Celebrating Seamus Heaney
On Home Ground 2014
11th - 14th September
www.onhomegroundfestival.com
Day 1 - Thursday 11 September
School workshops in Illustration and Creative Writing in Bellaghy
Reading Rooms in Bellaghy
Evening events in Laurel Villa

Day 2 - Friday 12 September
School workshops in Illustration and Creative Writing in The Bridewell and Magherafelt Library
Stanzas and Scones with guest poets
Exhibition by Colin Davidson
Laureate Na Nóg visit Eoin Colfer
Discussions and poetry readings
Reading Rooms
Evening events in Laurel Villa

Day 3 - Saturday 13 September
Illustration workshops open to the public
Creative Writing workshops open to the public
Stanzas and Scones with guest poets
Discussions and poetry readings
Exhibition launch
Music performance by Gary Lightbody from Snow Patrol
Evening events in Laurel Villa

Day 4 - Sunday 14 September
Illustration workshops open to the public
Creative Writing workshops open to the public
Stanzas and Scones with guest poets
Discussions and poetry readings
Exhibitions
Music performances
Closing event Liam O’Flynn and guests
Roisin McDonough  
Chief Executive,  
Arts Council of Northern Ireland

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the On Home Ground Festival 2014, the major celebration of the legacy of the great poet and Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney in his native landscape.

There are places all over the world, from universities to national libraries to foreign embassies to the homes of private individuals like you and me, where Seamus Heaney's legacy as a poet is cherished, considered, reflected upon, admired and loved. But there remains the point of origin, the root and branch of his themes and concerns, the landscape and population with histories and nuances, which finds its moment in this very region, where the local meets the global.

It is not too much to say that On Home Ground is true to the impulses of the poet in whose honour it is established. It will not be the only way in which Heaney's unique gifts will be considered; but it will be an appropriate way, a suitable beginning, a valuable means for all of us to reflect on the profound contribution this man from Mossbawn made not only to the culture of our language and our civilisation but also, and not least, to the imagination of his native place.

The Arts Council is delighted to be able to support On Home Ground and, in so doing, begin the process of understanding just what that great force was which lived among us for so long but, sadly, for not long enough.

Welcome and enjoy.

James Kerr  
Verbal Arts Centre

The Verbal Arts Centre is honoured and privileged to be involved with this year’s On Home Ground festival. Together with Laurel Villa we have forged a strong artistic partnership that builds on the success of last year’s great event.

On Home Ground is a genuine and authentic public response to the life and work of Seamus Heaney. It is intentionally a celebration of the Poet rooted in the places and spaces that resonate throughout his written words.

This year’s festival will showcase the culture and creative vibrancy of the local people and countryside of ‘Seamus Heaney Country’. We have been thrilled to work with Marie-Louise Muir to gather an outstanding programme of local, national and international writers, musicians, artists, literary organisations and publishers. Many of the guests to the festival had a personal connection with Seamus Heaney all of them have been inspired by him. On Home Ground is their opportunity to pay special tribute to Seamus Heaney the poet and the man.

Also the festival programme has been designed to include events for young and old so that as many people as possible can join in! Seamus Heaney believed in the Home Ground, his place, his people, of Co Derry. Through this festival, we are digging into that Home Ground and will build strong foundations for all the On Home Ground festivals of the future.

I wish to thank all our partners and supporters in helping to make this festival possible. All have shared the vision of the On Home Ground Festival.
The Northern Ireland Tourist Board is pleased to support this fantastic collection of literary events. With a varied programme of entertainment on offer, it will bring Heaney Country alive with activity for all to enjoy. Set in the most picturesque surroundings visitors can not only be inspired by Heaney’s works but also enjoy some of Northern Ireland’s greatest landscapes and finest hospitality.

The late great Seamus Heaney is Northern Ireland’s towering literary figure and the fact that visitors can experience warm, local and first-hand connections with his life and works is a great boost for local tourism.

On Home Ground offers a quality unique literary experience and will continue to generate a substantial impact on the economy and contribute to Northern Ireland’s positive profile.

I commend the organisers for all their hard work and for the contribution they make towards the creation and sustainability of a vibrant tourism industry. I wish all the visitors and participants an enjoyable and memorable time at the festival.

Cllr Kathleen McEldowney
Chairperson, Magherafelt District Council

The On Home Ground Festival 2014 will play a unique part in enhancing our district as a must visit destination by giving visitors the opportunity to explore our rich cultural history and unique landscape through the creative arts.

The festival will celebrate the life, work and legacy of Seamus Heaney who was a ‘living legend’ and Northern Ireland’s most well-known and respected poet. It will also emphasise the culture and creative vibrancy of the local people and countryside of the district where Seamus Heaney grew up.

