

The Arts Office understands the difficulties artists, creatives and our arts communities face in the current circumstances and we continue to provide valuable support throughout the county during this time. We have long recognised the pivotal role that the arts play in society and believe in the importance of the arts to individuals and communities. As a fundamental element of a vibrant and sustainable community, Meath County Council has, through the County Arts Development Plan 2019-2024, committed to nurturing a creative working life for professional artists and creators at all stages of their career. At a time when most artists and creatives have seen their work, performances and engagements cancelled or postponed for the foreseeable future, this support is crucial. We have reached out to our creative and artistic communities and, in response, have developed a series of initiatives, some of which are below, to support, highlight and celebrate creativity in Meath.

Please stay in contact, let us know how you are getting on and how your work has been affected by the current crisis. We will continue to support artists and creatives and look forward to meeting you all again on the other side.

Gerardette Bailey, County Arts Officer



Keep an eye on the Meath County Council Twitter and FaceBook pages for details of **Toradh Thursdays** - our **Toradh Gallery** online, featuring some of the wonderful works recently exhibited in the Toradh Gallery, Ashbourne and Toradh2 Kells.

Our lovely new **Ceol Comfort** music series which will feature the beautiful music of Perlee – Saramai Leech & Cormac O Keefe, Bernadette NicGabhann, Caitlin NicGabhann, Brenda Castles, Antoin MacGabhann and Michael Brunnock amongst others.

Sit back and enjoy **Theatre Tuesday** featuring a variety of monologues read by award winning playwright **Deirdre Kinahan** from a selection of her works. We will also be adding **Children’s Theatre Hour** and fun art activities for all the family.



Our **Training Notes – Music in a Healthcare Setting** training programme has moved online to enable participants complete their course.

So too has the **Meath Artists Meet Up** programme with Arts Manager & Facilitator Aisling O’Brien.



The fantastic team at the county’s youth theatre – **Act Out Youth Theatre**, in consultation with Youth Theatre Ireland, have devised an online programme to enable the members continue with their skills and development. With both branches – Navan and Dunshaughlin at membership capacity in senior and junior level, this continuity was essential. Congratulations to Anthony Kinahan, Artistic Director and his team on the engaging and innovative programme they have put in place.

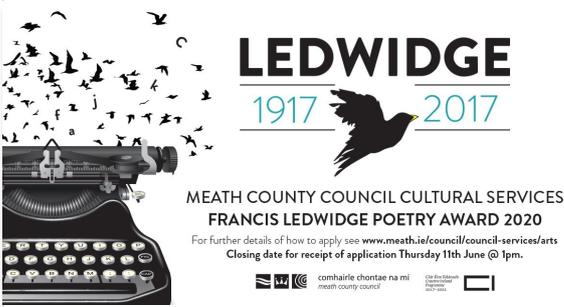


We have also introduced a number of new opportunities for artists and will be adding to them over the coming weeks. Of interest to new, emerging or recently published writers is our announcement of a **new mentorship partnership with Words Ireland** as part of their national mentorship programme. Our colleagues in the County Library have recently announced a **Writer in Residence Scheme**.....



And to celebrate Poetry Day on April 30th we announced the launch of the Francis Ledwidge Poetry Award 2020. Full details of how to apply for these opportunities are in the news section below.

OPPORTUNITIES



To celebrate national Poetry Day, Meath County Council Cultural Services is delighted to announce the launch of the **Meath County Council Francis Ledwidge Poetry Award 2020**.

This award, supported by Creative Ireland, is aimed at poets, and is designed to help support and nurture the rich poetry culture alive in Ireland today.

Named in honour of the famous Irish war poet and soldier: Francis Ledwidge *'Poet of the Blackbirds'*; The Francis Ledwidge Poetry Award seeks to support Irish poets both financially and creatively.

The awardee will receive a week- long residential stay at one of Ireland's finest artists' retreats: the prestigious Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Annaghmakerrig, Co Monaghan, and a cash prize of €1,500.00.

Helping to promote development in the craft of poetry, the artist's residency at Annaghmakerrig will afford the winning writer escape from the everyday to focus on creative work. Nestled amongst the beautiful, tranquil lakes and drumlins of County Meath and work in a community of like- minded people.

