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Galway City and County have the honour of hosting the European Capital of Culture in 2020 on behalf of the Irish nation.

The core themes that run through Galway 2020 are **Migration, Landscape and Language** and all 3 resonate within a broader European context, one where Galway will become a cultural focus in 2020. Migration celebrates Irish history as well as the diversity of cultures in Europe against the backdrop of Galway County and City – a city where 24 per cent of its population was born outside of Ireland. Landscape reflects Galway's position on the edge of Europe as it collaborates with European partners to delight, challenge and engage citizens across its rural and marine landscape.

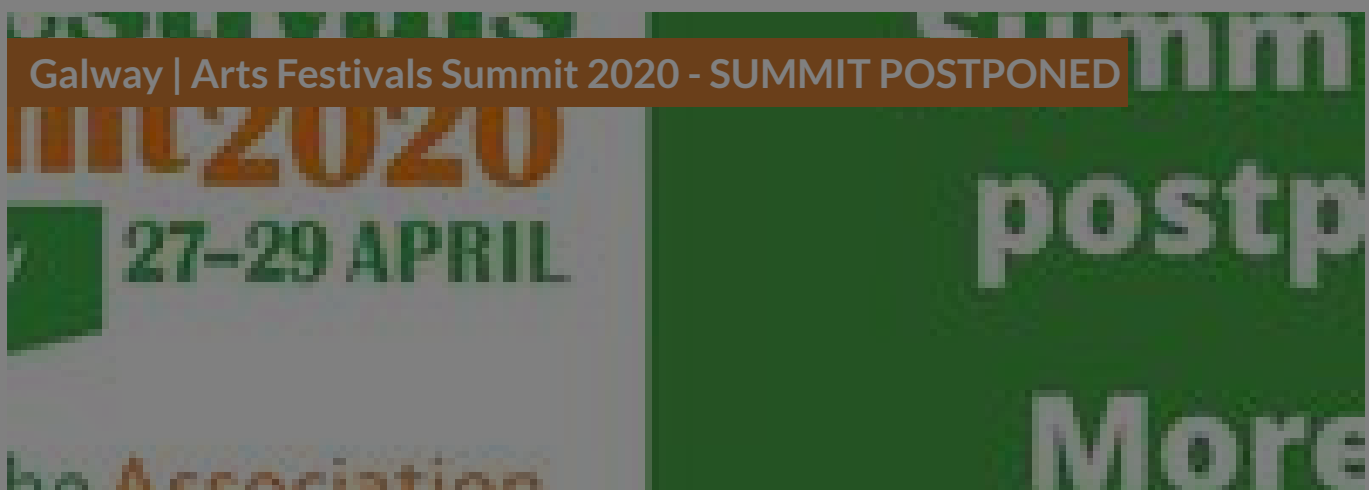
Galway 2020 represents the **legacy of decades of artistic endeavour and investment in the culture** of this place. It is a climax of everything that has gone before and a stepping-stone to a future that will leave an improved cultural infrastructure and heightened awareness of the role of culture in society; a society that appreciates the role of its artists and the possibilities that they bring. This exciting year provides extraordinary opportunities for local people to create and participate in something beyond their wildest expectations.

In recognition of the historic traditions, the programme is **based around the 4 fire seasons of Ireland's ancient pre-Christian calendar**, examining the country's roots in celebration and commemoration. It begins in February 2020, as does the pagan festival Imbolc, which represents the start of spring with its promise of new life and new beginnings. Following a spectacular, outdoor opening ceremony, the programme will unfold throughout the year according to the Celtic seasons of Bealtaine, Lughnasa and Samhain.

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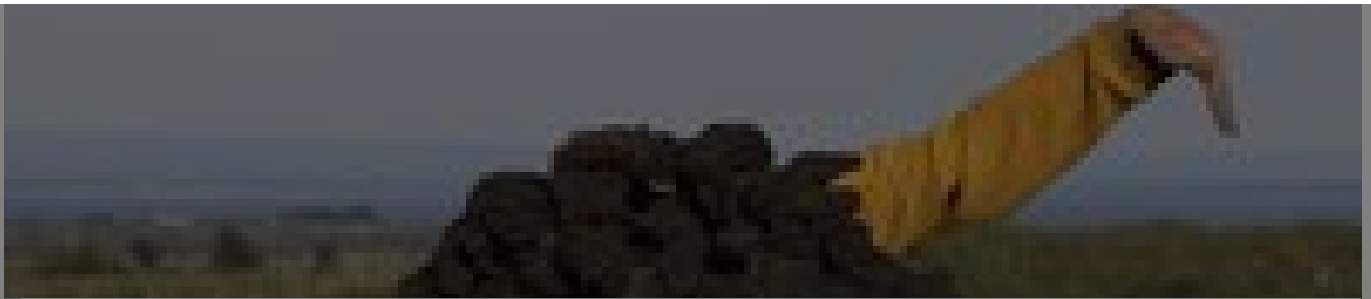


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