

Newsletter

February 2021



Ambasáid na hÉireann  
Embassy of Ireland

# ST. PATRICK'S DAY

Embassy of Ireland Helsinki

## Lá Fhéile Pádraig

Dear All,

As we enter into the final days of February, Irish minds turn to plans for St. Patrick's Day. This year we are all doing things very differently. Here in Finland, the Finnish Irish Society and the Salo Irish Festival have turned their plans around and are going online.

In Ireland too, there is going to be a lot happening – and this year it will be accessible for those of us far away. Just as a taster – the Late Late show will move to a Wednesday for the first time in its history, the St Patrick's Festival is online, and Ireland.ie is full of resources and excitement.

This year has been like no other. Perhaps most difficult has been the experience of so many in the global Irish family of being away from home for long periods without the prospect of the regular visits many of us are used to. In this, we might all reflect on St. Patrick who after all, was himself an involuntary migrant who took Ireland as his home.

Whatever your connection to Ireland - whether you are Irish in birth or at heart (or both) - I hope that in exploring the online resources and the activities and events here in Finland listed in this message you will find ways to bring Ireland closer.

We at the Embassy will be hoping to share some light-hearted social media material over St. Patrick's Day. If you and your family and friends are engaged in family-friendly fun, please do share with us. We'd love to see all that is going on around Finland!

On the wider context, we are at another difficult stage in the pandemic. As the Government of Finland has announced additional restrictions and preparations for the reintroduction of the Emergency Law, it is more important than ever to be aware of the existing restrictions and recommendations [in your area](#).

The [Embassy website](#) contains information on the services we continue to provide and where to find relevant information for those who have absolutely essential reasons for travel.

On Tuesday 26 February, the Government of Ireland published an updated plan for managing the way through the pandemic – *The Path Ahead*. This details plans for careful reopening of certain sectors while Level 5 restrictions will remain for some time to come. The aim is to reopen society as soon and as safely as possible while also maintaining downward pressure on the virus.

The Taoiseach reiterated the Government's commitment to deliver as fast and as comprehensive a vaccination programme as possible and over 350,000 vaccine doses have already been administered. By the end of March it is expected that Ireland will have administered 1.25 million doses.

This means that Ireland, like Finland, is putting in the work for better times ahead.

I and everyone at the Embassy hopes for St Patrick's Days in the future when we come together in person and in the meantime that everyone finds a way to mark the occasion.

I wish you all a very Happy St. Patrick's Day – Lá Fhéile Padraig sona daoibh go léir.

## Ruth Parkin

**Ambasadóir na hÉireann - Ambassador of Ireland - Irlannin suurlähettiläs - Irlands ambassadör**

# NEWS & EVENTS


## The Northernmost Irish person in the World

Embassy of Ireland in Oslo launched a [Twitter](#) competition to find the Northernmost Irish person in the world. Are you the most northerly member of the [#ArcticIrish](#) community? Find out by telling us where you are & tagging @IrishEmbFinland on Twitter or Facebook. There might even be a prize in it for you!

## Salo Irish Virtual Festival

The annual [Salo Irish Festival](#) is taking place virtually! Join on 26 February for a concert by Seonaidh, Trio Beoir and Isara, and 27 February by the Green Hope.





from February 10th  to March 31st

the **Helsinki Harps** PRESENT

THE *THE snow don't stop me* CHALLENGE

ski, run, walk, or cycle your way to a prize

HOW TO PLAY		PRIZES	
1	Use a GPS app or step counter to track your distance	T-shirt + Wall Posters	<b>1st Overall</b> €30 Woolshed Gift Card
		2nd Overall	T-shirt + Wall Poster Set + €15 Woolshed Gift Card
2	Upload screenshots of your progress on Instagram or Facebook with the hashtag #snowharps	Helsinki Harps T-shirt + Wall Poster Set	<b>3rd Overall</b>
		<b>100K Club</b>	<b>200K Club</b>
3	GET REWARDS!!	 Custom Sticker	 Custom Coffee Mug

### The Snow Don't Stop Me Challenge

The Helsinki Harps GAA Club present: The Snow Don't Stop Me Challenge. Ski, walk, run, or cycle your way to a prize before 31 March!

