's Instagram stories in addition to the day starting off with a half-hour Insta Live fitness session.

The school continues to offer online classes via Zoom. Prior to the pandemic, all students were based in New York. Since launching online classes, the school has steadily gained new students nationwide and as far away as California. It has also offered multiple Insta Live sessions from its own community teaching dance and yoga as well as a personal Trooper Fitness trainer.



The New York Studio of Irish Step Dance has been committed to keeping the tradition and entertainment of dance going this past year and will continue to do so as NYC returns to normalcy.

The New York Studio of Irish Step Dance is located in NYC and currently offers online classes. When it reopens its physical doors, it will do so at its home location in the Upper West Side of Manhattan. All students are welcome any time of the year wanting a challenging but enjoyable workout. The owner Soraya Hanzus created an environment focused on fun and fitness for adults - from ages 16 to 60s. The school's dancers have performed for business leaders and live on national TV. They are also crowd pleasers at pubs, weddings, festivals, sports games and cultural events.

## TAMI ELLEN MCLAUGHLIN & BILL REILLY

**(Sober Saint Patrick's Day)**

**Profession:** Sober St. Patrick's Day® was created by award-winning theater and television producer, William Spencer Reilly, who almost lost a member of his family to addiction in 2004. He first proposed the idea to leaders in the recovery and Irish American communities, a pitch that led, a year later, to the 2012 inaugural party. Ten years later, Bill built a global team that made the first virtual #Soberstpatricksdays and 10th anniversary an online global celebration.

Tami Ellen McLaughlin is the Executive Director of Sober St. Patrick's Day®, and met Bill Reilly at a #FirstFriday Networking Breakfast at the Irish Consulate General in New York, in March 2017. Bill invited Tami Ellen as his guest to that year's SSPD Party at Old St. Patrick's Cathedral, and that started their Irish step dance that led to Tami Ellen joining the foundation nearly one year ago. Tami Ellen is also a member of the Irish Business Organization of New York Executive Board, Membership Officer, and Chair of the IBO-NY Women's Networking Committee

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** Our SSPD Mission Statement and Core Values provided us with the inspirational roadmap, and our team of marketing, web, social media, and video production experts made it possible to take our 10th Anniversary Celebration online and share our YouTube Premiere with a global audience on March 17, 2021. Direct url: <https://youtu.be/mDyQyOnAbvs>

**Mission Statement:** To reclaim the true spirit of St.



Patrick's Day by changing the perception and experience from an occasion for binge drinking and other misuse of alcohol to a celebration of the richness of Irish culture and the legacy of St. Patrick.

**Core Values:** At the heart of what we do is "Sláinte" — an Irish toast that actually translates to "health." In "Reclaiming the Day" we also seek to "Reclaim Sláinte" — a sincere embrace and toast to health — fueled by Irish culture, the saint himself, and healthy and safe celebrations.

**Irish Culture:** The beauty and uniqueness of Irish culture — its music, dance and storytelling traditions that honor



our family- centric and faith- based roots.

**St. Patrick:** The life and legacy of St. Patrick, a former slave who became a bishop and patron saint of Ireland, and the importance of Saint Patrick's Day as a social and spiritual opportunity to honor St. Patrick's enduring cultural influence.

**Healthy and Safe Celebrations:** Enjoying St. Patrick's Day and Irish culture in a positive environment that provides an alternative experience to binge drinking — particularly for young people.

[www.soberstpatricksdays.org](http://www.soberstpatricksdays.org)



## ELIZABETH STACK

**Profession:** Elizabeth is a historian, and now the Executive Director of the Irish American Heritage Museum, Albany, NY. In her PhD she wrote about Irish and German immigrants in New York at the turn of the twentieth century, as they grappled with the immigration restriction movements of that time. She has a master's degree in Anglo-Irish Relations in the 20th Century from University College Dublin in Ireland and was a high school teacher in Ireland and the United Arab Emirates before moving to America in 2009.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** Elizabeth and the Museum quickly transitioned to hosting online lectures and panel discussions. Elizabeth participated in talks with other institutions across the state and country,

highlighting Irish and Irish American culture, history, literature, and music. She spoke on panels about Irish music, Irish American politics, Irish immigration to various groups during the pandemic.

Dr. Stack is Executive Director of the Museum, located at 21 Quackenbush Square, which hosts a number of historical exhibits, as well as lectures, music evenings and film presentations. Elizabeth joined the museum from Fordham University, where she taught Irish and Irish American History and was an Associate Director of the Institute of Irish Studies. A native of Listowel, in Co. Kerry, Elizabeth sees a huge connection between her own experience as an immigrant, and the important mission of the museum to preserve and share Irish heritage and culture. The new exhibits document Irish contributions to American culture and society.



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General Manager, John Nolan*

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*For centuries, immigrants have left Ireland in search of a new life in the United States, bringing with them their unique culture and heritage. Today, 34 million Americans claim some Irish ancestry. Our museum was founded in 1986 to preserve and tell the story of the contributions and culture of the Irish people, inspiring individuals to examine the importance of their heritage as part of the American cultural mosaic.*

*Our focus is on exhibits and programming that expand our audience and educate the public about Irish American history by highlighting their immigrant experience. We offer a wide range of musical, literary and historical programs each month, which are open to non-members.*

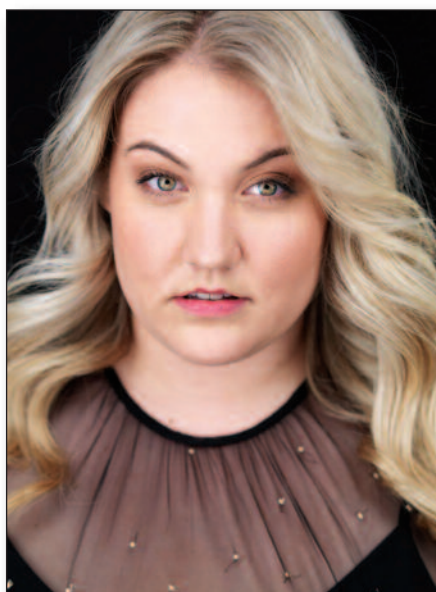


# ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATION & AWARDS

## FREIA TITLAND

**Profession:** Freia is an adjunct Professor of visual and performing arts at SUNY Rockland College in Suffern, NY. She is also an actor, model, writer and the founder and festival director of the Midnight Film Festival, the Body Positive Film Festival and the Divine Feminine Arts and Film Fest. She is dedicated to creating and sharing art in its many forms with as many people as she can.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** I have been fortunate enough to continue to work as an actor and model during the pandemic. I have also hosted a 48 Hour Quarantine Film Challenge where teams of any size banded together to create short films from page to screen in only 48 hours. It was an incredibly fun way to bring some joy into an uncertain situation in the early days of lockdown. In January I also celebrated hundreds of filmmakers and creatives from all around the globe with my film fest, the Midnight Film Festival. We met both in person and online and held filmmaker Q&A's, virtual screenings, and readings of original screenplays.



