



IRISH HERITAGE

Supporting young Irish musicians and Irish composers

3rd October 2016

NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends and Supporters

We launched our 2016-2017 programme on Wednesday 15th September at the Royal Overseas League. Those of you who were fortunate to be there will have appreciated the special talents of the 2015 Irish Heritage Music Bursary winners - mezzo-soprano, **Carolyn Holt**, and pianist, **Maire Carroll**. Carolyn was accompanied by *Michael Pandya*, piano. I hope you enjoyed the interval and post concert receptions and the opportunity to meet the musicians, and their parents, who came over from Ireland for the event. You can get all the latest details of our programme on our website www.irishheritage.co.uk along with other news.

We had a very successful Golf Fundraising Day on Friday 30th September at Luton Hoo Golf Club and Spa, followed by dinner and entertainment – with a showcase performance by young Irish Heritage musicians – Eimear McGeown, flute; Christopher Cull, baritone; and Siobhain O’Higgins, piano. Irish Heritage is very grateful for the generous Main Sponsorship of the Modebest Group and the many other firms that entered teams, gave prizes, auction items and other forms of sponsorship. This event is a major contribution to our work in supporting young Irish musicians and Irish composers through our programme of events and our Bursary. Further details of the Golf Day will be on our website blog in due course.

THE NEXT EVENT

We return to The Forge Music Venue in Camden on **Monday 14th November 2016 at 7.30pm** for the World Premiere of a highly innovative production, **London Irish Reflections**, that seeks to contextualise the experience of the Irish of several generations working and living in London.

London Irish Reflections is a new song-cycle for soprano, harp and electronics, composed by **David Wallace**, in collaboration with **Dan Milmo** who has written a set of poems derived from in depth interviews with members of the Irish emigrant community in London.

Daire Halpin (soprano) and **Jean Kelly** (harpist), both of whom are well known to Irish Heritage audiences (Jean is our Joint Artistic Director), will premiere the piece in a London concert at The Forge as part of Irish Heritage’s Season **‘1916-2016 A Century of Music in Ireland’**.

Daire is a soprano who has sung principal roles with the major opera companies in the UK as well as regular appearances with the RTE Concert and Symphony Orchestras. She has a keen interest in the creation of new work and has delivered world premieres of works by Nico Muhly, Craig Armstrong, Colin Mawby, Torsten Rasch and Raymond Deane.

Jean Kelly is an in demand harpist working in London in the Classical Chamber Music and Commercial Music worlds. She works with composers such as Jonny Greenwood, Guy Barker and Dario Marianelli, on a range of projects, from commercial film scores to acoustic and electronic contemporary music. They are both graduates of Yehudi Menuhin’s ‘Live Music Now!’ scheme where they specialised in workshops for older people and have experienced first hand the power of memory through music and song.

Daire and Jean commissioned the work from composer David Wallace (whose opera ‘Lucy’

won a director's choice award from the Boston Metro Opera) and writer Dan Milmo (deputy business editor at The Guardian). All the artists involved are currently living in London and have Irish roots.

"The music for London Irish Reflections ties together aspects of the classical tradition with that of the Irish tradition. I have tried to create a sound world for each of the bodies of text that allows the message behind the text to really shine through. Working with both concert and electric harps helped to create a contrast in sound world that the text seemed to contain, one where the old and the new collide with the same agenda: the sense of loss at having to relocate." – David Wallace, composer

"The text for London Irish Reflections is based on interviews with relatives and friends from Ireland who had moved to the UK and, largely, conversations with attendees at the Southwark Irish Pensioners Project. Instead of singling out individual contributions, I brought the interviews together under themes - such as displacement, belonging - where all these voices can coexist and create a common identity, a shared experience. I found a lot of the discussions at the Pensioners Project very moving because the interviewees had so many fascinating stories to tell about themselves but they had never been recorded. This piece is a modest attempt at addressing that." – Dan Milmo, writer

"For a long time, I've wanted to create a piece that offers a contemporary take on the emigrant experience. Being an emigrant myself, I found a lot of the literature focused on the darker, tragic side of life as an emigrant. I wanted to explore the experiences of other emigrants and find a way to share our stories so we can reach out to the many many people whose lives have been touched by emigration. David and Dan have produced a very special and unique piece which Jean and I can't wait to bring to life." – Daire Halpin, soprano

"I visited Southwark Irish Pensioners Project to perform with Daire Halpin, my cousin and fellow Londoner. We were moved by the tales of hardship endured by the audience members – a generation of Irish emigrants who arrived in London in the 1950s and 60s. The comparison to our own trouble-free, racism-free experience of moving to London was shocking to me, and I came away feeling that I owed a huge debt to this group of people who contributed so much to change the attitude towards Irish people in Britain, and who allowed my transition from Cork to London to be so smooth." – Jean Kelly, harpist

Tickets for this event (£20 including wine reception and programme) can be booked on-line at www.irishheritage.co.uk click on DONATE (no booking fee), or through Kathy O'Regan, kathy.oregan@hotmail.co.uk tel. 020 7226 4578. As capacity at The Forge is limited you are advised to book early.

Venue: The Forge Music Venue, 3-7 Delancey Street, Camden NW1 7NL at 7.30pm
The Forge, which is in the heart of vibrant Camden, is just 5 minutes walk south from Camden Town Underground station or 7 minutes north from Mornington Crescent. *"Since opening in 2009 The Forge has embodied the vibrancy, charm and eclecticism of Camden Town, bringing together the diversity of London's eclectic music scene and making it a firm favourite amongst musicians and music-lovers alike"*. www.forgevenue.org.

OTHER EVENTS

Dorothy Lynch of the Institute of Irish Studies in Liverpool has asked Irish Heritage to invite you to the book launch of Maggie Wadey's latest novel, *The English Daughter*, on Wednesday 5th October at their London Campus in Finsbury Square, London. Details below **but please contact Dorothy Lynch if you wish to attend.**

The English Daughter is a new book by playwright, novelist and screenwriter, Maggie Wadey, in which she explores the family secrets hidden in her Irish mother's past in rural Ireland, which only came to light at the end of her mother's life.

5th October 2016 at 6.30pm

University of Liverpool in London
33 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1AG

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REMINDER: FRIENDS OF IRISH HERITAGE

We are grateful to those of you who renewed your *Friends of Irish Heritage* membership (£50 per household), or joined for the first time, and to those Friends who purchased a **Season Ticket** (£130 or £190 for two which includes Friends membership). If you have not joined or rejoined please contact Kathy O'Regan: kathy.oregan@hotmail.co.uk tel: 020 7226 4578, or log on to our website where secure payments can be made. We offer you a unique opportunity to help young Irish musicians at the time they need it most for their continuing education.

Thank you all for your continuing support and we hope to see you at many of our events.

With best wishes.

Niall Gallagher

Chairman
Irish Heritage

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