



Cultural Programme 2008

AT CASTLETOWN



WELCOME TO CASTLETOWN

The Office of Public Works takes great pride in presenting Ireland's grandest Georgian property in Ireland.

Castletown was sold by Speaker Conolly's descendents in 1965, and in 1967 the Hon Desmond Guinness, founder of The Irish Georgian Society, bought the house and some of the parkland. The House and Grounds continue to be conserved since it came into State ownership in 1994. New access off the M4 now makes a visit to Castletown a must with its proximity to the city centre no less than 15km.

For this season at Castletown the **OPW** presents a captivating series of concerts in July with musicians from different parts of the world. The **Salon Series** is presented in three of Ireland's finest properties managed by the OPW - the Picture Gallery of Kilkenny Castle, the Ballroom of Farmleigh and at Castletown in the beautiful Long Gallery.

During August the OPW is proud to announce that the **Silver Trust** will present a fine Exhibition of silver objects that are on loan to No. 10 Downing Street. This is a unique chance to see how the British Prime Minister's table is dressed for State banquets.

Camerata Ireland will present a further two concerts at Castletown during August and September. Book your tickets early for an opportunity to hear the extraordinary Barry Douglas and the very talented Irish musicians of Camerata Ireland perform.

Heritage week is always a highlight in the calendar of OPW's historic properties so put a date in your diary to visit between the 24th and the 31st of August truly to immerse yourself in Ireland's fascinating history. Visit www.castletown.ie for details of Castletown events for this week.

Congratulations to Mary Heffernan, General Manager, George O'Keeffe, David Levins, Jurga Rakauskaite and all the team at Castletown for this superb Summer Season of Events.



Dr Martin Mansergh, T.D.,
*Minister of State at the Department of Finance with
Special Responsibility for the Office of Public Works*

HISTORY

Castletown is Ireland's largest and finest Palladian style country house, built for William Conolly, the Speaker of the Irish House of Commons in c.1722. Speaker Conolly was born in Ballyshannon, Co Donegal, and from humble origins rose to become the wealthiest man in Ireland. The designs of a number of important architects were used at Castletown, notably Alessandro Galilei, Sir Edward Lovett Pearce and later Sir William Chambers.

Speaker Conolly died in 1729 and in 1759 his great-nephew Tom Conolly arrived at Castletown with his young wife, Lady Louisa Conolly.

The Castletown Foundation was established to care for the contents and they handed Castletown over to State care in 1994. Castletown is now managed by the Office of Public Works. The Castletown Foundation remain the legal owners of a significant element of Castletown's Collection.



OPW SALON SERIES 2008



In 2008, our salon series spreads its wings to take in two sister locations within the OPW's portfolio of historic properties, with Kilkenny Castle's Great Hall and Castletown's Long Gallery now joining the ballroom at Farmleigh as the place to be for the summer's most memorable concerts. All three have a perfect ambience and natural acoustic, and are set in the most dramatic surroundings a music lover could ask for. Curated by Improvised Music Company, these concerts bring the world's leading jazz, traditional and classical musicians into the very heart of Irish heritage, and this year's participants travel from Peru, Argentina, Hungary, Mali, Morocco, Madagascar and The UK, along with outstanding musicians from Ireland, to bring you an unforgettable night's music. Tickets for each of these intimate salon concerts are limited, so your earliest online application is advised to avoid disappointment!

