

# VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY

## COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES



### CENTER FOR IRISH STUDIES

#### Welcome Back, Winter-Spring 2026

##### Athbhliain Faoi Mhaise Daoibh! Happy New Year!

We begin 2026 with a rush of activity!

Please welcome to campus our Heimbold Chair for 2026, novelist Cauvery Madhavan, who immigrated to Sligo in 1986. Like so many who have lived in Ireland, it soon became part of her: **"I grew up twice. The first time in India, where I was born, and the second time in Ireland. One nation birthed me, the other swaddled my very soul."** We look forward to having Cauvery work with students and read on Feb. 24.



We also welcome the Irish Ambassador, Geraldine Byrn Nason to Villanova tonight for our co-launch of [Irish America 250](#). In March, the innovative new play [Below](#) about a traditional accordionist, Danny O'Mahony, will be on the week before St. Patrick's Day, and we will have more distinguished visitors and guests this semester! Please join us at an event, as a minor, or in a class or program!

*Joseph Lennon, Emily C. Riley Director of Irish Studies*

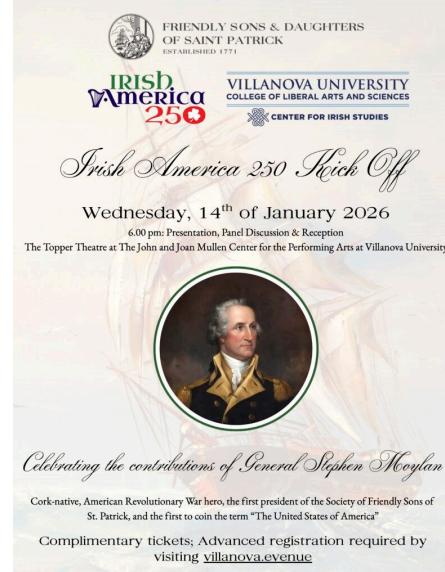
#### Spring 2026 Public Events

##### Wednesday, January 14: Irish America 250 Kick Off

We will launch [Irish America 250](#) with the [Society of the Friendly Sons and Daughters of St. Patrick](#) and the [Irish American Business Chamber Network](#). The event is a tribute to [Stephen Moylan](#), the Society's first president, aide-de-camp to General George Washington, and the first to write the phrase "The United States of America." Moylan, born in Cork, served as 2nd [Quartermaster General](#) and Commander of the Cavalry of the [Continental Army](#).

Tickets are SOLD OUT, but there is a [Livestream available](#).

Mullen Center Topper Theatre at 6:00pm




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## Thursday, January 22: Hidetaka Hirota talk: "Irish Immigration and the Origins of Deportation Policy in the United States"



The United States' deportation policy is receiving considerable attention today, but Irish immigration in the nineteenth century is often left out in the inquiry into the history of US deportation policy. This lecture explores how northeastern states developed policies for restricting immigration, including deportation, in response to Irish immigration in the mid-nineteenth century and how these state-level measures helped lay the foundations for federal immigration laws.

[Hidetaka Hirota](#) is a social and legal historian from UC Berkely, specializing in the history of American nativism and immigration control, and the author of ***Expelling the Poor: Atlantic Seaboard States and the Nineteenth-Century Origins of American Immigration Policy***.

This event is co-sponsored by [the Albert Lepage Center](#), [Mother Cabrini Institute](#), [Center for Peace and Justice Education](#), [Farmworker Legal Aid Clinic](#) and [CARES \(Clinic for asylee Refugee and Emigrant Services\)](#). ACS Approved.

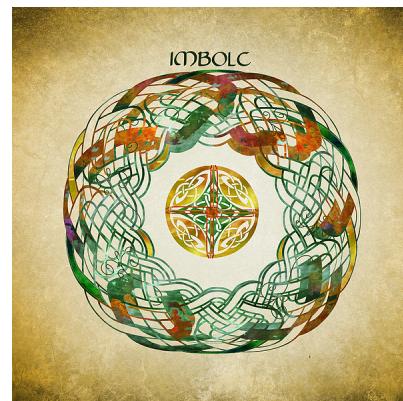
**Garey Hall, Alumni Event Room at 4:00pm**

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## Early February date TBA: St. Brigid & James Joyce Celebration

Join us at McShea's Pub in Ardmore as we celebrate a talismanic time of year for Irish culture. Imbolc is a traditional Gaelic festival marking the beginning of Spring. The first day of Imbolc, February 1, is recognized as the Feast of St. Brigid. February 2nd is the birthday of James Joyce. Festivities include Irish dancers, Brigid's Cross making, Irish music and reading from Joyce and on Brigid. Food will be served!

