

**LIVERPOOL  
IRISH  
FESTIVAL** / **19–29  
OCTOBER  
2017**

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Bringing Liverpool  
and Ireland closer  
together through  
arts and culture

Untitled from the series *Saturday Girl Liverpool*, 2015 (c) Casey Orr

# IN:VISIBLE WOMEN: ILLUMINATING DEBATE

it's liverpool



AN ROINN GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA AGUS TRÁDÁLA NA HÉIREANN  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE OF IRELAND

# WELCOME TO IN:VISIBLE WOMEN

## FOREWORD

Welcome to *In:Visible Women* - a concept and platform generated by conversations the *Liverpool Irish Festival* has been having with artists, academics, activists and communities about the role of women in Irish society – today and historically. These conversations have shown that (Irish) female existence is continually affected by outside influences and influencers and now is no different. Indeed now it's critical.

Reports show that depression and suicide is escalating in our 16-24 years old women. As older generations age, more and more women will live alone. With more men committing suicide between 25-45 years old, how many women (partners, mothers, children, sisters) will have to cope with suicide in their lifetime? Without the confidence, autonomy and positive mental health men are expected to have, how are women being equipped to cope?

At a time when air-brushed, millionairesses are revered/objectified as sex symbols and girls compare themselves to these impossible, idealised versions of womanhood, is it any wonder that our young people are fighting with body dysmorphia, depression and low confidence? When this is backed by conflicting views of choice vs submission, opinion vs trolling, 'bitch' vs 'assertive' branding, 'visual recognition' vs reality and an inability to escape these views, is it any wonder that women are confused? What safe spaces remain and how are they accessed?

As interest in third and fourth-wave feminism rises and equity – between faith, ethnicity, nationality, gender, etc – is continually under debate... as people start employing intersectionality and we start to create laws that support equitable living and parity between relational agendas (same-sex marriage, same-

sex adoption, women being allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia) it seems ever more important that women feature. At all. That women are made visible. That taxing women for their 'privilege' of being the 'birth giver' is reviewed. That choice about the use of that body is reconsidered. By women. That female impact on history, welfare, politics and society is made visible. That our parity is understood and entrenched to replace that of the former, in which "some of us are more equal than others". Enter *In:Visible Women*.

*In:Visible Women* is just a starting point. There are women's organisations we need to speak to and artists whose work we must see and share. We are barely scratching the surface, but by beginning we are moving in the right direction. It is not the panacea to solve all 'patriarchal sin', but it is a beginning where we can share stories, take/share space (and company) and learn (or affirm) female world ideas and ideals.

In this act of coming together to bear witness to women and consider individual diminished histories; in looking at some of today's women and in thinking about what tomorrow's issues are going to be, we are helping to tell the story of womanhood – we are helping to futureproof our young people – and we are collaborating to show that we are here. We are not invisible. We have voices and we are using them to empower women who came before, females here today and voices that will speak for equity in the future.

You are welcome here and we feel certain that you will hear interesting stories, learn new things and take ideas with you that will help you elevate the women in your world. Many thanks,



Emma Smith, Director  
Liverpool Irish Festival  
*In:Visible Women*, 2017



## CONNECTED EVENTS



Ailbhe Reddy - press image, Pomona UK

### VISIBLE WOMEN: NEW AND POWERFUL WOMEN IN MUSIC

Fri 27 Oct 2017, 8pm; £14+7.5% booking fee [liverpoolphil.com](http://liverpoolphil.com),  
Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room

Further to a day of illustrated talks, installations and debate, we present an evening of exceptional female talent, from Liverpool and Ireland. Including four acts, the evening celebrates contemporary music and the women making it. With modern takes on traditional songs; self-penned tracks and exceptional instrumental talent, the night is hosted by Gerry Ffrench, a popular local radio star and touring musical artist in her own right. The line-up includes sets from Emma Lusby (Limavady, Co Londonderry), *Mamatung* (Liverpool), Sue Rynhart and Ailbhe Reddy (both from Dublin).



### AN BÉAL BOCHT: A REFLECTION (EXHIBIT)

Thurs 19 Oct-Fri 17  
Nov 2017, open Mon-  
Fri 9am-9pm; Free, just  
turn up to The Florrie

*Oíche lascaireachta (detail only)*  
© Deirdre McKenna

### FAMILY DAY AT THE MUSEUM (DIVERSE ACTIVITIES)

Sat 28 Oct 2017, 10am-5pm; Free, just turn up  
to the *Museum of Liverpool*. Delivered in  
partnership with *National Museums Liverpool*,  
*Liverpool Comhaltas* and *Melody Makers* with  
support from the *Institute of Irish Studies* at  
*University of Liverpool* and sponsored by  
*Tourism Ireland*. The day also includes:

#### - VOTES FOR IRISH CITIZENS ABROAD (VICA): A DEBATE

Sat 28 Oct 2017, 11.30am; Free, booking  
required: [livirishfest.eventbrite.co.uk](http://livirishfest.eventbrite.co.uk)

#### - THE LILY AND THE POPPY

#### (TWO WOMEN TALK ABOUT PEACE AND RECONCILIATION)

Sat 28 Oct 2017, 3pm-4.30; Free, booking  
required – see brochure or listings.

