

Specific Ideas for 2015 programme

The programming team for Guth Gafa 2015 will only be commencing their search for films in March so it is too early to give any indications of possible films, however Guth Gafa 2015 will be the festival's 9th year, and we are programming the major strand of the festival as: **Women in Documentary Film 2015**

This year's festival will have a main theme or focus on women in documentary film making, both as filmmakers and as subjects. In a first for Ireland, the festival will celebrate the empowerment of women, in front of and behind the camera. As part of this, Guth Gafa will also host a debate that will address the issue of *Gender and Violence*, which will be attended by some leading national and international speakers.

This year's main theme could not be more topical as women across the world are taking the lead in tackling issues from climate change to poverty and civil war. Our festival will draw a domestic and international audience that will recognise that work in an atmosphere that is celebratory.

It couldn't be more fitting that one of the world's first conclaves on women's rights, took place just up the road from Kells, in Ireland's ancient capital of Tara. The Hill of Tara was setting for a seventh century church synod to enact laws giving greater rights to women.

As part of Guth Gafa, festival-goers will also have the opportunity to visit the local historical sites of Tara, visitors' centres at Boyne Valley and Newgrange and the Loughcrew Cairns, dedicated to the earth Goddess, in her form as a wise woman. The local historic sites, with particular reference to the recognition and role of women in the past, will be the subject of a talk during the festival weekend. Guth Gafa has the full support of the Hay Festival Committee, including Myles Dungan, who has offered to assist us with programming historical events and activities.

Audiences can choose from more than twelve films every day, partake in exciting question and answer sessions with the filmmakers or just soak in the atmosphere in the magnificent surroundings of the 18th century Headfort Demesne, and the historic town of Kells.

The move to Kells, County Meath with our Festival will do a number of things:

- Allow us to extend the festival and build Guth Gafa on the East coast by opening up Guth Gafa to a much larger audience in Ireland, Europe and around the world.
- Give us the opportunity to bring some big celebrity film names to our Festival locations (proximity to Dublin and Belfast Airports will help),
- Broaden our appeal to potential sponsors, for whom proximity to Dublin will have a strong appeal.

The 2015 programme will incorporate many of the successful elements in the 2014 programme – the **Guth Gafa Debates**, the **Secret Screening** (sold-out and talked about for weeks after), and with MEDIA Festival funding a possibility, we will maintain our 70% or more contingent of European films. As well as our Women in Documentary strand, we will also have our regular strands focusing on human rights, social issues and the environment. We will also expand the number of screenings, side-bar events and cross-promotional events with other festivals and arts events.

For Irish films, we are considering a **retrospective** of an established Irish female film maker in 2015, and our focus will of course be, not only international, but firmly on new Irish films. We will also continue with our very successful **student shorts competitive programme, Next Generation**, which we introduced in 2011. In 2015, we plan to develop and nurture our already well-established relationship with colleges and film students and up-and-coming film talent.

Our exciting **Docs for Young People outreach programme** will be expanded to include more youth centres, and community groups working with young people, and will involve young people, students, teachers, youth workers collaborating on hosting and running a mini-Film Festival in their youth club or school – selecting 3 or 4 films from the Guth Gafa programme, publicising the event, inviting guest speakers, building their audience, etc. Then, after hopefully being inspired by the experience of watching award-winning international films, and discussing the films and their subjects with their youth leaders/teachers, they might participate in some filmmaking workshops and start making short docs.

We are exploring the idea of another **Irish Film Festival Summit** for 2015 to follow on from the success of our first International Film Forum, held in 2014 in conjunction with Honeycomb Creative Works . The objective of hosting a summit of Irish filmmakers with international experts and guests, is to create a forum for discussion of their work, and of their marketing and distribution of Irish film abroad.

The international Irish film festivals in US and Europe would have huge diaspora mailing lists, which we hope would be used to attract their supporters to come and spend a few weeks in Meath.