

SATURDAY 7TH JUNE

7am

DAWN-ISH CHORUS:

A walk in the woods and along the mountain stream, with birdman **Seán Ronayne**. Meet outside the front of the house for porridge and poitín.

BORRIS FESTIVAL OF WRITING & IDEAS

	THE ORANGERY	THE ROOKERY	THE OWLERY	THE BALLROOM	CHAPEL
10.30 - 11.25am	<b>IRELAND AS 'LABORATORY':</b> Historians <b>William Dalrymple</b> ( <i>The Golden Road</i> ) <b>Anita Anand</b> ( <i>The Patient Assassin</i> ) and <b>Jane Ohlmeyer</b> ( <i>Making Empire</i> ) explore how Ireland, as Britain's first colony, became a template for colonial expansion in the rest of the world. <i>An 'Empire' Podcast event.</i>	<b>STILLNESS IN SPACE:</b> <b>Samantha Harvey</b> ( <i>Orbital</i> ) discusses the quiet power of her Booker-Prize winning novel and where pastoral realism meets low Earth orbit. A meditation on time, perspective, and the strange beauty of stillness in space. With <b>Alex Clark</b> .	<b>STOP THE PRESS:</b> Journalists <b>Fintan O'Toole</b> and <b>Carole Cadwalladr</b> examine the growing threats to journalism – from disinformation and political interference to the collapse of investigative reporting – and why defending the truth has never been more urgent. In conversation with <b>Misha Glenny</b> .		
11.25am	<b>BOOK SIGNINGS</b> (Bookshop): <b>William Dalrymple, Anita Anand, Jane Ohlmeyer, Samantha Harvey</b>				
11.50am -12.45pm	<b>RITUALS OF THE LAND:</b> <b>James Rebanks</b> ( <i>The Place of Tides</i> ) and <b>Manchán Mangan</b> ( <i>Listen to the Land Speak</i> ) explore the importance of preserving ancient farming traditions and the rich lore of the land, reflecting on how these rituals can connect us to both the past and the future.	<b>HANDED DOWN:</b> Fiddler <b>Martin Hayes</b> (and author of <i>Shared Notes: A Musical Journey</i> ) talks music – and the ceremony of the handing down of songs and instruments to others – with stadium rocker <b>Colin Greenwood</b> .	<b>H IS FOR HORROR:</b> When naturalist <b>Helen Macdonald</b> ( <i>H is for Hawk</i> ) met sci-fi writer <b>Sin Blaché</b> online, an unlikely creative partnership was born. The result? <i>Prophet</i> – a queer techno-thriller about a mysterious substance that turns memories into deadly weapons. Most of the novel was written virtually, until the duo met in Ireland to finish it. Neurologist <b>Jules Montague</b> joins them to unpack memory, imagination and collaboration.	<b>A NEW ART HISTORY?:</b> <b>Katy Hessel</b> ( <i>The Story of Art Without Men</i> ) puts women artists back into the frame. In conversation with <b>Sinéad Gleeson</b> ( <i>Constellations: Reflections from Life</i> ).	<b>POETRY PHARMACY:</b> Join apothecarist <b>William Seighart</b> and <b>Denise Gough</b> for an event that will soothe, revive and inspire with the extraordinary power of words.
12.45pm	<b>BOOK SIGNINGS</b> (Bookshop): <b>Katy Hessel, Sinéad Gleeson, Sin Blaché &amp; Helen Macdonald, William Sieghart, James Rebanks, Manchán Magan, Martin Hayes</b>				
1.30 - 2.25pm	<b>THEATRE OF TRANSFORMATION:</b> The legendary <b>Fiona Shaw</b> talks to fellow Cork actor <b>Eileen Walsh</b> about the alchemy of performance and how the characters of her childhood came to inform some of her greatest classical performances.	<b>THE ENVIRONMENT WILL SHAPE GLOBAL POLITICS:</b> For <b>Bruno Maçães</b> ( <i>World Builders: Technology and the New Geopolitics</i> ), the climate crisis is now at the heart of geopolitics. Join him as he explores how climate change is reshaping world politics, driving new disputes over resources, migration, and power, and how our changing environment will influence the future of global conflict. With <b>Kirsty Lang</b> .	