### The Finnish-Irish Society's Virtual St. Patrick's Day

The Finnish-Irish society presents a virtual St. Patrick's day on 17 March at 7pm. Join the society for a virtual celebration of St Patrick with talks about the saint himself and his legacy featuring Frank Boyle and Katja Ritari and Irish music by Ants in the Pants! If you want to join e-mail to [katja.ritari@helsinki.fi](mailto:katja.ritari@helsinki.fi) to get the link.

### St. Patrick's Festival

Accessible globally, St. Patrick's Festival 2021 will feature more than 100 events, created by artists, performers, makers and dreamers across Ireland. Running 12-17 March, the programme offers six great virtual days and nights, where audiences can stream our full programme of events in real time.

### Helsinki Biennial talks

Helsinki Biennial Talks is a series of talks on the subject of international biennials of contemporary art. The series begins on 3 March with a lecture by Dr. Paul O'Neill, followed by two conversations with biennial curators from across the world on 17 and 31 March. The talks will be livestreamed on Helsinki Biennial's Youtube channel and Facebook page.

### 20 Shots of Opera

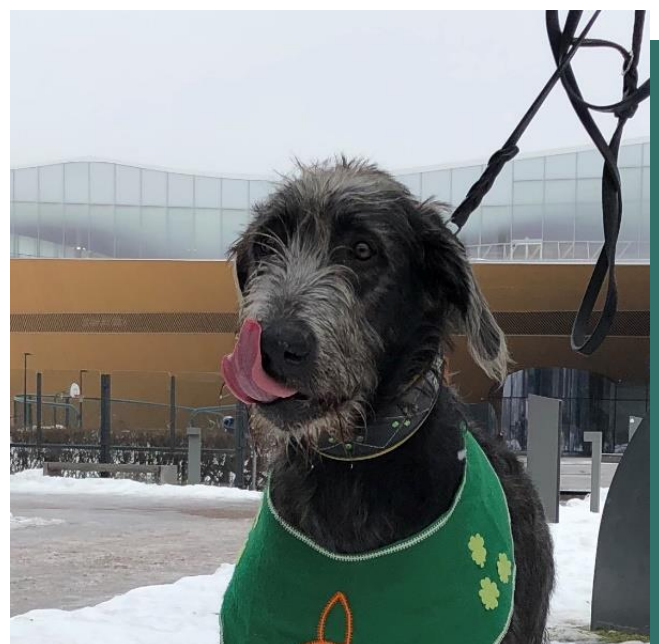
Irish National Opera's 20 Shots of Opera turns a spotlight on creativity and makes 2020 a year to remember for positive reasons. These 20 short operas showcase the breadth and depth of Irish operatic talent.

### Seachtain na Gaeilge

Seachtain na Gaeilge le Energia is an international Irish language festival and one of the biggest celebrations of our native language and culture that takes place each year in Ireland and in many other countries 1-17 March.

### The Irish Wolfhound Club

The Irish Wolfhound Club in Finland wishes all a happy St Patrick's Day! Find more information about the club here.





### **Webinar: Ireland and the Arctic Council**

The IIEA and the Department of Foreign Affairs will jointly host this public webinar on "[Ireland and the Arctic Council](#)" to discuss some of the issues and opportunities arising from Ireland's application for observer status to the Council. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney, will deliver the keynote address. The proceeding panel will be moderated by David Donoghue, former Ambassador of Ireland to the United Nations and to the Russian Federation. Please note that this webinar is open and free to attend.

### **Once Upon a Bridge**

*Once Upon a Bridge*, a new play by Sonya Kelly, directed by Sara Joyce and produced by Druid Theatre, will be available [on demand](#) to watch at home until Sunday 28 February. Inspired by real events, *Once Upon a Bridge* weaves a tale about human triumph and frailty, about the power of destiny and chance, and why sometimes we choose to hate, and other times we choose to dance.

