

# MISLEÓR

*Festival of Nomadic Cultures*



*Programme*

**28th September - 1st October 2023**

[misleor.ie](http://misleor.ie)

Presented by Galway Traveller Movement



# MISLEÓR 2023


We recognise in nomadic peoples from around the world, a kindred inner spirit which unites our communities; a fire in the belly that is fanned by activism, creativity and coming together. The campfire is a meeting point for Travellers. Creativity, singing, storytelling and entertainment would always be found by those gathered round the open fire, under the blanket of a starry night. We look forward to meeting you around the fire at Misleór this year, to share our stories and get to know one another.

**Nora Corcoran and Alice McDowell**  
**Co-Artistic Directors - Misleór Festival 2023**

**[www.misleor.ie](http://www.misleor.ie)**

All events are free unless otherwise stated  
Booking advised from [misleor.ie](http://misleor.ie)  
For more information contact:  
[misleorfestival@gmail.com](mailto:misleorfestival@gmail.com)

## **Accessibility**

All venues are wheelchair accessible  
Events marked with  include live ISL interpretation





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Artistic Directors:** Nora Corcoran and Alice McDowell

**Festival Producer:** Ciara Moloughney

**Misleór Steering Committee:** Kathleen Sweeney, Nora Mongan, Margaret O Riada, Ann Lyons, Joanna Corcoran, Martin Ward, Vivienne Ivers, LeeAnna Ward, Jane Ward, Siobhán Joyce and Niamh Ryan.

**Poster and cover artwork:** Rico Zimmer

**Programme Design:** Jessica Reid



Thursday 28th September

## 'On The Road'

Opening Ceremony

The Mick Lally Theatre, Druid Lane

Thursday 28th September: 6pm

Join us 'on the road' as we welcome our guest artists and light the fire for Mísléór 2023.



Live ISL  
interpretation





## Chant Yil Lull

The Mick Lally Theatre, Druid Lane

Thursday 28th September: 7pm

Chant (Cant language) and Yil Lull (Guugu Yimithirr language) both mean “to sing”. In this unique musical gathering, Australian Aboriginal artist Jessie Lloyd forms a song circle with women from the local Traveller community. Connected by a deep understanding of song traditions, the women in the circle delve into the personal and cultural significance of what it means “to sing”.

Friday 29th September

# Kindred Spirits – Fire in the Belly

## Nomad-only Dialogue Space

The Mick Lally Theatre

Friday 29th September, 11am

RSVP at [misleorfestival@gmail.com](mailto:misleorfestival@gmail.com)

Workshop and dialogue space exploring cultural rights and the role of activism in the journey to bring about social change. Facilitated by Nora Corcoran and Nora Mongan of Galway Traveller Movement, this event will also include a special presentation of the Dynamic Memory Lab - “Codes of Memory” by Hamze Bytyçi and Lisa Smith from RomaTrial. This event is reserved exclusively for members of nomadic communities.

## Misleór Conversations

The Mick Lally Theatre

Friday 29th September, 2pm

Public panel discussions featuring guest artists, activists and leaders from nomadic communities around the world. Sharing diverse perspectives on nomadic identity, the panellists will discuss cultural rights and claiming space for nomadism in today's society.

Featuring Jessie Lloyd (Australian Aboriginal), Liza Mortimer (Romany), Willzee (Traveller), Conchighkhand Byambaa (Mongolian), Raine Geoghegan (Romany), Oein DeBhairduin (Traveller), Lisa Smith (Romany) and Hamze Bytyçi (Roma).

Hosted by Galway Traveller Movement.



Live ISL  
interpretation



## Cherra Sessions

The Mick Lally Theatre

Friday 29th September, 6pm



Live ISL  
interpretation

For nomadic communities the 'cherra' (Cant word for 'fire') has always been a place of sharing; a melting pot of memory, imagination, poetry and ghost stories. Join this special meeting of creative minds, as poets and storytellers gather around the cherra to share work inspired by their nomadic heritage. Featuring Raine Geoghegan (Romany), Oein DeBhairduin (Traveller), Lavie Olupona (Traveller), Julia Sweeney (Traveller), Nora Corcoran (Traveller) and Conchigkhand Byambaa (Mongolian).



