

**RTÉ**



**Championing Us**

Arts & Culture on RTÉ





**When the world  
as we knew it was  
turned upside down,  
people everywhere  
turned to the arts,  
and to culture, for  
sustenance, joy,  
escape and healing.**

My ambition for arts programming on RTÉ is that it will contribute to our shared recognition of the essential value and pleasure that the arts bring to our lives. In creating work that reaches out to a large and wide audience, we have used the talents of so many artists and creative talents from across the independent sector, from in-house RTÉ teams, and with our strategic partners within many arts and cultural organisations.

As we learn to adapt to the 'new normal' I hope that, while winning the hearts of the public, the arts and culture schedule in RTÉ will also contribute in some modest way towards wider recognition of the invaluable role that arts and culture play in defining who we are.

**Ann-Marie Power**

Group Head of Arts and Culture, RTÉ

**Nuair a cuireadh an  
saol mar ba eol dúinn  
é trí chéile d'iompaigh  
daoine i ngach áit i  
dtreo na n-ealaíon agus  
an chultúir ar mhaithe  
le cothú, luchtáir, sólas  
agus slánú a fháil.**

Is é an aidhm atá agam maidir le cláracha ealaíon ar RTÉ ná go gcuirfeadh siad le haitheantas comhroinnte a bhaint amach i leith an fhiúntais riachtanaigh agus an phléisiúir a fhaighimid ó na healaíne. Tá leas bainte ag RTÉ as buanna go leor ealaíontóirí agus daoine cumasacha ó ar fud na hearnála Neamhspleáiche, ó fhoirne intí RTÉ agus ó chomhpháirtithe straitéiseacha RTÉ laistigh d'iomaí eagraíochtaí ealaín agus cultúir d'fhonn saothar a chruthú a chothaíonn caidreamh le lucht spéise mór agus forleathan.

De réir mar a rachaimid i dtaithí ar an 'ngnáthshaol nua' tá súil agam, fad a mheallaimid an pobal, go gcuirfidh an sceideal ealaíon agus cultúir in RTÉ, más go measartha féin é, le haitheantas a mhéadú i leith an róil riachtanaigh atá ag na healaíona agus ag an gcultúir i dtaobh cur síos a dhéanamh orainn féin mar dhaoine.

**Ann-Marie Power**

Grúpcheannasaí Ealaíon & Cultúir, RTÉ

**70%**

**of Irish Adults agree  
with the statement that  
"RTÉ supports a range of  
arts activities in Ireland".**

RTÉ Brand Tracker



# Context

**RTÉ's new cross-platform commissioning, production and distribution system for arts and cultural content means that audiences experience an exceptional level of access and connectivity to arts and culture in all its forms, both home-grown and international, across all genres, and on all RTÉ's channels.**

**90%**

**of people feels it's important that RTÉ provides a platform for artists, musicians and culture.**

RTÉ Have Your Say National Survey 2021



Championing Us

# Sound | *Fuaim*



## RTÉ Radio 1

From *Simply Folk* to sold-out broadcast performances of *The Songs of Leonard Cohen* with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, to the RTÉ Radio 1 Folk Awards, RTÉ Radio 1 is at the forefront of curating powerful music in performance.

The *RTÉ Concert Orchestra Presents* strand on RTÉ Radio 1 brings the orchestra into homes all over the country, with many of our leading contemporary artists across all genres of music, while the RTE Radio 1 Folk Awards ensures our folk tradition is celebrated yearly, acknowledging the creativity and work of our artists.





### **RTÉ lyric fm**

Despite the cancellation of live music making during the pandemic, RTÉ lyric fm continued to provide its regular broadcast output on its audience-focused daytime shows, on *Marty in the Morning*, Lorcan Murray's *Classic Drive*, *Purple Vespertine* with Ellen Cranitch, *The Full Score* with Liz Nolan, and *Movies and Musicals* with Aedín Gormley, as well as embedded culture-themed feature items and a range of documentaries. RTÉ lyric fm constantly seeks innovative ways to bring live orchestral music to a wider audience, with live radio and live streaming of specially designed RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra concerts and specially streamed events featuring the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, with diverse guest artists.

Opera continued to feature on lyric fm and [www.rte.ie/culture](http://www.rte.ie/culture), despite the cancellation of much live work. A special broadcast and online partnership with Wexford Festival Opera included a premiere broadcast performance of *What Happened to Lucrece* by Andrew Synott.