### AHEAD OF IN:VISIBLE WOMEN...



Uncle John and Aunt Mary, *After The Dance* (c) Daisy Asquith

### AFTER THE DANCE (DOCUMENTARY; CERT PG, 75 MINS)

Shown Sat 21  
Oct 2017, 12pm

### BODY AND BLOOD (PERFORMANCE)

Mon 23 and Tues 24 Oct 2017, 7.30pm

### INDIECORK CONSIDERS IN:VISIBLE WOMEN (FILMS)

Tues 24 Oct 2017, 6.30pm

### SPREAD THE WORD AND REPEAL THE EIGHTH:

#### COLLAGE WORKSHOP

Wed 25 Oct 2017, 1pm-4pm

### ORLA GUERIN – FRONT LINES, FAULT LINES AND DEADLINES – 30 YEARS OF CHASING THE STORY (TALK)

Thurs 26 Oct 2017, 6pm

# JANE/SIMPLY JANE



*Jane* and *Simply Jane* have been commissioned from artist Alison Little (see biography) for *In:Visible Women*. Combining a fictional piece of writing and an artwork, *Jane* exists to help readers consider the effects of sexual violence towards women. Although it will echo some experiences, it is not 'the definitive story', nor is it specific to an individual. We raise this not to diminish its value, but to assure readers that no survivor's story is being misused. This artwork will be on show during the *In:Visible Women* day at *Liverpool Central Library*.

Alison's art (seen above) depicts the torso of a woman formed from delicate paper strands, echoing the fragility of womanhood. The shape is held together by clear, surgical plastic. This body, through which the womb seen, has labels spilling from its sides. These labels indicate an array of powerful messages that a women might receive or consider after a sexual attack. Services; choices available (or not) and labels placed upon her by external sources... These labels are combined, showing how complex the messages are

about personal freedoms, service access and support. They include lines such as "clinical violence", "stigma and silence" and "liberty". Witnessed in a forest or on a gallery floor, the haunting image of this woman, dismembered and alone, is symbolic of the treatment of women facing difficult questions about their future.

*Due to the sensitive content relayed in the following piece - relating to sexual violence and rape culture - we advise reading on with caution.*

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## SIMPLY JANE

Jane awakens. Her eyes bolt open, so much so it feels as though her upper lashes are laid flat against her eyebrows. The eyes almost detach from their position as the globes project up towards the ceiling, her pupil's forefront in their position. Wide awake in panic again from the last eight weeks and four-days since it happened.



Although a chilly night, as they often are in County Cork, she was sweating intensely. Her groin was wet and the undersides of her flowering breasts were drowned in perspiration. She feels down between her legs, wishfully hoping that the damp may be 'Me Auntie Bid' finally arriving, six weeks and approximately three days late. She could only feel perspiration, no thicker substance, her optimism fades away as she faces the reality of being with child.

Still anxious, twisted in her bodily position, she begins to think about it again; what happened on that ill-fated night eight weeks and four days ago. She was at a sixteenth birthday party, not far away, just the next village. It was her best friend's shindig, they had all brought what beer, cider and wine they could get hold their hands and one of the travellers had jiggered in with a bottle of Poitín.

In her innocence Jane had got tipsy on the drink, then tipsier, finally slipping into inebriation. One of the older fellas had been dancing with her. She didn't really know who he was, he must have been from a village in the opposite direction. As she became a little stilted in her motion, he placed his hands on her hips, then guided her towards the open front door. As the cold air had hit her she began to sober up. On his suggestion they went to sit in the barn.

As they sat on some crates he began to tell her she was a 'Wee Doll' and how the blue of her dress matched her eyes. After brushing his wet lips quickly across hers he produced an unopened half bottle of Jameson's. He opened the lid and took a quick swig before passing it over to Jane: 'Come on have some', enticing her into becoming drunk again.

The next thing Jane can remember is that he is on top of her, back flat against the concrete as he fumbles around her dress as he tries to remove her knickers. Jane tries to squirm and say no but he pushes himself into her, she can't move as he protrudes into her virginal body.

