

**Kildare Readers Festival** is a celebration of books, ideas, and conversation—bringing readers and writers together in a warm, welcoming space.

With a programme that spans fiction, poetry, politics, memoir, and more, this year's festival offers something for every reader.

From debut voices to literary icons via workshops to lively panels, we invite you to join us in exploring the stories that shape, challenge, and connect us.

All events are free, and all are welcome.

## SUPPORTED BY



## Kildare Readers Festival 2025 Schedule

### Saturday, 4 October

Dennis O'Driscoll – Poetry and Song 11am  
Creative Writing Workshops 2.30pm

### Tuesday 7 October

An Tolg Liteartha 7pm

### Wednesday 8 October

'This is not a Cookbook' with Roxana Manouchehri 7pm

### Thursday 9 October

Documentary Screening: *Blue Road: The Edna O'Brien Story* 7pm

### Friday 10 October

Inside Publishing: Tramp Press and The Stinging Fly 7pm

### Saturday 11 October

10 Books with Rick O'Shea and Hazel Gaynor 10.30am  
Under the Rainbow: Shane Kenny and Fionnán Sheahan 1pm  
Debut Voices 3.30pm  
Filthy Queens and Beer Herstory 5.30pm  
Crime and Forensics: Fact Meets Fiction 8pm

### Sunday 12 October

Sunday Sessions: Music, Mayhem and Memory 11am  
Writer in Residence with Belinda McKeon and Aingeala Flannery 1pm

### Tuesday 14 October

Poetry in the Past and Present Tense 7pm

# Kildare Readers Festival 2025

October 4-14

[kildarereadersfestival.ie](http://kildarereadersfestival.ie) [@kildarereaders.bsky.social](https://twitter.com/kildarereaders.bsky.social)  
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Free Events

More Info & Booking:  
[kildarereadersfestival.ie](http://kildarereadersfestival.ie)



## FESTIVAL WEEK

### Dennis O'Driscoll – Poetry and Song

Saturday, 4 October | 11am

#### Naas Library & Cultural Centre

John MacKenna presents five poems by Dennis O'Driscoll, each followed by a song response from Shane Sullivan. The event concludes with the Dennis O'Driscoll Bursary Awards, honouring Róisín Ní Neachtain and Cian Geoghegan.

### Creative Writing Workshops

Saturday, 4 October | 2.30pm

#### Naas Library & Cultural Centre

Choose from three engaging sessions:

**Screenwriting with Margaret Kane Rowe** – a hands-on intro for new writers.

**Essay Writing with John MacKenna** – for intermediate/advanced writers, covering page and radio.

**Short Story Craft with Pauline Clooney** – open to all, focusing on strong story openings.

### An Tolg Liteartha

7ú Deireadh Fomhair | 7i.n.

#### Leabharlann agus Ionaid Culúrtha an Náis

Cuirfidh Tristan Rosenstock (RTÉ RnaG) agallamh ar bhuaiteoirí Ghradaim Foilsitheoireachta an Oireachtais 2025: Gradam Uí Shúilleabháin, Gradam Réics Carló, agus Gradam de Bhaldrathe. Eagraithe ag Leabharlanna Chill Dara i gcomhar le hOllscoil Mhá Nuad, an tOireachtas agus RTÉ RnaG.

### 'This is not a Cookbook' with Roxana Manouchehri

Wednesday, 8 October | 7pm

#### Naas Library & Cultural Centre

Artist and writer Roxana Manouchehri discusses her acclaimed book *This Is Not a Cookbook*—a blend of memoir, food writing, and lithographic art. Through vivid vignettes, she recalls her 1980s Tehran childhood, the women who shaped her, and memories of wartime Iran. In conversation with Syrian-Irish journalist Razan Ibraheem.

### Documentary Screening: *Blue Road: The Edna O'Brien Story*

Thursday, 9 October | 7pm

#### Riverbank Arts Centre, Newbridge

Author Eithne Shortall will introduce this screening of Sinéad O'Shea's record-breaking documentary exploring Edna O'Brien's trailblazing life and work. With insights from O'Brien herself, Gabriel Byrne, Walter Mosley, and others, it charts her rise from rural Ireland to literary icon.