Freia M. Titland is an actor (SAG-AFTRA, AEA), model, writer & the founder and festival director of the Midnight Film Festival. Freia is an adjunct professor of visual and performing arts and the host of the Body Positive Goddess podcast. Through her company, Midnight Films, Freia has produced various award-winning creative projects and short films. Thank you so much for this honor! [www.freiatitland.com](http://www.freiatitland.com)

## NIALL O'LEARY

**Profession:** Irish dance & music performer and teacher, architect.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** It has been extremely challenging, but we have kept it going with the help of a great team!

Niall O'Leary is a former All-Ireland and World Champion dancer from Dublin, Ireland. The Niall O'Leary School of Irish Dance has been community-building and training champions since 1995, and currently has locations in New York City, Miami in Florida, and Mexico. We currently offer video classes in Irish dance and music worldwide. O'Leary performs regularly as a solo artist, in duet with Darrah Carr, with Mick Moloney's Green Fields of America, and with his professional company The Niall O'Leary Irish Dance Troupe. He is in constant demand across the USA, as well as Canada, Ireland, and Asia as a performer, choreographer, master instructor and adjudicator in Irish Dance. He is the Artistic Director of the Irish Arts Center's New York City Irish Dance Festival. He served as President of



the Irish Business Organization of NY Inc. (2010-11). Additionally, O'Leary practices as an architect. He has been honored by Irish America Magazine as one of the 'Top 100 Irish-Americans of the Year', and by the Irish Echo newspaper as a 'Community Champion.' [www.nialloleary.com](http://www.nialloleary.com)

## MAURA MULLIGAN

**Profession:** Dancer/Writer/ Teacher (language & dance)

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** YES. 1. Happily wrote articles for The Irish Echo Newspaper. 2. Delighted to be a volunteer teacher of Irish language for the NY Irish Center on Zoom. 3. Enjoy teaching a socially distanced outdoor dance class at Donnelly Park in West New York, NJ.

Maura Mulligan, a native of Aghamore, Co. Mayo, is a retired ESL teacher, Céilí Dance instructor, Irish language teacher and author of the memoir, "Call of the Lark." Her articles/essays have appeared in The Writing Irish of New York, Irish America magazine, The Irish Echo Newspaper, The Irish Examiner, Glór Achadh Mór, and 650Where Writers Read. In 2018, she was honored as "Irish Woman of the Year" by The Irish Heritage Committee of the NYC Department of Education. She is founded of Nollaig na mBan NY - a charity group which raises funds for a women's shelter.



## BARRY STAPLETON

**Profession:** Director: Ward Irish Music Archives. Entertainment Staff: Milwaukee Irish Fest

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** Yes...we've been very busy with the Archives. Two grant positions have continued digitizing at the Archives and Jeff Ksiazek, our archivist, has posted many tunes on our social media pages. I just did a general Irish in Music program for a local historical society. I've made a commitment to stay in touch with Irish entertainers over this past difficult year.

Barry is the director of the Ward Irish Music Archives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Through the archives he has published three CDs, the latest being "Francis O'Neill Cylinders: 32 recordings of Irish Traditional Music in America circa 1904." Barry has given programs at many conferences in the U.S. and in Ireland. He has organized conferences on Bing Crosby, Irish Music and Celtic Festivals. He has presented at the Library of Congress, Folk Alliance, Hofstra University and the Na Piobairi Uilleann, Pipers Club, Dublin, Ireland. Barry has presented at the American Conference for Irish Studies, ACIS national and regional conferences



## BRIAN O'DONOVAN

**Profession:** Producer/Host/Arts Manager

Born in Clonakilty and immigrating to the United States in 1980, Brian O'Donovan's varied career spans professional sports, facility and event management, writing, and public broadcasting. He has served as Vice President of the New England Patriots, General Manager of The New England Revolution Soccer Team, and Producer/Host of A Celtic Sojourn on public broadcasting's WGBH in Boston. He is a producer of live music, radio and television events and also a tour guide specializing in trips to the Celtic countries.



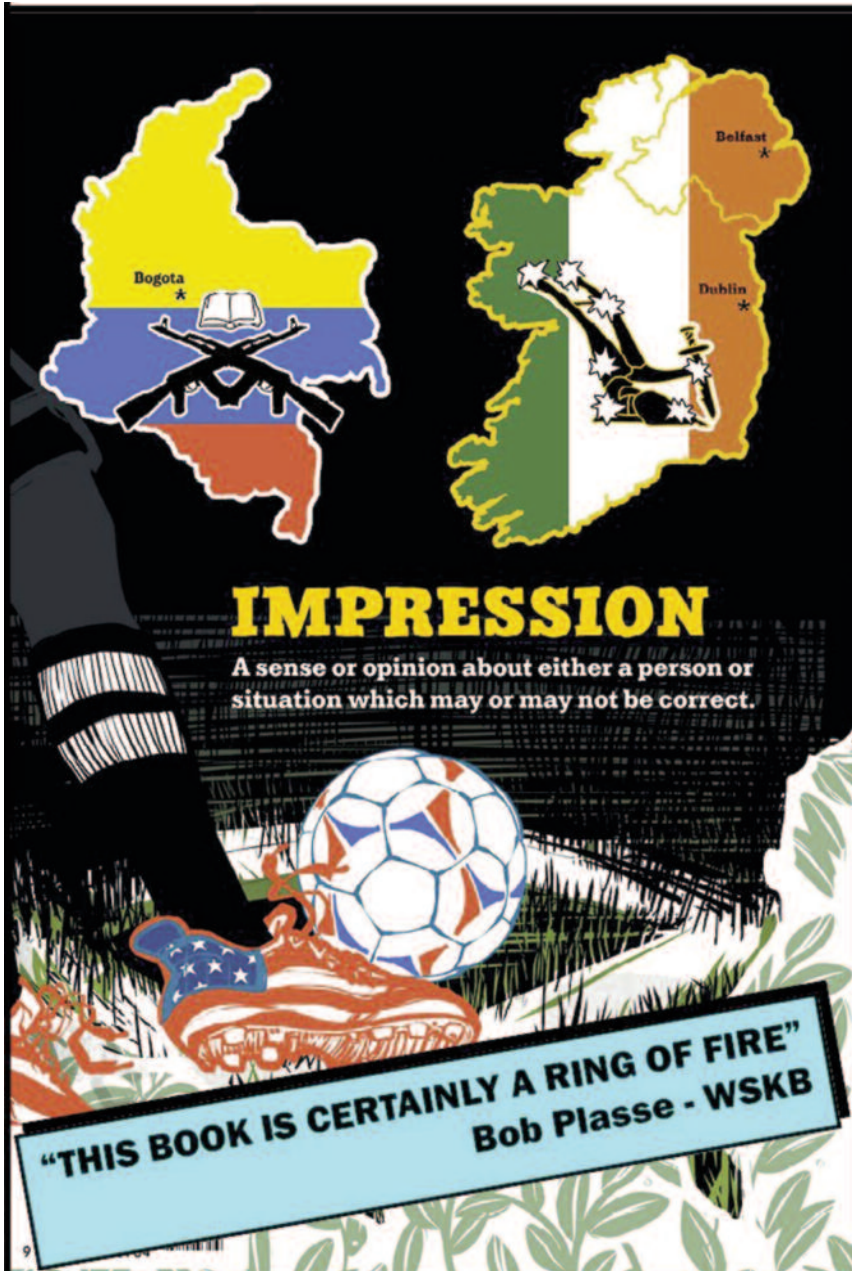
# CONGRATULATIONS MARY KAY HENEGHAN!