After he had finished, he moved to one side and appeared to fall into a drunken slumber. Jane manages to stand slowly, edging out of the barn, away from the light and noise from the party, down long country lanes, bushes each side, moon half visible, night owls coo-ing in the distance, to her village, her front door, her room, bed, her fear.

She lies in that bed tonight, thoughts rushing through her mind about her one sexual encounter. The one she had not wanted and the one which had left her bearing child. She tosses over in bed again, her mind engulfed with thoughts about how to end this ordeal.

Abortion pills? She could order online, but are they safe? What if she gets caught having them delivered? It was such a small village, the Post Man knew everybody and the Post Mistress was always chin-wagging and may even open the package.

Her parents finding out seemed bad enough, but she could even be locked up by the Garda. She could travel to England or the Netherlands; a cheap flight from Ryanair could get her to Amsterdam. Can she get enough money for the operation?

She had no-one to talk to. Her friend who had sprung the party had found her knickers and the barn and all the girls at school seemed to know that something had happened, she felt like they were calling her a 'Floosie'.

She wanted a 'babby' one day. It was his baby she didn't want. Every day she lived in fear of seeing him again, smelling him again. Even the remnants of her Dad's malt from his glass brought on the urge to vomit now. The vision of him and the memory of her inability to move as he forced into her innocent body... She thinks of how this baby would remind her of him. It could grow up to look like him, possibly even act like him.

She turns in bed again. She had no choice. She couldn't have this baby, but how and when could she terminate the pregnancy? An owl, outstretched, screeches in the distance. She envisages the black eternity of the sky under its expanse the owl looking down on her as a minuscule speck; alone amidst the wrongs of the World which make up human existence.







## SERVICES AND SUPPORT

If you have been affected by any of the contents of this document or the *In:Visible Women Day*, please consider consulting one of the services below. This is not an exhaustive list of those available, but a start point for anyone needing counsel, support or information.

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**Abortion Support Network** – if you (or a loved one) requires access to abortion support services from Ireland, Northern Island or the Isle of Mann, the *Abortion Support Network* may be able to assist: [asn.org.uk](http://asn.org.uk)

To call from Northern Ireland +44(0)7897 611 593; from Ireland +44(0)151 267370 (*calls only, no texts*) and/or from the Isle of Man +44(0)7897 611593 or email [info@asn.org.uk](mailto:info@asn.org.uk) If using email, please be mindful of the security of your account and other people's access.

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**National Centre for Domestic Violence (NCDV)** provides a free, fast emergency service to survivors of domestic violence, regardless of race, financial situation, gender or sexual orientation. They work closely with partner agencies and help people apply for an injunction quickly [ncdv.org.uk](http://ncdv.org.uk) (successfully accessed 10 Oct 2017).

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**National Domestic Violence Helpline** runs a freephone 24 Hour a day helpline, run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge. It is a national service for women experiencing domestic violence, their family, friends, colleagues and others calling on their behalf +44(0) 808 2000 247

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**NHS** – Sexual assault and violence services are available in most UK cities. To help to locate a service near you, the NHS have a service locator, which you can access using this link (successfully accessed 18 Sept 2017): <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Sexualhealth/Pages/Sexualassault.aspx>

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**Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (RASA)** – this is a Mersey based support service, not a national service +44(0) 151 666 1392 [rasamerseyside.org](http://rasamerseyside.org)

[helpline@rasamerseyside.org](mailto:helpline@rasamerseyside.org) If using email, please be mindful of the security of your account and other people's access.

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**Victim Support** can offer assistance with how to handle reporting a crime as well as helping you through the legal procedures of pursuing a charge. For more details of how to use these particular services, use this link <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/crime-info/types-crime/rape-sexual-assault-and-sexual-harassment> (successfully accessed 18 Sept 2017).

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If you are supporting someone you know to have survived a violent, sexual encounter, there are some interesting and useful points in this online article, from *The Everyday Feminist* (successfully accessed 18 Sept 2017):

<https://everydayfeminism.com/2013/01/how-to-help-sexually-assaulted-friend/>

To reiterate: this is not a complete list of services available or of the resources you can access. You are not alone. If you need support an online search will show you support and resources in your area or a national organisation you can contact.

