

Ireland - Italy Projects presents:

Draft programme for Santa Brigida, Rome 2nd February, 2026

The School of Hibernia(after Raphael), 2024

By Na Cailleacha



This project by the Irish art collective Na Cailleacha, is part of their aim to increase visibility for women, challenge patriarchy and advocate for older art creatives. They have taken a key work of European Renaissance history, Raphael's *School of Athens* (Vatican Museum 1509–1511) and reinterpreted it to reflect a more inclusive world view.

This project, particularly targeting patriarchal views of art and education, was staged in the Museum Building, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland's oldest university, on March 9th 2024 with the participation of women, such as the first female President of Ireland, Mary Robinson, lawyer and climate change activist, and Professor Linda Doyle, engineer and first female

provost of Trinity College Dublin. All have led change in Ireland across a wide range of disciplines from social equality, racial justice, and climate activism to the arts, sciences and sport.



Raphael's fresco represents still dominant influences on academia derived from Ancient Greece led by such figures as Plato, Aristotle, Pythagoras, Euclid and Archimedes. Na Cailleacha's re-enactment of Raphael's *fresco* with an all-women cast is set in Ireland. *The School of Hibernia* features forty-one leading, contemporary Irish women from a variety of intellectual disciplines, who have contributed to human knowledge. Together they draw on international traditions and learning, representing various abilities and social backgrounds, including history, art, sciences, medicine, engineering, the law, economics, social activism and sport, in ways that both subvert and expand the earlier traditions.

Na Cailleacha (the name means witches or hags) is a collective of six visual artists: Helen Comerford (1945–2024), Barbara Freeman, Patricia Hurl, Rachel Parry, Therry Rudin, Gerda

Teljeur; jazz musician Carole Nelson, and curator/writer Catherine Marshall, who have come together to explore being female and being older creatives.

Na Cailleacha Instagram

Na Cailleacha Facebook

Ireland-Italy Projects (IIP) was co-founded by Jane Adams and Brenda Moore-McCann in 2024 to promote cultural exchange between the two countries. IIP's first event was a successful symposium held in Trinity College Dublin in November 2024 to introduce the historically neglected Renaissance artist, Suor Plautilla Nelli (1524-1588), to an Irish audience.

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To mark the feast day of Ireland's national female saint, Saint Brigid, Ireland-Italy Projects and Na Cailleacha, with the patronage of The Irish Embassy, Rome, present: **The School of Hibernia (after Raphael) 2024**

When: February 2nd, 2026

Where: Casa Santa Brigida, Piazza Farnese, Rome (and the Galleria Spada/Cinema Farnese tbc).

Who: Ireland-Italy Projects (IIP) & Na Cailleacha art collective

What: Public presentation/symposium/European premiere of documentary film.

Speakers and topics (Titles to be confirmed) (15 minutes)

- Chairs & Introduction: Jane Adams & Dr. Brenda Moore-McCann (Ireland-Italy Projects)
- "Introduction to *The School of Hibernia* project." Catherine Marshall, Art Historian, Curator, Na Cailleacha.

- “*The Two St. Brigids, The School of Hibernia* and the concept of a modern university.”
Professor Rachel Moss, Art Historian, Trinity College Dublin.
- “Raphael and *The School of Athens*: The legacy of an inspirational artwork.”
Professor Arnold Nesselrath, Art historian and former Director of the Vatican Museum Collections.
- “Taking art history forward into the future”, Dr. Caroline Campbell, Art Historian & Director of the National Gallery of Ireland.
- “Where art and science meet in *The School of Hibernia*”, Dr. Emma Teeling, Professor of Zoology, University College Dublin School of Biology and Environmental Science.
- “A (short) History of the Empowerment of Women in Italy,” Eliza Pistis, author and actress
- Questions/Panel discussion (45 minutes)
- European Launch of Therry Rudin’s Documentary Film (title tbc) of the making of *The School of Hibernia* (1 hour)
- A number of *School of Hibernia* prints (42 x 54 cms), cost €500, and a poster with images and details of the project will be available for purchase.
- Reception with music by Carole Nelson.

