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PAPER ABSTRACTS

**Toshio Akai (Kobe Gakuin University)**

**“Who Sang Behind the Hawk’s Dance?” The Formation of Oriental Images in Yeats’ Play’**

This paper is to examine what motivated Yeats to write *At the Hawk’s Well* and what took place behind its first performance in 1916, thereby tracing the growth of the Japanese or Oriental images he and his fellow poets and playwrights of Irish literature nurtured. This also reveals how culturally-biased Orientalism permeated into the criticism on the works of Yeats and the Irish literature contemporary with him. First, we are attentive to the process of how the information of Japanese traditional stage performance *Noh* reached Yeats and made him embrace the idea of paralleling Irish mythological figures with the characters in Japanese Fantasy *Noh*. This leads us to consider the mediating role performed by Yeats’ then secretary Ezra Pound, who inherited Ernest Fenollosa’s unpublished manuscripts and translated Chinese poems to cultivate the Oriental images Yeats and other poets appreciated. Pound’s friendship with a Japanese painter Tamijuro Kume aka Koumé Tami, established when *At the Hawk’s Well* was performed in London, is important in that Pound thereafter relied entirely on Koumé Tami’s knowledge when he understood what Fenollosa left on his manuscripts, and his interpretation of Japanese stage performance made an impact on Yeats’ writing. Thus the formation of the Oriental images in the interwar art world has a complicated history, which inevitably effected the criticism of Yeats’ symbolism.

**Jaclyn Allen (University College Dublin)**

**‘The Woman Poet and Her Critics: the Case of Temple Lane and Freda Laughton’**

Eavan Boland famously stated that while women were mostly excluded from the Irish poetic canon, the few women she could find did not provide a model for an Irish woman poet. This begs the question of what women poets there were, particularly in the mid-twentieth century, in the generation prior to Boland. Using archival evidence and recent scholarship, we see that this generation of women poets was very active in public arenas, literary circles, and publishing. Despite this activity, these women rarely appear in later anthologies and critical work. This raises the question of how these women were forgotten by the next generation of poets as well as escaped critical notice. My paper uses two women poets of the time period, Temple Lane and Freda Laughton, as case studies in order to examine how these women fell into mid-century debates around the nature of Irish writing, the purpose of poetry and poetic form, and the nature of woman herself. My paper will demonstrate how this initial reception continued to be re-interated through later anthologies and critical work, thus limiting the poets’ perceived power and range as well as obscuring the feminist energies in their work. I aim to demonstrate that in recovering these women, we must re-examine and revise our own understanding of the time period, but also of our definition of the poet and of the canon itself in order to recuperate these women.

**Alex Alonso (University of York)**

**“signatures on your own frequency”: Radio and the Belfast Group’**

During the 1970s and 80s, radio broadcasting played a central but seldom acknowledged role in nurturing the talents of a cluster of Northern Irish writers best known today, as they were then, as the ‘Belfast Group’. Such was radio’s influence, as Heather Clark has noted, ‘almost every significant poet to come out of Belfast in the twentieth century worked or read for the BBC’ (‘Regional Roots’, 101). Counted among that number was Paul Muldoon, who worked as an Arts producer with BBC Northern Ireland from 1973 to 1986 and aired dozens of programmes featuring a combination of Seamus Heaney, Derek Mahon, and other Group members among the cast lists. This paper looks at representations of radio in Heaney’s, Muldoon’s, and Mahon’s writings, focusing on the creative

models radio offered in their early years, and tracing impressions of the technology, live dialogue, and physical space of the recording studio across their works. Heaney alluded to his formative engagements with radio on numerous occasions. His Nobel acceptance speech 'Crediting Poetry' (1995) credited the wireless set of his childhood as his first portal between worlds – a gateway that speaks to his poetry's deep investment in borders and border-crossings, and to sounds that 'set the darkness echoing' ('Personal Helicon'). Eleven years earlier, in a title punning on Ireland's radio network, 'Station Island' (1984), a Joycean interlocutor advises Heaney's speaker to 'fill the element | with signatures on your own frequency, | echo soundings, searches, probes, allurements.' Muldoon's writing is no less drawn to the power of sonic transmissions, attuning in one poem to the distant sounds of whales through 'a hydrophone' ('Catamaran') and in another to the struggle of the Foley artist whose job is 'matching sound to picture' ('The Key'). Although such echoes reflect more than Muldoon and Heaney's shared history in broadcasting, I hope to show that their acoustic imagination is inflected by an intimate understanding of the airwaves – as if word and sound were linked for these poets by 'a radio serendipity', as Mahon's 'Hudson Letter' puts it, 'to illustrate | the resilience of our lyric appetite.'

**Charles I. Armstrong (University of Agder)**

**'The "open door of her body": Ekphrasis, Self-reflection and Embodiment in Vona Groarke'**

Vona Groarke's *Four Sides Full: A Personal Essay* (2016) is a marvelously playful engagement with pictorial frames and their accompanying images that also, surreptitiously, presents a covert poetics and a reticent suggestion of an autobiographical narrative. It is a text that casts an interesting light back on Groarke's earlier *oeuvre*, and which indeed challenges the very notion of textual integrity – exploring as it does the paradoxes of borders and frames that not only delimit art works but also link them together with their contexts. This presentation will explore how the themes *Four Sides Full* raises percolate back into Groarke's poetry, with a special emphasis on her poems dealing with visual representation. Poems such as the Hammershøi Sequence in *X* (2014) will be approached in terms of how they place themselves in relation to the later prose work, specifically in terms of how they tacitly explore representational strategies in relation to the female body and combine poetic and critical registers. In the process, Groarke's poems will be placed in a Romantic tradition that insists upon the critical dimension of literature, as well as an ekphrastic heritage that blurs the borderlines between poetry and art history.

**Zsuzsanna Balázs (National University of Ireland, Galway)**

**"Take but His love away": Oscar Wilde's Legacy, the Erotics of Male Friendship and Melancholy Masculinities in Yeats's *Calvary***

Authority was defined as masculine heroic leadership by Thomas Carlyle in the 1840s, and the fascist leaders of Europe took direct inspiration from Carlyle's ideas. Nicholas Mirzoeff in 'The Right to Look' distinguishes between the authority of visibility which builds on segregation, categorisation and masculinity and the right to look which is seen as trans, queer, feminine, fluid, refuses to be segregated, and which is a performative claim always at *dissensus* with the authority of visibility. Mirzoeff's ideas appear to be very useful in the dramaturgical analysis of the power performance of female characters in Yeats's mature plays. It is true that Yeats seemed to applaud Mussolini and the fascists in 1924 for 'calmly walk[ing] over the more or less decomposed body of the goddess of Freedom' and Yeats idealised a myth of manliness connected to Charles Stewart Parnell, the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy and the aristocratic courtier culture of Renaissance Italy, and stressed the masculinity of the Fenians in some of his poems. Yet Yeats was also increasingly critical of the performance of hyper-masculinity and authority that dominated European politics in the first half of the twentieth century. Instead of strengthening traditional notions of authority, many of Yeats's mature plays create a space of visibility for people treated as invisible nonentities by nationalist political discourses. His plays began to feature new heroes: defiant, uncompromising and often androgynous women who claim visibility for themselves and perform countervisuality to fight the repressive violence of normalcy and respectability imposed on them by patriarchal authorities.

**Sarah Balen (IADT Dublin)**

## **'Finding Common Ground: Peter Sirr's Critical and Poetic Practice'**

As a poet, critic, translator, and editor, Peter Sirr has always been connected to the elsewhere in the various and interconnected fields of his output. His collections have, over time, delineated Dublin and other cities in which he has lived. Increasingly, these collections have incorporated lines of, and written out to, other poets' material, such as André Breton and Jorge Luis Borges. Sirr's most recent collection, *Sway* (2016), gives itself over to this project more fully than any of his previous publications. The works of twelfth-century troubadours from southern France are centrally placed in new versions which bring their content and song to contemporary readers. Sirr, in his final editorial of *Poetry Ireland Review* in 2007, entitled 'This is Not an Editorial', urged an engagement with the 'internationalism that is the lifeblood of poetry'. This paper will look at both the critical argument for, and the practice of, a poetic internationalism in the work of contemporary Irish poet Peter Sirr.

## **Richard Barlow (Nanyang Technological University, Singapore) 'Ossianic Fragments in Owenson, Yeats, Joyce, and Beckett'**

Despite being key texts behind the development of literary Celticism in Ireland, James Macpherson's *Ossian* poems (first published from 1760 to 1765) are rejected and sidelined in Irish Romanticism and in the Celtic Revival. Initially, *Ossian* is either considered threatening, since its Scottish Gaelic dimension undermines Ireland's position as a uniquely spiritual 'Other' capable of contrasting with modern industrialised England, or it is spurned in favour of more 'authentic' versions. The challenge of Macpherson is directly engaged with by Sydney Owenson in her 1806 text *The Wild Irish Girl*. Later in the nineteenth century, W. B. Yeats takes an interest in the legend of Oisín (or 'Oisín') but hardly engages with the actual texts of Macpherson's *Ossian*. In Irish Modernism, with the disappearance of Celticism and a diminishing interest in cultural 'authenticity' and 'purity' (replaced by an emphasis on textual collage, psychoanalysis, and inauthenticity), allusions to *Ossian* appear in Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* and Beckett's *Murphy* (in its French version). This paper will focus on how and why Macpherson's work is referred to in key texts of Irish Romanticism and Modernism. The paper will also contrast the intertextual links between Macpherson and Joyce with the absence of intertextuality between Macpherson and the other Irish writers covered.

## **Ruth Barton (Trinity College Dublin) 'Avenging the Famine: Lance Daly's *Black '47*, genre and history'**

In Ireland, Lance Daly's 2018 release *Black '47* was a critical and box-office hit. Set in Connemara, it tells the story of Irish deserter from the British army, Feeney (James Frecheville), who returns home to find his country devastated by famine and his close family either dead or dying. Feeney embarks on a revenge mission that will bring him to the doorstep of the man whom he holds responsible for the region's suffering. As this summary indicates, *Black '47* is a revenge drama structured as a Western. Contemporary Irish cinema's embrace of genre filmmaking (notably the gangster film, the horror film and the romcom) has given rise to considerable critical debate over the consequences for small nation cinemas of adapting globalised narrative forms. In particular, this practice raises the question: what remains of the local within a global storytelling structure? *Black '47* is distinctive in its repurposing of the modern Western as a historical narrative. It is also unusual in putting the narrative of the Famine on screen. This paper will speculate on why the film was such a success with Irish audiences but failed commercially elsewhere. It will further discuss Daly's film as a neoliberal corrective to Famine historiography, one that emphasises agency over victimhood.

## **Giuliana Bendelli (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano) 'Ireland's Cultural Empire: the Myth of a Colony'**

This paper focuses on the relationship between Ireland and England and pays special attention to the traditional concept of colony. When referring to Ireland, it reinforces a prejudicial perspective and blurs the relevant influence

of its cultural heritage and identity. Instead, the concept of an Irish cultural empire counterbalances this bias and highlights Ireland's deep cultural and linguistic influence in the world. In the decades after independence, Ireland was predominantly defined in terms of separatism and isolation, and in a contrasting, antagonistic relationship with Britain. Recent studies have instead explored the essential connectedness of Irish culture. The positive achievements of the modern Irish diaspora, sometimes even working through the structures of the former British Empire, have come to be valued in a way that was not previously possible. Hence, the slightly provocative reference to an 'Empire' in the title of the paper, situates it within a live and continuing debate. The paper neutrally reflects on Irish cultural inheritance and on its multiple interactions with international culture. It provides engaging hints at meaningful contacts, comparisons, translations, dealing with the significant influence of 'Ireland's cultural empire' in the world, starting with a hint to Early Mediaeval Ireland's contribution to the development of Western Civilization and choosing examples chronologically arranged from Oliver Goldsmith moving to London in the middle of the 18th century, Lafcadio Hearn to Japan and George Fletcher Moore to Australia in the second half of the 19th century to finish with Brendan Kennelly's autobiographical hero moving to Leeds, England, in the second half of the 20th century. They all revolve around the theme of encounter.

**Sarah Bennett (Oriol College, University of Oxford)**

**'Remembering the Revolution: Denis Devlin, Frank O'Connor, and Literary Style in the New Irish State'**

In a 1937 letter to Thomas MacGreevy, Denis Devlin describes a pair of recurring dreams. Carnivals and carefully-choreographed horse parades on O'Connell Street feature, as well as angry discussions about American-I.R.A. relations, in one of the most challenging passages to transcribe and interpret in Devlin's correspondence. In a curtailed analysis of the dreams, Devlin supplies the following: '[t]he day before I had been saying my weariness with Frank O'Connor and his school of short stories about the "movement"... All-including and symmetrical.' Looked at as an allegory for literary style responding to political events—O'Connor's biography of Michael Collins, *The Big Fellow*, was published this year, and his realist short stories in response to the revolution, *Guests of the Nation* (1931), established what became the mainstay of Irish literary form for the coming decades—Devlin's dream raises fascinating questions about the choices open to Irish writers in the decades after the revolution, and the attendant anxieties. His own volume *Intercessions* (1937), which contained poems about revolution, was largely met with befuddlement by its Irish readers. Devlin, along with MacGreevy, Beckett and Coffey, was dismissed as part of a pessimistic 'cultured studentry' in the polemical introduction to Leslie Daiken's 1936 anthology of Irish war poetry, which separated poets after the 1921 treaty into 'escapists and traditionalists'. This paper examines what the 'symmetrical' and 'traditional' mean for Irish writers of the generation that remembered the revolution, culminating in a comparison of *The Big Fellow* and Devlin's belated elegy 'The Tomb of Michael Collins' (1956). It addresses the difficult intersections between modernist obliquity and Irish politics.

**Faith Binckes (Bath Spa University)**

**'Canons and Correspondences: Hannah Lynch and the "Paris correspondent" in the British Press'**

This paper concerns the 'Paris Letters' that Hannah Lynch contributed to the London *Academy* from the mid-1890s until 1903. Lynch's columns appeared regularly until the months immediately preceding her death in January 1904, in a period notable for its intense debates on issues of gender and nation. Only partially disguised by the initials 'H.L.', Lynch frequently wrote as a *de facto* literary critic, reviewing a broad range of contemporary French literature. However, being a 'correspondent' – a writer of 'letters', who also seeks meaningful connections between their place of residence and that of their audience – implies something different to being a 'critic'. The nature of this difference will form the focal point of the paper, connecting Lynch as it does to other notable Paris correspondents of Irish heritage, who have shared her ambivalent relationship with the canon of literary criticism.

**Mariana Bolfarine (Federal University of Mato Grosso (UFMT/CUR)/ Rondonopolis-Brasil)**

**'A Critical Reading of Roger Casement's Trial in Brazilian Newspapers'**

It is well known that the Irish revolutionary Roger David Casement (1864-1916) had a stellar consular career and became known for his early contribution to the birth of human rights as a result of his revelations of atrocities committed against the native populations in the Belgian Congo and in the Peruvian Amazon. However, Casement's afterlife remains controversial due to his alleged treachery against Britain at the brink of the First World War, and because of the negative impact of the finding by the British Home Office of the so-called *Black Diaries*. The aim of this study is to perform a critical analysis of the way in which Brazilian newspapers from Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Amazonas covered Roger Casement's controversial actions in the Easter Rising and his death, both in 1916. I will look at the positioning these periodicals took in relation to the situation Casement was experiencing, especially due to the fact that he had lived in Brazil for seven years and had been a known diplomatic figure in his time. The theoretical framework is based on studies related to Roger Casement and on periodical discourse analysis.

**Alessandra Boller (Philipps-University Marburg)**

**“we have been led into the thorny parts of controversy”: The (Literary) Interventions of Caesar Otway and *The Christian Examiner* and *Church of Ireland Magazine*’**

Proceeding from the observation that nineteenth-century short narratives and magazines were involved not only in the representation but also in the intervention in Irish life, the proposed paper discusses the activities of Caesar Otway and his *The Christian Examiner* and *Church of Ireland Magazine* in 1829, the year of the Roman Catholic Relief Act. Otway had a reputation as an editor, a writer, and an anti-Catholic ‘proselytizer,’ and with him as editor, the rather radical Protestant magazine also published short fiction. While Otway enabled Irish writers to publish their fiction ‘at home’, he simultaneously instrumentalized their texts for the magazine’s purposes. I will explore to what extent Otway’s voice stood out in the 1828 and 1829 issues of *The Christian Examiner* and discuss selected texts to show how he tried to intervene in public debates. My talk thus discusses Otway’s activities in the light of a particular historical moment and I read his texts, as well as other writers’ short narratives published in *The Christian Examiner*, as interfaces where critical and public discourses meet and merge, are shaped and developed. The tale, one of the forerunners of the short story, can be regarded as hybrid fiction which included elements integral to other forms and modes of writing and was close to the people and their realities. Thus, such short narratives can be understood as representative documents, instruments and agents and they highlight the function of literature in social, political and religious debates as well as the roles of editors and/as critics.

**Phyllis Boumans (KU Leuven)**

**“The lack of valuable criticism is as devastating as a locust”: Seán O’Faoláin and the Craft of the Short Story in *The Bell*’**

The mid-twentieth century saw the rise of the short story as a major literary genre in Ireland. While explanations for this flowering have often been sought in the influence of the Gaelic storytelling tradition, the rivalry with Britain, or the preference of specific writers, the critical writings on the short story by Frank O’Connor and Seán O’Faoláin have also played an important role in consolidating the short story as a national form in Ireland. However, while O’Connor’s *The Lonely Voice* received, and continues to receive, ample scholarly and popular attention, O’Faoláin’s contributions to short story criticism remain relatively under-researched. Moreover, O’Faoláin’s seminal work *The Short Story* is the progeny of ideas and literary precepts originally developed and disseminated in *The Bell* (1940-1954), a literary periodical which actively sought to promote and mediate the short story in Ireland. This paper aims to trace the genealogy of O’Faoláin’s short story criticism throughout his outspoken contributions to *The Bell*. Through his editorials, his ‘The Craft of the Short Story’ series, and his ‘New Writers’ series in which he advised new writers, O’Faoláin disseminated his own particular ideas about the short story and all but prescribed them for readers and writers of *The Bell*. In this paper, I will discuss O’Faoláin’s normative ideas about the short story, trace their development throughout *The Bell* and compare them to the short story aesthetics of Elizabeth Bowen and Frank O’Connor.

**Marlene Briggs (University of British Columbia)**

## **‘Contesting the Legacies of the 1916 Rising in Ireland: Modern Poetry, Contemporary Film, and Critical Practices of Commemoration’**

Taking the ‘Decade of Centenaries’ (2012-2022) as my point of departure, I reconsider the complex intersections of aesthetics and politics in contested mediations of the Easter Rising (1916), an event arguably central to the ‘critical ground’ of contemporary Irish culture. In particular, I juxtapose two influential films, namely George Morrison’s *Mise Éire* (1959) and Keith Farrell’s *A Terrible Beauty* (2012). *Mise Éire*, Morrison’s documentary named after Pádraig Pearse’s Irish poem (1912), premiered in the Republic during the bipolar period of the Cold War. In turn, Farrell’s docudrama *A Terrible Beauty*, which invokes W. B. Yeats’ English lyric, ‘Easter, 1916’ (1920), has been screened internationally in the unipolar era of globalization. Morrison and Farrell foster dialogue with renowned writers Pearse and Yeats in the context of the clashing political frameworks of Marxism and Neo-liberalism, respectively. I interpret modern poems on the Rising along with subsequent cinematic retellings through their divergent frameworks of articulation, pluralizing channels of remembrance through explorations of distinct assumptions about collectivity. This multidisciplinary paper thus develops an agonistic analysis indebted to Chantal Mouffe, a post-Marxist political theorist who illuminates the joint challenges of commemorations: antagonism and pluralism. Setting discrepant versions of 1916 side by side disrupts Marxist formulations, Neo-liberal alternatives, and sectarian idioms. I examine Morrison and Farrell through their contrasting engagements with canonical literature; historical narrative; Volunteer women; and First World War soldiers. Overall, this intervention recalls the foundational role of the arts in (counter) hegemonic struggles while promoting critical practices of commemoration oriented towards the future.

**Joseph Bristow (University of California, Los Angeles)**

### **‘The Irish Trials of Oscar Wilde’**

In a brief report about Oscar Wilde’s libel suit against the Marquess of Queensberry, the *Dublin Evening Telegraph* observed after the third day of the trial in 1895: ‘Is it not a little curious that three of the chief actors in the drama are Irishmen: Mr. Justice Collins, Mr. Oscar Wilde, and Mr. Carson Q.C. [?].’ My intention is to explore the distinctly Irish dimensions to Wilde’s libel case against the Scottish aristocrat’s accusation that he was ‘posing as a sodomite’. The trial brought to the fore Carson’s reputation as a rhetorically adept Unionist who had the honour as the first Irish Q.C. to command the same authority in the English courts. Carson, as observers realized, was classmate of Wilde’s from Trinity College Dublin. The judge, Richard Henn Collins, also had a Classical education at Trinity before moving to England to study for the Classics Tripos at Cambridge. In their midst, Wilde was a Trinity- and Oxford-trained Classicist from an Irish nationalist background. Once Wilde’s libel suit failed on the grounds that it exposed his homosexuality, it was left to the Director of Public Prosecutions, Hamilton Cuffe, 5th Earl of Desart, to proceed with the Crown prosecution of Wilde for committing acts of ‘gross indecency’, on the basis of the revelations of exposed during the libel trial. There has been speculation that Cuffe stored the official records of the Crown proceedings at his home in Co. Kilkenny, until they perished when the IRA firebombed the Georgian mansion in February 1923.

**Eoin Byrne (National University of Ireland, Galway)**

### **‘Semantic Succour: The Languages of Irish Modernism’**

Though it is now axiomatic in Irish Studies that the decline of the Irish language in the 19th century had profound consequences for Irish literary modernism at the turn of the 20th, the number of critical studies which engage directly with Irish literary space’s multilingual nature are few. This paper will examine how Ireland’s multilingual literary space makes it a fruitful site for probing the very contours and boundaries of literary modernism, particularly as we witness the ‘vertical expansion’ of the New Modernist Studies. If modernism is marked by a certain scepticism regarding the signifier, this defining characteristic appears to be accentuated in the case of Ireland, with debates over suitable language(s) and forms stemming back to the foundation of a modern national literature. By focusing on late-modernist cultural production during Ireland’s postcolonial moment, it will be argued

that a multilingual approach to this cultural moment may help in better sketching the blurred borders between modernist and postmodernist aesthetics. Despite writing in different languages, there are startling similarities in the aesthetic approaches of writers such as Samuel Beckett, Máirtín Ó Cadhain, and Brian Ó Nualláin (Flann O'Brien). The search for 'semantic succour' in these writers' works leads to a distinctive brand of literary modernism, one as much in thrall to wider transnational paradigms as it is a cultural response to the early decades of independence in Ireland. This form of 'postcolonial modernism', as we will see, may provide us with an intermediary position to better examine the limits of literary modernism overall.

**Ben Cartlidge (University of Liverpool)**

**'Kenealy's Athenaeus: Languages, Cultures, and Literatures in the Service of Irish Self-definition'**

Edward Vaughan Kenealy (1819-1880) would become the most notorious barrister in the 19th century owing to his part in the trial of the Tichborne Claimant; he would go on to a political career, to found a nonconformist religious cult, and to author several volumes of poetry translated from a dizzying array of languages. But as a young student in Dublin he composed a youthful jeu d'esprit, *Brallaghan, or the Deipnosophists* (1845). The subtitle links this short book indissolubly with the mammoth 3rd c. a.d. compendium *Deipnosophistae* by Athenaeus of Naucratis; common to both works is the centrality of dining as a cultural and social but also literary practice. This paper considers Kenealy's work as a reception of Athenaeus, examining in particular its linguistic dexterity; Kenealy plays with Irish, Ancient Greek, and English, but this game, as well as imitating the bicultural Graeco-Roman world of Athenaeus, conceals deeper concerns. Kenealy's linguistic criticisms reveal his political interests and attitudes (in particular his attitude to the English); the ludic attitude struck by Kenealy is a cover for a highly serious and politically committed work. By setting Kenealy's work into its intellectual context - contemporary linguistic comment; Irish classical scholarship; the role the Irish language played in fostering political consciousness - a piece of classicising juvenilia enriches our appreciation of this complex period in Ireland's history. Furthermore, *Brallaghan* has lessons for classical scholars, which this paper will briefly sketch, in particular the value of Irish engagements with classical texts and the creative potential Greek texts unleashed.

**Teresa Casal (University of Lisbon)**

**"'Imagining myself out of myself": Uses and Failures of Fiction in Colm Tóibín's and Lucy Caldwell's Stories of Grief'**

In an essay on the literature of grief, following the publication of *Nora Webster*, Colm Tóibín concedes that he first thought of 'writing the book from [his] own perspective, rather than [his] mother's', but couldn't because it 'was as though the experience had hollowed me out and was, from my perspective, too filled with silence and distance for me to be able to harness it for a novel's purposes' (*The Guardian* 2 Oct. 2014). Using memory and the imagination to tell the story from the widow's perspective was therefore his way of addressing the young son's grief, and his conflicted relationship with the surviving parent. Lucy Caldwell's collection *Multitudes* concludes with the narrator of the title story, and mother of a gravely ill newborn, confessing that, 'For the first time in my life, fiction has failed me. I can't imagine myself out of myself' (Caldwell 2016: 164). Though Caldwell had used fiction in the preceding ten stories to address experiences of vulnerability and grief, the last story strikes the reader as possibly autobiographical. Literature has repeatedly engaged with how to tell that which eludes language, be it the extremes of love, violence or loss. By drawing both on Irish Studies and on Medical Humanities, my aim is to consider: why Tóibín needs to use fiction to tell grief and Caldwell eventually cannot; the implication for readers of reading stories as fiction or as memoir; and to what extent these grief stories can be useful in the context of Medical Humanities.

**David Clare (Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick)**

**'Swift and After: The Immram in Anglophone Irish Literature'**

Between the eighth and tenth centuries, a type of literary tale emerged in Ireland called an *immram*. These tales give an account of a hero's journey by sea to *Tír na nÓg*. During the course of these tales, the hero visits various

fantastical islands, and usually returns home to Ireland at the end, sometimes regretfully. It is understandable why writers working in Irish in later centuries, such as de Fréine and Ní Dhomhnaill, would choose to write modern *immrama*. However, since the eighteenth century, a number of Irish writers working in the English language have also written works inspired by medieval *immrama*. This paper will examine the first great example of an Anglophone *immram*: Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. Gulliver's journey to his utopia, the land of the Houyhnhnms, may be broken up over four voyages (as opposed to taking place at the end of one, as in an *immram*). But the structure of the book does culminate in the hero finding his paradise and ultimately returning to a much less desirable life back at home. This paper will then briefly explore two Anglophone *immrama* significantly indebted not only to Swift but also to the most famous of all medieval *immrama*, *The Voyage of St. Brendan*: C.S. Lewis's *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, which – as critics have argued – is a 'faithful' retelling of St. Brendan's voyage, and Stewart Parker's *Pratt's Fall*, a play about a man who claims to have discovered a vellum map depicting the territory covered during the actual historical voyage of St. Brendan.

**Catriona Clutterbuck (University College Dublin)**

**'Reflections of Feminist Theology in Contemporary Irish Women's Poetry'**

This paper examines the mutually generative relationship between feminist theology (particularly that engaging with the Catholic tradition) and Irish women's poetry, examining themes of spirituality, worship, nature, sexuality, transcendence and resistance to institutional authority. The monolithic and exclusive nature of Catholic Church teaching on the role of women, which many feminist theologians argue leads to limitation and blurring of the Church's broader vision of human development in relationship with the Divine, has also been interrogated both directly and indirectly in Irish women's poetry. Certain touchstone texts such as Paula Meehan's 'The Statue of the Virgin at Granard Speaks' have become key markers of the destruction wrought by Church-shaped 'sacrificial social orders' (Mary Condren) which deny the practical agency of a woman-centered religious consciousness. Irish women poets explore the boundary-defying power of such a consciousness, suggesting its potential significance for secular activism by and on behalf of the marginalized. The role of religious art more generally in expanding the possibilities of socio-political praxis, will form a backdrop to this paper tracing resonances between the thinking of feminist theologians such as Siobhán Garrigan, Mary Condren and Tina Beattie, and poems concerned with traditions of faith and worship alongside issues of justice, voice and inclusivity produced by writers such as Eileán Ní Chuilleanáin, Paula Meehan and Medbh McGuckian.

