

SLICE OF THE CITY

NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWS, INSIGHTS & INVITATIONS FROM THE DOYLE COLLECTION

ISSUE 23 SPRING 2025



THE DOYLE COLLECTION

LONDON • DUBLIN • WASHINGTON DC • CORK • BRISTOL

Though it seems barely possible as we look out over frosted pavements, by the time you read this magnolia (and Cherry trees, if you're in DC) will weigh heavy with blooms, days will be longer, sunshine stronger and optimism in the air. To mark all this we're heading behind the scenes at the Bord Gáis to muse with GM, Stephen Falloon on the magic of theatre, we're marking St Patrick's Day by profiling today's most talked-about contemporary Irish Artists, we're celebrating Cork City as a destination for travellers from all over the world and we're getting out and about to shop for antiques in London town.



ORIGINAL SKIN

It's not often that a skin care and wellness clinic scores five stars across the board but GP turned dermatologist, Dr Louise Smyth's pristine, supremely cocooning Kinsale-based spa, KINS, has achieved just that. And now they're opening their second incredible destination on Level 1 at The River Lee, for guests, visitors and residents of the Rebel City that want their skin impeccably behaved, flawless and glowing. While Dr Smyth's training has been in medical grade skincare and KINS offers the full menu, the brand's ethos is just as much about education, care and prevention as it is about treatment. So, very much not about

quick-fix aesthetics popular on social media and reality television - particularly among younger generations - instead focusing on optimal skin health by age and stage, and beauty. Each KINS journey begins with an in-depth consultation, recommendations for treatments and the formulas to firm, lift and perfect every skin type for years to come. For guests that wish to find out more about their skin health, who prefer not to miss out on the treatments they rely upon at home, and anybody who is interested in treating skin to everything it could dream of, KINS at The River Lee is a must. **URL TO COME**

THE DOYLE COLLECTION

THE KENSINGTON
LONDON

THE MARYLEBONE
LONDON

THE BLOOMSBURY
LONDON

THE WESTBURY
DUBLIN

THE DUPONT CIRCLE
WASHINGTON DC

THE BRISTOL
BRISTOL HARBOURSIDE

THE RIVER LEE
CORK

THE CROKE PARK
DUBLIN

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ON THE COVER

Finbar by Oisín Byrne (@byrneoisin) from the Irish Art Now exhibition. See p. X

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HUNT THE EASTER EGG

At 108 Brasserie we're celebrating Easter by inviting guests to seek and find one of the 108 prizes we've hidden around Marylebone Village, as well as hosting a bespoke designer egg created for The Big Egg Hunt (an annual event where artists of note create pieces of egg-inspired art, to be auctioned off for wildlife charity, The Elephant Family). doylecollection.com/hotels/the-marylebone-hotel/easter-activities-at-the-marylebone

JAZZED

At 108 Brasserie (The Marylebone) we're bringing back our popular jazz brunch - and on the last Saturday of every month we're inviting guests and locals to take a journey into live jazz with a glass of fizz, a buffet of brunch and a trip to the Pie Room for tarts and bakes. **108brasserie.com/jazzbrunch**



KING OF KINGS

When legendary Irish actor Conleth Hill takes on King Lear, every ticket to the Gate Theatre's 371 seats becomes the hottest in town. Fortunately, at The Croke Park, we're good friends of the Gate, which means we can offer guests the chance to see it for themselves. **Package details/URL to come.**



News & Views

ST PATRICK'S RESIDENCY

While the 162 million Americans that celebrate St Patrick's Day do not all come to DC (how could they?), tens of thousands come to the parade and citywide celebrations. And we're hosting award-winning Oisín Kelly (Bar Manager, The Sidecar) who brings his rather fabulous 'classics with a twist' cocktail list, and impeccable martinis to Doyle Bar. **URL TO COME**



BRISTOL WEEKEND CURATOR

Following the success of the River Lee weekend Curators, at The Bristol we've worked with Great British Bake Off star Briony May Williams to bring her perfect 48 hours in the Pirate City and, unsurprisingly, it includes some excellent food and drink, as well as some Bristolian favourite places to go. **URL to come**

GET ILLUSTRATED

Afternoon Tea at The Kensington has taken art to heart, accompanying their destination painterly afternoon tea with live illustration sessions with artist, Niki Groom. Meaning guests can nibble on exquisite patisserie inspired by some of the world's most iconic artworks and have the moment captured in a portrait to take home. Meta! **URL to come**



SAINTS ALIVE

Come to The Bloomsbury for two St Patrick's Day (14th March) takeovers. The Sidecar will helm The Coral Room from 7-10pm before Paladar (Irish Bar of the Year, 2024) mixes things up in The Bloomsbury Club Bar from 9pm-12am, all accompanied by some excellent live music.



A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

Stepping behind the scenes of Dublin's Bord Gáis Energy Theatre, in the company of its General Manager, Stephen Falloon, we fell to musing on the enduring power of theatre in our option-saturated times

As we stood, battered by a stiff breeze drinking in the astonishing views of Dublin's Grand Canal Plaza from The Terrace we agreed with the Bord Gáis General Manager, Stephen Falloon that what makes theatre unique is the human connection at its heart ...

And it's a sentiment perfectly expressed by Dublin's finest export, Oscar Wilde who said of the theatre that it was "the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being". While we couldn't agree more, we can't help but imagine him in a wonderful world of streaming, rather

Left A rare view from the 'bridge' high up in the Fly Tower looking down on to the stage. *Above* The exterior of the Libeskind-designed Bord Gáis theatre.

enjoying *Succession* and *The Wire*, but ascerbic about anything from the arts establishment. Eclectic in his viewing, as a perennial miner of celebrity we think he'd have loved and loathed *The Kardashians*, sneakily peeked at *Gogglebox* and thoroughly enjoyed *It's a Sin* and *The Queen's Gambit*. Oscar was, after all, an entirely modern man. And as he himself said, "Man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask, and he will tell you the truth".

It was this rather large question that drew us, that grey, windy day to Stephen Falloon's domain, the iconic (though rather unwieldy-ly named) Bord Gáis Energy Theatre, and saw first hand the many ingredients required to tell Wilde's truth and leave audiences skipping down the street, buoyed by a delightful blast of live theatre.

But before we speak with Mr Falloon, we need to talk about Daniel Libeskind. The Polish American theatre architect and, according to Rethinking the Future (RTF) "legendary pioneer of Deconstructivism in architecture". Studio Libeskind has created some of the world's landmark buildings, including Berlin's Jewish Museum and the Infinity Tower in Shanghai. In architect speak, "the design concept for the theatre is, in fact, stages—the theater's 'real' stage and the plaza (outside) as another, equally real but more provisional and changing stage. By night, when the second floor lobby of the theater is activated by users, and the theater's tilting façade and plaza are illuminated, the entire complex transforms into a multi-experiential stage". In layman's terms the theatre could have been conjured by Daft Punk's alien cousins. For Stephen Falloon the design stands for far more than simply spectacle. ▶



As we followed him at pace from orchestra pit to the fly tower, Stephen explains. “Take the fly tower. There are 66 bars here” (which lift everything from lighting to scenery) “and each can hold a piece of set, large or small, that can then be flown up and down from the stage, held high above when not needed.”

“*Hamilton* had a big set but it’s not as complicated as *The Lion King* or *Wicked*, which are awash with huge pieces. It’s all conducted meticulously by calling from the bridge – a level three platform. If it’s a set-intensive show several pieces can be moving at once, so it’s a lot of work. When you’re watching you’d never know the sheer volume of what’s going on up there. For a show like *Hamilton* we had serious logistics.”

“The production was packed into 45-foot trucks (17 of them), with sets, costumes, wigs, everything. The set looked simple but it’s deceptive; there a double turntable, which comes apart – and it’s big. The whole lot came over by sea. We needed around 100 people backstage and another 40 in front of house to make it happen. But regardless of which side of the stage you are, one of the huge benefits of a newly-built theatre is that everything has been considered. Backstage, the architects decided to use the classic counterweight system rather than electric powered, which is great until there’s a power cut, front of house there’s obvious stuff like

good open spaces, well-designed bars and of course, wheelchair accessibility.”

“We’ve got 2,111 seats, they’re all really comfortable – there’s not a bad one in the house. Even in the upper circle you can see literally everything – the view is great. Obviously, it’s purpose built, so the sound is incredible – and I think it’s almost at its best in the seats up top. It’s expensive to run, but we always offer affordable seats and can keep higher seats as low as €0 euros – and they’re decent. Backstage we’ve also got 26 dressing rooms – each with its own shower and a window. That’s unheard

Our audience trusts us to deliver brilliant productions on a big stage

of. Traditionally every broom cupboard is a ‘dressing room’ and they’re cramped, claustrophobic spaces.”