*Irish Echo Arts & Culture Awards*



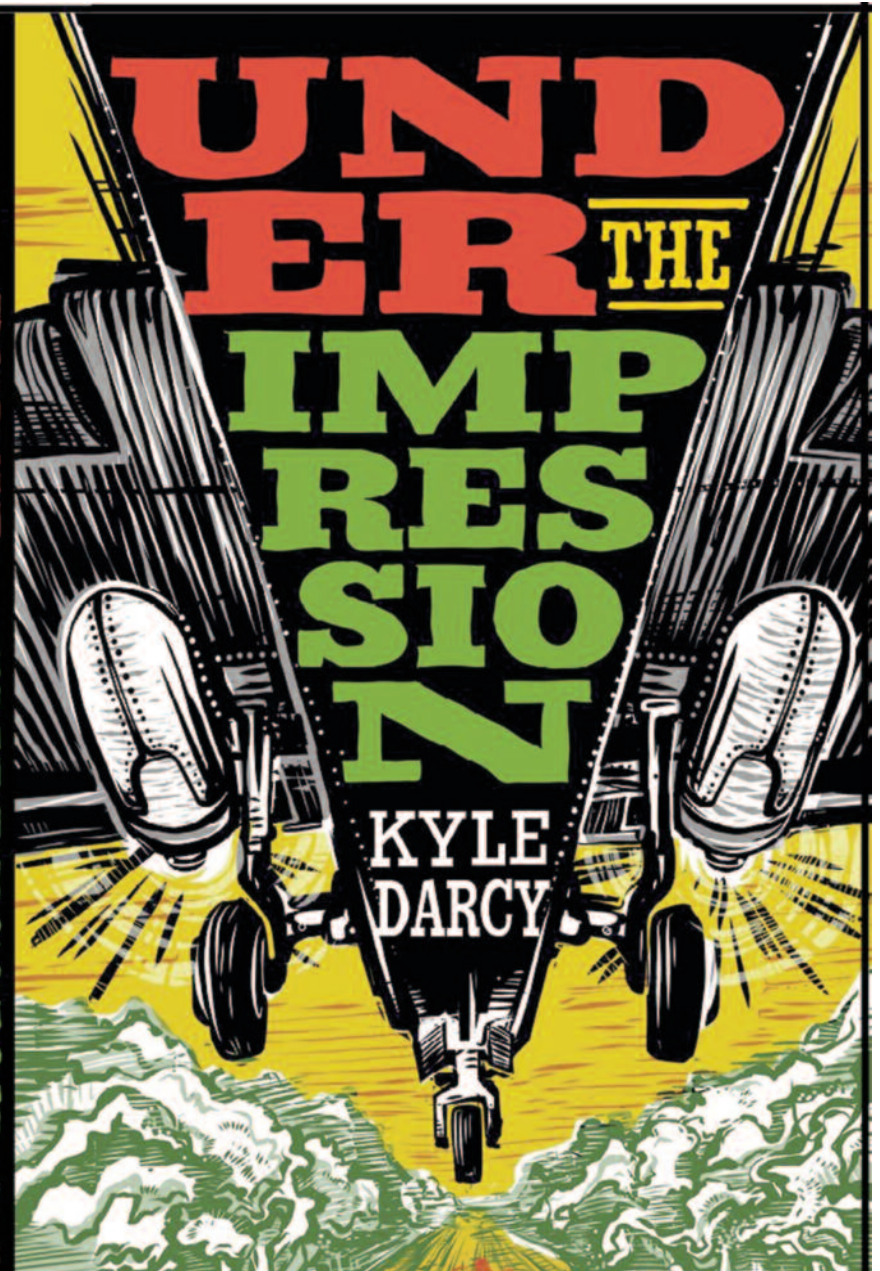
*Thank you for celebrating and promoting Irish dance and culture throughout Buffalo and Western New York! We are so proud of all the work you do to educate the community in the Irish Arts!*

**Senator Timothy M. Kennedy**  
New York State Senate, 63rd District



DARCY UNDER THE IMPRESSSION

Denett Press



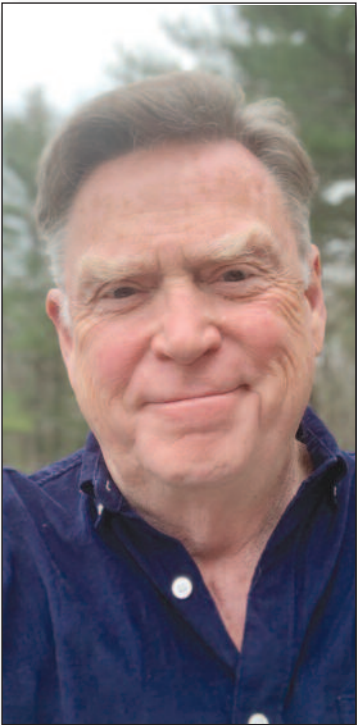


# ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATION & AWARDS



## TONY REILLY

**Profession:** Founder and Artistic Director of American Irish Repertory Ensemble (AIRE)  
**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** Helped create and appeared in the Maine Irish Heritage Center and Irish American Club's virtual St. Patrick's Day parade 2021. And we are in the process of preparing this year's virtual celebration of Bloomsday with AIRE's original theater piece - Ulysses for Beginners.



AIRE (American Irish Repertory Ensemble), Maine's Irish Theater Company, is a 501c3 organization dedicated to presenting classic and contemporary Irish and Irish American productions. Since 2004, AIRE has entertained New England audiences, especially Maine's large Irish community. Sharing the power and beauty of Irish theater and raising awareness and understanding of Irish culture.