# Championing Us Sound | *Fuaim*

## RTÉ Orchestras

The pandemic led to a fundamental reimagining of how the RTÉ Orchestras could continue to connect with audiences. The RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra presented an autumn series of 14 live performances from the National Concert Hall with guest artists including soprano Claudia Boyle and principal conductor Jaimie Martin, broadcast live on lyric fm and live streamed on [www.rte.ie/culture](http://www.rte.ie/culture), and 10 selected concerts were also subsequently televised on RTÉ One.

The RTÉ Concert Orchestra continued its acclaimed specials every bank holiday, and created a series of six multiplatform concerts featuring a broad range of popular music performed with guest artists, including original John Lennon arrangements, a musicals evening, seasonal themed concerts for Christmas and New Year, the premiere of a centenary-themed work by Paul Frost, *The Burning of Cork*, Songs of Leonard Cohen (302,000 viewers), and a celebration of the anniversary of *A Woman's Heart* (304,000 viewers).



RTÉ Concert Orchestra's All-Star John Lennon Tribute







## Championing Us Sound | *Fuaim*

*Arena* on RTÉ Radio 1 played a significant sectoral support role following the devastating impact of the pandemic on the arts sector.



*The Rolling Wave's* successful podcast strand increased listeners' interaction with the traditional music show.

*Céilí House* travels the length and breadth of Ireland and beyond, in search of good sessions and great music.





*Mystery Train*, the award-winning, multi-genre music show is one of many across the RTÉ schedules, such as *An Taobh Tuathail* on RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta and *The Purple Vespertine* on RTÉ lyric fm.



Philip King's *South Wind Blows* is eclectic and personal, enriched by his personal archive collected out on the road.

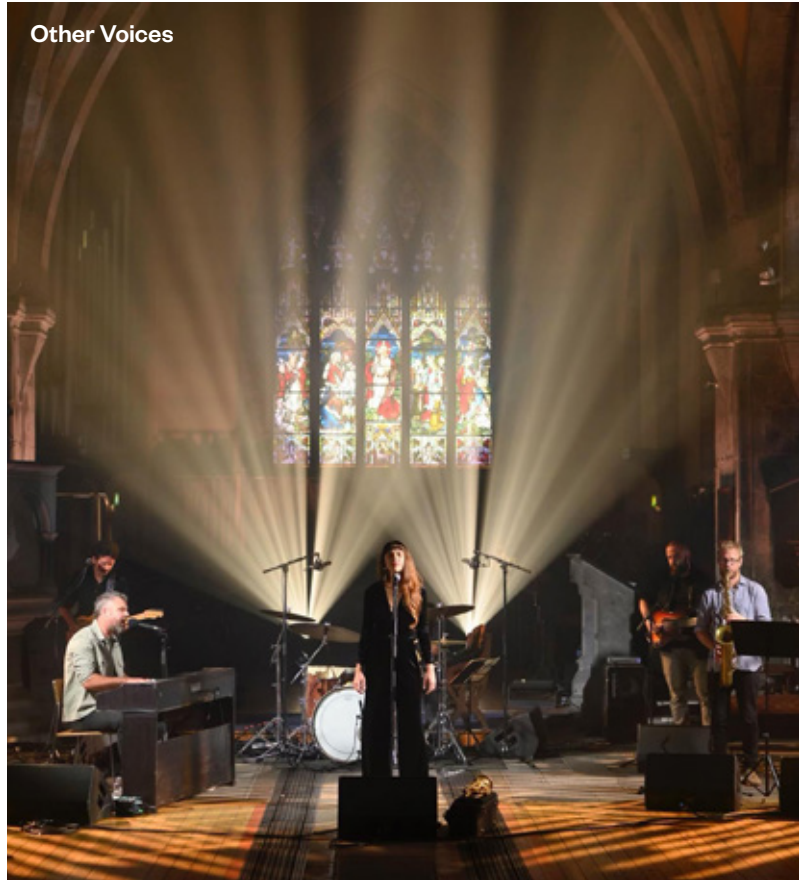
The home of broadcast traditional music, recent RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta series *Aistí ón Aer* featured new writing from over 26 contributors.



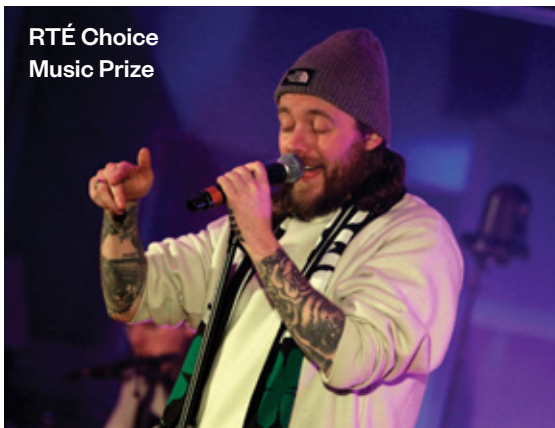


# Championing Us Sound | *Fuaim*

In *Other Voices*, audiences at home and abroad savoured the best of Irish contemporary music from Dingle and beyond. *Other Voices: Courage* presented two series of live-streamed concerts and two subsequent TV series in 2020.



