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MUSIC, VISUAL ART
DANCE AND MORE

CARLOW ARTS FESTIVAL

28 MAY
1 JUNE
2026

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Special thanks to Tully's Bar Carlow, Lamberts Coffee House, and Lennons

Welcome to Carlow Arts Festival

28 May - 1 June 2026

Summer begins at Carlow Arts Festival!

Starting this year on the June bank holiday weekend, we are kicking off the summer with an exciting mix of local, national, and international events.

Come join us for a spellbinding performance from the unique and renowned Irish musical artist Camille O'Sullivan; the spectacular dance and circus performance *BLOCK* by UK company Motionhouse; an incredible night of comedy headlined by award-winning comic, Andrew Maxwell, and Spanish company La Mecànica's immersive and interactive theatre experience *A Teen Odyssey*, plus much more.

We are launching *The CAF Sessions*, a line-up of music supported by O'Hara's Brewery; Carlow native Barry Fitzgerald is returning with *Mourning is a Muscle*, a work he first developed with the festival in 2024. Discover the immersive installation of *Our Place*, developed with attendees of Delta Centre Day Service and led by people with an intellectual disability, exploring their human rights and personal stories.

And, this year, for our spectacular parade, Crom comes to town! Crom is a giant created by the world-renowned Macnas. He will be joined by cairde from Carlow Folklore.

Carlow Arts Festival is moving beyond Carlow Town this year and is headed for Bagenalstown! *BLOCK* will be performed in Bagenalstown alongside a series of local events.

Finally, a big Carlow welcome to our new Artistic Director, Mikey Martins. With a background in performance art and festival direction, Mikey brings a deep passion for artistic experimentation and community connection that will help shape the festival's future. And thank you to our departing Artistic Director, Benjamin Perchet, for his four years of dedication.

We hope you enjoy the festival!

- The Festival Team

Book now

To book your tickets and plan your visit go to carlowartsfestival.ie or book in person at VISUAL.

Concessions

Where applicable, concessions are available for students, senior citizens, arts workers, the unwaged, and persons with a disability. Proof of eligibility must be presented at Festival box office and/or venue.

Free events

While being advertised as Free Events, please consider donating via our website or in person at the festival. As a not-for-profit that relies mainly on public funding, all donations – no matter how small – go a long way to ensuring the festival will continue for another 47 years. Thank you!

A €2 booking fee will be added to all tickets. Full terms and conditions can be found on our website.

Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult at all times. Alcoholic drinks bought off-site are not permitted, and all alcoholic drinks bought at the festival bar must be consumed within the festival grounds. Please drink responsibly.



"A courageous and singular performer, Camille is one of the most gifted interpreters of narrative songs yet to appear."

The Irish Times



© Barry McCall



"Ravishing, a superb performer.. the star is her singing voice, a deep sultry instrument that might have been created to express desolate love."

The Guardian

Music | Cabaret

CAMILLE O'SULLIVAN: LOVELETTER

Camille O'Sullivan with Feargal Murray

Performance

Fri 29 May, 8pm

Venue

The George Bernard Shaw Theatre, VISUAL

Tickets

€25 / €22

Age recommendation

14+

Duration

90 mins approx, (incl. interval)

A love letter in song, Camille celebrates dear friends Shane MacGowan, Sinéad O'Connor, David Bowie, Radiohead, Brel, Nick Cave and more. Chameleon-like on stage, each song has a different character with a story to tell.

With long-time collaborator Feargal Murray, Camille has created an intimate, heartfelt show with a little bit of joyful, mad chaos as her life unravels, capturing the honest response to those much loved and lost.

The multi-award-winning singer has stunned audiences around the world with her five-star sell-out performances, including the Sydney Opera House, Royal Festival Hall and The Roundhouse. Having toured with the Pogues, guested at Yoko Ono's and Richard Thompson's RFH Meltdown and the original star of Olivier Award-winning *La Clique*.

Dark, sexy, fierce, amusing and mesmerizing, Camille transforms each song she performs into an intense, emotional, and theatrical experience. Expect joy and pure passion.



"A technically tremendously complicated piece of work...it's thrilling."

The Guardian



© Dan Tucker

Dance & Circus | Irish Premiere

BLOCK

Motionhouse

Performance

Sat 30 May, 2pm & 7pm

Sun 31 May, 1pm & 4pm

Mon 1 June (Bagenalstown), 4pm

Venue

Carlow College Grounds

Bagenalstown

Tickets

Free

Duration

40 mins

Supported by Arts Council England, Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru – Arts Council Wales, Llywodraeth Cymru – Welsh Government.

BLOCK is commissioned by Without Walls, Stockton International Riverside Festival, Norfolk & Norwich Festival and Out There International Festival of Circus & Street Arts. Co-production Archaos, Pôle National des Arts du Cirque Méditerranée and Le Citron Jaune, Centre National des Arts de la Rue.

Ten years on...*BLOCK* is back.

Motionhouse presents a new, super-charged reimagining of this iconic show. With its daring physicality, split-second timing and gravity defying dance-circus, *BLOCK* will once again leave audiences on the edge of their seats.

BLOCK is about life in the city – its contradictions and challenges. Twenty oversized blocks, resembling giant Jenga pieces, form an ever-changing environment as the story of *BLOCK* unfolds, with split-second timing and thrilling feats.

Created and directed by Kevin Finnán. Original concept, design and production by Ali Williams. Originally produced and developed in collaboration with NoFit State.

BLOCK's performance in Bagenalstown is proudly funded by Carlow Co. Council Arts Service under the Carlow Beo! initiative.