Speakers’ Curriculum Vitae

Catherine Marshall: Art Historian, writer, co-founder and curator of Na Cailleacha is the former inaugural Curator of Collections, Irish Museum of Modern Art. She is also co-editor of *Art and Architecture of Ireland*, 2014, Volume V, Yale and the Royal Irish Academy.

Rachel Moss: Professor of Art History at Trinity College Dublin and participant in *The School of Hibernia*. She specialises in medieval and insular art, medieval Irish Gospel books and monastic history. She is a former president of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland and editor of *Art and Architecture of Ireland, 2014, Volume 1*, Yale and the Royal Irish Academy.

Arnold Nesselrath: Professor and former Director of the Art History Departments of the Vatican Museums. His research include architectural drawings, the Classical Tradition, History of the Renaissance Architecture and Painting.

Caroline Campbell: First woman director of the National Gallery of Ireland, Renaissance scholar and a participant in *The School of Hibernia*, she is the former Director of Collections and Research at the National Gallery, London where she curated *Siena: The Rise of Painting, 1300–1350* (2025) and is the author of *The Power of Art: a World History in Fifteen Cities*, 2024.

Emma Teeling: Professor of Zoology, University College Dublin. She established the Laboratory of Molecular Evolution and Mammalian Phylogenetics in 2005 and is the Founding Director of the Centre for Irish Bat Research at UCD which investigates evolutionary relationships among mammals at both the nucleotide and genomic level. She was a participant in *The School of Hibernia*.

Elisa Pistis: Professional actress and author from Sardegna. As both actress and author she has collaborated on the realisation of a variety of theatrical productions in Italy and abroad. In 2019 she was invited to participate in a TED x Women event in Zurich where she presented a record of the empowerment of women in Italy.

Therry Rudin: A member of Na Cailleacha, Rudin is a Swiss artist, film-maker and one of the curators of the international film festival "Homeland". The documentary film *Dawn to Dusk* about the formation of Na Cailleacha, won awards in Washington, Montreal and Istanbul, as well as in Ireland.

Carole Nelson: An Irish-based jazz composer, pianist, saxophonist, lyricist, performer, teacher, Nelson's fourth Trio album, *Through the Storm*, is due for release October 2025. She is a member of Na Cailleacha. Her theatre work includes composition for *The Trojan Women* at the Peacock and Emma Donoghue's *Ladies and Gentlemen* at the Project Arts Centre, Dublin. Collaboration with fellow Cailleach, artist Barbara Freeman, led to the award-winning short-film, *Ithaca*.

Jane Adams: co-founder of Ireland-Italy Projects & CEO of www.artemisiagold.org which fosters overlooked women artists globally. She was formerly the director of Partnership Relations with Jane Fortune's Advancing Women Artists Inc., restoring 70 works of art over 14 years. She led her first solo restoration project in 2020, restoring works by Artemisia Gentileschi and contributing to the 2024 Gallery Spada, Rome, book on the artist. She also directed and co-sponsored the restoration of two paintings by Plautilla Nelli in 2024, the 500th anniversary of her birth.

Brenda Moore-McCann: medical doctor, art historian and Adjunct Assistant Professor at Trinity College Dublin and co-founder of Ireland-Italy Projects. Her research focuses on contemporary art. She has published widely on the Rosc exhibitions and produced the first monograph on Brian O'Doherty/Patrick Ireland in 2009 and two more books in 2018 and 2023. She has also published two books on art in Italy. She serves on the Advisory Board and is Editor of the Art & Medicine section of the Harvard interdisciplinary website, The Blood Project (www.thebloodproject.com). She is currently creative advisor to a forthcoming major exhibition of Brian O'Doherty's work in 2026.