

PRESS RELEASE

dlr Festival of World Cultures attracts thousands to weekend of music and culture

(Dún Laoghaire, Sunday July 25, 2010. 5pm)

More than 200,000 people descended on Dún Laoghaire this weekend for the 10th anniversary of the Festival of World Cultures.

As the seaside town basked in glorious sunshine, performers from 33 countries shared their wealth of music, dance, theatre, film and art with festival audiences who also enjoyed the tempting global cuisine on offer.

A programme of exceptional events celebrating the 10th anniversary included **Homeland**, an inspirational merging of ethereal voices and ancient traditions featuring **Iarla Ó Lionáird** (Sean-nós, Ireland), **Tanya Tagaq** (Inuit throat singing) and duo **Adjagás** (Norwegian yoikers) in the stunning environs of Monkstown Church.

Another enchanting collaboration was the extraordinary musical and visual layering of Icelandic group **Amiina** with Ireland's **Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh** and **Donal Dineen** to create a cinematic wonderland of violins, keyboards, glockenspiels, drums, Kalimbas, musical saws and laptop wizardry, all fusing into a crisp Icelandic electro beat that became a red hot night of exquisite music.

Festival Director Jody Ackland was delighted by all the weekend's events and the huge turn out. Ms. Ackland announced today that she will step down as Artistic Director of the annual event once this year's Festival is wrapped up.

Ms Ackland (40) set up the Festival in 2001 with the then dlr Arts Officer Sarah Searson. In ten years, under her stewardship, the festival has grown its local and international audience from 25,000 in 2001 to more than 200,000 this year.

Ms Ackland said: *"I am leaving the Festival on a high note, at the best possible time. When I set this Festival up, Ireland was a different place. Now, 10 years on, this Festival is one of the most beloved on the calendar. I am leaving it now free for someone else to create a vision for the next 10 years."*

Ms Ackland will work freelance for the near future. Her long-term ambitions are to work in Fair Trade Travel and Cultural Tourism in Africa.

Other highlights of the weekend included:

Khaled, the international icon and King of Raï from Algeria, whipped audiences into a joyous frenzy on Saturday when his charismatic warmth and progressive expression of the traditional folk music of the Bedouin people emanated across the green at Newtownsmith Main Stage, where festival-goers embraced his funk, jazz and reggae beats, arms raised to the evening sun.

Radio Hemisphere, the Festival's own internet station and a Festival first, broadcast live interviews and performances with audiences tuning in from Macedonia to New Zealand. It will stream for a further two weeks and can be accessed through the Festival site: www.festivalofworldcultures.com <<http://www.festivalofworldcultures.com>> .

The 2010 ten year anniversary Festival ended after another night of virtuosic musicianship on Sunday, following the **Birthday Bloco Carnival** which filled the streets with musicians, dancers and acrobats in vibrant costumes, leaving everyone who attended with a glow that will last for some time to come.

The Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council's Festival of World Cultures ran July 23-25, 2010.

The Festival is supported by the Arts Council, Dublin Bus, Failte Ireland, RTÉ lyric fm and The Irish Times.

More information and images

on www.festivalofworldcultures.com <<http://www.festivalofworldcultures.com/>

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