With an entertaining programme of performances, exhibitions and activities the weekend promises to be not only a celebration of poets and poetry but an opportunity to showcase the wonderful people, talent, arts and cultural scene of Northern Ireland.

On behalf of Magherafelt District Council I would like to wish all the poets, artists and visitors a great weekend and hope they will have a truly memorable experience.
Eugene Kielt
Laurel Villa

I first heard Seamus Heaney at an event in Magherafelt in 1977. He was already something of a crowd-puller. Over thirty years later he came to this small guest house, not exactly a bastion of academia, and treated a small group of us to a magical night of poems, stories and humour. A few days later Gerardine and I got a letter from him thanking us for having him. Thinking about those things, I feel they summed up what has attracted me to Seamus Heaney down the years, things over and above his gifts as a poet. His charisma, his loyalty to his home ground, his thoughtfulness and his humility. I feel that we have much to celebrate and still much to learn from Seamus Heaney. The morning after Seamus died I got an email from Helen in Australia. It said; ‘In my grief at learning of Seamus’s death I remembered the time in May my husband and I spent with Gerardine and you at Laurel Villa and the great privilege it was to be in his country at long last and with such a sensitive and respectful guide. I’ll never forget the experience you gave us. I trust you will continue to honour his name, his poetry and his place. It’s important work and all the more so now.’

Marie-Louise Muir
Guest Curator of On Home Ground

When I was asked to curate On Home Ground, I thought, ‘what kind of festival would Seamus himself have wanted to go to?’ I know, I set the bar high. This was the most sought after poet in the world, his fax machine at home spewing out endless invitations to pretty much every literary festival on the planet. I know that he would have had a gentle shudder at the idea of being “celebrated”, of being put centre stage, especially a few miles down the road from where he grew up. So while I was putting the jigsaw of this festival together, I kept imagining his voice, asking myself what he would have enjoyed, what would sit well together, what would creatively clash, what would rise and fall in the right rhythm. I know he loved hearing new voices, sitting back to let a fresh tribe of scribes through. So I have deliberately mixed up the programme to place emerging poets, debut writers and local singer/songwriters alongside more established, award winning poets, the biggest names in Irish traditional music, veteran journalists, celebrated composers and even an Ivor Novella winning songwriter.

I wanted to honour his belief in the marvellousness of the local by programming a festival that reflected his place and his personality, his care and his company, here on his Home Ground.

We have the legacy of his words and we have the future of his Home Ground to plough for him.
Poetry Trail - From Boortree to Anemone
Daily from 10am
Laurel Villa Gardens
Admission Free

In July of this year, the poet & keen plantswoman Jean Bleakney was introduced to the owner of the Mid Ulster Garden Centre, Maghera, Jim Bradley. A creative friendship was forged as the idea of the poetry themed Heaney garden took seed.

Emails were exchanged discussing plants like Rosa Old Blush China and Artemisia Arbrotanum and Jean swapping poetry. One email saw Jim sign off “Thank you for the link. I am now both horticulturally and poetically uplifted for the day!”

Plants have provided inspiration, balm and metaphor throughout history. Strollers in the garden of Laurel Villa will find a trail of poems placed alongside plants to which they are linked by name or association; poems by Seamus Heaney and the poets who inspired him. This installation uses Laurel Villa’s leafy backdrop and specific existing plants plus other key plants sourced and supplied by Mid Ulster Garden Centre.

Poetry & the Planter
Friday 12, 1pm
The Poetry Tent, Laurel Villa
Admission £5.00

Join the Poet & the Planter in Conversation with BBC Radio Ulster’s Cherrie McIlwaine on Gardeners’ Corner. Hear how they came to co-create the Heaney Poetry Trail at Laurel Villa.
Painting Heaney
Opens Thursday 11
Daily from 12noon - 8pm
The Dinning Room, Laurel Villa
Admission Free

At the end of 2012, Seamus Heaney sat for a portrait by Colin Davidson in the poet’s Dublin home. The resulting painting was unveiled in June 2013, just two months before Heaney’s death. This small exhibition gives a unique insight into the artist’s working practice, showing some of his drawings of the Nobel Laureate alongside the finished portrait itself. The exhibition will also include a short BBC film, which documents Colin Davidson’s progress, from start to finish, with what would be the last portrait of Seamus Heaney.

Colin Davidson Talk
Thursday 11, 10am
Bellaghy

This is a closed session for invited local A-Level art students.