© John McMahon

Parade

AON SCÉAL

Carlow Folklore Parade featuring Macnas

Performance

Mon 1 June, 1.30pm

Meeting Point

Carlow College Grounds

Age recommendation

All ages

Duration

90 mins

Want to join the parade? Come for a drop-in workshop on Saturday or Sunday, 12:30-4pm, or Monday 10am-12:30pm.

Supported by Carlow County Council

Crom, a giant brought to life by Macnas, is loose, wild and weary in this world. He is surrounded by the folklore characters of Carlow – *Mad Sweeney*, the *Scallionater*, *Labhraidh Loinsigh*, the *Cailleach*, a *Seanachai* and the last *Wolf of Carlow*. Together they will parade through the streets of Carlow.

Everyone is invited to come join them on their journey!

Inspired by Carlow Folk Tales, these characters were created as part of *The Great Carlow Folklore Resurrection Project with Amie Egan*, commissioned by VISUAL and Carlow Arts Office.

Maracatu ilha Brillhante will bring the drums and percussion, giving the parade its heartbeat, alongside young musicians from Music Generation Carlow.

Joining the parade are pupils from St Fiacc's NS, Askea NS, Scoil Mhuire Lourdes NS, Tullow and from St Patrick's NS, Rathvilly as well as some local groups.



"A master-class in mirth. Sublime timing, relaxed delivery, killer punchlines—the holy trinity of stand-up. Go see a craftsman at work."

The Herald (on Andrew Maxwell)

© craicdencomedyclub

Comedy

COMEDY GALA

Performance

Sun 31 May, 8pm

Venue

The George Bernard Shaw Theatre, VISUAL

Tickets

€25 / €23

Age recommendation

16+

Duration

2 hrs (incl. interval)

Get ready for a night of exceptional stand-up as we bring together some of the finest voices in Irish comedy for one unmissable event.

Hosted by the brilliantly sharp Sharon Mannion, the evening features a stellar lineup of comedic talent. Bernard Casey, known for his hugely popular online sketches and sell-out shows nationwide, delivers his signature blend of relatable, high-energy comedy. Joining him is rising star Sophia Wren, fresh from supporting international heavyweights Finn Taylor and Daniel Sloss, and rapidly establishing herself as one of Ireland's most exciting new voices.

Headlining the night is the hilarious Andrew Maxwell, a double Edinburgh Comedy Award nominee and one of Ireland's most acclaimed performers. With over two decades of experience across stage and screen, his credits include *Mock the Week*, *Have I Got News for You*, *Never Mind the Buzzcocks*, *QI*, *Richard Osman's House of Games*, and more.

This is a night not to be missed – book your tickets now.



"Fast, furious, talented and hilarious."

The Scotsman

© Micheál McLaughlin



★★★★★

"Extraordinary and moving."

British Theatre Guide

★★★★★

"A highly engaging interactive promenade piece centred around our smartphones."

The Scotsman

© Luca Rocchi

Music

AINDRIAS DE STAIC & THE LATCHIKOS

Performance

Sat 30 May, 8pm

Venue

O'Hara's Stage

Tickets

Free

Age recommendation

12+

Duration

90 mins

The Latchikos storm the Carlow Arts Festival with a high-energy fusion of music and storytelling.

Fronted by fiddler Aindrias de Staic, they mix Irish fiddle, flamenco and wild guitar, blues harmonica, and driving world beats into a genre-defying whirlwind.

Join us for an unforgettable night of music, fast-paced stories, fiery instrumentals, and irresistible rhythms that make every performance a full-on sensory experience. From haunting melodies to danceable grooves, The Latchikos deliver a show that's bold, vibrant, and unforgettable – blurring the lines between tradition and innovation and leaving audiences exhilarated.

Theatre | Irish Premiere

A TEEN ODYSSEY

La Mecànica

Performance

Sun 31 May; 2.30pm & 4pm

Mon 1 June; 12.30pm, 2pm, 3.30pm

Venue

George Bernard Shaw Theatre, VISUAL

Tickets

€17 / €15

Age recommendation

12+

Duration

55 mins

Content warnings

Contains strobe lighting and haze.

Please note, audience members will need to stand and walk in the space throughout the performance.

Supported by Institut d'Estudis Balearics de les Illes Balears. With the support of Fundació Èpica - La Fura dels Baus.

A Teen Odyssey is a show for all generations, an invitation to a celebration of anyone who is (or ever was) a teenager. An exhilarating piece of immersive physical theatre from Mallorca, combining live physical performance with smartphone technology to transform every audience member into an active participant.

Exploring identity, belonging, and what connects us across the generations, it is a show as much for the teenager discovering who they are as for the adult who still remembers exactly how that felt. Visually striking and sonically rich, this is theatre that stays with you long after you leave the room.

Central to the experience is the innovative Kalliôpé 2 app, created by Spanish theatre legends La Fura dels Baus - Fundació Èpica, which uses the audience's mobile phones as the catalyst for interaction.

Please bring your phone fully charged to the performance. The Kalliôpé 2 app will need to be downloaded on each phone before the performance.



© Donal Talbot



© Simon Lazewski

Theatre | Irish Premiere

MOURNING IS A MUSCLE

Barry Fitzgerald

Performance

Sat 30 May - Mon 1 June, 3pm & 6pm

Venue

Carlow College, St Patricks

Tickets

€15

Age recommendation

14+

Duration

60 mins

Content Warnings

References to loss and grief

Funded by The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon. *Mourning is a Muscle* has been supported by Carlow Arts Festival, Carlow Arts Office, Dublin Fringe Festival, OUTBOX and VISUAL Carlow.