**Deirdre Collins (New York University)**

**'Ghostly Interviews: The Ghost Estate as Narrative Form in Two Crash-Era Irish Novels'**

Donal Ryan's *The Spinning Heart* and Claire Kilroy's *The Devil I Know* are novels by contemporary Irish writers, published in 2012, that both feature communities and characters haunted and reordered by ghost estates and use the interview as a central structuring element. The two interview forms, though different in many ways, serve as vessels of fragmentation, dislocation, and the dislocation of time, all harkening to the effect and lingering symbolism of ghost estates in rural communities. The testimonies given in the two novels are impossible recordings, at times evoking the free indirect discourse and nonlinear, non-fixed rendering of time used by major modernist and post-modernist writers, including James Joyce and Flann O'Brien. But what is left out—the presence of the interviewer and of the central villain, for example—and what is unsaid also harkens to the nature of the ghost estate. In the way that the ghost estate's absent features define it, these texts create a presence in what is absent and construct meaning with what is left out. These novels employ the ghost estate into the structuring of the narrative to demonstrated a disturbance of the natural order that transcends landscape and reaches into interior consciousness. In doing so they demonstrate the power of the rise and fall of the Celtic Tiger on the creation of contemporary Ireland and portray the ghost estate as a new ruin representative of a fundamental event in Irish history.

**Lucy Collins (University College Dublin)**



## “Something Strange and New”: Political Crisis and the Irish Woman Poet, 1890-1922’

From the mid nineteenth century onward, the role of women writers within Irish nationalist circles grew significantly. Women poets, in particular, were active contributors to the *Nation* newspaper, linking the ideals of Irish independence to larger social issues, especially to the fate of women and children under empire. The Irish Revival, which began in earnest in the 1890s, was hospitable to women writers and many took the opportunity to become involved in Dublin theatre circles and publishing ventures. These experiences strengthened women’s sense of artistic community, and alerted them to the political significance of certain kinds of cultural production. Both the First World War and the Easter Rising – and the divided loyalties they produced – had a profound effect on many women writing at the time. Some, such as Katharine Tynan (1858-1931) and Winifred Letts (1881-1972), supported Irishmen fighting in Europe, and wrote about the experiences of the soldiers and their families. Other poets, including Dora Sigerson Shorter (1866-1918), found inspiration in the Rising, situating it within the context of Ireland’s long revolutionary history. This paper explores the role of women poets in mediating between these shifting allegiances, and considers the role of politics in their creative evolution and its influence on their literary legacy.

**Gráinne Condon (University College Cork)**

### ‘New poetry for a new state: Rhoda Coghill’s Reception of Walt Whitman’

In 1923, as a music student at Trinity College Dublin, Coghill set to music Whitman’s ‘Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking’ (1871). This musical arrangement is, according to Contemporary Music Centre Ireland, ‘one of the few significant orchestral works written by an Irish composer before World War II’. Yet Coghill’s connections with Whitman, across time, space and medium, remain unexplored. Coghill, who worked as the official Musical Accompanist in Radio Éireann from 1939 to 1969, published two slim volumes of poetry, *The Bright Hillside* (1948) and *Time Is A Squirrel* (1956). In this period, the free-state Eire becomes a Republic in 1949. At this time, according to Vincent Sherry, ‘there were various signs that a new Ireland, an Ireland less concerned with its own national identity, less antagonistic to outside influence, less obsessively absorbed by its own problems to the exclusion of wider issues, was, however embryonically, in the making’ (1982: 226). Against this backdrop this paper will consider the ways in which Coghill’s poetry responds to that of Whitman. Whitman believes in the need for a national literature, especially poetry, in order to fully realise an American democracy. Coghill’s reception of Whitman, at the birth of the Irish Republic, is indicative of her broader understanding of the role poetry could play in this new national formation. That Coghill chooses a precursor from across the Atlantic and not from within the Irish cultural milieu, for instance, Yeats, evidences Coghill’s use of what Anne Fogarty (1995) calls ‘multifarious cultural contexts to motivate her writing’. In attempting to create a poetry appropriate to the new Irish State, Coghill, as Lucy Collins posits, ‘uses the representation of the environment to interrogate the relationship between human subjectivity and the changing world’. Analysing Coghill’s reception of Whitman, this paper argues, illuminates her ideas of place and of identity, and her engagement with wider questions of nationality and democracy.

**Eimear Nic Conmhaic (Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath)**

### ‘Ceist na Bé i Nuafhilíocht na Gaeilge’

Is ceist thábhachtach í ceist na Bé sa nuafhilíocht. Tharraing Bidy Jenkinson aird ar an gceist sin in ‘Nuafhilíocht na Gaeilge i dtreo na Mílaoise’, alt a foilsíodh in *Feasta* sa bhliain 2000. An ann don Bhé agus, más ann, cad atá i gceist léi? Sa pháipéar seo, caithfear súil ar an díospóireacht sin an athuir, ag féachaint ar thuiscintí éagsúla a bhí ann ar an mBé ó aimsir na Gréige ar aghaidh. Déanfar mionstaidéar ach go háirithe ar thuirimí Choilm Bhreathnaigh, file agus úrscéalaí comhaimseartha Gaeilge, ar an ábhar seo. Tá an-mhachnamh déanta ag an mBreathnach ar an teanga agus ar choincheap na Bé ó tháinig an chéad chnuasach aige amach ag tús na nóchaidí. Is é aidhm an pháipéir seo ná soiléiriú a dhéanamh ar chás na Bé i nuafhilíocht na Gaeilge faoi láthair agus solas a chaitheamh ar thábhacht na díospóireachta sin don fhile agus don chriticeoir araon.

**Edwin Coomasaru (Courtauld Institute of Art)**

**'Witchcraft, Brexit and Northern Ireland: Rita Duffy's *Soften the Border* (2017)'**

Both Leavers and Remainers frequently use metaphors of 'magic', 'magical thinking', 'blind faith', 'sacrifice' and 'cults' to mock or attack the other side of the Brexit divide. Headlines have exclaimed: 'Tarot revival thanks to Brexit' (*BBC News*), and 'Cults, human sacrifice and pagan sex: how folk horror is flowering again in Brexit Britain' (*The Guardian*) – with TV shows like *Britannia* (2018) portraying a pagan Britain resisting Roman invasion. Magic has a specific history in Ireland and Northern Ireland, of course: from racist and misogynistic Victorian accounts of the supposedly 'primitive' and 'feminine' Irish – to the British Army's secret practice of staging Black Magic rituals in the early 1970's as a weapon of war. More recently, feminist activist movements like the Repeal the Eighth campaign in the Republic have appropriated witchcraft symbolism in their successful efforts to change abortion law. Given the complex entanglements of gender, conflict and magic as metaphor – how might feminist artist Rita Duffy's installation, *Soften the Border* (2017), draw on such cultural currents in the midst of Brexit? Made up of dolls and cushions knitted by women's groups from Ireland and Northern Ireland, it was exhibited across the Blacklion-Belcoo Bridge – straddling the border. If the work was a testament to the ties and entanglements between communities living either side, could the hand-woven dolls also be referencing ideas of magic – playing with the conceptual connections between witchcraft, women and feminism? What might such a ritual performance mean in the context of Brexit?

**Brendan Corcoran (Indiana State University)**

**"'perfected in my memory": Beauty and Truth in Seamus Heaney's "The Grauballe Man"'**

Helen Vendler richly describes Seamus Heaney's two most essential bog poems—'The Tollund Man' and 'The Grauballe Man'—as 'twinned'. These intensely fraternal poems, like the figures they evoke and illuminate, are often conjoined (in Heaney's discourse), even palimpsestically morphed (as in a remarkable 1973 letter from Ted Hughes), and as such they offer a harmonic rendering of Heaney's mature and fundamentally elegiac poetics. This paper considers 'The Grauballe Man', at once an extension from 'The Tollund Man' and, in its own right, an essential terminus in the development of Heaney's art, a vital point of artistic arrival and departure, and an assured articulation of the lyric values he will hone and consolidate across his career. Ted Hughes, in a 1962 statement that Heaney quotes on various occasions, says that 'the poet's only hope is to be infinitely sensitive to what his gift is, and this in itself seems to be another gift that few poets possess'. Heaney possess this gift in spades. In 'The Grauballe Man', a Troubles poem in no way delimited by the Troubles, this poetic knowledge (beyond just authorial self-awareness) grounds upon the figure of the 'scales', which subsequently resounds throughout Heaney's *oeuvre*. This paper describes how the Keatsian operation of these scales involves no simplistic binary arrangement of terms, but rather a more organic, fractal-like geometry, what he calls in a 2004 tribute to Michael McLaverty, 'the contemplation of two truths [aptly, thanksgiving and disconsolation] that are mysteriously complementary and have a complex human inter-relation'.

**Marguërite Corporaal (Radboud University Nijmegen)**

**"'The atmosphere is completely realised": American literary criticism of Irish regional fiction in the 1890s'**

The 1890s saw the publication of many collections of Irish local colour fiction, thereby testifying to the huge popularity of the genre in Ireland during a crucial period in its cultural identity formation: the Revival. Today we mainly conceptualise this tradition of Irish local colour literature in relation to processes of nation formation, due to the influence of scholarship on local colour fiction by amongst others, Josephine Donovan (2010), Judith Fetterley and Marjorie Pryse (2003). In Irish studies, the tendency has also been to frame this heyday of regional literature by the contexts of cultural nationalism, in line with common paradigms of 'regionalised nationalism'. What is thereby overlooked is not only a rich publication history of these texts across the Atlantic, but also a significant corpus of literary criticism about these local colour narratives and their authors in the North-American press. This paper will revisit this rich tradition of literary criticism by looking at the reception of works by Shan Bullock, Jane Barlow and

Katharine Tynan in the American press (e.g. *The Dial*, *The Bookman*, *The Review of Reviews*). What aspects of their work as local colour fiction were highlighted in these reviews, bearing in mind the rich traditions of American local colour literature in the second half of the nineteenth century? In what respects are these critical responses to Irish local colour fiction targeting diaspora readerships, and imbued by diasporic consciousness? These questions will be addressed in relation to theoretical frameworks of nostalgia, cultural transfer and transculturalism.

**Éamonn Costello (Ollscoil Luimnigh)**

**‘Ag Gabháil Foinn Fhéiniúlacht na hAthbheochana: Fonnadóireacht san Oireachtas 1897-1924’**

Cé gur féile litríochta a bhí in Oireachtas na Gaeilge sa tréimhse 1897-1924, theastaigh imeachtaí meidhreacha, ar nós comórtais ceoil, damhsa, agus an céilí, chun an pobal mórthimpeall a mhealladh chuig an bhféile; ach bhí feidhm eile níos doimhne ag na comórtais amhránaíochta freisin. Mar gheall ar thionchar scríbhinní leithéidí Macpherson agus Joseph Cooper Walker, chreid cuid de lucht na hathbheochana gur iarsma ón sean-ré Ghaelach a bhí sna hamhráin traidisiúnta a bhí le fáil i measc phobal na Gaeltachta. Cé gur ghlac lucht an Oireachtais leis go mba cheart tús áite a thabhairt do amhráin traidisiúnta i bhformhór na gcomórtas amhránaíochta ó 1903 ar aghaidh, bhíodh neart díospóireachta ar siúl i measc athbheochanóirí maidir leis an gcur chuige amhránaíochta a b’fhearr a d’fheilfeadh don fhéile, comórtais cóir nó comórtais aonair. Chreid cuid de lucht an Oireachtais gur ceol aonair a bhí sa gceol Gaelach agus nár fheil comhcheol de chineál ar bith dó. Sa deireadh, socraíodh dhá shraith comórtas a chruthú, comórtais aonair agus comórtais cóir. Ach, spéisíúil go leor, glacadh leis, tríd is tríd, gur fonnadóirí clasaiceacha seachas traidisiúnta a bheadh ag gabháil foinn sna comórtais seo ar fad. Is beag fonnadóir traidisiúnta a ghlac páirt san Oireachtas sa tréimhse seo, agus áitítear anseo go seasann an stíl chlasaiceach amhránaíochta a bhí chun treise san Oireachtas ó 1897-1924 don chineál féiniúlacht chultúrtha a bhí ag na hathbheochanóirí ag an am: féiniúlacht mheánaicmeach agus iltíreach. Áitítear freisin nár tugadh cluas éisteachta don fhonnadóir traidisiúnta ag an am mar go raibh an stíl traidisiúnta contráilte le aeistéitic ceoil na hathbheochana, agus gur sheas an stíl traidisiúnta do fhéiniúlacht tútach réigiúnach, féiniúlacht nach raibh i gcomhréir leis an bhféiniúlacht nua chultúrtha a bhí dhá chothú ag na hathbheochanóirí.

**Kate Costello-Sullivan (Le Moyne College)**

**“It is all your fault”: Motherhood and the maternal body in Enright’s *The Green Road*’**

Anne Enright’s *The Green Road* follows the familiar pattern of questioning what one might call the model of the ‘Sainted Maternal’ seen in earlier novels such as *The Gathering* by juxtaposing it against the realities of common, flawed motherhood. And unlike that earlier novel, it does not posit what Dominic La Capra has called a ‘founding trauma’, instead presenting us with the history, and accrued challenges and sorrows, of the every day. In this respect, *The Green Road* walks the line between the ideal—a concept hollowed of meaning and scorned as impossible—and the real—on the one hand inevitably deflating, on the other grounded in a way that is enabling, almost comforting. This paper argues that *The Green Road* reflects a narrative effort to capture the accrued and pedestrian traumas of the everyday, often centered on the mother and the maternal body, in order to recuperate both.

**Patricia Coughlan (University College Cork)**

**‘Material Mermaids’**

This paper discusses a collaborative project between Alice Maher and Doireann Ní Ghríofa: the recent book *Nine Silence* (Dublin: Wild Salvage Press, 2018), which juxtaposes a new Ní Ghríofa sequence with images from Maher’s acclaimed current exhibition “Vox Materia”. This cross-generational collaboration takes a point of origin from the late-medieval carved stone mermaid in Kilcooley Abbey, Co. Tipperary. After publishing three collections in Irish Ní Ghríofa, who works bilingually, won the 2016 Rooney Prize for her English-language volume *Clasp*, and several subsequent awards. She is an Inaugural Fellow at the QUB Heaney Centre. A renowned national and international artist, Maher needs no introduction. The paper argues that in this project two artists explore contemporary uses of

myths about the body, in the urgent contexts of the Tuam mass infant burials and the powerful social movement to repeal the anti-abortion Eighth Amendment. Both emphatically and actively feminist, Maher and Ní Ghríofa create passionate and arresting reinscriptions of human identities as always in process and of human-natural liminality. Their related but differing work in visual and verbal media combines to transform the monstered, abjected feminine of tradition by embracing material being, in sexual expression, reproduction, and maternal attachment. Points of connection and divergence from Ní Dhomhnaill's major *Murúcha* sequence (1998; Muldoon version *The Fifty-Minute Mermaid* (2007)) are subliminally indicated, registering both continuity and change in the character and aims of feminist critique in the two decades between.

**Alexander Coupe (Goldsmiths, University of London)**

**“Driving towards the money shot”: Gendering “normalisation” in Stacey Gregg’s *Shibboleth*’**

Since the 2008 financial crisis attention has turned to how the discourse of political and social ‘normalisation’ that attended the Good Friday Agreement has been underwritten by the economic logic of neoliberalism (John Nagle, Conor McCabe, Colin Coulter). Others have argued that a focus on the nationalist-unionist antagonism has obfuscated the market’s entrenchment of class and gender inequalities (Brian Kelly, Kellie O’Dowd). Less attention has been given to the convergence of this economic orthodoxy and the social conservatism shared, to varying degrees, by each of Northern Ireland’s four main political parties. In 2010 the Outburst Queer Arts festival began a cultural critique of ‘normalisation’ by organising around the question ‘what is normal?’, paying particular attention to how sectarianism is structured through misogyny and homophobia. However it was not until Stacey Gregg’s 2015 play *Shibboleth*, set amidst the urban re-development of Belfast, that a production adjoined both the feminist and socialist analyses of the post-Agreement political-economic settlement. This paper will argue that Gregg’s play was a difficult and necessary reckoning with theatre’s institutional and artistic complicity in producing an unproblematic image of Northern Ireland’s integration into neoliberal modernity. It will outline the ways in which *Shibboleth* deviated from the formal tendencies of the ‘well made play’ in post-Agreement theatre as a means of levelling a critique of how the economic transformations of ‘normalisation’ have relied upon preserving gendered divisions of class and community.

**Jonathan C. Creasy (University College Dublin)**

**‘Oral Histories of Mary Manning Howe and The Poets’ Theatre’**

This talk presents newly uncovered oral histories and interviews on Dublin-born playwright, novelist, actor, and director Mary Manning Howe and the company she co-founded in Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Poets’ Theatre (1950-1968). Born in 1905 into an Anglo-Irish Protestant family, Manning Howe wrote plays for the Gate Theatre, acted in the Abbey, edited the magazine *Motley*, published three novels, and produced and directed a number of pioneering Irish films. In the 1930s, she moved to the United States after marrying law scholar Mark de Wolfe Howe. There she was involved in founding The Poets’ Theatre in 1950. The Poets’ Theatre’s first productions were verse plays by recent Harvard graduates John Ashbery and Frank O’Hara. Manning Howe’s Irish connections led to significant Irish works being produced in The Poets’ Theatre, including plays by W.B. Yeats, Samuel Beckett, Denis Johnston, and – perhaps The Poets’ most celebrated production – Manning Howe’s own stage adaptation of Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*. The talk will focus on Creasy’s recent discovery of hundreds of pages of unpublished, unarchived interviews related to Mary Manning Howe and The Poets’ Theatre. (Fanny Howe gave these documents to Creasy for use in his forthcoming book, *Mary Manning Howe & The Poets’ Theatre*. The interviews were initiated and compiled by Elizabeth Shannon.) Other materials presented in the talk will include documents, photographs, and production materials found in Harvard’s Houghton Library, as well as interviews conducted by Creasy and Christina Davis, curator of Harvard’s Woodberry Poetry Room.

**Erin Cunningham (King’s College London)**

**“far from the green, green grass of home”: Form, Nation, and the Sonnet in the Poetry and Criticism of David Wheatley and Justin Quinn’**

David Wheatley and Justin Quinn are poets of the 'Metre generation', so-called after the poetry journal founded by the two in 1996, and, as Fran Brearton notes, 'loosely (if not always accurately) associated with formal conservatism, even with a new formalism'. Despite Brearton's scepticism, both Quinn and Wheatley do make frequent use of traditional forms in their poetry, though this is alongside copious free verse, and to an extent by no means unprecedented in Irish poetry of the last century. The sonnet features particularly prominently in the work of both poets, as in examples such as Wheatley's 'Sonnets to James Clarence Mangan' and 'Two Posthumous Sonnets', and Quinn's 'Prague Elegies' and 'The Months'. These sonnets often combine Irish themes and imagery with a more global, cosmopolitan subject matter, gesturing at the poets' critical interest in the 'postnational'. This was a cornerstone of their ethos in *Metre*, which sought to draw together criticism and poetry from across the world. The enterprise did not operate separately from the journal's investment in questions of poetic form; in his introduction to an issue dedicated to 'Irish Poetry and the Diaspora', Quinn writes, 'That one is far from the green, green grass of home might [...] provide a healthy dislocation for the imagination, as exhilarating as switching to free-verse after twenty years of sonnets.' This paper will use their sonnets as a case study to argue that Quinn and Wheatley's critical concerns are embodied by their poems, and by their use of form specifically.

**Diarmuid Curraoin (scoláire neamhspleách)**

**"Tuigim Joyce"/"I dig Joyce"**

Thosnaigh Jack Kerouac ag scríobh an leabhair *Old Angel Midnight* i 1956. Chum sé roinnt de nuair a bhí sé ag maireachtaint i Mill Valley, ceantar tuaithe in aice le San Francisco, agus an chuid eile de i rith an ama a chaith sé i dTangiers san Afraic Thuaidh. Foilsíodh an chuid is mó den saothar i 1959 agus píosaí eile de i 1961 agus i 1964. Cuireadh an leabhar ina iomláine i gcló i 1973. Is léir an tionchar a bhí ag scríbhneoireacht James Joyce ar *Old Angel Midnight*. Tá sé scríofa i bhfoirm atá an-chosúil leis an gceann atá le fáil in *Finnegans Wake*. Baintear feidhm as nathanna de chuid Bhéarla na hÉireann tríd an leabhar agus, in áiteanna, úsáidtear cúpla focal Gaelainne freisin. In *Old Angel Midnight* léiríonn Kerouac ní hamháin a mheas ar Joyce ach ar an dtír agus ar an dtraidisiún as a dtáinig sé, agus mar sin díreofar ar an saothar seo ach go háirithe i rith na cainte, ach féachfar freisin ar dhánta le Kerouac ina bhfuil gnéithe Gaelacha le feiscint agus scrúdófar aistí agus ailt dá chuid ina labhrann sé faoi Joyce agus faoina chuid scríbhneoireachta.

**Christopher Cusack (HAN University of Applied Sciences)**

**"Be Americans and not Traitors!": Identity Crisis in Irish-American Popular Fiction, 1914-1918'**

Throughout the First World War, the issue of national identity played a central role in American politics. Though the country initially maintained a policy of neutrality, many citizens of European descent continued to identify strongly with the country of their heritage. Yet such dual belonging, popularly referred to as 'hyphenism', was denounced at all levels of US society, including by President Woodrow Wilson, who in a 1914 speech lambasted 'Americans [who] need hyphens in their names'. The two most conspicuous such groups were German and Irish Americans. While it is obvious why the former might be inclined to support the *heimat*, at first glance it seems less logical for Irish Americans to rally to the German cause. However, many Irish American radicals supported the German Empire, as they hoped the Germans might support the Irish struggle against their common enemy, the British. But the role of the First World War in the formation of Irish-American identities remains seriously understudied. In my paper, I will examine how Irish-American popular fiction written during this period thematises diasporic identity formation. Such material demonstrates that ethnic identity was an eminently marketable theme that is, however, more complex than might be expected. Covering authors such as Mary Synon, Finley Peter Dunne, and Donn Byrne, I will reassess simplistic narratives of diasporic filiopietism. After all, popular fiction forms a crucial resource for a literary sociology of identity, and these authors' explorations of diasporic identity in times of crisis provide valuable insights into processes of social formation.

**Eli Davies (Ulster University)**

## **‘Radical domesticity: home, remembrance and conflict in Northern Irish women’s writing’**

This paper will consider the importance of domestic space in how we remember and talk about the Troubles in the north of Ireland. As Briony Reid points out, houses in the region ‘have been made full participants in the public world in ways specific to the province's history and politics’. Homes were sites of invasion and violence and continue to be, in Reid’s words ‘the carriers of political symbols’ in the commemorative landscape. I will highlight the ways that hegemonic male-dominated grand narratives about the Troubles have worked to erase the significance of what went on *inside* the home, the emotional and physical work, frequently performed by women. Literature, with its stress on the specificity of individual, private lives, is ideally placed to describe this experience and can undermine the stereotypical depictions of women which continue to feature in the Northern Irish commemorative landscape. Drawing on the work of writers including Nell McCafferty and Bernadette Devlin McAliskey and the accounts of individual women I will argue that Northern Irish women’s writing – memoir, short story and novels – plays a distinctive role in inserting women’s voices and bodies into the ways in which we remember and talk about the experience of the home and conflict in Northern Ireland.

**Sorcha De Brún (University of Limerick)**

### **‘Flight of the Girls: Clitricht, Filíocht na Man and Irish-Language Criticism’**

The retreat that the Irish language has been beating in recent years to the unlikely bedfellows of the Academy, *Gaelscoileanna* and some heroic Gaeltacht families who keep the fire of the language burning against the odds, is matched only by the flight of the Irish-language book review to the mists of a distant past that involved *ordinary readers*. The central role played by the reviewer in Irish-language literary criticism, which was alive and well at the time of the publication of Máirtín Ó Cadhain’s *Cré na Cille* in 1949, has been replaced by a growing importance and dependence on the academic critic. While there is much consternation and some huffing and puffing in the Academy over the survival of prose writing, Irish literature, and the language itself, the idea of the humble book reviewer who might jot a piece for a newspaper to pay the rent on the house, and because s/he loves books, has been all but blown down by a not inconsiderable amount of wind. This paper will look firstly at the political implications of the exodus of the Irish-language book reviewer and their gradual replacement by the University-based critic. Secondly, the paper will show how criticism in the last twenty years has focused on women, while omitting work done by men, and while missing other tropes in contemporary Irish literature which do not fit the Gender Studies model. Finally, the paper will show how both the growing gentrification and ‘feminization’ of Irish-language criticism has resulted in a distaste for realism in Irish-language literature and for the experience of *ordinary readers*.

**Joan FitzPatrick Dean (University of Missouri-Kansas City)**

### **‘Cross-Currents in Irish Suffragist Theatre’**

This paper considers the cross-currents in Irish suffragist theatre by focusing on several of the actor-activists and activist-actors who played key roles in Irish theatre, Irish republicanism, and the Irish suffragist movement: Daisy Bannard-Cogley, Margaret and James Cousins, Francis and Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, and Countess Markievicz. However intent these, like most, republicans were in advancing an Irish Ireland agenda, when it came to suffrage, several instances of common cause with the English suffragist movement have been documented in recent scholarship. The suffragist Daffodil Fete, staged by the Irish Women’s Franchise League at Molesworth Hall shortly after Easter in 1914, featured performances of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington’s *The Prodigal Daughter* and an adaptation of Cicely Mary Hamilton’s *A Pageant of Great Women*, which was first performed in London Scala Theatre and published in 1909. Margaret Cousins, who left Ireland with her husband in 1913 for Liverpool and then India, was hand to open the Daffodil Fete. Adapted for an Irish audience, *A Pageant of Great Women* incorporated great Irish women, including Maeve (Mrs. McDonagh), Deirdre (Elizabeth Young), and Anne Devlin (John Brennan [Sidney Czira]), and infused an English suffragist work with a republican message. This paper builds on Paige Reynolds’ and Cliona Murphy’s observation of the theatricality and performativity in the Irish suffragist movement.

Drawing on archival research, this paper focuses on the international dimensions to the theatre productions associated with the Irish suffragist movement.

**Juan José Delaney (Universidad del Salvador, Buenos Aires)**  
**'Irish-Porteño identity in Rodolfo L. Walsh's writing'**

Born in Patagonia in 1927, Rodolfo Jorge Walsh belonged to an Irish-Argentine family. All his ancestors were Irish or of Irish descent. Michael McCaughan wrote that Rodolfo's mother 'considered English the language of the civilized world and would nurse ambitions of social mobility among their children'. The first part of the statement is true for most of the Irish Argentines, who, little by little, incorporated Spanish voices, modified syntax and introduced neologisms, promoting that strange linguistic variation known as Irish-Porteño, spoken by the Irish-Porteños: Irish living in the City of Buenos Aires and their descendants. Language appears as an important topic among the Irish Argentines; Irish-Gaelic was hardly spoken by the Irish in Buenos Aires, and it was quickly dropped due to its uselessness, but it survived threading through their English in that expressive variation which is Irish-English. Walsh wrote all his work in Spanish. His literature was, at the same time, innovative and fiduciary to the normative grammar. What is significant in Walsh's writing is his personal and original style. Critics consider that his Irish-influenced narratives are among the best texts found in contemporary Argentine literature. Walsh's original style is what claims reader's attention, a style that, we believe, has been nourished by Irish-English and Irish-Porteño variations. This paper shows how this linguistic process developed, in what way the author's literary Spanish discourse conveys ancestral linguistic echoes.

