Theatrum Animi

European Theatre & Mental Health Practice

THEATRUM ANIMI EUROPEAN SYMPOSIUM

22 October 2026 | Smock Alley Theatre, Dublin

FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

Co-funded by the European Union

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WELCOME

Welcome to the THEATRUM ANIMI European Symposium 2026!

Today, we bring together artists, creative practitioners, mental health advocates and organisations from across Europe to explore the powerful relationship between theatre and mental health.

Through conversations, performances and shared experiences, we will consider how theatre can challenge stigma, encourage connection, inspire new perspectives and create space for meaningful dialogue.

This symposium is an opportunity to share ideas, learn from one another and celebrate the role of creativity in building more inclusive and understanding communities.

Thank you for joining us and being part of the conversation.

First Fortnight & the THEATRUM ANIMI Partners

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MORNING PROGRAMME

9.30am	**Registration, Tea & Coffee**
10.00am	**Welcome & Opening** Emily Scanlan, First Fortnight Maria Fleming, First Fortnight
10.00am	**Ministerial Address** Mary Bulter TD, Minister for Mental Health
11.00am	**Creative Interlude: Ashes** Performed by Emma Lundenmark, Magnus Alinder and Catherine Jones
11.10am	**Break**
11.25am	**Across Europe: Theatre, Mental Health & Community** **Moderated by:** Dr Tanya Dean, TU Dublin Conservatoire. **Panelists:** Pasquale Vita, ATER Fondazion, Italy Emma Lundenmark, Dejv iska, Sweden Martina Cumova, L'Altre Festival, Spain Eveliina Lafghani, Taiteen Sulattamo, Finland
12.00pm	**Creative Interlude: Connecting with the Body** Facilitated by Adrienne Cassidy
12.15pm	**In Conversation with PJ Gallagher** A conversation exploring creativity, comedy, mental health and lived experience, and the power of sharing personal stories to challenge stigma.

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AFTERNOON PROGRAMME

1.00pm — **Lunch & Partner Exchange**

14.30pm — **Creative Interlude: We Must Create**
Performed by Stephen James Smith

14.45pm — **The Big Conversation**
An opportunity to reflect on the day's discussions and consider how theatre and creativity can support more inclusive communities and meaningful conversations around mental health.

15.05pm — **Introducing Theatre Can Campaign**
Cat Maher, First Fortnight

15.15pm — **Creative Interlude: Justin(e) Case**
Performed by Helena Ryti

15.30pm — **Closing Remarks**
Maria Fleming, First Fortnight

16.00pm — **Networking Reception**

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SPEAKER BIOS

MARIA FLEMING

CEO | First Fortnight

CEO of First Fortnight, an arts and mental health organisation challenging stigma through creativity, cultural participation and creative arts therapy.

MARY BUTLER TD

Minister for Mental Health

Holding government responsibility for mental health, supporting community-based services and improved access to care.

PASQUALE VITA

ATER Fondazione, Italy

Over 25 years of performing arts experience, specialising in cultural programming, international partnerships and inclusive theatre.

EMMA LUNDENMARK

Dejviska Production / Scen Totalnormal, Sweden

Writer and theatre practitioner who developed Antistigmateater, using participatory theatre to challenge mental health stigma and support recovery.

MARTINA CUMOVA

L'Altre Festival, Spain

Works in communications and international relations at L'Altre Festival, promoting inclusive performing arts and cultural participation

EVELIINA LAFGHANI

L'Altre Festival, Spain

Executive Director of Taiteen Sulattamo, exploring theatre, mental health recovery and inclusion through creative participation.

PJ GALLAGHER

Comedian, Actor & Broadcaster

Irish comedian and broadcaster whose openness about his mental health experiences has helped encourage conversations around stigma and recovery.

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ater.emr.it

arteesalute.org

centrodiegofabbri.it

dejviska.com

firstfortnight.ie

laltrefestival.cat

plavopozoriste.org

meziploty.cz

taiteensulattamo.fi

THEATRUM ANIMI is a cooperation project co-funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union (Grant Agreement No. 101255376).

Running for 30 months, from March 2026 to August 2028, the project brings together nine organisations across seven European countries to connect theatre and mental health practice, share knowledge and develop new approaches to reducing mental health stigma.

Discover more: theatrumanimi.eu

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