

PART TWO
Contributors (in order of appearance)



Ambasáid na hÉireann | An Fhrainc
Embassy of Ireland | France
Ambassade d'Irlande | France



Macdara Yeates

Macdara Yeates is a traditional singer, musician and producer from Dublin. For the last decade, Macdara's work has taken particular focus on the folk song tradition of his native north inner city Dublin, collaborating regularly with the Dublin Dockworkers' Preservation Society and exploring the work of Seán O'Casey, Peadar Kearney and the Behan family. Macdara has toured in the US, Canada, India, Africa and the UK as a former member of folk ensemble Skipper's Alley, as well as solo performances at various folk festivals such as Whitby Folk Week (ENG), The Frank Harte Festival (IRE), FifeSing (SCO) and the University of Limerick International Song Symposium. In 2021, Macdara took up a residency at the Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris to devise a one-man show on Dublin folk singer and activist Liam Weldon.

Clíona Ní Ríordáin

Professor Clíona Ní Ríordáin is a critic and translator and the O'Donnell Chair of Irish Studies at the University of Notre Dame. Before joining Notre Dame, she was Professor of English at the University Sorbonne Nouvelle-Paris 3 from 2003-2023, where she taught Irish literature and translation studies. She is the author of the monograph *English Language Poets in University College Cork* (Palgrave, 2020), and the editor of four anthologies of Irish poetry, and two collections of essays, *Speaking Like a Spanish Cow* (Ibidem, 2019) and *The Poets and Poetry of Munster* (Ibidem, 2023). Her most recent publication is a personal anthology of the poems of Gerry Murphy, *Plus loin encore* (Circe, 2023), co-edited and co-translated with Paul Bensimon.

Virginie Roche-Tiengo

Virginie Roche-Tiengo is an Associate Professor in Irish Studies at the University d'Artois. Following her Ph.D. at the Sorbonne University on *Lost Unity: The Poetics of Myth in the Theatre of the Irish Playwright Brian Friel*, she has published on Irish drama, in particular the work of Brian Friel, Brendan Behan, Thomas Kilroy, Frank McGuinness, Charles Macklin, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, James Joyce and Samuel Beckett. She is a member of GIS Eire and most recently contributed a paper on Irish Theatre, Human Rights and Women Change-Makers to their international conference in Toulouse in 2022. As a member of the GIS Sociability and Digital Encyclopedia of British Enlightenment Sociability (DIGITENS) project, she received a grant for monographs on Richard Brinsley Sheridan and Charles Macklin. Virginie Roche-Tiengo is currently working on the Brian Friel Papers in the National Library of Ireland and in the archives of NUI Galway as part of a new book project. Her research also focuses on law and theatre.

John Brannigan

John Brannigan is Professor of English and Head of the School of English, Drama and Film at University College Dublin. He is the author of several books on Irish and British literatures in the twentieth century, including *Brendan Behan: Cultural Nationalism and the Revisionist Writer* (Four Courts Press, 2002). He was editor of the *Irish University Review* from 2010 to 2016, during which time he edited a special issue on the work of Behan. His most recent publication is a new complete edition of Behan's newspaper articles, entitled *A Bit of a Writer: Brendan Behan's Collected Short Prose* (Lilliput, 2023).

Behan 100: Brendan Behan in Paris

Samedi 18 novembre 2023 - Centre Culturel Irlandais



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Blanaid Behan Walker - Special Contributor

Behan 100: Brendan Behan in Paris is co-produced by the Centre Culturel Irlandais and Deirdre McMahon and presented in association with the Embassy of Ireland.



PART ONE

Introduction

Deirdre McMahon

“Familiar Stranger”

Blanaid Behan Walker opens today’s event with a recorded reading of her essay “Familiar Stranger”, an inspiring tribute to her father in his centenary year. Originally broadcast on *Sunday Miscellany*, RTÉ (2023).

Brendan Behan in Paris

Deirdre McMahon tells the story of Brendan Behan in Paris in a presentation interspersed with readings of Behan’s work by **June McGrane** and music by **Jack O’Rourke**. Deirdre will also be joined by **Ciarán Farrell** of Shakespeare and Company to bring us back to the post-war period when George Whitman’s famous bookshop provided shelter and literary sustenance for Behan and many other writers. To set the scene, Ciarán will read from Krista Halverson’s *Shakespeare and Company: A History of the Rag and Bone Shop of the Heart*.