Other Voices



RTÉ Choice Music Prize

The RTÉ Choice Music Prize is Ireland's leading showcase for emerging and established artists.

Each year, 10 acts are chosen by a panel of experts for the coveted *2FM Rising* list.



2FM Rising





Fronted by Niall Breslin, in *Soundtrack to my Life* guest artists performed with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra.

Loah and Una Healy brought us incredible performances from an all all-star line-up in *The Heart of Saturday Night*.



In 2020, *Songs from an Empty Room* raised much-needed funds for Minding Creative Minds and the Association of Irish Stage Technicians' Hardship Fund (AIST).



Championing Us

# Communities | *Pobail*

From the Willie Clancy Summer School to St Patrick's Festival, from Culture Night to the Cork Film Festival, from the RTÉ All Ireland Drama Festival to Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, RTÉ is a lead media and content production partner for dozens of community and national cultural events.

RTÉ is partner to Wexford Festival Opera, available to stream worldwide live and on-demand on RTÉ Player and [www.rte.ie/culture](http://www.rte.ie/culture).

In partnership with the Arts Council, RTÉ has reimaged the approach to celebrating Culture Night, showcasing activities taking place across the country, with complementary additional content on [rte.ie/culture](http://rte.ie/culture), RTÉ Radio 1, RTÉ lyric fm, and RTÉ One.

RTÉ is the lead partner, with Creative Ireland, for Junk Kouture, Cruinniu na nÓg, and *This is Art*. In supporting these important initiatives, RTÉ seeks to be a positive engine for creativity and innovation across all age groups.

*This is Art* was a new, young people's art competition. With over 8000 entries from 32 counties, it spanned over 12 disciplines (from drawing and painting to photography and sculpture). Almost half a million people visited the specially created website. Meanwhile, Creative Kids, funded by Creative Ireland, was a one-hour TV documentary focusing on creativity and the arts in primary and secondary schools all around Ireland.

Through the RTÉ Supporting the Arts scheme, RTÉ routinely supports over 100 local, regional and national events and cultural organisations with bespoke, specially produced campaigns which run across RTÉ's radio, television and digital services. Bringing arts and culture to the masses, RTÉ ring-fences over €1,000,000 worth of airtime every year in support of the arts and our artists.

In 2020, in partnership with Creative Ireland, RTÉ delivered 15 additional campaigns for arts and cultural enterprises which were hit hard by the pandemic. From Irish National Opera to the National Gallery, from local exhibitions and community initiatives, the campaigns – all produced by RTÉ – spanned mental health, the visual arts, architecture, literature and music.

