

THOMAS MOORE
at
BANNOW HOUSE

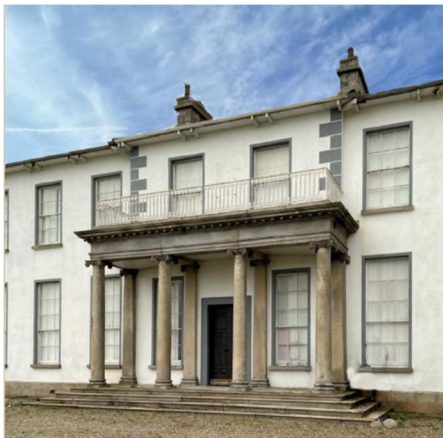
Saturday
26th of August 2023



A CELEBRATION
IN
WORDS & MUSIC

On the 188th anniversary
of his triumphal visit

Devised by: Ian Magahy
Directed by: Heather Hadrill



BACKGROUND

In August 1835, Thomas Moore, then 56 years old, made a visit to Wexford from his home in England to visit the birthplace of his mother, Anastasia Codd, in Wexford town. He also stayed a few days with a fellow student from Trinity College, Thomas Boyse, a large landowner who was building a new house in Bannow, Co. Wexford at the time of his visit.

Moore was by then widely celebrated and hailed as the "Bard of Eireann" thanks chiefly to his "Irish Melodies", ten books of musical manuscripts some 124 melodies in all. These were published between 1808 and 1834 and were based on Irish airs, mostly from the harping tradition of the preceding century. These airs Moore lightly adapted, and used as settings for his own lyrics, in English. He referred to them himself as Ballads and many had become enormously popular and sung throughout the drawing rooms of Ireland and England at the time of his visit to Bannow.

He was met by a huge crowd on the road between Wellington Bridge and Bannow and transferred to a leaf bedecked cart drawn by two rows of young men, followed by nine young women representing the Greek muses. The celebrations lasted for five days and nights.

THE CELEBRATION

The commemorative celebration will take place at Bannow House, which was under construction by its owner Thomas Boyse at the time of Moore's visit. The current owners of the house have kindly offered the grand portico of the house overlooking the Saltee islands, as a stage for the event.

Moore kept a journal for most of his life and the concert is driven chiefly by extracts from this, read by Nick Dunning in the part of Moore. The journal covering his stay in Bannow is often very amusing (Moore had eye for a pretty face) and in the course of the narrative, certain melodies of Moore's are evoked which will be sung variously by the soprano Aimee Banks, and baritone David Kennedy. They will be accompanied by Rebecca Warren on piano and her husband James on violin.

Much of Moore's own life and experiences are reflected in his melodies; his marriage to his beloved Bessy (*Believe me if all those Endearing Young Charms*) and the premature death of all his five children (*'Tis the last rose of Summer*) and his politics, including his friendship with Robert Emmet (*Oh Breathe not his Name/She is far from the land*) and his rocky relationship with Daniel O'Connell (*Oh where's the Slave so Lowly*). Other favourites, (*Oft in the Stilly night, The Harp that once through Tara's Halls etc.*) will feature.

It will be directed by Heather Hadrill.

It is a project of the Bannow Historical Society and has been devised and arranged by one of their number, Ian Magahy, who has a keen interest in the history of the area and has written a published study on the lost town of Bannow.

For further information contact Denis Kenny. deniskenny55@gmail.com (086) 8200992.

Tickets are available through the Wexford Arts Centre, <https://www.wexfordartscentre.ie/events/>.

Parking will be available on site and ticket holders can arrive at 3:00 p.m. with the event starting at 4:00 p.m. It is an open-air event, and the house is private.

THE PLAYERS

Musicians

Soprano	Aimee Banks
Baritone	David Kennedy
Piano	Rebecca Warren
Violin	Andrew Warren

Actors

Thomas Moore: Nick Dunning

Narrator: Andrew Macklin

Daniel O'Connell: Michael Dunbar

BIOGRAPHIES

THE ACTORS

NICK DUNNING



Nick Dunning has worked extensively in theatre across Ireland, including The Abbey and Gate Theatre. In the West End in the UK on Harold Pinter's *The Homecoming* with Sir Ian Holm, Brian Friel's *The Homeplace* with Sir Tom Courtenay, and *No Man's Land* by Pinter at The Comedy Theatre with Sir Michael Gambon. Multiple appearances at The Royal Shakespeare Company, The Royal National Theatre, the Royal Court Theatre and many shows for Shared Experience. Most recently on stage on Broadway in New York City as Polonius in *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare. He is a series regular on UK and US TV in shows like *The Tudors*, *Da Vinci's Demons*, *Hatfields and McCoy's*, *Dalgleish*, *Little Women*, *Father Brown*, *Midsummer Murders* and Movies like *Alexander and the Iron Lady* with Meryl Streep. Nick won an I.F.T.A. for his portrayal as Sir Thomas Boleyn in the *Tudors* with Jonathan Rhys Myers. He also won an Irish Times best actor award for King Philip of Spain in *Don Carlos*, and the Irish Times best supporting actor award for *Betrayal* by Harold Pinter.

