**PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE THURSDAY 29 AUGUST 2024**

**FREE events for Culture Night 20 September 2024 in Laois. Programme launched today at Áras an Chontae.**

The annual Culture Night will take place on **Friday 20 September 2024.**

Culture Night /Oíche Chultúir is a national moment, celebrating culture, creativity, and the arts, and seeks to actively promote the belief that this rich and varied culture is alive, treasured and nurtured in people’s lives, today and every day.  Laois have a broad spectrum of events to enliven the county happening until late**. Entry to all events is free to the public. Local groups, musicians, artists, and venues have come together to make this a night to remember for everyone in the county.**

**ABBEYLEIX**

From 6.30pm – 7.30pmat **Abbeyleix Library**, join internationally acclaimed Classical musicians **David Vesey and Alina Obreja** for **Nocturnal Soundscapes** a concert duet on Piano and Cello, featuring music inspired by the night.

If you lean more toward the visual arts try **Pat’s Art Class**, **Abbeyleix Heritage House**, where you can join acclaimed **local artist, Pat Byrne** in a fun and educational **lesson on landscape painting.** From 6.30 – 8.30pm. Booking is essential email: info@abbeyleixheritage.com

**DURROW**

At 8pm in Durrow **Spink Comhaltas** will host a traditional Irish music session in **Aylwards Heritage Museum**, for a night of **traditional Irish music**: group, solo and duet performances along with **storytelling and singing**. Refreshments provided.

**MOUNTMELLICK**

**Mountmellick Library hosts a wealth of experiences for all including music, storytelling, and film**. 4pm – 5pmsee a **screening** of the **1995 Mountmellick Famine Commemorative Film** and learn how the famine affected Mountmellick.

5pm – 6pm **enjoy a trad set with Mountmellick Comhaltas.**

For those with an interest in drama and writing from6pm – 6.30pmsee the **premier screening** of **Tiny Plays** a series of short films created by members of the Mountemellick Community, directed by Ellen Buckley.

6.30pm – 8pmthe evening concludes with an intimate **Story Sharing; One Night for All.** The Mountmellick Community Arts Collective willl share their stories along with invited storytellers from a diverse range of community groups featuring unique stories stories from traveller, LGBTQ and writers from diverse cultural backgrounds.

**PORTLAOISE**

At **Dunamaise Arts Centre, EXPLORE EXPERIENCE AND ENJOY** arts and culture from6pm to 10pm.

6pm come and celebrate the **25th Anniversary** of the fabulous **Portlaoise Musical Society** with a musical performance from their upcoming show ***Guys and Dolls*!** Refreshments served.

6pm meet Makeup FX artist **James Mac** for this **Makeup and Artistry workshop in Dunamaise Gallery**. JMAC renowned makeup artist and Netflix/ BBC finalist from GLOW UP series 2 will demonstrate unconventional methods connecting art and makeup design. Visitors can also grab a coffee at Dunamaise Café and enjoy a **display and demonstration** of beautiful **handmade crochet** with LOETB **tutor Courtney Murray**.

6.30pm **Portlaoise Library** hosts a magical evening of music and entertainment with the **Drawing Room Opera Company's enchanting performance!** Singers include Paul Linehan (tenor) and Mary Flaherty (soprano) accompanied on piano by David Wray in a delightful program of popular opera, Neapolitan songs, and Irish classics.

At 8.30pm, experiencethe highlight of the Dunamise programme, **From the Roof of the World,** a performance by eight **Tibetan monks, from Tashi Lhunpo Monastery**. The group will present afascinating experience of: cultural chant, mantras, music and dance opening a magical window on a world of reincarnation and mysticism. Booking advised: (057) 866 3355.

**PORTARLINGTON**

**Explore Painting with Artist Mary Slevin in Mount Henry Art Studio.** Mary is delighted to welcome **adults** and **children** to her art studio at Mount Henry to explore painting and other art techniques. Children will create a bird house and adults can explore collage. Children’s workshop 4pm – 5pm and adult workshop 7pm -8.30pm.

6.30pm Join the **Port Art Crawl** with **Port Art Collective**. Building on previous Art Crawls over the last two years this event will be a fun mix of art, craft, music, and history, including several cultures on the night. Various locations and venues see @portartcollective

**RATHDOWNEY**

8pm – 9pm, all are welcome tojoin the **Rathdowney Revel** and experience a unique blend ofperformance art from a varied set of performers, especially curated by artist Caroline Conway, sculptor Evgeny Chubatyy, circus performer Maria Corcoran and percussionist Lilia Iontcheva. The event will be held outdoors, and involve children and young people from Scoil Bhríde NS, Errill NS, and St Fergal’s College, as well as the wider Rathdowney community.

**STRADBALLY**

**The Laois Art House & Library Stradbally present visual art, artist open studios, music, and storytelling.**

6.30pm – 8pm experience ***Anseo* – Here** a group exhibition by the Laois Arthouse Studio Artists, Stephanie Deady, Lia Laimbock, Greg Hallahan and Bernadette Keating along with an opportunity to view the artists studios.

8.30 – 9.30pmthe Library will host **Music by Liarnan and Storytelling by Michelle Quirke.** A performance on Uilleann Pipes, Harp and Fiddle by the acclaimed performers Liarnan sharing a blend of traditional Irish music, and newly composed tunes, followed by storytelling from Michelle Quirke, sharing local stories and folklore.

7.30pm, at **Ballykilcavan Brewery** join a performance of **Folk Music with Emer Dunne** and her band on guitar and fiddle. This performance brings together traditional and contemporary folk music and song featureing music, telling the stories of Laois’ history and heritage - audience participation is encouraged!

**Refer to local venues for booking details.**

Visit [https://culturenight.ie/laois](https://culturenight.ie/location/laois/) for details on event times and further information or visit [www.laois.ie](http://www.laois.ie) and download the Laois Programme of events 2024. Event Guides are available from Laois Co. Council, Libraries and Arts Centers. Further details from Muireann Ni Chonaill / Arts Officer, Laois Co. Council. **T:** 057 866 4033 / **E:** [arts@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:arts@laoiscoco.ie)

*Culture Night is brought to you by The Arts Council in partnership with Laois County Council.* *Cuireann an Chomhairle Ealaíon Oíche Chultúir i láthair, i gcomhpháirt le Comhairle Chontae Laoise. Supported by Creative Ireland Laois.*