In Conversation with Glenn Patterson
Thursday 11, 7pm
The Poetry Tent, Laurel Villa
Admission £10.00

Colin Davidson is in conversation with the writer Glenn Patterson who also has recently sat for Colin, and brings his own insight into being a Davidson subject.
Illustration workshops
Thursday 11,
Bellaghy 10am & 2pm
Laurel Villa 10am

Friday 12, 10am & 2pm
Magherafelt Library, The Bridewell

NB: Thursday and Friday illustration workshops are for invited school groups only and are not open to the public

Saturday 13, 10am (age 6-10) & 2pm (age 10-14),
Magherafelt Library, The Bridewell
Admission £3.00

Sunday 14, 2pm (age 6-10),
Magherafelt Library, The Bridewell
Admission £3.00

2D, the Northern Ireland Comic Festival has been developed by the Verbal Arts Centre to nurture the art of visual storytelling and to highlight the importance of illustration in engaging young people with literature. 2D is organised and delivered by the Verbal Arts Centre and we are excited this year to be part of the On Home Ground programme of events. This provides us with the opportunity to develop and extend further the art of storytelling and illustration.

The programme includes fantastic guests who will take part in a series of engaging workshops delivered by industry such as Oliver Jeffers, guest talks from Colin Davidson aimed at school groups of various ages and the general public.
Creative Writing workshops
Thursday 11
Bellaghy 10am & 2pm
Laurel Villa 2pm

Friday 12, 10am & 2pm
Magherafelt Library, The Bridewell

NB: Thursday and Friday creative writing workshops are for invited school groups only and are not open to the public.

Saturday 13
The Bridewell, 10am (age 6-10)
Magherafelt Library, 2pm (age 10-14)
Laurel Villa 10am (age 6-10)

Admission £3.00

Sunday 14, 2pm (age 10-14),
Magherafelt Library

Admission £3.00

The Verbal Arts Centre is unique in its promotion of language and literature. Situated in Derry~Londonderry on the City walls, our ethos is to engage, educate and enthuse through the arts and development of written and spoken word.

We are delighted to be involved in the festival and have developed a programme of creative writing sessions aimed at various ages. Participants will gain a greater understanding of how to structure and develop their own poetry. Together the groups will work with a team of creative writers to complete the task of creating a new collection of poetry.

More info on artists can be found at www.onhomegroundfestival.com
The Reading Rooms
Thursday 11, 12.30pm
Bellaghy
Friday 12, 12.30pm & 3pm
The Small Tent, Laurel Villa
Saturday 13
Magherafelt Library 11am
The Small Tent, Laurel Villa 12.30pm
Sunday 14
Magherafelt Library 12noon
The Small Tent, Laurel Villa, 12.30pm
Admission Free

The Reading Rooms is a socially inclusive shared reading initiative based on a model of collective reading in a group setting. The Reading Rooms is an innovative, flexible programme which has delivered by the Verbal Arts Centre in a variety of settings and to a range of participant groups from prison groups, older people, dementia groups, young people and various health and wellbeing groups.

Using a shared reading model with poetry and prose the Reading Rooms project works with many groups to create an accessible and safe setting for participants to engage and flourish through a series of educational, health and wellbeing and creative sessions.

Throughout the Festival we are delighted that the Reading Rooms will become a hub of celebration of Seamus Heaney’s work.
Seamus Heaney made an important and lasting contribution to the BBC. His appearances on local radio and television ranged widely and extended over several decades. Much of his early work was for school audiences, but it was followed by other documentaries, features and interviews. His skills as a communicator meant that he was always in demand by BBC programme-makers, eager to involve someone who understood the demands of broadcasting and who knew how to inform, educate and entertain. His virtuoso talent enlivened the BBC’s airwaves and has left behind a treasure trove of archive gold, including many timeless (and inimitable) readings of his own verse.

Heaney On Air is a tribute to Seamus Heaney’s work for the BBC. It will include a selection of archive screenings and an illustrated talk by Pat Loughrey on Seamus Heaney’s programmes for local schools and our Nobel laureate’s skills as a writer of scripts and presenter. It promises to be a memorable event, unlocking the archive and celebrating Seamus Heaney as one of our most gifted broadcasters – a public intellectual whose voice was familiar (and immediately recognisable) to BBC audiences at home and around the world.

We expect that there will be a high level of demand for tickets to these events. A random draw will operate to allow the maximum number of people to apply.

For more information about these BBC events and to apply for tickets, please visit bbc.co.uk/tickets

More info on artists can be found at www.onhomegroundfestival.com
Peter Fallon In Conversation with Heaney commentator Professor Bernard O’Donoghue
Thursday 11, 8pm
The Poetry Tent, Laurel Villa
Admission £7.50

The Gallery Press publisher and poet Peter Fallon talks to leading Heaney critic, poet & Oxford academic, Prof. Bernard O’Donoghue about his long & unique relationship with Seamus Heaney. From being one of Seamus’ first readers to Seamus being best man at Peter’s wedding, it is a story of two friends who, in Peter’s words, “rode shotgun for each other”.

Expect an intimate evening of words & wit in celebration of a singular and deep reaching friendship forged in poetry, people and place.

