

# IRELAND'S GREAT HUNGER MUSEUM

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS:

### THE IRISH FAMINE - A SHORT FILM FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

**Ireland's Great Hunger Museum at Quinnipiac University** invites proposals for a short film (12-15 mins) aimed at audiences in the age range 10-13 yrs. on the subject of the Irish Famine / an Gorta Mór (1845-52). The film is intended for both classroom and individual use, will be widely promoted and distributed via online platforms, and supported by specially prepared educational materials.

#### PROPOSALS:

- should be imaginative and original with the ability to engage young audiences within and beyond Ireland. We especially encourage visual and narrative approaches that explore the reality of the famine for children (e.g. having to abandon home in search of food, contemporary sights and scenes, the experience of the workhouse, the trauma family/friends emigrating etc.)
- can be live action, animation or a mixture of styles.
- can take a documentary, fictional or docu-drama approach but should be grounded in **solid scholarship** on the famine and its consequences.
- should be mindful of both the specificity of the Irish famine as well as its relationship to contemporary themes and circumstances – eg famine, displacement, refugees etc. (see Micheal D Higgins quotation below)
- must include reference (either directly or for illustration) to the collection held at Ireland's Great Hunger Museum, Quinnipiac University <http://ighm.org>

**Funding for the project is up to €30,000**

The deadline for submissions is **5pm, June 9, 2017 (delivery February 2018)**

Project Co-Ordinator / Executive Producer of the Famine Film project: Dr. Tony Tracy

Submissions & Enquiries: [faminefilm2017@gmail.com](mailto:faminefilm2017@gmail.com)

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## SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL

### WHO CAN APPLY?

Established and emerging filmmakers are eligible to apply. We especially welcome proposals from filmmakers with experience of this audience.

Writer/Directors/Producers (where the producer and director are not the same person) should have previously completed at least one film for exhibition.

**The deadline for submissions is 5 pm, June 9, 2017**

### THE PROPOSAL

Please include as much detail in your proposal in relation to the following:

- **Synopsis** - Briefly outline the subject and story of the film.
- **Treatment** - Clearly communicate how the film program will unfold from beginning to end. Include details on story structure, theme, style, format, voice, and point-of-view.
- **Project Timetable** - Provide an outline schedule of phases of production.
- **Budget** - Include an itemized list of project costs, i.e., staff salaries, talent, post-production expenses, insurance (all elements of production, delivery, archive, clearance etc.)
- **Key Personnel** - Provide biographies of the key project staff, i.e., producer, director, writer, cinematographer, editor, as well as experts, consultants, or talent.
- **Sample Work** - Include samples of previous work that demonstrate the creative and production abilities of the team.

**Delivery:** ProRes & BluRay (February 2018)

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## THE GREAT IRISH FAMINE

The Irish famine (1845-1852) represents the most cataclysmic event in modern Irish history with consequences stretching down to the present day.

When a new strain of potato blight disease was accidentally imported on ships from North America in 1845, it had a catastrophic effect on crops across Europe. 40% of the Irish population depended on the potato at this time owing to its nutritional complexity and ease of cultivation. While support and relief was mobilized elsewhere it was withheld in Ireland due to a combination of unsympathetic beliefs and policies resulting in widespread starvation and death. When relief was offered, it was either inadequate or on extremely stringent terms and did little to alleviate the situation. All the while Ireland's grain harvest continued to be exported to Britain.

As a result, over one million people died of starvation and disease, while 1.5 million emigrated. Had the famine not occurred, the population of Ireland would have been around nine million in 1851. Instead it was 6.5 million, a figure that continued to decrease in the decades ahead due to the legacy of the famine (a further 2 million emigrated by the end of the nineteenth century).

Death and emigration led to a rapid and widespread depopulation of the Irish countryside, with catastrophic effects on communities, customs and the Irish language.

In addition to its importance in shaping the history of modern Ireland and the New World, the experience of the Irish famine has continued resonance and relevance today. The physical and psychological suffering of the poor, the cruel and entirely inadequate relief response and the experience of enforced migration of large numbers of individuals and families, contain all too familiar echoes in our era.

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## SELECTED RESOURCES

The following resources represent a fraction of what is available and are intended to offer context and suggest prompts and signposts rather than dictate approach. We draw attention not only to a number of historical sources but also letters, articles, visual representations (illustrations and film) and song.

