

Bord Scannán na hÉireann /  
Irish Film Board &  
TG4 PRESENT

IN ASSOCIATION WITH  
NORTHERN IRELAND SCREEN'S  
IRISH LANGUAGE BROADCAST FUND

MG ALBA AND THE BROADCASTING  
AUTHORITY OF IRELAND

NOT TO BE MISSED!

A  
BELOW  
★ THE ★  
RADAR

PRODUCTION

CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT

RINGSIDE  
1984  
★★★

BEST DOCUMENTARY  
Irish Film  
Festival, Boston  
2017

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
Irish Film  
Festival, Boston  
2017

# ROCKY ROS MUC

CAREER RECORD  
1978 - 1993

W L D  
42 14 1

SOUTHPAW

\*\*\*\*\*  
ROS MUC IRELAND  
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DIRECTED BY MICHAEL FANNING

BELOW THE RADAR PRESENTS "ROCKY ROS MUC" EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS TREVOR BIRNEY PROINSIAS NÍ GHRAINNE MARY GALLERY ÁINE WALSH MARGARET CAMERON ORIGINAL MUSIC ANDREW SIMON MCALLISTER  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ROWAN FOX EDITOR MICHAEL PAISLEY ASSISTANT PRODUCER MAIRÉAD NÍ THREINIR ASSOCIATE PRODUCER RÓDÁN MAC CON IOMAIRÉ PRODUCERS MÁIRE BHREATHNACH MICHAEL FANNING DIRECTOR MICHAEL FANNING

TG4

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BORD SCANNÁN NA hÉIREANN

BAI

LEAGAS  
GRADACHAN  
AUTHORITY  
OF IRELAND

NORTHERN IRELAND SCREEN  
Irish Language Broadcast Fund  
An Cúir Creadaíochtaí Ceallige

MG  
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A Scottish Media Property

Bord Scannán na hÉireann/Irish Film Board  
& TG4

present

A Below The Radar production  
In association with  
Northern Ireland Screen's Irish Language Broadcast Fund  
MG ALBA  
& the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland

# ROCKY ROS MUC

A Film by Michael Fanning



BEST DOCUMENTARY

**Irish Film  
Festival, Boston**

2017



OFFICIAL SELECTION

**Irish Film  
Festival, Boston**

2017

**Below The Radar Ltd**  
2nd Floor Callender House,  
58-60 Upper Arthur Street,  
Belfast, BT1 4GJ  
Northern Ireland

**+44 (0)28 9031 5522 (office phone)**

**Michael Fanning**  
**mfanning@belowtheradar.tv**

**Máire Bhreathnach**  
**mbhreathnach@belowtheradar.tv**



## SYNOPSIS

From humble beginnings, to challenging for a world title crown. From the quiet Gaeltacht village of Ros Muc in Co Galway, to the criminal underworld of James 'Whitey' Bulger and the mean streets of Boston. *Rocky Ros Muc* examines spirit inside the ring and troubles outside; the reality of emigration and its impact on identity.

In the mid 1970's Sean Mannion left Galway for Boston. Like many before him, he left behind his home village of Ros Muc and headed for a new life in America.

He had a talent for boxing. His sparing partners at his gym were at the heart of Whitey Bulger's Winter Hill gang. Friends. Fellow emigrants. His world was their world. The fighting Irish. Drugs, racketeering and murder. This was the reality of life in South Boston.

In October 1984, Sean stood in the boxing ring in Madison Square Garden, in New York City, fighting for a WBA world title crown. His rise up the professional ranks wasn't straightforward. Neither was his descent.

*Rocky Ros Muc* is Sean Mannion's story. His life and boxing career. The ups and downs of both.

A story of survival. Of determination, honour and strength. A story about identity and community. Not just for Sean Mannion, but for the thousands of emigrants like him.



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

"I don't care what you say, as long as it's the truth." These were Sean Mannion's words to me as we talked about the documentary we were making on his life. He was giving my producer and I, a tour of Ros Muc, his home village in Conamara.

Those words were important. Not just to Sean, but to me, because his life story isn't always a happy one.