Peter will also be reading from “Strong, My Love”, his first collection in seven years, a series of prayer like poems for family & old friends.
Laureate na nÓg is an exciting project established by the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon which recognises the role and importance of literature for children. The laureateship is currently held by Eoin Colfer. Eoin is a best-selling author of books for children and teens, known for writing the Artemis Fowl Series, Half Moon Investigations, The Wish List, The Supernaturalist and Airman. The second in his latest series, W.A.R.P. The Hangman’s Revolution, has just been published.

As Laureate na nÓg, Eoin has initiated a new project called Once Upon A Place. He wants to bring stories to children all over Ireland, reaching places that might not normally be prioritised. Eoin’s second focus is on fantastic places: extraordinary settings in which to stage a very special and memorable storytelling event that would spark children’s imaginations and bring the magic of story and of books to young people in an experiential way.

HarperCollins UK and Penguin USA publish Oliver’s picture books, now translated into over 30 languages, including The Incredible Book Eating Boy, Stuck & This Moose Belongs to Me. The Day The Crayons Quit, illustrated by Jeffers, was a New York Times #1 bestseller.

More info on artists can be found at www.onhomegroundfestival.com
Stanzas and Scones

If Shakespeare believed music was the food of love, we here at On Home Ground believe that scones should be the food of stanzas. It’s a bit of poetic licence to invite you to stop by mid morning, pour a cuppa, butter one of Laurel Villa’s homemade scones and enjoy some verse from new and established poets.

Poet Nathaniel J McAuley
Friday 12, 11am
The Small Tent, Laurel Villa
Admission £5.00

Poet & physicist Iggy McGovern
Saturday 13, 11am
The Small Tent, Laurel Villa
Admission £5.00

The Honest Ulsterman: Heaney’s influence in Ireland.
Poetry from Stephen Connolly Manuela Moser, Padraig Regan and Stephen Sexton
Sunday 14, 11am
The Poetry Tent, Laurel Villa
Admission £5.00
My Heaney

A series of well known journalists, writers and musicians personally select their favourite Heaney poems and reveal how they shaped them.

Henry McDonald
Friday 12, 4pm
The Small Tent, Laurel Villa

Henry is Ireland Correspondent for The Guardian & The Observer. He has been a journalist for more than 25 years. Belfast born, he is currently living in Dublin. Author of seven non-fiction books, he is currently writing a novel about one pivotal day in Belfast in 1979. Henry fondly remembers interviewing Heaney on the day the poet laid the foundations of the new Lyric theatre, about the Lisbon referendum, the EU’s future and listening to the Nobel laureate’s passionate defence of the democratic European ideal.

Seamus McKee
Saturday 13, 1pm
The Poetry Tent, Laurel Villa

Seamus McKee is a prolific Northern Irish broadcaster and has been on the air for the last thirty years. He currently presents Evening Extra on BBC Radio Ulster. During his varied broadcasting career he has hosted programmes on current affairs, education, religion and the arts, including Spotlight, Hearts and Minds, Songs of Praise and the Radio Two Arts Programme.

Wireless Mystery Theatre
Saturday 13, 6pm
The Small Tent, Laurel Villa

Aislinn Clarke and Reggie Chamberlain-King are the team behind Wireless Mystery Theatre. Clarke is a writer, director, and film maker. Chamberlain-King is a writer and performer. Wireless Mystery Theatre is Northern Ireland’s only audio theatre company, specialising in live staged radio plays, sound installations, and broadcast material. They have toured the UK and the Republic of Ireland, selling out the Ulster Hall on two occasions, produced a 4-star reviewed run in the Edinburgh Fringe, and their work has been broadcast on BBC Radios 3 & 4, as well as in Canada, Germany, and the United States.
Brian was born in Belfast. His huge body of work reflects an obsessive love of music creation in all its forms and includes operas, orchestral works, large-scale community oratorios, film scores, multi media installations, dance works as well as ensemble, solo, and chamber pieces.

His music has been performed and commissioned by many international artists and organisations. Much of his output has involved collaborations with artists from a diverse range of disciplines.

Liam is the Political editor of the Belfast Telegraph, formerly Sunday Times and before that the Sunday News. He is the author of Broadening the Battlefield: H Blocks and the rise of Sinn Fein and co-author (with his wife Kathryn Johnston) of an unauthorised biography of Martin McGuinness “From Guns to Government”.

Christopher has spent 25 years writing and broadcasting about country walks (and tougher hikes), life in remote rural and island communities from Scotland to Crete by way of the Faroes, music-making in Irish pubs, festivals from Spain to Sweden, and the pleasure and delight of telling stories and weaving yarns. He is author of the book Walking in Ireland, which covers 50 of the finest walks he has taken on the Island.

My Heaney
Continued...

