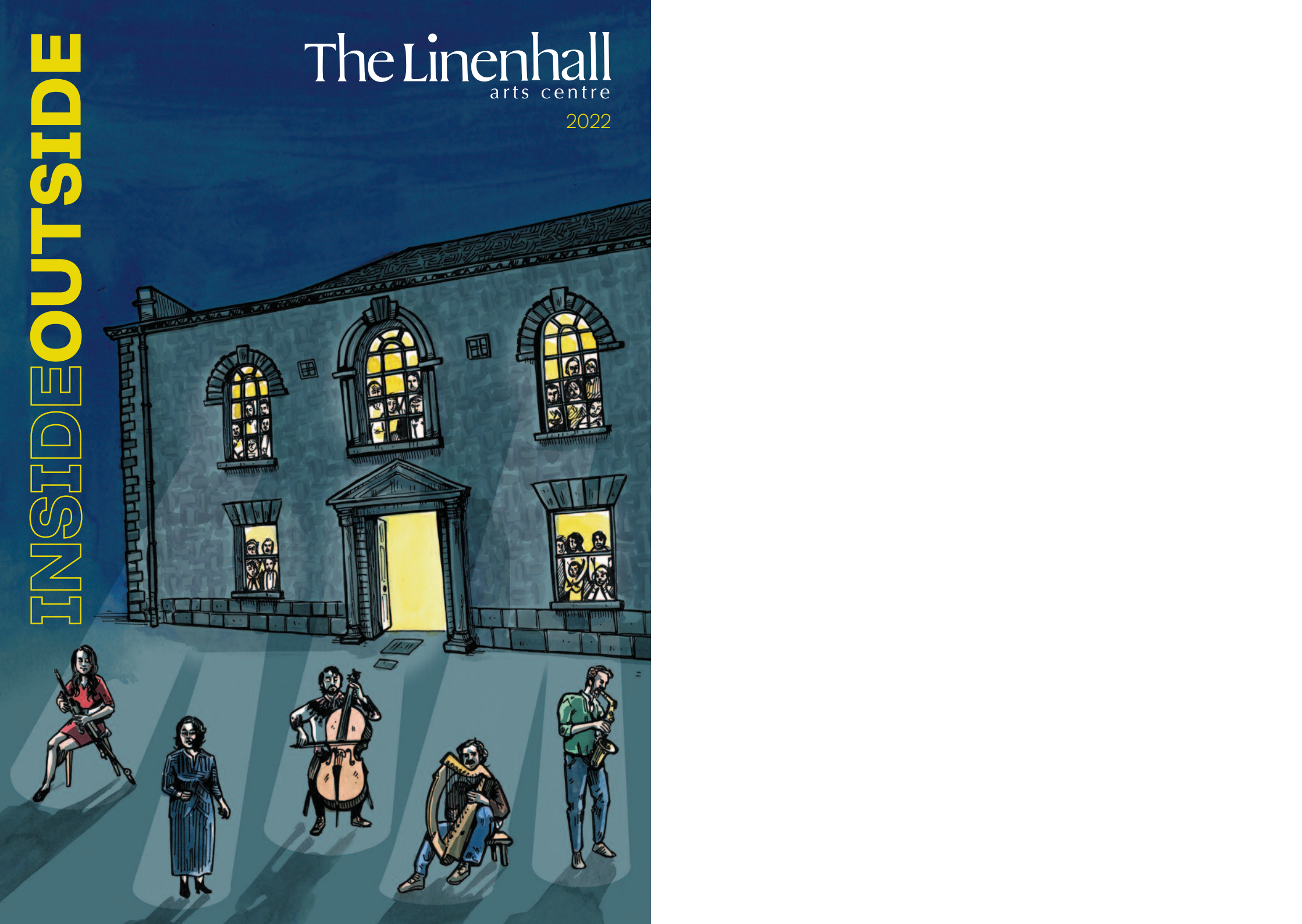


INSIDEOUTSIDE

# The Linenhall

arts centre  
2022



# WINTER BEACON

*thread a green note over the open door*

Music is a soundtrack to unseen history: a tune can turn our gaze inwards and out, searching out shape and clarity in the darkness. Fragments come back by grace of music and song: images, glimpses through glass. Notes of music drift towards the future, carrying a cargo of clarified light.

That the limestone rooms of Castlebar's Linenhall should fill again with music is as it should be. The building itself is an elegant tune in time, its copestone a held note of history, austere, formal, defiant and, ultimately, celebratory. Though its original function was utilitarian, the building that rose up in 1790 was modestly elegant, generous and adaptable to change. It was a secular space with a noble-enough purpose, civic and economic, and in its many uses down the decades the Linenhall has been witness to change and unfolding history.