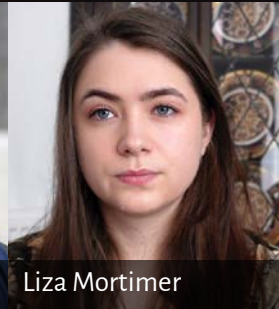
Oein DeBhairduin



Lisa Smith



Hamze Bytyçi



Liza Mortimer



Conchigkhand Byambaa



Raine Geoghegan



Julia Sweeney



Lavie Olupona

Friday 29th September

## Nomadic Shorts

An Taibhdhearc Theatre, Middle St

Friday 29th September, 8pm. Tickets €10/5. Ages 16+

A special programme of short films exploring identity, resilience and diversity within nomadic communities. Featuring the world premiere of *My Sister, My Best Friend*, which was made through this year's Misleór Short Documentary Grant. Screening followed by Q+A with filmmakers and a wine reception at the bar.

### **Bihttöš (Rebel)**

Directed by Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers.

This film is an unconventional documentary that explores the complex relationship between a father and daughter. Through animation, re-enactments, and archival photos, writer/director Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers (Blackfoot & Sámi) delves into the dissolution of her parents' mythic love story and how it has coloured her perception of love in her adult life.

### **Agape**

Directed by Ethan Donoghue

A young Traveller woman is forced into a marriage with a man she can never love. Meanwhile, the woman she really loves has no choice but to watch as everything goes downhill.

### **Listen**

Directed by Hamze Bytyçi

This haunting, poignantly narrated short animated film describes the witnessing of an unspeakable tragedy in contemporary Russia. It is a story heavy with the silence of those who did not speak up to protect others, and those who no longer have a voice. It is told from the perspective of Holocaust survivor Lydia Krylova.







## **Шилүүс (Mountain Cat)**

**Directed by Lkhagvadulam Purev-Ochir**

In contemporary Mongolia, a teenage girl with a heart disease is forced to see a shaman for healing. When opportunity presents itself, she expresses her true feelings and desires to the shaman.

## **Morit Elena Morit**

**(Wake Up Elena Wake Up) Directed by Anders Sunna & Inga Wiktorija Påve**

This atmospheric tale follows a young girl and her reindeer as they try to escape the menacing darkness of colonial oppression in Sápmi. Guided by a spirit, she is reminded to listen to her inner voice and trust her instincts. Both directors draw inspiration from their family traditions.



## **Take Us As We Are**

**Directed by Liza Mortimer**

Based on the 1969 BBC archive documentary, *Where Do We Go From Here*, and the family roots of Minty Smith, *Take Us As We Are* cultivates the spirit of freedom of the Gypsy and Traveller community - a nomadic culture still prevalent as ever.



## **My Sister, My Best Friend**

**Directed by Kathleen Ward**

As children, Bidy and Annie were inseparable. Immersed in their culture and life on the road, together they went exploring, playing, baking, begging and foraging. When their family was taken off the road and forced to live in houses, Bidy and Annie remained incredibly close, keeping their culture and traditions alive through their children and grandchildren. After Bidy's passing earlier this year, Annie and her family pay tribute to a remarkable and truly loved woman.



Saturday 30th September

# Where Is Our Meeting Point?

For nomadic cultures, a sense of place isn't fixed in stone. It travels with people and is connected to where they meet, even just for a few hours around a fire. These spaces for connection are usually not on any physical map, have no sign posts and may be invisible to most, but they are of special importance to nomadic placemaking and heritage. Over a morning of talks, presentations and conversation, this event invites you to share the richness of nomadic placemaking, and hear from those who are reclaiming spaces for community.

*Where is Our Meeting Point?* is delivered in partnership with the Irish Architecture Foundation

## Sessions - Nomadic Placemaking

Studio 1 - O'Donoghue Centre,  
University of Galway

Saturday 30th September, 10am

Hosted by Nora Corcoran, this event will present a number of mapping and placemaking projects from Ireland and overseas.





Nomadic Placemaking is a way of describing how nomadic communities create a sense of place, something which can be creative, temporary and centred around relationships with community and with the natural world. This event will place a particular focus on sharing initiatives connected to mapping nomadic spaces, the important meeting points for culture, community and connection. As well as invited speakers, there are a limited number of 5 minute slots for those attending to share their own projects. If you wish to present, get in touch with Bernadine Carroll before September 20th: [engagement@architecturefoundation.ie](mailto:engagement@architecturefoundation.ie)

## **Nomadic Architecture Meet-up**

**Festival Tent - Fisheries Field, University of Galway**

**Saturday 30th September, 12pm**

Following our presentations, we will make ourselves comfortable in the outdoor camp, and get a chance to connect with others who are interested in how nomadic architecture is celebrated and created. As part of the Irish Architecture Foundation's placemaking programme, the Nomadic Architecture Meet-Up is a space for discussion, sharing, and building connections around ideas of architecture, urbanism, and the built environment. Coming from communities that have been adversely affected by policies and practices around housing, urban design and placemaking, nomadic architects and other industry professionals have unique and important insights which should be celebrated and empowered. This event is open to everyone, including those from Traveller or Nomadic backgrounds working in architecture, urbanism or placemaking, but especially those who have lived experience of nomadic architecture and wish to share their knowledge with the younger generation. We welcome you to this event and invite you to share with those who you think may be interested.