Having a Field Day - Travel writer Christopher Somerville on the lines of Heaney’s landscape
Sunday 14, 12noon
The Small Tent, Laurel Villa
Admission £5.00

Liam Clarke
Sunday 14, 1pm
The Small Tent, Laurel Villa
Admission £5.00

Brian Irvine
Sunday 14, 5pm
The Small Tent, Laurel Villa
Admission £5.00

Liam Clarke
Having a Field Day - Travel writer Christopher Somerville on the lines of Heaney’s landscape
Sunday 14, 12noon
The Small Tent, Laurel Villa
Admission £5.00

Brian Irvine
Sunday 14, 5pm
The Small Tent, Laurel Villa
Admission £5.00

More info on artists can be found at www.onhomegroundfestival.com
Maurice Riordan  
Friday 12, 5pm  
The Poetry Tent, Laurel Villa  

Admission £5.00

Cork born poet Maurice Riordan will read from “The Finest Music”, a new anthology of early Irish lyrics to be published by Faber in November.

These are the poems that founded Ireland’s rich literature. Seamus Heaney’s work in particular relates to this early tradition and the anthology includes several of his poems and translations. In particular Riordan will be looking at Heaney’s interest in the medieval tale of Sweeney - and his versions and variations on subjects related to the wild bird-man and the importance of blackbirds in his poems.
Seamus Heaney’s poetry uniquely captures the wonder of a child’s eye view of the world.

Heaney had a deep appreciation of the joys and fears of childhood. He was a teacher and taught in St Thomas’ Secondary Intermediate School in West Belfast in the early 1960s and later joined the staff of St Joseph’s Teacher Training College.

In that same decade he began to write radio scripts for BBC Schools Programmes and to present occasional Schools television programmes. Even in those early days Heaney’s remarkable ability to speak for and to children was evident, so too was his lifelong love of the local and of South Derry in particular.

In this talk Pat Loughrey presents examples of Heaney’s early broadcast work and explores his themes.

Pat Loughrey has been Warden (Vice Chancellor) of Goldsmiths, University of London for four years. Goldsmiths has a worldwide reputation in the Fine Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

Pat is a native of Donegal and lived in South Derry for twenty years. He is a former Head of Educational Broadcasting and Controller of BBC Northern Ireland.

For more information about these BBC events and to apply for tickets, please visit bbc.co.uk/tickets
During Pádraigín Ní Uallacháin’s artistic residency in the Seamus Heaney Centre, she collaborated with Seamus Heaney on setting his translations of early Irish lyrics to music, which includes Colum Cille Cecinit from his last collection Human Chain. Her singing of these song poems have been described by Heaney as ‘a totally absorbing experience’ and ‘songs of pure joy’. Medbh, a contemporary of Heaney, reads her favourite of his poems & Leontia unveils a new poem written since Heaney’s death. Also joining Pádraigín will be two of Ireland’s most gifted musicians, Zoe Conway and John McIntyre who possess a rare facility of drawing on pieces from traditional, classical, jazz and world music, displaying the sheer range and wonderful versatility of their instruments. Included will be a new composition by Zoe in honour of Heaney.
Eugene Kielt has guided poetry aficionados, overnight guests at Laurel Villa as well as non-residents, groups and travel journalists from all over the world around the town lands, places and scenery used in Seamus Heaney’s work.

Take a tour around the poet Seamus Heaney’s ‘first world’ in Magherafelt, described by The Guardian as “One of the top ten outdoor activities in Ireland”.

Covering the life and works of the major poet, the five-star tours are conducted by historian and experienced Blue Badge guide, Magherafelt native, Eugene, proprietor of Laurel Villa Guest House, and a friend of the late Nobel Laureate.

As well as the tours of Heaney Country Laurel Villa boasts a full Seamus Heaney experience that includes an exhibition and regular Heaney-related poetry evenings. The guest house is the epicentre of On Home Ground, inaugurated last year and named by the poet before his untimely death.

Participants on the tour will experience warm, local and first-hand connections with the life and works of Seamus Heaney and will be inspired by his poetry in the most picturesque of surroundings.
Earth to Alice - Stand-up Poetry by Alice McCullough
Saturday 13, 12noon
The Poetry Tent, Laurel Villa
Admission £5.00

Join Alice and experience this captivating new voice that has been delighting audiences as she plays with the boundaries between spoken word, stand-up, storytelling and theatre in her one-woman show ‘Earth To Alice’ described by Ursula Burns as “Beautiful, profound and funny - stunning new work from an exceptionally talented woman.” Winner of the Belfast Book Festival Poetry Slam, Writer In Residence at the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival this year, and host of Belfast’s new alternative spoken word showcase, Red Pill, Alice’s unique take on stand-up poetry has been entertaining audiences across NI, Dublin, London and the Edinburgh Fringe, having supported talents in both poetry and comedy including Hollie McNish and Katherine Ryan.
Dis-ease
Saturday 13 Launch, 1pm
The Bridewell
Admission Free

A Collaboration between Moyra Donaldson (Poet) and Victoria J. Dean (Visual Artist) curated by Abridged Magazine.

