

CULTÚR2026

Sharing Ireland's Culture

**Sligo's Culture Programme for Ireland's Presidency
of the Council of the European Union 2026**

JULY – NOVEMBER 2026

It is my pleasure to introduce Sligo's contribution to Cultúr 2026: Sharing Ireland's Culture, the cultural programme for Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2026.

Throughout these months, our towns, villages and cultural venues will become places of exchange, creativity and conversation as artists from across Europe and audiences come together through a shared appreciation of culture. From the internationally acclaimed World Press Photo Exhibition to music, literature, theatre and youth projects, this programme reflects the richness of Sligo's cultural life and the strength of our European connections.

This programme celebrates what unites us through culture while recognising the diversity that enriches Europe. It is an opportunity to strengthen friendships, inspire dialogue and reaffirm the values of openness, creativity and co-operation that lie at the heart of the European project. I encourage everyone to engage with the programme and join us in marking this significant moment in Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Councillor Dara Mulvey
Cathaoirleach
Sligo County Council

CULTÚR2026
Sharing Ireland's Culture



An Roinn Cultúir,
Cumarsáide agus Spóirt
Department of Culture,
Communications and Sport



Sligo
County Council
Arts Service

Sligo.

INTRODUCTION

As Ireland holds the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2026, Sligo County Council is proud to present Cultúr 2026: Sharing Ireland's Culture – a cultural programme that reflects both the richness of our own creative life and our strong connections with communities across Europe.

From world-renowned photography and music to literature, film, performance and youth collaboration, this programme brings together artists, cultural organisations and international partners in a celebration of creativity, dialogue and shared values. It showcases Sligo as a place where culture connects people, encourages understanding and inspires new perspectives.

I would like to thank our many partners, artists, volunteers and communities whose commitment and collaboration have made this ambitious programme possible. We look forward to welcoming artists, visitors and audiences to County Sligo to experience an exceptional season of cultural events during Ireland's Presidency.

Martin Lydon
Chief Executive
Sligo County Council

All information correct at time of publication, July 2026.
Please refer to the associated information/booking links for up to date information

WORLD PRESS PHOTO

EXHIBITION 2026

FRIDAY 14TH AUGUST – THURSDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER
QUEEN MAEVE SQUARE (OUTDOOR), SLIGO TOWN
FREE EVENT, NO BOOKING NECESSARY
www.sligo.ie / www.sligoarts.ie

Sligo County Council presents the 69th annual World Press Photo exhibition as the flagship event of Cultúr 2026: Sharing Ireland's Culture, the culture programme for Ireland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2026. The renowned annual World Press Photo Contest recognises and honours the best photojournalism and documentary photography produced over the last year. The 2026 exhibition showcases the work of 42 winning photographers, selected from 57,376 submissions. Featuring contributions from several European photographers, the exhibition offers a powerful reflection of our world.

The walk-through exhibition includes single photographs, stories, and long-term projects that capture both breaking news and deeper social issues. Through powerful visual storytelling, this year's show encourages visitors to reflect on current events and the role of photography in shaping our understanding of the world.

Admission is free, and visitors can explore the exhibition at their own pace over the four weeks, using the self-guided audio tours that are available in multiple languages via QR codes, helping to make the experience as accessible as possible for everyone.

World Press Photo supported by its strategic partners, the Dutch Postcode Lottery and FUJIFILM Corporation.

STRATEGIC PARTNERS



FUJIFILM

CAIRDE SLIGO ARTS FESTIVAL: CLAUDETTE & LOS GALINDOS

DATES: 4TH, 8TH & 9TH JULY

INFO: www.cairde.ie

Cairde celebrates contemporary circus and interdisciplinary performance with the Irish premiere of *MDR: Death by Laughter* by Catalan company Los Galindos and *Claudette*, a free, all-ages Irish-Belgian co-production by Cie Maleta and Cie Balancetoi.