**Martina Devlin (Trinity College Dublin)**  
**'From Anna to Hanna: Political Activists and How They Were Silenced'**

This paper will deal with the motivations, obstacles and outcomes for a number of women writers who were political activists. The methodology examines how fictionalising them, which I did for a collection, *Truth & Dare: Short Stories about Women Who Shaped Ireland* (Dublin: Poolbeg Press, 2018), paradoxically renders them more human. Throughout history, writers have used their platforms and eloquence to challenge state policy. While a number of women carved out influential roles by confronting the status quo, most have been forgotten. Conscious of this injustice, I decided to retell the stories of some key female activists through the medium of fiction. What politicised them and how did they handle opposition? I envisaged the process of writing their stories as direct action, spurred on by my own experience as an activist, highlighting issues via a weekly column with the *Irish Independent*. Analysis of a cross-section of women, including Speranza, Anna Parnell and Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, showed earlier activists developed political consciousness on a personal level. Once the limitations imposed on them as individuals were realised, they expanded beyond the private to encompass gender and class. Fighting not only against rigid social norms but also familial disapproval, their message about political and economic inequality was delivered through newspapers, pamphlets and books; furthermore, they learned public speaking skills to advance their causes. However, while social change was effected, there was a tendency to marginalise these women subsequently. This paper aims to consider whether fiction can be harnessed as an act of reclamation.

**Leszek Drong (University of Silesia)**  
**'Belfast's Pasts, Memory's Borders: Travelling to Strange Lands in Recent Northern Irish Fiction'**

Different though they are, Anna Burns' and David Park's recent novels (respectively, *Milkman* and *Travelling in a Strange Land*) share the same setting: Belfast. In both books, too, the work of memory is of paramount importance to their characters because it is associated with trauma. Finally, what brings the two novels together is a keen exploration of borders and divisions, both physical and figurative. Tom and middle sister (Burns' protagonist has no name) are usually on the move; they often cross more or less visible lines (between areas, neighbourhoods, provinces, lands, etc.), mindful of the consequences of their actions, and of the history behind those divisions. In my discussion of the novels I bring together border studies and cultural memory studies to show how those two

critical discourses may illuminate each other in the context of fiction from Northern Ireland. Borders, walls, divisions and barriers have been a fixture in Ireland since times immemorial; their exploration from the point of view of how they are remembered in works of fiction yields immensely interesting insights into partitions enmeshed in the fabric of our perceptions. By confronting Astrid Erll's writings on transcultural memory with Alexander C. Diener's notions of border studies and territoriality as well as Joe Cleary's views on partition with regard to Ireland, I claim that contemporary novels from Northern Ireland are not only intertextual but also profoundly aware of what is going on in the outside world, where Brexit is redefining our (cultural) memory and redrawing our borders.

**Maureen E. Ruprecht Fadem (City University of New York, Kingsborough)**

**'Embedded Contingencies and the Tyranny of (Postcolonial) Comparativity in the Poetry of Medbh McGuckian'**

This presentation is part of a larger study of a three-part poetics of silence in the poetry of renowned Belfast poet, Medbh McGuckian. It details a third silent property shaping her work, its profuse intertextualities. This paper offers a response to and urges a recasting of the recent debate on McGuckian's intertextuality in the frame of poetics and poetical as well as postcolonial, feminist and partition theories. It moves beyond critical perspectives prevailing in this branch of the scholarship in a full theorization of the meaning and function of citation in poetry, a question registered along the antennae of the postcolonial and postmodern, of partition and of the (Irish) woman writer. A salient aspect of this oeuvre is its international comparativity, what I call 'embedded contingencies': verses that compare the Northern Irish Troubles to the Holocaust, or prisoners at Maze to those incarcerated under Stalin or as part of the Spanish Civil War by means of intertextuality as a continuous comparative gesture underpinning the oeuvre. This is, I argue, a postcolonial comparativity, one deeply important to Northern Irish literature at large. I posit the compulsory nature of such comparativities for the postcolonial poet; more particularly, writing from the more extreme circumstances of occupation, trauma and violence – conditions prevailing in nearly any post-partition successor state – means voice is rendered as uncertainty or conundrum and the penning of (colonial) English often analogous to the 'say[ing]' of 'nothing'. Just as these materialities are signaled by aspects of McGuckian's craft – the hook-tying of images into series, of similes into chains, unexpected shifts of pronoun or location – the contextual disturbances noted are indexed in the profuse tethering of the poems to other voices, places, times, texts, political histories and indeed languages. Ultimately this talk makes the case for a shift in the dialogue on McGuckian's intertextuality in favor of theoretical analyses that aim to understand its purpose and to consider its possible compulsory nature rather than merely to suss source texts or adjudicate the 'plagiarism' question. This paper is informed by a deep engagement with the range of intertextual criticism on McGuckian as well as theories of intertextuality, feminism, partition and postcoloniality; of especial significance are reflections of Benjamin, Weisgerber, Alcobia-Murphy, Wills and Hutcheon.

**Fiona Fearon (Dundalk Institute of Technology)**

**'A Hidden History: Working Class Culture in Dundalk 1898-1905'**

Dorothy Macardle, playwright, novelist and historian of the Irish Republic, was born in Dundalk in 1889 to the wealthy Macardle brewing family and left to go to Alexandra College in 1905. Macardle's childhood memories of Dundalk are of a military barracks town which was deeply affected by poverty. Her memories were obviously coloured by the stultifying atmosphere of her Victorian childhood complicated by a difficult relationship with her mother. What the 16-year-old Macardle could not have known when she escaped to Dublin in 1905, was not only the vibrant professional and amateur theatre tradition of her own town, but the complex forgotten history of working-class social clubs, schools and political organisations. As she raged against her parents for preventing her access to an education, young girls in the school directly opposite her house performed suffragette manifestos in front of visiting clergy. Gymnastics and boxing displays were regularly presented in the Town Hall Theatre alongside opera, comedies and early moving picture shows, while the social and sporting clubs held evenings of music and dramatic entertainment, as well as dances and phonographic presentations. This paper will analyse the production



and reception of working-class culture in Dundalk between 1898 and 1905, using previously unpublished archival records and newspaper coverage.

**Molly Ferguson (Ball State University)**

**'Folklore and Fairy Tale as Feminist Critique in Louise O'Neill's *The Surface Breaks*'**

Louise O'Neill's young adult novel *The Surface Breaks* (2018) is a feminist reimagining of Hans Christian Anderson's 'The Little Mermaid' through an allegorical representation of young womanhood within a culture of gender-based violence. While a straightforward reading of the novel recognizes its condemnation of violence against women in all its forms, a more nuanced reading absorbs the second layer of critique directed at women themselves. O'Neill demonstrates how women maintain patriarchy by internalizing oppression, enforcing surveillance and divisive competition despite negative consequences for other women. So while the novel has a message for the young adult women who read it seeking empowerment, it also asserts a challenge to adult women who are complicit in perpetuating violence against women by supporting patriarchal structures. For example, in the novel the 'rusalkas', selkies whom the mermaids are taught to fear and despise, are revealed as victims of sexual violence, reinforcing O'Neill's message that women shame other women and hold them back from uniting against gender-based violence. During this '#MeToo' moment in Ireland when the feminist movement is so present in popular culture, O'Neill uses folklore as an entry-point for critique of rape culture and how women maintain that culture. While young adult novels are often overlooked by critics, my paper will explore this novel's feminist critique through its employment of Irish selkie and mermaid lore to subvert the 'little mermaid' tale and speak to a moment of tension in Irish culture today over women's responsibilities to one another.

**Jana Fischerova (Trinity College Dublin / University College Dublin)**

**'Kate O'Brien as Critic and Public Intellectual'**

Kate O'Brien (1897-1974) has now long been recognised as one of the most significant Irish novelists. Following a long period of neglect, caused at least partly by the impact of Irish censorship, there has in recent years been renewed interest in her work and legacy. The artistic complexity of her novels has been acknowledged, as has her courage in engaging with controversial themes. All but one of her novels are back in print. However, there is still a side to O'Brien that remains largely unexplored: her work as a literary critic and social commentator. Over some four decades she produced a large body of non-fiction texts spanning several genres and forms. These reveal a unique, authoritative voice drawing her audiences' attention to a variety of subjects – from the arts and education, to current world affairs, to nationalism and violence, and more. This material is more than an overflow from her novelistic work – it stands alone on its own merit. At the same time it complements O'Brien's novels, shining new light on the creative purpose behind them, illuminating a poignant consistency in the author's outlook and values. The aim of this paper is to explore – through a selection of her journalism and essays – this other side of Kate O'Brien and highlight the significance of her work as a critic and public intellectual.

**Lisa Fitzpatrick (Ulster University)**

**'Female Treachery and Male Heroism: Deirdre, Grainne and Dervorgilla on Stage'**

The early twentieth century saw a large number of dramatizations of Irish legends, with multiple versions of Deirdre of the Sorrows as well as events from the Cuchulain cycle and the Fianna. These plays focus on the actions of the male hero, with female characters present as helpmeets and temptresses who lead the hero to disaster. However, a number of plays by women during the period from 1900-1920 stage the stories of Deirdre, Grainne, Maeve and Dervorgilla, to explore this recurring trope of female faithlessness and betrayal. The paper considers them alongside other significant post-colonial female figures like La Malinche (Mexico) and Sacagawea (North America), also both positioned as treacherous women. The texts used are Alice Milligan's *The Last Feast of the Fianna*, Augusta Gregory's *Dervorgilla* and *Grania*, and Eva Gore-Booth's *The Buried Life of Deirdre* and *The Death of Fionavar*. From this selection of plays, the paper seeks to establish an emergent tradition of mythological drama

that centres on the experiences of the female characters while reflecting on the position of women in pre-Independence Ireland.

**Deirdre Flynn (University College Dublin)**

**'A half formed thing: Female Middle Age in the Post-Celtic Tiger novel'**

The ageing population is a major concern for Ireland, the EU and the UN. However the focus of the majority of the research is on older age. Most research projects focus on 60 and above, or like The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing, starting at 50. None of the research looks at middle age, or the gendered implications of middle age. Much work post-crash has focused on the landscape, and general economic concerns, yet female middle age has yet to feature, especially from world systems and gerontological approaches. This paper hopes to address a deficit in focus on middle age, especially after the economic collapse, as part of a larger project on middle age. There are fascinating portraits of middle age in many post-Celtic Tiger novels, but this paper will focus on the mother in Eimear McBride's award-winning *A Girl is a Half-formed Thing*: described as ranting, suffering with mental illness and an abusive past, she is unable to connect emotionally with her children. At the end of the novel she is left alone and childless. If literature is a socially symbolic act then how we represent middle age in literature must be analysed, and looking at post-Celtic Tiger fiction presents a picture of female middle age in Ireland that must be examined in light of national, European and global concerns about the rapidly rising ageing population. This builds on Susan Cahill's excellent work on the gendered aspect of the Celtic Tiger, and expands the field of gerontology as knowledge is acquired on middle age. Much excellent work has been done on post Celtic Tiger Ireland and the Crash by Peadar Kirby, Clare Bracken, Gerry Smyth, and Tara Harney-Mahajan, and this project will speak to this research from a new perspective, building on excellent research from Maggie O'Neill on ageing.

**Roddy Flynn (Dublin City University)**

**[No paper title]**

This paper questions the extent to which it is possible (or even useful) to continue to think about national cinema on a textual level. In scholarship there has been a greater acknowledgment of the manner in which "the national" can be understood at an *industrial* level. Yorgos Lanthimos's *The Lobster*, for example, was a five-country (Ireland, UK, France, Greece and the Netherlands) co-production, a structure reflected in a mix of Irish, UK and Greek production personnel, a French digital effects company and a cast drawn from across Europe. Having first partnered with Lanthimos on the film, Element Pictures acted as lead producer on his two subsequent films – *The Killing of a Sacred Deer* and *The Favourite*. Strikingly, the award-season success of the latter has seen the film popularly discussed as an "Irish" success story despite the more or less total absence of any textual elements even remotely connecting the film to Ireland. The paper also seeks to sketch out a methodology which might allow researchers to go beyond straightforward accounts of how individual projects are put together at a financial/personnel level and to create a means of routinely connecting the production context to textual content.

**Hedda Friberg-Harnesk (Mid Sweden University)**

**"... in what ocean?" Sea spaces, islands, and the littoral in Sebastian Barry's Sligo novels'**

In Sebastian Barry's *The Temporary Gentleman* (2014), Jack McNulty asks himself, 'The British Isles, where do they lie...?' and, questioning such identity components as 'British' and 'gentleman', throws his British passport 'into the silky waters' of the Suez canal. Citing Kerrigan (2008), John Brannigan (2015) highlights that nowhere does the term 'archipelago' refer "'to islands but rather to an area of sea'". Moreover, seeing 'the archipelago as a maritime space, in which lie a group of islands', emphasizes how 'seas and oceans surrounding the islands connect them to each other and to other land masses'. Also, as Nels Pearson argues, discussing *Dubliners*, such maritime spaces are associated with 'both connection and division' (2018). Negotiating maritime spaces, Jack McNulty sees the waters surrounding his native Irish island and those between Europe and Africa, not as barriers, but an expressway allowing him to escape disastrous consequences of past failings. Similarly, his brother Eneas, of *The Whereabouts of*

*Eneas McNulty* (1998), attempts escape from persecution in insular Sligo by travelling oceanic highways to Africa. Thomas McNulty, in *Days Without End* (2016), 'child of poor Sligionians', having crossed the Atlantic to escape a poverty-ridden childhood, engages in American wars and a diluvian episode. Finally, in *The Secret Scripture* (2008), Roseanne, discarded and isolated wife of Tom McNulty, lives littorally, for a while, at Strandhill. Focusing on islands, maritime spaces, and the littoral in Barry's Sligo novels, then, this paper explores relations between them.

**Kiminori Fukaya (Hosei University)**

**'The Aesthetic Development of Incoherent Reality and Indolence in 'UND': Methodological and Diegetic Transformations in *Dream of Fair to Middling Women*'**

At the end of the chapter two in Samuel Beckett's first novel, *Dream of Fair to Middling Women*, the protagonist Belacqua discusses the notion of 'incoherent reality' with the Mandarin, his girlfriend Smeraldina-Rima's father. In his early career, Beckett often refers to a type of 'reality' that resists rational explanation: it appears in his lecture on French literature at Trinity College Dublin and in his essay on Marcel Proust. In a previous article published in *Journal of Beckett Studies* (26:2), I explained that Arthur Rimbaud influenced Beckett's strong interest in incoherent reality, and Beckett tried to re-interpret the idea by introducing the notion of 'indolence' in the subsequent chapter entitled 'UND'. In this sequential paper, I would like to elaborate the manner in which Beckett refined the ideas of incoherent reality and indolence in 'UND'. This chapter may be read as Beckett's manifest of his creative process: the author/narrator plans for his next book and examines his writing methods, suspending the on-going narrative. The narrative environment undergoes three major transformations in accordance with this suspension: (1) in the story space, (2) in the character relationships and (3) in Belacqua's characterization. I will explore the manner in which the conceptions of incoherent reality and indolence in this interlude chapter relate to the process of Beckett's development of the two aesthetics, keeping in mind that the methodological examination and the diegetic transformation occur at the same moment.

**Rosanne Gallenne (University College Dublin)**

**'The Garden as a Creative Space in the Poetry of Blanaid Salkeld and Eavan Boland'**

In poetry, the garden is a common trope that has been fascinating poets since biblical times. In men's canonical poetry, the garden is a microcosmic idealised representation of the society of their times. Gendered power relations are staged there and reflect both social and political realities, such as the marginalisation of women from society and the simplification of their femininity under the traits of the Woman Gardener, an Eve-like figure. This isolation from the outside world can arguably be compared to the situation that Irish women poets – and more generally Irish women – are confronted with as they are somehow marginalised both from society and the poetic tradition. However, modern Irish women poets also write about the garden in their poetry, which highlights their will to disrupt patriarchal canonical norms, and both Blanaid Salkeld and Eavan Boland wrote quite extensively on the garden. Their re-appropriation of the trope of the garden is a political gesture that allows them to finally write their own version of the woman gardener with the intention to explore the complexity of their femininity. They also manage to escape the physical limitations of the garden thanks to their powerful creativity and their harmonious relationship with nature, deprived from any sense of ownership. This paper thus intends to demonstrate that through their re-creation of the traditional trope of the garden, Blanaid Salkeld and Eavan Boland challenge the long-established gendered power-relations and make women an integral part of Irish poetic tradition, both as poets and active subjects of poetry.

**Alison Garden (Queen's University Belfast)**

**"a bullet / left in me": eroticism, violence and Medbh McGuckian's "love poems"**

In a radio interview from 1995, Medbh McGuckian described 'The War Degree', from her 1994 collection, *Captain Lavender*, as a 'love-poem to the war' of the Troubles. In her poetry, love, desire and violence are frequently intertwined and there is a specifically politicised element to McGuckian's 'love poems' that lends them an unusual

potency. Across her oeuvre, we find poems that make love icons of various figures from Ireland's bloody history, such as Roger Casement, Robert Emmet, the United Irishmen and, most controversially of all, several Provisional IRA members who were killed while conducting paramilitary attacks. We might understand these almost love poems as Michaela Schrage-Früh does, as a by-product of living through a traumatic conflict, where the North's 'sectarian division and its ensuing violence' are 'internalised'. Conversely, we might read them as more explicitly political: in a context of Irish nationalism that relies heavily on gendered rhetoric and has occasionally, in Susan Canon Harris's term, resorted to 'enlisting sexual desire in the service' of its aims. Through discussing this body of love poetry and McGuckian's poetics of violence, history and desire, this paper hopes to elucidate an important and underexplored element of McGuckian's work.

**Mehdi Ghassemi (Université de Lille)**

**'Negativity as a Critical Medium in John Banville's Fiction'**

John Banville's body of work is an evolving philosophical fiction that, ever since Gabriel Godkin's struggle with finding 'the thing in itself' in *Birchwood* (1973), has earned him a reputation as a 'critical writer' whose fiction merges the novel with critical theory (Laura Izarra, 1999). Among the different schools of thought, however, it is Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy that has been the towering influence on the narrators' extra-moral stance as well as their obsession with finding redemption through the pursuit of aesthetic self-expression. At the same time, a distinctive feature of Banville's narrators is their constant struggle with different forms of negativity – be it the gap that separates them from the world, the eerie silences that permeates their neo-gothic universe, or the fundamental sense of lack that afflicts the narrators throughout their journeys of self-discovery. Often, negativity is inscribed in the very fabric of their texts, resulting in a highly undecidable narrative universe where the narrators come face to face with the ghostly materiality of nothingness. This paper, thus, proposes to read the different figurations of negativity as variations of Banville's critical engagement with Nietzsche's notion of the self as an unfinished project. Drawing on several of Banville's novels, I argue that Banville establishes a sophisticated dialogue with the philosopher by systematically confronting his narrators with negativity. It is arguably in these encounters that Nietzsche's idea finds an echo in Banville's art, one that constantly reveals the ontologically incomplete nature of the self.

**Genoveffa Giambona (University of Reading)**

**'The extraordinary in the ordinary – Women and the domestic setting in Anne Enright's *The Gathering*, *The Forgotten Waltz* and *The Green Road*'**

The fulcrum around which Anne Enright's *The Gathering*, *The Forgotten Waltz* and *The Green Road* centre is family and women. The families in these novels are rambunctious, torn and led by strong female characters. Despite potentially being seen as dysfunctional, the reader is also reminded that these families could stand for any average family. Family, domestic space and the situation of women carry huge symbolism in postcolonial literature; this is especially so in an Irish context. This paper will investigate how, in an attempt to rework and reverse some legacy stereotypes, women, domestic environments and families are figured in these recent Enright novels. We will see how these novels, however obliquely, function as social and political criticism. Female characters, and the spaces and places that have traditionally been associated with women, it will be argued, are re-imagined by Enright in order to give them new meaning in contemporary Ireland.

**Matthew Gibson (University of Macau)**

**"'You are not to be cut off from Ireland": Bram Stoker's relations with Edward Dowden'**

One of the most important formative influences on Bram Stoker was Edward Dowden, Professor of English at Trinity College Dublin, who as a young don had befriended and impressed the barely younger man, introducing him to the work of Walt Whitman. While Elizabeth Wynne and Adam Putz have recently observed the relation between Dowden's criticism of the Victorian stage, and the Irish don's relation with Irving, few have observed how Stoker's

own fiction is suffused with Dowden's somewhat racist ideas in relation to literature and art. In this paper there will be a discussion of the role played by Stoker in promoting Dowden's fame abroad, and the significance of Dowden's own appreciation of Stoker's work. Thus the major argument of this paper is that Stoker was truly never cut off from Ireland, and played his own small and unique role in supporting the cultural importance of Ireland in London and abroad, and that his late novel *The Man* – a novel which analyses the Anglo-Norman type and rejects the notion of the 'New Woman' – is a novel which Dowden conspicuously admired, mainly because it embodied his own ideas of racial hierarchy, but extended them to the New World.

**Tara Giddens (University of Limerick)**

**'From Fact to Fiction: Gendered Spaces in Kathleen Coleman's Writing'**

Carl Ackerman, the Dean of the Columbia University School of Journalism, said in 1949, 'The inside of a newspaper should be like the inside of a home'. The women's section of many newspapers at the end of the nineteenth century underlined this sense of being 'housed' in the walls of a paper and set apart from major headlines and world issues. This confinement of women's columns or domestic spaces in periodicals can be seen in Irish-Canadian journalist Kathleen Coleman's (1856-1915) own writing. Using the androgynous penname 'Kit', Coleman covered numerous subjects and events in her weekly column 'Woman's Kingdom' (1889 to 1911) for *The Toronto Daily Mail* (later *The Daily Mail and Empire*). However, Coleman refused to be contained by the strict confines of women journalists of her time. Rather than discussing 'proper' topics, Coleman preferred to instead discuss politics and debate transnational issues with her readers. Furthermore, Coleman opened up new avenues for women as professional journalists, especially when she became the first accredited female war correspondent during the Spanish-American War (1898). Moreover, Coleman experimented with gendered spaces in her short story, 'A Pair of Gray Gloves' (1903) printed in *The Canadian Magazine*, where a women journalist is confined to the top of a newspaper building. Comparing the gendered space of Coleman's column with her fictional writing and representation of women journalists allows us to understand and analyse the constraints and hardships of many women journalists during the *fin-de-siècle*.

**Marta Gorgula (University of Silesia)**

**'England's Broken Dolls: Irish Wounded Soldiers in Sean O'Casey's *The Silver Tassie*'**

As Ireland has continued to reconcile itself to its turbulent and confounding past, the Great War – a shunned conflict, producing contesting responses that were ultimately hushed for years for the sake of coherence, outshone by the Easter Rising and the tearing Civil War – is also slowly regaining its place in Irish remembrance culture. In this arduous task of re-discovering the past and letting go of the national amnesia, numerous forgotten pieces of the fragmented Irish memory of the Great War come to light. One of such pieces is the presence of Irish soldiers not only participating in this world-wide conflict but also returning home – often times disabled and with little prospects for the future. The aim of this paper is the representation of wounded Irish soldiers, emphasizing the need to further study the impact the Great War had on Irish society. With the recognition of the de-sanitized representation of severely wounded Great War soldiers occurring only in recent years in Britain, it is indeed remarkable to find the description of war wounded in Sean O'Casey's *The Silver Tassie*, famously rejected by W. B. Yeats and published shortly after the war. Being ahead of its time both in subject and style, *The Silver Tassie* presents probably the only depiction of the not-so-glorious mutilated survivors of the Great War in Irish literature, proving it was probably 'better to die 'neath that Irish sky' rather than to carry on as one of 'England's broken dolls' – a crippled veteran of a 'foreign' war.

**Stephen Grace (University of York)**

**"a whale's eye view": history, ecology, and the ocean in the poetry of Caitríona O'Reilly'**

In an essay collected in the 2017 volume *Post-Ireland?*, Jefferson Holderidge suggests that Caitríona O'Reilly belongs to a generation of poets who 'view questions of Irish identity with less urgency than many of their

predecessors', and argues that for O'Reilly 'the human finds its image reflected perhaps most startlingly in the non-human'. Prompted by O'Reilly's 2006 poem 'The Sea Cabinet', which examines the legacies and relics of whale-hunting, and also recent scholarship in the 'blue humanities', I intend to argue that the aspect of the environment by which O'Reilly is most compelled is the ocean, and that her oceanic ecology complicates the boundary between history and nature, the human and the non-human. In his book 2017 *Shipwreck Ecology* Steve Mentz writes that 'Covering more than two-thirds of the earth, the inhospitable sea represents the most powerful nonhuman actor in world history. Attending to the global force of the sea applies posthuman ecological pressure to the historical experiences of globalization'. 'The Sea Cabinet', I will argue, is permeated with this 'ecological pressure', and offers us glimpses of 'nonhuman actors' including not only the ocean but also its disparate creatures, whose strange, uncanny identities also invite us to rethink the make-up of human identities. The result is an environment that is radically other, often 'inhospitable', and perhaps even destructive, but also constituting a new site from which to re-think questions of history, culture, and ecology.

**Shane Grant (Coláiste Mhuire Gan Smál, Ollscoil Luimnigh)**

**“Bíonn an t-ádh leat má gheibheann tú ceann, má gheibheann tú dhá cheann bíonn tú sna flaithis” – Anailís ar dhearcadh fhilí chomhaimseartha Chorca Dhuibhne agus Uíbh Ráthaigh ar ghort na léirmheastóireachta Gaeilge’**

Is í aidhm an pháipéir seo ná mionanailís a dhéanamh ar thaithí thriúr déag fhilí de chuid cheantar Chorca Dhuibhne agus Uíbh Ráthaigh ar cheird na léirmheastóireachta. Tá an anailís bunaithe ar ionchur ó agallaimh a deineadh leis na filí mar chuid de thráchtas reatha PhD. Féachtar ar an bhfeidhm, ar an tábhacht agus ar na dúshlán ar leith a bhaineann leis an léirmheastóireacht i ngort na Gaeilge. Is díol spéise an t-aitheantas a thugann na filí don nganntanas léirmheasanna atá ann. ‘Cuirfidh mé mar seo chugat é, bheadh sé an-dheas iad a d’fheiscint. *Sin freagra*’ (Ó Muircheartaigh 2018). Áitíonn filí áirithe nach mbítear sásta léirmheas cóir a dhéanamh ar dhuine mar go bhfuil pobal na Gaeilge ró-bheag agus gur deacair daoine a tharraingt chun léirmheas a scríobh. Caitear amhras ar an gcur chuige agus ar an déantús a bhíonn le roinnt léirmheasanna chomh maith. I measc na ndúshlán seo, feictear an tábhacht a bhaineann le léirmheasanna mar shíneadh ar an litríocht, mar threoir agus oiliúint don scríbhneoir. Is tráthúil anois féachaint ar an léirmheas mar áis a d’fhéadfaí an léitheoireacht sa Ghaeilge a chothú agus géarchéim na léitheoireachta aitheanta go háirithe le fógairt agus áiteamh lagmhisniúil Chois Life i mbliana. Cuireann an páipéar seo leis an dioscúrsa reatha a bhaineann le ceird na léirmheastóireachta a thugann léargas luachmhara ar thaithí fhilí atá ag scríobh faoi láthair.

