



Pictured at the launch of Roscommon Drama Festival 2010 are Committee members. Back row (left to right): Paraic Brennan, Marie McCrann, Con Connolly, Brigeen Fitzmaurice, Eilis Gilvarry, Fr. Eugene McLoughlin (President). Front row (left to right): Joe Nally (Treasurer), Paddy Kearney (Hon. Member), Mary Cox (Chairperson), Deirdre Kelly and Mary Finn (Secretary).

Curtain call on Friday night

Nine nights of top class drama get underway on Friday night next, as Roscommon Drama Festival celebrates its golden jubilee.

It's 50 years since the first ever Roscommon Drama Festival back in 1960, and although the festival has had a break in the intervening years, the 2010 programme of events aims to honour that anniversary and the people who played a pivotal role in making it the success it was and has again become.

Re-established four years ago, the present day festival is now one of the premiere cultural and social events in Roscommon Town. For the past number of months amateur drama groups the length and breadth of the country have been deep in rehearsal in preparation for the springtime circuit and Roscommon is proud to host nine nights of unmissable drama starting on Friday the 5th of March in Roscommon Arts Centre.

This year's adjudicator is Pauline Byrne from Duncannon Co. Wexford. Pauline is currently

lecturing in Communications for the National College of Ireland. Pauline has acted in and directed many productions and was awarded best director for her production of 'The Lesson' at Oakville Ontario Canada. We are delighted to have her as adjudicator in Roscommon this year.

The festival will be officially opened on Friday the 5th of March and is a major showcase for amateur drama, with no less than three groups from Wexford taking part in addition to groups from Claregalway, Tubbercurry, Thurles, Galway, Dunmore, and Charleville, all presenting a wonderful mix of play as they compete for awards and nominations to the All Ireland Finals.

On Friday night, March 5th, Thurles Drama Group will perform 'Aristocrats' by Brian Friel. The following night Bunclody/Kilmyshall Drama Group from Wexford will perform 'Death of a Salesman' by Arthur Miller. On Sunday, March 7th, Bridge Drama Group will stage Noel

Coward's 'Blithe Spirit'. Monday night, March 8th, sees 'The Last Apache Reunion' by Bernard Farrell, performed by Dunmore Amateur Dramatic Society. On March 9th, Compántas Lir from Claregalway will perform 'I do not like thee Dr. Fell' by Bernard Farrell. Shoestring Theatre Company from Charleville take to the stage on March 10th with 'The Salvage Shop' by Jim Nolan. 'The Mai' by Marina Carr, will be staged by Phoenix Players in Tubbercurry on March 11th, while 'Hedda Gabler' by John Osborne (after Henrik Ibsen) will be staged by the KATS group from Galway. The festival comes to a close with 'Canaries' by Bernard Farrell staged by Kilmuckridge Drama Group.

Nine nights of drama is a considerable undertaking in terms of expense and the committee rely heavily on local sponsorship to ensure financial viability. Organisers issued a very sincere word of thanks goes to all award and group sponsors, to all who have taken an

advertisement in the festival programme and most particularly to Molly's Artisan Bakery and Fine Food Emporium, sponsors of the launch and Cormican's School and Art Supplies, sponsors of the Children's Art Competition. Roscommon County Council and most particularly County Librarian Richie Farrell and his staff were also thanked for their generosity in assisting with the launch.

The Festival Club will be held after each nights performance and everyone is invited to come along, meet the adjudicator and performing groups and to join in the craic. A number of venues are playing host to the festival club over the nine nights, specific details of which can be found in the festival programme.

Tickets for each night are €14/€12 and are now available. Bookings can now be made at Roscommon Arts Centre on (090) 66 25824. Full details on all aspects of the festival are available from www.roscommondramafestival.com

Art winners

Following last year's success, the second Drama Festival Children's Art Competition took place in February. The competition was expanded to include transition year students and entries of an exceptional standard were received within all categories.

Prizes were presented to winners at the Festival Launch and the festival committee thanked Cormican's for their kind sponsorship of prizes and judge, Ms Riona McGuinness, without whom the difficult decisions could not have been made.