## TIM TAIDHG MARTIN

**Profession:** Retired Real Estate Broker

My name is Tim (Taidhgín O'Máirtín) Martin. I'm An Irish Language Teacher and a member of The Celtic Arts Center (An Claidheamh Soluis') in N. Hollywood where I taught Irish since 1986. I'm a stage actor, and a member of "Sarah Fulton Acting Group". I've played Bodhrán, Bones & Sing at seisiúnacha pre-Covid now on Zoom'. •I've taught a lot of classes in Irish and Irish songs in Los Angeles for An Claidheamh Soluis', 'Conradh na nGaeilge' (The Irish League), and occasionally 'Comhaltas. I teach The Irish Language and occasionally Irish Song on Zoom as I did recently for Conradh na Gaeilge. I'm also an avid Set Dancer. I was a member of The Los Angeles Set Dancers for over ten years and still dance.

## DAWN DOHERTY AND THE AISLING IRISH CENTER CEILI BAND & BALLAD GROUP

**Profession:** Music Director of the Aisling Irish center Ceili band & ballad group  
**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** During the pandemic I continued music & singing lessons on line. I started Ceol le chéile on my Facebook page which featured a different student every night singing or playing music. I had all my students send me videos on a daily basis and I did this every night and I still continue to do it. I received so many emails and messages of thank you and support for continuing the music and giving children a life line during the pandemic to meet virtually on line with their friends. We also made several music videos. One at Untermyer Gardens at Christmas time which was on News 12 Christmas Day, we were part of the Late late Christmas toy show in Ireland where we recorded a video in Times Square, we recently did a video The Rose of Mooncoin for Vicky Phelan currently in US receiving treatment for Cancer, and we also did a beautiful video for Saint Patrick's Day celebrations.

Dawn Doherty director of the Aisling Irish Center ballad group & Frankie Mc Cormick with the Aisling Center Ceili band have spearheaded both groups into a huge success story on an international scale in a short period of time. Dawn is an All-Ireland champion & the winner of Irish Echo's People's choice award 40 under 40 in 2020. Frankie Mc Cormick, All-Ireland champion from County Armagh has worked with Dawn as Aisling Center's musical director in keeping the music alive throughout the whole pandemic.





Megan, we are so proud of you on being the recipient of this wonderful award during such a challenging time for so many. You continue to amaze us with your achievements! We are inspired by your professionalism and incredible talent in your chosen field of Occupational Therapy. You shine so brightly.

**All our love,  
the Derrig, Fallon and Haugh Families.**



**MAINE IRISH**  
HERITAGE CENTER



CONGRATULATIONS  
TO MAINE'S 2021 ARTS  
& CULTURE HEROES

**JEAN HANEY**  
MAINE IRISH HERITAGE CENTER

**TONY REILLY**  
AMERICAN IRISH  
REPARATORY THEATER

*Sláinte*



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Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade  
and So Much More!



# ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATION & AWARDS



## MARY KAY HENEGHAN

**Profession:** Irish Dance Teacher

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** Yes. After a quick shift to google classroom and then Zoom, we were able to keep teaching. We then did "parking lot pop up classes" and "practice in the Park" until we were able to move back indoors following covid guidelines.



Born in Buffalo, NY. Mary Kay started Rince Na Tiarna (RNT), in 1986. She received her Master's Degree in counseling education from Canisius College. RNT is the first school in North America to win gold at the All Ireland's in team dancing in 2004. The school has produced several world champion winners and medalists. Three RNT dancers were cast as part of Riverdance's 25th Anniversary tour which was postponed. Mary Kay volunteers for the MidAtlantic Region, the Irish Dance Teacher's Association of North America and International Work Group that was established by An Comisiun Le Rince Gaelacha (CLRG)



## DIANE V. BYRNES

**Profession:** Producer & Host of Echoes of Erin on WEDO 810AM.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** I prepare

music, content, arrange interviews and contact News Correspondents for a weekly radio broadcast every Sunday. My Correspondents come from the four corners of Ireland - Donegal, Galway, Dublin, and Belfast.

February 2021 began my 33rd year on the air on WEDO 810AM with 'Echoes of Erin', the Irish radio program out of Pittsburgh, Pa. There is a re-broadcast every Wednesday at 1:30 PM on [www.kdwradio.com](http://www.kdwradio.com) out of Florida. Previously I was a Promoter of Irish talent producing many concerts in the Pittsburgh region. My day job was as Office Manager for a non-profit veteran's organization for 11 1/2 years. Today I am retired.



## ELIZABETH O'REILLY

**Profession:** Artist and Teacher

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** The one thing painters never have enough of is time, and the pandemic gave me that. I

spent six weeks with a friend on Long Island and made a portfolio of new watercolors where I tried out new ideas and more abstract work. Then I went to an artist friend, Lois Dodd, in Cushing, Maine and we worked side by side for three months in her gigantic studio in her barn. The days were productive and uninterrupted. It was a kind of bliss. I would start every day with a walk, and most days I would see some interesting creature; a porcupine, a rafter of turkeys and on one special day, a pileated woodpecker. A pandemic will quiet the roads. The Caldbeck Gallery in Rockland Maine showed the watercolors in an e-catalog, and this summer my oil paintings will be in a two-person show at the same gallery with my friend. It was actually a very productive year.

I was born in West Cork, but went to school in Dublin and County Meath. I studied at St. Patrick's College and became an elementary school teacher. It was when I came to the US that I was able to get my MFA in painting at Brooklyn College. I've been painting and teaching painting since I graduated in '92. My work has been shown at the George Billis gallery in Chelsea for twenty years, but I also show at the RHA show in Dublin every year. The Caldbeck gallery in Maine will show my work from this pandemic year.

## EAMONN WALL

**Profession:** I have been writing and publishing poetry, reviews, and essays in books, magazines, and journals for thirty years. My first book, Dyckman-200th Street (Salmon Poetry) was published in 1994 and my most recent, From Oven Lane to Sun-Prairie: In Search of Irish-America (Arlen House/Syracuse UP), was published in 2019. In addition to being a writer, I work as a professor of English and Global Studies at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** I have continued with my practice of writing and reading during the pandemic. But, ethically and practically, it has been a challenge. Both the pandemic and the Trump presidency have been entwined and all-consuming, and it has been impossible for me to avoid them in what I write, particularly in poems, and even when I am trying not to. I have taken part in readings and lectures on Zoom--both a reader and audience member--and this has lessened the isolation. I have been reading a great deal while thinking, at times, that I'd prefer to be meeting friends for a drink or for coffee.



I was born in 1955, raised in Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford, and am one of the many Irish who arrived in the US in the 1980s. From 1984-1992, I lived in New York City where I earned a Ph.D. in English from the CUNY-Graduate Center. My poetry collections include Junction City: New and Selected Poems 1990-2015. Two of my non-fiction books are From the Sin-e Cafe to the Black Hills: Notes on the New Irish, and Writing the Irish West: Ecologies and Traditions. I live in Missouri where I teach at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.



