

IAC Closer to Home Goal

TAOISEACH Enda Kenny on Thursday announced a grant of \$1,060,000 in new support toward the construction of Irish Arts Center's (IAC) rapidly expanding new home in New York City.

The grant was presented by Irish Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs Heather Humphreys last week at an event in New York, and it follows on from earlier Irish government grants totaling \$4.7 million from the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The latest award comes at the beginning of pre-construction work on the new building, which is near the IAC's existing venue at 553 West 51st Street. Irish Arts Center supporters and board members attending the Thursday evening event included prominent philanthropist Loretta Brennan Glucksman, James E. Quinn, the former president of Tiffany, and Shaun Kelly, the global COO of KPMG International, and Bob Devlin, the former CEO of American General.

IAC Executive Director Aidan Connolly and Vice Chair Pauline Turley then introduced a brief program to formally receive the grant. Connolly told the *Irish Voice*, "We are deeply grateful for the generous support of the Irish government, and for their continuing collaboration with the City

of New York, the State of New York, our generous private donors, audiences, and artists to bring to life the new Irish Arts Center – not only a building, but a new understanding of who we are and how we engage with the world."

The latest funding reflects the Irish government's increased recognition of the crucial role that Irish culture plays in promoting Ireland globally, whilst also strengthening its links with the global Irish diaspora.

The new building will allow the IAC to increase the scale and range of its artistic programming, with purpose-built, flexible performance spaces for theater, dance, music, installations and special events.

With \$54 million raised already, the Irish government's gift now brings the IAC closer to its projected \$60 million goal for the new building.

Meanwhile, the center has announced its 2017 season beginning with a talk with Senator George Mitchell on January 25 at 7:30 p.m. Writer and journalist Belinda McKeon will moderate the talk, billed as an intimate conversation with the legendary statesman and peacemaker.

The Stunning, one of Ireland's most popular bands, are scheduled to perform for two nights only in a sure to sell out concert series on February 3 and 4 at 8 p.m.

On Valentine's weekend balladeer Declan O'Rourke will appear direct from the National Concert Hall in Dublin with a 10-piece orchestra in tow, conducted by Henry Hey.

The performances will run between February 17-19 at 8 p.m. and will feature orchestral arrangements of over a decade of musical treasures across Declan's career.

On March 1 at 7 p.m. at the IAC in partnership with the Center for Fiction will co-present the multi-award winning McKeon (*Solace, Tender*) and Lambda Literary Award-winner Lisa Carey (*Every Visible Thing, The Stolen Child*).

The authors will discuss how their latest novels delve into obsessive desire, the relationship between sexuality and community, and the challenge of writing unlikeable characters.

Rooms by Tony Award winning Irish playwright Enda Walsh will be presented beginning May 3 through the 28 at Cybert Tire, the future home of the new Irish Arts Center located on 11th Avenue.

The show is comprised of three "rooms." *Room 303, A Girl's Bedroom*, and *Kitchen*, will all be presented as installations in a site-specific gallery setting.

First up, in the U.S. premiere of *Room 303* an old man lies close to his time on earth near



Irish Arts Center Executive Director Aidan Connolly, Minister Humphreys and Vice Chair Pauline Turley.

an end. Then in the New York premiere of *A Girl's Bedroom*, a 6-year old girl leaves her bedroom and family home and walks, never stopping. And in the U.S. premiere of *Kitchen*, a wife wills her implosion whilst standing by her kitchen sink.

Other unmissable nights include an evening with the award winning novelist Lisa McInerney on May 6 at 7:00

p.m. One of the most talented contemporary Irish writers, she will read from her popular debut novel, *Glorious Heresies*. Set in the Cork criminal underworld, McInerney shines a bright light on contemporary Ireland in prose so vivid it's like looking at film.

For more information on the upcoming season visit