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Message from Robert O'Driscoll

Consul General of Ireland

A chairde, friends,

I am delighted to welcome you to the second annual Los Gatos Irish Literary Festival. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the festival founder and director, Catherine Barry, for curating a program that celebrates the best of contemporary Irish literary and cultural talent, and provides space to pause for reflection and explore the history of Ireland and the rich heritage of the Irish diaspora.

This is my first festival since taking up the position as Consul General of Ireland to Western USA in July 2017, taking up the reins from my predecessor, Philip Grant. In the short time since I have been in the U.S. I have been taken by the breadth and the depth of the relationship between Ireland and the US. I have also been struck by the circularity of that relationship. It is best described as a conversation, with each side sharing their values, skills and knowledge in turn to the betterment of the other – a mutually beneficial continuous circle of inspiration – a “fáinne na h-inspiraide” – that continues to replenish and revitalize the Irish-American relationship.

This festival, which builds on the Sister City connections between Los Gatos and Listowel, is an important opportunity to support and nurture the circle of inspiration by providing a platform to make new connections and to develop new literary and cultural relationships.

The Los Gatos Irish Literary Festival is supported, in part, by the Government of Ireland through Culture Ireland, operating under the Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht, which promotes Irish arts worldwide, by supporting opportunities for Irish artists and companies to present and promote their work at strategic international festivals such as this.

I wish this year's Irish Writers' Festival every success. I look forward to joining you over the coming days as we explore together the rich tapestry of Irish literature, culture and history.

Le gach dea ghúí,

Robert O'Driscoll