## TURLOUGH MCCONNELL

**Profession:** Writer and producer. President and CEO Turlough McConnell Communications

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** Since march 2020 I have created and produced more than a dozen online productions. Production partners include Quinnipiac University, Boston College and the New York Irish Center.

Turlough McConnell is a writer, playwright and producer specializing in historical topics, including special features published in Irish-America media and projects exhibited in museums in the U.S. and Ireland. Turlough's pre-pandemic theatrical productions include The Land of Promise: A Celebration of the Scots-Irish in partnership with Carnegie Hall's Migrations the Making of America; since the pandemic he has created many virtual productions including a celebration of the 1976 film "To the Western World" for which he won the 2021 Spirit of the Festival Award at Origin 1st Irish Theatre Festival. He lives in New York with his family.



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New York \* Connecticut \* Ireland \* Internet

Meet the team that made the SSPD 10th Anniversary YouTube Premiere a global celebration and virtual success!

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William Spencer Reilly



Executive Director  
Tami Ellen McLaughlin



Irish Host & SM Consultant  
Samantha Kelly



Digital Marketing & Social Media  
Áine McManamon



Public Relations  
Bridget O'Brien PR and Events

## NYC Party



Artistic Director  
John Whelan



Associate Producer  
Kerry Keys



Volunteer Coordinator  
Betty Carroll



IT & Digital Support  
Mark Osman



Graphic Designer  
Tanner Spreer



President and CEO  
of St. Edmund's Retreat  
Fr. Tom Hoar, SSE

## Enders Island

## Technology & Recovery Partner

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## SSPD YouTube Premier Video Producer



Video Producer  
Ed Roy



Video Editor  
Molly Gamache



Associate Producer  
Tara Latorre

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AN EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE

FROM 2021 IRISH ECHO ARTS & CULTURE AWARDS HONOREE

PATRICK MICHAEL REDMOND, M.A.

PATRICK REDMOND DESIGN ([WWW.PATRICKREDMONDDDESIGN.COM](http://WWW.PATRICKREDMONDDDESIGN.COM))

WITH GRATITUDE FOR THESE EARLY INFLUENCES AND SUPPORT OF: PIUS XI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, AS I REMEMBER IT, 1964-1968 (CLASS OF '68); NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY; MILWAUKEE ART CENTER (MILWAUKEE ART MUSEUM) CHILDREN'S ART PROGRAM, 1962-1968; SCHOLASTIC ART & WRITING AWARDS®; STANDARD OIL STUDENT ART COMPETITION; 1968 MILWAUKEE JOURNAL STUDENT ART CALENDAR COMPETITION; THE MINNEAPOLIS SCHOOL OF ART (MCAD, MINNEAPOLIS COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN), MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, AS I REMEMBER IT, 1968-1970 (COHORT CLASS OF '72); WATERFORD® CRYSTAL; MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ART; POWERS DEPARTMENT STORE; CÓRAS TRÁCHTÁLA, IRISH EXPORT BOARD, ENTERPRISE IRELAND; MATA (MILWAUKEE AREA TEACHERS OF ART); WAUSAU SUMMER ART WORKSHOPS PRESENTED BY MATA, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN, MARATHON CAMPUS, WAUSAU, WISCONSIN, 1967, 1968; SAINT RITA AND SAINT AUGUSTINE SCHOOLS AND PARISHES, WEST ALLIS, WISCONSIN, AS I REMEMBER THEM, 1960-1964, 1955-1960; SAINT MATTHIAS PARISH, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN; SISTER MARY IRENITA; SISTER MARY SUE KOEPPLE; SISTER CONTARDO (SISTER FRANCES BACH); SISTER MARY KEVIN; SISTER PAT HOFF; SISTER RITA BLEIDORN "SISTER MIRIAM JOSEPH"; SISTER CLOTILDUS; SISTER DIANE NIEMER; SCHOOL SISTERS OF SAINT FRANCIS; SCHOOL SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME; SISTER GILMARY LEMBERG, SSND, AND HER "DESIGNED FOR YOU" ART LESSONS ON THE MILWAUKEE ARCHDIOCESAN TV CHANNEL; KEITH J. BEUTIN; MARTY; MR. STEVENS; ANDI; CATALYST; THE GRIFFINS; PALLOTINE FATHER ROBERT V. CARNEY; THIRD ORDER OF SAINT FRANCIS; FTA, FUTURE TEACHERS OF AMERICA; JOHN L.; VIRGINIA SMALL; BARBARA C.; BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®; PIUS XI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL JOURNAL; JEAN TORKELSON; MR. CAHILL; PIUS XI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL ART CLUB; JOE HASEK; SEVENTEEN®; SAINT JOHN'S ABBEY, COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA; KRUMBHOLZ FINE ARTS, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN; CITY OF WEST ALLIS; WEST ALLIS OFFICE SUPPLY AND THE EICCHOLZ FAMILY; KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS; WEST ALLIS STAR NEWSPAPER; HI-TIME CATHOLIC YOUTH MAGAZINE; MIKE VOGEL; HERDER & HERDER; VIRGINIA BRODERICK; WEST ALLIS PUBLIC LIBRARY; BARBARA; JAY JOSLYN; ROBERT J. DE BREY, DE BREY DESIGN; PETER SEITZ, INTERDESIGN; GAY B.; WALTER J. LENZ, JR.; JACK TRAUT; EUGENE V. MECIKALSKI; MISS CHRIS; ANN KOHL; RALPH CIESLIK; TOM G.; TOM Z.; BIRNEY QUICK; AIRPORT MUNZNER; ALBERS; BARRY LE VA; ESTHER; R. BUCKMINSTER FULLER; JOHN CAGE; ROBERT PAUL; MARGIT ROWELL; SIA ARMADJANI; RUTH JUSTUS; HERB G.; PIERCE BUTLER III; EUGENE LARKIN; MY FAMILY, INCLUDING MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS-IN-LAW; MY DAUGHTERS AND MY SONS-IN-LAW; MY GRANDCHILDREN; MY STEPDAUGHTER; MY DEAR WIFE, DEBORAH; BROTHER-IN-LAW, SISTER-IN-LAW, AND LATE MOTHER-IN-LAW; MY MANY OTHER CHERISHED RELATIVES, FRIENDS, CLASSMATES, MENTORS, TEACHERS AND CLIENTS; AND, RELATED TO THIS IRISH ECHO AWARD, MY LATE IRISH AMERICAN GRANDPARENTS, CATHERINE EDNA (O'BRIEN) AND FRANK REDMOND, AND MY LATE IRISH AMERICAN AUNT, AND MY LATE IRISH AMERICAN UNCLES; MY LIVING IRISH AMERICAN UNCLE AND OTHER LIVING UNCLE; AND MY IRISH AND IRISH AMERICAN (AND ITALIAN [SICILIAN] AND ITALIAN AMERICAN [SICILIAN AMERICAN]) RELATIVES (INCLUDING NIECES, NEPHEWS, NUMEROUS COUSINS, AND MY LATE AUNTS AND LATE UNCLES), AND ANCESTORS, ESPECIALLY MY DEAR, LATE PARENTS, GERALD F. & CARMELLA "CARMEN" (GIANQUINTO) REDMOND. IT IS AN HONOR TO RECEIVE A 2021 IRISH ECHO ARTS & CULTURE AWARD. PATRICK MICHAEL REDMOND, M.A. [UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, B.S. '73, M.A. '90] DESIGNER, ARTIST, AUTHOR, CREATIVITY ADVOCATE, ENTREPRENEUR, POET, ART DIRECTOR, RETIRED EDUCATOR; FOUNDER, CREATIVE DIRECTOR, OWNER, PATRICK REDMOND DESIGN, SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA USA [WWW.PATRICKREDMONDDDESIGN.COM](http://WWW.PATRICKREDMONDDDESIGN.COM) COPYRIGHT © PATRICK MICHAEL REDMOND. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. APOLOGIES RE: OMISSIONS OF APPRECIATION. REDMOND@PATRICKREDMONDDDESIGN.COM JMJ