ANDREW MACKLIN



Andrew Macklin is from Waterford and trained at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. His work in theatre includes productions at the Abbey Theatre (*King Lear*, *Three Sisters*, *The Picture of Dorian Grey*), Royal Shakespeare Company, Out of Joint Theatre, Red Kettle Theatre, Sir Peter Hall Company, Watford Palace, Salisbury Playhouse, York Theatre Royal, Curve Theatre, Project Theatre (Dublin) Old Vic: 24hr Plays, Four Rivers Theatre and the UK and US tour of Stephen Daldry's 'An Inspector Calls'.

On screen Andrew has appeared in *Doctor Who* (BBC) *Me Selfridge* (ITV) *Doctors* (BBC) *Fair City* (RTE) and *The Holiday* (Channel 5/Netflix)

MICHAEL DUNBAR



Michael is an actor and director and a founder member of Scaldar Theatre Company.

Theatre work includes: 'The Last Stand for Four Rivers', 'Class', 'The Salvage Shop', 'The Steward of 'Christendom' (All-Ireland Best Actor Award), 'On Raftery's Hill', 'Poor Beast in the Rain', 'The Beauty Queen of Leenane', 'Cavalcaders', 'Poor Beast on the Rain', 'Moonshine', 'The Cripple of Inishmaan' (All-Ireland winning productions; British All-Winners Festivals winners).

He directed the world premiere of 'Of Mornington' by Billy Roche with Scaldar Theatre company at the National Opera House. Other directing credits include 'Da', 'A Life', 'Family Plot', 'Belry', (Gorey Little Theatre)'Guys and Dolls', 'Oklahoma', 'My Fair Lady', 'Sister Act', 'Fiddler on the Roof', 'Me and my Girl', 'Jesus Christ Superstar', 'The Mikado', 'Calamity Jane' (nominated for AIMS Best Director).

He holds an MA in Theatre Studies from DCU, with whom he directed 'The Lonesome West' by Martin McDonagh.

THE MUSICIANS

AIMEE BANKS



Aimee Banks is a 21 year old soprano from Galway, Ireland.

She is currently pursuing her Bachelors of Music Performance under Kathleen Tynan, Head of Opera and Vocal Studies and répétiteur Grainne Dunne at The Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin.

Aimee currently holds a number of vocal titles and has won the Junior Class of the Charles Wood International Song Competition 2023, The Irene Sandford Award and Bursary 2022, The Birr Lions Club Bursary 2022, The Vladimir Piontkovsky Memorial Scholarship 2022. She was a multi-award winner at Newpark Festival of Music & Dublin Feis Ceoil 2023, The Irene Sandford Award and Bursary 2022, The Birr Lions Club Bursary at Birr Festival of Music 2022, The Vladimir Piontkovsky Memorial Scholarship 2022.

She has had the honour of performing at the Irish Government's launch of the 1916 Commemorations in Dublin's Convention Centre, National Famine Commemoration 2020 and performed at Áras an Uachtaráin for President Micheal D.Higgins.

Aimee debuted as the young Giordano Bruno in Roger Doyle's Opera, 'Heresy', where she received commendation from Opera World, The Irish Times and Opera Today. She played the roles of Amore and Damigella in L'incoronazione di Poppea at Saluzzo Opera Academy and performed the role of Damigella in RIAM Opera's production of La liberazione di Ruggiero dall'isola d'Alcina by Francesca Caccini. She most recently performed in the Blackwater Valley Opera Festival's production of Verdi's Macbeth as part of the chorus.

