

# FRIELDAYS

## A HOMECOMING 2025 - 2029

### A 2026 DIARY

In August 2015, some weeks before the death of Irish playwright Brian Friel, Arts Over Borders successfully produced the inaugural *Lughnasa* FrielFest on both sides of the Irish border.

It had the blessing of the writer and approval for it to be an annual event celebrating his work in Ireland's northwest. It was Ireland's first formally constituted cross border festival. Friel lived his life on each side of the border: born in Tyrone, schooled and worked in Derry, and the latter half of his life wrote and lived in County Donegal where many of his plays are set.

The writer can be considered as Ireland's quintessential cross-border artist.

In 2025, the 10th anniversary year of the playwright's death, AOB launched a new ambition: a five year journey to present 29 of Friel's plays to the centenary of his birth in 2029. Titled *FrielDays - A Homecoming 2025-2029* it will take place across a plurality of rural Ballybegs (Friel's fictional village for 14 of his plays) in all three northwest counties each year. *FrielDays* is one of the most ambitious celebratory retrospectives of a single playwright's body of work on these islands and one which takes place in the terroir of his natural as well as literary homeland.

## **YOU ARE NOW ENTERING FRIEL DERRY**

Coproduced with The Playhouse, Derry~Londonderry

### *The Freedom of the City*

by Brian Friel

The Guildhall, Derry~Londonderry

July 17-26 2026

(Directed by Jonathan Burgess of Blue Eagle Productions)

### *Dido and Aeneas*

(Premiered 1689: Chelsea Girls School, London)

by Henry Purcell

St. Columb's Cathedral, Derry~Londonderry

July 31 & August 1 2026

(Featuring The Guildhall School of Music, London alongside musicians from Derry. Part of the Maiden City Festival)

### *The Burial at Thebes*

by Seamus Heaney

The Amphitheatre (outdoor), Gasyard Centre, Bogside Derry

August 14-16 2026

(Directed by Conall Morrison)

## DONEGAL

### *The Gentle Island*

(55th Anniversary)  
by Brian Friel

An island off the north coast of Donegal  
June 26-28 2026  
(Directed by Tom Creed)

### *Dancing at Lughnasa*

by Brian Friel

St. Columba's School Glenties,  
County Donegal  
July 24-August 2 2026  
(A multicultural production directed by Michael Walling of Border Crossings)

### *Faith Healer*

by Brian Friel

Edeninfagh Community Hall (Part 1)  
Iniskeel Hall, Portnoo (Part 2)  
Kilclooney Men's Shed (Part 3)  
Highlands Hotel, Glenties  
August 7-9 & 29-31

### *The Yalta Game*

(25th Anniversary)

by Brian Friel

Moville, Inishowen Peninsula  
August 14-16 2026

### *Translations*

by Brian Friel

Dunlewey Centre, Gweedore Gaeltacht  
August 21-23 2026

### *The London Vertigo*

(35th Anniversary)

by Brian Friel

The Wee Hall, Culdaff, Inishowen Peninsula  
September 4-6 2026

## TYRONE

### *The Loves of Cass Maguire*

(60th Anniversary)

by Brian Friel

County Tyrone  
December 4-6 2026.



Comhairle Contae  
Dhún na nGall  
Donegal County Council  
Council of the Year 2025



Derry City & Strabane  
District Council  
Comhairle  
Chathair Dhoire &  
Cheantar an tSrathá Báin  
Derry Cíttie & Strábane  
Deistrick Cooncil



Gasyard  
Development  
Trust  
Iontaobhas  
Forbartha  
na Gáslainne



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