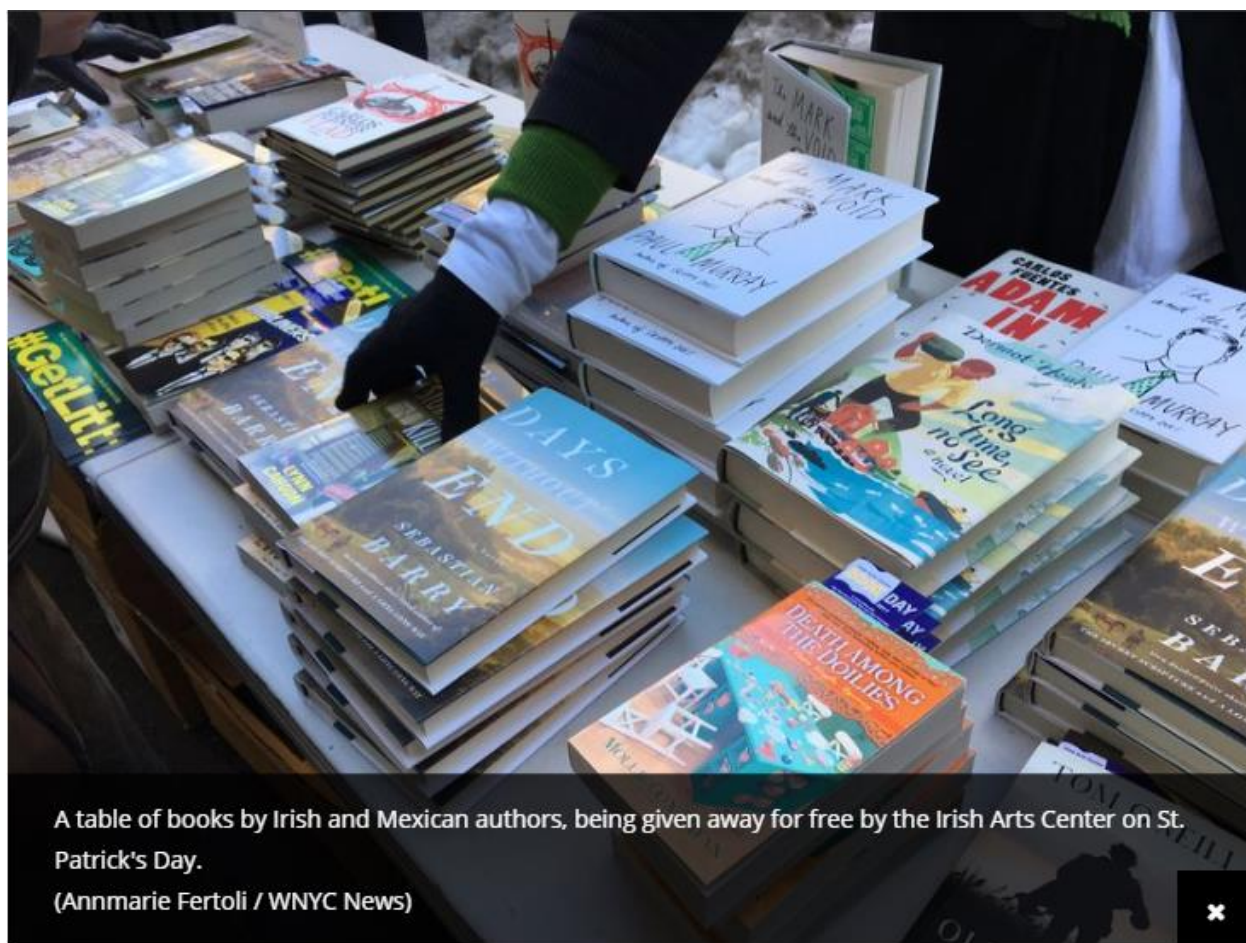


On St. Patrick's Day, Celebrating Irish and Mexican Culture



A table of books by Irish and Mexican authors, being given away for free by the Irish Arts Center on St. Patrick's Day.

(Annamarie Fertoli / WNYC News)

Mar 17, 2017 · by [Annamarie Fertoli](#)

For the past seven years, the [Irish Arts Center](#) has marked St. Patrick's Day by [giving away free books](#) by Irish authors. This year, the group did something a little different, teaming up for the first time with another country — Mexico.

Rachael Gilkey, the center's director of programming, said the goal is to show a more complete view of Irish culture and cross-cultural exchange — especially on St. Patrick's Day.

"Here in New York, it tends to be known for a little bit of the Guinness and shamrocks," she said. "And the Irish Arts Center is about projecting a positive, strong, multi-cultural dynamic image of what Ireland means today"

The group set up tables of free books at 14 locations across the city, placing titles like Frank McCourt's *Angela's Ashes* alongside Carlos Fuentes' *Adam in Eden*. And passersby were intrigued.

Charva Jones, visiting from Indiana, picked up Luis Rodriguez's *Running*. She said it made her think about her son.

"Right now he's in a state of his life where he doesn't know what he wants to be," she said. "So I thought that this would be something for me to read and share with him as well."

Those are the kinds of connections organizers are hoping readers will make.

Ambassador [Diego Gomez Pickering](#), consul general of Mexico in New York, said it's also fitting to hold the event on St. Patrick's Day, a day that's all about celebrating culture.

"They make us think about the importance of building bridges across communities, and across people from different backgrounds," he said.



A passerby stops to browse a table of free books being given away by the Irish Arts Center for St. Patrick's Day.

(Annmarie Fertoli/WNYC News)