In the still shock of the 2020 London lockdown, Barry began writing letters to their father. He had died four years earlier. A simple mourning ritual grew and allowed Barry to move again.

Mourning is a Muscle is the culmination of those letters, a denim-drenched journey through grief, connection, queerness, and lineage - part performance, part installation. Focusing on the relationship of a father and queer child, and a story of a derelict farm, it fuses movement, music, design and ritual. Playfully delving into gender, how we carry the landscape of home, and the joy of moving as our true selves.

From Annie Lennox to Neil Diamond, Carlow fields to London lockdown, line dancing to lip-syncing - it moves across time and place, landing in tender and electric moments. A call to witness mourning in all its forms: spectacular, ordinary, and everything in between.

Outside of scheduled performances, the performance space will open at set times for self-guided visits. You're invited to enter, have a cup of tea, sit with the work, and spend time with it in your own way.

Exhibition

OUR PLACE

Carlow Arts Festival

Launch

Thurs 28 May, 6pm

Talk

Fri 29 May, 11am - 12pm

Guided Tour

Fri 29 May, 2pm

Exhibition

28 May - 30 May, 11am-8pm

Sun 31st, 11am - 6pm

Mon 1 June, 11am - 5.30pm

Venue

VISUAL

Our Place continues at VISUAL until 30 August

Disability Participation and Awareness 3.0 Funded by Rethink Ireland in partnership with the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE)

Supported by St John of God Community Services Liffey, Delta Centre, Create and VISUAL Carlow.

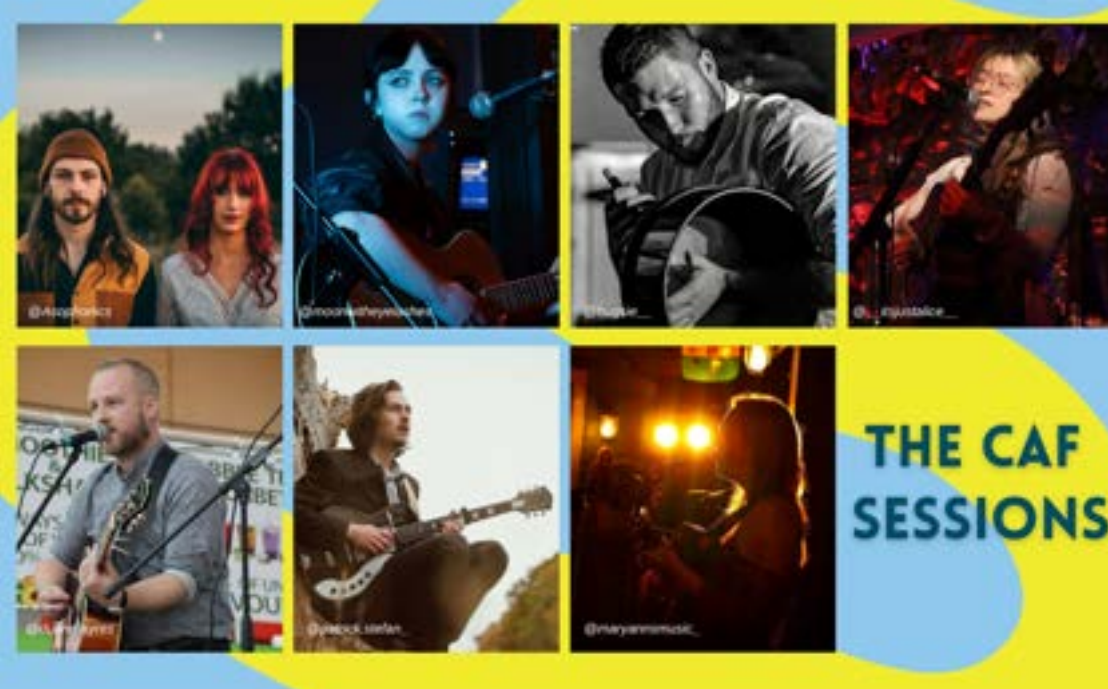
Everyone is welcome in *Our Place*. Experience an immersive sound and light exhibition that playfully explores themes of human rights, happiness and belonging.

Our Place is a long-term, socially engaged art project that champions the human rights of people living with intellectual disabilities. This project places the ideas, talents and lived experience of people with an intellectual disability at the centre of artmaking and exhibition design.

In collaboration with people supported by Delta Centre, the *Our Place* team have developed a new installation for VISUAL Carlow, commissioned by Carlow Arts Festival.

Led by artists AlanJames Burns and Sinéad McCann, and co-designers Patrick Fitzgerald and Tony Davis.

Sensory areas are designed within the gallery, featuring vibroacoustic seating for groups and individuals. Lámh, captions and audio descriptions are an embedded feature of the artwork.



THE CAF SESSIONS 2026

Music

THE CAF SESSIONS

Performance

Sat 30 May - Sun 31 May

Venue

O'Hara's Stage

Tickets

Free

Thank you to everyone who responded to our Open Call for this new strand, we were amazed by the response. We can't wait to keep this tradition going, so be sure to apply next year for a chance to perform.

Supported by O'Hara's Craft Brewery

The CAF Sessions is our brand-new music strand, dedicated to showcasing bold and exciting local musicians on the big stage.

This year's lineup features an incredible mix of local and national talent, including bands, duos, and solo acts. Audiences can expect a vibrant blend of genres from folk to rock and indie to pop, bringing something exciting for every music lover.

We can't wait for you to experience the dynamic range of performances on the O'Hara's Stage across the weekend. Everyone is welcome at The CAF Sessions, whether you want to sit and appreciate the music or dance into the night, we've got you covered.