**Saturday 30th September**

*Image credit: Shane O'Connors*

# In Conversation

## **Misleór on Screen - Workshop with John Connors**

**O'Donoghue Theatre,  
University of Galway  
Saturday 30th September,  
10am**

Are you interested in making films? Join award-winning actor and filmmaker John Connors for this unique opportunity to gain an insight into the craft of writing, directing and getting films made!

Limited places - booking essential

## **John Connors**

**O'Donoghue Theatre, University of Galway  
Saturday 30th September, 12pm**

John Connors is an award-winning actor and filmmaker from the Traveller community. Widely known for his role as Patrick Ward in *Love/Hate*, he also directed the critically acclaimed documentary series 'John Connors: The Travellers', and wrote and directed the feature drama 'The Black Guelph'. Having opened up publicly about his personal struggles with mental health, John Connors has been a driving force in challenging racism and discrimination experienced by the Traveller community, whilst shining a light on the power of creativity and artistic expression.

John will be in conversation with Lisa Smith from RomaTrial.



## Kitty Cassidy

O'Donoghue Theatre, University of Galway  
Saturday 30th September, 1pm

Kitty Cassidy, like many members of the Travelling community, is from a family with a rich history of singing and storytelling. Kitty's father, Johnny Cassidy, was a noted storyteller, and Kitty's mum had a store of songs that she sang both at home, as she worked, and in public at social occasions. It's from her family that Kitty learned the majority of her songs. Kitty became known to the broader music traditional music community in Ireland and the UK through field recordings made by Alen MacWeeney in late 1960s. A selection of these recordings were published on the album: *Whist!: Irish Traveller Folktales & Songs - The Cassidys, 1967*. These recordings have proved influential with artists such as Lisa O'Neill recording songs learned from Kitty's singing.

Kitty will be in conversation with Alan Woods from the Irish Traditional Music Archive.

*Image credit: Colm Keating*



Saturday 30th September

# Family Programme



## Storytelling - 'The Slug and the Snail'

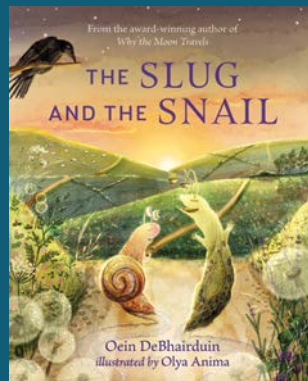
**Festival Tent - Fisheries Field**  
**Saturday 30th September, 2pm**

“At night, as the slugs rested beneath the stars, the younger brother made plans for a new home.”

Oein DeBhairduin reads from his new children's book *The Slug and the Snail*. Drawn from the Irish Traveller storytelling tradition, DeBhairduin's tale is a gentle allegory about identity, self-acceptance and different ways of seeing the world.

Storytelling session followed by an arts and crafts workshop.

*The Slug and the Snail* is an Irish Traveller folktale told by award-winning author Oein DeBhairduin, co-published by inclusive Irish presses Little Island and Skein Press.





## Reimagining Life on the Road

Fisheries Field

Saturday 30th September, 11am - 4pm

Fisheries Field comes alive with traditional Traveller wagons, tents, antiques, music and storytelling around the campfire. Featuring interactive displays and workshops: paper flower-making, beady pockets, griddle bread and traditional Traveller tinsmith Tom McDonnell. Immerse yourself in 'life on the road' at this traditional Traveller camp - all ages welcome.



## Misleóir Youth Open Mic with PJ and Francis

O'Donoghue Theatre

Saturday 30th September, 4pm

Presented by Music Generation Galway City, this event welcomes young talents and families to enjoy performances by PJ Mongan and Francis Ward, with special guests from the Music Generation Galway City - Leanaigí Primary School programme.

We also invite young people to sing a song during the 'Open Mic' session, with support from Music Generation Galway City educators David McGloughlin and PJ Mongan - the stage is yours, give a song a go!

Let us know if you are thinking about playing or singing by e-mailing [musicgenerationgalwaycity@gretb.ie](mailto:musicgenerationgalwaycity@gretb.ie)



Saturday 30th September

# Misleór In Song

Róisín Dubh, Saturday 30th September, Doors at 7pm, Tickets: €15/10

All roads lead to the Róisín Dubh! Join us in celebrating nomadic cultures around the world through music, song, spoken word and dance... This is a night not to be missed!

