

PRESS RELEASE – 9 FEBRUARY 2012



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PRESS RELEASE

**The Barrow River Arts Festival 2 – 4 March 2012
In Duiske Abbey, Graiguenamanagh, Co. Kilkenny (the Labèque Sisters) and
Borris House, Borris, Co. Carlow (all other events)**

Michael Dervan, chief music critic of the Irish Times said of the first Barrow River Arts Festival, which took place in March 2011 – *'This new event may be a boutique festival but its directors (Homburger and Guy) are pursuing an all encompassing vision'*. Founded and curated by long time Irish residents, Swiss violinist **Maya Homburger** and English bass player **Barry Guy**, the Barrow River Arts Festival presents, in one packed weekend, a programme of classical music, free improvised jazz, theatre, story-telling and visual art in two beautiful settings along the River Barrow in Counties Kilkenny and Carlow - **Duiske Abbey and Borris House.**

The 2012 festival (2 – 4 March) begins in the magnificent early 13th century Duiske Abbey in Graiguenamanagh, Co. Kilkenny with the celebrated French piano duo of **Katia and Marielle Labèque** performing music by Debussy, Stravinsky, Leonard Bernstein (Suite from West Side Story) and Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue. From Duiske Abbey the festival moves to the ancestral home of the Kings of Leinster, Borris House, Co. Carlow (www.borrishouse.com) where on Saturday 3 March the outstanding **Calmus Ensemble** presents a programme of à capella vocal music from Germany, Italy and Spain entitled 'Sacred and Profane' by composers Schütz, Monteverdi, Bach, Franke (b.1959) and Mateo Fletcha (15th century Spain). The following day Sunday 4 March international award-winning ensemble **Camerata Kilkenny** joins forces with the **Calmus Ensemble** for a performance of two of J.S. Bach's sacred cantatas Ich habe Genug (BWV 82) and Nach dir, Herr verlanget mich (BWV 150), his second Orchestral Suite in B minor for solo flute, strings and basso continuo (with its famous Badinerie movement) and Mystery Sonata No 4 by H.I.F. Biber.

An exhibition, celebrating the 90th birthday of the English Abstract Expressionist painter **Albert Irvin** (*A painter who lets the sun shine into the city*) will open in the presence of the artist on Saturday 3 March at 2 pm in Borris House and will run until Sunday 11th March. **Evan Parker** (*among Europe's most innovative and intriguing saxophonists*) will play at the opening. More free improvised jazz can be heard later that evening (following a Tapas supper with the performers) when the Spanish/English **AURORA Trio** of **Agustí Fernández** (piano), **Ramón López** (percussion) and bass virtuoso **Barry Guy** join forces. (*There is no better place to consider the heavens - All about jazz*).

At 4 pm on Sunday 4 March, Irish actress **Marcella Riordan**, awarded Best Actress for her portrayal of Nancy Gulliver in a BBC Radio adaption of Jennifer Johnston's *The Old Jest* will perform excerpts from Molly Bloom's soliloquy, from the Anna Livia chapter of Finnegans Wake and from Beckett's play *Happy Days* in a programme entitled '**Women in Joyce and Beckett**. **Professor Roger Marsh**, known for his abridgements and productions of all the novels of James Joyce for Naxos Audiobooks and director of the ensemble 'Black Hair', which specialises in the theatrical realisation of contemporary music, will introduce the performance. Story teller **Eddie Lenihan**, recently nominated for the *2012 Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award* (the world's largest children's literature award) will weave his tales of myth, magic and mystery for adults and children on Sunday 4 March at 2.30 pm.

Tickets on sale from: VISUAL – centre for Contemporary Art & The George Bernard Shaw Theatre, Old Dublin Road, Carlow.

Box Office: 059 917 2400

Email: info@visualcarlow.ie

<http://www.gbshawtheatre.ie/theatre-intro.php>

For more information (including photos and biographies) please see the following websites and links:

www.maya-recordings.com (Maya Homburger & Barry Guy – directors of BRAF & performers with Camerata Kilkenny & AURORA TRIO)

www.borrishouse.com (Venue for most of the Festival events).

www.labeque.com (French piano duo and performers at opening Gala Concert)

www.calmus.de (a capella vocal ensemble from Germany)

www.agustifernandez.com (Spanish jazz pianist – AURORA TRIO)

<http://www.ramonlopez.net/index2.html> (Spanish jazz percussionist - AURORA TRIO)

www.malcolmproud.ie (Member of Camerata Kilkenny)

www.gimpelfils.com (Albert Irvin's agent/gallery in London)

www.naxosaudiobooks.com/marcellariordan.htm (Beckett & Joyce programme with Marcella Riordan)

www.york.ac.uk/music/staff/academic/roger-marsh/ (Beckett & Joyce programme)

<http://cistercians.shef.ac.uk/abbeys/grauguenamanagh.php> (Duiske Abbey - venue for the Labeque Sisters concert)
www.eddielenihan.com (Irish Story Teller)

Further information:

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Festival Committee: Barry Guy, Maya Homburger (Artistic Directors), Andrew Kavanagh, Olivia O'Leary, Malcolm Proud.

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