The poet, Moyra Donaldson and photographic artist, Victoria J. Dean met in 2010, the inaugural year of the ACNI’s Artist Career Enhancement Scheme for which they were both selected.

Interested in each other’s work, and in expanding and challenging their individual practices through a collaboration across the disciplines of poetry and the visual arts, they decided to work together.

Having agreed on the theme, Dis-ease, spanning concepts of disease, unease or discomfort, the collaboration took an organic course. Over the course of 6 months, each responded individually to the theme, whilst also exchanging thoughts and inspiration on an ongoing basis through regular meetings and discourse, cultivating the project as a whole with subtle influences and potential crossovers.

The exhibition consists of a series of images combined with poems or extracts from poems. Supported by Gregory McCartney Editor of Abridged Magazine, (in its 10th Anniversary year), the Verbal Arts Centre and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.
Earlier this year the Guardian newspaper ran an article on what it referred to as a striking new cultural phenomenon in Northern Ireland, the rise of Ulster Noir.

Thriller writers, it said, are “getting inspiration from the province’s memories of deprivation and sectarian violence”.

Ahead of the publication of a new anthology of crime fiction writing, Belfast Noir, Bafta award winning investigative reporter Darragh McIntyre (The Shame of the Catholic Church for BBC, The Disappeared for BBC/RTE) talks to three crime fiction writers, Stuart Neville (The Twelve), Brian McGilloway (The Inspector Devlin mysteries) and Gerard Brennan (The Point).

Why is such a strong wave of new crime fiction emerging now? What do these writers have to say about a Post Conflict society?

Darragh’s own recent investigation into the Disappeared, coupled with the parallels with Seamus Heaney’s Bog poetry, show crime fiction here has only just begun to dig at the surface of our society.

Belfast Noir will be available worldwide 04 Nov 2014
Introduction to music journalist and CEO of Oh Yeah Music Centre Stuart Baillie

Featuring

Best Boy Grip
Robyn G Shiels
Oh Volcano

Seamus Heaney often remarked that he wished he had gone to more concerts. As a wordsmith, music endlessly fascinated him, and there was no line for him between poetry and songwriting. So welcome the New Bards On Home Ground, a line up of locally sourced musicians & bands whose lyrics are poetic, whose music is authentic, and whose hearts are pure County Derry. Oh Volcano is Bellaghy brothers Owen and Enda Strathern (formerly of General Fiasco), Robyn G Shiels is from Kilrea, with James Heaney, Seamus’ nephew, on banjo, and Eoin O’Callaghan is Best Boy Grip, a songwriter from Derry City. We didn’t ask Eminem. Maybe next year?
Snow Patrol’s front man, Gary Lightbody, pays his first public performance tribute to the man he describes as making him want to be a writer. From being published as a poet at 15 to winning an Ivor Novello award & penning some of the biggest anthemic hits of our times, Gary places Seamus as a central force in his creative life.

Writing in response to the news of Seamus’ death, he wrote about an invisible tribe of people who act as creative touchstones.

“People of profound light, love and kindness that simply and maybe even without their knowledge make us and the world around them better. Stephen Fry is one. Guy Garvey another. To see them on the stage, screen or on the page makes us feel safer, happier, stronger, more centred and less confused by life and what the hell we’re doing here.

I would make Heaney chieftain of that ‘invisible tribe’.”

Gary will be in conversation with the On Home Ground curator Marie-Louise Muir.
Architect Greene and the Magician’s Secret
Writer D. D. Everest reads from the book being called the New Harry Potter.
Sunday 14, 12noon
The Poetry Tent, Laurel Villa

Admission £5.00

Architect Greene and the Magician’s Secret is being billed as a phenomenal magical fantasy to rival Harry Potter, a world where bookshelves are enchanted, librarians are sorcerers & spells come to life.

Architect Greene receives a mysterious present on his birthday. Deep within an ancient wooden box he finds an old book, written in a language he doesn’t recognise. With the book comes a Special Instruction - Architect must travel to Oxford to return the book to the museum of Magical Miscellany. Soon Architect will meet the family he never knew he had, and discover the world of the Flame Keepers.

D. D. Everest is a successful business journalist and author who has written a number of adult non-fiction books. Architect Greene and the Magician’s Instruction is his first book for children. Rights have been sold at auction around the world.

