



## Lá na Cruite, National Harp Day Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2018

### For immediate release

Saturday October 20<sup>th</sup> marks Ireland's second National Harp Day/Lá na Cruite where Harp Ireland, Cruit Éireann, once again, invites harpers and people interested in the harp to join us to celebrate all facets of the harp in Ireland. Venues from Donegal to Dingle, from Belfast to Bandon will resound to the wonderful sound of harp-playing at concerts, sessions, Harpathons, pop-up sessions, talks and demonstrations of harp making.

"The past few years have seen an unprecedented upsurge of interest in the instrument, introducing it to even more players and to new audiences" Aibhlín McCrann, Chair of Harp Ireland, Cruit Éireann said. "We were thrilled with the response last year; we had many requests from people wanting to learn the harp. So, we urge everybody with an interest in the harp to join us on Saturday 20 October to celebrate our iconic instrument; you will have a chance to hear some of our best harpers play along with our younger rising stars".

National Harp Day is Cruit Éireann's second major initiative to promote Ireland's national instrument, encourage more people to learn the harp, attract new audiences and recognise the harp's unique place in Irish musical and cultural life. Harp events will take place at a number of key venues in cities and towns nationwide including Armagh, Belfast, Dublin, Mayo, Galway, Limerick, Laois, Louth, Meath, Cork, Wexford. 2018 sees us venturing even farther afield, with associated harp events taking place virtually with our harping friends in the Isle of Man, the USA and New Zealand.

- Young harpers will gather at The Lexicon Cultural Centre in Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin to take part in a fun-filled *Harpathon*. It will be followed by an exciting collaboration with Lorcán Mac Mathúna, *dlr* musician in residence, *Dinnseanchas*, where selected extracts from the Irish Folklore collection about local place-names will merge with traditional storytelling, harpers' music and songs, performed by young people from the area. Harper Rachel Duffy will be joined by harpers from Bray and Monkstown to participate in the project.
- Galway City Museum will showcase four events during the day; Meet the harp makers at 10am, a lecture with Paul Dooley at 10.30am, and a student performance at 12pm. The final event features Kathleen Loughnane with an ensemble of 12 in concert from 3 – 5pm.
- The Irish Traditional Music Archive in Merrion Square will reverberate to soothing sounds of Irish harping from Siobhán Armstrong, Cormac de Barra and Alannah Thornburg.
- The Royal Hibernian Academy hosts an enchanting mixture of harp and flute with Teresa O'Donnell and Karen Leitner. They will be joined by multi-talented harper-composer Anne-Marie O'Farrell.
- Harpers in Wexford will appear at the Wexford Arts Centre and in pop-up concerts in Gorey throughout the day.
- Harpers from The Meath Harp Academy play at Nobber Library, Post Office and Café and later at the George Eogan Centre.

- Harpers from Music Generation Laois will perform a new commission composed by their director, harper Siobhán Buckley.
- Harpers in Mayo, led by harpers Laoise Kelly and Gráinne Hambly, will turn out in force in Westport; they will be joined by Mayo Music Generation Harp Ensemble.
- The stunning setting of the Pearse Museum in Rathfarnham will welcome a *Rising Stars* concert hosted by Cairde na Cruite, while students at the Royal Irish Academy of Music will stage a pop-up concert there.
- Muckross House in Killarney has a busy afternoon with a solo performance from Kerry Harper, Deirdre Granville, followed by workshops on the Muckross Harp trail, and ending with a concert at 4pm.
- Cork harpers will be turning out in force at the Crawford Gallery.
- Harp events will take place across the north in Derry/Londonderry, Belfast, Armagh and Newry.
- Manx harpers will join in our celebration with a gala concert there featuring Mera Royle, BBC's Folk Musician of the Year, who will play an evening concert in the Villa Arcade in the Isle of Man.

All events are free and this programme is evolving on a daily basis - so please check back on [harpireland.ie](http://harpireland.ie) and our social media channels for regular updates.

## ENDS

### Note to Editors

Cruit Éireann, Harp Ireland is the national umbrella resource organisation for the harp, its organisations, harp players and harp makers in Ireland. It was established in 2016 by harpers in collaboration with the Arts Council, An Chomhairle Ealaíon to support the continuing development of the harp in Ireland, gain recognition for its unique status and secure its sustainability.

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For programme details go to [www.harpireland.ie](http://www.harpireland.ie)

Lá na Cruite, National Harp Day is generously supported by the Arts Council, An Chomhairle Ealaíon and RTÉ lyricfm

