

## **Count down to Ladies Day at the Galway Races with Anthony Ryan's of Galway and co-sponsors The Ardilaun Hotel, Galway**

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Marking the count-down to Ladies Day at the Galway Races, well-known Galway Ryan family businesses, **Anthony Ryan Ltd. and The Ardilaun Hotel, Galway** hosted a special **press brunch** on Tuesday morning (24<sup>th</sup> June 2008) to reveal details of the magnificent prize package for Best Dressed Lady and Best Hat competition. The launch was organised by John Ryan, Managing Director, The Ardilaun Hotel in conjunction with his brother Anthony Ryan, Anthony Ryan Ltd. Guests included Mr. John Maloney, Manager, Galway Racecourse, members of the Galway Race committee as well as representatives of Galway business community, Galway Airport, Fáilte Ireland West and media. Brunch was enjoyed in the Garden Lounge at The Ardilaun Hotel, Galway with vintage champagne flowing and tasty treats including mini muffins, tapas, sweet and savoury bouchons and homemade ice-creams.

This glamorous event featured up-to-the-minute fashions from Anthony Ryans as well as three showcase hats specially designed by Galway Hat designers Emily-Jean O'Byrne, Suzie Mahony and Jaime McEleney, based on the theme of 'The Colours of the Galway Races' - to highlight the wealth of local talent.

### **Prize Package for Best Dressed Lady Triples in Value !**

A major announcement made by Anthony Ryan, of Anthony Ryan Ltd., Galway; the sponsor of Best Dressed Lady on Ladies Day at The Galway Races, is that the prize package is increasing to €17,000 (an increase of €12,000 from 2007). On the 31<sup>st</sup> July, the Best Dressed Lady will walk away with €4000 cash, a diamond necklace valued €6000, €2000 of vouchers for Anthony Ryan's Galway store as well as a crystal vase from the collection by Irish Fashion Designer Louise Kennedy. The runner-up will receive €1500 Anthony Ryans Shopping Spree. All finalists at the Best Dressed tent will be presented with a special collection of Versace cosmetics compliments of University Pharmacy, Galway.

Looking forward to this year's Ladies Day at the Galway Races, Anthony Ryan commented 'Ladies Day at the Galway Races is the premier showcase for Irish ladies to display the wealth of fashion talent that exists in this country. Standards this year are expected to be even greater than before.'

Well-known media personalities and fashion journalists make up the judging panel - Bairbre Power, Fashion Editor, Irish Independent Weekend Magazine and Fashion Stylist on RTE's Afternoon Show, PJ Gibbons, Editor, Social and Personal Magazine, Lorraine Keane, presenter Xposé on TV3 as well as Patricia McCrossan, Editor, Galway NOW.

### **The Galway Races and Fashion Stakes**

'Hat designers in Ireland, in particular from Galway, punch well above their weight and can stand their ground in any international fashion arena. In the lead up to Ladies Day at the Galway Races, showcasing the high standard of local hat designers at this launch, creates a platform to highlight and recognise the great talent and creativity here in Galway. Their work contributes greatly to the glamour and style that makes Galway's Ladies

Day such a major event in the Irish social calendar each year especially here at The Ardilaun Hotel,' said John Ryan, Managing Director, The Ardilaun Hotel, Galway.

The wonderful prize being offered by The Ardilaun for the winner of 'Best Hat' will include a luxurious overnight stay in The Ardilaun Hotel, Galway, swift chauffeur transfer to Galway airport for a direct flight to Amsterdam where they will enjoy a three day exclusive visit in the Dutch capital, Amsterdam, in 4 star luxury accommodation overlooking its famous canals.

The Galway Races is synonymous with cutting edge fashion and couture and at this time of year Galway becomes the fashion capital of Ireland. One of the best known names - Galway man Phillip Treacy features in international media for his wonderful hat creations. The three hats created by Galway hat designers featured at this launch will be part of a Hat Exhibition on show in Galway city during the first week of July at Anthony Ryan's department store on Shop Street. This will serve as a reminder to encourage people to attend Ladies Day at the Galway Races on 31<sup>st</sup> July, wearing hats of course which add to the glamour and excitement of the event.

## ***ENDS***

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### **Additional Information:**

1. Ladies interested in taking part in this year's Lady Day Competition on Thursday July 31<sup>st</sup> are asked to arrive early as the finalists will be chosen by 3pm. There is no entry required for the competition. Judges will mingle through the crowd and will invite chosen finalists to the judging marquee which is located adjacent to the champagne tent in the race enclosure.
2. Winners will be announced at 4pm just after the main race and prize giving ceremony will follow.
3. Models at press brunch photocall are from Galway's Catwalk Model Agency. Make-up by Avalon Beauty Salon at The Ardilaun Hotel. Hair by Bellissimo, Galway

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DETAILS ON HATS created by Galway Milliners

*'Going for Gold' by Emily-Jean O'Byrne*

This elegant hat uses a stiffened sinamay cap as the base for her head piece where she uses layers of rich gold veiling and crinoline. The focus point is formed with champagne and gold silk rosettes folded into the centre, which is encrusted with gold crystal pearls and swarovsky crystals in smokey topaz. The quills add height and increase the impact of this head piece – the quills were both hand curled and hand painted vintage gold by Emily-Jean to set the tone of the piece. Emily-Jean's colour scheme was inspired by the Galway Races, champagne which is there to be enjoyed and the gold symbolic of the first prize winners in the races which all owners, trainers and jockeys aspire to. Emily-Jean sees her hat as wearable art to be admired.

*'Royal Admiral' by Suzie Mahony*

This 'wow' hat consists of a large purple horse shoe shaped base with wired edge and magenta pink sinamay. The design is embellished with ostrich feathers which have been dyed to match the hat and loops of both purple and magenta sinamay are also used. To enhance the back of the hat, Suzie has added rolled purple sinamay to ensure that the hat makes impact when viewed from all angles. Adding a touch of curiosity Suzie has introduced beautiful velvet butterflies to the front and back of her creation. Suzie says that she chose these colours in association with the Galway Races because purple is such a regal colour and automatically one thinks of horses and racing. The magenta pink is a huge colour this season and it sets off the purple just perfect. The butterflies symbolise colour and movement, all of which feature in Suzie's work as a Milliner. The overall shape of the design is based on a continuous circle where the face of the model completes it, the idea here is that the enjoyment of Ballybrit is never ending year after year.

*Jaime McEleney's* hat is inspired by the colours of the jockeys' shirts. Using tangerine and burgundy coloured woollen felt and feather spines, it is a modern twist on a classic forties style design. Fashions from the forties and fifties have seen a huge resurgence of late on the catwalks and in high street stores and Jaime's current collection is inspired greatly by the hats and headpieces worn by film starlets from the black and white movies of this era.