Eight years after it is built the leader of the French revolutionary forces of 1798, General Humbert, gathers supporters in the Linenhall for a victory ball and (failed) fundraiser. What music is played at that gathering, what song or songs roused up? Does a harpist play? (The image of a harp without a crown and the tree of liberty has already been adopted as visual symbols of a new day in Ireland.) Do any of the black French officers from the West Indies survey the Linenhall rooms that night, size up the gathering and what might come from it all? Do they imagine the music and sounds of home, wonder about their commitment to this cause of foreign freedom?

Imagine the tunes that might have been named on the night:

*The Flaxen Field*

*The Year of Liberty*

*My Love Wears Green Linen*

*The Bleaching Green*

*The Linenhall*

*O'Carolan's Cloak*

*The Races of Castlebar*

Patrick Adams of Aughagower is growing flax in 1796. So is Michael Melody in Dungarvan, Widow O'Donnel in Kilconduff, John and Michael Poor in Ballyovey, Mrs Wilks in Kilmeena and James Young in Cong. Did Michael

Melody play music? Did the Widow O'Donnel sing? Or keen and lament the death of loved ones and neighbours? Chances are many of those who grew flax, and retted, scutched, hackled, spun and wove, also made tunes, used their agile hands and fingers to pluck, draw, curve and coax airs, notes, rhythms for dance and whimsy and reflection.

The great wheel turns. The stones endure. And more than two centuries on musicians, singers and artists draw in upon the astonishing past to honour the spirit and history of the Linenhall. Harp, cello, uilleann pipes, saxophone, words, and the sung miracle of the human voice will tap into and magnify what is held in space, make new work to honour old.

Emer Mayock has assembled a team of masterful artists to reflect on the spirit of the Linenhall and draw that spirit into their own creative work. Paul Dooley, Louise Mulcahy, Patrick Dexter and Macdara Yeates look to the endlessly rich resources of the traditional music and oral history of Co. Mayo to make compelling performances that will enter the cycle of memory and old-new composition; saxophone and Clare Island weaving meet in the collaborative work of Nick Roth and Beth Moran, materiality becoming music; and mezzo soprano Michelle O'Rourke honeys old songs that resonate with this place and its unfolding story.

In making new work centred in Castlebar's limestone heart, the artists of this Linenhall project of February 2022 honour the craftsmen who built the stone of the building over two hundred years ago, the women who spun and wove and worked linen for decades after, and all the artists and workers who have done so much good in this building over its long lifetime. That the new music, words and performance also mark the completion of important conservation work in the Linenhall Arts Centre is entirely in keeping with the larger spirit of the place – art, creativity and architectural heritage in enduring harmony.

Good begets good. More creative power will emerge from the achievement of these eight artists, more notes of music will sound out in these rooms. The Linenhall is a beacon.

*the small, crabbed general stands on the threshold later he'll lead his troops through  
Tarmon where my great-great grandmother Bess Flynn feeds them what she has –  
a pot of Indian meal and praties that she's pounding for the pigs he is very grateful  
O'Carolan played music in the house where she lived or so it's said*



## A chara,

Having worked at the Linenhall for the past three years it's become clear to me the impact this special building has had on the people of Castlebar. Memories that last a lifetime have been created within our walls as audiences have enjoyed music, theatre, dance, literature, song and much, much more over the past 32 years.

It gives us pause to think then, of the building as it was over two hundred years ago, as one of the largest producers of flax in Ireland. It is stranger still, to think of the Linenhall as a dance hall, a place where our parents or grandparents danced many moons ago. Now, two centuries later, the Linenhall is one of Ireland's oldest arts centres, founded by the great Marie Farrell, and the walls continue to ring to the sound of arts, culture and celebration to this day.

Now, for one night only, we want the streets to ring to the sound of music, dance and celebration as we commemorate the building's restoration to its former glory.

As an arts centre we are incredibly lucky to be surrounded by both artists and lovers of the arts. We are immersed in a community of people who love and support the Linenhall and we remind ourselves of this every day.

Special and heartfelt thanks must go to Castlebar Municipal District and Siobhan Sexton, Architectural Conservation Officer with Mayo County Council, for the recent restoration work on the building which has been ongoing



**Bernadette Greenan**  
Director,  
Linenhall Arts  
Centre

for a number of years. This event is a small token of commemoration of this support which we continue to rely on to this day.

Thanks also must go to our events curator, Emer Mayock, who conceptualised the idea with me back in mid-2020 and who has been an upmost champion and supporter of artists throughout her career. We couldn't have imagined making this event a reality with anyone else and we're forever grateful.