With thanks to our Principal Sponsor, O'Hara's Brewery, for their continued and generous support. All acts will perform on the O'Hara's Stage, a free, unticketed outdoor venue open to everyone.

Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult at all times. Alcoholic drinks bought off-site are not permitted, all alcoholic drinks bought at the Festival Bar must be consumed within the festival grounds. Please drink responsibly.

THE CAF SESSIONS

Just Alice

Sat 30 May, 1-2pm |
O'Hara's Stage

A rising singer-songwriter blending folk, Americana, and country influences with heartfelt storytelling.

MARYANN

Sat 30 May, 3-4pm |
O'Hara's Stage

Think Hannah Montana sparkles meet Dido-esque vocals, MARYANN is carving out a space for herself on the pop stage.

Patrick Stefan

Sat 30 May, 5-6PM |
O'Hara's Stage

Through entrancing indie-folk songs infused with poetic lyricism, this Irish singer-songwriter is described as the 'voice of James Blake meets the guitar playing of Nick Drake'.

Asophonics

Sat 30 May, 9.30-11pm |
O'Hara's Stage

This Carlow based duo's sound weaves intricate, open-tuned guitars with dynamic, harmonically rich vocals to create a distinctive blend of folk and indie rock.

Ciara McNally

Sun 31 May, 2-3pm |
O'Hara's Stage

Just 21, this singer songwriter from Carlow writes rich, personal songs that evoke a raw and emotive sound.

Hugsie Trio

Sun 31 May, 9-10.30pm |
O'Hara's Stage

Calling his music "DIY Alternative Folk", Hugsie draws from his many musical interests and experiences to write honest, enthusiastic and colloquial music for the people.

Duane Ayers

Sun 31 May, 8-8.45pm |
O'Hara's Stage

An established local songwriter and performer, Duane Ayers delivers a vibrant live performance of original Irish folk and rock music on bouzouki and acoustic guitar.



"This is a wonderful, joyful and uplifting event that should be experienced by every community."

Backstage Theatre

Dance | Participatory

CÉILÍ AFRO DABKE UKRAINE

Catherine Young Dance

Date

Sun 31 May, 5pm

Venue

O'Hara's Stage

Tickets

Free

Age recommendation

All ages

Duration

90 mins

Get ready to move! This vibrant world music céilí celebrates the music and dance traditions from around the world including: West African dance, Palestinian Dabke, Ukrainian dance as well as the traditional Irish céilí dances – all to live music.

Featuring a line-up of world-class musicians and dancers, this uplifting event invites everyone from seasoned dancers to complete beginners onto the dancefloor. No experience needed and all ages are welcome – each dance style is taught as you go.

Energised by live music, pulsating rhythms and the thrill of learning new cultural dance forms, this unique and joyous event will have you moving, smiling, sweating and wanting more.

Come with friends, family or on your own. *Céilí Afro Dabke Ukraine* is an invitation to gather, meet new people, celebrate the richness of world cultures and dance.

SEXYTADHG PRESENTS...

Fri 29 May | 7pm - 10.30pm | Free | O'Hara's Music Stage

Join us for a night of fun, hosted by Local Carlow legend, SexyTadgh. They've put together a showcase of music, dance and drag to help us kick off our 2026 festival in style...



SexyTadgh

Our MC for the night and Carlow native SexyTadgh will be performing a number alongside the festivities for this special showcase.

With a reputation for theatrical performances and fearless queer expression, SexyTadgh will bring their powerhouse performances back to Carlow.



Dara Eaton & The Patsy's

Originally forming to play a loud and joyous show at Carlow Arts Festival 2023, Dara Eaton & The Patsy's went on to record their third album, *Jack and The Skag*.

After taking a hiatus in 2025, the band has reformed for one night only. Stating that, "When SexyTadgh calls, you answer."



Ping Pong Disco

Cian Kinsella's wild and joyous *Ping Pong Disco* is a destination club within a festival -- part art space, part club, all dance floor.

Push your wild instincts and demented desire in our joyously outrageous, flashy, trashy, paradise.



Ciúnas

Don't be fooled by the name, Dublin band Ciúnas is far from quiet.

United by a shared love of CMAT, The Cranberries, and Fleetwood Mac, Ciúnas blend classic melodic songwriting with a modern indie edge, bringing queer, female-led stories boldly to the forefront of their music.

Supported by O'Hara's Craft Brewery

FREE EVENTS

Yoga

Sat 30 May, 10am | 60 mins
O'Hara's Stage

Connie Byrne's mindful yoga creates a space for you to breathe, move, and rest; allowing you to flow through your day with ease, grace, and balance. Join in on Saturday and please bring along your own yoga mat.

Supported by Active Carlow

Drumming Workshop

Sun 31 May & Mon 1 June,
11.30am | 60 mins
O'Hara's Stage

Bang the drums with *Rhythm Riot's Parent and Child Drumming Workshop*. Learn how to keep a beat and create new music.

Supported by Music Generation Carlow

Dinky Dancers

Mon 1 June, 3pm | 40 mins
O'Hara's Stage

Ready for a dance? Join us for a fun, social baby and toddler morning suitable for 0-4 years led by the amazing DJ Little O. Fun costumes for your little ones is encouraged!

The Appliqué Lab

Sun 31 May, 1pm | 60 mins
Carlow College

Ever since the first textile was created, there have been stories woven into fabric. What stories can we tell through textiles?

Join artist Thaís Muniz for a hands-on patch making session. Learn how to prepare fabrics to cut custom shapes and forms, and attach them to your piece – creating your own wearable or decorative story.

Bring cuts of pre-loved fabric to upcycle!