# 87%

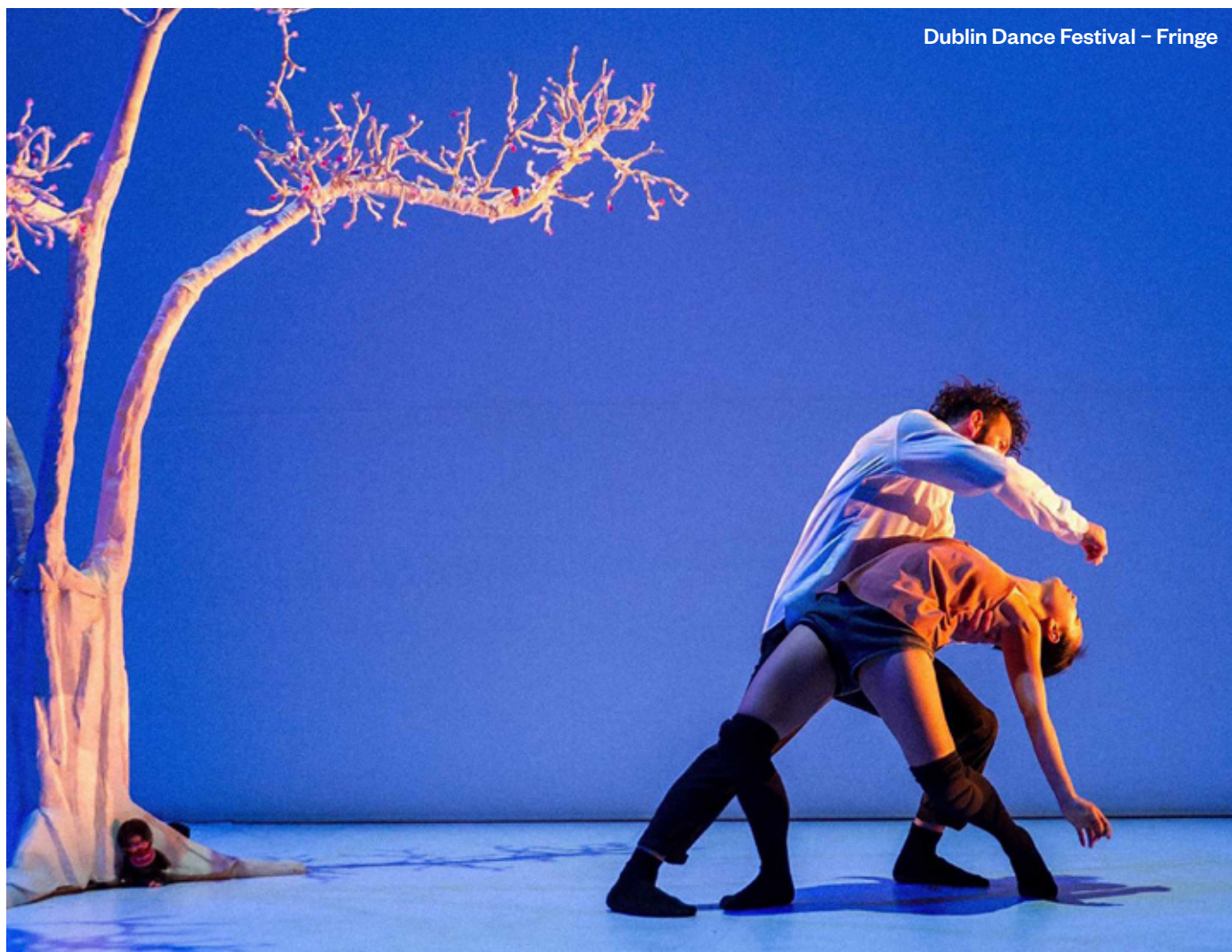
**of people feel it's important that RTÉ creates shared experiences through content and services that bring communities together.**

RTÉ Have Your Say National Survey 2021

# 10



Dublin Dance Festival – Fringe



Cúirt International Festival of Literature



Junk Kouture



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# Pictures | *Pictiúir*

Irish bands, musicians and artists are not only a prominent feature of RTÉ's radio schedules, they are also rightly given a central role within a broad range of Ireland's most-watched entertainment programmes including *The Late Late Show*, *The Tommy Tiernan Show*, *Heart of Saturday Night*, and more.

*The Late Late Show* featured 80 Irish acts between January 2020 and June 2021, to audiences which frequently exceeded 500,000.

*The Tommy Tiernan Show* featured 26 Irish acts between the two series broadcast between January 2020 and June 2021. The most recent series had an average audience of 472,000, with a further 764,000 streams on RTÉ Player. There was significant engagement with audiences aged 15 to 34, resulting in significant exposure for emerging artists with younger audiences.

*The Heart of Saturday Night* brought together the crème de la crème of performers in Ireland for rousing musical sessions to audiences in excess of 200,000.

Heart of Saturday Night

The Tommy Tiernan Show





**91%**  
of people feel it's  
important that RTÉ  
supports creativity  
and innovation.

RTÉ Have Your Say  
National Survey 2021

*The Works Presents* with John Kelly was a ten-part series featuring an Irish artist or artist living in Ireland. These dynamic creators shared insights into how and why they work in their chosen fields, what inspires them, and how it drives them to create the works they make.

A season of impactful arts documentaries included Colm Tóibín *On Memory's Shore* (162,000 viewers), and seven new documentaries are set to feature on RTÉ One in the coming season.

Sinead Crowley is RTÉ's dedicated arts and media correspondent, reporting on events and issues across the arts, culture and media sectors on news programmes such as *Morning Ireland* (491,000 listeners), the *Six-One News* (458,000 viewers) and the *Nine O'Clock News* (443,000 viewers).

Arts discussion and Irish artists are also feature items within a broad range of peak time programming on RTÉ One and RTÉ Radio 1, such as *Nationwide* (281,000 viewers), *Today with Claire Byrne* (369,000 listeners), *Sunday with Miriam* (318,000 listeners), and the *Brendan O'Connor Show* (382,000 listeners). *The Ryan Tubridy Show* and *The Ray D'Arcy Show* are both enthusiastic supporters of Irish literature and performers in all genres.

