

# MIC FEMFEST 2024

A festival highlighting the experiences & achievements of women

*Caithfear Éisteacht*

March  
Tuesday 5th  
Wednesday 6th  
Thursday 7th



## Opening Event

### Justine McCarthy: A Lot Done - More To Do

1-2pm G10

MIC FemFest 2024 is opened by Justine McCarthy, a weekly columnist with The Irish Times. Justine has won more than a dozen awards for her journalism, is a frequent broadcaster and the author of three books - Mary McAleese: The Outsider, Deep Deception: Ireland's Swimming Scandals, and An Eye on Ireland. Welcome by Dr Fiona McDonagh, Chair, MIC FemFest and Introduction by Dr Angela Canny, MIC, followed by a choral reading of the FemFest Manifesto by the FemFest Committee.



## Afternoon Event

### Feminist Song

2.30-3.30pm G10

#### Bread and Roses: A Socio-Musical Case Study of Feminist Resistance -Dr Gwen Moore, MIC

This talk invites the audience to consider the power of music as a vehicle for social protest across cultural, social and political divides, past and present. Dr Moore argues that the power of protest song extends beyond the lyrics and the score and beyond the production and reception of the song as artefact. She claims rather that it is in collective singing that a strong unity of purpose is fostered.



#### Feminist Anthems! Jude Mc Inerney and Michelle Ryan, MIC

This project explores individual interpretations of the Feminist Anthem. It consists of an audio piece in the style of a mixed-tape podcast compiled from submissions of favourite Feminist Anthems from MIC staff, students and the wider Limerick community. Jude and Michelle analyse this compilation in terms of the genre, era, and content of the anthems represented. Attendees are encouraged to wear their favourite band t-shirt, badge or anything that gives a nod to the era or performer of their own favourite Feminist Anthem. The audio piece will also be broadcast on WIRED FM Student Radio and made available online. Introductions by Dr Susan Liddy, MIC.

## Evening Event

### Stretch on Your Grave: A Tribute to Sinéad O'Connor

This event is a celebration of Sinéad O'Connor's life and music through readings and song. Come along to hear Deirdre Clare and Dr David Clare, MIC, perform Nothing Compares 2 U, Stretched on Your Grave, Black Boys on Mopeds and other hits. There will also be readings from various Limerick-based performers.



5.30-6.30pm Meditation Space, Foundation Building

## Morning Event → Student Performances 11-12 noon Halla

Us, The Beneath is a devised performance presented by 2nd Year BA students Matthew O'Rourke, Megan Warde, & Gránia Curran. The performance is an ode to forests, bodies, womanhood, and growth. Based on a poem by Matthew O'Rourke, it explores what community means, what it can do, and how it is undermined by patriarchal structures and behaviours.

Mary I Dramatic Arts Society (MIDAS) invites you to enjoy a performed reading of selected feminist plays from 1970s & 1980s Italy. These highly controversial and impactful stories were written by ground-breaking feminist playwrights. And, in this performed reading, the distinctly comedic resonance of their work in contemporary Irish contexts will be revealed.

## Lunchtime event → Song Seeking 1-2pm G10



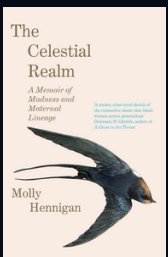
This event shares songs and insights from some of the Ukrainian women who take part in the Song Seeking project. This is a Sing Ireland initiative that preserves participants' connection to their homeland whilst fostering new relationships through cultural exchange. Introduction by Dr Ailbhe Kenny, MIC.

## Afternoon event → Talk by Professor Pat O'Connor 3-4pm G10

Prof Pat O'Connor, Professor Emeritus of Sociology and Social Policy, UL and Visiting Full Professor, Geary Institute, UCD, reads from her recently published memoir: A 'proper' woman? One woman's story of success and failure in academia. Her 120 publications include nine books and over 80 peer reviewed articles. Pat was the first woman full professor of sociology in Ireland (1997), the first woman full professor in any discipline in UL, and the first woman Faculty Dean in UL. Introduction by Dr Dorothy Morrissey, MIC.