SLIGO JAZZ FESTIVAL: EUROPEAN VOICES



DATE: TUESDAY 21ST - THURSDAY 23RD JULY
VENUE: HAWK'S WELL THEATRE, SLIGO
INFO: <https://www.sligojazz.ie/atagance.html>

Sligo Jazz Project dedicates a core strand of its July 2026 summer school and festival to celebrating European jazz collaboration, diversity, and intercultural dialogue. The "European Voices" Concert Series at the Hawks Well Theatre features artists, representing the breadth of European nations and musical traditions.

TREAD SOFTLY FESTIVAL: MEITHEAL

DATE: SUNDAY 30TH AUGUST
VENUE: CUMMEEN STRAND, SLIGO
INFO: <https://www.treadsoftly.ie/>
EMAIL TO PARTICIPATE: info@treadsoftly.ie

800 participants will gather at Cummeen Strand to re-create a 5,000-year-old stone carving discovered at Carrowkeel's Cairn B.

Carrowkeel forms part of the Passage Tomb Landscape of Sligo's World Heritage bid and belongs to a wider network of Neolithic monuments across Atlantic Europe, highlighting Ireland's contribution to our shared European cultural heritage.



SPANISH ARMADA FESTIVAL: COAST STORY

DATE: FRIDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER, 8PM (CULTURE NIGHT)
VENUE: GRANGE CHURCH, GRANGE, COUNTY SLIGO
BOOKING: <https://spanisharmadaireland.com/events-gala-concert/>

The Band of the Spanish Navy, The Atlantic Coast Ensemble Sligo & Guests

Coast Story features the Band of the Spanish Navy, Sligo's Atlantic Coast Ensemble, and special guests. Set in historic Grange Church, it weaves together Irish and Spanish music, storytelling, and stunning underwater archaeology footage to explore the Spanish Armada's legacy and the enduring cultural connections between Ireland and Spain.



ADAPTATION FILM FESTIVAL: GERMAN CINEMA IN FOCUS

DATE: WEDNESDAY 16TH – SUNDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER
VENUE: THE MODEL, SLIGO
INFO: <https://cinemanorthwest.ie/adaptation-2026>
BOOKING: <https://www.theglenscentre.com/>

Marking Ireland's EU Presidency, the festival programme expands its international focus with screenings of acclaimed films by German director Volker Schlöndorff. As part of the programme, Schlöndorff will also be in conversation with author Colm Tóibín.



SLIGO BAROQUE MUSIC FESTIVAL: GALA CONCERT

DATE: SUNDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER
VENUE: SLIGO CATHEDRAL
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
BOOKING: <https://www.sligobaroquefestival.com/>

The closing event of this year's Sligo Baroque Music Festival will include a performance of Handel's glorious Dixit Dominus, as well as other repertoire, including selected arias performed by international and Irish vocal soloists, conducted by Finnish conductor and harpsichordist Aapo Häkkinen.



SLIGO LIBRARY: THE WORD WITH FRANK WYNNE

DATE: WEDNESDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER, 6.30PM – 8PM
VENUE: SLIGO CENTRAL LIBRARY
INFO: <https://sligolibrary.ie/>

The Word is a monthly literary event at Sligo Central Library, run in collaboration with ATU Sligo's BA (Hons) Writing and Literature. In this special edition, Sligo-born writer and award-winning literary translator Frank Wynne who has lived and worked internationally as a journalist and broadcaster, will discuss his work with Sligo author Declan Burke.

Frank's many honours include the *International Dublin Literary Award*, the *Scott Moncrieff Prize*, *Premio Valle Inclán* and the *CWA International Dagger*. In 2022, he became the first translator to chair the judges of the Booker Prize. Music on the evening will be courtesy of Felip Carbonell.