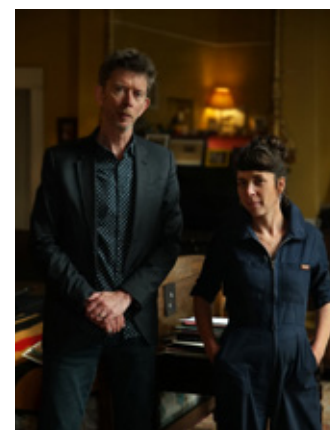
On Memory's Shore



Sinead Crowley



The Works Presents





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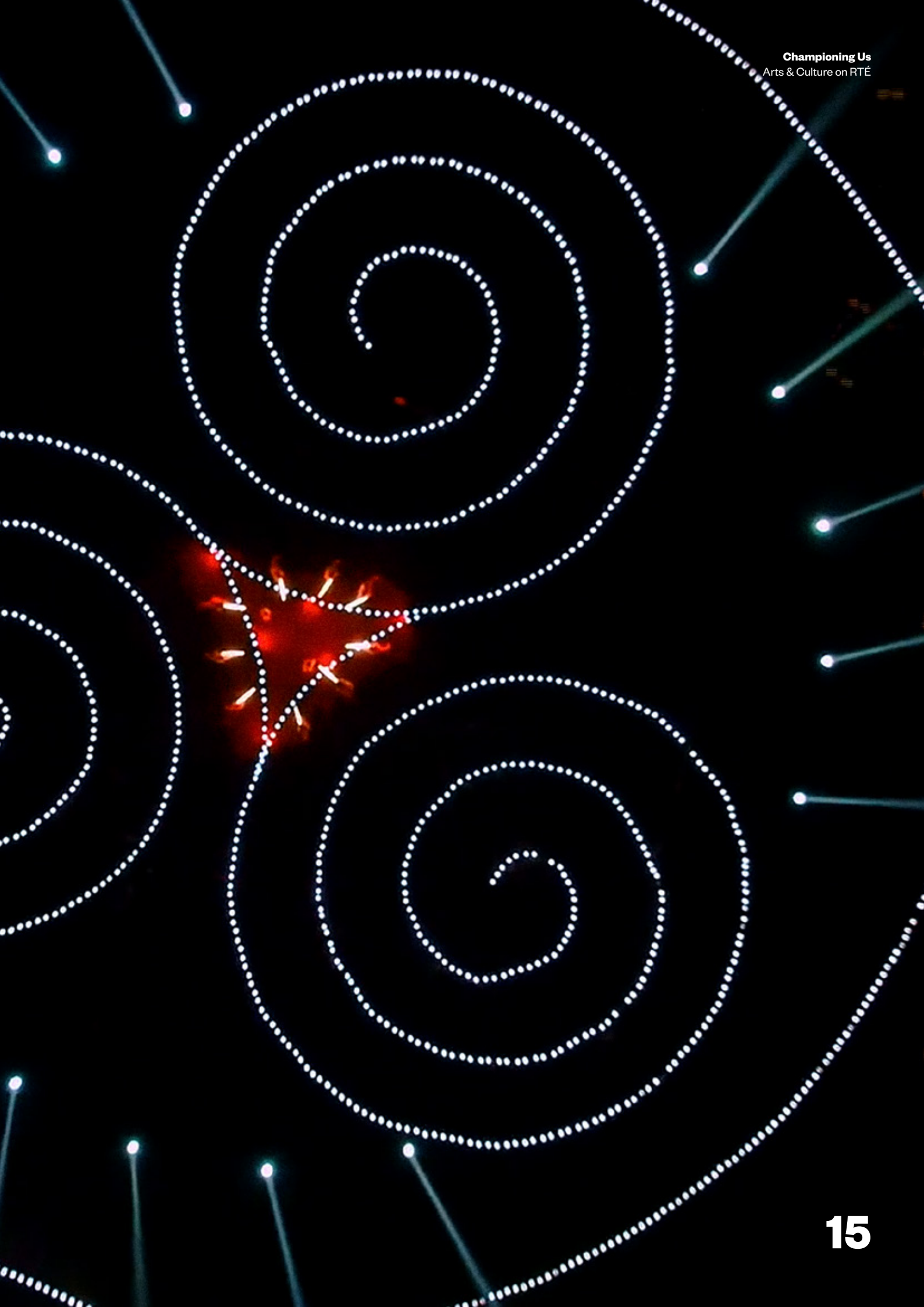
# Pictures | *Pictiúir*

*Shine Your Light* called on people of all ages to be as creative as they wished, joining together to shine a light through the dark hours at the height of the first lockdown. Artists in their droves supported *Shine Your Light*, including Saoirse Ronan, Gabriel Byrne, Sinead O'Connor, Marie Mullen, Paula Meehan, Glen Hansard, Colm Mac Con Iomaire and Moya Cannon. The special RTÉ One programme was watched by 716,000 viewers live, with massive public engagement, including over 400,000 social posts from the public.