## Evening event → The Celestial Realm: Discussing Memoir, Madness, and Maternal Lineage



Molly Hennigan is an Irish writer and editor living in Galway. As a child, she visited her grandmother in various psychiatric hospitals. Tracing the organic path of her grandmother's experience to her great-grandmother's time in Irish mental hospitals, Molly explores her own family trauma and what it means to be an unconventional woman in a society that values conformity. Molly will read from her first book *The Celestial Realm* which was nominated for the An Post Irish Book Awards Newcomer of the Year, followed by an interview with Dr Deirdre Flynn, MIC.

5.30-6.30pm G10

## Lunchtime event **Caoineadh/Keening** 12.30-2pm G10

Keening, from the Irish caoineadh, was an Irish traditional vocal artform, performed in mourning for the dead. The women entrusted with performing the keening, bean chainte/ mná caointe, played an integral role in paying tribute to the deceased and articulating the grief felt by the mourning community.



This event will shine a light on the traditional role of keening in rituals around death in Ireland, with a talk from the bilingual writer and UCD professor emerita Angela Bourke who has conducted and published extensive research on this practice, the women who performed keening and the poetry they crafted. This will be followed by a talk and performance by vocal and visual artist, Ceara Conway, who will discuss her “Making Visible” project. Commissioned by CREATE (2014), Ceara created a series of contemporary vocal performances informed by her time engaging with "Able Women", a group of women seeking asylum in Ireland. Introduction by Dr Vicky Brady, MIC.

## Afternoon event **Behind the Scenes - Literary Women and the Complexities of Publishing**

In association with the Irish Women's Writing Network (1880-1920)

Women are central to the publishing industry, frequently serving in behind-the-scenes roles as editors, reviewers, copywriters, designers, marketers, project managers, and public relations professionals. This roundtable session introduces Lucy Hogan (Royal Irish Academy and Publishing Ireland) who will discuss her experiences in the business. She is joined by members of the Network, Deirdre Brady, Sinéad Mooney, Caoilfhionn Ní Bheacháin and Kathryn Laing, who will offer snapshots of the legacy of Irish women writers and publishers, opening up broader conversations about women in publishing, women and publishing as an industry, and the intersections between the arts and business. The session concludes with a short launch by Professor Bill Leahy, Dean of Arts, of recent MIC and Network publications relating to women's lives and writing. Chaired by Dr Kathryn Laing, MIC.



2.30-4pm G10

## Evening Event **Sara Baume in conversation Eimear Ryan** 5.30-7pm Tara 117



In this event author Sara Baume will talk about her work in conversation with author Eimear Ryan. Sara is the author of three novels, *Spill Simmer Falter Wither*, *A Line Made by Walking* and *Seven Steeples*. In 2023 Sara was named one of Granta magazine's Best Young British Novelists. Eimear Ryan is the author of a novel, *Holding Her Breath* (2021), and a memoir, *The Grass Ceiling* (2023), both published by Penguin, Sandycove. She is a co-founder of the literary journal *Banshee* and its publishing imprint, *Banshee Press*.



Tuesday 5th March

# MIC THURLES

Wednesday 6th March

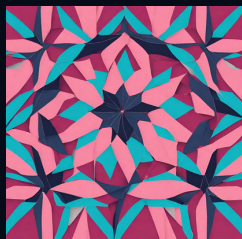


## ✦ Opening Event 11-1pm G16

Opening of FemFest at MIC Thurles by Dr Deirdre Brady. Talk by Siobhán McQuillan, a registered art therapist, and founder of Arts Reach Ireland and of Amber Refuge's One Million Stars project. This project is a community arts project aimed at connecting communities across Ireland in solidarity against domestic abuse and all forms of violence.

