

DUNGIVEN TOWN

Dungiven woman among Irish Language Broadcast Fund graduates honoured

Northern Ireland Screen hosted a reception in The Linen Hall Library on Thursday to mark the graduation of 12 trainees who took part in various Irish Language Broadcast Fund (ILBF) training schemes and to welcome six new trainees onto the New Entrant scheme this year.

ILBF Investment Committee Chairwoman, Róise Ní Bhaoill, presented the trainees with certificates in recognition of their achievements.

Among the trainees was Dungiven woman Caitlín Ní Cheallaigh. Méabh Ní Dhoibhlin, from Toome, also graduated.

The Irish Language Broadcast Fund offers several different training opportunities for Irish speakers working or aspiring to work in the independent production sector. A key principle of the training

schemes is that they should lead to an advancement of skills, expertise and general career development, which impacts positively on not only the Irish language production industry but the wider sector in Northern Ireland.

This year, twelve trainees graduated across seven year-long courses: five on the New Entrants 2018-19 scheme; one on the Trainee Assistant Editor scheme; two on the Trainee Producer scheme; one on the Trainee Video Journalist scheme; one on the Post-Production Supervisor scheme; one on the Production Co-ordinator Scheme and one on the Trainee Digital Producer scheme. Additionally, six candidates for this year's New Entrants 2019-20 scheme were recognised for having completed the Introduction to Production course at BBC.

Several clips from

programmes produced by the trainees were screened as part of the ceremony to an audience which included representatives from various television production companies, BBC Northern Ireland, NvTv, Raidió Fáilte and Northern Ireland Screen.

Róise Ní Bhaoill said: "Congratulations to all the trainees who have completed their ILBF training schemes this year. I am thrilled to represent the ILBF Investment Committee and celebrate the achievements of all those here today."

"The training schemes funded through the ILBF continue to provide fantastic opportunities for participants to gain the necessary skills required to secure employment within the local Irish speaking production sector."

Aine Walsh, Head of the Irish Language Broadcast Fund, said: "The ILBF is



Pictured is trainee Méabh Ní Dhoibhlin from Toome.



Pictured is trainee Caitlín Ní Cheallaigh from Dungiven.

delighted that many of the trainees who participated on the various training schemes have already secured employment or are continuing training within the production sector. I am excited about seeing their work on Irish language productions in the future.

"This has also been an

excellent opportunity to meet and welcome our new trainees on board the scheme. These trainees will support the development of the Irish language production sector in Northern Ireland – one of the key aims of the ILBF."

The ILBF's annual New Entrant training scheme is

now in full swing with six new trainees since the beginning of September. The scheme began with a two-week intensive training course in the BBC in Belfast and the trainees have now begun their placements with production companies and NvTv.

Famous German artist sings for the Shipyard workers ahead of Dungiven gig

When Berlin's most outstanding singer, accordionist and songwriter Isabel Neuenfeldt was confirmed as the highlight performer at the 26th Flax Mill Yard Fest in Dungiven on September 14, many music-lovers from far and near were joyful – last year's super performance by the energetic artist was in great memory.

Mill owner Marion Baur expressed her delight but was also aware of the fact that the "musical powerhouse" (four concerts per week is her average) had to travel 2,000 kilometres one way to perform at the event.

When booking her flight, the organisers of the Yard Fest made sure that the day before the event was kept free for Isabel, no interviews, no photo sessions etc. were taken.

Marion Baur explained: "My husband rang Isabel in



The linen tea-towel Marion made for the Shipyard workers, an artist from Cookstown painted on it

Berlin a few days before her flight to make sure all was ok. She told him that she had learned about the workers in Belfast occupying the Shipyard to keep it from being closed down. 'I need to go there to give these brave men a song or two' was her wish – so much for the free day."

The mill owner – she had shown support to the workers a week previous - contacted the trade union reps and got an overwhelming response.

"They were humbled and delighted to be able to welcome such a well-known artist amongst the workers. Isabel arrived here in the night, had a few hours' sleep and we organised transport to Belfast for her. I accompanied her and can tell you that in all my years as an active trade unionist I have not seen as emotional a gathering," said Marion.

Isabel Neuenfeldt gave the workers her very own version of the American copper miners' song "Joe Hill" in two languages (she has translated the famous piece into German) and Christie Moore's "Ordinary Man".

When she took the stage at Derrylane the day after, the mentioning of her trip to Belfast by the compere caused standing ovations.

Marion added: "It showed me how many people are in sympathy with the workers, Isabel's attitude won her a lot of admiration amongst our visitors".

Isabel Neuenfeldt has returned to Berlin since and is spreading the news about the attempt by the workers to save Harland and Wolff. A German journalist asked her why she went to sing for them.

"These times are cold and egoistic. The attempt by the Belfast workers to keep their jobs, hold on to the world's oldest and most famous industrial unit, stick together to beat greed and inhumanity deserves the support of all honest people from far and near," she said.

"We are being told a lot about heroes past and present. I think those men in Belfast are the real heroes of these days. It is the least I can do as an artist to go to them and do what I can do best – sing. Marion showed me



Isa on stage at the Flax Mill Yard Fest last weekend. PHOTO: SVEN - OLAF ROESSLER

some emails she received after I had been at the Shipyard. One woman said she loved me for this. I think it should be normal, every-day - practise to show solidarity with your fellow man or woman."

Isabel Neuenfeldt will be back on these shores in exactly one year's time. The organisers of the Yard Fest – the 27th one will happen on September 12, 2020 - have booked her straight after this

year's concert and she agreed straight away.

Marion added: "To have an artist of her class and human quality amongst us is very honouring. MLA John Dallat who welcomed this year's performers in the area said it is a great delight to have musicians and poets from all corners of the globe here. We couldn't agree more and will try our best to bring several acts as good as Isabel next year's Yard Fest."