*Shine Your Light: Solstice* opened with a spectacular dance routine filmed on the sacred hill of Uisneach, featuring music from Damien Dempsey, Erica Cody, Clannad, Christy Moore, Sharon Shannon, the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, new writing by Marina Carr and Manchán Magan, Solstice offered a moment of light and hope at the end of year.

The summer of 2020 was like no other. For musicians and the arts community their live audiences and livelihoods disappeared. RTÉ continued the commitment it has shown to artists throughout the pandemic and brought performers such as Villagers, Cormac Begley, Dermot Kennedy, Pillow Queens and Denise Chaila, together to play for all of us in *Shine*.









Championing Us

# Pictures | *Pictiúir*





*Illuminations* was an online gallery of 30 new works commissioned by RTÉ, featuring visual art, photography, film, music, poetry, essays and spoken word pieces from a wide range of established and emerging creative talent. *Illuminations* captured how people felt during Covid-19 as artists explored the complex shades of lockdown.

There have been almost 300,000 page views to date.

In partnership with Creative Ireland, a series of projection and light installations around the country from 17 to 20 December brought artworks from the *Illuminations* online gallery, including visual artists Isabel Nolan, Leanne McDonagh and Hazel Coonagh, to dramatic locations across Ireland.



Championing Us

# Words | *Focail*

The written word is at the heart of who we are as a people, and it is at the heart of RTÉ's arts and culture offering. New writing for *Sunday Miscellany* (275,000 listeners) alongside the *Book on One* series, means audiences in Ireland hear from both new and established writers. Books and literature are the backbone of much of the RTÉ Radio 1 schedule, from *The Ryan Tubridy Show* in the morning, *The Ray D'Arcy Show* in the afternoon and right across the day, including dedicated programmes such as *The Poetry Programme*.

*The Sunday Miscellany* podcast is among the top 3 books podcasts and top 5 arts podcasts in Ireland on Apple podcasts, as well as appearing in podcast charts all over the world.

The RTÉ Short Story Competition is now among the most prestigious on the island. A significant consumer campaign saw over 4000 entries in 2020, with the shortlisted stories broadcast on RTÉ Radio 1 and available to stream on [www.rte.ie/culture](http://www.rte.ie/culture).

As a media partner for the *An Post Irish Book Awards*, RTÉ has developed the RTÉ Audience Choice Award on television, radio and online, bringing the people to the heart of the process of picking the nation's favourite read.

In *Spoken Stories*, RTÉ Radio 1 commissioned an anthology of 12 half-hour stories marking the Decade of Centenaries, from writers as diverse as Neil Jordan, Anne Enright, Kevin Barry and Yan Ge, read by actors including Saoirse Ronan and Stephen Rea.



Culture Night



Other Voices: Courage



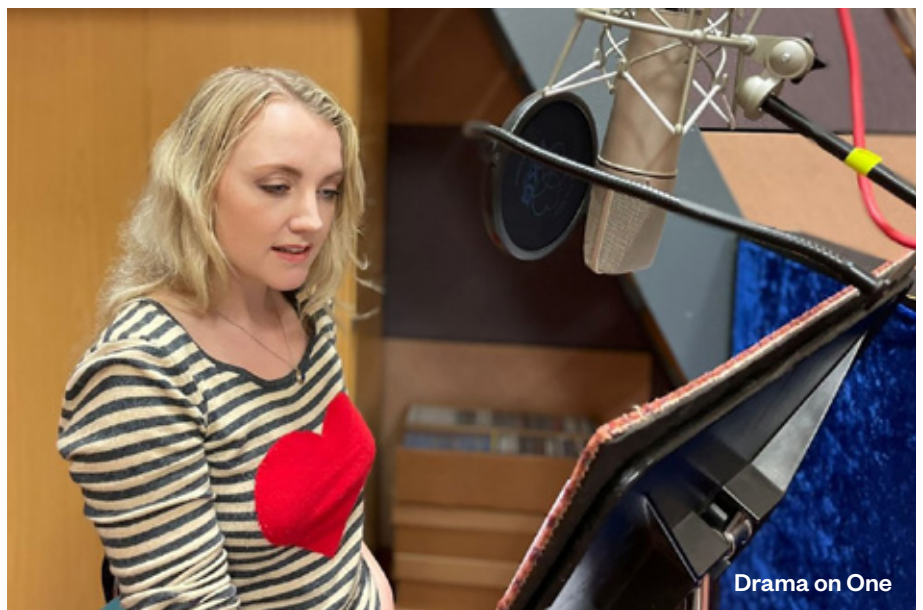


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# Words | *Focail*

*Drama on One* is the home of radio drama in Ireland, featuring new original writing and performance, and also the classics. *Bloomsday* now sees the continuous broadcast of the 29-hour production broadcast on RTÉ Radio 1 Extra. The podcast, complemented by a suite of Joyce content across RTÉ, achieved 100,000 downloads and reached No.1 in the Irish iTunes chart.