## Star Weaving Workshops

Day 1 of a series of 'Star Weaving Workshops' led by students, staff and community volunteers, facilitated by Dr Joan Finlay, MIC. One hour daily sessions will take place:



Tuesday 5th to Friday 8th March.  
'Ref' canteen

## Rest as Resistance Reclaiming the Right to Rest

Dr Rebecca Purcell, MIC will explore the 'Rest' movement, examining 'Rest' as resistance against systems of oppression through the practice of Yoga Nidra.

1-2pm The Chapel

## Unheard Voices 10-11.30am Room 15

This panel reclaims space for those in Irish society whose voices have remained hidden, forgotten or ignored. With papers ranging from topics including the role of the Irish government in influencing women's role in society in the 1950s, women in design and publishing in the 70s and 80s, current gender pay trends, marginalised groups in education, and transsexual issues, this discussion prompts us to consider how we can learn from the past to think about Irish society today and in the future.

Panellists: Ms Molly Daly, Dr Hannagh McGinley, Dr Eimear Nic Conmhaic and Dr Catherine Stapleton.  
Chair: Dr Maria D. Ryan.

## Tea & Conversation

Forging & sharing ideas- with colleagues from MIC Limerick. Facilitator: Dr Marian Carcary.

11.30-12.30pm Staff tearoom

## Closing of FemFest MIC Thurles 2.30pm

Closing address by Head of School, Dr Finn Ó Murchú.

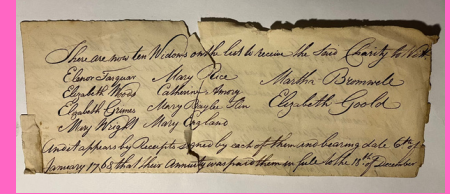
## Guided College Tour 3pm

With special focus on the role of women within the College. Led by Ruth Talbot, MIC.

# OTHER

## Exhibition The Foyer, Foundation Building

Mrs Alice Craven, a wealthy Protestant widow, bequeathed in her will of 1729 monies to support the setting up of Limerick's Craven Charity. This charity was committed to the care of the Church of Ireland Bishop of Limerick who established a trust in her name – the Alice Craven Trust, which still survives today.



It was the first of several similar private female-funded trusts to emerge in eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century Limerick, including Mrs Hannah Villiers' charity (1821) and Mrs Hall's Almshouses (ca.1848). The surviving Craven papers span the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and include a list of all the widows over nearly 300 years. We also have a copy of Alice's will (1729). Curated by Dr Paul O'Brien, Dr Helene Bradley Davies, Dr Ursula Callaghan and Killian Webster, MIC, the exhibition will recognise these long forgotten widows and recover their lost voices.

## Poetry event Wednesday 6th of March at 7.30pm White House Bar, Limerick

Esteemed poet Patricia-Anne Moore performs at the First Wednesday Series at the White House Bar followed by an Open Mic. Presented by Limerick Writers' Centre & Lime Square Poets. Hosted by D'or Seifer and Dr Lauren McNamara, MIC.

## MIC Library MIC LIBRARY will host an exhibition over the course of FemFest on topics related to the festival.

## Thank you!

The MIC FemFest 2024 Committee would like to thank MIC's Professional Services staff for their collegiality and support in planning this festival. Thanks to Michael Keane, Rachel Costello, Caroline Duffy, Eoin Buckley, Trish Kennedy, Rachael Finucane, Edel Fahy, Ben Sweeney, Aisling Allen, Luke Cleary, Fr Michael Wall, Sean Smith and MIC Buildings and Estates, and Master Chefs. Thanks to Dr Brian Desmond for his support of the student performances. Thanks too to Professor Lorraine McIlrath for her support and to MIC EDII Project Awards for financial support for the festival. Additionally, we would like to extend our thanks to our speakers and performers, to the student volunteers, and to anyone else who supported the festival in any way!



@FemFestMIC