## SPEAKER/CONTRIBUTOR BIOGRAPHIES

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### ABORTION SUPPORT NETWORK

*Abortion Support Network* provides financial assistance and accommodation to those travelling from the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man for abortion procedures. Funding is available on a case by case basis, depending on financial need and availability of funding. Individuals are asked to contact ASN before booking travel as they can also advise on the least expensive clinics and methods of transport. ASN provide confidential, non-judgmental information to anyone who contacts them via phone or email about travelling to England for an abortion, as well as information about reputable providers of early medical abortion pills by post, which they also provide information on. [asn.org.uk](http://asn.org.uk)

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### MÁIRE DOOLIN

Máire is Chair of the *Liverpool Irish Centre* and an Industrial Officer for the *Public and Commercial Services Union*. An active member of the Irish community, Máire has a Business Studies Degree and an MA in International Trade Union Studies. It was through this study that Máire drew focus on many of the diminished histories of Liverpool, Liverpool Irish and Irish women who fought for change and active reform at the turn of the nineteen-hundreds, paving the way for the suffrage movement.

[liverpoolirishcentre.org](http://liverpoolirishcentre.org)

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### University of Chester

### MELISSA FRIEND

Melissa is an graduate of *Chester University*. Her research has uncovered a number of individual stories that collectively help to show the impact made by Liverpool and Liverpool Irish women in 1916. [chester.ac.uk](http://chester.ac.uk)

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### ALISON LITTLE

Alison is an artist based in Anfield in Liverpool. She has worked on a number of large scale commissions including *Go Superlambanana*, *Go Penguin*, *Cheltenham Horse Parade* and more recently the *Nottingham Biennial* and has smaller works for sale at *Arts Hub 47*, Lark Lane (Liverpool). "I was conceived an artist and have spent the moments since birth developing my practice, something which will continue throughout my life". [littlere-makes.com](http://littlere-makes.com)

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# LIVERPOOL IRISH FESTIVAL

*Liverpool Irish Festival* brings Liverpool and Ireland closer together through arts and culture. The festival provides a snap shot of high & popular culture, accommodating all aspects of the Liverpool Irish community and Ireland's creativity; maker, spectator & participant. The festival is about exchange rather than a broadcast or lecture. We are convivial, diverse, distinct & daring. It is for everyone. [liverpoolirishfestival.com](http://liverpoolirishfestival.com)  
[/LivIrishFest](#) [#LivIrishFest2017](#) [#InVisibleWomen](#)

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## LONDON-IRISH ABORTION RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

The *London-Irish Abortion Rights Campaign* calls for the repeal of the 8th amendment from the Irish constitution (ROI) and campaigns for access to free safe legal abortion in Ireland and Northern Ireland. They are the London branch of the *Abortion Rights Campaign* in Ireland, and a member of the *Coalition to Repeal the 8th Amendment*.  
[londonirisharc.com](http://londonirisharc.com) | [repealeighth.ie](http://repealeighth.ie) | [abortionrightscampaign.ie](http://abortionrightscampaign.ie) Handles: [/londonirisharc](#)  
[/ldnirisharc](#)

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## JULIEANN O'MALLEY

Julieann is an interdisciplinary artist based in Liverpool. Her practice focuses upon live durational performance, film, sound and photography. O'Malley likes to condense ideas; using semiotics as a communication method, finding ways to explore, engage and create 'open' dialogues about the ever-changing environments and practices of society. [vimeo.com/user3545057](https://vimeo.com/user3545057) [@JulieannOMalley](#)

Still from Julieann O'Malley's work; title to be confirmed, 2017

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## DR CASEY ORR

Casey – originally from Delaware, USA - is a documentary photographer, researcher and senior lecturer at *Leeds Beckett University*. Her work has been shown at the *University of the Arts* (Philadelphia), in *The Observer Magazine*, *The Royal Photographic Society's Contemporary Photography Magazine*, the *Tour De France* cultural programme, *LOOK/15 Liverpool International Photography Festival*, *Yorkshire Sculpture Park* and at *HM Prison Leeds* (the first time this space was ever used for art). Along with *Saturday Girls*, Casey has also concluded another all-women project *Animality, Women and Animals*. [caseyorr.com](http://caseyorr.com) | [leedsbeckett.ac.uk](http://leedsbeckett.ac.uk) [@caseyannorr](#)

Casey portrait: Casey Orr, Hasselblad 503, LOOK15 © Tony Cearns, 2015

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## IN:VISIBLE WOMEN: ILLUMINATING DEBATES

### NOTE ABOUT THE DAY AND SCHEDULE

Any of these sessions could include discussion about 'sinful' pregnancies, shame, arranged marriages, faith crises, institutional abuse, secret adoptions and illegal abortions; many of which retain influence and impact on families and communities today and are highlighted elsewhere in the festival programme. *In:Visible Women* builds relationships with artists, academics and organisations to deliver illuminating talks, films, performances, artworks and written features to start making 'invisible' women's issues, visible. We know this can be emotional and/or contentious. Everyone involved aims to address these matters from an empathetic position, aimed to assist women in gaining equity. It is unapologetically a pro-choice and pro-women day. We expect those present to behave and speak with empathy and mindfulness and hope that, in this way, we can have difficult conversations without creating new wounds or generating aggression.