**Marianna Gula (University of Debrecen)**

**‘New Configurations of Memory and Mediation in Recent Fiction Revisiting the Northern Ireland Troubles (Deirdre Madden’s *Molly Fox’s Birthday* (2008) and Bernard MacLaverty’s *Midwinter Break* (2017))’**

Fiction has actively participated in the cultural work of memory and mourning to facilitate the future in ‘post-conflict’ Northern Ireland. Several writers born and living in Northern Ireland (like Glenn Patterson, David Park, Eoin McNamee), as well as writers born, growing up in Northern Ireland but living elsewhere (like Deirdre Madden or Bernard MacLaverty) have portrayed in numerous scenarios how violence-induced trauma affects memory; how memories of the Troubles have produced troubles with memory; and how the memory of the war has generated a war over memory. Here I will look at two recent novels, Deirdre Madden’s *Molly Fox’s Birthday* (2008) and Bernard MacLaverty’s *Midwinter Break* (2017), which portray the long-lasting traumatising effect of the violence in the region in a highly self-reflexive manner, thematising how culture and art function as the site of the ethical imperative to remember. Apart from foregrounding the cultural mediation of remembering in this manner, both novels cast a retrospective glance at the Troubles in a multidirectional way, MacLaverty’s novel through the lens of the Holocaust, while Madden’s novel through the lens of recent terrorist attacks in continental Europe.

**Helena Gurfinkel (Southern Illinois University)**

**‘The Happy Prince: Biography, Boys, and Binaries’**

Rupert Everett's *The Happy Prince* (2018) exemplifies the increased attention Wilde scholars and fans have recently paid to the final four or so years of the writer's life, after his release from prison. The new work of Nicholas Frankel and Laura Lee, for example, has noted the further complications of Wilde's already knotty identity that emerged in his final years: the heady mix of liberated sexuality, religiosity, forward-looking modernity, and regressive politics (siding with, and befriending, the infamous Ferdinand Walsin-Ezterhazy during the Dreyfus affair). Everett's well-acted and well-researched screen effort, though successful in some respects, remains largely stuck in the clearly delineated identity politics of the 1990s Wilde mini-revival, headlined by David Hare's *The Judas Kiss* and Brian Gilbert's *Wilde* in which, uncharacteristically, Stephen Fry's *Wilde* pontificates about one's 'true nature'). The script of *The Happy Prince* organizes itself thematically around fairly simplistic oppositions: sons vs. lovers; debauchery vs. family; England vs. the Continent; the Regina vs. Oscar Wilde; Robbie vs. Bosie (cinematically, these binaries are illustrated by almost compulsive dissolves and flashbacks). Everett, who is intimately and productively familiar with his beloved subject's wit, does not quite demonstrate that 'truth is rarely pure and never simple'.

**Chen-wei Han (National Taiwan University)**

**'An Imperative to Remember? Memory and the Troubles of Northern Ireland in Christina Reid's Plays'**

In a divided society like Northern Ireland before and after the peace process, memory plays a vital role in shaping people's sense of place, time and identity in everyday life. Memory in diverse forms of existence constitutes, interrogates and negotiates the contested relationship between the past and present, the private and public, the individual and communal, the fictional and actual, the unspeakable and representable, and so forth. Northern Irish playwright Christina Reid reveals the dynamics of memory in the form of storytelling among different family members across generations in *Tea in a China Cup* (1983), *My Name, Shall I Tell You My Name?* (1989), and *The Belle of the Belfast City* (1989). In these plays, Reid represents the daily and cultural experiences of Protestant working-class families through acts of remembering and forgetting performed by the characters in their everyday exchanges. This paper seeks to explore the following questions: How do these plays unearth and question the complex and contradictory nature of personal and collective memory in terms of gender, class, and generations? Furthermore, how do these plays negotiate the qualities of consistency, homogeneity, and coherence associated with memory with other qualities such as porosity, fluidity, and fragmentation? In the end, how do the plays indicate the possibility of ethical memory beyond the sectarian modes of memorization and commemoration?

**Adam Hanna (University College Cork)**

**'Thomas Kinsella, the Civil Servant-Poet'**

During a transformative period in Ireland's modern history, Thomas Kinsella was in the crucible. He worked in the civil service for almost twenty years from 1946, near the end of which he was made private secretary to the head of the Department of Finance, T. K. Whitaker. This paper will explore the effects that the department where Kinsella worked during the mid-twentieth century had on his work. It will examine in particular how the Finance Department's radical attempts in these years to create a new economic model for the State have echoes in Kinsella's poetry. I will argue that through Kinsella's poetry, as through Brian Ó Nualláin's pseudonymously published prose, readers are able to see the developing lineaments of mid-century Irish bureaucratic modernity. Furthermore, the fact that Kinsella has drawn parallels between the 'Victorian' civil service ethos and his own 'Victorian mind' indicates that complex cultural dynamics are at work in his imagination. The tense and tortuous relationship with the past that is such an element of Kinsella's writing is something he apprehended as much in the apparatus of the Irish State that employed him as in himself.

**Tara Harney-Mahajan (Caldwell University)**

**'Irish Girlhood in Crisis: Louise O'Neill's and Meadhbh McHugh's *Asking For It*'**

Louise O'Neill's 2016 novel *Asking For It* was adapted for the stage by Meadhbh McHugh and premiered in the summer of 2018 at the Everyman, Cork, before moving to the Abbey Theatre in the fall. Much like the novel, the

play has been universally critically acclaimed, and although the play largely stays true to the novel, it is one thing to read about the brutal gang rape of an Irish girl who is then dumped onto her parents' porch, like rubbish, and quite another to see these actions represented on the stage. O'Neill and McHugh offer an almost unbearable account of girls transitioning into young women as they chronicle how social media transforms them into disembodied body parts. Girls, they seem to say, have been abandoned by their families and their communities, in lieu of an intense preoccupation with superficiality and materialism. This paper will read O'Neill's novel and McHugh's play in the context of the Waking the Feminists Movement of 2017 and the #RepealThe8th movement of 2018 in order to ask difficult questions about the cruel ways in which young women are treated and how women's bodies – and in particular young women's bodies – are figured as disposable. I will argue that *Asking For It* is both a major feminist development in Irish theater as well as a stunning wake-up call, foregrounding a twenty-first century representation of Irish girlhood that is in crisis.

**Liam Harrison (University of Birmingham)**

**'After Modernism, After Beckett: Towards a Criticism and Poetics of Lateness'**

Recent critical developments in the fields of Irish modernism and Samuel Beckett studies have been increasingly engaged with the concept of afterlives. The critical frameworks of studies as varied as *The Cambridge Companion to Irish Modernism* (2014) edited by Joe Cleary, *Modernist Afterlives in Irish Literature and Culture* (2015) edited by Paige Reynolds, and Declan Kiberd's *After Ireland* (2017) draw on developments in 'new modernist studies', reconfiguring modernism(s) to create new critical vocabularies. Additionally, these developments resonate with Beckett criticism such as *Beckett's Literary Legacies* (2007) edited by Matthew Feldman and Mark Nixon, and Peter Boxall's *Since Beckett: Contemporary Writing in the Wake of Modernism* (2009). Furthermore, Anthony Cronin's famous characterisation of Beckett as the 'last modernist' has been taken up by Tyrus Miller and Shane Weller and transposed into the 'late modernist'. Throughout these overlapping critical conceptions of late, last, and the afterlives of modernism, is a through-line of 'lateness' – as initially conceptualised by Theodor Adorno and Edward Said, and greatly expanded on by Ben Hutchinson's *Lateness and Modern European Literature* (2016). This paper will explore the critical developments in the symbiotic relationship between Irish modernist and Beckettian legacies, and how they both increasingly draw on aesthetic and historical lateness – on Adorno and Said's late style, and Miller and Weller's late modernism. Drawing on Hutchinson, I will examine how a criticism of lateness can be used as a malleable yet nuanced method for exploring what Paige Reynolds calls 'the enduring potentiality of modernist forms, themes, and practices'. The expanding fields of late modernism and modernist legacy coincides with a period in contemporary Irish fiction of resurgent engagement with modernist aesthetics. This paper will conclude by briefly looking at two works – Eimear McBride's *A Girl is a Half-Formed Thing* (2013) and Claire Louise-Bennett's *Pond* (2015) – which demonstrate contemporary commitments and challenges to modernist persistence, particularly post-Beckettian persistence, as each author carves out their own poetics of lateness.

**Hugh Haughton (University of York)**

**'Irish Poetry in the Global Museum'**

Derek Mahon's iconic poem 'Lives' begins with an object from the National Museum in Dublin ('a torc of gold'), but takes in objects from across the world, including an oar from the Homeric Mediterranean, a bump of clay in a Navaho rug, a 'stone in Tibet', a tongue of bark 'at the heart of Africa', and finally an anthropologist with 'a whole boatload/ of photographic equipment.' Mahon has also written a series of resonant poems about the visual arts – from 'Courtyards in Delft' and 'The Hunt by Night' to 'Art Notes' in his *New Collected Poems* and 'Mythhistorema' in *Against the Clock*. 'Lives' is dedicated to Seamus Heaney, another deep-dyed poet of things and artefacts, as in 'To a Dutch Potter in Ireland' as well as the photos in P.V. Glob's *Bog People* which inspired the trans-cultural 'bog poems' of *North* (1975). My paper reflects on the aesthetics and cultural politics of such pictorial and plastic investments in contemporary Irish poetry, setting in the context of Yeats's appropriation of the ekphrastic and museum poems into Irish territory with 'Lapis Lazuli' and 'The Municipal Gallery Revisited', and the larger history of modern poetry's investments in dialogue with visual arts from Baudelaire to the present. Since the 1960s, Irish



poets have regularly turned to paintings – and other art-objects – as a source for poems, locating their poetry in the trans-national culture of the museum and the digital gallery. Paul Muldoon reports in ‘The More a Man Has’ that his protagonist ‘left the Museum of Modern art, with the bit between his teeth,’ and I want to reflect on the ways many contemporary Irish poets write with variants of this bit between their teeth. I will focus particularly on Derek Mahon, but also look at looking at artworks in Paul Durcan (with his two collections about paintings in the National Galleries of Dublin and London), Eavan Boland, Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin, Paul Muldoon and Caitriona O’Reilly.

**Miriam Haughton (National University of Ireland, Galway)**  
**‘A Critical Bid: Galway 2020 and Feminist Interventions’**

This paper proposes a study of how the bid book *Making Waves* submitted by Galway for the designation of European Capital of Culture 2020 was embedded with feminist principles, processes, and intentions. Its feminist ideology is fundamental to its objectives, as outlined in the Introduction, which declares, ‘Our vision for Galway 2020 is that it will be a catalyst for a future of inclusivity, participation and cultural sustainability’. This paper will provide analysis of the bid book as a critical feminist action, including the projects proposed by local artists, and, the ethos of collaboration across companies, communities and individuals involved in creating the bid. The estimated €45 million investment could be transformative for a region marked by urban youth and diversity facing precarious futures, rural decline, and historically, most harshly impacted by the Great Famine (1845-49). However, since winning the bid, this feminist approach has been significantly problematised by those who then took on the management of the project. In this paper, I address how the Galway 2020 bid visualises the potential for artistic and cultural futures, while elements of the planning process (thus far) have been subject to traditional working practices marked by crisis, exposing the difficult and unresolved relationship(s) between the nation’s artists and the apparatuses of the state.

**Maureen S. G. Hawkins (Liverpool John Moores University)**  
**‘The Poetic Implications of the Opening Playlet of Denis Johnston’s *The Old Lady Says “No”*’**

Denis Johnston assembled the opening playlet of *The Old Lady Says “No”* from Lady Gregory’s *The Rising of the Moon* and from popular collections of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Irish nationalist poetry, primarily Cooke’s *The Dublin Book of Irish Verse* (1909) and Thomas Moore’s *Irish Melodies* (1807-35). He said he did so because he wanted to see if ‘the associations and thought-patterns already connected with the songs and slogans of our city [could] be used deliberately to evoke a planned reaction from a known audience’. The original works’ being well-known to his audience, Johnston could expect each line to carry its own weight and suggest its original context, but the original contexts frequently undermine the Romantic Nationalist tenor of Emmet’s popular myth and the playlet itself. By juxtaposing contexts – which frequently draw implications into the playlet which are not suggested by the lines in isolation – Johnston ironically foreshadows many of the themes he develops in the play proper, simultaneously embodying, parodying, and criticizing Emmet’s myth at its most sentimental and, subtly, through the original contexts of its poetic lines, presenting Emmet’s myth’s values as engendering a post-Civil War Ireland which the play proper portrays as death-oriented, callous, and materialistic.

**Seán Hewitt (Trinity College Dublin)**  
**‘Emily Lawless and “Enchantment”’**

Reading the prose works of Emily Lawless, in particular *A Garden Diary, September 1899 - September 1900* (1902) and her contributions to periodicals, alongside the recent spiritual turn in ecocriticism, this paper brings into focus Lawless’s innovative approach to natural historical study and its effect on her literary output. Placing these works in dialogue with the discourses of the Irish Revival, we are able to see Lawless’s alternative approach to materiality as both a scientific and literary critique. By developing an ‘enchanted’ view of nature, which foregrounds the material world as autonomous, self-moving, and non-mechanical, this paper suggests, these texts pre-empt modern ecocritical theory and offer a proto-feminist approach to human/non-human relations.

Ian Hickey (Mary Immaculate College)

**'Inheriting the Past: Hauntology and Seamus Heaney's Northern Ireland'**

This paper seeks to examine the absent presences that exist within Seamus Heaney's poetry through the theoretical lens of Jacques Derrida's *Specters of Marx*. Derrida notes that 'a ghost never dies, it remains always to come and to come-back', and it is this which enables a reading of Seamus Heaney's bog poems in a spectral fashion. The haunting function of the bog in the poetry sees past sacrificial victims of violence in Iron-Age Scandinavia return to haunt Heaney's Northern Irish poetry. These ghosts, or spectres as Derrida would term them, haunt Heaney and allow the poet to draw similarities between the violence during the Troubles in Northern Ireland and the bodies found in the bogs of Scandinavia. Northern Ireland is critically seen by the poet as analogous to a much broader, wider, older Northern Europe. The function of the bog, for Heaney, changes in its usage from *Door into the Dark*, *Wintering Out* and *North*. In this sense, the spectral can be seen to be at work much earlier in the poetry.

Geraldine Higgins (Emory University)

**'Promising Material: Irish Studies and the Archive'**

This paper claims that new definitions of the place of the archive underlie current shifts in Irish Studies criticism. An archive isn't born – it is made – by a combination of chance, resources, and generosity. The question of location (where and how archives are assembled) is increasingly complicated by the globalization and digitization of the knowledge economy. Focusing on the two major Seamus Heaney archives at the NLI in Dublin and Emory University in Atlanta, this paper examines the intersection of place and the paper trail in Irish critical discourse.

Shonagh Hill (University College Dublin)

**'The haunted body and 'architectures of containment' in Mary Devenport O'Neill's *Bluebeard*'**

Mary Devenport O'Neill's ballet-poem *Bluebeard* premiered at the Abbey Theatre, 25 July 1933, and its central themes resonate powerfully with the conservatism of 1930s Ireland. O'Neill draws on the traditional folk-tale in which Bluebeard murders his wives and then preserves their corpses in a locked room. This paper will position discussion of the ballet-poem, and the bloody chamber, within the context of Ireland's 'architecture of containment' and propose that examination of the haunted body in performance conveys women's experiences in the early decades of the Free State. In *Bluebeard* the haunted body enables the resurfacing of violent histories, and thus offers the means for an examination of the processes of memory and history as layers of somatic memories which are exposed and re-performed. This paper therefore seeks, at several levels, to dismantle the frameworks which contain women's expression. The development of O'Neill's ballet-poems is an important, and neglected, part of the history of Ireland's experimental and dance theatre which was engaged with European modernist influences. Key to the paper's intention of broadening the canon of Irish theatre is examination of the role played by Ninette de Valois who choreographed the ballet-poem, as well as dancing the part of Ilina, Bluebeard's wife.

Lillian Hingley (Hertford College, University of Oxford)

**“Saying the Unsayable”: Theodor Adorno's Bibliotherapeutic Use of Beckett's *The Unnamable*'**

The German theorist Theodor Adorno is often remembered for his famous declaration that 'to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric'. Whilst this statement attempted to grapple with what Adorno saw as the struggle to represent society 'after Auschwitz' (when life itself had been torn to shreds), his post-war theory is curiously littered with countless references to literature. In particular, the prevalence of his references to the writers James Joyce and Samuel Beckett demonstrates that Adorno nevertheless found solace in two of the most famous modernist writers in the Irish literary canon. To interrogate why Adorno turned to them, I want to suggest that Adorno's interpretation of Beckett's *The Unnamable* can be read as a kind of bibliotherapy: in other words, that he

used references to Beckett's novel so that he could confront the ineffable aspects of the trauma of Auschwitz. First, I will examine to what extent Beckett's novel could be read as advocating the possibility of achieving therapeutic ends through fiction, analysing the narrator's obsession with expressing itself through the medium of stories. Then I will suggest how Adorno reads *The Unnamable* psychoanalytically to privilege Beckett as a writer best suited for describing his personal affectedness by the war. Through this, I will hopefully show that Irish modernism is central to constituting one of Adorno's most important theses in *Aesthetic Theory*: that rather than theory or philosophy, it is perhaps only through critical, negative *fiction* that we can even begin to think towards a better world.

**Kaori Hirashige (Chuo University)**

**'Music, Smoking, and Seduction: "Sirens" Episode of *Ulysses*'**

Originally exclusively male and a rare occasion for men to smoke in public, the smoking concert was a peculiar form of musical entertainment that was short-lived but grew increasingly popular in both London and Dublin in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Despite its popularity, however, it has often been neglected in music criticism, due to its often semi-public or private setting. One purpose of this paper is to highlight this particular concert form, also mentioned in the 'Sirens' episode of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, as a cultural space that played a crucial role in Dublin musical life at the turn of the century. As we shall see, it was a space to which women were not welcomed, but in which boundaries between men and women were still negotiable, as in the saloon of the Ormond Hotel where 'Sirens' unfolds. Smoking concerts also shed light on other topics that Joyce's text is concerned with, namely war and rebellion, as both the acts of smoking and music were associated with patriotism and nationalist feeling in cultural tropes at the time. By foregrounding the smoking concert as a possible model for the spontaneous musical gathering that occurs in 'Sirens', this paper aims to show that a smoking concert provided Joyce with the best backdrop against which the theme of music, smoking, seduction, and war, all central to the episode, could be explored.

**Rui Carvalho Homem (Universidade do Porto)**

**"Such a dab hand": poetry as surrogate criticism in Paul Muldoon'**

Paul Muldoon has long been noted for his relational writing. At its most characteristic, this materialises in richly intertextual poems addressing texts from different genres, traditions and segments of literary history; and it resorts to citation, parody, and/or translation. Further, Muldoon's referential practices often straddle medial boundaries, drawing on a range of other arts, with a particular penchant for painting and photography. In this paper I propose to discuss recent examples of Muldoon's intertextual and intermedial poetics. I will be highlighting that his processing of prior creations increasingly tends to operate irrespective of the medium in which the poet finds them; indeed, poetic sequences that indistinctly address verbal and visual referents provocatively flout expectations that materially diverse forms of representation would require distinct formal protocols from the appropriative (re)writer. Beyond this, I will be arguing that Muldoon's ostensible rewritings, even when they bear the same titles as the works of art that they address, signify through cumulation rather than substitution or supersession. In other words, those poems by Muldoon that address prior creations (verbal or otherwise) achieve their effect by becoming co-present with their referents on the readers' consciousness. By doing so, they develop a referential relationship with their named objects that amounts to a critical act – involving an aesthetic and cultural judgement that signals the particular consequence that historically earlier imaginative creations may have for the context in which they are being received. My argument on this poetic processing as a form of surrogate criticism will be pursued with regard to poems from *One Thousand Things Worth Knowing* (2015) and one additional uncollected piece.

**Moonyoung Hong (Trinity College Dublin)**

**'Tragedy, Tragic Spaces and the Terror of Everyday Life in Tom Murphy's *A Whistle in the Dark* (1961) and *Famine* (1968)'**

The paper explores the performative and thematic spaces of terror in Tom Murphy's early plays with a special focus on the possibilities and questions of 'modern tragedy'. Critics have argued that a distinctively Irish tradition of tragedy can be identified in the plays of Yeats, Synge, O'Casey and Beckett, who have in their own way engaged in creative appropriation of Attic tragedy to capture modern Irish experiences. It is the writers' Irishness that leads to the dissonance between the Dionysian and the Apollonian, the disjuncture between content and form. Critical attempts to establish the tradition of Irish tragedy have not been extended to Tom Murphy, whose plays not only sit well in this tradition but also expand some of the established notions of tragedy. Moreover, the question of tragedy in many analyses concerns predominantly the nature and fate of the characters and less the way tragic art deals with space. How are tragedy and tragic values (or their loss) spatially realised? With an awareness that theatre is an experience-based event, theatrical criticism looks into and builds upon the intricate network of scholars' own subjective experiences, the no less subjective reviews of others, intermediated video recordings and prompt scripts, which, with their limitations, have become vital sources to recover and understand the play-as-performance. Using manuscript materials and digitised archives, the paper discusses the poetics and the politics of tragic spaces in Murphy's two early plays (and their staged productions) and seeks to contribute to the notion of modern Irish tragedy.

**Barry Houlihan (National University of Ireland, Galway)**

**'Staging the Landscape: Hugh Leonard, Performing Memory and Middle-Class Locality'**

This paper will investigate and challenge the concept of the popular in relation to archival memory, digital historiography and contemporary Irish drama. Popular, or the perception of popular performance, still resonates as a non-traditional and 'low-art' form of literary drama that does not reflect the national(ist) literary tradition of the Abbey Theatre. In my investigation of the archive and digitised record of popular performance, I utilise theoretical frameworks within a socio-cognitive mode, such as by scholar Andreas Huyssen, who argues in *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia*, that the past 'is not simply given in memory, 'but it must be articulated to become memory'. This articulation comes in the form of archival geo-temporal memory. The geography of Leonard's plays produced from the period of the late 1950s through to the end of the 1970s, are important to consider in context of critically examining the failure of the modernisation project of a modern Irish 'global' state, in terms of adequate housing, infrastructural and spatial planning, and the basic needs of a rapidly increasing urban population. Popular performances modes of comedy, farce, and nostalgia are critical to Leonard's criticism of the emergent middle-class Catholic majority in modern Ireland. By revisiting the (digital) archive of Leonard's plays, the innovative use of place and dramatic locations combined with the fracturing of time into non-linear realities, presents new opportunities for eco-critical study of the changing landscape of modern Ireland itself. It is also possible to position Leonard as an overlooked playwright in tandem with the mode of the popular within the development of contemporary Irish drama.

**Dearbhaile Houston (Trinity College Dublin)**

**'The Domestic "Spatial Turn" and Contemporary Irish Women's Writing'**

This paper will explore the domestic spatial turn in Irish Studies through an analysis of literary domestic architecture in contemporary Irish women's writing. Recent critical interest in the Irish domestic space, as evidenced by Rhona Richman Kenneally and Lucy McDiarmid's *The Vibrant House: Irish Writing and Domestic Space* (2017), provides fertile ground for the investigation of domestic space as imagined by contemporary Irish women writers. This paper will illustrate how the imaginary of the Irish home has, in the last twenty years, moved beyond fixed, historical conceptions of the domestic space. Depictions of the space have become rich and multifaceted, as indicated by the various types of homes constructed in the work of contemporary Irish women writers and augmented by their attention to the gendered history of the space. From the 'Sunday supplement dreams' of Anne Enright's suburban Dublin and rural Clare to the marginal, precarious, and non-normative domestic spaces of student accommodations, squats, and Direct Provision centres in the recent work of Sally Rooney, Eimear McBride, and Melatu Uche Okorie respectively, certain patterns of dwelling and domestic practice within the Irish home are

shown to be in flux, if not completely altered. This paper ultimately seeks to provide an assessment of this critical area by considering if and how the domestic spatial turn in Irish Studies adequately reflects the contemporary Irish domestic space impacted by cycles of prosperity, austerity, and crisis.

**Lloyd (Meadhbh) Houston (University of Oxford)**  
**'Irish Modernism and the Politics of Sexual Health'**

In this paper, I explore the ways in which authors, politicians, and activists in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Ireland harnessed debates over sexual health to construct and contest models of Irish identity. To do so, I examine the ways in which references to venereal disease were employed in nationalist anti-enlisting campaigns to offer a statistically quantifiable index of Britain's corrupting influence in Ireland, and highlight the influence of these campaigns on figures such as Oliver St John Gogarty and James Joyce. Where previous studies of Joyce and sexuality have positioned the author as an uncomplicated opponent of the sexual purity rhetoric of Sinn Féin and Irish Ireland, I illustrate Joyce's pragmatic (if uncomfortable) awareness of its utility for nationalism. However, I also acknowledge the ways in which Joyce was to distance himself from the more pointedly chauvinistic deployments of this rhetoric, particularly where it was used to present Ireland's Jewish population as a degenerative threat to the physical and moral well-being of the nation. Finally, I trace the contours of an emerging weariness in Joyce's rendering of the entire question of sexual health as the grounds for conceptualising national identity, highlighting a performative exhaustion which was ultimately to be revisited and extended in the later work of Flann O'Brien. In doing so, I illuminate the vexed relationship between constructions of gender, sexuality, and ethnicity in twentieth-century Irish culture and politics and suggest the significance of sexual health discourse to the emergence and development of Irish modernism.

**Adrian Howlett (Trinity College Dublin)**  
**'God's Time: Ireland's Time Zone and the Politics of Time in *Ulysses*'**

The treatment of time in Joyce's work is a theme that has been frequently addressed by criticism, not least as parallax, one of the defining features of the style of *Ulysses*, is shaped by its distortion of time. The issues raised by the aesthetics of time feed back into political anxieties; I will argue that Joyce's techniques of temporal disruption form an engagement with these concerns.

**Ellen Howley (Dublin City University)**  
**“The right to set ‘the island story’ straight”: Island Topographies in Irish and Caribbean Poetry'**

'Did sea define the land or land the sea?' asks Seamus Heaney in the early poem 'Lovers on Aran'. The interaction between the sea and the land is a central concern for island inhabitants and as such is a subject with which not only Ireland's poets engage but also the poets of island spaces globally. Poetries attentive to island spaces often display similarities of outlook as the specific topography of island space, with a shifting and fluctuating relationship between land and sea, prompts questions about identity and nationhood. As such, the focus of this paper is a comparative reading of Irish and Caribbean island poetics. Inhabiting postcolonial island regions, the poets of Ireland and the Caribbean investigate the critical ground of the island in their work. In particular, this paper examines the work of four poets – Lorna Goodison (Jamaica), Seamus Heaney (Northern Ireland), Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin (Republic of Ireland) and Derek Walcott (St Lucia) – in relation to the image of the island in their work. As these poets interrogate the confines and connections of island spaces, they also respond to their postcolonial reality. This paper investigates questions of nation, identity and landscape as they are explored in island spaces of the work of these four poets and accordingly is informed by island studies, postcolonialism and ecocriticism. Developing links between these two poetic traditions not only highlights the similarities between work produced in these regions but also illuminates the particularities of each tradition.

**Mícheál Hoyne (Institiúid Ard-Léinn Bhaile Átha Cliath)**

## **‘An chanóin liteartha agus seachadadh na litríochta sa Mheánaois: cás Fhilíocht na Scol’**

Tháinig timpeall dhá mhíle dán “clasaiceach” anuas chugainn ón Meánaois Dhéanach, saothar na bhfilí léannta, adhmholtóirí agus bolscairí oidhrechtúla a fuair ardoiliúint i scoileanna filíochta. Fairis na dánta féin, tá corpas tráchtas ar marthain ina bpléitear cúrsaí meadarachta agus gnéithe den réim teangan a shaothraigh na filí le haghaidh a gceirde. Sna tráchtas sin déantar tagairt do shaothar na máistrí a bhí suas sa treas, sa cheathrú agus sa chúigiú haois déag, corpas ar féidir linn ‘canóin Fhilíocht na Scol’ a thabhairt uirthi. Sa pháipéar seo cuirfidh mé síos go hachomair ar an gcorpas seo agus ar an tionchar a bhí ag cruthú na canóna ar sheachadadh Fhilíocht na Scol. An féidir linn ráitis leathana a dhéanamh faoi Fhilíocht an Scol sa treas céad déag, mar shampla, má mhúnlaigh criticeoirí, ollúna agus scríobhaithe na Meánaoise a bhfuil ar marthain d’fhilíocht an chéid sin cheana? Áiteoidh mé gur trí chriathar bhunú na canóna agus na critice liteartha sa Mheánaois Dhéanach a tháinig a bhfuil ar marthain d’Fhilíocht na Scol anuas chugainn.