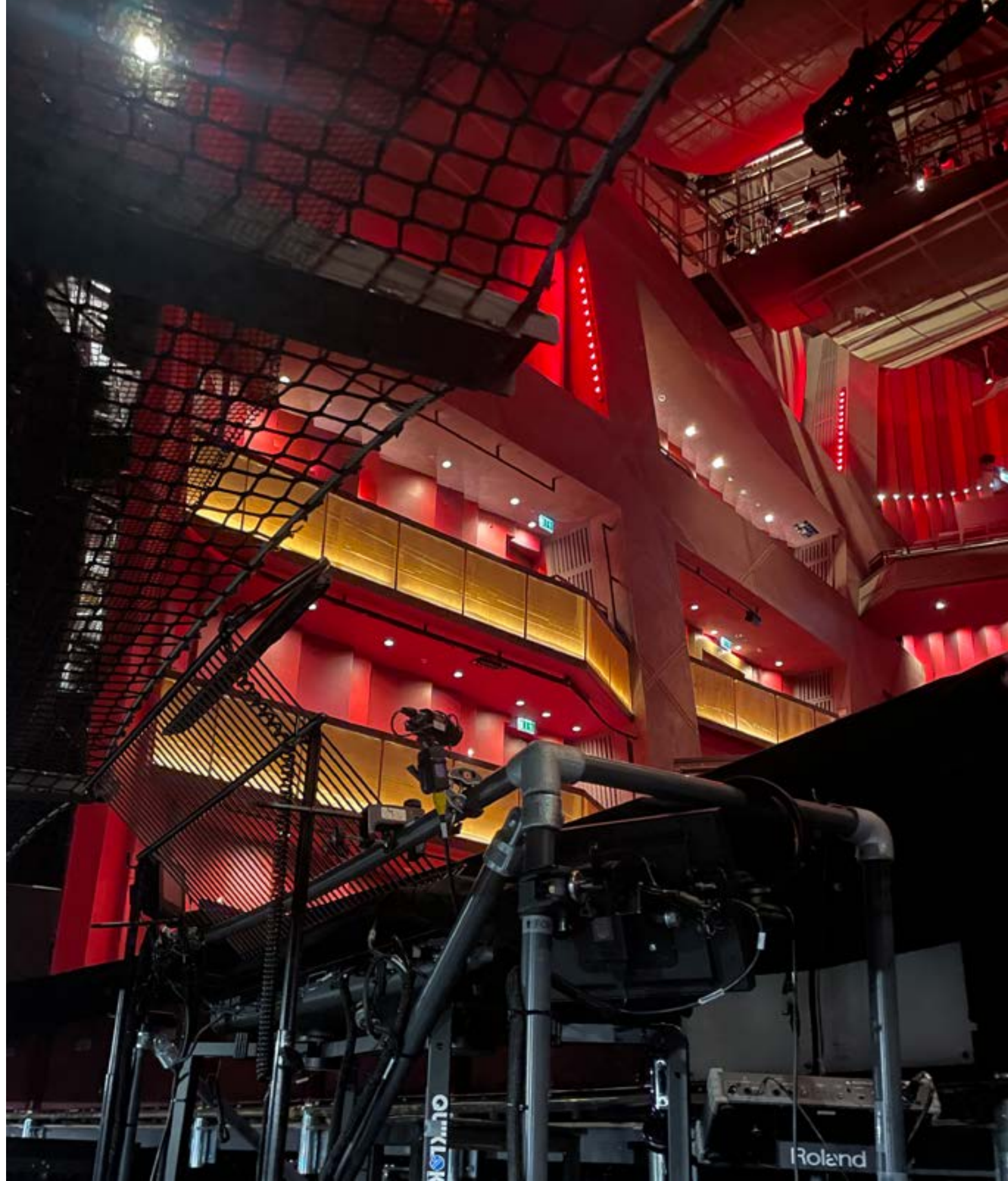
So the theatre must be an easy sell to actors? “Actually we opened at a really difficult time. Back in 2010 just after the crash, the Guardian said this country was closed for business and we couldn’t persuade anyone to come over. I’ll never forget how surprised producers were that restaurants were still busy. And the first big

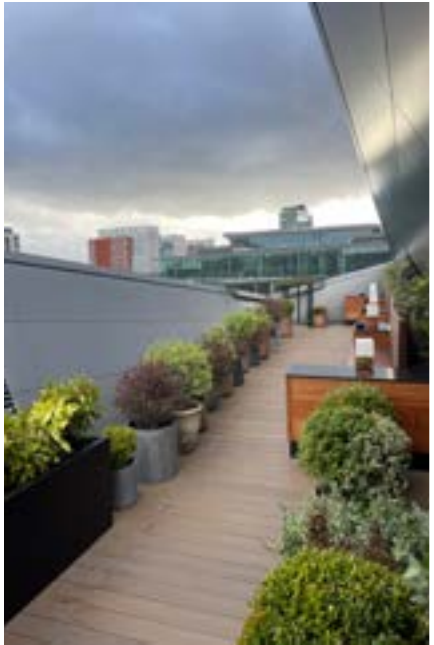
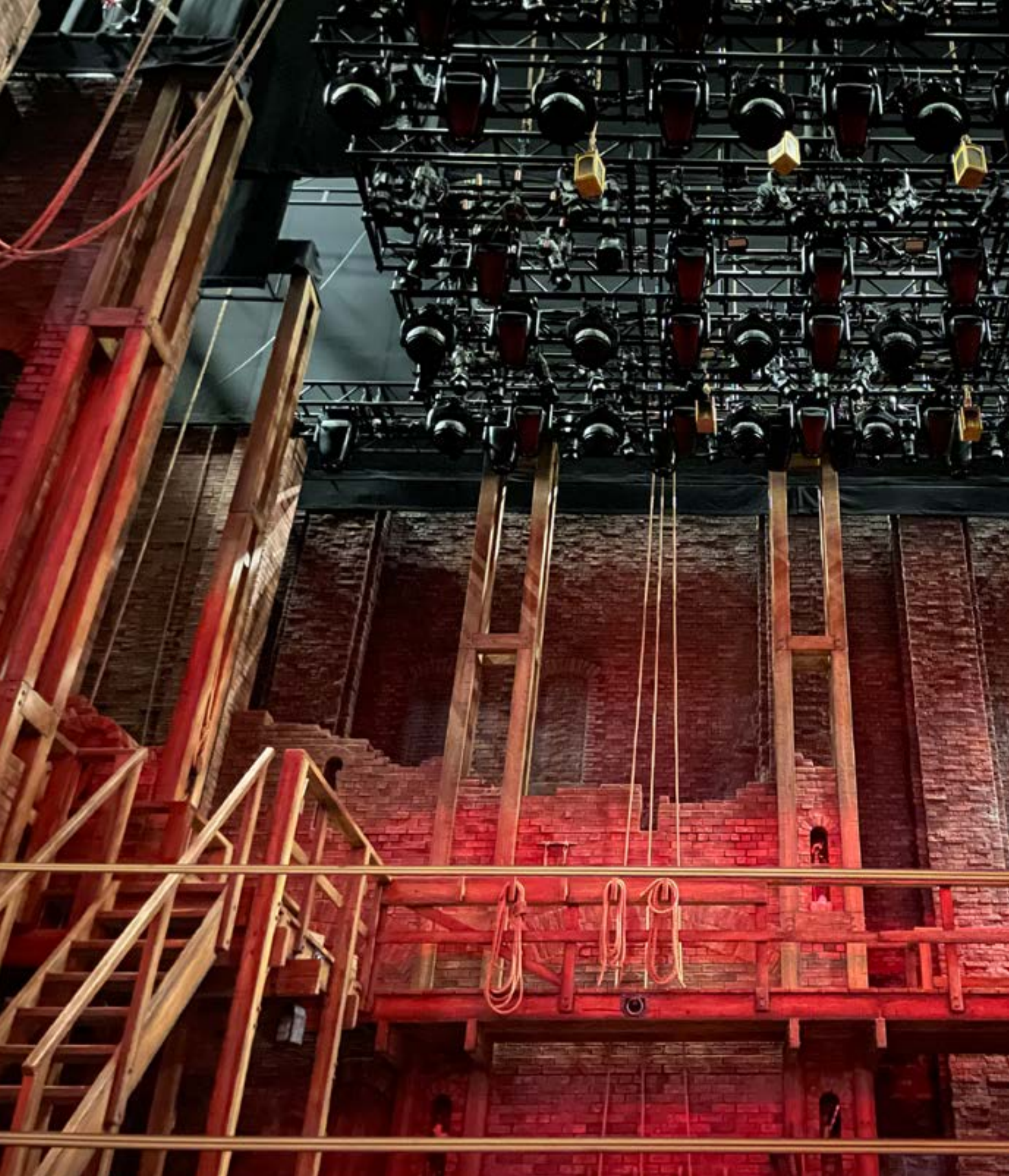
show to come was *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* which sold out.”

“That moment put us on the map. The flying car (which was amazing), showed what this stage was capable of. After that, producers started answering our calls. People in Dublin had wanted to see the big shows for decades, and we were the only theatre big enough to stage them consistently here. And we’ve put on some wonderful shows (including *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Wicked*, *War Horse*) most importantly our audience trusts us to deliver brilliant productions on a big stage.”

“And we don’t just do musicals (and ballets). We host touring comedians, musicians and even spoken word. In June 2024, we had Judi Dench in conversation with Gyles Brandreth. (And, no, I didn’t meet her. Because I had promised to take my nieces to Taylor Swift that night). ▶

Above from left The theatre bar has a panoramic view over the Grand Canal dock; A large abstract painting by renowned Irish artists Cian McLoughlin takes pride of place in the Circle Club - a members-only club to which guests of *The Westbury* have special access; the set for *Hamilton*. **Right** The view from the orchestra pit looks out from under a net (in case anyone should fall from the stage) to the very back of the Upper Circle.





Judi Dench was 89 and she was meant to play for 90 minutes, but she managed two hours. We’ve also hosted Julie Andrews (the loveliest woman ever, you heard it here), Angela Lansbury, John Cleese, Roger Moore - it’s a lovely strand of our programming.” One thing Stephen doesn’t do is panto. “We never have. Instead we always choose a Christmas Show – in 2025 it’s *Moulin Rouge* (a show for everybody over 12) and it’ll be AMAZING!”

