

CULTURE — IRELAND'S POPULAR EXPORT

Ireland's greatest export has always been its people, so the saying goes, and in recent years Ireland's cultural output – in film, music, dance and literature– has also emerged as wildly popular, particularly in the United States.

Start with film, where actors like Cillian Murphy, Barry Keoghan and Kerry Condon are winning both popular acclaim and industry awards, joining veteran Irish actors like Liam Neeson, Colin Farrell and Brenda Fricker.



In 2023, the Irish garnered a record-breaking 14 Oscar nominations, and 12 nominations in 2024, including a best actor nomination for Cillian Murphy for his lead role in *Oppenheimer*, and another 11 for Dublin-based Element Pictures, for its film *Poor Things*.

Ireland has long been an ideal film location for iconic films stretching back to the beginning of movie-making. In recent years, movies and TV series such as *Game of Thrones*, *Star Wars*, *Normal People*, *Derry*

Girls and *Banshees of Inisherin* have all been filmed in Ireland.

In music, Bono and U2 made Grammy history in February with the first live broadcast performance from *Sphere* in Las Vegas to the Grammy Awards show in Santa Monica. Bono and the band have won 22 Grammys over their distinguished careers.

This spring Wicklow-born singer/songwriter Hozier is on a 37-city concert tour, including the Boston Calling Festival in May, New York City in June and Bangor, Maine in July.

Ireland's two home-grown dance troupes, Riverdance and Lord of the Dance, have been performing continuously since their debut in the 1990s. Sharing the intricacies and ingenuity of Irish dance with a contemporary flair, these shows have reached millions of people. In 2024, Lord of the Dance celebrates its 25th anniversary, while Riverdance performs at the Gaiety Theatre in Dublin from June 5 to September 8.



In literature, a new generation of Irish writers has reshaped the Irish voice while producing great literature. Conor McPherson, former Laureate for Irish Fiction and himself an accomplished

playwright and novelist, said Ireland is in the 'golden age of Irish prose writing, noting, "there is such immense diversity of purpose and difference of styles. That is the great wealth of the present moment."

Just a selection of Irish writers to read this year include female novelists Anne Enright, Claire Keegan, Elaine Feeney, Louise Kennedy and Anna Burns, and male writers Paul Lynch, Donal Ryan, Paul Murray, Rob Doyle and Michael Magee.

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