SLIGO LIVE FESTIVAL ELISE FRANK TRIO

DATE: SUNDAY 25TH OCTOBER, 4PM (TBC)
VENUE: THE YEATS BUILDING, HYDE BRIDGE, SLIGO
BOOKING: <https://sligolive.ie/event/>

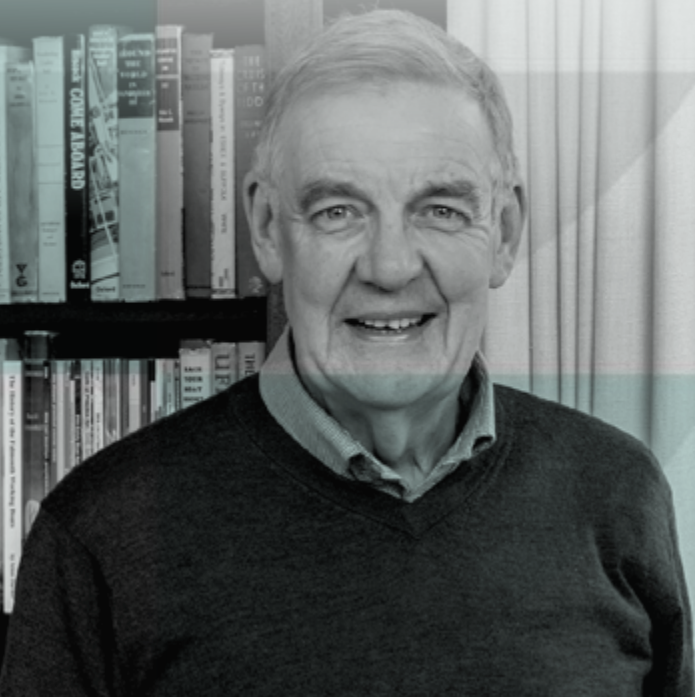
Sligo Live's Cultúr Programme will be a special performance by French singer, guitarist and songwriter Elise FRANK & her trio. Rooted in deep American blues and inspired by the raw energy of 90's garage rock, her music favours authenticity over polish. On stage, she performs with intensity and emotional depth, shaping a sound that is both direct and unfiltered. Elise FRANK continues to build a growing reputation on the European blues scene.



YEATS SOCIETY SLIGO: HOW EUROPEAN ARE MODERN WRITERS

DATE: THURSDAY 12TH NOVEMBER
VENUE: YEATS SOCIETY, HYDE BRIDGE, SLIGO
BOOKING: <https://www.yeatssociety.com/>

To mark Ireland's EU Presidency, the Yeats Society Sligo presents a public discussion on the influence of European literature on contemporary writing. Chaired by Bryan Dobson, the panel features acclaimed writers Paul Lynch, Jan Carson, and Jessica Traynor, exploring literary influence, identity, and cultural exchange.



BINDER ARTS/SPLIT MILK FESTIVAL: PANORAMA

DATE: FRIDAY 20TH NOVEMBER
VENUE: THE FACTORY PERFORMANCE SPACE
BOOKING: <https://binder.ie>

As part of the Split Milk Festival, Binder presents *Panorama* by the French collective Gamut. Blending live music, modular synthesizers, video projection, drawing, and object manipulation, this interdisciplinary performance creates a captivating audiovisual experience inspired by the Indonesian gamelan tradition.

KIDS' OWN PUBLISHING PARTNERSHIP: SHARED IMPRESSIONS

DATES: SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER

INFO: <https://kidsown.ie/>

Shared Impressions is a collaborative project by Kids' Own, Ballinode Community College, and Binder's Pulled Print Studio, bringing together storytelling and printmaking. Transition Year students will create original hand-printed publications, connecting with Belgian printmaker Alan Regnier and young artists in La Louvière as part of Ireland's EU Presidency.



COUNTY SLIGO YOUTH THEATRE SHARED GROUND: YOUTH VOICES



PROJECT DATES: 9–15 NOVEMBER

PUBLIC EXHIBITION & SHARING: 14–15 NOVEMBER

INFO: <https://sligoyouththeatre.ie>
sligoyt@gmail.com

“Shared Ground: Youth Voices” is a week-long arts residency bringing together Sligo Youth Theatre, Lithuanian visual artist Virginija Mitokaitė, and theatre practitioner Özer Gökmen. Through creative workshops in art, theatre, storytelling, and discussion, young participants will explore identity, belonging, and cultural connection, culminating in a free public exhibition and performance celebrating youth creativity and contemporary European identity.

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

EU PRESIDENCY 2026 CULTURAL PROGRAMME

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