

Media Release

Inaugural Dalkey Book Festival attracted over 2,000 to Dalkey

June 2010: The first annual Dalkey Book Festival, which took place from Friday 18th June to Sunday 20th June, has proven a great success. The Festival, which is the brainchild of **David McWilliams** and **Sian Smyth**, was founded to celebrate the literary heritage of Dalkey and to help traders in the town who, like everybody else, are struggling in the recession.

According to **Sian Smyth**, Director, Dalkey Book Festival: "The weekend was a roaring success. There was great interest in each and every one of the unique events at the festival. All ticketed events were sold out and all free events were full. Overall, roughly 2,000 people attended the festival. The traders in the town were delighted with the crowds attracted by the festival, and we were very fortunate with the weather, with the streets thronged full of happy festival-goers."

The festival included an eclectic range of events from Ireland's top literary and broadcasting talent. **Bruce Arnold**, who gave a talk on Writing About Art in the Tramyard Gallery, which was packed to capacity, said: "I so much enjoyed the weekend and thought the whole thing went exceptionally well. The mood was confident, positive and optimistic, a shot in the arm for Dalkey and I have great respect and admiration for Sian and David and the supporting team. I was delighted to be part of it."

Lia Mills, who talked about Writing Memoirs with **Ferdia MacAnna** in the perfect location, a second hand clothes shop, New to You, offered a charming anecdote to describe the weekend: "I've never seen or felt Dalkey so alive as it was this weekend. Dalkey was packed with cheerful people in brightly coloured clothes, strolling around with melting ice-creams in hand, wandering in and out of shops, pubs, and the market. As word spread the crowds grew, so that in the end there was standing room only at some events, with queues forming in the street. One woman, in a fabulous pair of green Italian shoes, told a packed upstairs room at the Country Bake (where they supplied free coffee and tasties to the audience) that she was glad she'd come to hear **Brian Keenan** and **Martina Devlin** in conversation with **Kate Holmquist** instead of going to Mass. She reckoned she got more spiritual value from the discussion. No one contradicted her."

Ferdia MacAnna added: "The festival reminded me so much of the glorious DIY spirit of the summer of punk in Dublin 1977 when anything was possible. Rock on."

This year's line-up included Bruce Arnold, Maeve Binchy, Vincent Browne, Michael Cawley, Marita Conlon- McKenna, John Connolly, Tim Pat Coogan, Chris Corlett, Martina Devlin, Nick Dunning, Eamon Dunphy, Bernard Farrell, Robert Fisk, Michael Ford, Bill Hastings, Kate Holmquist, Paul Howard, Declan Hughes, Gary Jermyn, Brian Keenan, Declan Kiberd, Trevor Knight, Mark Little, Fiona Looney, Declan Lynch, Ferdia MacAnna, Justine McCarthy, Conor McPherson, David McWilliams, Eamon Morrissey, Lia Mills, David Murphy, Joseph O'Connor, Shane Ross, Gordon Snell, Stephen Swift, John Waters and Mary Wilson.

The festival is due to return next year – 17th-19th June 2011. Keep your eye on www.dalkeybookfestival.org for updates.

(Ends)

Issued on behalf of Dalkey Book Festival by Heneghan PR

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