# ARTS & CULTURE CELEBRATION & AWARDS



## SEAN MCMENAMIN

**Profession:** Retired Facilities Engineer/Director at DuPont in Wilmington, DE

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** As a member of the executive board of The Commodore Arts and Culture Center, we have taken advantage of this time of closures due to Covid to make improvements to our facility. We have maintained communication throughout the 2020-21 year virtually and have been able to plan various events once the city opens up again.

Sean McMenamin was born in the village of Killadangan, Westport, County Mayo, Ireland in 1941. As a child, he attended Killadangan National School, Westport Christian Brothers School, and Westport Technical School, where he specialized in construction trades. Sean enjoyed playing sports growing up, as well as experimenting with shortwave radio; connecting with different parts of the world in hopes of one day traveling to those various places. At 18, Sean began his adventure by moving to England to complete his apprenticeship. After six years, Sean decided to make the move to America. Sean's only dilemma upon his arrival was...should it be Pittsburgh or New York? But after a visit with his cousin Austin McGreal, fate intervened in that decision

when Austin said "Give Philadelphia a try." Sean then decided to call the "City of Brotherly Love" home. Sean joined the Mayo Society shortly after his arrival, along with playing football for the Mayo Team. Sean proudly served two years in the U.S. Army.

In 1966, Sean met his wife, Johanna at the Irish Center. They were married in 1968 at St. Martin of Tours church in the Oxford Circle neighborhood of Philadelphia where they raised their four children, Margaret, Sean, Noreen, and Eileen. Sean and Johanna truly lived by example as faith-filled individuals, devoted parents, and true role models of the community and the church.

Sean worked for DuPont, DuPont Merck, Bristol-Myers Squibb in Wilmington, DE, for 30 years where he retired in 2003, holding the position of Engineering and Facilities Manager; never missing a day of work during all his years. While working full time, Sean also attended Spring Garden College for two years, and became a member of the International Society of Pharmaceutical Engineers.

Sean was and still remains a dedicated father. He was a volunteer assistant coach for his daughters' Track and Field Teams at Little Flower Catholic High School for Girls for 17 years in the 1980's-90's. Sean is also "Pop" to seven grandchildren; Kaylee, Kiera, Maura, Johanna, Patrick, John, and James, as well as father-in-law to Jim, Steve, and John.

In 2009, Sean and his wife Johanna were inducted into the Delaware Valley Irish Hall of Fame. Sean lovingly and devotedly cared for Johanna throughout her two battles with cancer, until her passing in 2010.

Over the past decade, Sean has continued his spirit of charity by making it his goal to see the Irish Center flourish and continue for generations to come. With the assistance and support of members of the Irish Center, Sean set up a 10 year capitol improvement plan which included updates to the electricity, roof, air conditioning, flooring, putting in an elevator, and most of all, making the Irish Center the "Commodore John Barry Arts and Cultural Center"; a 501c3, non-profit charitable and cultural organization. Sean was elected as the President of the Mayo Association from 1971-74, and again from 2013-15. He was also the first President of the Commodore John Barry Arts and Cultural Center.

Sean was chosen to be the 2019 Grand Marshall of the Philadelphia St. Patrick's Day parade in Philadelphia in recognition of his work in keeping the Irish Culture alive in the city and surrounding suburbs. Sean's dedication to his family and to the Irish community is an inspiration. Sean has worked tirelessly and passionately to continue to preserve the Irish culture in Philadelphia for generations to come.

## CHRIS RANNEY

**Profession:** Pianist/Conductor/Music Director/Media Producer

**How have you continued to practice your art during the pandemic?** I started a company called Tune Supply along with my partner Caitlin Warbelow. Tune Supply supports musicians, singers, and dancers in the traditional music scene and provides a platform for virtual performance and instruction.

Originally from Washington State, Chris now resides in Manhattan and serves as the Associate Conductor of the hit Broadway musical Come From Away. Chris is the co-founder of the innovative new online music platform Tune Supply, which delivers virtual performance and learning resources and seeks to keep artistic communities connected and musicians working during the pandemic. As a pianist, Chris' wide range of stylistic influences are apparent in his accompaniment, bringing a fresh take to traditional tunes and modern compositions alike. His skills as a producer, engineer, and editor also shine in Tune Supply's numerous virtual productions.



**Congratulations to  
all our Award Winners  
— From The Irish Echo —**



## 'There's so much suffering'

By Peter McDermott

[pmcdermott@irishecho.com](mailto:pmcdermott@irishecho.com)

The Catholic Church lost an opportunity to speak out on the issue of suffering during the pandemic.

That's the view of leading American novelist Alice McDermott.

"Honestly, Joe Biden has come as close as I've seen to someone in the public eye speaking of the spiritual aspects of this thing we've just been through," she said.

"I suppose that there have been individual sermons that have been given," said McDermott, whose entire family came down with Covid in December. "But the public face of the church has been more about objecting to shutting down Masses than offering spiritual consolation, at a time as a society, as a world, we really need it.

"We need to be reminded of what's at the heart of our faith and here we're arguing 'let's crowd in a few more people because we're not getting the collection money.'"

The alleviation of suffering or what we do with suffering, she said, hasn't been addressed.

"We can't avoid it — isn't that the Christian message? The Catholic message is what we gain from

suffering," she said.

Instead, the Washington-based McDermott has detected a "kind of indifference to the suffering of others."

She added, "I'm dismayed as an American how little our obligation to one another seems to figure in so many people's consideration.