## EDUCATION CONTEXTS

The Irish Primary school curriculum identifies the Great Famine as a possible teaching 'strand' in 5<sup>th</sup> / 6<sup>th</sup> class. In studying it, the child should be enabled to:

- become familiar with ways in which the everyday lives of people changed
- reasons for these changes and conflicts
- people, organisations and events involved in bringing about change or adapting to change
- local evidence of changes and conflicts
- the long-term effect of changes and conflicts
- examine and become familiar with evidence which informs us about the lives of people in the periods studied, their thoughts and concerns, especially evidence which may be found locally
- record the place of peoples and events on appropriate timelines

“Encourage children to use their imagination and evidence to reconstruct elements of the past e.g. events of a 19<sup>th</sup>-century school day/emigration scene during famine times, and communicate this understanding of the past in a variety of ways – oral language, drama, writing, art work, modelling, ICT”

### **Children of the Famine (a teaching resource)**

<http://resources.teachnet.ie/jstacey/2004/>

### ***When Cropfields Cry* (2016)**

A famine re-enactment by Leenane National School, Co. Galway

<https://vimeo.com/188296684>

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## **The Great Irish Famine Curriculum (New York State)**

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/gt/gif/docs/intro.pdf>

## **HISTORICAL**

### **Strokestown Famine Museum (Co. Offaly)**

On November 2 1847, Denis Mahon of Strokestown House, Co. Roscommon was the first landlord to be murdered during the Great Famine after evicting 3000 persons. His 'big house' is now home to a Great Famine museum, which opened in 1994

<http://www.strokestownpark.ie/attractions/famine-museum>

### **The Irish Famine Archive**

<http://faminearchive.nuigalway.ie>

## **CONTEMPORARY DOCUMENTS**

Asenath Hatch, *Annals of the Famine in Ireland* (1851)

<https://www.lilliputpress.ie/product/annals-of-the-famine-in-ireland>

### **Eyewitness Accounts of the Famine**

<http://archives.evergreen.edu/webpages/curricular/2006-2007/ireland0607/ireland/eyewitness-accounts-of-the-famine/index.html>

### **Illustrations**

<https://viewsofthefamine.wordpress.com/illustrated-london-news/sketches-in-the-west-of-ireland/>

**Alexander Somerville, *Letters from Ireland during the Famine of 1847***

[http://www.aughty.org/pdf/letters\\_ireland1847.pdf](http://www.aughty.org/pdf/letters_ireland1847.pdf)

**Irish Views of the Famine (online sources 1846-1851)**

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/sadlier/irish/irish.htm>

## **VISUAL ART**

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Ireland's Great Hunger Museum

<http://ighm.org>

**The Artist Who Dared to Paint Ireland's Great Famine**

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/19/arts/design/the-artist-who-dared-to-paint-irelands-great-famine.html>

## SONG

There are two main kinds of music associated with the Irish Famine: Ballads (narrative folk songs) and Sean-nós (traditional unaccompanied singing).

*The Fields of Athenry* is probably the most famous Irish folk ballad set during the Great Irish Famine. Written in the late 1970s, the song is sung widely as an anthem at sporting events in Ireland and abroad. Other notable famine ballads include *Skibbereen* (1880) <http://bit.ly/2pdJQOp>

Frederick Douglas, the great African-American social reformer and abolitionist, toured Ireland for two months in 1845, where he first heard Sean-nós:

*I have never heard any songs like those anywhere since I left slavery, except when in Ireland. There I heard the same wailing notes, and was much affected by them. It was during the famine of 1845-6 [...]. Nowhere outside of dear old Ireland, in the days of want and famine, have I heard sounds so mournful.*

Probably the most famous eviction song is *Lough Sheelin*, recounting the mass eviction of small cottiers and their families in Tonagh, Co. Meath describing how 700 people were thrown out of their houses on a cold day (90,000 evictions in 1849 100,000 in 1850)

CD - ***The Hungry Voice: The Song Legacy of Ireland's Great Hunger*** (Frank Harte and Dónal Lunny)

## FILM

***Ireland 1848*** (1996)

Experimental documentary shot in style of silent film combining animation and live action: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYIzYRcz9uo>

***An Ranger***

Short drama set in Conamara, 1854. After many years abroad in the service of the British Army, a soldier returns home to find that his family are all dead.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWv2d-v96DY>

***Poorhouse*** (1996)

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An impressionistic, screen adaptation of a short story by Michael Harding, directed by Frank Stapelton.

***When Ireland Starved - Managing The Famine*** (1992)

Acclaimed RTE four part documentary on the Irish Famine produced by Radharc.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aimbgso7LVo>

***Famine to Freedom: The Great Irish Journey***

US documentary containing useful interviews and imaginative approach.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jIVOgvZ6Iq>

## SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Atlas of the Great Irish Famine, 1845-52* / John Crowley. Cork: Cork University Press, 2012.

IGHM illustrations database.

*This Great Calamity: The Irish Famine 1845-52* / Christine Kinealy. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2006. Cote: 941.590 34 KIN

*The Irish Famine: A Documentary History* / Noel Kissane. Dublin: National Library of Ireland, 1995.

*Black '47 and Beyond: The Great Irish Famine in History, Economy and Memory* / Cormac O Grada. - Princeton University Press, 1999.

*The Tombs of a Departed Race: Illustrations of Ireland's Great Hunger* / Niamh O'Sullivan. - Quinnipiac University Press, 2014.

*The Irish Famine: A Documentary* / Colm Toibin, 2002.

President Michael D Higgins, "Recalling, Remembering and Learning from the Great Famine Speech at the National Famine Commemoration", Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin, 11 September 2016: <http://www.president.ie/en/media-library/Speeches/recalling-remembering-and-learning-from-the-great-famine-1>