



FESTIVAL CASTING CALL

AFTER 13 years at the helm, **Willie White** is stepping down as artistic director and CEO of Dublin Theatre Festival (DTF). Would-be applicants have until the day after the curtain comes down on this year's shindig.

The decision on the new festival boss will essentially be down to the DTF's chairwoman, arts consultant and Arts Council (AC) favourite **Úna Carmody**, who was appointed a director in 2022 and moved into the chair



Úna Carmody

last October. She is joined on the board by the likes of filmmaker **Andrew Lowe**, historian **Catriona Crowe**, former AC chairwoman **Pat Moylan** and Unicef fundraiser **Donna Marie O'Donovan**.

Certainly, one of the skills that will be on the minds of the interview panel will be an ability to tap some moneybags and appeal to their philanthropic side. In the past, this has proved elusive for the DTF. This year the festival has been allocated a repeat grant of €1.125m from the AC but, taking into account other income streams, the overall revenue of €1.7m in 2023 was slightly down on the previous year.

A small surplus of just on €40,000 recorded in 2022 was reversed to a loss for the next 12 months of €30,000, while ticket sales were also down last year by €56,000. Meanwhile, charitable donations (mainly from patrons) were a paltry €56,000.

No wonder the board is looking for "a bold, fearless new leader" who can "develop

and maintain commercial and sponsorship opportunities and philanthropic giving revenue as a significant income stream".

A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

DÉSIRÉE FINNEGAN'S

Screen Ireland (SI) has just launched yet another funding initiative, Perspectives, which is intended to provide "a window into experiences and viewpoints that may not have been widely represented on the big screen before". Apparently, the scheme is particularly interested in stories that can "touch on a wide range of experiences across Irish life, culture and communities".

The film and TV funding agency says it is committed to "diversity, equity and inclusion across all of its production and development funding schemes, and would strongly encourage applications from underrepresented backgrounds". Up to 20 feature film projects will be selected for initial development.

While SI has been particularly focussed on gender in recent years and, increasingly, on ethnicity, research in Britain published a few months ago revealed that in

2020 more than half the people working in the film and TV industries across the Irish Sea and north of the border were from privileged backgrounds:

The report stated: "People from working-class backgrounds are significantly under-represented, with only one in four of the screen workforce from lower socio-economic backgrounds, compared to 38% of people across the economy."

The research highlights the class imbalance that is particularly pronounced in creative roles, including writers, producers and directors. Over 60% of these come from privileged backgrounds, "making it amongst the most elite occupations..."

There is nothing to suggest the situation in Ireland is any different. Many young people starting out in the industry now appear to have parents who can fund a period of unpaid 'interning' or have contacts or family in the business who can offer them paid traineeships to tide them over for the first year or two.

With no data available here, Goldhawk wonders how many of the "authentic stories" being sought by SI for its new scheme will end up coming from writers, producers and directors who would be deemed "privileged".



STEVE PARKIN'S MOVES

STEVE PARKIN'S Irish 1,000 Guineas winner and dual Group 1 winner, *Fallen Angel*, has been sold to continue her racing career with Wathnan Racing.

The *Too Darn Hot* filly had raced in Parkin's Clipper Logistics colours for **Karl Burke**, winning four of her six starts. She first raced in the Wathnan colours of **Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani** – the Emir of Qatar – in the €4m Coolmore America 'Justify' Group 1 Matron Stakes at Leopardstown, where she finished a close second to the **Donnacha O'Brien**-trained *Porta Fortuna*.

Although bred by Parkin's Branton Court Stud, the minted owner's ex-racing manager, **Joe Foley** (see *The Phoenix* 5/4/24), was very quick to tweet his part

in her Irish Guineas success: "Proud of this filly today!! Bought her grandmother, her mother (from **Eddie Lynam**) and arranged her mating."

Parkin, who built a near £1bn logistics company from scratch, must be wondering how he will manage without Foley's advice in the future.

Meanwhile, the legal proceedings relating to Parkin's attempt to remove assorted nags from under Foley's watch remain in train between the two sides.

At the end of May, Foley's solicitors lodged High Court proceedings against Parkin personally; the entity behind the Englishman's racing interests, Clipper BCS LLP; as well as a company controlled by Foley himself, Ballyhane (Rath-bridge).

Two weeks later, Parkin returned fire with a suit against Foley and Ballyhane Stud Ltd.

All has been quiet in relation to the case filed by Foley but the legal eagles have been active in the Parkin proceedings and there has already been an out-

ing in court that resulted in an amended plenary summons.

Following the total disintegration of the working relationship between the two parties, Parkin and his new advisors began to restructure his entire racing interests.

He offered nearly 50 horses at Newmarket's July sale, following on from the offloading of all his national hunt horses to focus solely on the flat.

Parkin's 206-acre stud in Rath-bridge, Co Kildare, is now listed for sale at offers in excess of €4.7m and will go to auction on October 24. The "truly unique and perfectly developed stud farm" includes a three-bedroom, single-storey cottage and features 46 loose boxes.

Separately, there has been no completion by Clipper of the planned almost £2m purchase of the Shadowfax & Craven House training stables in Newmarket from **Sheikh Mohammed al Maktoum's** Godolphin operation.

All these moves have been

justified in the context of Parkin's decision to focus his racing and bloodstock interests in Britain, where he made a killing from his business exploits.

FANS OF Goldhawk will recall (see The Phoenix 27/6/24) that a video of an uncovered dead horse in an open builder's trailer, which was being towed by John 'Shark' Hanlon's Boyle-sports-sponsored horse box to a factory for disposal, went viral. While Shark apologised for any distress caused, stating that the tarpaulin that had been covering the horse came undone during the journey, he has not been shown much leniency by the regulators.

The video also attracted the attention of Restricted Trainers Association head John Fitzgerald, who promptly wrote to Boylesports informing the gambling company of its ambassador's behaviour.

The Irish Horseracing Regulatory Board slapped Hanlon with a 10-month ban and a paltry €2,000 fine earlier this month and the referrals committee, chaired by judge Tony Hunt, has now shot down his long-odds request to defer the suspension until next April.



Steve Parkin