DAVID KENNEDY



Throughout his upbringing in the countryside of rural Galway, baritone David Kennedy has always had a curiosity about the natural world. He is passionate to bring classical music to life in its most authentic self. David is currently studying at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, he will finish his Bachelor's Degree in Music Performance in the year 2024. David is noticeably the first Irish singer to be a scholar of the LiedAkademie with the Heidelberger Frühling, under the artistic direction of internationally acclaimed baritone Thomas Hampson. He was also recently a member of the Savolina Festival International Music Academy in Finland where he received mentorship from Hartmut Höll

(Piano), Changyog Liao (President of Shanghai Conservatory) and Zheng Zhou (Baritone). David has performed in notable venues such as; Pierre Boulez-Saal (Berlin), National Concert Hall (Dublin), Alta Aula (Heidelberg), Pepper Canister Church (Dublin), Á ras an Uachtará in (Dublin). He has received masterclasses from other notable persons; Simon Keenlyside, Graham Johnson, Tara Erraught, Brenda Hurley, and Dearbhla Collins. David is excited to be here this evening to celebrate Thomas Moore and has a busy and exciting upcoming year with various performances on the horizon.



REBECCA WARREN

Rebecca Warren is a collaborative pianist, répétiteur and violinist from Wexford and has just completed a two-year répétiteur masters programme at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. She holds an MMus, MA, BA and Diploma in music performance and has worked on several operatic productions including *Aida*, *Madama Butterfly* and *Die Zauberflöte* (Irish National Opera), *Le nozze di Figaro* (Saluzzo Opera Academy), *Lalla Roukh* (Wexford Festival Opera), *Les enfants terribles*, *L'étoile*, *A Feast in Time of Plague* and *Four Sisters* (RCS).

Collaborations and concert tours with other artists have brought Rebecca to the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg and the UK. She was répétiteur with the inaugural Irish National Opera Studio 2018/2019, in 2020 was awarded the prestigious Next Generation Artist Award by the Arts Council which enabled her to pursue her répétiteur studies further, and was recently awarded the James H Geddes Award for Répétiteurs. Rebecca will be répétiteur for *The Land of Might-Have-Been* with Buxton International Festival and Norwich Theatre this summer, and is very much looking forward to her second year of The Wexford Factory at Wexford Festival Opera in the autumn where she will work on *La fille du régiment* and *La ciociara*.



JAMES WARREN

James Warren graduated with a Master of Arts in Classical String Performance from the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance where he studied with pedagogues Prof Mariana Sîrbu (violin) and Prof Bruno Giuranna (viola). James holds a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Music from Waterford Institute of Technology with specialisations in performance and critical music editing and whilst there studied violin with Teresa Costello and Una Kindlon. He also holds an Associate Diploma in violin performance from Trinity College London and has participated in international masterclasses with Maighread McCrann, Eszter Hafner, Paul Cortese, Lars Ander Tomter, Bruno Giuranna, Mariana Sîrbu, Pavel Vernokov, Svetlana Makarova, Jana Ozolina and Sherniyaz Mussakhan. A keen orchestral musician, James has performed with MA Classical String Performance training orchestra Academos, Virtuoso & Belcanto Festival Orchestra Lucca and regularly performs with orchestras and chamber groups throughout Ireland. His international performances have taken him to Italy, France, Austria, Finland, Denmark, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Kazakhstan where he performed as soloist with The State Orchestra for Chamber Music Camerata Kazakhstan.

Alongside his performing activities James maintains an active teaching career and directs several instrumental programmes in primary schools across the South East of Ireland as well as running a successful private teaching studio in Wexford town. He has taught with the ICO's outreach programme Sing Out with Strings in the regeneration areas of Limerick city and in music schools in Cork, Galway and Wexford

THE DIRECTOR

HEATHER HADRILL



Heather Hadrill's directing credits include: Operas *Acis & Galatea* (Handel), *The Tempest* (John Weldon), *Venus & Adonis* (John Blow), *La Dafne* (Marco da Gagliano), *Dido & Aeneas* (Purcell) and *Scenes from The Magic Flute* by Mozart, and plays including a touring production of "The Secret Fall of Constance Wilde" (Tomas Kilroy) and Assistant Director on Shakespeare's "The Tempest" (Travelling Light Theatre Company). As Producer for Four Rivers Theatre Co, she has produced six of its touring theatre productions since 2021 and was Artist in Residence at

Wexford Arts Centre (2021) and creative producer of “Wexford at 8” a production of 8 new short plays by 8 new writers. As co-founder/facilitator of Wordplay – a group for writers, actors & directors in Co Wexford, she produced seven new productions, including site specific theatre and 24-hour play challenges. A classically trained singer and a past participant of Performance Theatre Company (Gaiety School of Acting) she holds an Associate Diploma in Speech & Drama Teaching and B.A. in Communications

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