NI WEEKLY

THE IRISH COMEDY VOICE

Bold comedy, real life and a distinctive Irish perspective

FROM ROSCOMMON TO THE UK STAGE

Roots, reinvention and a rise across Ireland and Britain

MY THERAPIST GHOSTED ME

How an unlikely podcast became a defining chapter in Joanne's career

STAND-UP, STORYTELLING & SOLD-OUT TOURS

Live shows, sharp observations and a celebrated stage presence



JOANNE McNALLY

THE QUICK WIT. THE BIG STORIES.

CELEBRITY PROFILE • SPECIAL FEATURE



FROM COUNTY ROSCOMMON TO THE SPOTLIGHT

A voice shaped by reinvention

Joanne McNally was born on 7 May 1983 in County Roscommon, Ireland. Her early story began with a family history that she has spoken about openly: her biological father left before she was born, and she was raised by her adoptive family in Killiney, County Dublin. Those roots—rural Ireland, suburban Dublin and the experience of adoption—would later become part of the candid storytelling that audiences recognise in her comedy.

At University College Dublin, McNally studied English and sociology. Journalism was an early ambition, but her first professional direction took her into public relations. She worked as a publicist and spent time in Australia before moving into the charity sector, including work with a mental-health charity. The conventional career path, however, did not give her the sense of purpose she wanted.

Her route to the stage was not a straight line. McNally has described a difficult period in her twenties, including an eating disorder and the challenge of rebuilding her life. In 2014, after receiving treatment, she accepted an invitation from director Una McKevitt to perform in Singlehood, a theatre production exploring relationships and modern love. That opportunity became a turning point: the stage offered a way to turn personal experience into connection, rather than keeping it private.

The result was a comic voice that feels conversational but carefully shaped. McNally’s material draws on dating, family, friendship, self-image and the awkward realities of adulthood. Her willingness to discuss uncomfortable subjects has helped distinguish her from performers who rely only on quick punchlines.

A personal history turned into a distinctive stage perspective.



THE STAGE BECAME HER PLATFORM

From Singlehood to sold-out tours

McNally’s first major stage chapter grew out of Singlehood. Working with PJ Gallagher and Una McKevitt, she developed Separated at Birth, a show that explored adoption and identity through a comic lens. It sold out Vicar Street in Dublin in May 2015 before travelling around Ireland. The project introduced audiences to a performer who could move between sharp jokes and more vulnerable storytelling without losing the pace of a live comedy show.

She later supported Gallagher on his Concussion tour and joined the Lisa Richards comedy agency. Her one-woman show Bite Me brought another dimension to her work. Built around her experience of bulimia and eating disorders, it used dark comedy to examine a serious subject. The Dublin Fringe run at Project Arts Centre sold out, and the production received several award nominations. McNally also took the show to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2017.

Further festival appearances followed with Wine Tamer, which played both Edinburgh and Adelaide. These shows helped establish her as a comic with a strong solo identity: outspoken, quick-thinking and willing to let a story become messy before delivering its payoff.

In 2022, Prosecco Express took her touring profile to a new level across the UK and Ireland, with multiple sold-out dates at Vicar Street and the London Palladium. Her next major live chapter, Pinotphile, began in 2025, travelling through cities including Dublin, London and Manchester. The planned 2026 Dublin 3Arena date marks a landmark moment in her career and has been described as a first for an Irish female comedian performing a solo show at the venue.

Live comedy remains the centre of her creative identity.



A FAMILIAR FACE AND AN UNMISTAKABLE VOICE

Television, podcasts and a wider audience

McNally’s television breakthrough came in October 2015, when she became co-host of RTÉ2’s satirical sketch show Republic of Telly. She took over from Jennifer Maguire and remained with the programme until leaving in June 2016. The role introduced her to a national television audience and built on earlier appearances across Irish programmes including The Late Late Show, The Afternoon Show, Ireland AM, Two Tube and The Commute.

Her television work has since ranged from panel and entertainment formats to reality competition. She appeared on Channel 4’s The Big Fat Quiz of Everything in 2022 and The Big Fat Quiz of Telly in 2026. In 2023, she co-presented Joanne & Vogue’s Sex Drive, a one-off E4 special with Vogue Williams. In 2024, she joined the seventeenth series of Taskmaster, finishing in second place. In October 2026, she appeared in the second series of The Celebrity Traitors, while also serving as a team captain on Ed Gamble’s Unacceptable for TLC.

The partnership with Vogue Williams has been especially influential beyond television. Since April 2021, the pair have co-hosted My Therapist Ghosted Me, an award-winning podcast whose informal, irreverent conversations have built a loyal following. The title captures its comic premise: friendship, dating disasters and everyday anxieties are treated with the honesty of a private chat and the rhythm of a comedy set.

McNally also hosts Joanne McNally Investigates for BBC Sounds. Across two series, she has pursued deliberately eccentric questions, including “Who Replaced Avril Lavigne?” and “Did the Furbys Spy on Us?” The format blends mock-investigation with character-led comedy, allowing her curiosity and improvisational style to lead the story.

Her podcast work has made her voice a daily companion for listeners.



BEYOND THE PUNCHLINE

Writing, identity and what comes next

Alongside performing, McNally has developed a writing career. She contributes the monthly “Jo’s World” column to Stellar magazine, bringing the same observational humour to the page. Her essay collection Femme Feral was scheduled for publication in August 2026, extending her work into longer-form personal writing.

Her public persona is frank and energetic, but the subjects beneath the jokes are often serious: adoption, mental health, body image, relationships and the pressure to appear as though adulthood is under control. McNally’s comedy works because it does not pretend that life is neat. She makes the contradictions part of the performance, inviting audiences to laugh at the parts of themselves they might otherwise hide.

She has also spoken about the role of dating and being single in her life, and those experiences frequently feed her stage material. Rather than presenting a polished celebrity narrative, she builds comedy from the ordinary details people recognise: a bad decision, a complicated family story, a friendship that tells the truth, or a plan that falls apart in public.

From her early work in public relations to Irish theatre, television, podcasting and major UK and Irish tours, McNally’s career has been built through reinvention. Her trajectory is a reminder that a creative career can begin well after the first plan has changed—and that a distinctive point of view can become a powerful professional signature.

QUICK PROFILE

Born: 7 May 1983 | County Roscommon, Ireland
Based/raised: Killiney, County Dublin
Work: Stand-up comedian, writer and actress
Education: English and sociology, University College Dublin
Known for: My Therapist Ghosted Me, Bite Me, Prosecco Express, Pinotphile

SOURCE & FURTHER READING

OPEN JOANNE McNALLY — WIKIPEDIA

One source link is provided here; tap the red text to open it.