The **Meath County Council Francis Ledwidge Poetry Award 2020** promotes the conception of new works, the completion of ongoing projects and the regeneration of creative thinking through the provision of a creative residency and financial reward.

To enter, applicants must submit a biography, writing samples and a creative residency work proposal. Full details at <https://www.meath.ie/council/news/meath-county-council-cultural-services-francis-ledwidge-poetry-award-2020>



Meath Arts Office & Words Ireland National Mentoring Programme

Words Ireland is a grouping of seven literature organisations who have worked together collaboratively since 2015 to provide coordinated professional development and resource services to the literature sector. They aim to establish increased opportunities for writers at all stages in their careers. Their remit includes the provision of professional development opportunities, with a particular focus on mid-career and advanced career practitioners. They provide mentoring opportunities, creating meaningful employment for professional writers and opportunities for emerging writers to advance their creative practice.

Meath Arts Office will be supporting one mentorship programme for a writer from or living in Meath under this initiative. This initiative is available to new, emerging or recently published writers. The mentoring process involves 4 x two-hour meetings between the selected 'mentee' and their chosen professional writer over a 6-8 month period. The mentor will read up to 10,000 words of the mentee's prose, or a selection of poems, in advance of each meeting and share their critical feedback and advice. The work in progress of the mentee is discussed in depth.

Applications must be made via Submittable. Selected mentees must be willing and able to meet mentors via Skype, Zoom or phone for initial meetings.

Full application details are available here: <http://wordsireland.ie/national-mentoring-programme-2020/>

Closing date for applications is noon, Monday 4 May, 2020.



Meath County Council Library Service Writer in Residence Scheme



Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme
2017-2022



Meath County Council invites applications for a Writer in Residence, under the Creative Ireland Meath programme.

The residency runs for the period June 2020 to December 2020 and will be managed by Meath County Council Library Service.

The residency is open to published writers working in any genre of fiction or poetry who have significant experience in delivering high quality writing experiences for children, young people and adults.

Full details of the scheme and how to apply available at: <https://www.meath.ie/council/news/call-for-writer-in-residence-2020>

Closing date for receipt of applications is May 11th at 5:00pm

In case you missed it.....

First up in the **Ceol Comfort** series was *Charlies Song* from the recently released debut E.P. *Slow Creature* by the fabulous Perlee. More amazing Meath talent in musicians Saramai Leech & Cormac O Keefe, award winning cinematographer Jass Foley & film maker Mark Smyth. Shot in and around Kells, a wonderful Meath collaboration.

<https://youtu.be/dQdEObxpBCA>

This was followed by *Easter Blossom*, a beautifully poignant piece specially composed and performed by renowned Ashbourne based fiddle player Antóin MacGabhann.

<https://www.facebook.com/MeathCountyCouncil/videos/283360202678288/>



Our first **Toradh online exhibition** was **The Perfect Rain**,

a solo exhibition by Meath based children's author-

illustrator Tatyana Feeney. Originally from North Carolina,

Tatyana has lived in Trim, Co Meath for the past 15 years where she draws inspiration for her art works and stories from the irregular Irish weather. Her latest publication entitled *Eva and the Perfect Rain* (The O'Brien Press), follows a little girl's pursuit for perfect umbrella rain: not too windy, too thundery or too drizzly. The book and it's imagery form the basis of this exhibition.

<https://www.facebook.com/MeathCountyCouncil/videos/884739068620516/>

Second in the series **The Fragility of Culture** features the work of Trim artist Dermot McNevin with musical accompaniment by international harper Siobhan Armstrong. Dermot, who has work in the OPW State Art Collection, MCC Art Collection and DIT Permanent Collection presents a body of intriguing abstract works on canvas referencing the Meath landscape and the counties long association with the harp.

<https://www.facebook.com/MeathCountyCouncil/videos/2916790478399169/>

Theatre Tuesdays

Sit back and enjoy award winning playwright **Deirdre Kinahan** read two excerpts from her play **Summer Fruits**, a humorous peek into the world of her mayhem inducing character Denise!

<https://www.facebook.com/MeathCountyCouncil/videos/summer-fruits-with-deirdre-kinahan/270937980858540/>

<https://www.facebook.com/MeathCountyCouncil/videos/278443753177198>