In addition, RTÉ is the proud title sponsor of the *RTÉ All Ireland Drama Festival*, which sees regional groups from all over Ireland compete for a range of artistic and technical awards at the annual event, held in Athlone.





All Ireland Drama Festival 2021



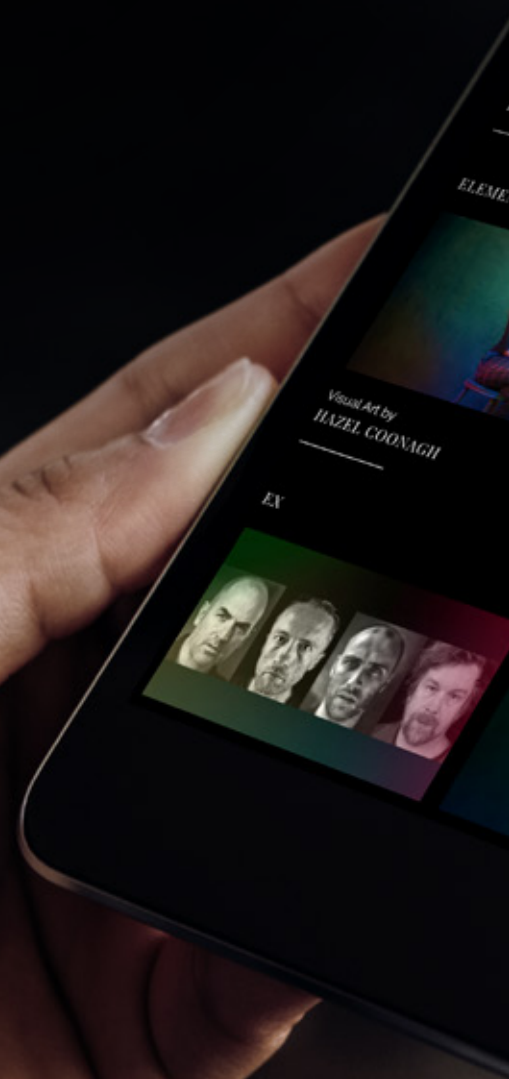


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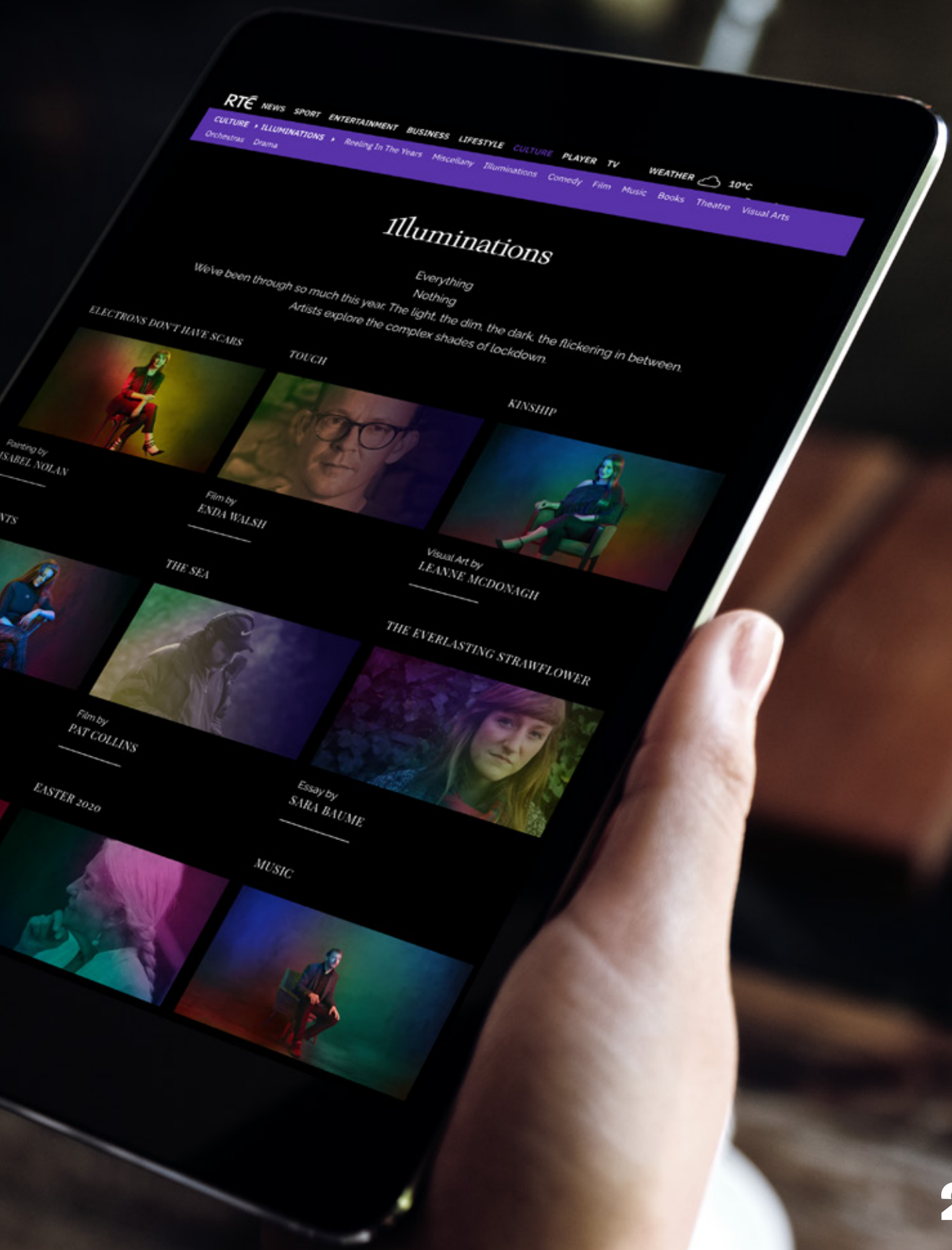
# Culture | *Cultúr*