Illustration by James de la Rue
Alice McCullough hosts an afternoon of wordplay and delights as she invites you down the rabbit hole and into the poetry garden and various other venues to experience a diverse collection of award-winning performance poets in this special Red Pill Showcase. Red Pill is an all new alternative stand-up poetry night based in Belfast that showcases the exciting new wave of spoken word talent emerging with a new generation of poets taking the mic. Bringing poetry far from the page and onto the stage, a fun and exciting way to enjoy some out-of-the-ordinary poetry for all the family. Featuring a special musical performance by Ciara O’Neill.
Popular cook, teacher and broadcaster Paula McIntyre brings her culinary skills to Seamus Heaney’s poetry in a bespoke cookery demonstration for On Home Ground.

**Paula says**

“I love Seamus’ connection to field, lough and plate in his poetry. So much of his writing resonates me, especially how he celebrates local produce.”

So expect everything from sloe gin, blackberries & buttermilk to perch, salmon & oysters.

Trained in the Culinary Arts at the prestigious Johnson Wales University in Rhode Island, Paula has brought her talent and knowledge of food back to her own Home Ground, sharing with audiences of her radio broadcasts and guests at her table her passion for good food.

A familiar voice to Radio Ulster listeners, Paula has also appeared as the local expert on Radio 4’s Kitchen Cabinet Programme, hosted by Jay Rayner.
Hugo Hamilton introduces Carlo Gebler’s new book  Confessions of a Catastrophist

Hugo Hamilton introduces Carlo Gebler’s new book  Confessions of a Catastrophist

When Carlo Gébler started writing seriously in the late 1970s there was no internet and publishers liked to lunch. Three decades on the literary world has changed: most significantly, it seems no longer congenial or welcoming to literature or those who try to make literature.

As a catastrophist who never doubted from the moment he started that conditions in what he calls the Kingdom of Letters would only get worse, Carlo Gébler is not in the least surprised by how things have turned out. It was always going to go downhill (how could it not?) and in his Confessions he describes that process but in his own personal, idiosyncratic and caustic way.

The book is an intriguing mixture of pungent, fierce and striking memoir with pithy mordant notes on the literary trade, on the books he’s written and why he wrote them, and on the difficult business of negotiating a way through the thickets and trying to make a living. It is not a sour book (hopefully): it is a funny book (hopefully), it is unquestionably a true book, true about literature and the innumerable humiliations peculiar to it.

Colin Barrett reads from his short story collection Young Skins

Colin Barrett was born in 1982 and grew up in County Mayo. In 2009 he was awarded the Penguin Ireland Prize. His work has been published in The Stinging Fly magazine and in the anthologies, Sharp Sticks, Driven Nails (Stinging Fly Press, 2010) and Town and Country (Faber and Faber, 2013). He won the 2014 Frank O’Connor international short story award for debut collection of stories, Young Skins.

The book was first published in Ireland by The Stinging Fly Press in 2013, and was published in the UK this year by Jonathan Cape. Grove Atlantic will publish in the US next year, while translations are also planned for the Netherlands and France.

Novelists Alison MacLeod and Manuel Gonzales, poet Matthew Sweeney and artistic director of the Munster Literature Centre Patrick Cotter judged the prize. MacLeod said: “How dare a debut writer be this good? Young Skins has all the hallmarks of an instant classic. Barrett’s prose is exquisite but never rarefied. His characters - the damaged, the tender-hearted and the reckless - are driven by utterly human experiences of longing. His stories are a thump to the heart, a mainline surge to the core. His vision is sharp, his wit is sly, and the stories in this collection come alive with that ineffable thing - soul.”
Padraic Fiacc (born 1924 in Belfast, Northern Ireland) is one of the most troubling presences in Irish letters. A modernist ‘poetemaudit’ steeped almost paradoxically in the world of the Celtic Twilight, Fiacc’s fractured, elliptical poems and orchestrations are imbued with the American sensibility.

Yet it is the Belfast poet’s writings about the troubles on which his reputation rests. His collections; By the Black Stream (1969), Odour of Blood (1973), Nights in the Bad Place (1977) and Missa Terribilis (1986) were a daring direct engagement with the violence and terror convulsing Northern Ireland.

These - and his contentious anthology, The Wearing of the Black (1974) - left him vulnerable to critical attack. Dismissed at times as exploitative and journalistic, others found Fiacc a profoundly moral and aesthetically serious poet. It is a debate that continues to this day.
Flickerpix animator Joel Simon introduces the making of Five Fables and screening of Episode 1

It was to be his last work for a medium in which Seamus Heaney thrived, television. Five Fables was made for BBC Two Northern Ireland by Waddell Media and Flickerpix and saw Heaney’s translations of 500 year old stories written by the medieval Scots poet, Robert Henryson, animated for a 21st century audience.

