



# Spring 2022 Newsletter.

## Welcome.

Hello again from Kildare Writing Centre and as it is the first of 2022...happy new year! I say that, however, in the knowledge that we do not live in happy times. It is difficult to marry our belief that we have evolved into cultured, civilised beings with the barbaric, uncivilised atrocities being visited on our Ukrainian brothers and sisters. And yet, there is light still in these shadow days, light in the humanitarian efforts being made, light in the solidarity of nations supporting President Zelensky and his country, light in the peace talks that we hope will soon bring the war to an end. And in the meantime, as is our nature as a species, in the words of our own Samuel Beckett, 'I must go on, I can't go on, I'll go on.'

In our writing world, this time of year sees the first festivals, back in person for the most part, writing competitions, residency opportunities, and book launches. For those of you thinking about entering any of the short story competitions I have some exciting news below about a course designed to help you get the story written, redrafted and polished to a winning sparkle. There are lots of dates for your diary, always wonderful opportunities to connect with other writers and readers. And in this issue's shout out, I want to highlight a Kildare writer Darren Donoghue, whose first poetry collection will be launched in the Riverbank Theatre, Newbridge, April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

In this issue:

- Darren Donoghue
- Short Story courses at Kildare Writing Centre
- Festival and competition news

## Darren Donoghue, Playwright and Poet.



Darren's profile page on the Curtis Brown Agency website, tells us he is *"...an award-winning Irish playwright and poet. His plays have been produced in Dublin, London, Edinburgh, Barcelona, Milan, Prague, Baltimore, Washington DC and New York."* Darren's work has been nominated for and has won numerous awards including the Bread and Roses Playwriting Award, 2019 and the Radius Playwriting Competition, 2020 in association with Finborough Theatre. He was awarded the Dennis O'Driscoll Literary Award, 2020. His poetry has been shortlisted for the Hennessy Literary Award for "emerging poetry" in 2010 and 2015. This accomplished playwright and poet hails from Newbridge, Kildare, and now lives in Kilkenny and so is the pride of two counties. It is always so delightful to see one of our own achieve such wonderful national and international acclaim for their work.

I first knew Darren as a student in the Patrician Boys Secondary School, Newbridge, and as the younger brother of Michael, also a student there before him. And apart from being blood brothers what also connected them for me was their artistic nature, already they were carving a different path from the majority, their interests were in the musicals, the literary events, the wonderful world of words. Over the years our paths have criss-crossed many times in this literary space, in Crooked House Theatre, where I was first introduced to Darren's plays, and with Michael, in UCD, where we were both on the same master's in creative writing programme. It is an honour and privilege to call these two literary gentlemen friends, and why I am so much looking forward to April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, Darren will be launching his first poetry collection in the Riverbank, Newbridge, an event not to be missed.

Details here: <https://www.riverbank.ie/event/book-launch-secret-poets-by-darren-donoghue/>

And if you would like to find out more about Darren here is a link to an interview he recently gave to the Kildare Nationalist:

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=10159938418342390&set=a.10150383100232390>



## **Next Course at Kildare Writing Centre.**

### **Writing that short story!**

**Thursday April 21<sup>st</sup> – Thursday May 12<sup>th</sup>**

**6.30pm-8.30pm**

**4-week Online course**

**Cost €120**

If you are thinking of entering the hugely prestigious Francis MacManus RTE Short Story competition, then this course will facilitate you in getting your story ready for the deadline of May 13<sup>th</sup>. Over the course of the four weeks, we will look at story openings, characterisation, point of view, plot, and theme as you are guided through handouts on craft, invited to partake in written activities, and encouraged to discuss the elements of craft encountered in assigned stories and in your own work.

There will be a reading assignment each week and your written goal will be to complete a short story.

The format for each class is as follows:

1. Introductory chat followed by a prompted 10-minute written exercise.
2. An instructive session, based on a PowerPoint/handout on the art of writing where a different element of craft is explored each week.
3. A short discussion referencing the **weekly reading assignment**.
4. Workshopping **weekly written assignments** from at least two students.
5. Concluding chat about the writing plans for the week ahead.