**Shan-Yun Huang (National Taiwan University)**

**“We all partied,” or really?: Carnavalesque Critique in Claire Kilroy’s *The Devil I Know***

Claire Kilroy’s novel *The Devil I Know* (2013) directly tackles the madness and stupidity of the Celtic Tiger with its cast of greedy property developers and corrupt government officials. In a satirical tone, the novel depicts the economic boom as a carnival in which order and authority are disrupted for the pursuit of pleasure, while normally unacceptable behaviour runs rampant without any consideration of consequences. The spirit of the carnival is perhaps best captured by the sentence ‘we all partied’, uttered by a real-life Minister of Finance and rendered quite unsettling and problematic by Kilroy’s reference to it in the novel. At another level, the form of Kilroy’s novel is also a carnival in that it consists of mixed genres ranging from court record, satire, gothic, morality play, Faustian motif, to the big house novel. These are the starting points that invite an examination of *The Devil I Know* through M. Bakhtin’s concept of the carnivalesque. Bakhtin regards the carnival’s ‘licensed misrule’ as positive and potentially liberating, but Kilroy’s use of the carnivalesque mode serves more as a critique of the unlicensed misrule in the Tiger years. This paper will explore such differences between Bakhtin and Kilroy and examine how the latter appropriates the carnivalesque in *The Devil I Know* – in terms of both content and form – as a critical device to make sense of the surreality of the Celtic Tiger’s rise and fall.

**Katherine M. Huber (University of Oregon)**

**‘Ephemeral Environments: How the History of Radio and Seán Ó Riada’s *Our Musical Heritage* Construct the Irish West’**

Tensions between modernization and tradition in representations of the Irish west pervade the global proliferation of Irish Traditional Music across an array of media, from early cylinder recordings to current album releases on CD and Spotify or streaming programs on Clare.fm, TG4, or RTÉ. These media have captured and altered regional styles while also implicitly reworking representations of the regions themselves. While scholars like Luke Gibbons have examined how the history of Irish media has influenced constructions of Irish cultural identity over the course of the twentieth century, scholars have yet to examine how intersections between the history of radio in Ireland and the Irish music revival of the 1970s and 1980s shaped representations of the Irish west and notions of authenticity. This paper examines the published transcription of Seán Ó Riada’s 1962 Radio Éireann program, *Our Musical Heritage*, to explore the extent to which Ó Riada reworks conceptions of authentic Irish environments. *Our Musical Heritage* describes the ‘comparatively untouched pasture’ of the tradition of Irish music, noting that its ‘progress’ was like ‘the flow of a river’ and its circular form more ‘Oriental’ than European. Ultimately, my analysis shows Ó Riada’s natural metaphors and strategic distancing from Europe creates an ephemeral broadcast space for the tradition of Irish music at a historical moment when economic expansion and modernization were drawing Ireland’s natural resources and media into the European community.

**Jacqueline Hurtley (Universitat de Barcelona)**

## **'Her Master's Voice: Hannah Lynch, George Meredith and the Making of a New Woman'**

Hannah Lynch's first novel, *Through Troubled Waters* (1885), was dedicated to the English author George Meredith and the ongoing imprint of his influence on her intellectual development was further reflected in her *George Meredith. A Study* (1891). The paper will focus on Meredith's impact on Lynch before she mastered a voice of her own, audible in her nomadic novels and journalism of the 1890s. Drawing on Rosi Braidotti's notion of the nomadic, reference will be made to a number of novels and articles dating from the *fin de siècle* in order to illustrate degrees of affirmation and emancipation and to identify and analyse her moulding of New Women.

**Clare Hutton (Loughborough University)**

### **'Why the *Ulysses* of the *Little Review* Matters'**

James Joyce's *Ulysses*, long thought of as the iconic book of the Modernist Parisian spring of 1922, was first published serially in New York between 1918 and 1920. Even committed Joyceans tend to be vague on these details and their implications for Joyce's career and the composition and meaning of *Ulysses*. This paper will put the serialisation of *Ulysses* in context. It will look at how and why *Ulysses* came to be published in the *Little Review*, what else was published in the *Little Review*, and why the serialisation proved to be so controversial. The text of the *Little Review Ulysses* is significantly different to that which was published in Paris in 1922, and the latter part of the paper will give some examples of the ways in which Joyce changed the text in view of his sense of a changing Ireland during the period 1918 to 1921.

**JiHyea Hwang (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)**

### **'Colonial Korean Writers' Adoption of the Plays of Sean O'Casey'**

In this paper I discuss the influence of the Abbey Theatre on the establishment of Korean modern theatre in the early 1900s. I hope to show not only how the Irish plays contributed to shaping international understanding and appreciation of Ireland's literary tradition, but also how they helped shape and define literary traditions beyond Ireland, by highlighting the colonial Korean writers' critical assessment and adaptation of Irish plays. The genre of modern theatre was introduced to Korean scholars during Japan's occupation of Korea (1910-1945), a time during which Japan was developing its own 'new' theatre with the modern European theatres as its model. Early Korean playwrights such as Yoo Chi-jin who studied in Japan became familiar with the European theatre models, and found the Abbey Theatre to be an inspiration for the aspiring dramatists of colonial Korea. They published studies on Irish playwrights and the Abbey Theatre, and Yoo famously modeled his own plays after the works of Sean O'Casey. This study and adaptation of Irish plays in the 1920s and 1930s was a recognition of the Abbey Theatre as a successful model of national theatre that produced a space which raised awareness of political and social issues, while at the same time engaging the audience in telling an emotional yet realistic story of the Irish people. By examining how Irish plays were studied and adopted by literary scholars of colonial Korea, the earlier plays of the Abbey Theatre can be understood beyond its regional boundaries in a postcolonial context.

**Nao Igarashi (Durham University)**

### **'The Self-Critical Ground: Louis MacNeice's *Autumn Sequel*'**

MacNeice's *Autumn Sequel* (1954) is a poem sequel to *Autumn Journal* (1939), written in the Dantean tradition of terza rima. Although it has gained an unsatisfactory critical reputation, the poem, in its conscious succession of form and concerns from his own earlier works and the literary tradition, can be seen as the attempt to renew MacNeice's poetic creativity, which was in crisis in the post-war period. I will reevaluate the poem's successful fusion of the traditional rhyme-scheme and the fluidity of spoken voice. One of the major differences of *Autumn Sequel* from *Autumn Journal* is the experience of the Second World War that includes his work for BBC. MacNeice, by understanding the radio production as 'homage to the human voice', finds reconciliation for his long-held dilemma between the opposing needs for poetry such as popularity and aestheticism. In the cantos about the death of Dylan

Thomas, MacNeice reconsiders the conception of the poet as the 'Maker' by singing of Thomas' imagination that could create and preserve its own poetic world. Making an elegy for his poet-friend functions as a catharsis for MacNeice and enables him to recommence, like Thomas, who 'never stopped beginning'. My paper aims to reveal that *Autumn Sequel* is the self-critical ground for MacNeice's past and present verbal activities, which empowers him to write in defiance of the monotonous, mechanic life that the voice of the 'Parrot' symbolises. The poem therefore shows itself as MacNeice's own 'Quest' for regaining the 'human voice' in his poetry.

**Yuta Imazeki (University College Dublin)**

**'John Banville's Self-Critique: Reading *Kepler* as a Hypertext Novel'**

In *Prague Pictures* (2003), John Banville makes a number of critical comments on his own work, *Kepler* (1981). It is striking that some of them concern the computer and the internet. Retrospectively, they enable us to read *Kepler* from the viewpoint of digital technology and hypertext. Originally, the word 'computer' used to mean a person who makes calculations based on astronomical or meteorological data and constructs almanacs or navigational calendars, just like the eponymous hero *Kepler*. In addition, Banville composes the novel *Kepler* after the planetary model devised by his protagonist; in other words, the numbers of chapters in each part of this novel correspond to the number of each polygonal face in *Kepler's* planetary model. It seems that through this formal device Banville implies a correspondence between natural language and calculations, or alphabets and numerals, which is the key feature of digital writing. Furthermore, above all, the chapters of *Kepler* are not arranged sequentially in chronological order but in a form of discrete network linked to each other via causal or thematical relationships, which can be regarded as a hypertext. When *Kepler* was written, the internet was still in its incunabula as the ARPAnet and the concept of the hypertext was not so popular, so such a way of reading may seem a bit anachronistic. Banville's own critical comments, however, encourage us to treat *Kepler* as a kind of hypertext fiction, an approach which this paper intends to pursue.

**Florence Impens (University of Manchester)**

**'Contemporary Irish Poetry and Translation: Derek Mahon and Francophone Poetry'**

Many Irish poets in recent years have published versions from non-Anglophone literatures, (re)introducing readers to a broad range of foreign authors. The practice is not new in Anglophone poetry, as exemplified in the work of Robert Lowell, but at the turn of the new millennium became increasingly popular in Ireland. The role played by those poetic versions in the context of Irish writing is largely neglected by critics. For Justin Quinn, even though there are poets with an interest in translation in Ireland, 'translation from languages other than Irish is of marginal interest for the understanding of contemporary Irish poetry written in English'. This paper seeks to nuance this appraisal, and will illustrate how the study of those poetic versions valuably complicates our understanding of Irish writing. Arguably, many poets, translating from languages and literatures they do not know (well), 'avoid serious engagement with cultures beyond those of the Anglophone world' (Quinn), but those cases also need telling, for what they reveal of the poet's attitudes to foreign literatures, to translation practices, and of the publishing landscape in Ireland. The paper will focus on Derek Mahon's versions from the work of Francophone poets from several post-colonial African and Caribbean countries, published in 2013 in *Echo's Grove*, and use this case study as a means to interrogate the challenges posed by such work, where the 'translator' is in this instance familiar with the language, but not the cultures and literatures.

**Hattie Induni (University of Leeds)**

**"The writer's tongue is decaying": Speech, Ruin and Resistance in Máirtín Ó Cadhain's *Cré na Cille*'**

Decay and ruin are fertile materials for social criticism. Caught in a transition between presence and absence, ruins render both space and its meaning unstable. Through this property, they have become resources for cultural resistance in a variety of Irish literature. The following paper will discuss the role decay plays in Máirtín Ó Cadhain's 1949 novel *Cré na Cille*, and Ó Cadhain's use of ruin to enable both author and reader to make critical interventions



in post-independence Ireland's national narrative. Written in Irish and set in the Connemara Gaeltacht during World War II, *Cré na Cille* takes place in a cemetery. It consists almost entirely of dialogue spoken by a motley collection of corpses, who lie in the ground, bickering, expostulating, and describing the nation they left behind. I argue that decay flourishes in the graveyard clay: present not only in characters' bodily decomposition but also within their speech. Using a highly fragmented, ambiguous style, each conversation riddled with omissions and ellipses, Ó Cadhain inflicts discursive ruin on his own text at the level of form. The result is a precarious narrative environment in which no one perspective predominates; any singular definition of Irish identity is disrupted. I will trace how this textual decay is used to criticise – and to an extent resist – isolationist and nationalistic perspectives in Ireland's post-independence culture. A ruinous form allows diverse voices to find textual ground, yet also threatens their ability to communicate meaning. Following this, I will examine how Ó Cadhain's portrays the Irish language as a decaying, almost obsolete tongue: key to Ireland's national identity, but also restricting relationships with other cultures and their histories.

**Raphaël Ingelbien (KU Leuven)**

**'Critical traditions and the nineteenth-century Irish novel: a new comparative look at realism, allegory and Gothic'**

The cliché that Ireland did not really produce fiction in the nineteenth century may have been challenged by the bibliographical recoveries of the last two decades, but the perception that it was in many ways anomalous remains a hallmark of criticism on the Irish Victorian novel. Whether this supposed anomaly is deplored as a flaw or celebrated as a subversive feature, the standards that are brought to bear on Irish fiction often remain implicitly indebted to definitions of realism that have long dominated both Anglo-Saxon and comparative literature. Rather than emphasizing Irish novels' differences from the canon of European realism, this paper suggests that Ireland's paradoxical blend of peripherality and relative proximity to the centres of nineteenth-century European cultural production can instead be used to interrogate still dominant accounts of metropolitan fiction. Drawing on an Irish detail in a masterpiece of French realist painting, the paper proposes to recontextualize terms like realism, allegory and Gothic and highlight their porousness not just in Irish writing, but in the very canonical traditions from which Irish Victorian fiction is still too often segregated.

**Yvonne Ivory (University of South Carolina)**

**'The Aesthete as Nationalist: Oscar Wilde's American Lectures on Irish Culture'**

Oscar Wilde spent 1882 promoting the 'English Renaissance of Art' across the US and Canada, lauding the Pre-Raphaelites for their 'regeneration of English art' in a lecture that was the cornerstone of a tour designed by an English impresario to promote an English operetta. Only twice in those twelve months did Wilde deliver a lecture that highlighted his own non-Englishness: once in Minnesota during a St. Patrick's Day celebration; and again, a short three weeks later, at Platt's Hall in San Francisco, where he spoke on 'The Irish Poets of the Nineteenth Century'. In both of these speeches Wilde attacks English cultural imperialism: the 'Saxon took our lands and left them desolate', he laments, as they '[burned] proud monuments to the genius and intellectuality of Ireland'. Wilde's lecture may celebrate the recent Irish Renaissance of poetry, but it also packs a political punch: Ireland will never sustain a 'national art ... until we get that right of legislative independence so unjustly robbed from us; until we are really an Irish nation'. My paper explores the content and contexts of these two speeches by the young Wilde, paying special attention to the audience he is addressing, the newspaper accounts of the evenings, and other statements about his Irishness made by Wilde in interviews during his year in North America. At the heart of the paper is a discussion of how we might reconcile Wilde's self-representation as a prototypical Aesthete with what amounts in these speeches to a political call to action.

**Cody Jarman (University of Texas at Austin)**

**"I Did All A White Man Could": Reevaluating Joyce, Whiteness, and Empire'**

It is generally admitted that Joyce has been rescued from the confines of 'modernist' academic practices and is just as comfortably at home in global studies of postcolonial literature as he is alongside the likes of Ezra Pound. Since the 1990s, this turn in Joyce studies has revealed him to be a far more radical and politically engaged author than was originally assumed, and numerous scholars have demonstrated Joyce's critique and deconstruction of imperial power. Postcolonial approaches to Irish culture and literature, however, have since painted a far more nuanced picture of Ireland's relationship to empire, particularly as it relates to the racialization of the Irish and their overall relationship to the idea of whiteness. In my paper, I will revisit and revise readings of Joyce as a colonial author by more thoroughly engaging with contemporary criticism regarding the racial position of Irish identity, observing the ways Joyce seizes on the instability of the concept of whiteness to explore, advocate for, and criticize the Irish colonial position. Focusing on Joyce's critical writing and *Ulysses*, I plan to refine definitions of Joyce's understanding of Irishness, empire, and whiteness, giving special attention to the dual-position he creates for the Irish by characterizing them as both members of an international network of subaltern peoples and as a vital part of settler colonial projects on behalf of the United States and Britain. By considering the ways Joyce capitalizes on the slipperiness of the idea of whiteness to advocate for the Irish both within and in opposition to the ideologies of empire, I hope to open new avenues for discussion of Joyce's status as a colonial author.

**Nuala Johnson (Queen's University Belfast)**

**'Beyond authorship: Charlotte Wheeler-Cuffe and the Natural History of Colonial Burma'**

Natural history was one of the areas of late nineteenth-century science where women could make some significant contributions, albeit through informal and unofficial networks and linkages. In particular, in the fields of plant illustration and plant collecting women formed part of an invisible army of knowledge producers, often working outside the recognised channels of the emerging discipline of botany. Isla Forsyth has claimed that 'The *where* of scientific practice at times was liberating, the colonies in particular affording women space for practicing science'. For Charlotte Wheeler-Cuffe colonial Burma did appear to provide her with the freedom to explore, collect, travel and illustrate the natural history of the region. But as Felix Driver has observed representations of scientific exploration often continue to 'privilege the actions of heroic individuals... [and] tends to be dominated by the actions of European and American men'. Using her private correspondence in particular, this paper will enumerate some of the ways in which Wheeler-Cuffe transgressed familiar gender categories during her time as a servant of empire in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Burma. How she negotiated her position as the wife of an imperial official and also developed as an enthusiastic and talented amateur illustrator, traveller and plant-collector, in ways that both accommodated and challenged the gendered understandings of empire, will be explored.

**Alexander Jones (Trinity College Dublin)**

**'Turn therefore inland: Towards a Psychological Reading of Louis MacNeice's Instinctual Images'**

Louis MacNeice's poetry demonstrates a lifelong fascination with the workings of the mind. Whilst critics have long noted continual references to psychological theory in his work, it has not been considered a significant area of inquiry in its own right. Instead, his engagement with contemporary thought has been limited to political and metaphysical readings of his *oeuvre*. The present paper seeks to correct this through a consideration of what MacNeice identifies as the 'instinctual images' of his poetry: the sea, factories, fields, and gardens. Whilst 'instinct' obviously carries Freudian connotations, research into the intellectual networks that MacNeice was a part of suggests that his ideas of instinct had roots in post-Freudian psychologists of the British School, including the popular W. H. R. Rivers. As such, MacNeice can be located within a web of thinkers and writers who processed, disseminated, and reflected popular contemporary ideas of the mind. Close readings of poems under headings of the four 'instinctual images' will be conducted to show how he uses Classical and philosophical ideas as frames of knowledge that help the poems to explicate the irrational psychology of the interwar years. The paper thus seeks to enable the reorientation of MacNeice as a poet of the mind in a way that has heretofore gone underappreciated,

and to demonstrate that the role of psychology as a significant undercurrent in his thought parallels its position as a new frontier of human inquiry in the early-to-mid twentieth-century.

**Eamonn Jordan (University College Dublin)**

**'Justice in Abeyance in Martin McDonagh's *The Leenane Trilogy*'**

Druid Theatre Company's staging of Martin McDonagh's *The Leenane Trilogy*, comprising *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* (1996), *A Skull in Connemara* (1997) and *The Lonesome West* (1997), engendered a whole host of diverse critical responses, some positive and some negative. Over the past twenty-plus years, each play has been staged numerous times and in different ways around the world. Attempts to situate this early cluster of writing by McDonagh in terms of the relationship of the work to broader reality and matters of authenticity, in terms of genre, popular culture, morality and violence, in terms of stereotype, class and marginality, or in terms of diasporic/globalised or post-colonial cultures took the criticism down distinctive and sometimes siloed avenues of analysis. While some scholarship highlights how these plays highlight injustices and morality, and while some look as specific plays in relation to the law and legal matters, absent to date has been any over-arching investigation of this Trilogy in relation to how the practices and administration of justice are dramatized. This paper is partially prompted by McDonagh's more recent works in theatre (*Hangmen* [2015] and *A Very, Very, Very Dark Matter* [2018]) and in film (*Three Billboards Outside of Ebbing, Missouri* [2017]) where manifestations of justice shed particular light on the dramaturgical aspects at the work in the Trilogy. From the practices of popular culture and from the genres on which the plays are partly reliant (namely quasi-naturalism, melodrama and black farce), natural and poetic justice reflexes are prerequisites. Benign outcomes are almost predetermined: work ends with the near absolute establishment of guilt or innocence, victim and perpetrator. In contrast, McDonagh's denouements bring uncertainty and ambivalence rather than the comforts of closure, as he consciously imperils the mechanisms of justice, whether it is by foregrounding the investigative incompetence evidence tampering (*Beauty Queen*), rights violations and corruption enacted by agents of the state (*Skull*) or the inadequate conflation of religion and justice by a community unwilling to address civic duty deficits (*Lonesome*). Distinctions between perpetrator and victim are not maintained, as something unsettling about justice is accommodated. The writing becomes reliant not on the courts but on genre justice to punish matricide in *Beauty Queen*, and crimes are no nearer being solved by the end of the plays (*Lonesome* and *Skull*). The implications of such dramaturgical practices in terms of reception will be a consideration of this paper.

**Wei H. Kao (National Taiwan University)**

**'Abjection and Liberation in Jennifer Johnston's *Three Monologues*: A Kristevan Reading'**

The history of the monologue form of drama dates back to solo performances during medieval times, but in Anglophone theatre it has been the preserve of male writers. In contemporary Irish theatre, this particular form has often been employed as an embryonic exercise in character construction by male playwrights such as Brian Friel, Mark O'Rowe, Conor McPherson, Owen McCafferty, and others. Set against these noted male playwrights, Jennifer Johnston, who wrote a series of monologues that radically undermine gender stereotypes and challenge religious bigotry and sectarian violence, seems insufficiently studied. This paper will explore how Johnston gives voice to an alienated, split and multifaceted speaking 'I', for instance by role-play, story-telling, memory, testimony and confession, and will delve into how interior dialogues deliver and reveal shifting values and subjectivities. It will then discuss how her socially marginalized characters, seen from Julia Kristeva's viewpoint, are subject to communal abjection during the Northern Ireland Troubles, while also being able to disrupt received truths and break down social rigidities from their shared, disadvantaged position. Furthermore, the paper will illuminate how both men and women in a misogynistic culture, whether religious or trans-border political, may fight in various ways to preserve or undermine the patriarchy. Although the militant patriarchy is repugnant within both nationalist and unionist cultures, the disadvantaged Irish men and women strategically liberate themselves from social subjugation and work to be provocative yet inseparable either as the Other or the abject. The three monologues to be discussed are *Christine* (1989), *Mustn't Forget High Noon* (1989), and *Twinkletoes* (1993).

**Kenneth Keating (University College Cork)**  
**'The Haiku in Irish Poetry: Hibernian Haijin?'**

This paper seeks to trace the arrival and development of the haiku as a poetic form in modern and contemporary Irish poetry. Originating in Japan, popularised by Bashō and his followers in the Edo period, and made accessible to Anglophone writers through the work of post-war North American scholars in the middle of the twentieth century, the haiku has a rich history which transgresses national, cultural, and linguistic borders. This form has recently increased in popularity in Irish poetry. A division has developed however, between strict adherents to the rather simplistic 5-7-5 syllable structure established in early criticism, including more prominent poets who have produced occasional haiku or extended series of haiku, and others who are more attentive to the more advanced and lesser understood demands of the form. In examining the limitations of the former and the disciplined progress of the latter, this paper will contend that there is a significant and growing community of poets interested in substantial engagement with the history and culture of the haiku. This small group of haijin represents a unique movement in contemporary Irish poetry.

**Benjamin Keatinge (Trinity College Dublin)**  
**'Rooted Cosmopolitanism: Harry's Clifton's Italian Poems'**

In a 1996 interview, Harry Clifton refers to the 'iconographic clutter' of more traditional societies, including those of Ireland and Italy, which he contrasts with the 'desertification' of secular culture that he goes on to celebrate in his 2007 collection *Secular Eden*. While widely seen as a poet of cosmopolitanism who eschews the baggage of nationhood, there persists an important parochial side to Clifton's poetry which resurfaces in *Portobello Sonnets* (2016). This paper will re-examine Clifton's 1994 collection *Night Train Through the Brenner* to define this conflation of parish and wider world. It will suggest that Clifton's travel memoir *On the Spine of Italy* (1999) best reveals Clifton's parochial interests via descriptions of a 'microcosm' of Italian culture 'unfrequented by foreigners'. Clifton's rootlessness gives him insight into the customs of the 'demoralized village' where he lives for a year enjoying an elemental life in a 'backward society', one that has been critiqued by such noted anthropologists of the Italian South as Edward Banfield. Clifton celebrates 'the sun, the South' while also exploring Italian literary culture in 'At the Grave of Silone' and 'The Poet Sandro Penna, in Old Age' and meditates on the north/south divide in Italy and Europe generally. If Clifton enjoys 'travelling backwards' from Munich to Florence 'through the Brenner', this mood is punctured by such northern poems as 'The Nihilists' and 'Søren Kierkegaard'. Sophistication and backwardness emerge as relative concepts and 'rooted cosmopolitanism' presents one conceptual framework through which to explore these nuances in Clifton's poetry.

**Emma Marie Kelly (Queen's University Belfast)**  
**'Commentary or Criticism? Spoken Word, Slam Poetry, and Social Media in Action'**

Writing in *The Guardian* on 24 December 2018, Rory Carroll declared 'the seanchaithe are back'. Referencing the 'traditional storytellers, itinerant poets, entertainers [...] and repositories of a rich oral tradition' that died out 'in the era of radio and television', Carroll asserts that a new generation of Irish spoken word poets and performers have breathed new life into an old tradition, whilst also forging a new oral tradition in Ireland. Writing in the *Poetry Ireland Review*, Eavan Boland concurs with Carroll's assertion, stating that 'new energies have come to the threshold of an old art' as a result of the 'democratic sparkle' of spoken word poetry. Juxtaposing the personal and the political, criticism and commentary, and poetry, performance and film, spoken word visibility can often extend beyond traditional forms of publication. Over the past decade, spoken word poetry has gone from strength to strength in Ireland, moving from local 'open mic' sessions to national and international festivals, such as the now-defunct literary festival, Lingo: A Spoken Word Festival, and the immensely popular Electric Picnic music and arts festival. Spoken word artists have also effectively utilised media sharing platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook, garnering tens of thousand of views worldwide and enabling performers to cover 'old ground' in an

innovative way. Engaging with the spoken word poetry of artists such as Oisín McKenna, Sarah Cahill, Emmet Kirwan, and Sarah Maria Griffin, among others, this paper explores how spoken word poetry functions as social and political criticism, and the implications that this has on wider Irish literary studies and criticism.

**Ian Kennedy (National University of Ireland, Galway)**  
**'Paradigm Shift and Post-war Irish Culture'**

Much of the research into the evolution of Irish cultural policy has concentrated on the decade of change that took place during the 1960s. Tom Garvin, Brian Girvin, Timothy McCarthy and others have argued that the economic challenges of the 1950s served as the catalyst of change that took place in the 1960s. However, Enda Delaney, Terence Brown, Tom Garvin, Brian Fallon and Joe Lee argue for a fuller exploration of the cultural influence on the paradigm shift present that took place in post-war Ireland. The Arts Council of Ireland has been a critical player in the development of culture since 1952. As a consequence of An Tostal, towns and villages throughout the country established numerous festivals of Irish culture and amateur drama that were supported by the Arts Council. Despite a perception that Irish culture was in decline a plethora of literary output, coupled with evidence from the Arts Council archive, demonstrates that communities looked to culture as a means of creatively addressing that which 'could not be spoken of in official Ireland'. Clair Wills has argued that these communities engaged in political criticism through the plays performed on the amateur drama circuit of the time. This paper will argue that the post-war paradigm change was part of a continuum of modernisation that stretches further back in the development of Irish society. It will also argue that, as Wills claims, communities challenged government policy through the embrace of critical performance at amateur drama festivals throughout the country.

