

Sheehy Skeffington School 2019

Rediscovering Democracy and the Common Good:

The Contribution of Human Rights

Friday 10th May The Teachers Club, 36 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1.

Contributor Biographies:

Carol Coulter: Carol Coulter is a former journalist, having worked with The Irish Times for 28 years, the last twelve as its Legal Affairs Correspondent and then Legal Affairs Editor. During her career she won a number of journalism awards, including Campaigning Journalist of the Year, Newspaper Legal Journalist of the Year and Overall Legal Journalist of the Year. In 2012 she left journalism to direct the Child Care Law Reporting Project, which reports on and analyses child care proceedings in the Irish courts. In February 2016 Carol was appointed Adjunct Professor of Law in NUI Galway, supervising a PhD on child protection law.

Michael O'Flaherty: Michael O'Flaherty is Director of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights. Previously, he was Established Professor of Human Rights Law and Director of the Irish Centre for Human Rights at the National University of Ireland Galway, and served as Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. From 2004-2012, he was a member of the United National Human Rights Committee, latterly as a Vice-Chairperson. He is currently adjunct Professor of Law at the National University of Ireland Maynooth. Michael has held a number of senior posts at the United Nations, including the establishment of the UN human rights field missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sierra Leone. Prof. O'Flaherty came to NUI Galway from the University of Nottingham where he was Professor of Applied Human Rights and Co-director of the Human Rights Law Centre. His publications include volumes on the law and practice of human rights field operations, the professionalisation of human rights field work and on human rights diplomacy.

Susan McKay: Susan McKay is a journalist, broadcaster and author from Derry. Publications in which her work has recently appeared include the Guardian/Observer, New York Times, the London Review of Books and the Irish Times. Her books include "Bear In Mind These Dead" (Faber, 2007) which tells the story of the NI conflict through the voices of those bereaved, and "Northern Protestants - An Unsettled People" (Blackstaff, 2000) which is about what she described as "the people I uneasily call my own." Her work has won awards including an Amnesty award for work on children who witness domestic violence. She is a former Northern editor of the Sunday Tribune. She directed the National Women's Council of Ireland (2009 - 2012) resigning in protest at government cuts to its funding. She was a co-founder of the Belfast Rape Crisis Centre in 1982. She recently joined the judging panel for the Ewart Biggs prize.

Donal O'Kelly: Donal O'Kelly is a playwright, actor and director. His solo shows include Edinburgh Fringe First winners Catalpa and Fionnuala, as well as Bat The Father Rabbit The Son, Jimmy Joyced! and Hairy Jaysus (about Frank Sheehy Skeffington). His music-folkplay Jimmy Galton's Dancehall inspired the Ken Loach film Jimmy's Hall, and The Cambria about Frederick Douglass's 1845 voyage to Ireland as a refugee from US slavery is currently revived for Glasgow Crossways Festival and Skibbereen Arts Festival. Other plays include The Dogs, Asylum! Asylum!, Vive La, The Adventures Of The Wet Señor and The Memory Stick (San José Stage USA 2017). Little Thing Big Thing produced by Fishamble toured to Edinburgh, New York and Adelaide and his music theatre series Francisco won the Prix Europa for Radio Fiction. He is an organiser of PalFest Ireland, an arts festival supporting the people of Palestine, and he is an associate director of the peace and justice organisation Afri.

Máire Ní hAinle: Máire Ní hAinle is an award winning musician from Co Sligo. She plays many instruments but focuses mainly on the Uilleann pipes, concertina and traditional and classical piano. She holds an All Ireland title in the Duet and Céilí Band Competition at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, a high achiever award in piano and is a former organ scholar in Galway Cathedral. A fluent Irish speaker and lover of the Irish language and culture, she is currently a final year biochemistry student at NUI Galway.