TEDx - a forum for making our world a better place

MC Amy Fox with speakers (l-r) Dr Brendan Rooney, Dr Virginie Gautier, Dr Kevin Healy, Dr Charlotte Blease, Dr Fred Cummins, Dr Cara Augustenborg, Steven Duggan, Maeve O'Rourke agus Dr Marcus Collier

Robert McMillen

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(http://www.irishnews.com/picturesarchive/irishnews/irishnews/2015/12/07/104608384-3a558006-c9b0-456c-81b8-46556ba24eb9.jpg)

GO mbeannaí Dia daoibh agus bhur gcéad fáilte isteach chuig The Bluffer's Guide to Irish.

A léitheoir dhíl - dear reader, you will know by now that the Bluffer is a big fan of TED and TEDx, the series of cainteanna - talks on a variety of subjects.

Last Friday, he finally got to a real live TEDx event in Coláiste Ollscoile Bhaile Átha Cliath - UCD and it was as good as he expected.

What was uplifting about TEDxUCD was the fact that the nine speakers were all talking about smaointe - ideas that would change the world for the better.

Indeed the mana - motto of TED and TEDx is smaointe ar fiú iad a roinnt - ideas worth spreading.

UCD is the perfect venue - providing you Nordies have a sat-nav - and the event took place in the new Dramsoc theatre at the Belfield campus. A hundred people, idir óg agus aosta - young and old packed the hall for Caroline Gill's introduction which included a video showing the idea behind TED itself.

Each speaker was a saineolaí - an expert in their field and all spoke with passion and erudition and humour. The highlights were too many to mention but first up was Dr Brendan Rooney whose talk was about scannáin - movies and an réaltacht fhíorúil - virtual reality.

He talked of Jurassic Park and of the work being done by Chris Milk with the UN in making films that immerse the viewer so totally in the experience that is creates empathy in them. Perfect for our polaiteoirí - politicians you would think.

Dr Charlotte Blease's talk was about the benefits of teaching fealsúnacht - philosophy, especially to very young children. There was a rí-rá - a hullabuloo in the papers earlier this year when major research by Durham University showed that, after doing one philosophical inquiry per week, that maths and reading ability had improved by an additional two months amongst all daltaí - pupils in 48 schools and that the improvement amongst pupils on school dinners, ie those from a disadvantaged, was even more marked where pupils improved by an additional three months in maths and four months in reading. That's lón machnaimh - food for thought.

Cara Agustenborg gave my favourite talk of the day in which she spoke of A Fossil Free Ireland in which we need to get rid of our dependence on breoslaí iontaise - fossil fuels. That would mean using only 20 percent of the fossil fuels we use today and leaving the other 80% in the

ground.

Cara imagined what kind of life her daughter would have if Ireland went some way towards being fossil free. The good news, she said, is that that need not change the lifestyle we enjoy today.

It might mean travelling in a "poo bus" like the one they are testing in England - it uses human and food Walters, ugh! - but she can always use her bike. Every car manufacturer is working on electric vehicles right now so big changes are on their way, she told a packed audience.

Bring on the future, I say.

A léitheoir dhíl (a layhore yeel) - dear reader

Coláiste Ollscoille Bhaile Átha Cliath

smaointe (colaashta olsculla walla cleea) - ideas

mana (maana) - motto

smaointe ar fiú iad a roinnt (smweentcha ar few aid a rintch) - ideas worth spreading

idir óg agus aosta (idir awg agus eesta) - young and old

saineolaí (saanyawlee) - an expert

scannáin (scannaan) - movies

an réaltacht fhíorúil (un rayltakht eerooil) - virtual reality

polaiteoirí (politchoree) - politicians

fealsúnacht (falsssonakht) - philosophy

rí-rá (ree-raa) - a hullabuloo

daltaí (daaltee)- pupils

lón machnaimh (lone macniv)- food for thought

breoslaí iontaise (brawslee inteesha)- fossil fuels