Meeting Stephen in late 2024, his main focus was *Mary Poppins* (the 2024 Christmas show) and 2025’s first major offering, Steve Coogan and Armando Iannucci’s *Dr Strangelove*, which opened in London’s West End and is headed (if the theatre Gods are kind) next to Broadway. But alongside all this the work never ends. As soon as *Dr Strangelove* leaves the building, in comes *Chicago*, *The Book of Mormon*, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and Matthew Bourne’s *Swan Lake*. Closely followed by *Tina: The Tina Turner Musical*, *Only Fools and Horses* and *Kinky Boots* and many more. And Stephen

Above Stephen Falloon on the balcony that looks out over Grand Canal dock. **Left** Looking up from the stage into the Hamilton lighting rig. What looks the rear wall of theatre is in fact part of the set.

is continually signing up productions into the late 2020s and beyond.

So, we’ve covered planning, programming and performance - but where else does that magic come from? Location, obviously. And the theatre is certainly in a good place. Commanding Grand Canal Square, with astonishing views over the regenerated docks and beyond that, the Irish Sea (the next stop’s Holyhead), the theatre’s façade towers in the place where land meets water. But as is so often the case in an ancient city like Dublin, there is history in them there hills and the theatre is bordered on its north side by ‘Misery Hill’.

It’s unclear when the name first stuck, but, back in the 1300s lepers gathered at Misery Hill, prior to pilgrimages to the Camino di Santiago – hoping spiritual intervention might cure them, or at least ease their suffering. A makeshift hospital was set up on the site to offer perfunctory care before they were decanted on board a ship to Spain. When this practice stopped it wasn’t too long before another contender emerged. “It’s often said that theatres are a home for ghosts. This building is built on the hanging quarter. That’s why it’s called Misery Hill and it’s not by accident. People were driven on cart up that hill and it’s a one-way trip. And sometimes when you’re locking the building up at night... We have all felt an energy.”

While our whistlestop tour of the Bord Gáis Energy Theatre failed to prove the existence of another dimension, it’s abundantly clear that it’s the team that makes the dream work. “I couldn’t do any of this without my brilliant team (of about 40, plus part timers and freelancers) my supervisors are the best group of young people that manage all the floors. The thing I instil is that we’re the best and biggest in Ireland so there is a pride in that. The compliments we get about the team and how they go above and beyond are incredible. It’s like its own ecosystem - where everything is continually in motion. I sneak in to watch snatches of shows all the time. And I say to all staff – if you’re having a tough day just pop down to a matinee and watch five mins and remember why we do it. It’s all pure escapism and families creating memories for generations and we’re so proud to be part of that process.” As he runs us down to the door talking 19 to the dozen, waving and checking in on everyone as we go, we can’t help thinking that if Stephen did see a ghost, he’d simply give them something useful to do... ■

Short closing line on the offer and sign off line to come, and more details on the Circle Club – the Dublin destination for members only, to which guests of The Westbury are welcome (offer tbc). Elizabeth to supply details

DESTINATION CORK

We know it and over half a million visitors in 2024 voted with their feet,
Cork is the place to visit right now

What do hiking up an active volcano in South America, dodging black bears in Florida’s Ocala National Forest, tracking wolves in Brazil’s Cerrado Savanna, rock climbing in India’s Suru Valley, and taking a street food tour of Dakar have in common with a little mizzly wander round Cork City? Well, they’ve all been named among National Geographic’s ‘25 best places in the world to travel to in 2025’. We’ll let that sink in.

We’d never talk a magical city like Cork down, but in fairness that’s heady company to keep. Especially given that the list also includes Guadalajara in Mexico, the Stockholm Archipelago (Sweden) and the 2,700 kilometre Murray River in a land down under (North Eastern Australia, to be clear). Though Boise Idaho (most specifically the Basque community) and Brasov in Romania feel a little more comparable to the ‘Rebel City’ for size, heart and soul.

With a population of just over 225,000, a motto that translates to ‘A safe harbour for ships’, and some of the very best artisan producers the Emerald Isle has to offer, Cork is Ireland’s second city and comes with a long history of simply not having it, when it comes to imposed authority. It’s already a city of contradictions and punching above its weight is to be expected. Plus harbour settlements and

those on rivers are always more significant by nature.

When Cork was founded by St Finbar in the 6th Century (initially as a monastery, the city grew up around it) it was the River Lee that made it possible. By 820 the city was accessible and wealthy enough to attract the attention of the Vikings, who attacked the monastery in the first of three raids, over as many centuries, and built themselves a raiding base to come back to. Though but a young settlement, the very earliest Corkonians were having none of it – and skirmishes were relentless, culminating in an 846AD sortie led by King of Munster, Ólchobhar mac Cináeda, and resulting in the destruction of the Viking’s castle and the dispatch of their leader, Gnimbeolu. It is said that the sheer level of resistance prevented the establishment of a permanent Viking settlement.

After seeing off the Vikings, the tustle continued, for many years between the great South of Ireland families (McCarthy, O’Brien, FitzGerald) and their first shenaigans with the British, courtesy of Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck and attempts to depose Henry VII. While Gerald FitzGerald (8th Earl of Kildare and de facto King of Cork) fully supported the bogus claims of Simnel to the British throne, when Warbeck arrived in Cork city claiming to be the Duke of York and tried

to launch a second revolution Gerald sat that one out, but his people had a taste for the fight – one that saw Cork first dubbed ‘the rebel county’.

While the history of these years (15th-century) is colourful, complicated and a rabbit hole we’re not going down, the FitzGeralds followed their people through the Desmond Rebellions which ended decades of strife in 1601’s England victory at the Battle of Kinsale. While Gaelic Ireland was almost decimated, the spirit was always strong, and rose again in the early 20th century with Cork’s most famous son, Michael Collins (1890-1922), Irish revolutionary leader and a key figure in the struggle for Irish independence. As Director of Intelligence for the Irish Republican Army during the War of Independence, his pivotal role organising the fight against British rule, and negotiation skills resulted in the Anglo-Irish Treaty that led to the establishment of the Irish Free State. Collins became the new state’s first head of its Provisional Government, but he was assassinated (allegedly by Denis O’Neill, ex British Army sniper and member of the Royal Irish

Right Perched on a rocky outcrop overlooking the River Lee, Blackrock Castle is over 400 years old and now houses a science centre and observatory.



Constabulary) before he could realise much of his vision for a free Ireland.

In a way it's hard to discern that seditious spirit in Cork today – it's a very peaceable place, packed with lovely pubs, friendly folks and rippling rivers. Yet there's a refusal to be cowed that lives on in the city's cultural ambition and a refusal to be defined by the mainstream. Pubs and bars are singular, many shops are independent, the country's very best food producers and artisan makers ply their trades here, and some of Ireland's most significant contemporary cultural exports were born or bred here – we're thinking Cillian Murphy, Graham Norton, Sinéad O'Connor, Fiona Shaw and Colm Tóibín, plus the human roar that is Manchester United legend, Roy Keane.

But what does Cork offer the modern visitor? Obviously it's a university town, with around 25,000 students drawn to the world class University College Cork (regularly topping Irish university lists – and notable in Europe too). Students always add a buzz to a city, and Cork is no exception, with bars, clubs and comedy venues meeting the need.

Cork is also known for its lively arts scene, with festivals aplenty (celebrating Film, Jazz and Midsummer, among other things), plus literature, theatre and music. But National Geographic singled Cork City out for a slightly different reason; the rather dry sounding Cork City Development Plan (“part of the \$128 billion Project Ireland initiative, which is set to redevelop the port and docklands, refurbish the Crawford Art Gallery and enhance the Cork Event Centre so it can host new concerts, festivals, and exhibitions. In September 2025, Ireland's second city shines during Sounds from a Safe Harbour, a biennial festival of music, dance, and conversation that was cofounded by Oscar-winning Oppenheimer actor and Cork native Cillian Murphy”).

Everybody in Cork will be thrilled with the works, but as National Geographic will be well aware there are so many reasons to visit Cork. We've picked our top 25.

AN ABC OF CORK

B

BAKERIES

You can't set foot outside Kent Station without stumbling across an independent artisan bakery and we couldn't be more on board. Choosing three is almost impossible but we've sacrificed waistlines to do it so you don't have to. Cameron Bakery won Cork Small Business award in 2024 for its gorgeous buttery pastries, French-style pâtissier's treats, sticky buns, iced cakes and tip top sandwiches at lunchtimes. Sourdough kings/queens of Cork, The Grumpy Bakers is also the place to go for perfect pastries, cruffins, brioches and turnovers. Their sausage rolls are off the charts. If it can be baked the Alternative Bread Company do. To perfection. You'll find them in The English Market with mountains of the best bread in the city, pastries (sweet and savory), buns, brioches, pies, cannolis. @cameron_bakery @the_grumpy_bakers @alternativebreadcompany

BUTTER MUSEUM

And where there is bread, let there be butter. In the 19th century Cork was the largest exporter of butter on earth. And butter's story (and within it the region's history) is told in full, from Medieval, 1000-year-old bog butter (it's there!) to the present day. thebuttermuseum.com



C

COCKTAILS

You'll find some darn fine cocktails at The River Club, The River Lee – but this isn't about us. Cork has some excellent purveyors of the mixologist's craft. It's not every 19th century pharmacy that's perfectly preserved and open for wine, beer and cracking bar food – even better there's tiny cocktail bar with a speakeasy vibe upstairs at Arthur Maynes. If you like your cocktails quick, slick and expertly mixed, Brick Lane's for you. But the fairest of them all, drumroll, is Cask. Since opening in 2017 it's not put a foot wrong, with a regularly changing menu that wins global awards for brilliance and its commitment to only using local ingredients.