ENGLISH ACOUSTIC COLLECTIVE

Chris Wood - vocals, guitar, fiddle

Rob Harbron - concertina

John Dipper - fiddle

Tue 1st July | The Ballroom | Farmleigh

Wed 2nd July | The Long Gallery | Castletown

Thur 3rd July | The Great Hall | Kilkenny Castle

Ticketed Event to apply see:

www.farmleigh.ie

"Compelling, sinewy stuff ... anyone who cherishes musical adventure with a firm grounding will be enthralled." - BBC Music

The English Acoustic Collective have won

countless hearts and minds with their raw and passionate explorations of England's folk music, old and new. Ghosts, their evocative release of 2004, was for many a revelation of the poignant songs within the English folk canon, so often spirited and defiant chronicles of a life that resonates deeply with our own experiences. Quietly and without drama, EAC have taken centre stage in England's reappraisal of its trove of vernacular music, and The Irish Times described them as "precisely the kick in the ribs that English folk music needed". Fittingly, The collective brings together three innate storytellers in Rob Harbron, John Dipper and renaissance man Chris Wood, a regular visitor to Ireland for always highly anticipated solo concerts, and also University of Limerick where he's an occasional faculty member.



MUZSIKAS

Mihály Sipos - violin, citera, vocal

László Porteleki - violin, koboz, vocal

Péter Éri - viola, mandolin, flutes, vocal

Dániel Hamar - bass, gardon, vocal

Tue 8th July | The Great Hall | Kilkenny Castle

Wed 9th July | The Long Gallery | Castletown

Thu 10th July | The Ballroom | Farmleigh

Ticketed Event to apply see
www.farmleigh.ie

“Raucously beautiful music.” – The New York Times

Tempus fugit, and its hard to credit that it's a quarter century since Muzsikas first came together, fuelled by the revival in traditional music that was then taking place in Hungary, just as it was here. Few stones have since remained unturned, and they have truly brought

halls like New York's Carnegie, and working with groups like The Balanescu Quartet. Healthy as their appetite for collaboration is, they have remained true to their deep roots in Hungarian traditional music, the rhapsodies and villages dances that inspired composers like Bela Bartok. In the hands of these four superb musicians, the lines we draw between the classical and the traditional cease to be important, and all that remains is life affirming music.



their music to the world, recording ten albums, often accompanying their compatriot Marta Sebestyen, most memorably in *The English Patient* soundtrack, performing in the great halls like Tempus fugit, and its hard to credit that it's a quarter century since Muzsikas first came together, fuelled by the revival in traditional music that was then taking place in Hungary, just as it was here. Few stones have since remained unturned, and they have truly brought their music to the world, recording ten albums, often accompanying their compatriot Marta Sebestyen, most memorably in *The English Patient* soundtrack, performing in the great

LUNFARDIA

Ariel Hernandez - guitars, vocals
Dermot Dunne - accordion
Ioana Petcu - Colan-violin
Malachy Robinson - bass
Frank Vidal - percussion

Tue 15th July | The Great Hall | Kilkenny Castle
Wed 16th July | The Long Gallery | Castletown
Thur 17th July | The Ballroom | Farmleigh

Ticketed Event to apply see:

www.farmleigh.ie

“Milongas, tangos and chacareras, each one tumbling after the other with a mix of wry nonchalance and highly disciplined precision.” - The Irish Times

You are invited on a voyage to the New World with Lunfardia, whose freewheeling repertoire embraces simmering Tangos and Milongas from Buenos Aires, rough-hewn Chacareras from the Argentinean pampas, breezy Bolivian Huaynos, grooving Joropos from Venezuela and speedy choros from Brazil. That so much musical ground is covered with casual artistry and engaging authenticity speaks volumes for the musicians in Lunfardia,



the heart of which is the charismatic and enduring partnership of Buenos Aires native, guitarist and singer Ariel Hernandez, and Ireland's leading classical accordionist Dermot Dunne. Ioana Petcu-Colan's bright singing violin takes flight here, while Malachy Robinson, her bass playing colleague from the Irish Chamber Orchestra, is also liberated in his gutsy rhythmic role alongside the outstanding Peruvian percussionist Frank Vidal.