<b>WOULD YOU RATHER...?:</b> Journalists and stablemates <b>Paul Howard</b> and <b>Róisín Ingle</b> use this nowhere-to-hide conversation game to grapple with the big questions.	<b>TIME CAPSULES:</b> In his memoir about growing up in '60s and '70s England, <b>Geoff Dyer</b> ( <i>Homework</i> ) taps his memory bank with dry wit. He and <b>Paul Murray</b> ( <i>The Bee Sting</i> ) revel in the complexities of family life.	<b>SECRETS SHE HAD TO KEEP:</b> <b>Clair Wills</b> ( <i>Missing Persons, or My Grandmother's Secrets</i> ) joins <b>Elaine Feeney</b> ( <i>Let Me Go Mad in My Own Way</i> ) to discuss unearthing painful family histories – stories long buried, secrets fiercely guarded – and the lasting impact they have across generations.
2.25pm	<b>BOOK SIGNINGS</b> (Bookshop): <b>Bruno Maçães, Paul Howard, Clair Wills, Elaine Feeney, Geoff Dyer, Paul Murray</b>				
3.10 - 4.05pm	<b>TRIAL BY BATTLE:</b> <b>Max Hastings</b> on what really went on on D Day, the subject of his latest book <i>Sword</i> . With <b>Dominic Sandbrook</b> (Co-Host of <i>The Rest is History</i> podcast).	<b>LOUD MOUTHS, QUIET SOULS:</b> <b>Conor O'Brien</b> published <i>Passing a Message</i> to capture his musical project <b>Villagers</b> - a chronicle of lyrics, artwork, photographs, ideas and sketches. He talks to <b>Colin Greenwood</b> of <b>Radiohead</b> (who in turn documented his band's exploits in <i>How to Disappear: A Portrait of Radiohead</i> ) about the mysterious relationship between frequencies, feelings and the transcendent possibilities of the musical moment.	<b>A WILD GOOSE CHASE:</b> Award-winning novelist <b>Joseph O'Neill</b> ( <i>Netherland, Godwin</i> ) joins longtime Granta editor <b>Bill Buford</b> to explore his sharp, subversive take on post-9/11 America. From cricket to football, wit to rage, they delve into identity, exile, and O'Neill's enduring sense of unbelonging.	<b>ON CRIMES AND IMPUNITIES:</b> In <i>38 Londres Street</i> , the final instalment of the <i>East West Street</i> trilogy, <b>Philippe Sands</b> tracks a former SS commander into Pinochet's Chile. Blending personal memoir, historical investigation and legal drama, Sands exposes the hidden links between fascist fugitives, brutal political regimes, and how one address in Santiago became a symbol of terror – and of the global fight against impunity. With <b>Barbara Demick</b> .	<b>THE DIRECTOR'S CONSCIENCE:</b> Bafta and Emmy award-winning filmmakers <b>Leslie Cockburn</b> ( <i>Yuri The Great</i> ), <b>Margaret Brown</b> ( <i>Descendent</i> ) and <b>Molly Dineen</b> ( <i>The Lie of the Land</i> ) talk to documentary journalist <b>Ben Anderson</b> about the role film can play in exposing inequality and injustice, and driving change.
4.05pm	<b>BOOK SIGNINGS</b> (Bookshop): <b>Philippe Sands, Barbara Demick, Conor O'Brien (Villagers), Colin Greenwood, Max Hastings, Dominic Sandbrook, Joseph O'Neill</b>				
4.40 - 5.45pm	<b>JUGS OF DUST:</b> Actor and writer <b>Rupert Everett</b> discusses his literary life, ranging from his three bestselling memoirs, his love of Graham Greene and Oscar Wilde, to his 2024 short story collection, <i>The Great American No</i> , whose tales, he writes, are 'testaments to failure of a kind.' With <b>Patrick Freyne</b> ( <i>Ok Let's Do Your Stupid Idea</i> ).	<b>THREE YEARS, FOUR MONTHS: THE WAR IN UKRAINE:</b> <b>Lara Marlowe</b> ( <i>How Good It Is That I Have No Fear of Dying</i> ) considers the West's inability to face up to Putin at this critical juncture in European history. In conversation with <b>Lindsey Hilsum</b> ( <i>I Brought The War With Me</i> ).	