@arthurmaynes @bricklanecork @caskcork

COFFEE

We're spoiled for choice in Cork for coffee. Craft roastery, check. Crazy bakes, check. Spectacular brunch, check. It must be Lab 82. When only the richest, fresh roasted coffee will do you need an excellent micro-roastery/barista academy/café hybrid. Ideally one semi-imported from South Korea – yep it's Café Moly. Opened after the 2008 crash to offer the community decent coffee, cakes and a space that offered freedom of expression, Alchemy café and bookshop is still doing the do. @lab82coffee @cafemoly_roastery @alchemycoffeecork

COMEDY

As in so many other places, comedy's a thing in Cork. And new clubs are springing up to keep the established places like City Limits (a 200-capacity venue that punches above

its weight) company. Newer additions to the scene include Midtown Comedy Club and Comedy Cabaret, while Crüe and Any Craic Comedy Clubs and The Comedy Cavern fill the space in between.

@citylimitscomedyclub @clancyscork @corkcomedycabaret @cruecomedy @anycraiccomedyclub @thecomedycaverncork

CRAWFORD ART GALLERY

Currently undergoing a multi-million-euro transformation – Crawford Art Gallery is closed from 2024-2027 while the space is expanded and every aspect of the existing gallery is re-considered. Updates and digital views of the collection are online. @crawfordartgallery

E

ELIZABETH FORT

In 1601 a star-shaped fort was built outside the city walls. Rebuilt in the 1640s it has since been a barracks, a prison, an air-raid shelter, a police station... Today it's fully refurbished with panoramic views across Cork City. @elizabethfort_

ENGLISH MARKET

Trading since 1788 and one of the oldest covered markets in Europe, the English Market is lined with artisan makers and purveyors of everything; meat, fish, herbs, spices, fruit, veg, oils, sauces, chocolate, cakes, cheeses and fresh pasta. Wander, taste, enjoy – and order the best toasted cheese sandwich on earth (the soup's pretty good too) in the first floor café. @theenglishmarketcork

EVERYMAN THEATRE

It's Victorian (opened 1897), it's got 650 seats, it's the oldest purpose-built theatre in Cork, it seamlessly mixes classics with panto, gigs with stand up – and it has offered a warm welcome to everybody who is anybody in the Irish arts. @theevermancork

F

FASHION

Obviously global fashion chains and department stores are present and correct but it's the city's independent fashion stores that really shine. At Samui (trading since 2001), majestic

owner, Clodagh Cronin serves fierce Rick Owen leather, ethereal Simone Rocha tulle and everything a style maven could desire. Founded by sisters Susan-Jane Corbett and Lisa Grainger, Olori has curated impeccable

understated luxury for nearly a decade. It's all a little bit The Row. Blarney Woollen Mills is the place to buy authentically knitted Arrans, Fair Isles and impeccable Irish tweeds. @samuicork @oloriboutique @blarneywoollenmills



FOOD FEST

Cork on a Fork

The kind of food Cork's famous for deserves celebrating, so we do. Every August, with tastings, masterclasses, demos, street food, pop ups and a whole lot more. [facebook.com/CorkonaForkFest/?locale=en_GB](https://www.facebook.com/CorkonaForkFest/?locale=en_GB)



THE GLUCKSMAN GALLERY

Set in a woods in University grounds, The Glucksman Gallery is set on a limestone podium and clad in a fine layer of timber. With three floors of galleries showing contemporary art, and an excellent café and shop, it's a must visit – as much for building as art. [@theglucksman](https://www.instagram.com/theglucksman)

GAOL

Cork City Gaol is an impressive building with perfectly preserved cells and a chequered history, holding writers, republicans, actual children committing the petty crimes of poverty and, of course, proper crims. Executions were conducted here too. [@corkcitygaol](https://www.instagram.com/corkcitygaol)



JAZZ

Cork Jazz Festival launched in 1978, is Ireland's biggest jazz event and has welcomed some of the greatest of Jazz ever since, from Ella Fitzgerald to Buddy Rich, Herbie Hancock to Damon Albarn. With concerts and events all over the city it brings over 100,000 fans. [@guinnesscorkjazz](https://www.instagram.com/guinnesscorkjazz)

Overleaf The River Club at The River Lee. **This page**, *right* The English Market. **Far right** The Glucksman art gallery



MARINA MARKET

With its global street food trucks and stalls, jam-packed events calendar, seasonal pop ups, craft markets, winter skating, DJs and so much more, the Marina Market is a bustling community hub in the Old Port in Cork. [@marinamarketcork](https://www.instagram.com/marinamarketcork)

Cork is a very peaceable place, packed with lovely pubs, fabulopus food, friendly folks and rippling rivers



PUBS

There are over 100 pubs in Cork so choosing the best is really a matter of taste. If we were tied up and only allowed out upon chosing three, they would be The Shelbourne (a little Victorian pub with snugs aplenty, a highly polished dark wood bar and Its '100 whiskeys to try before you buy'), the Sin E comes with stained glass windows, daily traditional Irish music and a strict no reservations policy that sees people arriving early and staying late, and The Rising Sons, Cork's only microbrewery, is home to excellent craft ales, with pizza on the side and sport on the telly. [@shelbournebarcork](https://www.instagram.com/shelbournebarcork) [@sin_ebarcork](https://www.instagram.com/sin_ebarcork) [@risingsonsbrewerycork](https://www.instagram.com/risingsonsbrewerycork) Check out [corkheritagepubs.com](https://www.corkheritagepubs.com) for a list of the best with music.



NANO NAGLE PLACE

Nano Nagle was an eighteenth century nun who believed in education and social inclusion for the poor in an era where almost nobody else did. Nevertheless she opened seven schools for poor children in Cork and an almshouse for women of the slenderest means. Today her life and work are commemorated at Nano Nagle Place, with an award-winning museum, walled gardens (a space of absolute tranquility), a design shop and the Good Day Deli, set in a modern glass box amidst beautifully restored convent buildings. [@nanonagleplace](https://www.instagram.com/nanonagleplace)



ST ANNE'S CHURCH, Shandon Bells and Tower

The stride from river up to St Annes Church, home of the Shandon Bells and Tower (and the nearby Butter Museum and Elizabeth Fort) is calf-busting if taken at speed. But you're well rewarded with a rare Anglican church (open for prayer since 1722), more climbing up the tower (for phenomenal views) and an eyeball of the infamous eight bells of Shandon, ringing since 1752. [stannesshandon.ie](https://www.stannesshandon.ie)

SHANDON SWEET SHOP

You can't visit the church without a stop to sample the traditional sweets the Linehan family have been hand-making in their little factory (with shop attached) since 1929. [shandonsweets.com](https://www.shandonsweets.com)

ST FIN BARRE'S CATHEDRAL

Given Saint Fin Barre's ancient heritage as founder of Cork and status as the city's Saint, there is something slightly incongruous in commemorating him with a colossal 19th-century gothic revival cathedral, even though its crafted largely from local stone. Take off your continuity hat though and the cathedral offers fascinating history lessons and a soaring space, stained glass, spectacular organ and gargoyles to admire. [@stfinbarrescathedral](https://www.instagram.com/stfinbarrescathedral)

ST PETER'S CHURCH

Cork's oldest church, parts of St Peter's date back to the 12th century, it was deconsecrated in 1949 and is now a museum and cultural centre, telling the story of 'A City by the Sea' – the story of Cork from origins to today. And the café's lovely. [stpeterscork.ie](https://www.stpeterscork.ie)

SPIKE ISLAND

Take the ferry to Spike Island, a historic fortress telling tales of heroes, villains, saints and sinners – a potted history from the fringes. The island itself offers beautiful walks, the imposing fortress leavened somewhat by the arrival of café and gift shop. Check opening times and book ahead. [@spikeislandcork](https://www.spikeislandcork)



TRISKEL ARTS CENTRE

Triskel Arts is one of those places where there's always something around the corner. It's set in a restored neo-classical Georgian church it hosts gigs, events, exhibitions and is home to a fabulous art house cinema. [@triskel_cork](https://www.instagram.com/triskel_cork)



UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK

It's Ireland's other top University set in grey stone quads in beautiful grounds and is open to the public six days a week for popular 70 minute tours – wear comfy shoes and book ahead. [@universitycollegecork](https://www.instagram.com/universitycollegecork)



VINTAGE

Cork gives great vintage and the mother of them all is Mother Jones' Flea market – where independent stallholders sell everything from clothing to vinyl, furniture to glassware, icons to vintage jeans, with an excellent café, often with live music. For specifically fashion, you can't beat Miss Daisy Blue, spanning everything from early '30s tailoring to '90s sportswear. Nine Crows Cork is the destination for retro 90s sportswear, cool jeans, band tees and is perfect for teens. [facebook.com/motherjonesfleaemarket/?_rdr](https://www.facebook.com/motherjonesfleaemarket/?_rdr) [@missdaisyblue](https://www.instagram.com/missdaisyblue) [@ninecrowscork](https://www.instagram.com/ninecrowscork)





PEAK ANTIQUE

There’s nothing quite like browsing antiques in person – you never know what you’ll find, so where better to start than with our little guide to the vintage markets of London?

Though the antiques market has recently been subject to a rather sedate yet quantum shift from local to global and personal to digital, changing the landscape and means of selling, and opening up the market to the many, there’s still no substitute for choosing treasures in person. And whether you’re looking for a candelabra or a brass door knocker, a watch or a hat, London is filled with places where you can pick and choose for yourself. Because nothing feels more immediate than running bare fingers on the carved console

table, its highly polished surface telling tales of two hundred years of gloved hands sweeping up the morning post, children’s fingers, sticky from tea, retrieving a top, a set of keys, dropped upon entry, and endless dusting, waxing and buffing to give it its rich patina. As you lift a weighty crystal decanter, ringing clear as a bell when tapped, it’s a witness to perhaps centuries of celebration or commiseration, raised for a thousand different reasons. The weight of a solid silver fork, perfectly balanced to hold, hand-crafted in Sheffield

one hundred years ago for a newlyweds’ table. Or a watch, hand-cranked in 1820 and worn, new-fangled, on the wrist (or still attached by chain to pocket). An engagement ring, brought back by a soldier on leave to present to his lover and give them both hope.