**Brad Kent (Université Laval)**  
**'A Marriage of Art and Polemics: The Preface in Irish Literature'**

In *Seuils*, his ground-breaking study of paratexts, Gérard Genette theorises many of the preface's functions. Despite a good deal of work on this genre in other fields, the preface remains under-examined in Irish Studies in the three decades since Genette first published his work. Focusing on a selection of touchstone late-Victorian and modern Irish literature (notably plays and novels), this paper seeks to understand how the preface was used in this period, with a specific focus on its ability to serve as both political intervention and expression of aesthetic experimentation. Bernard Shaw is exemplary and notorious in this vein, writing extensive prefaces for his plays that can run to over a hundred pages, raising the question of which is the text and which is the paratext. However, a number of Irish authors contemporary to Shaw employ the preface in a similar fashion, using it as a hybrid work that most often functions as a mix of polemical positioning and artistic manifesto, both of which encourage a particular reception of the work it precedes. This paper will offer a survey of these writings to determine how Irish authors use the preface and ascertain more precise generic tendencies. Simultaneously, it makes the case that the preface deserves more critical attention as a genre that has an established tradition – or rather a series of traditions – in Irish literature.

**Claire Keogh (Trinity College Dublin)**  
**'Unconscious bias in Irish theatre: how gender and canon biases influence the programming and reception of new plays by women'**

Prompted by the #WakingTheFeminists movement, Fiach Mac Conghail's admission that unconscious biases were affecting his programming decisions at the Abbey Theatre realigned the theatre sector's thinking on why plays by women were not being programmed. This paper will investigate the ways in which gendered linguistic and dramaturgical markers in Irish plays by women trigger unconscious biases in a reader that results in hesitancy towards the programming of those plays. Focussing on Carmel Winter's *Best Man*, which was commissioned by the Abbey, but not programmed there, and Abbie Spallen's *Strandline*, premiered by Fishamble: The New Play Company in 2009, this paper will question the impact of canon bias on the programming of new plays. Analysing

the use of gendered language and speech patterns, as well as the feminist dramaturgies of both plays, I will indicate the ways in which the unconscious mind evaluates these against a male-dominated canon. Shifting attention to Elaine Murphy's play *Shush*, which made her only the third woman to be programmed on the Abbey's main stage since 1988, I will uncover the ways in which marketing and publicity strategies generate biased responses that prompt critical reviews of the playwright's gender, rather than the play itself. Combining linguistic, neuroscientific, performance and feminist theories, I propose to investigate how unconsciously biased responses manifest in both reader's and spectator's responses to Irish plays by women, causing both hesitation in programming and biased reviewing.

**Mollie Kervick (University of Connecticut)**

**'Toward a Critical Posthuman Understanding of Nonbiological Care in Enright's *What Are You Like?*'**

A survey of Irish feminist criticism from the past two decades reveals a reliance on psychoanalytic approaches to recent Irish writing by women. While this criticism has contributed to the project of deconstructing 'entrenched gender constructions underwriting the Irish imaginary', as Claire Bracken suggests, this paper argues that because of its privileging of biological familial relationships, psychoanalysis is a limiting framework through which to analyze texts about nonbiological care relationships. Susan Cahill (2012) illustrates an example of the critical consequences of a strictly biological view of mother-child relationships in her work on Anne Enright's novel *What Are You Like?* (2000). She suggests, 'The erasure of the maternal is at the heart of this trauma and the absence of the mother resonates through the narrative'. Yet, this psychoanalytic reading of the novel which relies on the biological connection between mother/child cuts off analyses of the relationship between the two twin daughters at the center of the narrative and their non-biological, adoptive mothers. As such, I argue that reading the novel through a critical posthuman lens which focuses on multiplicity, relationality, and community, as defined by Rosi Braidotti (2012), moves the critical emphasis away from the *lack* of the biological mother in Enright's novel, and allows for the consideration of the *presence* of two adoptive mothers. This critical shift provides alternative routes for thinking about the contours of care performed by adoptive parents in and beyond Ireland.

**Nadia Osman Khallaf (Al Azhar University, Cairo)**

**'A Study of the Gothic Aspects in John Banville's 'A Death' in the Collection of Short Stories entitled *Long Lankin* (1984)'**

This study aims at exploring the Gothicity of the short story 'A Death' in the revised edition of *Long Lankin*, by the celebrated writer J. Banville, in an attempt to interpret the evolving brooding, psychological philosophy and 'landscapes of the mind' which haunt most of his controversial, complex later longer fiction. Banville is linked not only to the Irish lineage of the Gothic genre from S. Le Fanu, in the nineteenth century, but also to later contemporary writers in the twenty-first century in America, with their haunted tales of the grotesque and violence. Such writers evince certain, similar features particularly the tendency to replace realistic passages with others that are considered sensational and highly imaginative. These modes are the consequences of characters struggling to make sense of the abstruse, as well as to give an account of the evil potential in all human existence. The narratorial voice, or central consciousness, however, in 'A Death', with an ironical twist, maintains instead a rational stance with the climax of the story, mitigating the Gothic flights of fancy and the thriller suspense effects by revealing the grotesque 'Long Lankin' figure to be nothing more than an absurd eccentric man who wishes to deliver a serious message concerning the evidence of a spreading contagion of 'despair'. And yet Banville leaves his story with its varied themes to be interpreted as conducive to multiple interpretation in the postmodern trend.

**Youngmin Kim (Dongguk University)**

**'Critical Ground of Spatial Form versus Open Form in Yeats's Poetics of Writing'**

Michel Foucault, in *The Order of Things* (1970), describes the modern world as one in which man, uncertain of his identity and newly aware of areas impenetrable to knowledge both within and around him, turns to the

'mysterious' formal properties of language as a source of order. The tendency toward 'mysterious' forms to penetrate into the unknowable and the lack of resources for conveying modern complexities are combined to stimulate the modern poet to seek for a new form to justify his faith in his visionary perception of the world. Joseph Frank's 'Spatial Form in Modern Literature' (1945) defines the modernity of modern poetry as the projection of experience on the model of the plastic arts in an attempt to negate sequential or temporal understanding in favour of synchronic perception. W. J. T. Mitchell's 'Spatial Form in Literature: Toward a General Theory' (1980) focuses on the relationship between time and space as one of complex interaction, interdependence, and interpenetration, best represented by the metaphor of body and soul. Studies of open form inform us that in both theory and practice Charles Olson and Robert Duncan descended from Pound and Williams, and that they found in the latter the formal procedure that they refer to as 'open form', or 'projective verse', or 'poem as process'. However, my contention is to position Yeats the Irish poet/critic as the trailblazer of tilling the critical ground of this mysterious form in his poetics of writing, in particular, in *A Vision*.

**Hironao Kobayashi (Toyo Gakuen University)**

### **'Paddy Dignam's Metempsychosis and Irish History as a Nightmare – Representations of Dogs and Ghosts in James Joyce's *Ulysses*'**

According to James Joyce's friend Frank Budgen, 'Circe' in *Ulysses* is both 'a costume episode' and 'an animal episode', saying '[t]he essence of the animal into man metamorphosis seems to be that man becomes an animal when he loses his many-sided human wholeness. . . . Beastliness is one-sidedness'. However, since Jacques Derrida's *The Animal That Therefore I Am* (2008) was published, many critics of Animal Studies have deconstructed the boundary between humans and animals. Joyce seems to have criticised this binary way of thinking by evoking 'many-sided' animal imagery in *Ulysses*. My paper aims to prove that through analysing the representations of dogs and ghosts in *Ulysses*, their imagery reflects not only Ireland's history as nightmare, but also a hint for Stephen's awakening from his own nightmare (the sea likened to the mother in 'Telemachus'). Buck Mulligan says nonchalantly that Stephen's mother was 'beastly dead', which means merely 'terribly' for Mulligan, but for Stephen, who encountered her deathbed, he cannot help taking this word literally. The phrase of 'beastly dead' itself makes his mother's ghost in his dream more ghoulish. However, Paddy Dignam, whose funeral takes place in *Ulysses*, is also regarded as 'beastly dead', for his 'heart breakdown' is possibly caused by the fact that he was 'drunk dog'. That's why Dignam in 'Circe' is changed from a dog to a ghoulish ghost. Based on these considerations, this paper will conclude that the epithet of 'dogsboddy' implies the historical adverse circumstances of Irish people as well as Stephen's.

**Alla Kononova (Tyumen State University)**

### **"Sailing upon Air and Ear": A Dialogue with Joseph Brodsky in the Poetry of Seamus Heaney and Mary O'Malley'**

The paper takes on a direction which has great potential for further studies of contemporary Irish poetry. It suggests studying the work of Irish poets through their relation to Russian literature. In particular, the paper focuses on the reception and reimagining of Joseph Brodsky's prose in the poetry of Seamus Heaney and Mary O'Malley. Both Heaney and O'Malley demonstrate a strong interest in Russian literature and it occupies an important place within their poetic landscapes. Both poets enter a conversation with Brodsky, primarily by addressing his critical works and essays (e.g. essays collected in the volumes *Less Than One*, *On Grief and Reason*, etc). This conversation can be observed in such poems by Heaney as 'Audenesque', 'Lauds and Gauds for a Laureate', 'Lines for Valentina', or in O'Malley's poems from her recent collection *Playing the Octopus* such as 'Arrival. Possession. A City', 'First Visit to Penn's Landing', 'Breaking into Silence', etc. The paper offers a comparative analysis of Heaney's and O'Malley's approaches to Brodsky's concepts, the ways these concepts are interpreted and integrated into their own work and how they help solve some preoccupying questions such as the role and place of poetry, the balance between 'art and life', or the matter of linguistic and territorial displacement.

**Joanna Kruczkowska (University of Łódź)**

## **'Paula Meehan, Derek Mahon, Greece and Ecocriticism'**

The geocentric perspectives serving as points of departure for this paper include Paula Meehan's 'The Island' (*Geomantic*, 2016) and Derek Mahon's 'Christmas in Kinsale' (*The Yellow Book*, 1997), where Greece they experienced appears to be the centre of the spiritual world immersed in physical elements. In Greece they can be 'creaturely ourselves' in the 'sea-girth garden' (Meehan), or safely harboured to face the universe in the moment of environmental disaster (Mahon). The Greek experience 'really laid the foundations for a relationship with [their] own writing' (Meehan), where the paradoxical familiarity of the Greek landscape provided both poets with a free creative zone. Their 'Greek' poems and/or commentaries also reinforce their potential as eco-critics. As early as 1970s Mahon inspects the 'chemical skies' around Delos, the centre of ancient geopolitics. Meehan combines images of Crete and Ikaria with her ideas of social and political engagement with the environment. Mahon's prehistorical natural Greece offers a refuge, though not always idyllic, from the turmoil of the historical phase, while its social gregariousness acts as an antidote to Northern solitude. Meehan's 'dinnseanchas of the Minoan Bronze Age' symbolises historical disruption and modern displacement, but also brings her closer to the native Irish ground. The paper will also enquire into the ecocritical reception of Meehan's and Mahon's work, asking whether their observations about Greece reflect the general tendencies of their art as diagnosed by ecocritics.

## **Zosia Kuczyńska (University College Dublin) 'The Brian Friel Papers: queering the archive'**

There is increasing pressure on Irish literary canons to justify themselves or move over to make room for the forgotten and the new. The archive can play a vital role in the process of recovering lost voices, as seen recently in feminist contexts (e.g. 'Fired!'). In this paper, I will be asking how the process of queering an archive allows us to destabilise dominant hetero-patriarchal canons. I will argue that, by privileging marginalised LGBTQ voices and themes in archival spaces designed for 'live encounter[s] with privileged remains' (Schneider, 2011), it becomes possible to queer the foundations of canonical literary works without making overstated revisionist claims about the extent of an author's allyship. Using the Brian Friel Papers at the NLI as a case study, I will examine the extent to which queerness – i.e. the troubling of sexual/gender norms and binaries and/or the institutions and narratives that perpetuate them – underpins certain works by Friel, not only in terms of their composition process but also in terms of their being performed/revived over time. Rather than restricting myself to claiming queer identities for Friel's characters, I will be examining the intellectual foundations of his plays and how his encounters with LGBTQ voices – either as source materials or among his creative collaborators – influenced the form and 'core' of his works. In examining the extent to which queerness is either appropriated by or 'straightwashed' out of those plays, I will ultimately be asking what it means to recover these LGBTQ contexts for contemporary literary criticism.

## **Michał Lachman (University of Łódź) 'Ciaran Carson's (self-) critical achievement'**

A writer's creative impact has always been located somewhere between literary achievement and its social preoccupation. Functions of writing are a product of inherited traditions which interact with social and cultural environment through the mediation of writer's sensitive engagement with the world. For Ciaran Carson the engagement with art and with the society manifests itself under various literary roles. As a poet, essay writer, author of memoirs and a musician, Carson combines literary and folklore traditions with an acute observation of places, people, politics and his own art in a (self-) reflexive effort at narrating the story of an Irish intellectual. The paper explores the critical and artistic impact of Carson's prose writing which is suspended between historical literary forms and modern experiment, between artistic exclusivity and a need for social observation. In such collections of as *Last Night's Fun: About Time, Food and Music* (1996), *Fishing for Amber* (1999), *Shamrock Tea* (2001) and especially in his memoir of Belfast, *The Star Factory* (1997), Carson combines the roles of a voyeur and flaneur of a modern city but also modern Irish culture. His poetic prose records not only peregrinations of a tireless archeologist of hidden treasures, an inexhaustible collector of experience but also of an acute critic of



contemporary Ireland observed from peculiar, intellectually challenging positions located close to mundane, everyday objects, forgotten histories and highly specialized knowledges. He is thus a powerful chronicler of his times and of literary or artistic styles which travel through history under changing, protean guises.

**Yi-Peng Lai (National Sun Yat-sen University)**

**'Contested Borders: Re-membering the Troubles in Seamus Deane's *Reading in the Dark* and Anna Burns's *Milkman*'**

In Northern Ireland, borders don't simply exist along national territories. Sometimes they divide a city into diverse parts where history of conflicts leaves its mark. During the Troubles, both Derry and Belfast witnessed how territorial borders between the Catholic and Protestant communities also shape the identity and ideology of these borderland communities. This paper attempts to read Seamus Deane's 1996 *Reading in the Dark* alongside Anna Burns's 2018 *Milkman* to consider the question of contested borders in contemporary Northern Irish writings, and how remembering – and re-membering – these borders through the unreliable adolescent narrators of these two novels allows an alternative historical narrative that echoes, and in a way redefines, the Irish oral tradition of folklore and storytelling.

**Kathryn Laing (Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick)**

**'Hannah Lynch, Archives and 'Girl Revolutionists''**

This paper will draw upon archival research undertaken for our recent study of Hannah Lynch and begin with the questions this recovery project raised – what does one need to know, to understand, or catch glimpse of, to write a literary life? How does one archive a recovered literary life and preserve it? The process of excavation, the archival pursuit of forgotten works, lost details, missing letters, images and more, was simultaneously the construction of an archive where one did not exist for Lynch. Included in this new archive are two recovered works: a short story, 'A Girl Revolutionist' and a Ladies' Land League novella, 'Marjory Maurice', serialised and published shortly after the dissolution of Anna Parnell's short-lived nationalist and indeed feminist movement. These two stories, both shaped and informed by Lynch's active membership of the Ladies' Land League, form the focus for the second part of the paper. Recent scholarship on the Irish New Woman and New Girl fiction, new histories of the Ladies' Land League and the expanding field of newspaper and periodical studies inform this consideration of how the recovery of these works of fiction enriches not only an understanding of Lynch's activism and literary interventions, but also the broader political, cultural, literary and publishing contexts of late nineteenth-century Ireland.

**José Lanthers (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)**

**'A Riddle of Doubles and Triples: Shadow and Substance in Martin McDonagh's *A Very Very Very Dark Matter*'**

London-Irish writer Martin McDonagh made his theatrical debut with a handful of plays set in a lurid version of rural Ireland. Since then, he has moved on to other settings, although his work continues to revisit familiar themes, including the relationship between the real world and the world of fiction. In McDonagh's 2008 movie *In Bruges*, Harry Waters gushes that the Belgian town where the film is set is 'like a fairy tale, isn't it?' But Ray, the film's tormented protagonist, experiences Bruges as a version of 'Hell'. In McDonagh's most recent play, *A Very Very Very Dark Matter* (2018), the fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen have a hellish origin: they are written by a diminutive Congolese woman (a survivor of Leopold II's brutal colonial regime) whom Andersen keeps locked in a box; her sister supplies Charles Dickens with his literary material. 'This is no fairytale', the poster advertising the play proclaimed. In both *In Bruges* and the play, McDonagh explores fairy tales as dark tales of repression, magical stories of wonder, and narratives intended to deceive. McDonagh's play serves as a commentary on the relationship between history, memory, and story, and as a critique (of sorts) of his own oeuvre to date.

**Nuria de Cos Lara (Trinity College Dublin)**

**'Constructing religious discourse: Yeats's criticism of Blake, Juan Ramón Jiménez's criticism of Yeats'**

In 'The Symbolism of Poetry,' Yeats writes that 'all artists ... have had ... some criticism of their art; and it has often been ... this criticism that has evoked their most startling inspiration, calling into outer life some portion of the divine life.' Yeats expresses this thought multiple other times throughout his prose writings, and further underlines the relationship between his critical stance on previous works of literature and the construction of his personal religion. This active processing of the literary milieu in order to formulate a personal mythology is not exclusive to Yeats. In fact, Yeats's unorthodox religion found reception in various other European contexts. One particular example of this is Juan Ramón Jiménez's prose poem *Espacio* (1954). By establishing similarities through this comparison, this paper suggests that, through their work as critics of others and of themselves, both Juan Ramón and Yeats achieved a unique position in the transition into modernity in relation to religious beliefs. In order to trace the ripple effect of Yeats's criticism, interpretation, and appropriation of religious and occult texts into the wider European context, this paper will compare Juan Ramón's *Espacio* and Yeats's preface to the critical edition of Blake's poems, as well as 'The Tower,' 'The Trembling of the Veil' and 'The Symbolism in Poetry.' In doing so, this will provide a new insight into some of the processes by which their new unorthodox religion is attained.

**Felix M. Larkin**

**'Grace Gifford (1888-1955): Her Abbey Theatre Drawings'**

Grace Gifford's two collections of drawings of plays and players at the Abbey Theatre – the first, *Twelve Nights at the Abbey Theatre*; the second, *Doctors recommend it: an Abbey Theatre tonic in twelve doses* – are a little-known and underused resource in studies of Irish literature and culture in the early twentieth century. They were published in 1929 and 1930 respectively. These drawings are perhaps Gifford's most accomplished work, but she also produced witty caricature portraits of people prominent in Irish cultural and political life – and subtle political cartoons in support of causes such as women's suffrage, Sinn Féin after the 1916 Rising and the anti-Treaty side in the Irish Civil War. She was a talented cartoonist, and deserves to be remembered as such – and not just as the tragic bride of Joseph Mary Plunkett, whom she married in Kilmainham Gaol a few hours before his execution in 1916. In this paper, I will outline Grace Gifford's life and work and will discuss, in particular, her Abbey Theatre drawings.

**Rosie Lavan (Trinity College Dublin)**

**'Educational Reform and Personal Life: Literary Memoir and the University in Ireland'**

Ireland, in Malcolm Tigh's words, 'has a long – and to some extent shared – higher education history with the rest of the British Isles'. Inevitably, that history has been inextricable from the country's political status. This was as true under the Union as it was after Partition, and in the transition from Free State to Republic. In Northern Ireland, British policy continues to shape the sector, and the social reforms of the 1940s engendered particular local effects. This paper compares personal accounts of the collective experience of studying English at university in Ireland, North and South, from the 1950s to the 1970s, while acknowledging the longer history, often determined in and by Britain, which underlies them. Nuala O'Faolain's *Are You Somebody?* (1996) and Gerald Dawe's 'Bit Parts' (2008) both feature extended recollections of university life. In O'Faolain's case this chiefly concerns UCD in the 1950s and 1960s, and her institutional life as student and lecturer is conditioned by gender. Dawe is self-consciously a graduate of new, mid-century systems of education, but the challenges of life in Northern Ireland in the 1960s and 1970s frame his retrospective. The integration of historical and literary sources in this area emphasises that the impact of higher education, and the political reforms which underpin it, cannot be understood solely in social and economic terms. Personal lives are shaped and determined within the university, and while these effects are harder to measure empirically, they are forcefully articulated in life-writing.

**Christopher Laverty (Queen's University Belfast)**

**'Seamus Heaney's Productive Misreading of Elizabeth Bishop'**

This paper examines the overlooked impact of Elizabeth Bishop on Seamus Heaney's poetics in the 1980s and 90s as he became a truly global poet. As the only female poet to influence Heaney (and, arguably, his only influence who was less prominent than him), Bishop is a unique and underacknowledged exemplar in the Heaney pantheon. Since the 1990s, however, Bishop's reputation has grown considerably; recent critical assessments of newly published work have led to new ways of reading her older collections, allowing critics to understand the 'reticence' for which she was famed less as an aesthetic principle – as Heaney understands it – and more as a concession to a repressive environment. Through intertextual close-readings alongside an examination of Heaney's prose-literary response to her work, this paper argues Heaney's image of Bishop is often refracted through the lens of his own concerns, leading him to render his sole female influence as a shadow of himself. Though not as sensitive as more recent criticism, Heaney's reading of Bishop nonetheless enables some of his most celebrated poetry of 'home', a constant concern in Bishop's work. Through an intense engagement with Bishop's models, Heaney begins to develop a poetics where poetic form itself – the essential border-making and border-crossing apparatus – is now emblematic of a solution to political crisis, making his misreading of Bishop a highly productive one.

**Héloïse Lecomte (ENS de Lyon)**

**'Post-traumatic uprootedness and liminal places in *The Sea* and *The Gathering*'**

In *The Sea* and *The Gathering*, John Banville and Anne Enright incorporate a strong sense of place in narratives of traumatic experience and bereavement. This paper will examine these two Irish novels through the prism of both place-related studies and trauma studies, a critical model that has been particularly fruitful for the analysis of Irish fiction by scholars like Kathleen Costello-Sullivan or Robert F. Garratt in recent years. The intradiegetic narrators of both novels, Max and Veronica, are recently bereaved and feel out-of-place in their own homes, which they associate with dark memories, leaving them with a profound sense of inadequacy and uprootedness. In this paper, I intend to show that the protagonists' restlessness bespeaks their deep-seated post-traumatic sense of displacement. Both Max and Veronica are vertiginously attracted to liminal or transitory places in their desire to escape from their stifling condition. The sea, the place where their loved ones tragically committed suicide by drowning, both repulses and fascinates them as the epitome of a boundless liminal space between life and death. The anthropological notion of 'non place' ('non-lieu'), theorized by Marc Augé in the 1990s, will be crucial to this analysis of the characters' post-traumatic sense of uprootedness, since they also continually invest those transitory non places, such as hotels, guest-houses, planes or car-parks. Their inability to settle down and feel at home anywhere betokens their desperate attempts to find their bearings in a world that has been rendered unhomely by traumatic disruption.

**Hélène Lecossois (University of Lille)**

**'Counter-acting the text: performance as resistance on the early Abbey stage'**

This paper proposes to investigate ways to broaden the scope of Irish theatre scholarship. Text-based analyses dominated Irish theatre studies for a long time. They are now being challenged by a number of approaches, amongst which practice as research, for instance. Philosophically or historically informed readings have also contributed to opening up the field. This paper will focus on the new insights that recent research in performance studies could bring to Irish theatre scholarship. It will concentrate on the phenomenology of the body on stage and inquire into the ability of performance to undermine the narrative of progress underpinning the theatre of modernity. Popular performance practices such as folk or ritual-based performances, or acting techniques borrowed from the circus or the music-hall counterpoint this progressive agenda. Their use on the Irish stage often proved a very efficient means to collapse the frame of representation, critique realist dramaturgies and expose their political bias. Works by canonical playwrights such as J. M. Synge or Seán O'Casey, as well as works by playwrights who are rarely included in Irish theatre history, such as George Fitzmaurice, for example, will serve as the basis for this reflection.

**Cathy Leeney (University College Dublin)**

## **'Maura Laverty: Exploring a Legacy'**

The existing history of Irish playwriting in the twentieth century is marked by a severe lack of women artists during the post Second World War period and onwards into the 1970s. This paper takes that dismaying context of invisibility and addresses the value of Maura Laverty's work for the stage, and what it reveals about class, value systems and social conditions in the period. Maura Laverty's prodigious talents lay behind her status as a national figure in Dublin and Ireland in the 1950s. As a popular novelist (although banned), journalist and broadcaster she was widely known. Her cook books, which were often supplemented by engaging narratives on the importance of food in human happiness and family cohesion, were familiar in many Irish kitchens. When she wrote three plays for the Gate Theatre Company, then under the direction of Hilton Edwards and Micháel MacLiammóir, for performance at the Gaiety Theatre in Dublin, they drew large audiences and several revivals, saving the financial skin of the company. How was Laverty so popular while her work explored ideas of proto-feminism and social critique that pushed at the unspoken boundaries of conservative Catholic patriarchy? This paper will explore elements from her three plays that evidence her negotiation of these boundaries.

**Stefanie Lehner (Queen's University Belfast)**

## **'Crosscurrents: Rethinking Critical Paradigms for contemporary Northern Irish Literature'**

Suspension has remained one of the key critical categories for reading contemporary Northern Irish literature. Richard Kirkland's *Literature and Culture in Northern Ireland since 1965: Moments of Danger* (1996) proposed the Gramscian concept of the 'interregnum' to analyse Northern Ireland's 'crisis', which inspired John Brannigan's 2006 analysis of literary refractions of 'the paradoxical state of suspension which characterizes the interregnum'. These studies have paved the way for more recent discussions of suspension as an aesthetic category, most notably in Birte Heidemann's *Post-Agreement Northern Irish Literature: Lost in a Liminal Space?* (2016), but also evident in Maureen E. Ruprecht Fadem's *The Literature of Northern Ireland: Spectral Borderlands* (2015) as well as Declan Long's *Ghost-Haunted Land: Contemporary Art and Post-Troubles Northern Ireland* (2017). But while critics have suggested that this ongoing state of liminal suspension is a 'disabling condition', this paper seeks to recover the recalcitrant dynamics of literary liminality as a crosscurrent to the homogenising and teleological thrust of the progress narratives underpinning both the Agreement and Brexit. This emphasis on the active energies suggested by the motif of crosscurrents allows a revision of the more passive concepts of the cultural corridor and suspension, and foregrounds the potential of contemporary Northern Irish literature to establish new affiliations and reconciliatory discussions, and to undertake a dialogue between the temporal coordinates of a haunting past and a precarious 'fresh' future.

**Melih Levi (Stanford University)**

## **"'Finding a voice where they found a vision": the use of deixis in Eavan Boland's poetry'**

Participating in a tradition influenced by Yeats's visionary poetics, Eavan Boland has developed a complicated relationship to the prophetic identity often associated with poets. The deictic moments in her work demonstrate a profound unease with the truth-telling impulses of poetry. More specifically, Boland's frequent use of 'this:' animates a desire for plain statement and epigrammatic clarity. However, this expectation is repeatedly overturned by sensuous description and a deeper investment in quotidian imagery. My paper will investigate the social implications of this practice by referencing Boland's prose writings on gender, tradition, and history. Boland's oeuvre allows us to rethink the centrality of a visionary poetics to the modernist and postmodernist traditions in Irish poetry. Accordingly, my paper will offer an evaluation of the roles imagery and object-oriented attention play throughout Boland's career, and show how Boland escapes the trappings of an Orphic desire and vision, especially in her treatment of themes like grief and mourning. The myth of Orpheus is an important influence on Boland's poetry, especially in terms of its askew gender dynamics and historical association with the objectifying gaze of a poet. Boland distances herself from Yeats's visionary poetics when she argues that '... no poetic imagination can afford to regard an image as a temporary aesthetic maneuver. Once the image is distorted, the truth is demeaned.'

The central goal of my paper will be to untangle this relationship between truth and image, and demonstrate how Boland develops historically grounded conditions for poetic imagery.