**Jack McShea's Pub, Ardmore at 7:00pm**



## Monday, February 10: University College Dublin (UCD) & Villanova Virtual Round Table: Perspectives on the Theme of Migration



Join us as we explore the theme of Migration from both the Irish and American perspective. Faculty members from both Villanova University and UCD will come together to discuss aspects of migration through a variety of lenses. All are welcome to view this livestreamed roundtable. For a link to the livestream contact Alyssa Burtchin at [alyssa.burtchin@villanova.edu](mailto:alyssa.burtchin@villanova.edu)

**Virtual event**  
**10:00am**

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## Wednesday, February 11: John Borgonovo Talk: "Mapping Revolutionary Ireland: The Atlas of the Irish Revolution Project"

Join us for a talk from University College Cork Historian, [John Borgonovo](#), as he discusses recent historical work on mapping the revolutionary war against Britain, which saw the partition and independence of Ireland in the early 1920s. [The Atlas of the Irish Revolution Project](#) represents a landmark contribution to the study of the revolutionary years in Ireland. Over 300 new maps were generated that provided new ways of seeing and understanding the Irish revolutionary experience. ACS Approved.

**St. Augustine Center, Room 300 at 4pm**



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## Tuesday, February 24: Cauvery Madhavan, Charles A. Heimbolt, Jr. Chair of Irish Studies, Reading



Join us for our annual reading and talk, from the 2026 [Charles A. Heimbolt, Jr. Chair for Irish Studies](#), Cauvery Madhavan, as part of the Villanova Literary Festival.

[Cauvery Madhavan](#) was born in India, where she began her career as a copywriter in Chennai before moving to County Sligo in 1987. She later settled in County Kildare, where she lives today with her husband near their three children.

She is the author of four novels: *The Inheritance* (2024), *The Tainted* (2020), *The Uncoupling* (2003), and *Paddy Indian* (2001). A regular contributor to *The Irish Times*, she has also written for the *Evening Herald*, *Sunday Tribune*, *The Phoenix*, *Travel Extra*, and *The Guardian*. Known for her meticulous research, she approaches both fiction and journalism with intellectual rigor and depth—often reading extensively to inform her opinion pieces. An avid reader since childhood, she cites Joseph O'Connor's *Star of the Sea* as the book that inspired her to write, and credits Amitav Ghosh as another major influence. She reads widely across genres—except horror—with a particular love for historical fiction and stories that illuminate hidden histories. She is deeply honored to serve as the Charles A. Heimbolt, Jr. Chair of Irish Studies, a position previously held by some of her literary heroes.

**Connelly Center, Presidents' Lounge**

Reception - 6:00pm  
Reading - 7:00pm

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### March 11-13: *Bellow*



***Bellow*** is a heartfelt performance exploring the weight of tradition, the capriciousness of memory and the artist's need to express their true self. Ireland's leading experimental theatre company, [Brokentalkers](#), join forces with traditional musician, [Danny O'Mahony](#), a man who had dedicated his life to the preservation of traditional Irish music and to the mastery of his craft.

Now, after 40 years of breathing life into centuries-old tunes to honor the memory of those who have come before him, Danny is finally taking a moment to stop and consider what this lifelong dedication has cost him. Danny takes the audiences on a personal journey of self-reflection, revisiting pivotal moments in his life: his first taste of music as a child, the mentors who shaped him, and the unrelenting pursuit of mastery that left little room for little else.

The performance fuses traditional music, an original electronic composition by Iceland's [Valgier Siggurðson](#) and contemporary dance, heightening the tension between past and present, contemporary and traditional, preservation and progress.

