

**'Insight of Raftery'**  
**Monday – Sunday, Nov. 17th – 23rd**  
**Kiltimagh**

*'As I went back along the silent road there was suddenly a sound of horses and a rushing and waving about me and I found myself in the midst of the County Galway Foxhounds, come back from cub-hunting. The English M.F.H. and his wife rode by and I wondered if they had ever heard of the poet whose last road this had been. Most likely not.'*

- Lady Augusta Gregory (1852-1932) from *Poets and Dreamers* (1903)

In Kiltimagh, Co Mayo, is a weekend long festival of poetry, music and storytelling, and featuring readings and talks; a Poetry Slam Competition; creative writing workshops; and an Open Mic. on the Sunday.

**'In Sight of Raftery' Festival** celebrates the history and culture of Kiltimagh as the birthplace of the famous blind bard, Raftery. It was set up to attract writers, poets and cultural enthusiasts to the town of Kiltimagh, and to increase cultural activity in the town.

On **Friday evening**, the festival will be launched at **19.00** at the Town Hall Theatre, with reception and Guest Reading by **Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill**; **Diarmuid Moynihan** with Uileann Pipes, and **Mary McNicholas & Ollie Burke**.

On Saturday, there will be poetry readings throughout the day at various historical and social locations. From 13.00-15.00, there will be Creative Writing Workshops with **Andrew Forster** and **Matthew Sweeney** at the Old School House and Library in Kiltimagh. At 16.00, there will be a talk on local history and heritage with local historian, **Basil Burke**, at the Town Hall Theatre Gallery. At 20.00, there will be an evening of Poetry & Song at the Town Hall Theatre with readings by poets **Matthew Sweeney** and **Andrew Forster**; Music and poetry by **Ger & Tony Reidy**.

Wine Reception. Admission: €8.

There will be a Poetry Slam at 22.30 with €750 in prizes - venue to be decided.

On Sunday, there will be Open Mic. Session at 14.00 - venue to be decided; then festival farewell and close.

There will be exhibitions throughout the festival at the Town Hall Theatre Gallery & Main Hall of the work of artists **Sally McKenna** and **Jane Page**. There will be displays of local, historical photographs and associated ephemera in the Town Hall Museum.

Contact

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source - Discover Ireland - <http://www.discoverireland.ie/>

We hope you enjoy the various events that have been organised to both promote and of course rejoice poetry and writing – and all in the memory of one of the best poets Ireland has ever seen – our very own **Raftery**.

Esteemed poet **Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill**, joined by piper, **Diarmaid Moynihan** and **Margaret O' Riordan** (Uilleann Pipes), will launch the festival on Friday the 21st. Ollie Burke and **Mary McNicholas** will also sing '**Cill Aodáin**' to mark the occasion.

Poet, **Matthew Sweeney** will be the Writer in Residence for a week; **Andrew Forster** another renowned writer from The Lake District – will also be participating in the festival. Poet and singer/songwriter **Ger** and **Tony Reidy** will join us from Westport.

There will be lots of opportunities for aspiring and seasoned writers: a Poetry Slam competition on Friday night, readings and music in pubs and open mic on Sunday. Matthew, Andrew and I will offer creative writing workshops on Saturday and there will be much, much more. Come along and join in the fun.

**Terry McDonagh**

Artistic Director

**In Sight of Raftery**

[www.rafteryfestival.com](http://www.rafteryfestival.com)

*'One winter afternoon as I sat by the fire in a ward of Gort Workhouse, I listened to ...*

*Irish history having been forbidden in schools, has been, to a great extent, learned from Raftery's poems by the people of Mayo, where he was born, and of Galway, where he spent his later years.*

*It is hard to say where history ends in them and religion and politics begin; for history, religion, and politics grow on one stem in Ireland, an eternal trefoil.*

*'He was a great historian,' it is said; 'for every book he'd get hold of, he'd get it read out to him.'*

*And a neighbour tells me:*

*'He used to stop with my uncle that was a hedge schoolmaster in those times in Ballylee, and that was very fond of drink; and when he was drunk, he'd take his clothes off, and run naked through the country.*

*But at evening he'd open the school; and the neighbours that would be working all day would gather in to him, and he'd teach them through the night; and there Raftery would be in the middle of them.'*

*His chief historical poem is the 'Talk with the Bush,' of over three hundred lines.*

*Many of the people can repeat it, or a part of it, and some possess it in manuscript.'*

source Lady Augusta Gregory (1852-1932) from *Poets and Dreamers* (1903)

## Links

### **The Arts Council**

<http://www.artscouncil.ie/>

### **Foras na Gaeilge**

<http://www.gaeilge.ie/>

### **Discover Ireland**

<http://www.discoverireland.com/ire/>

### **entertainment.ie**

<http://entertainment.ie/default.asp>

### **IRD Kiltimagh**

<http://ird-kiltimagh.ie/>

### **Mayo County Council**

<http://www.mayococo.ie/>

### **mayo-ireland**

<http://www.mayo-ireland.ie/>

### **mayowriters.org**

<http://mayowriters.org/>

### **Irish Writers' Centre**

<http://writerscentre.ie/>

### **Irish Writers Online**

<http://irishwriters-online.com/>

### **Ó Bhéal**

<http://obheal.ie/blog/>

### **Poetry Ireland / Éigse Éireann**

[www.poetryireland.ie](http://www.poetryireland.ie)

### **Terry McDonagh**

[terry-mcdonagh.com](http://terry-mcdonagh.com)

### **Antoine Ó Raifteiri (1784 - 1835)**

(also **Antoine Ó Reachtabhra**, English: Anthony Raftery)

was an Irish language poet who is often called the last of the wandering bards.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antoine\\_%C3%93\\_Raifteiri](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antoine_%C3%93_Raifteiri)