**Sun-chieh Liang (National Taiwan Normal University)**  
**'Translating *Finnegans Wake* into Chinese: A Taiwan Perspective'**

Dai Congrong's Chinese translation of *Finnegans Wake* (Book I) was a successful hit, as the press acclaimed when it came out in 2013. Most of the reports, forums, and book reviews, however, simply emphasized the enormous difficulties of translating *Finnegans Wake* and beat around the bush without really touching upon Dai's translation *per se*. The academic circles worldwide, in contrast, have remained taciturn since the publication. This paper aims to provide a critical analysis of Dai's translation. In addition to numerous mistranslations and misinterpretations, unjustifiable nonsensical expressions, unnecessary simplified reductions of multiple meanings, and unsolicited lack of Wakean coinages of their Chinese counterparts, what makes Dai's translation so chaotically unreadable is twofold: firstly, the Wakean chaos is mistaken for a total chaos, and secondly, only one language (Mandarin, literally 'speech of officials', the Standard Chinese) is used as the target language; as a result, the highly complex multiphonic polyglot textuality of *Finnegans Wake* is one-dimensionalized into a de-sanguined text ramshackled by disorderly jumbled dictionary denotations. On the other hand, this paper will provide a possible working hypothesis for a Chinese translation of *Finnegans Wake* which is 'basically Chinese'. By definition in this paper, the term 'Chinese' refers to Mandarin, and the other dialects (e.g., Cantonese, Shandongnese, Shanghainese) used in China, Taiwan and Singapore. Four basic principles will be used: (1) to create new meanings out of trite idiomatic Chinese/Taiwanese expressions, (2) to make use of homonymic Chinese characters to achieve the effect of the Brunonian coincidence of contraries, (3) to integrate the Taiwanese and Chinese dialects into the Mandarin-dominant translation, and (4) to create visual effects by means of Chinese pictographic characters. Examples from *Finnegans Wake* will be provided to support the hypothesis.

**Yu-chen Lin (National Sun Yat-sen University)**  
**'Haunting in Elizabeth Bowen's Writing on Ireland'**

Haunting, suggests Avery F. Gordon, is the language of loss sustained by social violence; it raises specters and alters the experience of being in time. Elizabeth Bowen's full-length writing on Ireland exemplifies Gordon's observation. Set nine years back from the time of writing, *The Last September* (1929) registers 'a structure of feeling' (in Raymond Williams's term) among the Anglo-Irish residents and visitors of Danielstown, ranging from nonchalance to trance-like numbness toward one's own feelings. This unfeeling cushions them from their dispossession as a class or an individual – the imminent loss of home at the hand of the spectral Irish revolutionaries during the Troubles, and the loss of parents. Such temporal-emotional distance, in turn, enables Bowen to come to terms with the decline of her tribe in the novel, and deal with the faded glory of her family history within the larger context of Irish history in *Bowen's Court* (1942) fifteen years later. Her repressed sense of loss resurfaces in *A World of Love* (1954), which revisits the love lost in *The Last September* through Jane's quest for the truth of love between her mother and the spectral Guy, her mother's former fiancé who died in World War I. By dramatizing the presence of the ghost in a decaying Big House during the troubled time of Irish history, Bowen rewrites the structure of feeling which has haunted her for years.

**Conor Linnie (Trinity College Dublin)**  
**'"Mortified language": Cruiskeen Lawn and Irish Art Writing'**

Cruiskeen Lawn established the polyphonic persona of Myles na gCopaleen, in Carol Taaffe's words, as the 'ventriloquist of mid-century Ireland in all its guises'. The satirical force of the *Irish Times* column was underpinned by a linguistic sensitivity to what Taaffe has identified as 'the very nature of cultural debate itself, to its rhetoric, its repetitiveness and its endless capacity for self-caricature'. This paper explores the nature and impact of Cruiskeen Lawn's satiric commentary on the culture of Irish art and the rhetoric of its art writing during the 1940s. The decade

represented a watershed period in the production and promotion of modernist art in Ireland, with the outbreak of the Second World War focusing a new diversity of international and native artistic activity in the neutral capital. Yet the rapid nature of these developments at the same time posed significant issues for the city's comparatively underdeveloped art critical culture. For Myles na gCopaleen, the art criticism increasingly appearing in Dublin journals and newspapers was a prime example of the kind of 'mortified language' that degraded Irish cultural discourse and which ultimately reflected an uncritical assimilation of fashionable European influences and trends. The paper locates Cruiskeen Lawn's commentary on visual art in terms of the broader thematic and contextual concerns of Brian O'Nolan's literary oeuvre, establishing the importance of his views on art in interrogating the uncertain identity formation of the post-independence State.

**James Little (Charles University, Prague)**

**"No Irishness Intended": Beckett's Heterotopias'**

This paper contends that the heterotopic space of the theatre is crucial to the development of Beckett's spatial politics, drawing on Michel Foucault's definition of heterotopias as 'counter-sites' in which 'other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted'. Beckett used 'heterotopias of deviation' such as prisons and asylums in eight of the prose works written before *Godot* appeared on the boards in 1953. Yet in spite of close personal and artistic relationships with inmates of carceral institutions, Beckett never represented an institution of coercive confinement onstage. Using Joanne Tompkins' concept of a theatre heterotopia as a site which 'reflects or comments on a site in the actual world', I track Beckett's shift in critical ground by going underground, examining the way in which confinement continues to shape plays such as the unperformed and abandoned 'Espace souterrain' ['Underground Space']. The carceral traces of such works are indicative of a key shift in Beckett's spatial politics following his move from writing about heterotopias of deviation to working in the heterotopic space of the proscenium theatre. Rather than emancipating theatre from its ground, Beckett's manipulation of what he termed the 'very closed box' of the proscenium reminds us that theatre is never free from ground—even when that ground is overhead. In this reshaping of theatre space, I argue, Beckett finds his critical ground.

**Laura Loftus (University College Dublin)**

**'Homosocial Bonding and Periodical Codes: *Poetry Ireland Review* and *Tracks* during the 1980s'**

In recent years, there has been a growing body of work addressing the exclusion of women from the genealogy of Irish poetry during the 1950s, 60s and even 70s with important essays from Moynagh Sullivan, Lucy Collins, Anne Fogarty, Kathy D'Arcy, Alex Davis and Susan Schreibman addressing some of the dynamics involved in this occlusion. While critics such as Margaret Kelleher have demonstrated how anthologies contributed to this marginalisation, the role of Irish literary journals in this exclusion has received relatively little critical attention. This paper opens a new avenue of research in Irish literary studies through introducing a long overdue analysis of how the literary journals *Poetry Ireland Review* and *Tracks* contributed to the mainstream marginalisation of women poets during the 1980s. Employing theoretical frameworks from the field of periodical studies, this paper will examine how periodical codes (in symbiosis with broader networks of power within the Irish literary community) were deployed in these Irish literary journals both obliquely and explicitly in editorial comments, reviews, advertisements and illustrations, combining to create an environment where women and their poetry were excluded. I will also draw on the Bourdieusian concept of the world literary-field as developed in Pascale Casanova's well-known study *The World Republic of Letters*, where she shows the impact of editorial decisions made in the 'centre' (London, Paris, New York) on the literary field in the 'margins' or 'periphery' of the Global South especially. In the case of this project, editorial practice and the gendered 'shape' of particular poetry journals contributed to the exclusion of women poets even when editors called for more women to submit work.

**Patrick Lonergan (National University of Ireland, Galway)**

**'Play as Critical Intervention: Brandon Jacobs-Jenkins' *An Octoroon*'**

The 2014 play *An Octoroon* offers a rewriting of Dion Boucicault's *The Octoroon* (1859), thereby representing a critical investigation of an Irish-American play by an African-American playwright. My aim is to explore how the 2014 version needs to be seen as an act of critical investigation of the original play and its place in American theatre history. In performing that act of criticism on stage, Jacobs-Jenkins explores such issues as blackface performance practice, the public performance of violence, and the relationship between identity and creativity. In the paper, I consider how those themes are developed. In particular, I wish to consider how Irishness functions in the adaptation – not only in its characterization of Boucicault himself as a stage Irish buffoon but also in its consideration of the histories of blackface, a performance practice that Irish actors were strongly associated with, of course. What can *An Octoroon* teach us about the use of theatre as a critical tool, one that can give us new ways to think about the histories of Irishness and its relationship to race, slavery and American identity?

**Yuval Lubin (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)**

**'Delineating De Selby: Epistemological Failure in *The Third Policeman*'**

Flann O'Brien's *The Third Policeman* is a novel grounded in a period of scientific upheaval. As a result, scientific subjects, from Einstein's special relativity to industrialization, pervade the novel. By utilizing these themes, the text explores the way empirical knowledge functions as a defining element of human understanding. This paper will argue that O'Brien humorously represents empirical methods of knowledge to convey how methodological epistemology fails to structure an understandable reality. This is apparent from the way the text utilizes images of science and structures its language. Science is often shown in the text as a means to achieve absolute knowledge. However, this same knowledge fails to have practical implications as it becomes self-referential and thus meaningless. In a similar manner the language used in the novel comically employs various registers, most notably the scientific, to create an obstructive text. The language of the text is often opaque and uses abundance of information to convey the futility of defining reality through speech. By utilizing these themes, the author creates a text that is ultimately a parody of encyclopedia. *The Third Policeman* depicts a world that revolves around the character of De Selby and his theories. Nevertheless, this conceived world does not coalesce into the same understandable whole De Selby proposes; the hellish parish is an illogical landscape that rebuffs attempts of stable classification. As such, the novel represents an attempt to unify reality into a conceivable object and by this conveys the limitations of such attempts and their inevitable absurdity.

**Eleanor Lybeck (University of Oxford)**

**'Revisioning the Circus: history, theory and philosophy in John Banville's *Birchwood*'**

It was in the first issue of the *Irish Review* that Roy Foster famously and provocatively announced: 'We Are All Revisionists Now.' An extract from the unproduced screenplay of John Banville's 1973 novel *Birchwood* appeared in the same publication. The novel would later be claimed in the introduction to the *Penguin Book of Irish Fiction* (1999) by one of Ireland's most renowned contemporary writers and literary critics, Colm Tóibín, as 'the most radical text of Irish revisionism', outstripping the work of any historian. Building on the work of Conor McCarthy, this paper begins by revisiting claims such as Tóibín's as a means of investigating the relationship between historiography and *Birchwood*, as both novel and screenplay. It carries out a quasi-paratextual reading of the *Irish Review: Number 1* in order to improve our understanding of Banville's concerns about history, politics and the expressive potential of art. It then moves to explore how fundamentally important a historical sense of Western philosophy was to the construction of *Birchwood*, using archival material held by Trinity College Dublin as a blueprint for its development. It finally contrasts Banville's use of philosophy with the use of literary theory as an organising principle in Angela Carter's *Nights at the Circus* (1984), and asks why it is that both authors imagine the nineteenth-century circus as a vehicle for their revisionary work.

**Claire Lynch (Brunel University London)**

**"Let's be clear; this is absolutely not an autobiography": The Critic as Reluctant Autobiographer'**

This is a good time to be a life writing scholar. G. Thomas Couser has gone so far as to argue that we live in ‘an age—if not the age—of memoir’. It is also a good time to be a reader with bookstores and publishers catering to what Julie Rak calls the ‘memoir boom’, noting the ‘thousands of people [...] buying, borrowing, downloading, and reading memoirs’. Does it follow that it is also a good time to write memoir? The question of timing is a crucial one for memoir writers. Those who write ‘within’ an experience are often criticized for a lack of reflection; those who write with the benefit of hindsight are accused of forgetting or fictionalizing. Writing memoir is a risky business. Writing about one’s own life is, of course, potentially exposing but at least the revelations are self-inflicted. Writing about the lives of others presents a quite different ethical dilemma. When Couser asserts that memoir has the power to ‘do things fiction cannot’ he refers to the genre’s potential to connect readers via real-life experiences and memoir’s capacity to challenge and inspire. This paper explores autobiographical writing in Irish criticism, considering texts that are both overtly autobiographical and those that lurk in the margin. Ranging from the smallest personal details buried in the acknowledgments page of a monograph, to the full reflection of Emilie Pine’s *Notes to Self*, the paper curates multiple critics’ life stories, asking what they reveal about our discipline.

**Vivian Valvano Lynch (St. John’s University, New York)**

**‘Caught and Crazy in a Mansion on the Hill: David Ireland’s *Cyprus Avenue*’**

In 1968, Van Morrison sang in a now iconic song of being ‘caught’ and fearing going ‘crazy’ while wistfully looking at a ‘mansion on the hill’ on east Belfast’s affluent Cyprus Avenue. In his 2016 play *Cyprus Avenue*, David Ireland has a denizen of one of those stately homes, a staunch Unionist consumed with sectarian hatred and disgusted with the Good Friday Agreement that quieted Northern Ireland’s Troubles, undergo a cataclysmic identity crisis and quite literally go mad. Contemporary Irish drama has familiarized us with black comedy, but Ireland forces us into the blackest of all possible holes. His protagonist, Eric, cajoles us into frequent laughter, even as we squirm – until it eventually becomes impossible to ignore the inexorability of the tragedy to come. At first angrily claiming that his infant granddaughter looks like Gerry Adams, Eric quickly advances to the ludicrous delusion that the baby actually *is* Gerry Adams. This paper will examine the depths of Eric’s insecurities about his place in a changed world despite his loud claims of being British; his rants range from sectarian to racist to misogynistic. David Ireland gives us a quintessential angry white male in a particular time and place. However, the catastrophe he precipitates delivers a frightening and horrendous theme that can be universally applied. Not a laughing matter at all, it is, instead, apocalyptic in its uncompromising, unalleviated final horror.

**Mary O’Malley Madec (Villanova University)**

**‘The Place of Self Critique in Poetry Criticism in Ireland’**

In this paper I would like to explore the role of the writer as critic and how that can be realized in a framework which complements traditional modes. In *Waiting for Godot* the ultimate insult hurled by one of the tramps is CRITIC which points rather well to the fear of criticism in the small literary space we have in Ireland. The general upsurge of interest from the public in poetry is a cultural phenomenon, which brings poetry back to the people but lands on the desk of critics a considerable body of work rather difficult to critique. Can a poet look objectively at his/her work and contribute here? The answer at one level is no, yet at another level there are academic theories and practices which use self reflection as a tool which can serve the poet to reveal the sociocultural and literary dynamics of the work. I will examine my own poetry to argue that although self criticism using auto-ethnography is a different process from literary criticism, it properly situates the voice of the poet in society, and shows how it has social meaning and a complex agency, and is, from a cultural point of view, plurivocal. Not only does this method of analyzing poetry enlarge our understanding of the function of poetry in contemporary society but it also deepens our understanding of poetic process and technique, perhaps as well as literary criticism.

**Eamon Maher (TU Dublin)**

**‘John McGahern as Social Critic’**



John McGahern has been referred to variously as the chronicler of a disappearing traditional rural Ireland, as a critic of all narrow thinking, particularly in the religious and social spheres, as a writer with a keen appreciation of the landscape, customs and practices of his native Leitrim/Roscommon. But he was above all else an artist who saw his role as simply 'to get the words right'. He knew that if he achieved that, he would reflect all that writing is capable of reflecting. So, in proposing a paper on McGahern as social critic, I am conscious of the writer's own comment to me in an interview conducted in 2000: 'I think that if you actually set out to give a picture of Ireland that it would be unlikely to be interesting, that it would be closer to propaganda or journalism.' McGahern was not interested in changing society, in being a journalist, but that does not necessarily mean that his writing is devoid of criticism when it comes to a number of the unsavoury aspects of the hidden Ireland in which he grew up and which are memorably captured in both his fiction and prose writing. Taking key texts like *The Dark* (1965) and *The Pornographer* (1979), this paper will explore the evolution of Irish society as they are depicted in these two novels and will illustrate McGahern's achievement in reflecting the changes that were taking place without falling into the trap of didacticism.

**Clara Mallon (University College Dublin)**

### **'Speaking from the Margins: Empathy and Estrangement in Pat Kinevane's Monologue Theatre'**

This paper explores the politics of identity differences represented in performer/playwright Pat Kinevane's *Forgotten* (2006), *Silent* (2011) and *Underneath* (2014). Kinevane's theatre focuses on social injustices and experiences of exclusion within contemporary Irish society. Like many works within the Irish theatrical canon, Kinevane's pieces expose an uneasy relationship between characters and their community. Though the marginalized come to occupy the centre in these works, Kinevane complicates the idea of the hegemonic centre itself. This is achieved through the combined use of distancing strategies associated with Avant Garde sensibility (constructional, formal and stylistic), and Kinevane's use of traditional Irish storytelling, through which he criticizes conventional political assumptions. Of interest to me is Kinevane's remarkable ability to promote identification with characters' abjection, while simultaneously creating critical distance through which we can consider the political implications of their marginal positions. Through a textual analysis of the trilogy, this paper argues that Kinevane simultaneously establishes estrangement and identification with characters' exclusion and interrogates commonplace attitudes in Irish society, pressing these issues for further reflection within public consciousness. The empathy/estrangement accomplished in these works can be seen as Kinevane's attempts to initiate political conscious-raising on behalf of the observer. Though these works foreground difference, they also reveals how very connected we are to the silenced, forgotten and invisible of this world; offering a serious, sometimes desperate, but also incredibly playful call to reassess our relationship to the centre, and those voices lost to its margins.

**Akiko Manabe (Shiga University)**

### **'Adaptation of Literary Works as a New Form of Criticism: Japanese Contemporary Artists' Experiment with Yeats and Hearn'**

In this paper, I will explore how the adaptation of William Butler Yeats and Lafcadio Hearn's writings to other genres such as traditional Japanese theatre contributed to a new literary perspective of their work. At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century, both writers created unique bodies of work through their encounters with Japan that injected new life into traditional folktales and mythology. Yeats and Hearn's re-writing of these classical stories presented a new critical approach to existing folktales and myth, but this also stimulated writers and artists to create variations using other genres – such as film, theatre and oral recitation. These adaptations reflect how actors, directors and writers 'interpret' Yeats and Hearn, thus bringing about a new type of literary criticism. In 1916 Yeats wrote *At the Hawk's Well* because of his encounter with Japanese Noh via Ezra Pound, and through the instruction of other Japanese artists such as Michio Ito and Tamijuro Kume. This same play stimulated the imagination of Mario Yokomichi and others to write new Noh plays, which, in turn, stimulated Noh players to create new experimental productions. Another example of this literary transformation can be seen in the adaption of

Yeats's *The Cat and the Moon* by the Shigeiyama Sengoro Group, a traditional kyogen theatrical company which toured Ireland in 2017. Similarly, contemporary film directors have attempted to interpret these same literary works in a highly creative way as have artists by combining musical performances with oral recitation.

**Donal Manning (University of Liverpool)**

**“another tellmastery repeating itself”: Cultural memory in episode II.4 of *Finnegans Wake***

In episode II.4 of *Finnegans Wake*, James Joyce exploits the subplot of the four old men spying on Tristan and Isolde to survey Irish history. The old men represent the four provinces of Ireland, the four Evangelists and the Four Masters. In this episode, they peruse history and myth from the Milesians to partition. Joyce borrows from sources ranging from the Bible, and the Egyptian Book of the Dead, to the melodies of Thomas Moore and the plays of Dion Boucicault. Among the personalities appearing are Saints Patrick and Kevin, Brian Boru, Jonathan Swift, the Duke of Wellington, Daniel O'Connell, Charles Stewart Parnell and Maud Gonne. There is a particular concentration on groups, personalities and events in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that marked the road to partition. These include allusion to secret societies such as the Whiteboys and the Peep O' Day Boys, the Queen's Colleges controversy and the demise of Parnell. Images of Ulster separatism include allusions to the Lambeg drum, associated with Loyalist marching, and to Ballymacarrett, near Belfast, the scene of sectarian violence in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Treaty documents and partition are mentioned directly, and the episode anticipates the establishment of Northern Ireland and the Irish Free State. The text abounds with the language of remembering, and Joyce's use of myth, historical sources, and popular culture emphasises his contribution in *Finnegans Wake* to the new Ireland's cultural memory.

**Alfred Markey (Universitat Jaume I, Castellón)**

**'Cancer, Medical Narrative and Entanglement: a Case Study of Emma Hannigan'**

The death, in March 2018, of Irish chick-lit author Emma Hannigan was not a surprise. From the year 2006, when she was identified as having the BRCA1 gene, with its 85% risk of breast cancer, she had fought for survival. More surprising was that upon her death she was so widely lauded in numerous obituaries and articles in the Irish and international press, was celebrated by the President of Ireland and was recognized with the establishment, in her honour, of a cancer research fellowship at the Royal College of Surgeons. The primary reason for this degree of recognition was that following her positive test for the BRCA1 genetic mutation she had begun a hugely successful career as a writer of popular narrative, of what is sometimes dismissed as chick-lit, publishing eleven novels and two memoirs. In addition, she became an ambassador for Breast Cancer Ireland and a regular contributor to public debates on cancer in the media and in her own personal blog. This paper will examine the work and public intellectual role of Hannigan in relation to the critical discourse of Medical Humanities, drawing particularly on the concept of entanglement as elaborated in the recent work of Julia Kristeva and affiliated scholars, and in the so-called Critical Medical Humanities. I will argue that Hannigan has helped to shift the critical ground which distinguishes medical science from the humanities and, by extension, that of Irish Studies.

**Radvan Markus (Charles University, Prague)**

**'Máirtín Ó Cadhain and Samuel Beckett: Fellow Irish Writers in Grips with Entropy'**

Prompted by the translations of his most famous novel *Cré na Cille* (*Graveyard Clay*, 1949) into English and other languages, the Irish-language author Máirtín Ó Cadhain (1906-1970) has recently attracted worldwide critical attention. *Cré na Cille* consists solely of the direct speech of the inhabitants of a fictional graveyard, trapped in their liminal state for an apparently endless period of time. This basic narrative situation has naturally invited comparisons with another author of Irish provenance, Samuel Beckett, whose oeuvre as such swarms with disembodied voices and physically restrained characters. This paper shall attempt to provide a more solid critical basis for this already established connection. Its focus shall be partly on specific literary techniques, such as circularity of narration or inherent musical structure. Also more philosophical concerns shall be addressed, most

prominently the deep engagement of both writers with the ‘post-modern condition’ and with the principle of entropy, which seems to have replaced the belief in a benevolent God. In both cases, this anxiety is exacerbated by the possibility of the destruction of humanity in a nuclear war. Due emphasis will be, however, also placed on the differences between Ó Cadhain and Beckett. The greatest among them is, perhaps, their attitude to language. While in both oeuvres discourse often serves as a mere means to delay the workings of entropy, Ó Cadhain’s use of language sometimes offers a possibility of regeneration and renewal, generally absent in Beckett. Ó Cadhain’s more positive approach can be ultimately linked to his belief in the creative possibilities of the Irish language, in spite of its endangered status.

**Mary Massoud (Ain Shams University, Cairo)**  
**‘Swift as Critic: Gulliver’s 4th Journey’**

Gulliver’s journey to Houyhnhnm-Land (the country of those marvelous horses solely guided by reason) has often been regarded as a utopian journey, embodying Swift’s own longings. The wisdom of the Houyhnhnms and their simple way of life are attractive to Gulliver as opposed to the disgusting sensuality of the Yahoos. Because the Yahoos look like human beings, the Houyhnhnms mistake Gulliver for a Yahoo. Gulliver is shocked. On the other hand, he is reluctantly forced to realize that the Yahoos have the same vices as his countrymen. Gulliver is so alienated from his own species that when he returns home, he recoils from his family in disgust, and goes to live with horses. Was Gulliver’s utopian quest a kind of metaphorical ‘Odyssey’ embodying Swift’s own longings? Or was it a criticism of certain aspects of the society of Swift’s age? This is what the paper will explore.

**Kelly Matthews (Framingham State University)**  
**‘The Enemy Within: Brian Friel’s Breakthrough Play’**

Brian Friel’s *Philadelphia, Here I Come!* was his Broadway breakthrough, the first play that brought him to the attention of American theatre audiences. As is well known, Friel wrote the script in 1963, after spending months observing Sir Tyrone Guthrie directing rehearsals at his new repertory theatre in Minneapolis, Minnesota – Friel’s first experience of life in the United States. But the production history of Friel’s previous play, *The Enemy Within*, is less well known. In this 1961 script, sixth-century saint Columba bounds across the stage, youthful despite his age, brimming with enthusiasm for each new person he meets and each new challenge he encounters. Friel studied Adomnán’s hagiography of Columba and set the drama in 587 A.D., a murky phase in the saint’s life when he returned from his Iona monastery for a battle among his cousins in Ireland, breaking his voluntary exile after 24 years of penance. This paper will discuss the history and reception of *The Enemy Within*, and will explore why this play struck such a chord with audiences in Dublin, Derry, and beyond. Recently uncovered letters and documents reveal that *The Enemy Within* was Friel’s true breakthrough success, for it was this play that brought him to the attention of Tyrone Guthrie, who was in the audience for its Dublin premiere in 1962. I will discuss archival copies of this early script as well as letters from Friel to the Abbey and Guthrie, showing how crucial this little-known play was to the playwright’s career.

**Tracy McAvinue (University of Limerick)**  
**‘A Place in the Mind: The Construction of the Home Space in Maeve Brennan’s Fiction’**

Maeve Brennan was born into the Irish revolutionary period in 1917, with her early years spent in the midst of the fighting that was to secure an independent Ireland, and her formative years coloured by the building of the Free State. The succession of legislative measures, copper-fastened in the 1937 Constitution, that looked to deprive women of rights and position them in the domestic space meant that for many women activists, including Brennan’s mother Una, ‘home’ became a term increasingly associated with confinement and contention. Brennan’s *The Visitor*, written in the 1940s but not published until 2000, evinces this disillusionment with the gendered inequality of Free State Ireland, and is a tale about a returned exile to a country that is unwelcoming, with houses that confine or reject the women who inhabit them. The geographical separation caused by her family’s relocation

to the United States in 1934 created little literary distance from her country of origin, with much of her writing firmly rooted in Ireland and the Dublin house of her childhood, the structures, walls, doors and windows of which are used to depict stifling spaces or create isolating boundaries. Building on key work by Angela Bourke, this paper takes an interdisciplinary approach by drawing on perspectives from architectural theory to examine the ways in which Brennan designed the internal and external spaces of the home to construct a novel that explores, and indeed dismantles, the traditional notion of woman's place as solely positioned within the domestic sphere.

**Jerusha McCormack (Beijing Foreign Studies University)**

**'Looking at Ireland from China'**

Over the fifteen years I have been teaching about Ireland in China, I have had to look at Ireland from a very different angle. At first it appeared to be an impossible task. Few knew what the Republic of Ireland was – and those who did thought it a province of Great Britain. But the task became easier as I saw Ireland emerging into a Chinese focus. Imports such as *Riverdance* and U2 paved the way for what, in 2007, was to become the first multidisciplinary Irish Studies Centre in China, located at Beijing Foreign Studies University. Teaching about Ireland from this platform, large commonalities became apparent. Although hugely discrepant in size and culture – and half a world apart – Ireland and the PRC have been running in a kind of parallel universe. Both emerged from long-standing empires and foreign domination to proclaim themselves independent republics. Both have endured colonization as well as a landlord class which exploited their peasantry, with long histories of famine and diaspora. Both boasted of ancient civilizations which suddenly had to be squeezed into a modern concept of nationhood. For both, inventing that nation involved social chaos, violence and civil wars – and a crisis in defining their new identities as either Chinese or Irish. Today, both countries are also suffering from the speed and intensity of rapid social change. From this comparative perspective, it is possible to read Ireland itself in new and unexpected perspectives. This paper explores the fruitful possibilities inherent in this freshly opened critical frontier.

**John McCourt (University of Macerata)**

**'Joyce in Ireland in the 1970s'**

In his influential book, *The Ordinary Universe* (1967), Denis Donoghue accused Joyce of overreaching, of irresponsibility, before coming to a final judgment couched in Catholic terms: Joyce 'is not in trouble, he is in sin, the sin of pride', a condemnation, this, which echoes uncomfortably with those issued earlier in the century in Ireland and elsewhere. This paper will explore how Irish criticism of Joyce finally began to break away from Catholic interpretations and explore how he was read and grudgingly accepted into the canon in Ireland in the 1970s. It will sketch both continuing resistance to the writer among mainstream Irish critics but also a slow but gradual public acceptance following the first International symposia held in the capital in 1967 and 1969.