"Even now, I can't believe we're not outraged enough," said McDermott, whose most recent novel, the acclaimed "The Ninth Hour," features an order of nursing sisters working in early 20th century Brooklyn.

Getting sick, which the family did together, "brought another reality to it," she said.

"I guess having been through the virus personally and seen my kids go through it, it's not just the death toll, there's so much suffering," she said. "This is a really awful virus that makes people very, very sick and makes their deaths and their illnesses really terrible.

"I just don't see enough of that in the public discourse," she said. "We need a little bit more keening."

The National Book Award-winning novelist found in 2020 that she had to turn to reading poetry and plays for sustenance.

"When things were really awful in

New York, our three kids live in Brooklyn, with all the stress of that, hanging on to Gov. Cuomo's words through the worst of it last spring, I found for the first time since I've been literate that I just couldn't focus on long works of fiction, on reading," McDermott said. "My solace for all my life has been going to novels and I found that very difficult."

Fiction, as it happened, had been one source for her awareness of the last pandemic — specifically, the title work in Katherine Anne Porter's collection of short novels "Pale Horse, Pale Rider," which dealt with the suffering caused by the great influenza at the end of and after World War I.

Another was McDermott's knowledge that her own maternal grandmother, who was from Bundoran, Co. Donegal, succumbed to the flu on Manhattan's Upper West Side in March 1919, even though in their Irish way the family always said she died of pneumonia.

McDermott's other grandparents were from Mayo, Cork and Kerry, and it was when discussing immigration that the novelist referred to the nation's "spiritual malaise."

She said, "Our obligation is to the



Alice McDermott signing a copy of "The Ninth Hour."

sickest among us, to the poorest among us. We are one of them, in some way, or may find ourselves one of them.

"Immigration has always been a difficult, complex problem for a country like the United States, but one we are morally obliged to address rather than just dismiss, because it's not us, it's them.

It's amazing and ironic and sometimes stupefying that a country of immigrants could turn so readily turn against the next wave of people who are only looking for what we've been given," McDermott said.

For more about Alice McDermott's work visit [alice-mcdermott.com](http://alice-mcdermott.com).

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# From Michigan to Moveen West

By Peter McDermott

[pmcdermott@irishecho.com](mailto:pmcdermott@irishecho.com)

On July 31, 1936, a priest, the Rev. Thomas Patrick Lynch, died in Taos, N.M.

A reporter from Santa Fe wrote: "Two years ago, the young Irishman from Detroit had made the journey up to Taos for the first time. Full of hope he was starting his life's work in the missionary parish."

Katharine Darst described the sad funeral procession down the mountainside, and what she saw on the way to the Cathedral of St. Francis of Assisi in Santa Fe.

"But nowhere was there a Willa Cather to mark the passing of this boy. She who had felt so poignantly the death of an old archbishop with his life work accomplished, was not here to witness the infinitely more pathetic exit of this boy whose life had been shut off 'ere half his days were done.' Here was a sorrow which needed her pen, and alas, only I was there."

Darst sent a copy of the article to the priest's brother, Edward, in Detroit.

If the death of a young priest was noteworthy enough for his Irish family, it would take on added significance. For Edward Jr., who at age 10 was the only child pictured in a large group at Fr. Lynch's ordination in Detroit, would at 12 wander into the basement of a funeral home to see his dead uncle being dressed in a fresh white alb and green chasuble in preparation for the wake that night and 10 o'clock Mass at St. John's the next morning, Thursday, Aug. 6, 1936.

"That vision — a young boy's witness of a dead priest and living men lifting him into the casket — shaped his life and my life and my family's life for going on seven decades now," according to his second son writing in the early years of the 21st century.

Instead of becoming a priest himself, Edward Lynch Jr. followed his true vocation, and most of his nine children followed him into the business he founded.

Thomas Lynch, the son named for the priest, has been a funeral director in Milford, Mich., since 1974. He is also in the "poetry



Thomas Lynch.

business," as his cousin Nora Lynch, of Moveen West, Kilkee, Co. Clare, used to say. He happily embraced the two vocational identities, and also took easily to being Irish as well as American.

In the first case, having an interesting day job only raised his profile, especially in the early 21st century when the HBO drama "Six Feet Under," set in a family-run funeral home, was a hit with viewers and critics alike. He'd written two books — "The Undertaking: Life Studies from the Dismal Trade" and "Bodies in Motion and at Rest: On Metaphor and Mortality" — that the show's creator Alan Ball admired.

"These two collections of essays about life as an undertaker gave me a sense of the tone I wanted the show to have," he said, calling Lynch a "brilliant, soulful writer."

"You funeral types have always understood," Ball told him in an

email. "Once you put a dead guy in the room you can talk about anything."

Lynch also understands that his own tribe have a particular affinity for the process: "For the Irish and Irish-Americans, the only spectacle more likely to bring out a crowd than a blushing couple at the brink of their wedding is a fresh corpse at the edge of its grave."

## 'Sentence commuted'

As for that second coupling of identities, by the time he wrote "Booking Passage, We Irish and Americans" (2005), he had more than paid his dues in his ancestral land, having been coming and going for 35 years.

"In the late 1960s, my life was, like many American men my age, up for grabs," Lynch writes. A draft lottery was held on the first day of the last month of the decade. Sept. 14 was the first date drawn. "Men born on that day were going to war," he says. His birthday, Oct. 16, wasn't pulled out at 254. "It was like a sentence commuted," he recalls. "I was free to go."

He would not be sent off to an unwinnable war. Instead, the 21-year-old asked his widowed grandmother for the address of her husband's relatives in Ireland, folks she'd dutifully sent Christmas and Easter greetings to every year. They were the "distant old-country cousins," who were mentioned in their prayers:

"Tommy and Nora Lynch on the banks of the River Shannon. Don't forget."

The brother and sister were both unmarried and the end of the line. Tommy was to die in 1971, the year after he met his American namesake in person. Nora lived on another 21 years, during which time Lynch was witness to a radical transformation within the cottage's walls, though the landscape would largely stay the same.

In time, Thomas Lynch became next of kin to Nora, his first cousin, twice removed.

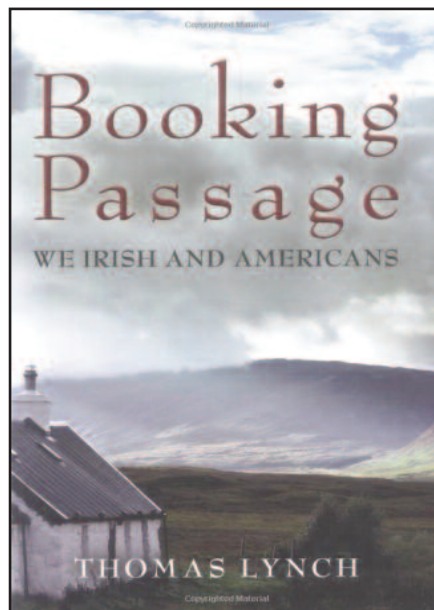
Circumstances can make that connection a close one, because, first of all, it involves two siblings. In this case, Nora's father was Sinon, and the brother who left and settled in Michigan was Tom, father to the priest, and great-grandfather to the poet.