Honestly, we could wax lyrical like this for hours but if you’re reading we’re probably already preaching to the gallery. The love of a good story, and that sense of history that comes with them notwithstanding,

there are also many excellent practical reasons to consider antiques. As part of our common aspiration for optimum health, the west is engaged in a global switch towards non-toxic living (its hashtag receiving hundreds of millions of views on TikTok), which means moving away from much mass-produced furniture. While scientists are still measuring the impact VOCs (volatile organic compounds) have on on health, the fumes that much manufactured furniture emits is known to be detrimental, and lasting in an airless setting. Antiques were obviously made using traditional methods and prior to the introduction of offenders such as glue-bonded wood pulp as a filler, so they’re a great alternative to modern manufacturing, as well as being kinder to the environment than buying new.

Of course, an antique will already have lasted at least 100 years (under 100 years

and it’s vintage, retro or of a period; eg mid-century vintage) because the fact is it was made by hand and built to last. And, with care, last it will. Most obvious of all, an antique is usually unique (well, a set of chairs will match their dining table) but certainly you’re unlikely to see the same pieces often, if at all. Plus, of course, they will have aged differently and will quite possibly have been painted or dyed (if textile), sofas, daybeds and armchairs will have been reupholstered many times. Second only to entirely custom-made pieces you’re unlikely to see your carefully chosen antiques anywhere else. In addition, antiques tend to hold their value (if bought wisely) – and many can be expected to rise further in value as time passes.

Regardless of reasons for buying antiques, they will always add character – and can look lovely as accent pieces in a more modern and minimalist setting, too. In

the UK the most popular antiques are the portable, lower risk/price ones – from table lamps to prints, candlesticks to jewellery. From car boot sales to antiques markets in town squares, there are treasures to be found all over the country – and we would always recommend looking up the local antiques shops/markets and dealers in any small town you visit. It’s always fascinating to browse. And, while the biggest antique market in the country, Newark International Antiques Fair (held once a year in Nottingham) is Europe’s largest for both punters and collectors, London is the place where you can find pretty much anything your heart desires – especially in the dedicated markets – at almost any price. Before you check any of these out, experts advise having a clear idea of what you’re looking for and doing a bit of research beforehand on the best prices. And, most of all, even if prices are marked, a little can usually be haggled off the total. ►



THE SLICE OF THE CITY GUIDE TO

LONDON ANTIQUE MARKETS



ALFIES ANTIQUE MARKET

Alfies feels like it's been just north of Edgware Road forever, but it has only been since Benny Gray took over an ailing department store (Jordan's) in the 1970s and transformed it into the vast emporium of stalls and booths it is today. Now the largest indoor antiques and vintage market in London, the original vision was to sell unpretentious mid-century vintage at affordable prices, but today you can buy anything from 'Victorian jewellery to mid-century furniture, Venetian chandeliers to Islamic art' – from over 100 dealers. It's a warren of treasures and today is home to an outpost of Benny's other venture, Gray's (see right). alfiesantiques.com

BERMONDSEY

Bermondsey Antique Market was first opened as Caledonian Market, in King's Cross, in 1855 by Prince Albert, moving to Bermondsey in 1947. Today it's one of London's most colourful and draws traders (shop owners

and professional buyers) to haggle for bargains once a week. It's open to the elements and the destination for an eclectic mix of (mainly) furniture, glassware, silver and china (though you never know quite what you'll find). The market is open every Friday, 7am-2pm, at Bermondsey Square, but quite a bit of trading happens at the crack of dawn. so early birds take note. When you're done, head to Bermondsey Street or Borough Market for sustenance. bermondseyantiquemarket.co.uk



CAMDEN PASSAGE

An antiques destination since the 1950s, Camden Passage includes three mini markets, the Passage itself, selling vintage and retro collectibles – mainly clothing, costume jewellery, luggage and prints, Pierpoint Arcade includes jewellery, medals and printing blocks, and Charlton Place focuses mainly on rugs, silver, watches, jewellery and so on. The markets feature different dealers on different

days so check before you go. Camden Passage is also home to gift shops, fashion, food, coffee and bars too, but is unconnected with Camden Market (famous for its vintage clothes and tattoo parlours, which is a tube ride away in Camden Town). camdenpassageislington.co.uk

GRAYS

Set in a listed Edwardian building in Mayfair, originally built as a water closet shop, Grays is Benny Gray's other outlet – he restored the building and set it up as a serious indoor antiques market, today home to about 100 stalls selling an incredible selection of antiques, jewellery (fine and costume) and watches, from very recent vintage to antique. At Grays, you're less likely to find an extraordinary bargain (though in antiques if a price seems too good to be true it usually is), but you will find a well-priced selection of excellent pieces, curated by experts, who are on hand to help you find the perfect one. graysantiques.com



GREENWICH VINTAGE MARKET

The whole area feels vintage, with its pretty Georgian town houses, Royal Park, historic museum buildings and independent stores. So it's no surprise that Greenwich has its own vintage covered market. It's a more eclectic mix than some – making it possible for the antiques devotee to browse alongside family/friends who might be interested in the more modern crafts, bakes, coffee and independent makers. greenwichvintagemarket.co.uk



NORTHCOTE ROAD ANTIQUES MARKET

South of the river to Battersea, Northcote Road has been serving local buyers (and furnishers) of fine Victorian houses since 1986, and is destination for expert dealers of antique furniture, lighting, decorative arts and household goods. While it is easily accessible by public transport, it's a neighbourhood rather than a central London location, ▶

but well worth the short trip and change of scene to visit. northcoteroadantiques.co.uk



PORTOBELLO MARKET

One of the planet's best known street markets, Portobello has always segued seamlessly from antiques to fruit and veg, vintage clothes to handmade stuff, making it all feel part of the community. And the stores around the market have always housed independents selling everything from Books for Cooks to designer lingerie, denim to Spanish specialities (yes, Garcia's, we're looking at you). The market is long, running from Notting Hill to Golborne Road, where two Portuguese patisseries (Lisboa and Café O'Porto) duel for local and visitor custom, their weapons of choice coffee and pastel de nata (and custard doughnuts). We digress. Portobello's famous antiques arcades, shops and stalls are at the Notting Hill end (mainly between Chepstow Villas and Elgin Crescent) and sell everything from vintage clothing to gramophones, rare books to prints and maps, brass buddhas to vintage clocks, plaster busts to birdcages, soldiers to silver toast racks. Market hours are Friday and Saturday 9-5 and Sunday 10-4. visitportobello.com

SPITALFIELDS VINTAGE MARKET

There's been a market in Spitalfields for almost a thousand years but it wasn't properly regulated and run until Charles II's 1682 Royal Charter, giving one John Balch the right to hold a market on Thursdays and Saturdays. For centuries the capital's prime fruit and veg market, today's covered site was built in 1893 with the veg stalls eventually moving to Leyton in east London (1991). Today the building is ringed with shops and cafes and home to street food stalls and a regularly changing market. Thursday is vintage day, featuring independent stallholders selling everything from garden furniture to candlesticks, decorative screens to lamps. Vintage fashion includes one Michael the Hat Man with everything from tweed caps to collapsible opera toppers (the 'gibbous'). oldspitalfieldsmarket.com



BRICK LANE MARKET

A shadow of its former self and now better known for its street food offer, cavernous vintage clothes halls and the bijou shops in Redchurch Street nearby, it is still fun to browse on a Sunday morning before heading up to Columbia Road flower market. vintage-market.co.uk



UPMARKET OPTIONS

Though any of these markets offer a fascinating day out – and quite the haul should you be so minded – they barely touch the sides of the antique and vintage trade in London – and there are so many shops it's almost impossible to choose. However, the impeccably curated vintage and antique luggage, cases and bags at Bentleys, Lower Sloane Street and the mountains of old school hard travel cases with clickity closures at London Vintage Luggage in Camden (by appointment only), are well worth a look. A little potter along the Pimlico road should take in Anthony Outred (sculpture, furniture, mirrors, lamps, stick stands, etc.), Jamb and Hilary Batstone Antiques (elegant furniture and furnishings of all kinds). For impeccable vintage jewellery (and we're talking tiaras here) Mayfair-based Royal Warrant holders Bentley & Skinner are extraordinary – their collection extending to serious antiques from ancient Egyptian artefacts

to Renaissance jewellery – much of their stock is available to rent too. Hancock (St James's Street, Mayfair) is a wonderful source of fine and rare antique pieces, while for a vintage or antique engagement ring (a huge trend right now) The Vintage Jeweller is open, by appointment only, in Cross Street, Islington (though the collection online is breathtaking). Seekers of jewellery, and experiences, should also visit The London Silver Vaults, a treasure trove of dealers under Chancery Lane. While Hatton Garden (the street for jewellers) is always worth a wander, for both contemporary and vintage pieces.

bentleyslondon.com
londonvintageluggage.com
outred.co.uk
jamb.co.uk
[@hilarybatstone](https://twitter.com/hilarybatstone)
bentley-skinner.co.uk
hancockslondon.com
silvervaultslondon.com
thevintagejeweller.co.uk
hatton-garden.london