Parade Workshop

Sat 30, Sun 31 May 12.30pm - 4pm or Mon 1 June 10am-12.30pm | 60 mins
O'Hara's Stage

Join us to create your own unique costume piece to show off on the streets of Carlow. Whether you're young or young-at-heart, everyone is welcome to get involved.

Lámh-a-Song

Mon 1 June, 12:45pm | 30 mins
O'Hara's Stage

Lámh-a-Song is a wonderful collection of nursery rhymes specifically designed for young Lámh users. It's a fun, engaging way to practice signs with your child, supported by music and clear visuals.



© Marilyn Tuna

Visual Arts

HOLD THIS ARTWORKS 2026

Launch & Artworks Awards

Thurs 28 May, 6pm

Guided Tour

Fri 29 May, 1pm. Meet at VISUAL

Exhibition

28 May - 30 May, 11am-8pm

Sun 31st, 11am-6pm

Mon 1 June, 11am-5.30pm

Venue

VISUAL

Tickets

Free, no booking required

Hold This continues at VISUAL until

30 August

Funded by the Arts Council | An Chomhairle Ealaíon
and Carlow County Council.

Hold This is this year's iteration of VISUAL and Carlow Arts Festival's annual open call exhibition.

Drawn from submissions from around Ireland and further afield, *Hold This* is about exchange; of ideas, stories, skills, knowledge, histories and experiences.

Hold this is a request for help – “Can you hold this?”; a gift – “Here, hold this” and an empathetic directive: “Hold this space” for someone or something; from psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott's concept of “holding”. It requires human touch; physical engagement with a thing, person or the world.

The exhibition foregrounds analogue skills and human engagement in an increasingly digitised, fragmented and disembodied age.

Hold This is shown alongside *Mycelium*, an exhibition of new work by socially-engaged artist Kate O'Shea.

Join VISUAL's Curator Benjamin Stafford for an informal tour that looks at several artworks in depth and the wider context for the exhibition.



Street Performance

O!

Ouch Productions / Colm O'Grady

**Sat 30 May - Mon 1 June | Various times |
40 mins | Free
College Grounds & Tullow St**

O! A comical cultural exploration.

Contemporary circus meets Irish traditional culture in a splendid display of stupidity.

Born in the heart of Dublin, Colm O'Grady has been living the circus dream for almost 30 years.

Bringing his street performance *O!* to Carlow, witness a wonderful exposition of eccentric traditional Be sure to experience his Leek dancing, classical music performances on a unicycle and many more playful acts.

@ Marie de la Guernonire



Street Performance

Maracatu ilha Brilhante

Sun 31 May | Various Times | Free | Tullow St

Maracatu ilha Brilhante (Shining Island Maracatu) is a music and folkloric cultural ensemble that specialise in the exhilarating drumming rhythms of Maracatu Baque Virado from Pernambuco in the Northeast of Brazil.

Founded in 2010, the group focus on the energy and spirit of the living Maracatu traditions and communities through thunderous rhythms, enchanting songs and choreographed movement.

Featuring some of the finest performers living in Ireland under the musical directorship of percussionist Thomas Duffy, their music is sure to shake the street and stir the soul.

@ Patrick Bramley

Street Performance

Miss Mary

Fontanella Dance

**Sat 30 May & Sun 31 May | Various times |
35 mins | Free
College Grounds & Tullow St**

An outdoor celebration of Irish music and dance where the performer, Kristyn Fontanella, recalls and reclaims the lost traditions of the travelling dance masters.

Traveling through parks and fields, embodying the land and its stories, she arrives at a gathering of people, she invites them to exchange and listen.

Miss Mary gathers ancestors, nostalgia and community, sharing the stories that live within us all.

Co-produced by Roscommon Arts Centre with support from the Bealtaine touring award, additional support from Roscommon Arts Office & County Council, Backstage Theatre, Longford and An Tain Arts Centre, Dundalk.



@ Cyrille Clement

Installation & Storytelling

Traveller's Wagon

Carlow Traveller Forum

**Barrel Top Wagon - Sat 30 May, 10am-4pm,
Carlow College Grounds
Stories, Singing & Poetry - Sat 30 May, 2-3pm,
Carlow College, St Patricks**

Carlow Traveller Pride Festival 2026 is hosted by St. Catherine's Community Services Centre at Carlow Arts Festival to celebrate Traveller culture, heritage and achievement.

Harnessing the creativity found in the Traveller community, artworks have been created especially for Traveller Pride. *The Meath Living History Barrel Top Wagons, Tinsmith, Art Exhibition, Paper Flower Making, and Beady Pockets* will be on display. Alongside this, Carlow Traveller Forum members will be sharing their stories and poems.

Be sure to visit this impactful installation and join in for a day of singing and storytelling.



Outdoor Theatre

CHOP

Cian Kinsella
Presented by VISUAL

Mon 1 June | 3pm | 45 mins |
College Grounds, St Patrick's

Prepare for *CHOP*, a dangerously funny, wildly absurd theatre performance written and performed by Cian Kinsella (*Lords of Strut*). This high-energy one-man show dives into fragile masculinity, social satire, and environmental collapse with sharp humour and physical wit that keeps audiences buzzing long after the curtain falls.

CHOP blends comedy and chaos with *theatrical* playfulness, creating a performance that's unpredictable, thought-provoking, and unapologetically entertaining. Driven by Kinsella's dynamic stage presence, the piece pushes boundaries and invites audiences into its absurd world, where physicality and timing elevate every beat of the narrative.