<b>WHOLE WORLD, SHORT FORM:</b> What can a short story hold? Three generations of literary writers – <b>Margaret Drabble</b> ( <i>A Day in the Life of a Smiling Woman</i> ), <b>Christine Dwyer Hickey</b> ( <i>The House on Parkgate Street &amp; Other Dublin Stories</i> ) and <b>Maggie Armstrong</b> ( <i>Old Romantics</i> ) discuss the short story as a means of representing the female experience. With <b>Alex Clark</b> .	<b>NARRATING PALESTINE:</b> <b>Adania Shibli</b> ( <i>Minor Detail</i> ) and <b>Joe Sacco</b> ( <i>Palestine</i> ) explore their different approaches to and perspectives on representing conflict on the genocide in Gaza – as a literary writer and a graphic novelist, a Palestinian and an American. With <b>William Sieghart</b> , founder of 'Forward Thinking', a conflict mediation NGO in the Middle East.	<b>I WRITE WHAT I KNOW, AND THEN I TELL LIES:</b> <b>Elaine Feeney</b> ( <i>How To Build a Boat, As Your Were, and fresh off the press, Let Me Go Mad in My Own Way</i> ) in conversation with writer <b>Sinéad Gleeson</b> ( <i>Hagstone</i> ) on their work as novelists.
5.45pm	<b>BOOK SIGNINGS</b> (Bookshop): <b>Rupert Everett, Lara Marlowe, Lindsey Hilsum, Adania Shibli, Joe Sacco, Margaret Drabble, Christine Dwyer Hickey, Maggie Armstrong</b>				
6.20 - 7.15pm	<b>NETANYAHU, TRUMP, PUTIN AND THE COURTS:</b> Human-rights lawyer <b>Philippe Sands</b> ( <i>East West Street, 38 Londres Street</i> ) and Harvard activist-attorney <b>James Tierney</b> discuss the possibility of holding the most powerful to account – and what role, if any, the legal system can play in today's political landscape. In conversation with <b>Carole Cadwalladr</b> .	<b>AND IN THAT MOMENT, EVERYTHING CHANGED:</b> Historian and podcaster <b>Dominic Sandbrook</b> and photographer <b>Chris Floyd</b> explore a dozen powerful images that capture defining moments in history. Together, they reveal the stories behind the photographs that shaped how we see the world.	<b>THE RISE OF THE AUTOCRAT:</b> The New World Order as defined by the leaders of China, Russia and the US, with four people brave enough to talk... <b>Bruno Maçães, Barbara Demick, Misha Glenny</b> and <b>Leslie Cockburn</b> .	<b>WITHSTANDING THE HEAT:</b> From warzones to kitchens, from Afghanistan to the fiery trenches of British publishing, war-correspondant <b>Ben Anderson</b> and journalist-chef <b>Bill Buford</b> interrogate one another on the adrenaline, risks, and revelations of their high-stakes careers.	
7.15pm	<b>BOOK SIGNINGS</b> (Bookshop): <b>Philippe Sands, Dominic Sandbrook, Chris Floyd</b>				
7.50 - 8.45pm	<b>QUELLING DISSENT:</b> <b>Fintan O'Toole</b> in conversation with <b>Steven Pinker</b> ( <i>When Everyone Knows That Everyone Knows</i> ) on what we really mean by 'free speech' and the criminalisation of political demonstration.		<b>PERFORMANCE ON THE PAGE AND OFF:</b> <b>Eimear McBride</b> ( <i>The City Changes Its Face</i> ) and actor <b>Fiona Shaw</b> discuss contending with passion and jealousy in theatre and literature. With <b>Katy Hessel</b> .		
8.45pm	<b>BOOK SIGNINGS</b> (in talk venue): <b>Steven Pinker, Eimer McBride</b>				

LIVE MUSIC IN THE ROOKERY

9.30pm: VILLAGERS

An intimate show from **Villagers** - the indie folk musical project of the mesmerising **Conor O'Brien** - this Ivor Novello prize winning, and Mercury Prize nominated musician is rich in articulate lyrics and musical dexterity.