IRISH ART NOW

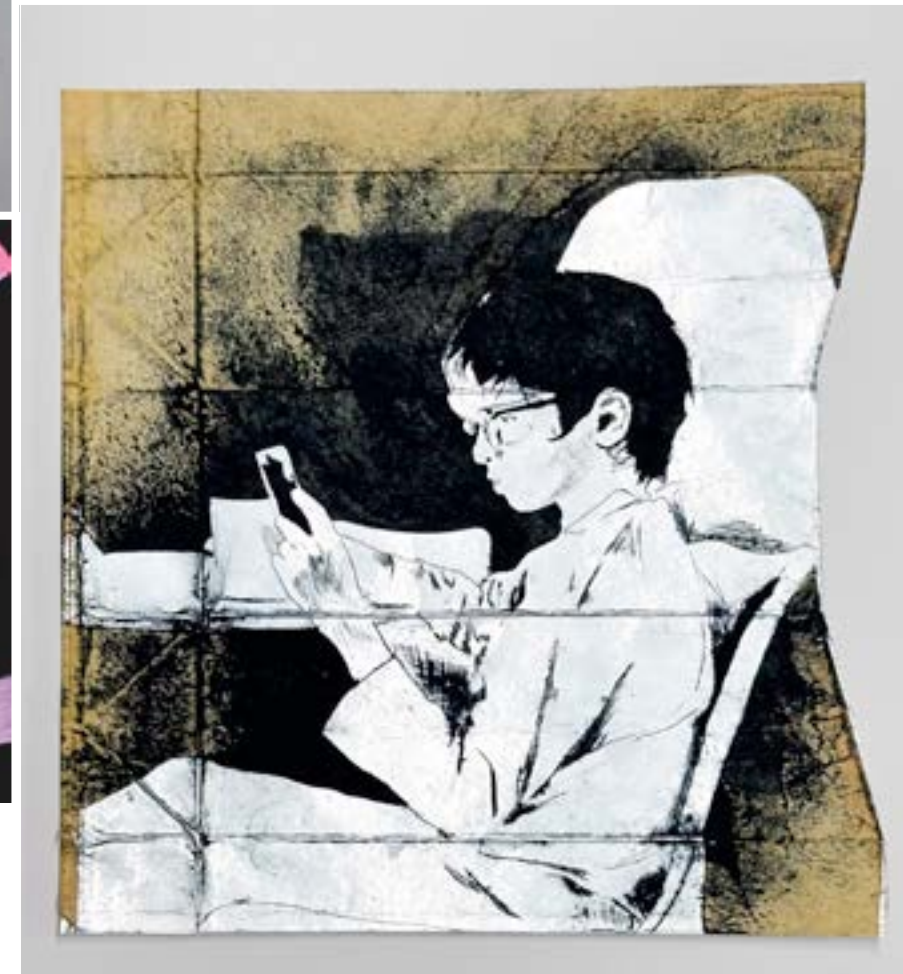
What better way to mark St Patrick's Day than with a celebration of contemporary Irish artists of note, living and working in London today?

As 17th March (St Patrick's Day) looms, we're all in favour of reminding people of the very best of Irish heritage. Who doesn't love the music, the culture, the way with words, the whiskeys (and gins, quite frankly), the Black Stuff, the oysters, the craic, the parade? It's all part and parcel of the celebration of a tiny country (5.2m) that punches well above its weight. The fact that the festival for a humble fifth-century missionary-come-patron-saint is the most widely celebrated on earth today speaks volumes to the sheer magnitude of the Irish Diaspora (estimated today at over 80 million people) but also for levels of cultural diplomacy comfortably wielded by this

island nation. Ireland's biggest export today might actually be pharmaceuticals, but in soft power terms we've hovered in and around the global top 20 for decades, among countries many times bigger, and richer. Yet, while the names of Irish musicians, actors and, of course, the colossi of literature all trip off the tongue, visual artists (especially contemporary ones), not so much. A fact that's just about to change with the launch of Irish Art Now, a landmark exhibition featuring 14 Irish-born artists currently working in London.

Curated by two of the artists themselves, Joe Duggan and Orla Jackson, the exhibition rose out of serendipity, timeliness and an abundance of talent. Over to academic (and exhibition catalogue scene-setter) Dr Fiona Barber... "One of the first things ►

Above Shadow Painting #1 (2023), oil on birch ply in a steel frame, by Eve O Callaghan, @eveveveoc.



From top, clockwise *Guardians* (2024), wool & wood, by Kathy Prendergast, @kathypprendergast;
sun[set] provisioning (2019), includes: OpenGL software, modified Dell PowerEdge R620, NVIDIA GTX 1650 GPU, uRad A3 atmospheric monitor, by Yuri Pattison, @yuripattison; *Beaded II (Black)* (2024), digital print on paper, by Aislinn F, @aislinn.art; *Synchrony* (2024), oil on linen, by Emmet Kierans, @emmetkieransart.

From top, clockwise *Figures* (2022) installation at Ormston House, Limerick, by Richard Malone, @richardmalone;
Forradh (2024), acrylic on canvas, by Hazel O'Sullivan, @hazelosullivanart; *Somebody's Everything, Plate* (2024), ink remains on tetrapak, by Kerri McEvoy, @kerrimcevoystudio; *Garland 1 (Black/Purple)* (2024), screenprinted monoprint in 11 colours on paper, by Eva Rothschild, @evarothschild.



that strikes you about Irish Art Now is that none of the work on display here looks the same. From what might be considered the traditional media of painting, printmaking and drawing, to artworks that more explicitly defy categorisation and challenge the viewer’s expectations, this exhibition curated by Orla Jackson and Joe Duggan showcases a tantalising selection of work by contemporary Irish artists based in London. The beginnings of Irish Art Now were in their shared perception that visual art outside Ireland itself lacks the cultural presence of music, literature or film as recognisable means of both exploring and challenging different forms of Irish identity in the wider world.” It’s a good point, well made. And, Dr Barber continues, despite this exhibition being strictly contemporary, “We would also do well to remember that Irish artists have been making an active contribution to the London art world since at least the late eighteenth century, including James Barry’s controversial relationship with the Royal Academy, the Victorian artist William Mulready and the Northern Irish sculptor, F.E. McWilliam who was a prominent member of the British Surrealist group. And, of course,

the Dublin-born Francis Bacon, who became so successful that he soon ceased to be recognised as Irish at all, being celebrated as possibly the greatest of all British painters instead.” Well, quite. As passionate supporters of Irish art and culture, at The Doyle Collection we very much believe in credit where it’s due, and for us it was a no-brainer to sponsor this exhibition, especially as it showcases such an exciting selection of Irish contemporary art. And, while it will only be hosted at the Irish Embassy for a short while, we hope to be able to offer support as it evolves into something more people are able to see, whether that takes the form of a pop-up or a travelling exhibition, or a digital incarnation - watch this space.

So how long did it take to gather the artists together and how easy was it to make the final selection? We spoke to Joe and Orla less than a week before their opening, when they were still hanging the final few pieces and very much feeling the lack of sleep. “We both came up with the idea completely independently. I had just graduated (from the Royal College of Art, in September) and quickly realised

how hard it is to gain any traction and stability in the art world. How difficult it can be for me and my peers to get a foothold and studio space and I thought perhaps by approaching the Embassy and having a conversation we could bring some of us together”, Orla explained. For Joe (a more established artist and fellow RCA alumnus, who has created public commissions in London and enjoyed support from the Embassy before) it was about time. “It’s been over 25 years since the last time a group of contemporary Irish artists working in Britain were celebrated in a show (1999’s 0044: Contemporary

Irish artists in Britain)”, he said, “plus, I’ve always really wanted to see some contemporary art in this beautiful, grand space – it’s almost baroque – such opulent backdrops hung with uncompromising pieces of work.” To find the artists Orla and Joe each tapped their own networks, as well as reaching out through London’s Irish Cultural Centre and the Embassy. “It’s a funny thing, because not all Irish artists want to be defined by being from Ireland, yet you become an ‘Irish Artist’ the moment to you move somewhere else. Because, of course, your work is always about identity and your place in the world”, he continued. As for the process, Joe and Orla agreed “there was a sort of synchronicity as we both pitched the idea to the Embassy at the same time, they introduced us to each other and we got the go ahead after six weeks, leaving us to ensure all our artists were able to participate”. The Embassy hosts a busy programme of events, so the calendar space was limited but if you use the hashtag #IrishArtNow you’ll be able to see where the show goes next and you can follow the artists individually on Instagram and on The Doyle Collection’s socials. @thedoylcollection ■

Above from left *Amulets for an ecstatic afterlife* (2022), cast bronze marl spirits, stainless steel chain, by Laura Ní Fhlaibhín, @lauranifhlaibhin; *In the Trees* (2022), acrylic, oil and collage on canvas, board and wood, by Anne Ryan, @anne_ryan_painter; *Blue blanket* (2024), ink on Japanese paper, by Orla Jackson, @orlajackson_art; *Wind Shaper* (2024), Apple tree wood and reclaimed woods, by Joe Duggan, @joe_duggan_artist.