@ Niel Hansworth

Installation

Mayumi Nakabayashi

Sat 30 - Sun 31 May | College Grounds, St Patrick's

Mayumi Nakabayashi is a Japanese land artist living in Ireland since 1999. She creates geometric patterns and structures with natural materials. Her works are ephemeral and site responsive – the artworks which feel harmonious in the landscape, incorporating elements and materials found on the spot.

She has exhibited at Trinity College Dublin, European Land Art Festival, Clifden Arts Festival, Nature Art de Zavelput in Belgium and other places. She also leads workshops for schools and communities, co-creating environmental arts to bring people together.

She has led sessions for VISUAL Carlow, IMMA, RTE, Alzheimer Society of Ireland and others. Her passion lies in co-creation on all levels – with people and with nature.



CARLOW ARTS FESTIVAL

Sustainable Futures Summer School at VISUAL

Planting Meitheal*

Fri 29 May, 10am | 3 hrs
VISUAL entrance

Plants have been used to make colour on clothes and in artworks for millennia. Join Hollie Kearns, curator of Colour Field at Workhouse Union to plant an experimental artist's garden, nurturing plants used for colour making.

No Booking Required. Wear something appropriate for gardening!

*From the Irish word for a working party

Textile Repair

Sat 30 May, Darning workshop: 10am – 12.30pm
Sashiko workshop: 1.30 – 4pm |
VISUAL | Tickets free, booking required

Toufan Hosseiny's work explores textiles and repair through embroidery, quilting, natural dyeing and mending; each stitch becomes an act of connection, acceptance and healing.

Darning: Learn to repair or reinforce worn areas of your knitted and woven fabrics using a needlework sewing technique.

Sashiko: Learn to mend and reinforce damaged or worn clothing through a modern version of the Japanese Sashiko, using a repetitive small hand stitch and patching.

Please bring a damaged, loved item of clothing that needs repair.

Bee Tour

Sat 30 May, 12.30pm | 30 mins
VISUAL | No booking required.

Did you know VISUAL has 3 beehives?

Join VISUAL's beekeeper Derek Blanche for a tour of the beehives in Carlow College's historic orchard and learn a little bit about what it means to keep bees.

Concertina Notebook & Natural Ink Painting Tutorial

Sun 31 May, 11.30am | 60 mins
VISUAL

Join artist Mairead Holohan to experiment with natural inks made from foraged materials, make your own concertina notebook and create a 360° painting of your chosen view outside with natural inks and charcoal.

@ Toufan Hosseini





Carlow Makers Market

Sat 30 May, 11am-4pm | Tullow St

This pop-up craft and art event will transform Lower Tullow Street into a vibrant hub of creativity, design, and enterprise.

The market will showcase a range of crafts, from intricate ceramics and textiles to contemporary jewellery, art, print, and woodwork. The event will highlight the incredible depth of skill within the local and regional creative sector.

Be sure to check out the market to support local sellers and find something unique!



Carlow Visual Arts Exhibition

Running 28 May - 1 June 2026 | Carlow College, St Patricks

Local arts practitioner Rennie Bunting, working with curator Tony Strickland, presents an exhibition of Carlow-based visual artists during the 2026 Carlow Arts Festival. The theme of this year's exhibition is *HOPE*.

*Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune
without the words
And never stops at all*

- Emily Dickinson

The project is supported by Carlow Arts Festival, Carlow Arts Office, and is funded by Creative Ireland Carlow.



Music Generation

**Sat 30 May, 11.30am, Mon 1 June, 4pm | 60 mins
O'Hara's Stage**

Carlow's emerging young musicians take to the stage with dynamic and engaging performances. Music Gen Carlow's Rock Bands, and Traditional Ensembles Reel Nua and Reel OG present a vibrant showcase of contemporary and traditional sounds.

Both Music Gen Carlow and Waterford will unite in a spirited brass performance that celebrates the joy of ensemble playing.

Come join them for their Trad session on Saturday and Rock and Brass takeover on Monday!

CAF ON THE ROAD BAGENALSTOWN

Mon 1 June | 11am - 5pm | Free



@ Dan Tucker

At Carlow Arts Festival, we believe great art shouldn't stay in one place. *CAF On The Road* is our commitment to reaching beyond the town centre – bringing bold, ambitious, and joyful experiences to communities across the county, and connecting with audiences in more rural areas in meaningful and lasting ways.

We want to create shared moments; on streets, in parks, and in unexpected places, where people can come together and experience something extraordinary, right on their doorstep.

This year, we're thrilled to bring *BLOCK*, the internationally acclaimed outdoor spectacle by UK circus and dance company Motionhouse, to Bagenalstown. Alongside this performance, there will be other activities, events and street performances throughout the day. Keep an eye on our website and socials for more information.

We're excited to share these experiences with new communities as part of our journey outward.

Supported by Bagenalstown Improvement Group and Creative Places Bagenalstown – "Building creative pathways through partnership." With support from Carlow County Council.