## Kathleen and Mary Keenan

Sisters Kathleen and Mary Keenan, come from a family of musicians. They are accomplished singers, songwriters, musicians, and solo artists in their own right. They have been performing from an early age, starting with family functions and have since performed at many different events. The Keenan sisters will be performing together and solo at *Misleór in Song*.

Mary Keenan (above)



Kathleen Keenan

## Khuur Mongolian Ethnic Band

Altangerel Batzorig (throat singer and morin khuur player), Budgarav Bayasgalan (morin khuur player) and Anujin Mendpurev (dancer), perform a selection of traditional folk songs, taking us into the heart of the Mongolian nomadic tradition.



Khuur Mongolian Ethnic Band

# MISLEÓR 2023



PJ Mongan

## **PJ Mongan**

PJ Mongan is a rising music star from the local Traveller community in Galway. Coming from a rich family tradition of singing, PJ performs a beautiful blend of traditional and contemporary songs. PJ was the winner of the 2022 Misleór Short Documentary Grant and is currently recording his first solo album.



Jessie Lloyd

## **Jessie Lloyd**

Jessie Lloyd is a Songkeeper. An Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait singer, social historian and cultural practitioner of Indigenous song and founder of her award-winning Mission Songs Project. As a cultural ambassador, Lloyd takes audiences on a profoundly-moving musical journey into the depths and diversity of Australia's Aboriginal culture, history and identity.



Willzee

## **Willzee**

Willzee's story is one of resilience, triumph over adversity, and a fierce commitment to shedding light on the struggles of marginalised communities. A prominent voice in the Irish hip-hop scene, Willzee's music offers a gritty, unapologetic look at the issues that impact the Traveller community, as well as global concerns like climate change.



Galaxy Band

## **Galaxy Band**

Back by popular demand, this talented and passionate group of young Roma men from Longford perform a high-energy mix of traditional Roma and contemporary songs. Galaxy Band will once again have the audience back on their feet and dancing!



## Additional Events

### **Lucamoros Compagnie & Guests**

#### **Workshops: 26-30 September**

Can you play an instrument, sing or enjoy storytelling?

French street theatre group Lucamoros Company are interested in meeting musicians, singers and storytellers from the Traveller and other nomadic communities who might take part in a future show. They are hosting a series of music workshops in Galway and Tuam led by their 2 composers and musicians. Participants will be paid expenses for their time.

For more details contact [kath@promenade.ie](mailto:kath@promenade.ie) or text/call her on 089 422 8073.

#### **Live performance: Sat 30th September 2pm, An Mheitheal Rothar (next to Fisheries Field)**

An informal sharing with music, song, storytelling and live painting by Lucamoros Company and members of the Traveller and other nomadic communities from Galway and beyond.



### **Arts in Action - Jessie Lloyd**

#### **Thursday 28th September 1pm, O'Donoghue Theatre**

Jessie Lloyd is a Songkeeper. An Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait singer, social historian and cultural practitioner of Indigenous song and founder of her award-winning Mission Songs Project. As a cultural ambassador, Lloyd takes audiences on a profoundly-moving musical journey into the depths and diversity of Australia's Aboriginal culture, history and identity.

For this Arts in Action performance, Jessie will perform a solo show with some special guests. She will also discuss her recent collaborative song project Chant Yil Lull, created with women from the local Traveller community.

Bookings via Arts in Action Eventbrite



## **Misleór at Ballinasloe Fair**

**Sunday 1st October: 10am - 5pm, Society Street**

We're on the road again! Misleór is heading to Ballinasloe Fair with our installation of wooden horses made from recycled materials. See traditional Traveller tinsmith Tom McDonnell in action, and join us for interactive displays of paper flower-making and beady pocket-making. Featuring a very special performance of 'Chant Yil Lull' by Australian Aboriginal artist Jessie Lloyd and singers from the local Traveller community. Please see our website for further details.

## **Exhibitions**

### **Reimagining Life on the Road**

**28th - 30th September, 10am-5pm - Education Room, 2nd Floor - Galway City Museum**

Celebrating life on the road through the eyes of the local Traveller community in Galway. Photographic exhibition by Kathleen Ward and films by Alice McDowell, Felix Ferguson and PJ Mongan.



### **People Can Die Twice**

**Saturday 30th September 12-5pm, Studio 1 - O'Donoghue Centre**

Nine animated documentaries based on the biographies of holocaust survivors currently feature as part of a permanent video based exhibition near the memorial dedicated to the Roma and Sinti victims under national socialism in Berlin. The animations aim to move the focus away from the perpetrators by telling the real life stories of Roma and Sinti people.



[misleor.ie](http://misleor.ie)