Events & Happenings

Step out of your hotel and into our pick of this month’s most captivating events

The Kensington

LEST WE FORGET

The first solo exhibition of her works outside her native India, Remembering encapsulates everything that makes Arpita Singh’s vision resonate, in a series spanning her vivid oil paintings to watercolours and simple sketches, Singh draws from Bengali folk art and Indian storytelling to open hearts and minds.
Remembering
Serpentine Galleries
20th March – 27th July 2025
serpentinegalleries.org

WORLD OF WHIMSY

For some of Hollywood’s weirdest, most wonderful creations, we have the magical, mercurial mind of Tim Burton to thank. And he is being celebrated by the Design Museum in a major exhibition ‘inviting visitors into his world through an exploration of the design of his unique aesthetic’ on its last stop of a decade-long world tour.
The World of Tim Burton
Design Museum
25th October 2024 - 21st April 2025
designmuseum.org

GOLDEN WONDERS

Featuring over 200 exhibits from all around the world, including many pieces from the V&A’s own collections, this glorious exhibition is a celebration of the extraordinary culture and creativity of Mughal Hindustan during the



golden age of its greatest emperors (1560-1660).
The Great Mughals: Art, Architecture and Opulence
V&A South Kensington
9th November 2024 - 5th May 2025
vam.ac.uk

VERSAILLENCE (SAY IT!)

It’s not often in the glorious splendour of Versailles that the mind turns to matters empirical, but between dancing a lordly jig and checking towering wigs for rodents, turns out the residents of the Marble Trianon positively tunnelled their vision in the pursuit of scientific excellence.
Versailles; Science

and Splendour
Science Museum
12th December 2024 - 21st April 2025
sciencemuseum.org.uk

The Bloomsbury

FOR LOVE

Start the new year with a ‘bittersweet ballet of first love and regret’ - a new production of the ballet Onegin. A ballet created by John Cranko in 1965, taking its inspiration (and music) from Tchaikovsky’s opera, based on Puskin’s original book, Eugene Onegin, and now being performed by The Royal Ballet.

Onegin
Royal Opera House
22nd January-12th June 2025
rbo.org.uk

KINGDOM OF KUSH

From an ancient kingdom at the crossroads between Central Africa and the Med, a civilisation that flourished in Sudan 3,000 years ago - this exhibition tells its story of skilled craftsmanship, religious beliefs and the role of women, with ancient insights into a rich culture, today locked in civil war.
Ancient Sudan
Enduring Heritage
The British Museum
1st February – 9th

November 2025
britishmuseum.org

THIS BLESSED PLOT

Director Nicholas Hytner’s work is always worth seeing and what better time to watch Shakespeare’s perennially prescient tale of somebody with absolutely the right to rule without necessarily being quite right to rule. Anyway, the cast is fabulous, and lead by the wonderful Jonathan Bailey, so obviously go.
Richard II
Bridge Theatre
10th February – 10th May 2025
bridgetheatre.co.uk

FEAR FACTOR

A rhinoceros charges across a town square in provincial France, or does it? As people run away in terror they start to become the thing they fear in a fabulous new production of Eugene Ionesco’s ‘absurdist satire about resisting conformity and the rumbling power of the herd’.
Rhinoceros
Almeida Theatre
25th March – 26th April 2025
almeida.co.uk

The Marylebone

BORN IN THE 80S

For those of us that were there, the 80s weren’t just big hair

and twice-baked conkers in the playground – it was a time of organising, activism and photography as a tool for social change – a horde of which is

gathered together in this ‘it could only be Britain’ exhibition.
The 80s: Photographing Britain
Tate Britain
21st November 2024 – 5th May 2025
tate.org.uk

LINDERING

Punk Icon Linder is celebrated in a first retrospective to celebrate her 50 years in the business of febrile creativity. And with half a century focused on dissecting the world’s fascination with the body, her work in montage, photography, performance and sculpture speaks volumes of that time.
Linder: Danger Came Smiling
Hayward Gallery
11th February – 5th May 2025
southbankcentre.co.uk

BORN LEIGH!

A rebel yell, ringing right through two decades of culture and continuing to shape visions today, Leigh Bowery’s outrageous body of work is celebrated here for all to see, contextualised, and analysed



Left Arpita Singh at Serpentine Galleries, Kensington
Top Right Punk Icon Linder celebrated at Hayward Gallery
Right The Royal Opera House stages a new production of the ballet ‘Onegin’.

- but freed to tell the story of the man who loved to blur the line between art and life. **Leigh Bowery!**
Tate Modern
27th February – 31st August 2025
tate.org.uk

DELUSIONAL
If anybody can think of an experience that isn't enhanced by the presence of Sir Grayson Perry we'd like to hear about it. Here the creative powerhouse has produced over 40 new works to anchor a show that interrogates the 'nature of craft-making and our drive for perfection'.
Delusions of Grandeur
Wallace Collection
28th March – 26th October 2025
wallacecollection.org

Bristol

TICK TOCK
Empty Alcove / Rotting Figure is a new commission and solo exhibition by artist Dan Guthrie.

Working primarily with moving image, Guthrie's practice explores representations of Black Britishness, especially in rural areas. Here he focuses on

the Blackboy Clock (from his hometown, Stroud) considering what society chooses to memorialise and how.
Empty Alcove / Rotting Figure



Spike Island
8th February – 11th May 2025
spikeisland.org.uk

WINTER'S REDEMPTION
Tobacco Factory Shakespeares are known for always being fresh and bursting with energy, so we're excited for this new production of The Winter's Tale, especially at a time of year when we'd welcome a tale of 'jealousy, redemption, and the enduring power of love'. So, bring it on.
The Winter's Tale
Tobacco Factory Theatres
20th February – 29th March 2025
tobaccofactorytheatres.com.

TALE OF WOE
While we confess we'd like to see Juliet's bossy old nurse (naughtily referred to as a ship in full sail) in a modern rap and R&B version of Romeo & Juliet, a glance at the trailer shows a naturally spoken, powerful retelling of a classic, with the cadence of the dialogue hardening to segue seamlessly into rap.
Romeo & Juliet
Bristol Old Vic
12th March – 5th April 2025
bristololdvic.org.uk

LYRICAL LYRA
It's April, and Bristol's thoughts naturally turn to the annual Lyra Poetry Festival, which gets 'poetry out there and accessible'. It being Bristol, spoken word is served every which way: simply, with music, with dance, in crowds, with participation, in pin-drop silence, in slams, in workshops and simply in hanging out together.
Lyra: Bristol Poetry Festival
Venues all over the city
25th April – 4th May 2025
lyrafest.com

The Westbury

EVERYTHING BUTT
Born in Lahore in 1962, Hamad Butt lived and died (tragically young) in London in 1994, his works numbering just a handful before his passing. Celebrated in Tate Britain's 2023 rehang, his first retrospective is a joint IMMA/Whitechapel Gallery production that's challenging and moving in equal measure.
Hamad Butt: Apprehensions
IMMA, The House Galleries
to 5th May 2025
imma.ie

MAKE THE DIFF
It's February and every young (and older) person's fancy turns to film because it's time for the Dublin International Film Festival (DIFF), which draws around 20,000 people to the capital over 11 days to bring the best of Irish and international filmmaking together for a celebration of storytelling.
Dublin International Film Festival
Various Dublin venues
20th February – 2nd March
diff.ie

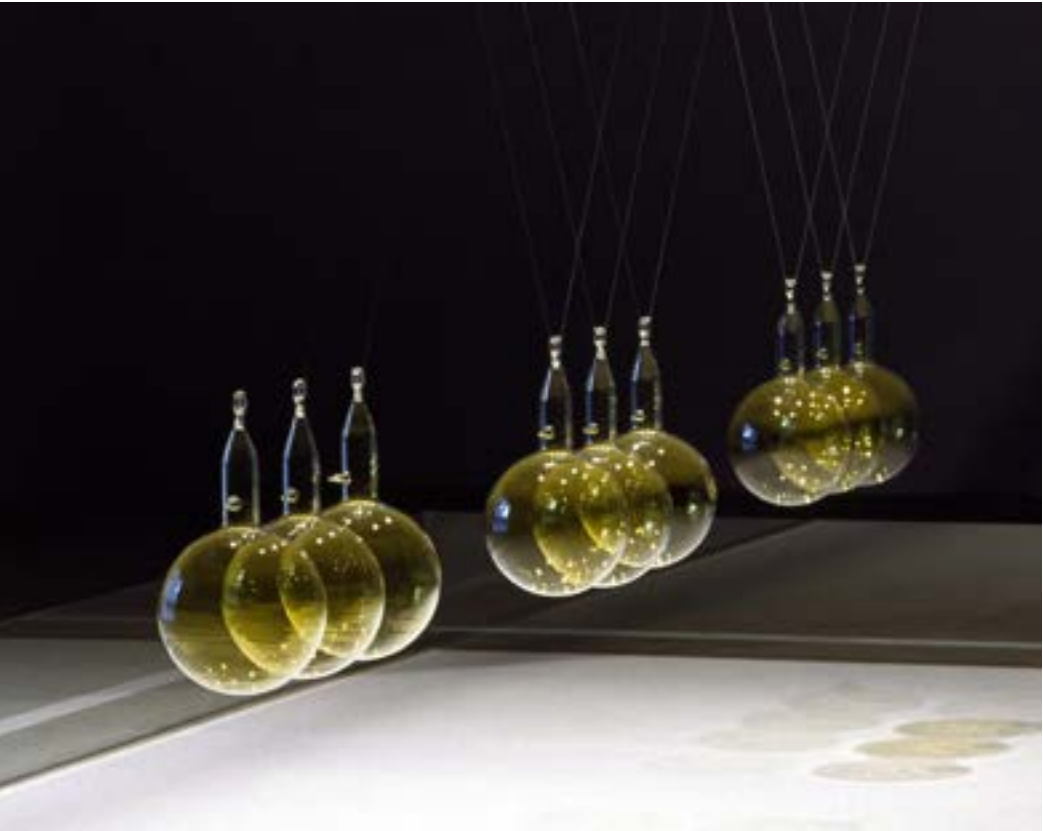
PATRON SAINT
St Patrick's Day is celebrated by millions in over 200 countries around the world, so no pressure for that Parade, Dublin. Fortunately the fair city always rises to the occasion - in

Left, Top Grayson Perry in *Delusions of Grandeur* at The Wallace Collection.
Left, Right Scenic artist Sofia Ejderos paints the backdrop for *The Winter's Tale* at the Tobacco Factory Theatre, Bristol. **Right, Top** *Familiars 3 Cradle (1992)* by Hamad Butt at IMMA.
Right Steve Coogan as *Dr Strangelove*, Bord Gáis theatre.

