

# A FANATIC HEART

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## BOB GELDOF ON W.B. YEATS

(2016) 2 x 55 mins and 1 x 100 mins

Musician and advocate, *Bob Geldof*, examines the life and work of one of the 20th Century's greatest poets, *William Butler Yeats*. *Geldof* argues that as a poet and statesman, at the vanguard of a cultural revolution, *Yeats* brought about immense change in Ireland's struggle for independence, without firing a bullet. For that reason, *Geldof* argues somewhat controversially, that *W.B. Yeats* deserves a place ahead of the revolutionary martyrs of the 1916 Rising.

*"One of the best literary documentaries I've seen. Geldof is unfailingly good company in this engaging, informative and thoughtful piece of television."*

**- JAMES WALTON (THE SPECTATOR)**



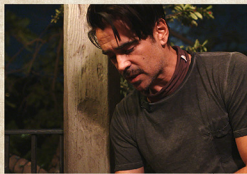
In this absorbing documentary, *Geldof*, a self confessed devotee of the great Irish Nobel Prize winning poet, traces how *W.B. Yeats* led the way in imagining a new, proud, strong Ireland into being after The Famine – and how, after centuries of colonial oppression, he gave the people of Ireland back a story they could believe in and fight for. As *Gogarty* said, there is no Free State without *Yeats*. By which he meant that Ireland does not exist without the poet.



*Geldof* traces *W.B. Yeats'* life, from his earliest family trips to Rosses' Point in Sligo – which awakened a lifelong love of fairy tales and folklore – via international fame as the poet laureate of an emerging Ireland, to his Nobel Prize and role as Senator in the new Free State.

Controversially, he argues that *Yeats* deserves a place ahead of the martyrs of 1916 – because, rather than sacrifice his life for Ireland, *Yeats* stayed alive to fight for a secular, just and truly inclusive Ireland.

Through interviews with Yeatsian aficionado and biographer *Roy Foster* and performances of some of *Yeats'* most iconic poems by leading Irish and British cultural figures, *Geldof* reveals how the poet and others built the scaffolding of a new independent Ireland decades before the Rising – but how *Yeats'* vision for a modern, pluralist, inclusive Ireland was pushed aside by the narrow-minded Catholic elite of the new Free State: the **Banana Republic** that *Geldof* in his **Boomtown Rats** lead singer/songwriter persona, rebelled against decades later.




**A Fanatic Heart** is a captivating tale of mythology, nation-building, insurgency and disillusionment and how one man dreamed an entire country out of the ravages of famine and into a new dawn. The enduring popularity of *Yeats'* work is reflected in the contributions from a veritable galaxy of stars and cultural icons.

With stirring performances of *Yeats'* poems by *Sting*, *Noel Gallagher*, *Bono*, *Van Morrison*; *Tom Hollander*, *Liam Neeson*, *Stephen Fry*, *Dominic West*, *Richard E. Grant*, *Bill*

*Nighy*, *Edna O'Brien*, *Colin Farrell*, *Ardal O'Hanlon*, *Shane MacGowan* and more, they succeed in lifting this thoughtful and artistic documentary onto a much more accessible plane for the average viewer. The film is also consistently propelled by *Geldof's* personality and his obvious knowledge of and passion for his subject.



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