Special thanks goes to the incredible artists involved: Macdara Yeates; Louise Mulcahy; Paul Dooley; Patrick Dexter; Nick Roth; Beth Moran; Michelle O'Rourke; Vincent Woods; Maeve Clancy.

And a final thank you goes to our brilliant team who've worked tirelessly behind the scenes to bring this event to the street: Sean Reynolds; Charlie Smith; Deirdre Melvin; Mary O'Callaghan.

We hope you enjoy this journey with us, back through the centuries to celebrate one of Castlebar's most significant landmarks.

Labhairt leat níos déanaí,



Linenhall Street, Castlebar c.1880 - Wynne Collection

*"The grey limestone blocks in the façade have a sturdiness and air of permanence about them, but surely even General Humbert - who held his victory celebrations here following The Races of Castlebar in 1798 - could not have imagined that the building would still ring to the sound of music, dance and celebration two hundred years on."*

## Programme *(in order of appearance)*

- **NICK ROTH** (saxophone/ composer) *in collaboration with* **BETH MORAN** (hand weaver)

*The Flourishing Wave* is a collaboration between weaver Beth Moran and saxophonist/composer Nick Roth. The piece takes its title from a traditional border pattern, and is itself woven from film and audio recordings made at the artist's studio on Clare Island, with a performance of the loom notation as musical score.

- **MICHELLE O'ROURKE** (mezzo soprano)

*Kitty O'Hara - Traditional* - a tune from the Bunting Collection, where it is noted as collected in Castlebar, 1802. Arranged for voice & pre-recorded audio by Michelle O'Rourke.

**INSIDEOUTSIDE**

*continued overleaf >>*

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● **MACDARA YEATES**  
(singer/composer)

*Spinner* – Macdara Yeates uses folk song, oral history and soundscape to explore the Napoleonic, industrial and recent history of The Linenhall. The piece blends ambient music with field recordings, factory sounds and the voices of Castlebar residents.

● **MICHELLE O'ROURKE**  
(mezzo soprano)

*LIT* – Anna Murray. Commissioned by Michelle O'Rourke with funds from the Arts Council of Ireland for voice & pre-recorded audio with words by American poet Robert Fitterman. Composer Anna Murray grew up in Castlebar and had formative musical experiences at The Linenhall Arts Centre.

● **LOUISE MULCAHY**  
(uilleann pipes/flute)

1. *Air: Joyce's Tune/An Speic Seoigheach* collected by Edward Bunting in Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo in 1792. *John McHugh's Jig* - Foxford

2. *Reels: Des Boyle's Reel, The Castlebar Traveller, The Boys from Mayo*

● **PATRICK DEXTER** (cello)

*Bridget Cruise* – Patrick's performance is based around a tune by 18th century Irish harper and composer Turlough O'Carolan. By using the sounds of the cello to echo the sounds of the linen industry, the picking of the flax, the sketching, the spinning and the weaving of the linen he builds a

pallet of sounds that lead the listener towards a simple O'Carolan melody, '*Bridget Cruise*'.

● **PAUL DOOLEY** (wire strung harp)

1. *Lamentation of Youths.*

Two pieces collected by Edward Bunting from the repertoire of Mayo harpers. *The Lamentation of Youths* was composed by Harry Scott in memory of Hussey, Baron of Galtrim (d.1603). The piece was taken down c.1802 from Dominick O'Donnell, a harper from Foxford in Co. Mayo, of whom Bunting remarked: "...[he] appeared totally unconscious of the art with which he was playing."

2. *The Jointure and Jigg* was composed by Thomas Connellan of Cloonmahoon in Co. Sligo some time towards the end of the 17th century. Bunting collected the tune from Dennis Hempson in 1792 at the Belfast Harp Festival and he later collected the *Jigg to the Jointure* from Hugh Higgins of Tyrawley, Co. Mayo, who also performed at the Belfast meeting. This is one of the earliest examples of an Irish jig to have survived.

● **LOUISE MULCAHY, PAUL DOOLEY & PATRICK DEXTER**  
with uilleann pipes, wire strung harp, cello

1. *Two William Davis's in This Place* – the source for this tune is PW Joyce who "copied it about 1873 from a MS, lent me from Lough Conn County Mayo".

2. *Jig - The Races of Castlebar* – the title references "one of the most ignominious defeats in British military history" in Castlebar during the Irish Rebellion of 1798.