Narrated by acclaimed comedian/actor Billy Connolly and with a specially-composed score by internationally renowned pianist Barry Douglas, Five Fables saw Seamus very much involved in all aspects of the project from its inception. This screening includes his final television interview before his death last summer; a fully animated fable, and some documentary elements about how these morality tales made it to the television screen.
The Given Note On Home Ground
Liam O’Flynn, Neil Martin, Brid Brennan and Rod McVey
Sunday 14, 7.30pm
The Poetry Tent, Laurel Villa

Admission £25.00

This is a much anticipated night of music, memory & crediting marvels.

Peerless uilleann piper Liam O’Flynn returns to his late friend and long time collaborator Seamus Heaney’s Home Ground for a one off performance.

The legendary musician will play some of the traditional music which formed such a part of “The Poet and the Piper” presentation and which resonated with the poetry and personality of Seamus Heaney.

Having performed for the very last time with Seamus in August 2013, weeks before Seamus’s death, Liam has made a significant personal & artistic commitment to be true to his friend’s vision of the world with this intimate musical & spoken word performance.

Award winning Irish actress Brid Brennan has personally selected the Heaney poems she will read, her distinctive voice & significant stage presence unmistakable.

On cello is Neil Martin, a composer and musician with an international reputation for choral & orchestral work, theatre, dance, tv & film scores. On keyboards is the Belfast musician Rod McVey, a long time musical collaborator with Liam O’Flynn.
**Magherafelt 'Never Felt Better' Weekend**

*Saturday September 13 and Sunday September 14*

Magherafelt is hosting a ‘Never Felt Better Weekend’ on Saturday September 13 and Sunday September 14 with a host of exciting activities and entertainment throughout the town centre to celebrate the Seamus Heaney On Home Ground Festival.

This event is part of Magherafelt District Council’s ongoing promotion to highlight Magherafelt’s excellent independent boutiques, superb leisure facilities and award-winning restaurants and night time economy.

As part of ‘Never Felt Better Day’ activities, local businesses will be offering special deals, promotions and giveaways via the town’s Never Felt Better App, available to download FREE on apple and android.

Further details on entertainment and offers can be obtained on our Never Felt Better App: www.neverbetteronline.com or Telephone our Visitor Information Centre on: 028 796 31510

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**Food at the festival**

Laurel Villa will be providing tea/coffee and snacks throughout the day. In addition, Church Street Restaurant will provide special festival catering facilities as follows:

**Church Street Restaurant at Laurel Villa**

Thurs/Fri/Sat/Sun nights 9pm onwards
Slow Braised Beef or Classic Fish Pie served with potatoes & vegetables, £7 a plate

**Church Street Restaurant at 23 Church St. Magherafelt**

Special Festival Opening Times

Thursday: 5pm – 10.00pm
Friday: 3pm – 10.30pm
Saturday: 12.30pm – 10.30pm
Sunday: 12.30pm – 9.30pm

Reservations are recommended. Tel: (028) 7932 8083

Details of additional restaurants in Magherafelt can be found on www.onhomegroundfestival.com
Box Office Opening hours
Mon & Thur
10.00am - 8.00pm
Tues, Wed, Fri & Sat
10.00am - 5.00pm

In person at
The Bridewell Tourist Information Centre
6 Church Street
Magherafelt
N. Ireland
BT45 6AN

On the phone
Call Box Office during opening hours on + 44 (0) 28 7963 3510

Online
Booking is not available online. However information about the programme and artists can be found at www.onhomegroundfestival.com

Bookings made by credit and debit cards will be subject to a 40p admin fee.

Refunds
Tickets are non refundable and non transferable.

On Home Ground can only refund money or exchange tickets in the case of a cancelled event.

Tickets for BBC events
For tickets to attend BBC events please visit bbc.co.uk/tickets

Seating
Please note seating is not allocated.

Late Arrival
Late comers will only be permitted to enter an even during the interval.

General info
Bar facilities will be available on festival site. I.D. may be requested at events.

Parking
Parking is available at St. Swithin’s Church of Ireland, Magherafelt Methodist Church and Floors for Living.

General Enquiries
For any general enquiries relating to On Home Ground please contact Verbal Arts Centre
Stable Lane and Mall Wall, Bishop Street Within, Londonderry, BT48 6PU
T: 028 7126 6946 F: 028 7126 3368 E: info@theverbal.co

BBC Broadcasts
On Friday 12 September, Pure Culture and Blas, (BBC Radio Ulster), will be broadcasting live from On Home Ground.

Press and Media
All enquiries should be directed to Esther Haller-Clarke at Type AB
E: esther@typeabconsultancy.com M: 078 3051 3296

Thank You
Thanks to the following for facilitating with parking arrangements during the festival: St. Swithin’s Church of Ireland, Magherafelt Methodist Church and Floors for Living.
On Home Ground

Celebrating Seamus Heaney