I first came across Sean Mannion through Rónán Mac Con Iomaire's book, Rocky Ros Muc. I was totally gripped. I'd never heard of him and the fact that Mannion's name wasn't a household one made me want to tell it all the more. Throw in the Irish of Dorchester and South Boston and the criminal underworld of James 'Whitey' Bulger and it was clear this was a story that would resonate beyond fans of boxing.

When Sean Mannion left home as a teenager, he didn't go to Galway or Dublin. He went west, to Boston. It wasn't seen as strange, or unusual. Just the way it was.

But there are two Ros Muc's; one in Conamara and one in Boston. Sean Mannion left one for the other.

And in America he found all the things that he had left behind; the Irish language, boxing, friends and family. That sense of place, community and identity remained important to Sean and others like him. And for me as a filmmaker, an integral part of the story.

Sean left Ireland as the All Ireland Junior champion. In America, he turned pro. A savvy boxer, a south paw. And while he may have lacked that knock-out punch, he more than made up for it in ability and skill. A real student of the game. By the end of 1982 Ring Magazine ranked Sean as US Champion – ahead of some of the biggest names around. In October 1984, he fought for the WBA World Light Middle Weight title at the home of boxing, Madison Square Garden in New York City.

All the while, back home in Ireland, he remained unknown outside his small village.

But this is not just a story about sporting achievement and boxing, it's about real life and shared experiences.

Mannion is a humble man. This is his story. But it's so much more.



## KEY PRODUCTION PERSONEL



### MICHAEL FANNING

**Director/Producer**

Michael is an award winning producer and director who has produced a range of current affairs and factual programmes for both network and regional broadcasters including Channel 4 News, Sky, RTÉ, BBC and TG4.

Since 2013 Michael has been Managing Director of Below The Radar and oversees all of company's projects in both English and Irish language as Executive Producer.

Michael began his career in UTV where he spent 5 years working in news and current affairs. He lives in Lisburn, Co. Antrim with his wife and 3 children.

Rocky Ros Muc is his first feature documentary.



### MÁIRE BHREATHNACH

**Producer**

Máire is originally from the Donegal Gaeltacht of Gort a Choirce. She is a respected broadcaster, presenter and producer. She has presented a number of TV series for both TG4 and BBC Northern Ireland and is also a presenter on Blas, BBC Radio Ulster's Irish language magazine programme.

Máire is currently head of Irish language at Below The Radar. Prior to that, Máire was an Irish language trainer with the Irish Civil Service.



## RÓNÁN MAC CON IOMAIRE

### Associate Producer

Rónán Mac Con Iomaire is Group Head, Irish Language, at RTÉ, and is the first person to be appointed to that role. Previously, he was Leascheannaire (Deputy Head) of RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta.

Prior to that, Rónán was Local Government correspondent for Nuacht RTÉ and TG4, where he won a number of awards for his journalism, as well as writing for publications such as the Irish Independent, Evening Herald and Irish Times. He has also presented, filmed and shot a number of documentaries for Nuacht.

Rónán was awarded the New Writer of the Year award at the Oireachtas Literary Awards for *Rocky Ros Muc*, a biography of Irish boxer, Seán Mannion, a book that went on to become the fastest-selling Irish language book of all time.

He lives in the Galway Gaeltacht village of An Cheathrú Rua with his wife, Máirín, and three children.



## TREVOR BIRNEY

### Executive Producer

Award-winning producer / director Trevor Birney has a strong track record as a producer of quality documentaries and series for Irish, UK and international broadcasters. He is a co-producer on the Emmy award-winning (oscar shortlisted), Alex Gibney feature-documentary, 'Mea Maxima Culpa: Silence in the House of God', which won an IFTA in February, 2013.

Trevor founded Fine Point Films to build on that success by focussing on further international collaborations. In 2006, Trevor founded Belfast-based production company Below The Radar where he produced a range of English and Irish language programming, from award-winning political biographies to landmark history series to live, weekly magazine shows. Prior to that, he was editor of current affairs at Ulster Television.

In a career spanning two decades, he has also won a Justice Media Award, two Royal Television Society awards, been nominated for three others and was named NI Broadcaster of the Year in 2002. Trevor began his career in Enniskillen on the "Impartial Reporter" newspaper and has also worked in radio.





## MICHAEL PAISLEY

### Film Editor

Michael Paisley is Senior Editor at Below The Radar. He is former Principal Editor with UTV.