CARLOW ARTS FESTIVAL

28 MAY - 1 JUNE

Thursday 28 May

6pm - 7.30pm	Hold This: Artworks (Running til 30 Aug)	VISUAL	Exhibition	Free	p.17
6pm	Our Place Launch (Running til 30 Aug)	VISUAL	Exhibition	Free	p.11

Friday 29 May

11pm - 3pm	Our Place: Talk & Tour	VISUAL	Talk & Tour	Free	p.11
1pm - 2pm	Artworks Talk	VISUAL	Talk	Free	p.13
11am - 6pm	Carlow Artists Exhibition (Running til 1 June)	Carlow College, St Patricks	Exhibition	Free	p.22
7pm - 10.30pm	SexyTadhg Presents...	O'Hara's Music Stage	Music	Free	p.15
8.00pm - 10pm	Camille O'Sullivan: Loveletter	The George Bernard Shaw Theatre	Cabaret & Music	€25 / 22	p.4

Saturday 30 May

10am-11am	Morning Yoga	O'Hara's Music Stage	Workshop	Free	p. 16
10am - 4pm	Traveller's Wagon Display and Storytelling	Carlow College Grounds	Talk & Display	Free	p.19
11am - 4pm	Carlow's Makers Market	Tullow St	Market	Free	p.22
11.30am - 12.30pm	Music Generation Trad Group	College Grounds (Children's Area)	Music	Free	p.22
12.30pm - 4pm	Parade Workshop	College Grounds (Children's Area)	Workshop	Free	p.16
1pm - 2pm	Just Alice	O'Hara's Music Stage	Music	Free	p.12
1pm - 1.40pm	O!	Tullow St	Street Performance	Free	p.18
2pm - 2.40pm	BLOCK	College Grounds	Dance & Circus	Free	p.5
2pm - 3pm	Carlow Traveller Forum	Carlow College, St Patricks	Talk	Free	p.19

Saturday 30 May

3pm - 3.40pm	Miss Mary	Tullow St	Street Performance	Free	p.18
3pm - 4pm	Mourning is a Muscle	Carlow College, St Patricks	Theatre	€15	p.10
3pm - 4pm	MARYANN	O'Hara's Music Stage	Music	Free	p.12
4pm - 4.40pm	O!	College Grounds	Street Performance	Free	p.18
5pm - 6pm	Patrick Stefan	O'Hara's Music Stage	Music	Free	p.12
6pm - 6.40pm	Miss Mary	College Grounds	Street Performance	Free	p.18
6pm - 7pm	Mourning is a Muscle	Carlow College, St Patricks	Theatre	€15	p.10
7pm-7.40pm	BLOCK	College Grounds	Dance & Circus	Free	p.5
8pm-9.30pm	Aindrias de Staic & The Latchikos	O'Hara's Music Stage	Music	Free	p.8
9.30pm - 11pm	Asophonics	O'Hara's Music Stage	Music	Free	p.12

Sunday 31 May

11.30am-12.30pm	Drumming Workshop	College Grounds (Children's Area)	Workshop	Free	p.16
12.30pm - 1.10pm	Miss Mary	Tullow St	Street Performance	Free	p.18
12.30pm - 4pm	Parade Making Workshop	College Grounds (Children's Area)	Workshop	Free	p.16
1pm-1.40pm	BLOCK	College Grounds	Dance & Circus	Free	p.5
1pm - 2pm	The Appliqué Lab	Carlow College, St Patricks	Workshop	Free	p.16
1.10pm - 1.40pm	Maracatu ilha Brilhante	Carlow Town	Street Performance	Free	p.19
2pm - 3pm	Ciara McNally	O'Hara's Music Stage	Music	Free	p.13
2.10pm - 2.40pm	Maracatu ilha Brilhante	Carlow Town	Street Performance	Free	p.19

Sunday 31 May

2.30pm - 3.25pm	A Teen Odyssey	The George Bernard Shaw Theatre	Theatre	€17/15	p.9
3pm - 3.40pm	O!	Carlow Grounds	Street Performance	Free	p.18
3pm - 4pm	Mourning is a Muscle	Carlow College, St Patricks	Theatre	€15	p.10
4pm - 4.40pm	BLOCK	College Grounds	Dance & Circus	Free	p.5
4pm - 4.55pm	A Teen Odyssey	The George Bernard Shaw Theatre	Theatre	€17/15	p.9
4.40pm - 5pm	Maracatu ilha Brilhante	College Grounds (Children's Area)	Street Performance	Free	p.19
5pm - 7pm	Céilí Afro Dabke Ukraine	O'Hara's Music Stage	Music	Free	p.14
6pm - 7pm	Mourning is a Muscle	Carlow College, St Patricks	Theatre	€15	p.10
8pm - 10pm	Comedy Gala	The George Bernard Shaw Theatre	Comedy	€25/23	p.7
8pm - 8.45pm	Duane Ayers	O'Hara's Music Stage	Music	Free	p.12
9pm - 10.30pm	Hugsie Trio	O'Hara's Music Stage	Music	Free	p.12

Monday 1 June

10am - 12.30pm	Parade Making Workshop	College Grounds	Workshop	Free	p.16
11.30am - 12.30pm	Drumming Workshop (Parent & Child)	O'Hara's Music Stage	Workshop	Free	p.16
12.30pm - 1.25pm	A Teen Odyssey	The George Bernard Shaw Theatre	Theatre	€17/15	p.9
12.45pm - 1.15pm	Lámh-a-Song	O'Hara's Music Stage	Event	Free	p.16
1pm - 1.40pm	BLOCK	Bagenalstown	Dance & Circus	Free	p.6
1.30pm - 3pm	Aon Scéal	Starts at Carlow College	Parade	Free	p.6
2pm - 2.55pm	A Teen Odyssey	The George Bernard Shaw Theatre	Theatre	€17/15	p.9

Monday 1 June

3pm - 3.40pm	Dinky Dancers	O'Hara's Music Stage	Event	Free	p.19
3pm - 3.45pm	CHOP	Carlow College, St Patricks	Performance	Free	p.20
3pm - 4pm	Mourning is a Muscle	Carlow College, St Patricks	Theatre	€15	p.10
3.30pm - 4.25pm	A Teen Odyssey	The George Bernard Shaw Theatre	Theatre	€17/15	p.9
4pm - 4.40pm	O!	Carlow College Grounds	Street Performance	Free	p.18
11am - 5pm	CAF on the Road	Bagenalstown	Events	Free	p.23
4pm - 5pm	Music Generation Takeover	O'Hara's Music Stage	Music	Free	p.22
6pm - 7pm	Mourning is a Muscle	Carlow College, St Patricks	Theatre	€15	p.10