Behan’s poems and stories

June McGrane reads from a selection of poems and short stories by Brendan Behan:

“Oscar Wilde” (1949)

“Gratitude to Joyce” (1949)

“A Woman of No Standing” (1950)

“Bridewell Revisited” (1951)

Setting Behan’s poems to music

Jack O’Rourke performs Behan’s poems that he has set to music while artist-in-residence at the CCI:

“Oscar Wilde”

“Gratitude to Joyce”

“Uaigneas”

Jack O’Rourke also performs his version of Brendan Behan’s song “The Laughing Boy”.

Coffee break 3.15pm-3.45pm

PART TWO

The second part of today’s programme features presentations and discussion on Behan’s work and legacy by **Virginie Roche-Tiengo**, **Cliona Ní Ríordáin**, and **John Brannigan**. Presentations will be interspersed with songs from the Behan family repertoire performed by **Macdara Yeates**.

Songs from the Behan family

Macdara Yeates performs “When All the World Was Young” - an adaptation of the Charles Kingsley poem “Young and Old” set to music by Kathleen Behan

Translating Behan’s early work

Cliona Ní Ríordáin introduces her translations into French of the poems “Uaigneas” (1950) and “L’Existentialisme (An echo of St Germain-de-Prés)” (1952) by Brendan Behan.

Followed by a Q & A and discussion.

Brendan Behan’s legacy in France

Virginie-Roche-Tiengo on Behan’s legacy and popularity in France.

Coffee break 4.40pm-5pm

Poetry and song

Macdara Yeates reads his own translation of the Brendan Behan poem “Guí an Ranniare” (1950) and performs “The Patriot Game” by Dominic Behan.

Brendan Behan’s short prose

John Brannigan draws on his latest publication on Behan, *A Bit of a Writer: Brendan Behan’s Collected Short Prose*, to explore the writer’s work in the period immediately following his return to Dublin from Paris, when France was never far from his sights.

Followed by a Q & A and discussion.

A final word

Macdara Yeates performs “The Old Triangle” from *The Quare Fellow*.

PART ONE

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Deirdre McMahon

Deirdre McMahon was awarded a PhD from UCD for her thesis entitled “Brendan Behan and European Modernism: A Critical Reassessment of Modernist Aesthetics in the Writings of Brendan Behan, 1942-1958”. Her doctorate was supported in full by the Irish Research Council. Deirdre co-produced the award-winning radio documentary *Brendan Behan in Paris* for RTÉ’s Documentary on One series. She has contributed essays on Behan’s work to *Reading Brendan Behan*, edited by John McCourt, and the *Eugene O’Neill Review*. She was a contributor to “Kathleen Behan” for the TV series *Máthair* (TG4), and to RTÉ’s Nationwide TV special documentary to mark the 2023 centenary of the birth of Brendan Behan.



June McGrane

June McGrane, born in Dublin, is an actress, singer and voice-over artist. She trained at the Lecoq School of Physical Theatre in Paris. Her work includes Carte Blanche Performances at the Centre Georges Pompidou with the *Snow White Project*, performing Titania in *Midsummers Night Dream* and Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth* at the Glastonbury Music Festival, performing the role of Kate Lintonen for the film *51 I Fly* and voice-overs for *Chanel*, *Lancôme*, *Shiseido*... She has previously enjoyed performing at the Centre Culturel Irlandais with Cinémorphe playing Gretta in *Distant Music*, the Mother for *Ninety Twenty Sixteen : Unto the Valley of The Black Pig*, composing and singing for *Samhain* with Underpressure and most recently playing Kathleen and The Thin Woman in *The Crock Of Gold*, which toured in France and Ireland, for Fooksbarn Traveling Theatre Company in collaboration with Glen Hansard and Breannán Ó Beaglaoich.



Jack O’Rourke

Jack O’Rourke’s third and most recent album, *Wild Place*, has received triumphant critical acclaim; it depicts an eclectic musicality with, as ever, strong emphasis on the piano and his captivating voice. The artist pushes the boundaries of dark blues and introspective ballads that are both heartbreaking and ardent, sprinkled with baroque pop, folk, soul and jazz tones. The Cork-born songwriter devoted his recent residency at the Centre Culturel Irlandais to setting Brendan Behan’s poetry to music, drawing on traditional sounds and sean-nós, with melodic touches of Ravel, Debussy, Kate Bush and Radiohead. These new open-hearted compositions combine with the artist’s standards – both modern and timeless, personal and universal.



Ciarán Farrell

Ciarán Farrell is a Wicklowman by birth, a Dublinman by adoption and a Parisian by choice. He is a doctoral student at Paris Nanterre University, researching an Irish Jacobite family, that of Sir Patrick Trant, who were part of the “Wild Geese” contingent exiled to France in the 1690s. He is currently an assistant manager at Shakespeare and Company, where he recently participated in the Friends of Shakespeare and Company *Ulysses* project to read “Lestrygonians”.

