



LIMERICK LEADER

ESTABLISHED 1889

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2000

INSIDE IN COLOUR

Mungret / St Paul's



Darren's big breakthrough nets him \$1 million

By RON KIRWAN

LIMERICK fantasy writer Darren O'Shaughnessy is set to pick up \$1 million dollars for his first children's book *Circque du Freak*.

The 27-year-old has signed a deal with Warner Brothers for the film rights to the teen horror novel, starring Darren Shan, the first book in a series called the Vampire's Assistant.

And a new fantasy novel *Hells Horizon*, the second in his *The City*

series of adult fantasy, is set to be published by Orion Books later this week.

"It's a big, big breakthrough for me," said the Pallaskenry writer this morning.

"And I've had even better news about the Vampires Assistant books because Harper Collins have agreed to publish the first three books in the UK and Europe and Little Brown have bought the rights for the US. This should lead to huge sales on both sides of the Atlantic."

The book and film deals were under negotiation since last October and were agreed last Friday.

This could see the Limerick author shoot straight to the top of the growing fantasy and horror league and give horror writers such as Stephen King reason to glance nervously over their shoulders.

The Pallaskenry man was born in London but returned home to Summerville with his parents Liam and Breda and his brother Declan

when he was six.

Darren's dad works for a plant hire firm and his mother teaches in Askeaton National School.

He attended the local Salesian College before studying sociology and English in London and has worked full time as a writer for the past five years.

Darren O'Shaughnessy made the breakthrough into the expanding international fantasy market last year with his first published novel, *ayumarca*.



Author Darren O'Shaughnessy

£1m WIN WON'T CHANGE COUPLE

By LAURA RYAN