To book your tickets and plan your visit go to carlowartsfestival.ie

A €2 booking fee will be added to all tickets. Full terms and conditions can be found on our website and on the website of our box office system supplier – VISUAL.ie



Support Carlow Arts Festival

Carlow Arts Festival is a not-a-profit organisation dedicated to promoting art in all its forms and delivering exceptional cultural experiences for audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

We're proud to be one of seven festivals that are Strategically Funded by the Arts Council | An Chomhairle Ealaíon. As our Principal Funder, their ongoing support is crucial to Carlow Arts Festival's future. We are also supported by Carlow County Council, our generous corporate sponsors, and our national and international cultural partners.

We are proud that we can present so much of our program for free and to ensure as many people get the chance to participate in the projects as possible. This is an increasingly difficult thing to do financially in these challenging times with costs rising for everything. Any contributions you can make to support our work is hugely appreciated.

We believe world class arts events should be accessible for as many people as possible, please help us to continue to reduce the financial barriers, and to ensure as many people can participate as possible.

As a registered charity, all donations are tax deductible. So whether as an individual or as an organisation, please consider making a donation today via our website or in person at the festival. All profits and donations go directly back into the delivery of Carlow Arts Festival.

Thank you for your support!

Thank you to our audience for continuing to join us in celebrating local, national and international work in Carlow. It's amazing to see familiar faces and new ones each year.

We're already planning next year, and we want to make sure it's even better. Your feedback is crucial in shaping the future of the festival.

Please take a few minutes to fill out our 2026 survey by scanning the QR code.

Scan to donate



Scan to view survey



Thank you

Festival Team

Artistic Director & CEO
Mikey Martins

Executive Producer
Ferga Moran

Creative Producer
Orlaith Treacy

Festival Producer
Shannon Basso Gaule

Marketing Manager
Sarah Hanna

Volunteer Manager
Shannon O'Doherty

Marketing Assistant
Darren Flynn

Artist Liaison
Ash Flynn

Illustration & Design
Claire Prouvost

Website
Path.ie

Box Office
VISUAL

Security
South East Security.

Special thanks to Fr. Conn Ó Maoldhomhnaigh, Averil Lawler and the staff of Carlow College, St Patrick's.

Board of Directors

Roisin Lawlor (Chairperson), Cian Kinsella (Secretary), Janice de Bróithe, Dan McInerney, Jolly O'Rock, Fintan Phelan.

Carlow Arts Festival is a member of Performing Arts Forum, Carlow PPN Public Participation Network, Naturally Wild Festivals, and ISACS Irish Street Arts, Circus & Spectacle Network.

We promote the Safe to Create Programme in our actions and provide safe working conditions for all our workers.

Carlow Arts Festival is the trading name of Éigse-Carlow Arts Limited registered charity no. 20035419.

Every year, as Carlow Arts Festival comes to life in all its colour, creativity, and energy, there is a group of people working quietly behind the scenes who make it all possible: the volunteers.

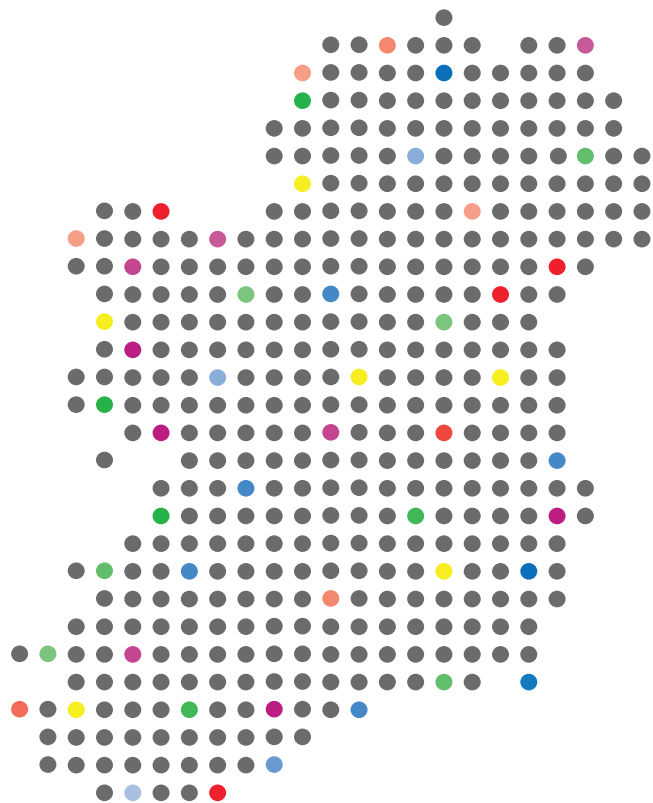
Whether you're welcoming visitors with a smile, guiding audiences between events, supporting artists, or helping everything run smoothly, you are essential. It is your time, your care, and your belief in the power of the arts that transform the festival from a programme of events into a shared, unforgettable experience.

The success of the festival is not measured only in performances or exhibitions, but in the connections made, the community built, and the joy shared. And none of that would be possible without you.

If you are interested in volunteering with our festival, see our website carlowartsfestival.ie for more information.

A huge thank you to our amazing technical and production team, all our valued seasonal staff, and the wonderful food vendors.

Until next year!



Every year, RTÉ supports more than 160 arts events nationwide.

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