



#DouglassWeek 2023 | Rochester, NY and online

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IRELAND AND USA UNITE TO HONOUR FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Event series commemorates anti-slavery campaigner who visited Cork in 1845

Final preparations are underway for #DouglassWeek, a creative event series that unites Ireland and the USA in celebrating the life and achievements of legendary American anti-slavery campaigner Frederick Douglass and other changemakers.

The announcement comes on the 171st anniversary of Douglass' famous "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July" speech, a masterful and scathing indictment of slavery in America delivered on July 5, 1852 in Rochester, New York. This year, #DouglassWeek will be held in Rochester from July 10th - 16th, with additional in-person and online events in Ireland and Washington, DC.

Each year, #DouglassWeek includes seven days of talks, walks, performances and other events commemorating Frederick Douglass and others whose legacies continue to influence efforts to create a more just world. The week is organised by US nonprofit organisation The Globe Lane Initiative in partnership with a wide network of Douglass scholars, historians, and researchers, along with artists, musicians, poets, community groups and activists from around the world. Participants respond to the story of Douglass and other changemakers through historical, creative, academic, cultural and other lenses to describe the influence of history on contemporary topics and conversations.

Frederick Douglass stayed in Cork for a month in late 1845 when he was travelling throughout Ireland and Britain as part of a two-year speaking tour, delivering powerful speeches denouncing slavery and raising funds for the abolitionist cause in the United States. He had escaped enslavement just seven years earlier at the age of twenty and described his time in Ireland as "transformative" and key to the development of his political thinking. Douglass returned home to America in 1847 and settled in Rochester where he published his famous North Star newspaper, raised his children with wife Anna Murray Douglass, and continued a remarkable career as a writer, orator, diplomat and advisor to at least three US Presidents, including President Abraham Lincoln.

Dr. Caroline Dunham-Schroeter and Kristin M. Leary are co-organisers of #DouglassWeek and their team includes partners like the Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives, a non-profit organisation founded by Douglass descendants and headquartered in Rochester. Dr. Dunham-Schroeter said: *"We are delighted to be able to remember the life of Frederick Douglass in both Rochester and Ireland during a week of important events to commemorate what he stood for and his efforts to abolish slavery and change the future for generations to come. We believe it's vital to*



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bring these stories to the locations where he had an impact during his lifetime, and we hope to bring his legacy to a wider audience, including more young people.”

Frederick Douglass spoke for the first time in Cork at a small venue on Globe Lane in 1845. The street no longer exists, but the name Globe Lane provides a touchstone to the organisation’s roots in Cork and the inspiration for their work, grounded on a small lane in Ireland but connecting people globally and throughout the world. In 2020, planning for #DouglassWeek started in Cork, and the inaugural #DouglassWeek was held there (although virtually) in 2021.

Several legacy projects have been developed around the world to strengthen links between #DouglassWeek host cities, notably the Cork Abolitionists Trail, part of Globe Lane Initiative’s Journeys for Freedom project and generously supported by The Irish Government Emigrant Support Programme and Cork City Council.

On Wednesday, July 12th, Dr Adrian Mulligan of Bucknell University will lead a guided tour of the Trail, a walking route of sites where Douglass lived and spoke during his time in Cork. The Trail also provides an insight into the rich history and geography of Corkonian abolitionism which would prove so consequential to achieving emancipation in the United States, especially. While Frederick Douglass was the best-known abolitionist to visit Cork, he was part of a tradition involving many other abolitionists who made the journey before and after him.

Additional events on Frederick Douglass in Ireland include an online Anti-Slavery Belfast Tour by Mark Doherty and Dr Tom Thorpe, on Friday, July 14th and on Sunday, July 16th, there will be a virtual live workshop in Barretstown, Co. Kildare.

Viewers are also encouraged to tune in online to attend a host of events ranging from a screening of a play about Douglass’ relationship with President Lincoln, to talks about the role of museums, curators and activism and the history of the Underground Railroad in America.

More information and further events can be found at www.douglassweek.org on Twitter at @DouglassWeek23, @DouglassWeek on Instagram or on the #DouglassWeek YouTube channel or Facebook page.

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Images attached

Image 1: Kristin M. Leary and Dr. Caroline Dunham-Schroeter with Kenneth B. Morris, not., great-great-great grandson of Frederick and Anna Douglass. Photo courtesy of the Globe Lane Initiative

Image 2: Kenneth B. Morris, not., great-great-great grandson of Frederick and Anna Douglass at an image of Frederick Douglass in Cork city. Photo courtesy of the Globe Lane Initiative



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ABOUT #DouglassWeek

#DouglassWeek is organised by the nonprofit The Globe Lane Initiative and celebrates the inspiration of Frederick Douglass around the world. The annual event series includes discussions, performances, exhibitions and events inspired by Douglass and other changemakers. Programming is presented in partnership with a wide network of Douglass scholars, historians, and researchers, along with artists, musicians, poets, community groups, writers, and activists. Participants respond to the story of Douglass and others through historical, creative, academic, cultural and other lenses to describe the influence of history on contemporary topics and conversations.

For further information, please contact:

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