The website, [www.rte.ie/culture](http://www.rte.ie/culture), showcases the best of culture and arts, from Ireland and the world, to a local and global audience. With one million page views monthly and a 120% rise in year-on-year traffic, the website presents not only RTÉ's own multiplatform events – such as the Illuminations gallery, the *Other Voices: Courage* series of live concerts and the live RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra Autumn Series – but also offers a platform to the entire sector.

It offers a centralised destination where audiences can access new and recent arts content, in words, in sound, and in picture.







**Throughout 2020, both before and after pandemic restrictions were introduced, RTÉ sought to lift the nation with emotionally enriching arts and culture content.**



Despite many challenges, for RTÉ and for the arts and culture sector, RTÉ maintained the core of our arts and culture broadcast schedules while devising new ways of serving our artists and our audiences, including multiplatform broadcast productions designed to inspire and provide solace and meaning.

Crucially, RTÉ sought to assist the arts sector, promoting through our various schemes and platforms the wealth of virtual offerings for audiences from a diverse range of cultural institutions and organisations.

RTÉ will continue to play our own unique role in helping to drive audiences to the arts. We are committed to Irish artists and to those working here, to our performers and creators.

**Dee Forbes**  
Director-General, RTÉ



## **Le linn na bliana 2020, sular tugadh isteach srianta na paindéime agus ina dhiaidh sin araon, d'fhéach RTÉ le misneach a thabhairt don tír trí ábhar ealaíon agus cultúir a dhéanfadh maitheas don anam a chur ar fáil.**

In ainneoin go leor dúshlán, roimh RTÉ agus roimh an earnáil ealaíon agus cultúir, chaomhnaigh RTÉ croílár a sceidil craolta ealaíon agus cultúir fad a bhí sé ag ceapadh bealaí nua chun freastal ar a ealaíontóirí agus ar a lucht féachana, léiriúcháin craolta ilardán san áireamh a raibh sé i gceist leo daoine a spreagadh agus sólás agus brí a thabhairt dóibh.

Thar aon ní eile, d'fhéach RTÉ le cúnamh a thabhairt d'earnáil na n-ealaíon, agus leis na scéimeanna agus ardáin éagsúla atá aige, rinne sé an flúirse saothar ar líne ó réimse éagsúil institiúidí agus eagraíochtaí cultúir a chur chun cinn ar mhaithe leis an lucht féachana agus éisteachta.

Leanfaidh RTÉ dá ról féin ar leith a bheith aige chun an lucht féachana agus éisteachta a threorú i dtreo na n-ealaíon. Táimid tiomanta d'ealaíontóirí Éireannacha agus dóibhsean a oibríonn anseo, dár dtaibheoirí agus dár gcruthaitheoirí.

### **Dee Forbes**

Príomh-Stiúrthóir RTÉ