**BALLAKE CISSOKHO,
DRISS EL MALOUMI, RAJERY**

Ballake Cissokho - kora

Driss El Maloumi - oud
Rajery - valiha

Tue 22nd July | The Great Hall | Kilkenny Castle
Wed 23rd July | The Ballroom | Farmleigh
Thur 24th July | The Long Gallery | Castletown
Ticketed Event to apply see:
www.farmleigh.ie

Any one of these musicians would have been a fine conclusion to our 2008 salon concerts, but to host all three together could be something very special, for they're each stars of African music in their own right. Mali's Ballake Cissokho is a master of the kora, the intoxicating 21 stringed harp that is central to West Africa's unique culture of the griot musician and storyteller. From the Maghreb comes Morocco's Driss el Maloumi, whose nickname "the oud magician", accurately conveys his mastery of the lute like instrument that's so broadly evocative of life in the Arabic world. From far out in the Indian Ocean, comes Rajery, under whose hands the zither-like valiha, the national instrument of his native Madagascar, sings brightly. Together they've found effortless common ground where west, north and east Africa converging in an uplifting string symphony.





**NO. 10 DOWNING STREET SILVER
AT CASTLETOWN 18 - 31 August**

The United Kingdom has a superb heritage of inventiveness and craftsmanship, which goes back many centuries. The reputation of British silversmiths has always been synonymous with quality and OPW is proud to welcome to Castletown House, The Silver Trust collection, which serves to confirm this reputation.

The Silver Trust is a charitable trust established in 1985 to promote the work of British silversmiths. The collection which is owned by The Silver Trust is lent to No.10 Downing Street for the use of the Prime Minister and it is now recognised as one of the most important silver collections of the twentieth century. It represents some of the best work of practicing British silversmiths and is a wonderful showcase for their talents. The quality and variety of design is stunning.

We do hope that you will enjoy this exhibition and admire the skill and talent of some of the finest silversmiths in the world.

THE PERFORMANCE CORPORATION PRESENTS A READING OF THE NOSE
August 16th 3pm | Admission free

Castletown House's resident theatre company The Performance Corporation present a rehearsed reading of *The Nose*. A new adaptation of Gogol's hilariously surreal comedy, by Tom Swift.

St Petersburg, December 1829. It's snowing outside, the Tsar's in his palace and all is well with the world... well, not quite. Major Kovalyev's nose has gone missing – to be precise, it's gallivanting round town and is proving a real hit with the ladies. To make matters worse, the nose is refusing to return to its rightful place, just above the Major's abundant whiskers and square between the eyes.

This reading is the culmination of a week of workshops at Castletown, led by director Jo Mangan and involving some of Ireland's best acting talent. It's also an opportunity to get a sneak preview of the play, ahead of its première at Project Arts Centre in Dublin this November.

The workshop builds on the unique experience of the company's inaugural *SPACE Programme* at Castletown. The *SPACE Programme* is an international research and development project for artists. The 2-week programme saw the collaboration of artists from fields as diverse as choreography and architecture. The Performance Corporation is one of Ireland's leading theatre companies -

specialising in innovative site-specific work. The company has been based in Castletown since 2007.

www.theperformancecorporation.com

The Performance Corporation is grant aided by the Arts Council and Kildare Co. Council





THE CASTLETOWN CONCERTS

International pianist **Barry Douglas**, one of Ireland's leading cultural ambassadors, and his chamber orchestra **Camerata Ireland**, have been delighted to take up residence at Castletown at the invitation of the Office of Public Works where they will perform on a regular basis.

Camerata Ireland have performed throughout the US and Europe, at the Irish Festival of Arts and Culture in China in 2004, at the 2006 Beethoven Festival in Warsaw, the Smithsonian Festival in the US Library of Congress, the Naantali Festival in Finland in 2007 and have developed a reputation for excellence and creating a particularly distinctive Irish string sound.

The orchestra remains unique as the only orchestra to enjoy the joint patronage of both the President of Ireland Mary McAleese and Queen Elizabeth II.