### Inside Publishing: Tramp Press and The Stinging Fly

Friday, 10 October | 7pm

#### Naas Library & Cultural Centre

A unique opportunity for readers and writers to explore the world of publishing. Lisa McLnerney (editor, *The Stinging Fly*) joins Tramp Press founders Lisa Coen and Sarah Davis-Goff to discuss editing, publishing, and the journey from manuscript to bookshelf, followed by an audience Q&A.

### 10 Books with Rick O'Shea and Hazel Gaynor

Saturday, 11 October | 10.30am

#### Riverbank Arts Centre, Newbridge

Broadcaster Rick O'Shea is joined by bestselling author Hazel Gaynor to share the ten books that have shaped their lives and writing. Hazel's latest novel, *Before Dorothy*—a prequel to *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*—adds a fresh twist to a classic tale. Expect lively conversation, personal insights, and plenty of reading inspiration.

### Under the Rainbow: Shane Kenny and Fionnán Sheahan

Saturday, 11 October | 1pm

#### Riverbank Arts Centre, Newbridge

Former government press secretary Shane Kenny joins journalist Fionnán Sheahan to reflect on the pivotal Rainbow Coalition years (1994–1997). From behind-the-scenes tensions to landmark moments like the McCracken Inquiry, the divorce referendum, and the early groundwork for the Good Friday Agreement, this conversation offers a rare and revealing glimpse into a transformative era in Irish politics.

### Debut Voices

Saturday, 11 October | 3.30pm

#### Riverbank Arts Centre, Newbridge

Join author Sam Blake in conversation with two exciting debut authors: Róisín O'Donnell (*Nesting*) and Brendan MacEvilly (*Deep Burn*). They'll share the inspirations behind their first novels, the challenges of getting published, and what it means to find your voice as a new writer on the Irish literary scene.

## FESTIVAL WEEKEND

### Filthy Queens and Beer Herstory: A Conversation with Dr Christina Wade

Saturday, 11 October | 5.30pm

#### Riverbank Arts Centre, Newbridge

Beer historian Dr Christina Wade discusses *Filthy Queens*, her acclaimed book on Ireland's women brewers—from St Brigid to Dublin's alewives. She's joined by award-winning beer writers Susan and Judith Boyle of Two Sisters Brewing for a lively, insightful conversation.

### Crime and Forensics: Fact Meets Fiction

Saturday, 11 October | 8pm

#### Riverbank Arts Centre, Newbridge

Former State Pathologist Dr Marie Cassidy joins bestselling crime writers Catherine Ryan Howard and Andrea Mara to explore how forensic and criminal investigations are portrayed in fiction—and how closely they reflect real-life cases. A gripping conversation where crime writing meets forensic reality.

### Sunday Sessions: Music, Mayhem and Memory

Sunday, 12 October | 11am

#### Riverbank Arts Centre, Newbridge

Festival Sunday begins with Dermot Bolger in conversation with author Eoin MacNamee (*The Bureau*) and musician Keith Donald (*Music and Mayhem*). Their latest works—novel and memoir—offer powerful reflections on the past, from Irish music's golden era to personal and political memory.

### Writer in Residence with Belinda McKeon and Aingeala Flannery

Sunday, 12 October | 1pm

#### Riverbank Arts Centre, Newbridge

Belinda McKeon interviews Aingeala Flannery, newly appointed Writer in Residence at Maynooth University/Kildare Library & Arts Service, in an inspiring discussion on the creative life and the role of literary residencies.

## CLOSING EVENT

### Poetry in the Past and Present Tense

Tuesday, 14 October | 7pm

#### Maynooth Library

Jessica Traynor (*New Arcana*) and Kimberly Campanello (*An Interesting Detail*) read from their latest collections, exploring history, myth, and meaning in the present. Hosted by poet and academic Catherine Gander, this closing event promises a rich evening of poetry and conversation.