With more than 20 years experience Michael has edited two Royal Television Society Award winning current affairs programmes. Having worked in a wide range of genres he has had productions short listed for RTS, Broadcast and ITV Awards as well as recognition in Broadcast Creative Review.



## RONAN FOX

### DoP

Ronan is an award winning cameraman with an extensive list of credits for his work which has taken him all over the world. 'The Morisson Tapes' in America, 'The Irish Empire' throughout Africa the memorable mockumentary series 'Paths To Freedom' are examples of his early work. Recent credits include 'John Sheahan - Dubliner', 'Dolores Keane - A Storm In The Heart', 'Paddy Moloey - Chieftan', 'The Burning of Bridget Cleary', 'Cathal O'Shannon's 'Ireland's Nazi's', 'The Radharc Squad', 'W.B. Yeats - No Country For Old Men and 'Brendan Behan - The Roaring Boy'





## ANDREW SIMON MCALLISTER

### Composer

Andrew Simon McAllister is a composer and multi-instrumentalist whose television credits include BBC 'Planet Earth' and BBC WWI drama '37 Days' starring Ian McDiarmid for which Andrew received a Royal Television Awards nomination.

Feature film credits include Netflix 'Hostage to the Devil', 'We're Doomed! The Dad's Army Story', 'Shooting for Socrates', 'The Healer', 'The Breaker' and 'My Lonely Me'. His soundtrack for 'My Lonely Me' was nominated for Best Soundtrack at the World Music and Independent Film Awards and won Best Soundtrack at the International Independent Film Awards. In 2015 Andrew composed the music for BBC TV movie 'We're Doomed! The Making of Dad's Army', which was broadcast on Christmas Day. Andrew recently completed the score to primetime drama 'The Secret' for ITV, starring James Nesbitt and is currently working on the score to feature film 'Zoo', starring Toby Jones and Penelope Wilton.

Andrew attended Berklee College of Music, graduating Summa Cum Laude in Film Scoring. He has also built up a strong relationship with senior Hollywood music supervisors, having had music placed in major feature films, television programs and adverts.



## MAIRÉAD NÍ THRÉINIR

### Assistant Producer

Mairéad Ní Thréinir is an Assistant Producer for Irish language documentaries and television. After studying Na Meáin Chumarsáide, (Communications with Irish), at the National University of Ireland, Galway, Mairéad went on to gain a Masters in Production and Direction in Huston Film School. She then completed the Irish Language Broadcast Fund's production scheme run by Northern Ireland Screen. She has worked on Factual productions for BBC, TV3, Channel 4 and TG4. Mairéad is currently producing and directing 'Tit for Tatt, a short documentary, commissioned by Northern Ireland Screen. Mairéad's recent credits include Producer on Below The Radar's returning Irish Language series, I Lár an Aonaigh (BBC NI), their new series An Focal Scoir (BBC NI) and Assistant Producer on their feature documentary, Rocky Rosmuc.

## MEDIA LINKS

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/RockyRosMucFilm>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RockyRosMucFilm/>

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-PjnwVfmlo&t=14s>

Website: [www.belowtheradar.tv](http://www.belowtheradar.tv)

## DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT

Photographs and Poster Artwork

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B7DQOVCsck1rUVE2cE9RcmJKVW8?usp=sharing>



## COMPANY PROFILE



Below The Radar TV was set up in February 2006 by award-winning journalists and TV producers Trevor Birney and Ruth O'Reilly.

Specialising in current affairs and hard-edged factual output, the company has produced films for the BBC, RTÉ, TG4, Channel 4 and Sky.

The company also produces online media through the websites, The Detail [www.thedetail.tv](http://www.thedetail.tv) and Meon Eile [www.meoneile.ie](http://www.meoneile.ie)

Below The Radar TV is a sister company of Fine Point Films; award winning producers of international feature documentaries.



**belowtheradar**<sup>TV</sup>

Investigative Journalism. Television production.

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Irish Language Broadcast Fund

An Ciste Craoltóireachta Gaeilge



ÚDARÁS  
CRAOLACHÁIN  
NA hÉIREANN

BROADCASTING  
AUTHORITY  
OF IRELAND



A' toirt Gàidhlig thugaibh