Writers of the short form you can expect to encounter include William Trevor, Eilís Ní Dhuibhne, Claire Keegan, Danielle McLaughlin, Flannery O' Connor, Raymond Carver, Carys Davies, and Kevin Barry.

Places are limited and usually book out fast.

You can book your place here:

**Booking:** <https://kildarewritingcentre.com/short-story-online>

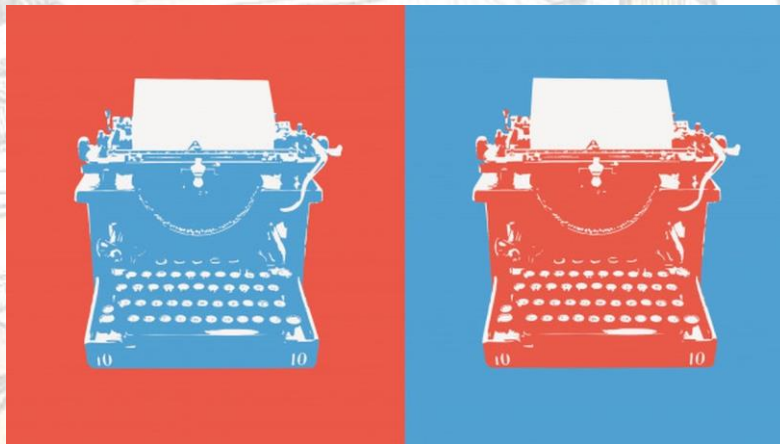
## **Festivals and Competitions/Opportunities.**

The number of events in this category are too numerous to do justice to in one newsletter but the good news is that Words Ireland's website is a one-stop shop for everything you need to know with forwarding links to each site.

# WORDS IRELAND

<https://wordsireland.ie/>

One competition I will highlight, one of the few free competitions, is the already mentioned Francis MacManus. Many of our great writers got their start with success in this competition. This year's adjudicators are Lisa McInerney, Ferdia McAnna and Éilis Ní Dhuibhne. Find out more here: <https://www.rte.ie/radio/radio1/francis-macmanus-short-story/> To hear what the judges have to say about your entry, click to listen their interviews with Sean Rocks on Arena: [https://www.rte.ie/radio1/podcast/podcast\\_arena.xml](https://www.rte.ie/radio1/podcast/podcast_arena.xml)

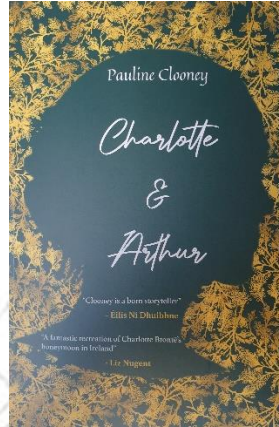


**And if you want an even further edge, sign up for the next course here that I have listed above, and you will have your winning story ready just in time for the deadline of Friday, May 13<sup>th</sup>.**



## *Charlotte & Arthur.*

### News



Thank you to everyone who has supported me and sent lovely messages of congratulations and kind, thoughtful reviews of the novel, I want you to know how much it all means.

Writing is not only a lonely process, but a very self-doubting one, so it is very encouraging to get such generous feedback.

One of the highlights for me was to have the book reviewed in *Brontë Studies*, which is the literary journal of the Official Brontë Society. As a member and subscriber to the journal for many years now, to even see my name in print there is like a dream. You can read that review and others on my webpage: <https://paulineclooney.com/charlotte-arthur-reviews/>

And following the years of lockdown and travel bans, this July I finally get to return to Yorkshire, where I am on the bill for the Bradford Literature Festival, so it will be a special delight to get to talk about the book in Brontë Country.

*Until the next time, wishing you all a happy Spring and a Happy Easter from the Kildare Writing Centre, here on the edge of the Curragh of Kildare.*