2025 with celebrations all over town and half a million people lining the streets for the parade.
St Patrick's Festival
All over Dublin

15th – 17th March 2025
stpatricksfestival.ie
FRIENDZONE
Take two pioneering Irish

Modernists studying art in Paris in the early 1920s and tell the story of their lifelong friendship and celebrated collaboration through 90 of



their works of art, then step back, enjoy and admire every painting, piece of stained glass and preparatory sketch.
Mainie Jellett & Evie Hone
- The Art of Friendship
National Gallery of Ireland
10th April – 10 August 2025
nationalgallery.ie

The Croke Park

DR. STRANGELOVE
Following a huge London launch, Sean Foley and Arnando Ianucci's stage production of Dr Strangelove, starring Steve Coogan in all the parts, is coming to the Bord Gáis for a limited run in February and we



Grayson Perry© Richard Ansett for the Wallace Collection, London-

couldn't be more excited. If you can get a ticket, get it and go! **Dr. Strangelove**
Bord Gáis Energy Theatre
5th – 22nd February 2025
bordgaisenergytheatre.ie

HAIL TO THE KING
Starring Olivier and Tony Award Irish veteran actor, Conleth Hill and directed by Roxana Silbert, Shakespeare's masterpiece returns to the Gate stage for the first time in over 80 years. With such a powerful cast, a production like this, in the intimacy of the Gate (with just 371 seats), will be one to remember.
King Lear
Gate Theatre
26th February – 27nd April 2025
gatetheatre.ie

FRENCH ACCORD
Turns out there's an award-winning Alliance Française Dublin (the second-largest in Europe), and they are also the good people behind the rather splendidly named Filf (Franco-Irish Literary Festival) – an annual event featuring the work and ideas of both French and Irish writers. (They also organise a Comic Book festival).
Franco-Irish Literary Festival
Dublin Castle/Alliance Française Dublin
6th – 8th March 2025
francoirishliteraryfestival.com

DREAM POOL
A major exhibition of the work of the Irish artist, Ailbhe Ní Bhriain will be thought-provoking, of course, as Ní Bhriain 'invites the viewer to experience the anxieties of the current moment while acknowledging histories past ... by way of six large-scale Jacquard tapestries'

bringing 'an opulence that belies the exhibition's surrealist mood'. Quite!
Ailbhe Ní Bhriain: The Dream Pool Intervals



Hugh Lane Gallery
27th March – 28th September 2025
hughlane.ie

The Dupont Circle

CHERRY OH!
Every spring, Washington DC becomes a riot of blooms as Cherry Blossom season takes over like magic – in the national park alone there are nearly 4,000 cherry trees (legacy of a 1912 gift from the people of Japan), celebrated by 1.5 million people all over the city with parades, parties, a kite festival and much more besides.
National Cherry

Blossom Festival
All over the city
March 20th – April 13th 2025
nationalcherryblossomfestival.org

won't play a part in the new administration – and where better to find out how we've got to where we are today, as well as some of the means

BETTER TOGETHER
Step back in time to the early 14th Century in central Italy, as Duccio, Simone Martini and the Lorenzetti brothers forged a new way of painting, introducing drama and emotion – and creating a pan-European movement via collaboration, evident in over a hundred works from Siena, Naples, Avignon and beyond.
Siena: The Rise of Painting, 1300 - 1350
National Gallery
8th March – 22nd June 2025
nationalgallery.org.uk

SPACE RACE
Whatever your politics, it's hard to argue that space

and methods that have taken men, women and instruments of research into space than the Smithsonian National Space Museum in Washington DC
National Air & Space Exhibition
6th Street and Independence Avenue SW
Open every day
airandspace.si.edu

FOR THE PEOPLE
This new 'cutting-edge educational experience' is a 33,000 sq-ft, three-storey retelling of the tale of The White House, its inhabitants and its history via immersive media and 'inventive scenic representations'. Created by the White House Historial

Association (WHHA), it opens The White House to many people that wouldn't otherwise get to experience it.
The People's House: A White House Experience
1700 Pennsylvania Avenue
Open daily
thepeopleshouse.org

The River Lee

PRESSURE DROP
Cecily Brennan explores themes of physical and psychological pressure in sculpture, painting, drawing, photography and screen media including her new short film The Devil's Pool and photographs from her ongoing Six Men project, alongside a selection of earlier pieces that also investigate connections between mental and material forces.
Pressure
Glucksman
29th November 2024 – 9th March 2025
glucksman.org

GREEN DAY
The second largest St Patrick's Day celebrations in Ireland quite rightly come to Cork. And they take the city by the scruff of the neck and give it a good shake until everybody has had a cracking good time. Sure there's an incredible parade, but also there's music of every kind, workshops, masterclasses,

tours, cruises and DJs. Just go...
Cork St Patrick's Festival
All over the city
15th- 18th March 2025
corkcity.ie

WHISKEY GALORE
While Oscar Wilde once called work "the curse of the drinking class" there's a great deal of pleasure to be had



with business, especially if you're organising a festival celebrating the Uisce beatha (water of life, AKA whiskey). And Cork Whiskey Fest gives Cork a chance to celebrate hundreds of wonderful distillations.
Cork Whiskey Fest
Various venues
21st-23rd March 2025
corkwhiskeyfest.com

CHORAL DISPLAY
Founded in 1954, today the Cork International Choral Festival welcomes about 5,000 choristers to raise roofs and soar to skies, in every form, from galas in City Hall to concerts in schools and churches. While there's a competitive element it's more a celebration, with a thriving fringe and the chance to hear some of the very finest choirs from all over the world.
Cork international Choral Festival
All over the City
30th April – 4th May 2025
corkchoral.ie



Left An SR-71 Blackbird aircraft at the Smithsonian National Space Museum, Washington DC.
Right, Top St Patrick's Day as celebrated in Cork.
Right The Annual National Cherry Blossom Festival fills the streets with pink in Washington DC.

36 HOURS

CHERRY BLOSSOM IN WASHINGTON DC

An imaginary schedule for the most unpredictable predictable event, the Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington DC. Predictable because it's always wonderful and unpredictable because you never know quite when blossom will appear. What we do know is the festival lasts about a fortnight across March and April - there's a url to help predict when, cherryblossomwatch.com. We're assuming you make it to The Dupont Circle in time - if you do, here are some highlights.

DAY 1 5.00-6.30 OPENING CEREMONY

After settling in and unpacking, head out to The Warner Theatre for the opening ceremony, a wonderful evening of special performances from acclaimed artists with ties to both countries. warnertheatredc.com

8.00 FINE DINE

You'll ready to sink into a deeply upholstered banquette and read a good menu with a spring cocktail in hand - The Pembroke awaits. pembrokedc.com

DAY 2 8.00 BREAK FASTS

You'll be out all day, so we recommend Irish Oatmeal or Maryland Chesapeake Crab Benedict from the breakfast menu. doylecollection.com/hotels/the-dupont-circle-hotel

9.30 WALK THE BASIN

The Tidal Basin is where most of the 3,000 cherry trees (introduced by a 1912 gift of 2,000 seedlings from Tokyo Mayor, Yuzio Ozarki) will be in full bloom, reflected in the limpid waters of the surrounding lakes. The harder of core go to see the sunrise there. Take in the memorials and monuments (to Lincoln, George Washington, Martin Luther King Jr, Franklin D Roosevelt) surrounding the basin.

10.00-12.00 IT'S A PARADE

Head to Constitution Avenue for the Cherry Blossom Festival Parade with floats, marching bands, music, celebrities and showmanship.

12.00-4.00 FLY HIGH

Drawing people of all ages, you'll find the Blossom Kite Festival in George Washington Memorial Park studs the sky with kites along with demonstrations, competitions, arts and crafts - for all the family. nationalcherryblossomfestival.org

1.00-9.00 OOOH, AAAH!

Petalpalooza brings outdoor stages, music, art, activities, entertainers and street food to the Capital Riverfront Navy Yard. Celebrations close with spectacular fireworks at 8.30pm. capitolriverfront.org



BRISTOL HARBOUR, C.1880

THEN

In the early 19th century the tidal Bristol Harbour became known as the 'floating harbour' on account of it's newly unvarying water levels. (The Avon, the river that fed it, continued to flow freely - through 'the cut', a mile or two away). Using its reliable water levels, the dock assumed its Victorian incarnation, a world

away from its bustling origins in the 13th century (it is believed that Bristolian sailors set foot on American soil years before Cabot and Columbus), and subsequent steady growth under the Society of Merchant Venturers. When this image was made, around 1880, the construction of the tramsheds was just 13 years' away.

& NOW

Canon's Marsh Quay fell into disrepair with the relocation of the working harbour, and stayed empty for decades before the 1970s when an Arts Centre built by enthusiasts in King Square Bristol became the first of the British Film Institute's Regional Film Theatres - but in need of a permanent home. In the early 1980s, the City was

looking to regenerate the derelict harbourside and in partnership with the British Film Institute, JT Group, and Bristol City Council, the Arts Centre was expanded and relocated into Watershed's current home (previously Transit Sheds E and W) with a new focus on media - particularly film and photography. ■



BRISTOL HARBOUR, TODAY