I can relate. Mary, my great-grandmother, raised her eight children in Dublin, my mother's father among them. John, Mary's brother, was father to eight children on the farm in West Clare. Their first-born daughters were educated and accomplished — Mary's Kate had an important clerical job and John's Mai was a nurse. These cousins, both single, could be trusted one summer during World War II to bring safely an extroverted 7-year-old Dubliner down to the farm in West Clare. The child, my mother, was enraptured by her three weeks there, and talked about that vacation and all subsequent vacations and trips until the day she died in 2019.

Mai would become godmother to my sister, her little first cousin, twice removed. Mai's brother, Michael, was my only relative in New York when I arrived in 1993. And a welcoming one he was, too.

Part of my West Clare family's story involves Loop Head. John and Mary's grandmother was from a house just beside the lighthouse and she walked barefoot the 12 or 14 miles inland on her wedding day. Her elderly descendants referred to her in the late 20th century as the "woman from the west."

Lynch mentions Loop Head, of course, and the Victorian resort Kilkee and the old market town of





Kilrush. But it's the family homestead that has pride of place in his heart.

"Nora Lynch's house, four generations removed from the young man who left there in 1890 and who started our family in America, fills me with a sense of the grandeur of Time," he wrote in a long letter to Síle de Valera, a government minister and a local member of the Dáil, after Nora's death.

The Land Commission had made Nora a squatter on her own land under pressure from local "grabbers" and "blackguards." It would eventually be resolved, with the land going to a couple she was close to. Thomas Lynch, meantime, had inherited the cottage, which had been a wedding gift in the era of the Famine to "our common man," as he called their shared male ancestor, Nora's grandfather, Pat Lynch, who died in 1907 when she was 4 or 5

## Luxury lost

Lynch writes: "Can the bigger picture be seen in the small? Can we see the Western World in a western parish? Can we know the species by the specimen?" Well, not so much really, for the book tends to focus on and reflect a particularly Irish-American sensibility.

"It was in Moveen I first got glimpses of recognition, moments of clarity when it all made sense—my mother's certain faith, my father's dark humor, the look he'd sometimes get that was distant, preoccupied, unknowable," Lynch says. "And my grandmothers' love of contentious talk, the two grandfathers' trouble with drink, the family inheritance of all that."

A couple of decades on, when his brother came to help him with Nora's funeral, he was able to view this with a certain distance: "Ireland happened to Big Pat in 1992 the way it happened to me in 1970, as a whole-body, blood-borne, core-experience; an echo thumping in the cardiovascular pulse of things, in every vessel of the being and the being's parts, all the way down to the extremities."

Lynch recalls about Pat, "'Oh God,' he half-sobbed through the shambles of his emotions, 'to think of it, Tom, the truth and beauty of it.'"

"I remarked to myself, given



Loop Head.

that the brother and I were both occupationally inclined to get through these solemnities while maintaining an undertakerly reserve, I thought his emotings rather strange."

At the heart of all this is a search for authenticity.

"Instead of Methodists or Muslims, we are golfers now; gardeners, bikers, and dead bowlers," Lynch writes, "The bereaved are not so much family and friends or coreligionists as fellow hobbyists and enthusiasts."

He adds, "And I have become less the funeral director and more the memorial caddy of sorts, getting the dead out of the way and the living assembled within a theatre that is neither sacred nor secular, but increasingly absurd—a triumph of accessories over essentials, gimmicks over the genuine. The dead are downsized or disappeared or turned into knickknacks in a kind of funereal karaoke."

Lynch had been thinking for a while about writing a sort of "Roots" for the Irish, celebrating those who left and those who stayed. Then all changed the year he began writing it. After 9/11, Americans had lost, he says, the "luxury of isolation and purposeful ignorance of the larger world of woes, a taste for which I'd acquired in my protected suburban youth and overindulged throughout my adulthood—fattening, as Americans especially do, on our certainty that it will all be taken care of by whoever's in charge."

Much later in another context, he discusses certainty, or

certainties, and someone being in charge and "watching out for the likes of me."

He says, "But faith, it turns out, is not child's play, seasoned as it must be by the facts of life—love hurts; we die; hope falters; God, it seems, goes missing sometimes."

"This is where the smarmy and narcissistic doxologies of the day fail us. Faith is not for dealing with God's grandeur—the sunset, the candle flame, the child's face. God is manifest in a lover's eyes. Faith is rather for the hours of God's absence, when we are most alone, betrayed, in pain, afraid."

Lynch has great affection for the old-school priests of his youth, like family friend Fr. Thomas Kenny, who was from Galway.

On her deathbed his mother "saw Fr. Kenny, dead himself for fifteen years, coming to take her by the hand into heaven. She saw him plainly, called him by his name, and smiled beatifically when she told us about it all."

Fr. Kenny had retired just as the Vatican II reforms were being discussed in the American church and went home to Ireland. "He found the Irish Church much as he's left it years before—much as I'd found it in 1970, established, in charge, completely enmeshed with the life of the nation, and its people."

Lynch seems less impressed with the latter-day priestly caste, or at least not with the first-name accessibility and the fashion fails and the scandals, accompanied by a doubling down on certain aspects of doctrine. "Divorce and abortion and contraception would seem, I am not the first to say," he

writes, "odd topics for manly celibates to get so embroiled in."

He recalls an encounter with a young English priest of Irish parentage on the island of Iona. The American traveled up on impulse when on a trip to England. "I'd always wanted to see this place," he says.

He revealed to his new acquaintance that Mary, whom he'd married recently, was caring for his four children back home in Michigan. No, his first wife was not dead, and, no, he'd never gotten an annulment. And he went to describe the idyllic relationship with Mary and some of the details of their wedding.

"Of course, that was only a 'civil' marriage," Fr. Peter said.

"Well, that would be an improvement on the one before," I told him."

There are other great lines like that and some memorable paragraphs.

Here is Thomas Lynch on the attitudes to weather in the corner of the world he made his part-time home: "'Grand day, thank God,' is what they mostly say, grateful to be up and out in it. Or 'soft day,' or 'it's very broken.' One rarely hears the out-and-out complaint that the weather in West Clare is severely damaged compared to, say, Cuba or Connecticut, or Melbourne, or East Clare, where trees can stand and gardens thrive and people can go about their business."

*For more about Thomas Lynch's four books of essays, five collections of poetry and a book of stories, visit [thomaslynch.com](http://thomaslynch.com).*