### **Druid Theatre: Coole Park Poetry**

[Coole Park Poetry Series](#) includes 10 short films including Doireann Ní Ghríofa and FeliSpeaks reading the poetry of Lady Gregory, Heaney and Yeats

### **RTÉ Radio Spoken Stories: Independence**

[Spoken Stories: Independence](#) series of new short stories by authors including Mary Costello, Kevin Barry and Sue Rainsford.

### **IMMA: Northern Light**

IMMA: [Northern Light](#) is drawn from the exceptional collection of photography amassed by Dr David Kronn over the past 25 years. This exhibition presents work by photographers that examines the history of the conflict in Northern Ireland specifically and places it alongside other events internationally. IMMA's Slow Looking Art Videos are available [here](#).

### **Solstice Film Festival**

Galway Film Fleadh presents: [Solstice](#). A season of Irish cinema from the late 70s to early 00s. Available until 28 February.

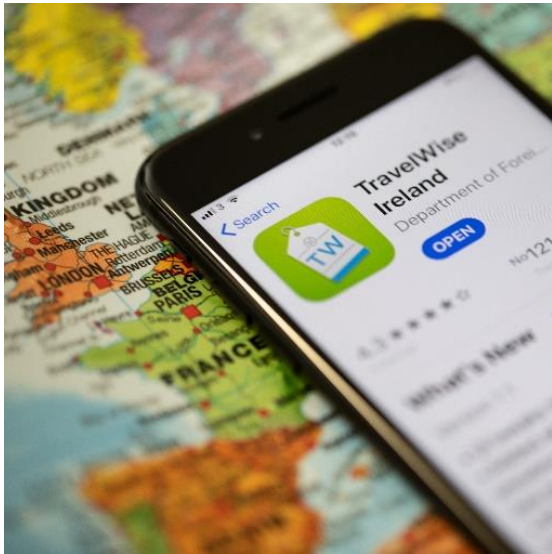
### **Dublin International Film Festival / DFA Partnership**

Dublin International Film Festival and Culture Unit are partnering on *Playback*, a new initiative for this year's Festival. [Playback x VMDIFF](#): Irish Hip Hop & R&B is a specially curated season of the best contemporary hip hop music videos in Ireland today, selected by producer Mike Donnelly V and musicians Erica Cody. This project showcases the creative and cultural diversity of these young contemporary artists, many from new Irish communities.

Dublin International Film Festival 2021 will take place entirely online 3-14 March. Discover the exciting [online programme](#) of Irish and International films and fantastic events with special guests.



# OUR SERVICES



## Passports

The Passport Service has paused operations in line with the move to Level 5 of the Government's National Framework on Living with COVID-19. Passport Online is open to all applicants, including children, renewing their passports and those applying for their first passport who are resident in Ireland, UK, EU, EEA and Switzerland. These applications will be processed when the Passport Services resumes operations. To apply via Passport Online, please click [here](#).



## Travel Advice

There is a Government Advisory in operation against all non-essential international travel. Advice about travelling to Finland is available [here](#). We advise all Irish citizens when travelling abroad to remain vigilant and follow the instructions and advice from the local authorities. [The Finnish Border Guard](#) provides information on border restrictions for travellers entering Finland. [The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare](#) provides guidance on health security measures. Information on testing for COVID-19 is also available on the [FINENTRY](#) service.

## Visas

As part of the combined efforts to tackle COVID-19 and to ensure customer safety, the Department of Justice has taken the decision to temporarily cease accepting new visa applications. Certain priority/emergency cases will continue to be processed. For further information please see the website of [Immigration Service Delivery](#).

If you wish to unsubscribe from our newsletter, please let us know by return email. This Newsletter comes to you as a free and voluntary service of the Embassy for your benefit. It includes event information that has been provided to us from external sources; please be informed that we cannot vouch for the accuracy or veracity of that information nor does it imply that the Embassy is associated with these events.

If you have an Irish community or cultural event that you would like to publicise, email us at [helsinkiembassy@dfa.ie](mailto:helsinkiembassy@dfa.ie). **Happy St. Patrick's Day from the Embassy of Ireland!**