**Wednesday 3/11, Thursday 3/12 and Friday 3/14**

**All shows are at 7pm**

**Mullen Center Topper Theatre**

**Tickets \$10-\$25, [on sale now](#)**

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### Thursday, April 9: Dr. Cera Murtagh Book Launch

Join us as we celebrate the launch of Dr. Murtagh's book [Civic Parties in Divided Societies](#).

In Northern Ireland and Bosnia-Herzegovina, a new form of politics is emerging thirty years after conflict. Despite ongoing polarization, civic political parties - those that reject ethno-nationalism and organize around alternative identities and issues - have formed, endured, and claimed political space. Notably, these parties have emerged within the

context of constitutional power-sharing, a political system explicitly designed to accommodate ethno-national groups.

The rise of civic politics challenges the dominant narrative of deeply divided societies. Cera Murtagh explores how countries transition from armed conflict to issue-based democracies, highlighting both the institutional barriers that civic parties face and the opportunities they can seize. Drawing on extensive fieldwork, including more than one hundred semi-structured elite interviews at critical political moments, *Civic Parties in Divided Societies* is the culmination of over a decade's research on Northern Ireland and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and beyond. ACS Approved. Co-sponsored by the Political Science Department



Falvey Library, Speaker's Corner at 4:00pm

## Irish Study Abroad Scholarship & Application Deadlines



Now is the time to be preparing for study-abroad programming this summer! Please see below for dates and deadlines and, students, stay tuned about future information sessions or reach out for information.

### Paid Internship at the Jackie Clarke Museum and Library in Ballina, Co. Mayo

The graduate-level internships provide opportunities for professional development in Irish Studies while living and working abroad. Interns serve as Archives Assistants at the museum, which houses a unique and important collection of manuscripts, printed materials and artifacts. Advanced undergraduates may also apply.

**Deadline: January 31, 2026, by 5pm**



### Summer Dublin EYE (Early Years' Experience) Internship

The Summer Dublin EYE provides first-year Villanova students the unique opportunity to explore and challenge their career assumptions through a 3-credit international work experience in Dublin, Ireland, while also introducing them to the various forms of expressions of traditional and contemporary Irish identity and culture through a 3-credit course on literature, music, and the arts.

**Deadline: February 15, 2026**



### Summer Studio in Irish Theater

From the studio to the stage, graduate students will study the workings and history of Ireland's world-class national theatre while developing their own theatre skills, knowledge, and practice. Student work will culminate in a showing of final work in the Lir, Ireland's National Academy of Dramatic



Art and guided by Abbey Theatre professionals.

**Deadline: March 1, 2026**

### **Summer Irish Studies in Galway**

The Villanova Irish Studies Summer Program will introduce students to Ireland's history, literature, society and archaeology through a 10-day Orientation in Dublin, and the Aran Islands, and one month of coursework at the National University of Ireland, Galway Summer School in Irish Studies.

**Deadline: March 1, 2026**



### **Irish Studies in Galway (Fall 2026)**

Spend a semester studying in Ireland's "Cultural Heart" at the National University of Ireland (NUI), Galway. Located in the west of Ireland, with deep and rich connections to Irish culture, NUI Galway offers a diverse curriculum which can accommodate most Villanova majors including Sciences and Engineering.

**Deadline: April 15, 2026**



## **Spring 2026 Calendar of Events**

January 14

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Mullen Center Topper Theatre, at 6:00pm

January 22

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Alumni Room, Garey Hall at 4:00pm

TBA

### **Imbolc and James Joyce Celebration**

Jack McShea's Pub, in Ardmore, at 7:00 pm

February 10

### **University College Dublin (UCD) & Villanova Virtual Round Table: Perspectives on the Theme of Migration**

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February 11

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Room 300, St. Augustine Center at 4:00pm

February 24

**Cauvery Madhavan, Charles A. Heimbolt, Jr. Chair of Irish Studies, Reading**  
Reception - 6:00 pm  
Reading - 7:00 pm  
Presidents' Lounge, Connolly Center

March 11-13

***Below***

Mullen Center Topper Theatre, Villanova University  
All shows at 7pm

April 9

**Dr. Cera Murtagh Book Launch: *Civic Parties Divided in Societies***  
Falvey Library Speaker's Corner, at 4:00pm

[Visit our Website](#)

**Stay Connected**



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