**EMER MAYOCK:** *Curator*

Master multi-instrumentalist, composer and recording artist. TG4 Gradam Ceoil Award winner and 'Music Of Mayo' creator, a resource dedicated to the rich traditional musical heritage of the county, past and present. [www.musicofmayo.ie](http://www.musicofmayo.ie)



**PATRICK DEXTER:** *Cello*

The globally-renowned cellist propelled to global stardom during lockdown. He is loved across the world for his virtuosic arrangements of classical, traditional Irish folk and contemporary pop music. [www.patrickdexter.com](http://www.patrickdexter.com)



**PAUL DOOLEY:** *Harp*

One of Ireland's most accomplished harpers, he is one of the leading exponents of the Irish harp in its historical form – a metal-strung harp played with fingernails. He holds a PhD from the University of Limerick. [www.pauldooley.com](http://www.pauldooley.com)



**BETH MORAN:** *Handweaver*

This master craftswoman artist has been weaving for over 30 years and works in a variety of materials. Each piece is like a symphony created in movements with different moods inspired by her location on Clare Island. [www.bethmoranhandweaver.ie](http://www.bethmoranhandweaver.ie)



**LOUISE MULCAHY:** *Uilleann pipes, flute, whistle*

The All Ireland Champion from West Limerick is a highly sought after contributor on television and radio with frequent appearances on RTÉ, TG4, BBC Alba. She holds a Doctoral Fellowship in Irish Music Studies at N.U.I. Galway and is a recent recipient of The Arts Council's prestigious Markievicz Award. [www.instagram.com/louisemulcahymusic](http://www.instagram.com/louisemulcahymusic)



**MICHELLE O'ROURKE:** *Mezzo soprano*

Empowered by a background in Baroque vocal music, and ever-fascinated by the role of voice in the ritual of performance, Michelle maintains a diverse portfolio of work: from contemporary classical music, to devised interdisciplinary projects, to holistic vocal coaching. [www.michelleorourke.ie](http://www.michelleorourke.ie)



**NICK ROTH:** *Saxophone*

Nick Roth is a saxophonist, composer, producer and educator based in Dublin, Ireland. Simultaneously subsumed by an insatiable appetite for literature, many of his compositions explore the symbiotic resonance of language as sound and symbol. [www.nickrothmusic.com](http://www.nickrothmusic.com)



**MACDARA YEATES:** *Voice, composer, cultural producer*

With work spanning four continents and his native inner city Dublin, Macdara's work explores the connection between folk music and social history and the theme of anachronism in traditional music. In 2021, Macdara was awarded an artist bursary at the Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris. [www.facebook.com/macdarayeatespresents](http://www.facebook.com/macdarayeatespresents)



## Production credits

Curator: **Emer Mayock**  
Artistic Director: **Bernadette Greenan**

Artists: **Patrick Dexter**, Cello; **Paul Dooley**, Harp;  
**Beth Moran**, Handweaver; **Louise Mulcahy**, Uilleann Pipes, Flute, Whistle;  
**Michelle O'Rourke**, Mezzo Soprano; **Nick Roth**, Saxophone;  
**Macdara Yeates**, Voice & Composition

Lighting Design & Staging: **Charlie Smith**  
Sound Design & Staging: **Sean Reynolds**  
Production Manager: **Mairead McGrath**  
Production Assistant: **Deirdre Melvin**  
Marketing: **Mary Callaghan & Jennifer Magee**  
Backstage Assistant: **Aidan Bolger**  
Front of House Manager: **Patrick Hopkins**  
Front of House Team: **Richie Moran, Orla Gallagher, Isaac Hardesty, Daniel Gibbs**  
Catering Team: **Angela O'Malley & Anne Naughton, Eileen McDonagh, Ann Wilson**  
Box Office: **Steve McGonagle & Ann McLoughlin**  
Cleaning Operative: **Ria Nuriyan**  
Film Documentation: **Andy Smith**  
Graphic Design: **Siobhan Foody**  
Cover artwork: **Maeve Clancy**

The Linenhall Arts Centre would like to acknowledge the support of Siobhan Sexton, Architectural Conservation Officer, Mayo County Council; Henry Mellott, who skilfully restored our heritage windows and door; Kenny's Guest House; CRCfm; Michael Baynes & Tom Kennedy. Thank you to the business community of Linenhall Street, Tucker Street & New Antrim Street for accommodating the street closure.

Supported by:



Castlebar  
Municipal  
District

The Linenhall Arts Centre is a company limited by guarantee, governed by a board of trustees, who volunteer their time and expertise. Interim Director: Fiona Neary, Lorraine Gannon (Chair), Clodagh Geraghty (Secretary), Bryan Gerard Duffy, Edith Geraghty, Thomas Gilligan, Michael Kilcoyne, Jennifer Loftus, Brendan Minish, Diarmaid Moynihan, John Scahill, Siobhán Sexton, Declan Swift.

The Linenhall  
arts centre

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Bookings: [www.thelinenhall.com](http://www.thelinenhall.com)