The Committee would like to thank all our budding artists and their teachers and parents for their involvement. The Committee is always interested in suggestions for Fringe events and would welcome suggestions to our website at www.roscommondramafestival.com

The following were the children's art competition winners as announced at the launch of Roscommon Drama Festival 2010. 3rd/4th Class Category: 1st Peter McConn (Abbey Boys NS); 2nd Caellum Kennedy (Abbey Boys NS); 3rd Mark Gleeson (Abbey Boys NS). 5th Class Category: 1st Aoilihe Ni Thiarnáin (Gaelscoil de hÍde); 2nd (Joint) Cadhlá Nic Charráin & Jade Ni Ghreacháin (Gaelscoil de hÍde); 3rd Samantha Nic Chonchruachan (Gaelscoil de hÍde). 6th Class Category: 1st Étain Ní hOisín (Gaelscoil de hÍde); 2nd Érin Ní Chruadhlaoch (Gaelscoil de hÍde); 3rd Emma Healy (Convent of Mercy).



Mark, Caitriona and James Gleeson pictured at the Launch of the Roscommon Drama Festival 2010, held in The Roscommon Library on Wednesday evening. Pic: www.hurson-photography.com



arts news

■ With Pauline Scott

Vinyl village

A head-spinning range of vinyl records spanning almost every era and every genre, from the 1950s right up to the present day will be on sale at a record fair at the Prince of Wales Hotel in Athlone this Saturday, 6th March.

There is literally something for everyone and every musical taste will be catered for, from blues to metal, rap to alternative, punk to funk, post-rock to 80s rock and Irish to indie.

If vinyl is the not the food of love for those thinking of attending, then a selection of hard-to-find CDs and DVDs will also be on sale on the day. For its many music lovers nothing can beat the crackle and purr of a vinyl record, but sadly it has become harder in recent years to buy and track down vinyl, but Record Fairs Ireland has been bringing a wide array to towns throughout the country.

Ballinasloe singers celebrate 5th birthday

Ballinasloe Singers Circle will host its 5th anniversary circle in The Dunlo Tavern, Dunlo St., Ballinasloe on Thursday 11th March from 9.30 pm.

All singers and listeners from far and near welcome. Organisers Thomas Corcoran and Damien Clarke now hope that the regular followers will come out as usual to support the Circle. The Circle is celebrating five years since it start back in March 2005. The organisers are delighted with the progress and the increasing popularity of the Singers Circle. They would like to thank everyone that supported the Circle over the last five years from far and near, singers and listeners. A further invitation has also been issued to all singers and storytellers in the surrounding area to come along and support the circle. Admission is free. There is still the weekly music session in The Emerald Bar every Friday night. All musicians welcome. For info contact Thomas (090) 96 43448.

Design a postcard

A 'design a Postcard' competition has been organised to mark the fact that Glenamaddy Theatre Festival is hosting the All Ireland Theatre Finals from the 16th to the 24th April next.

The theme is to design a postcard advertising the All-Ireland Drama Finals. This competition is open to the whole parish for every age group. All postcards for entry can be picked up at Donnie Keaveny's. The children's competition will be run through the schools both primary and secondary. If you need to know any further details about the competition please contact either Breda (087) 2805241 or Mary (087) 9444627. Start working today and remember 'Every act of creation is first of all an act of destruction'.

'Callaghan's Place'

Tarmonbarry company Sanctuary Players bring 'Callaghan's Place' to Roscommon Arts Centre on Friday 26th and Saturday 27th March. 'Callaghan's Place' written by playwright John McDwyer (Beeznee Theatre Company) tells the story of Paul and Mary Dolan as they struggle to come to terms with the departure of their daughter Frances to university. A mysterious Englishman arrives in their midst and his friendship with Frances creates a backdrop to tragedy. Neighbours Pat Kelly and Annie Jackson fail to stem the tide of Paul's suspicion and anger. For all its serious undertones Callaghan's Place is peppered with scenes of outrageous humour. McDwyer's writing is always a guaranteed night of theatre. To reserve your tickets call Roscommon Arts Centre on (090) 66 25824.