### INTRODUCTION

9.30am: Emma Smith, Director of the *Liverpool Irish Festival* opens the day

### MORNING SESSIONS – TALKS AND INTERACTIVE INQUIRY

9.35am-11.30am: Máire Doolin, Chair of *Liverpool Irish Centre* and Melissa Friend, *Chester University* graduate

Unveiling a number of discrete, yet important case histories of Liverpool, Liverpool Irish and/or Irish women, the morning sessions set the scene for exploring historic issues women still face today, particularly in certain Irish communities. By recognising their influence and impact we aim to redress their abilities and attributes.



Untitled from series *Saturday Girl Liverpool*, 2015 © Casey Orr

### SATURDAY GIRLS: CASEY ORR

11.30am-12.30pm - Illustrated talk about today's young women in Liverpool and Belfast

Casey is an American artist who has lived in northern England for over a decade. A prolific photographer, with multiple projects on the go at any one time and a lecturing role at *Leeds Beckett University*, Casey's project *Saturday Girl* is the project Casey thinks she could keep returning to for life. In this illustrated talk, Casey looks at *Saturday Girl Liverpool* and *Saturday Girl Belfast*, casting her eye forward to what *Saturday Girl Dublin* might raise.



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## JANE: ALISON LITTLE

12.30pm-1.30pm – Sculpture in practice

Alison presents *Jane* (seen above), the sculpture she made to embody the issues of womanhood. In this artist's talk, Alison considers her motivation, the execution of the work and gives audience members the opportunity to see the work – and its incredible labels – up close.

Alison will read *Simply Jane* aloud at lunch for anyone who would like to stay and listen.

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## LUNCH

Lunch is not provided. Guests are invited to visit the Library café or nearby restaurants and cafes, including *The Walker Art Gallery's* café, *World Museum* or *Head of Steam* (Lime Street). You may bring pack ups to eat on the roof or street terrace.

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## YOUR BODY, YOUR RIGHTS: LAW, IRELAND AND ABORTION

2.30pm-3pm – *London-Irish Abortion Rights Campaign session*

Discussions move to those of women's rights and abortion legislation in the afternoon. Current laws in the Irish Republic, Northern Ireland and England still allow 11 women per day to travel to England to procure abortions. This sessions looks at the current legislation to set the scene for what women are experiencing today.

3pm-3.30pm – What are the repeal movement and rights activists campaigning for?

Having considered current abortion legislation in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and England, the following session discusses what is being done to affect positive changes to these laws to acknowledge that abortion is not just a matter for women, but society and legislature.

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Still from film in production: *We Watch, We Wait* © Julieann O'Malley

## WE WATCH, WE WAIT: JULIEANN O'MALLEY

3.30pm-4.30pm – Artist discussion about working positively with women on the subject of abortion

Julieann O'Malley is an artist based in Liverpool. She is in the process of developing a film involving 40 women and the subject of abortion. At the time of writing, the film is still being cut and the women still being consulted – the process is live and the results untested. The film aims to take a sensitive look at the journey women undertake, powered by the sounds lived and witnessed by those who travel, often independently and alone. The session may include a public screening or be a work in development – either way, Julieann's experience and contact with women's views, concepts and/or experience of abortion in the city will be explored.

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## SUMMARY AND CLOSE

4.30pm – In: *Visible Women* day closes. Emma Smith will wrap up the day.

All participants are encouraged to attend *Visible Women: New and Powerful Women in Music*, taking place later on at the *Liverpool Philharmonic Music Room*, shifting the balance from daytime invisibility to evening visibility!

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## THE LIVERPOOL IRISH FESTIVAL

Liverpool Irish Festival is a registered charity supported by Liverpool City Council's cultural investment programme and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland's Emigrant Support Programme.

In:Visible Women has been supported with festival funding, but also with in-kind support from Liverpool Central Library, London-Irish Abortion Rights Campaign and Abortion Support Network and our speakers, artists and contributors. Thanks go to everyone involved in making this happen, including the Board who have offered this their ongoing, multi-year commitment.

Registered charity: 1100126

Company number: 04800736

[info@liverpoolirishfestival.com](mailto:info@liverpoolirishfestival.com)

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#LivIrishFest2017 #LIF2017

#InVisibleWomen

## FUNDERS



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



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DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE OF IRELAND



## PARTNERS