Their remaining concerts at Castletown for 2008 are as follows:

Sunday 31st August | 7.30pm

Barry Douglas, piano/direction
Michael D'Arcy, leader

Beethoven *Piano Concerto N° 2*
Beethoven *Piano Concerto N° 4*
Beethoven *Piano Concerto N° 5*
"Emperor"

Sunday 28th September | 3.30pm

Barry Douglas, piano/direction
Michael D'Arcy, leader

Rossini String *Sonata N°1 in G*
Mozart Piano *Concerto No 27 in B flat K 595*
Penderecki Ciaccona
(In memory of Pope John Paul II)
Schubert Symphony *No 5 in B flat*

Booking Information

Box Office 1800 927361

Tickets €25, €40 (Concessions also available)

CHC AT THE WEST WING

Fittingly located in the original double height kitchen of Castletown House, CHC at the West Wing is the perfect place to relax with friends for coffee and cake, afternoon tea, lunch or dinner.

Surrounded by Georgian splendour, the menus offer traditional fare based on locally sourced ingredients but with a modern twist.

Opening hours are:

Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 5pm

Sundays 10am - 6pm

For larger groups and parties of up to 40 The Housekeeper's Room, a delightfully atmospheric private dining room, is available with custom set menus and dedicated service.

For all reservations, booking enquiries, to request menus or to discuss any event you would like to have at CHC at the West Wing please contact Attracta, restaurant manager on 01 6279498 or email castletown@clairehanley.ie







EVENTS AT CASTLETOWN

Castletown, with its unique grandeur and evocative interiors, provides a very special backdrop for your event.

The property caters for receptions, dinners, conferences, meetings and recitals.

For details on how to book an event at Castletown please visit our website or contact our Events Manager, Josephine Higgins at + 353 1 628 8252 or e-mail josephine.higgins@opw.ie

VISITOR INFORMATION

Tours:

The house is open to the public for tours everyday except Mondays and opens at 10.30am with the last tour leaving at 4.45pm.

Prices:

Adult- EUR4.50

Student/ Child/ Senior- EUR3.50

Groups (per person for over 20 people- please pre-book) - EUR3.50

Family - EUR12.50

For more information please:

Tel: +353 1 628 8252

Fax: +353 1 627 1811

Email: castletown@opw.ie

Web: www.castletown.ie

CHC at the West Wing is the restaurant at Castletown and the opening times are:

Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 5pm and

Sunday 10am to 6pm.

For more info: Call +353 1 672 9498

How to get there:

Driving:

take the Celbridge West/ Leixlip West exit off the M4, take the first left and enter through the new entrance on the right.

Pedestrians:

take the Dublin Bus no. 67/67a from Pearse Street to Celbridge and walk up the avenue.

Credits:

Design: Jurga Rakauskaite

Photography: Con Brogan (cover,p.9), Ciaran Bagnall (p. 9), Jurga Rakauskaite (p.13)

Team:

General Manager: Mary Heffernan

Director BMS: Denis Carr

Estate Manager: George O'Keeffe

Conservation: Linda Kearns

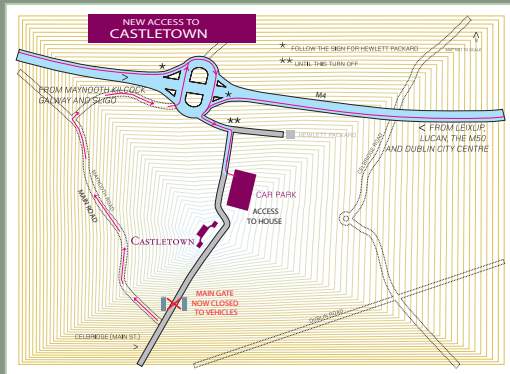
Office: Josephine Higgins

Caoilfhionn Hurley, Catherine Hillery



CASTLETOWN

Castletown House, Celbridge, Co. Kildare



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Castletown is managed by the OPW