**Lucy McDiarmid (Montclair State University)**

**'The Poetry of Hair: Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin, Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill and Tara Bergin'**

This paper will discuss hair as a form and expression of power in poems by Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin, Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, and Tara Bergin.

**Deirdre McFeely (Trinity College Dublin)**

**'Maura Laverty: Exploring a Legacy'**

Maura Laverty's trilogy of plays – *Liffey Lane* (1951), *Tolka Row* (1951) and *A Tree in the Crescent* (1952) – give a vivid and insightful sense of the social and political issues at play in the lives of 1950s Dubliners. This period saw an increase in social mobility in Ireland, with Dublin undergoing a revolution in working-class living. Large numbers of families moved from tenement buildings in the city centre to newly constructed estates on the edge, and Laverty commented on these social changes with perceptiveness. She paid attention to women's lack of power over finance,

reproduction, men's sexual behaviour, and the welfare of their families. On 29 October 1951, Pope Pius XII endorsed the use of the rhythm method of birth control, in certain circumstances only, for Catholics, but that papal encyclical was not welcomed in Ireland, and information booklets on the rhythm method would not become generally available in Ireland until the 1970s. Given that *Tolka Row* opened at the Gaiety Theatre on 8 October 1951, the frank discussion in that play about the rhythm method was well ahead of its time. This paper will consider Laverty's portrayal of women and their reproductive rights, focussing on the issue of birth control as presented in *Tolka Row*. At a time when Dublin theatre managers were expressing concern about the ever-growing popularity of cinema, Laverty's plays were successful, enjoyed regular revival and attracted new and younger audiences. This paper will ask whether Laverty's treatment of such issues was a factor in attracting audiences.

**Marion McGarry (Galway Mayo Institute of Technology)**

**'Cholera = Dracula'**

This paper explores the influence of the Sligo cholera epidemic of 1832 on the character of Count Dracula. The following is well known: the mother of Bram Stoker author of the novel *Dracula* (1897) was Charlotte Stoker. She was living in Sligo in the west of Ireland when it became the worst hit town (in all of Ireland or Britain) by the 1832 cholera epidemic. Charlotte's family escaped, but she was forever haunted by what she witnessed. She wrote 'Experiences of the Cholera in Ireland' (1873), a first-hand account of events in Sligo. Some of Bram Stoker's fiction took influence from his mother's essay.

**Philip Mac a' Ghoill (Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Claith)**

**'Fílócht na mBard: Traidisiún Liteartha na hÉireann, 1200–1600'**

Úsáidtear an téarma 'fílócht na mbard' go neamhchruinn go minic le tagairt a dhéanamh don chineál fílóchta níos sine in Éirinn, ach céard is brí leis? Céard í 'fílócht na mbard?' Bhí traidisiún fílócht Chlasaiceach na hÉireann, ar a thugtar 'fílócht na mbard', faoi bhláth sa tréimhse idir 1200 go dtí an chéad leath den seachtú haois déag. Le linn na tréimhse seo, ba ó fhilí scoileanna na mbard a tháinig an príomhshaothar litríocht chruthaitheach in Éirinn. Chumadh an file proifisiúnta, mar oifigeach d'oireacht an rí, dánta foirmeálta adhmolta agus caointe fá choinne na huaisleachta, chomh maith le dánta diaga nó aortha clúmhillteacha, a d'aithrisíodh go poiblí go minic ag féastaí agus ócáidí speisialta. Maireann thart ar 2,000 dánta sna céadta lámhscríbhinní éagsúla ar fáil dúinn sa lá atá inniu ann, ar foinse luachmhar iad do stairí chultúr na nGael agus do scoláirí Gaeilge na hÉireann.

**Paula McGrath (University of Limerick)**

**'Exploring trauma options for fiction through practice-based research'**

This paper traces the process of developing and testing strategies for the representation of trauma in fiction within a practice-based context, or, from another perspective, of writing a novel within a critical framework and environment. It weighs the advantages of doing creative work in an academic environment against some of the restraints and pitfalls, considering issues such as funding, deadlines, methodologies, analysis, metrics, formal feedback, teaching and other commitments. Finally, it situates my project within the broader context of practice-based research in the Irish Academy. The inner critic is the first a writer must contend with, and while I was writing a rape scene in my second novel, mine wondered if the strategy I was using, of fracturing the narrative to represent my protagonist's fracturing consciousness, was the best strategy; or whether it was, in fact, hackneyed, a default representation of trauma. When it became clear that the protagonist of my next novel would experience multiple traumas, I needed to explore my options. A comparative analysis of the modernist strategies used by Eimear McBride to represent trauma in *A Girl is a Half-formed Thing* with those used by Annie Ryan in her stage adaptation of the novel, in the context of contemporary trauma theory, shows that the contemporary novel has trauma options beyond modernist techniques, and reveals that the intersection between theatre and the novel is fertile ground for the novelist.

**Sarah McKibben (University of Notre Dame)**

**'The Critical Ground of Bardic Poetry: The Time for Indexical Close Reading is Now'**

For IASIL 2019: The Critical Ground, I will argue the importance of indexical close reading (connecting a richly decoded text to a broadly conceived context) to the advancement our understanding of early modern Ireland. The treatment of bardic poetry, while still necessarily focused on the creation of proper editions, must move beyond narrowly historicist and linguistic-philological treatments to see how politics and art combine in the major (yet still neglected) Irish literary genre of the medieval and early modern period. We need history, linguistics and philology – but not at the expense of richly referential literary-rhetorical critique attuned to subtlety, without which we risk misreading and thus mischaracterizing poets, poetry and their community alike. Thus it is with two poems addressed to Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill in the late 1580s and late 1590s respectively, the first as he was held captive in Dublin and the second as he won multiple victories against the Crown during the Nine Years War. By excerpting or passing lightly over the work, critics have failed to grasp how each poem tackles challenging circumstances to intervene in its world and time. Specifically, each poem challenges English threats to the poet's person, practice and world, transforming that constraint into a mechanism for its own creative production and self-defense. By rereading these works and reflecting on our methodology, this paper challenges us to more fully engage the rich universe of early modern Ireland.

**Martin McKinsey (University of New Hampshire)**

**'Politics of the Gutter: Bilingual Editions of Contemporary Poetry in Irish'**

This talk will examine the efforts of writers on the Celtic fringe to challenge the privileged place of English in the poetry of Ireland and Scotland. The attempt by revivalists in Ireland at the turn of the last century to establish Irish Gaelic as the national idiom was followed soon after by the efforts of Hugh MacDiarmid and his circle to set up Lallans as a distinct language (rather than a dialect of English) suitable for the poetry of an independent Scotland. Long after the ideologies and heated rhetoric of the period have faded, contemporary poets of Ireland and Scotland continue to employ these oppositional languages as a marker of historical and cultural difference. To speak and write in Irish in Northern Ireland is a political act, one that during the Troubles was filled with risk. Gearóid Mac Lochlainn, a second language speaker, employs Irish in his book *I Am the Tongue* both to taunt British authority and to chide the 'lazy tongues' of his Celtic brethren who 'don't have the Irish'. Nevertheless, his performances often twine Irish and English together in a tense duet. Like Dublin poet Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, who collaborates with other poets from the North like Paul Muldoon and Medbh McGuckian to create bilingual diptychs, the impulse is never separatist. Theirs are interlingual creations in which each language supports its other. Nor does an exclusionist impulse lie behind contemporary poetry in Scots. As with their Irish contemporaries, Scots poets resist the linguistic binaries of purists and assimilationists to create works that are in equal degrees both local and global.

**Andrew McNeillie (Exeter University)**

**'The Heroine of the Story'**

Richard Murphy first came into view beyond Ireland with his debut book *Sailing to an Island* (1963). My personal discovery of that book, in a Dublin bookstore in 1965, when I was nineteen, was momentous for me, life-altering, contributing far more than I subsequently acknowledged in print, until more recently, to my own romantic escapade in 1968-69 to go to live on Inis Mór. My *nesophilia* (Hugh MacDiarmid's term from the Greek for a mania for islands) was inspired, before Murphy, by the writings of J. M. Synge. In retrospect, now, I see just how key Murphy's role was more generally, in pioneering what I consider 'an archipelagic turn', as made since by such giants as Tim Robinson and Norman Ackroyd. Primarily I went to Inis Mór to live in a wild place, where I could fish for my supper, and mix in the bar with the folk. I seemed to get from Murphy what I think he saw in W. S. Graham when he praised the Scottish poet's *The Nightfishing* (1955) in the *TLS* and spoke of one 'who knows something about ordinary life outside the library, where livings are earned in dangerous and cold labour'. It was that 'ordinary' life I wanted and believed in, the sea, and hardship. Reflecting this, my paper will look to the early work, by taking the

*Ave Maria* – the heroine of the story – on a voyage through her own material culture and history, and Murphy with her.

**Aintzane Legarreta Mentxaka (American College Dublin)**  
**‘Early Modernist Textual Praxis as Political Critique’**

In the work of early modernists such as George Egerton (1859-1945) and Emily Lawless (1845-1913), experiments in the representation of consciousness are presented in tandem with critiques of the structural inequality of women and the poor. Rather than documentation or harangue, their texts strategically place the reader in direct contact either with the mind of the subjugated or the mind of the complicit bystander. Stylistic adventurousness props up plots questioning the status quo, through the use of third-person indirect free style and stream of consciousness, as well as reveries, epiphanies, doppelgangers, and dreams. Modernist writers from the New Woman movement are particularly interested in articulating female consciousness, and offer an implicit critique of the association of reason with Man by turning each female protagonist into a Cartesian *res cogitans*. In addition, they undermine colonial discourse by ridiculing pity (in Lawless) and celebrating the uncivilised (in Egerton). Egerton and Lawless, often assumed to be English, drew attention to their own Irishness, and much of their work is concerned with Irish experience, including post-famine devastation, the Land Wars, rural and urban poverty, and the oppressiveness of Christian morality. In short texts, such as Lawless’ ‘Famine Roads’ or Egerton’s ‘Oony’, these politically activated nineteenth century writers targeted specific issues very effectively. The politics of Egerton and Lawless are regularly derided as reactionary or apolitical on account of their reticence in public statements, but their individualist feminism, non-statist nationalism, multi-ethnic empathy, disgust for structural poverty, and Tolstoyan sympathies are all laid out in their stirring stories and their non-conformist experimentation.

**Hiroko Mikami (Waseda University)**  
**‘Play Texts vs Performances: Tom Murphy’s Case’**

Tom Murphy, along with Brian Friel, is regarded as a giant figure in contemporary Irish theatre. Nobody would deny this. However, as Nicholas Grene wrote, ‘Murphy’s plays [...] do not “travel” well, are not easily accessible to non-Irish audience’. As if to prove the case, they have never reached the Far East. (In Japan, for example, where people have been enjoying plays in translation written by Irish playwrights, including Friel, McGuinness, McDonagh, and McPherson, none of Murphy’s works was ever staged.) If Murphy’s plays do not travel well in the form of performance, his texts in book form certainly do. I first encountered his plays as a reader, before watching some of them on stage in Ireland. Being an audience of Murphy’s theatre was, of course, invaluable experience: it was a sheer delight to see his plays in lieu of theatre performances. I found out that many aspects were missed out by the reading of this non-Irish and non-native English reader. At the same time, however, I found out that Murphy’s texts offered more in-depth account than the perception of performance. In this paper, I would like to explore the interaction between texts and performances in the case of Murphy’s plays and argue that the performances on stage that are realized through the bodies of performers are only some part of the fertility of play texts.

**Elliott Mills (Trinity College Dublin)**  
**‘Seán O’Faoláin and Myles na gCopaleen: Dialogue, Debate and Definitive Stance(s)’**

My paper will amplify a key critical dialogue which played out explicitly and implicitly between Seán O’Faoláin and Myles na gCopaleen. The debate at first chiefly consisted of Myles na gCopaleen’s ridiculing of what he saw as O’Faoláin’s pretentiousness, with barbed critiques from the writer then signed ‘Flann O’Brien’ being published in the letter section of the *Irish Times* in 1938. Proceeding from these initial encounters, I aim to map out a variance of attitudes in Myles and O’Faoláin on how to inhabit the role of the public cultural commentator. Taking care not to manufacture a superficial binary opposition, it is nevertheless possible to contrast the cacophonous voices of Myles’s *Cruiskeen Lawn* with the comparatively clear pronouncements of O’Faoláin’s editorials in *The Bell*, highlighting how these differing forms of intellectual discourse helped produce their respective personas. This

distinction is made yet more intriguing when considering that both figures perform notably similar roles. Both O’Faoláin and Myles exist as mediators of multiple voices, though the voices which Myles mediates are also voices created by Myles. Stemming, then, from a discussion of the conflicting and overlapping ways in which these two figures construct their critical voice, and in turn their writerly character, in the separate but interrelated textual spaces of the newspaper column and the magazine editorial, I will ultimately assess how certain tensions and contradictions in their divergent adopted postures of the writer-as-critic might provoke and shed light on some crucial questions concerning authority and self-presentation of public identity.

**Lia Mills (University of Limerick)**  
**‘Eva Gore-Booth: Critic of the State’**

On 12 May 1916, Eva Gore-Booth and Esther Roper arrived in Dublin with permission to visit Constance Markievicz in prison. Their arrival coincided with the announcement that James Connolly had been executed that morning. This paper will discuss Gore-Booth’s eyewitness account of the days that followed, the rapid publication of a play, *The Death of Fionavar* (1916) and a subsequent poetry collection, *Broken Glory* (1918) in response to the Easter Rising. Before the Rising, Gore-Booth was known for her pacifist activism and her core belief in non-violent resistance. As her biographer, Sonja Tiernan, has pointed out, her writing about the situation in Ireland is demonstrably different to her arguments against the state-sponsored violence of the Great War. This difference has led some commentators to suggest that her pacifism was selective and that she saw a justification for violent rebellion in Ireland. Through close readings of the aforementioned texts, and other contemporaneous writing such as her 1918 play *The Sword of Justice*, this paper will contest this view. I suggest that the shift in structure of her arguments is strategic. *Fionavar* was published at a time of extreme shock and grief for the death of several friends and colleagues, and of concern for her sister, who was still held by the authorities. While preparing *Fionavar* for publication, she was also deeply involved in the campaign to save Roger Casement. My reading is that these factors led to a more nuanced approach in her writing but not a change of heart.

**Katie Mishler (University College Dublin)**  
**“furtive and frightening”: Abortion, Stigma, and Travel in the Popular Fiction of Maeve Binchy and Marian Keyes’**

The Eighth Amendment, introduced into the Irish Constitution in 1983, not only institutionalized doctrinal control of female reproductive bodies, but represented a cultural and religious stigmatization of abortion and female sexuality. The 1967 Abortion Act, which legalised abortion in the UK but has not been extended to Northern Ireland, has historically provided women in Ireland the opportunity to travel to England for reproductive healthcare; however, being forced to travel abroad for safe and legal healthcare further stigmatises abortion, inflicting great physical and emotional trauma, as well as financial expense, onto pregnant people. This paper will explore how since the 1980s, contemporary Irish women authors, specifically the popular-fiction writers Maeve Binchy and Marian Keyes, have integrated narratives of secrecy and privacy, as well as open storytelling, into their depictions of crisis pregnancies and travelling abroad for abortion. These fictional stories reflect the tension between socially imposed secrecy, through the stigmatization which continues to silence and shame individuals forced to seek abortion care abroad, and constitutionally protected privacy, which is defined by the right to access reproductive healthcare without outside interference or judgment. Storytelling was at the heart of the campaign to repeal the Eighth Amendment, as women openly shared their own lived experiences of being forced to access care abroad, or obtain illegal medical abortions at home. By writing openly about abortion and contributing to the conscious-raising efforts of Irish feminists, the fiction of Binchy and Keyes reflects the social realities and personal stories which continue to challenge misconceptions about abortion, and have slowly changed the conversation regarding access to reproductive healthcare.

**Nobue Miyake**  
**‘The Critical Spirit and ‘The Statues’**



Oscar Wilde had a wholesome critical spirit founded on his deep understanding of the ancient Greek life and literature. (Cf. Ken'ichi Yoshida) In 'The Critic as Artist', Wilde says that the critical spirit is the source of creation. Art degrades without it, unable to find a new form. The essay had a great influence on Yeats. In his understanding of it, Yeats developed his idea of the mask, and later it becomes the important part of *A Vision*, as Richard Ellmann points out. The critical spirit is alive in his works throughout his career. I would like to show how it works in one of his last poems, 'The Statues'. Its form, the ottava rima, and the complexity of the third stanza would be discussed.

**Marisol Morales-Ladrón (Universidad de Alcalá)**  
**'Control and surveillance in Anna Burns' *Milkman*'**

The purpose of the present proposal is to look at Anna Burns' recently acclaimed and award-winning novel, *Milkman* (2018), in light of Foucault's theories of bio-power, defined as a 'technology of power centered on life' (*History of Sexuality*, 1976). Set in an unknown location in Northern Ireland, the narrative unearths a set of distraught mechanisms of control that have been culturally interiorized for decades by a troubled society, and only questioned by a numbed protagonist. The narrative reveals how, in this context, (self) regulation and surveillance are the two most resourceful alliances of a disciplined community, whose architectural sociopolitical design rests on oppression, repression and silence. In this context, the panopticon, 'a type of location of bodies in space', and silence will be looked at as both sources of disempowerment and strategies of survival.

**Christina Morin (University of Limerick)**  
**'The Misadventures of Sophia Berkley: Textual (Mis)Identification and the Shaping of Irish Gothic Criticism'**

2014 marked a pivotal year in the scholarship of early Irish gothic fiction: *The Adventures of Miss Sophia Berkley* (Dublin, 1760) was discovered to be a pirated edition of *The History of Amanda* (London, 1758). The ramifications of this revelation were significant, as, for the previous ten years, *Sophia Berkley* had been routinely named – not without controversy – as an earlier gothic novel than Horace Walpole's putatively genre-founding text, *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), thus effectively upsetting conventional chronologies of gothic fiction and re-inserting eighteenth-century Irish imaginative writing into a literary history from which it had been largely excluded. While the re-identification of *Sophia Berkley* confirmed some scholars in their belief that the novel held no merit in the historiography of Irish gothic fiction, this paper argues instead that the misidentification of *Sophia Berkley* offers an indicative case study of popular publishing in late-eighteenth century Dublin, one that holds considerable significance to autochthonous gothic literary production. Moreover, it contends that the initial identification of *Sophia Berkley* as an early Irish gothic, ensuing scholarly debate about it, and the revelations that followed proved crucial to a more widespread re-evaluation of Irish gothic fiction in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

**Nora Moroney (National Library of Ireland)**  
**'An Irishman in Argentina and a woman 'of unsound mind': stories from the Greene archive'**

The collected papers of the Greene family of county Kildare, housed in the National Library of Ireland, reveal a medley of lived experiences of this upper-middle class Protestant landed family. Stretching from the early nineteenth century to the 1970s, this collection records the day-to-day activities of many branches of this family as well as the social history of a class often overlooked in Irish history. Through a combination of estate records, personal correspondence and a large amount of ephemera, the lives of many of the Greene family can be traced in detail across time and place. This paper proposes to concentrate on two of these lives, Arthur Pageitt Greene and Abigail Simpson. Recorded, respectively, explicitly and implicitly, they represent two facets of an important family in Irish political and social life at the time – including the interface of the public and private medical spheres in nineteenth-century Ireland. Arthur Greene trained as a doctor and worked for many years in Argentina during the latter half of the century, while his aunt Abigail spent most of her life in an asylum, branded 'of unsound mind'. Arthur's voice emerges strongly from this archive, through personal correspondence, medical records and a lengthy narrative he wrote about his time in Argentina. Abigail, on the other hand, is silenced, although her experience is

recorded through a considerable mass of official documentation around her incarceration. This research brings together two vastly different narratives and personalities, highlighting both the personal and public experience of medical institutions in Ireland, and piecing together just two valuable stories from the archive.

**Anne Mulhall (University College Dublin)**

**'Critical Practice and 'Migrant Writing': the politics of representation'**

Despite a critical focus on the representation of 'the migrant Other' in work by Irish and white settled writers, recent years have seen a growing body of critical work on writing by minority-ethnic fiction writers, poets and playwrights. This shift follows the increasing publication and performance of work by people of migrant and minority ethnic background in Ireland. I will map these developments, focusing first on critical approaches to 'migrant writing' in Irish literary studies since the millennium. Critical work on 'migrant writing' in Irish literary studies has (very broadly) cleaved into three registers: first, a celebratory discourse invested in a thin version of multiculturalism; second, an approach that focuses on the 'migrant Other' as primarily instrumental, a 'mirror' to the Nation; and third, a more politically engaged critical analysis grounded in the national and global realities of border regimes and structural racism articulated in the groundbreaking work of, for instance, Zélie Asava, Charlotte McIvor, and Sara Ruiz Martin. Following some of the insights of McIvor's work on performance, I will consider some extra-literary forces that have had a shaping influence on both critical practice in this area as well as on routes to publication and institutional notice for writers of migrant and minority ethnic background in Ireland. I will conclude by looking at some work by a new generation of writers, poets and performers and asking some questions about whether the parameters and field imaginaries of Irish literary studies are appropriate in engaging with this work.

**Eda Nagayama (University of São Paulo)**

**'Affiliative postmemory in *Malinski*: issues of retelling the past from a perspective of alterity'**

*Malinski* (2000), by the Irish writer Síofra O'Donovan, narrates the story of two Polish siblings separated during WWII. After being violently subjugated by a Nazi *kapo*, the mother and the youngest child escape to Ireland, leaving behind the oldest son. The effacement of their Polish identity and past may be related to the Polish migration to Ireland after the Celtic Tiger years, mainly from 2004 to 2008. Considering Marianne Hirsch's postmemory (2008) and the theory of cultural trauma, *Malinski* can be put close to other novels in which unrelated writers choose WWII and Holocaust to create fiction, as *The Book Thief* (2005), by the Australian Markus Zusak, *The Reader* (1995), by the German Bernhard Schlink, and *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (2006), by John Boyne, also Irish, which mitigates the reality of Auschwitz when he portrays both the Jewish boy and the camp commandant's youngest son as exceptionally naive. The novel presents only a minor Jewish character: a tailor in Lwów (former Poland, actual Ukraine) that appears either as phantasmagoria or stereotyped remembrance. Since the author is non-Jewish, and has no Polish ancestry or direct connection to WWII, the narrative's subject can be taken as an elective affinity, part of a dynamic of affiliative memory, as proposed by Hirsch. Even if unintentionally, *Malinski* effaces Jews and the Holocaust, and the perspective that is proposed on this presentation is that this author's narrative choice indirectly contributes to the contemporary controversy of the Poles exclusively as victims and bystanders.

**Tapasya Narang (Dublin City University)**

**'Transnational Criticism: Assessing the Importance of Works comparing Irish and Other Modern Literatures'**

In the paper, I shall attempt to assess the value of comparing Irish modern literary movements with other modern literatures. In recent years, several literary critical studies have looked at the similarities and contrasts between Irish and other modern cultures. These studies, by drawing attention to certain overlooked elements in conventional Irish literary criticism, throw fresh light on Irish writings. The transnational comparisons of contemporary Irish literature have striven to situate Irish cultural endeavors in the context of the larger process of cosmopolitanism and globalisation in the world. I shall study some transnational comparative works such as *Conversing Identities: Encounters Between British, Irish and Greek poetry; 1922-52* by Konstantina Georganta,

selections from *Comparing Postcolonial Literatures* edited by Ashok Berry and Patricia Murray; and *Wanderers Across Language; Exile in Irish and Polish Culture of the Twentieth Century* by Kinga Olszewska. This shall help assess the significance of the methodological frame that compares Irish works with other cultural works to highlight the similarities and differences in challenged and aspirations of modern communities. I shall also reflect on how research methodologies emplaced by such comparative criticism have impacted my own work comparing Indian and Irish modernist poets, titled, *Poetics and Politics of Cosmopolitan Modernism: Comparing the Works of Derek Mahon and Arun Kolatkar*.

**Máire Ní Annracháin (University College Dublin)**

**‘Faillí chritice: Filíocht Ghrá Phádraig Mhic Fhearghusa’**

Tá sé leabhar filíochta le Pádraig Mac Fhearghusa foilsithe le dhá scór bliain anuas. Saothar ar ardchaighdeán atá ann, ach, cé is moite de chorrléirmheas gairid agus aischothú na moltóirí ag comórtais an Oireachtais, lean tost critice nach mór iomlán na leabhair ar fad. Féachann an páipéar seo le cúiteamh beag a dhéanamh as an bhfaillí sin chritice trína áitiú go bhfuil filíocht Mhic Fhearghusa le háireamh ar ráitisí móra na Gaeilge faoin ngrá, agus go dtugann téama an ghrá chaillte fianaise ar iniúchadh mothúchánach atá íogair, forbartha, agus gan staonadh. Níl a mhacasamhail ná a shárú, go bhfios dom, aon áit eile i litríocht na Gaeilge. Fiafrófar, leis, le míniú a thabhairt ar an bhfaillí shuntasach i gcritic na Gaeilge a fhágann scothshaothar gan an anailís agus an ceiliúradh atá tuillte aige.

**Bairbre Ní Chaoimh**

**‘Maura Laverty: Exploring a Legacy’**

‘Despite falling foul of the censor more than once, Maura Laverty has never made it into the Irish pantheon of the brilliant and the banned. Perhaps cultural gate-keepers do not take multi-taskers seriously, especially when one of those tasks is cookery-writing.’ So wrote Caitriona Clear in her *Irish Times* review of Seamus Kelly’s *The Maura Laverty Story* (2017). While Laverty (1907-1966) might be best remembered now, if at all, as the author of the best-selling cookbook *Full and Plenty* (1960), she was, in fact, a household name throughout Ireland from the mid-1930s to the 1960s. Her presence in the world of Irish media over those decades was exceptional: people listened to her radio broadcasts, read her novels and magazine articles, and bought her cookbooks and followed her recipes. Between 1951 and 1952 her three plays were staged by Hilton Edwards and Micheál MacLiammóir (of the Dublin Gate Theatre Company) at Dublin’s Gaiety and Gate theatres. Long overlooked, Laverty’s work is now coming into the light at a time when significant material held at the National Library of Ireland and at the Gate Theatre Digital Archive at NUI Galway is becoming available. This paper will introduce Maura Laverty to a new audience by exploring the life and legacy of the Kildare-born novelist, broadcaster, playwright, cookery write and agony aunt.

**Ríona Ní Fhrighil (National University of Ireland, Galway)**

**‘Modern Irish-language poetry through a human rights lens’**

Drawing on Seamus Heaney’s espousal of the ‘writer as righter’ (2010), this paper will discuss the role of the poet in an interconnected world. Literary devices such as metaphor, allegory and metonymy are regularly employed to discuss human rights issues and concerns. The potential for use and misuse by those who wish to inform public opinion, obliges us to deepen our understanding and appreciation of literary modes of expression that can cultivate transnational solidarity or conversely, arouse suspicion of ‘dangerous others’ and incite transnational discord and conflict. What role does the contemporary Irish-language poet play in this context?

**Clíona Ó Gallchoir (University College Cork)**

**‘Women and Authorship in Eighteenth-Century Ireland: Charlotte Brooke’s *Emma; or, the Foundling of the Wood* (1803)’**

For decades, critical views of Charlotte Brooke tended to take their lead from her own highly self-effacing depiction of herself in the 'Preface' to *Reliques of Irish Poetry* (1789), in which she minimizes her ambition and her skill by saying that 'My comparatively feeble hand aspires only (like the ladies of ancient Rome) to strew flowers in the path of [the] laurelled champions of my country', and goes on to describe herself as 'unskilled in composition, and now, with extreme diffidence, presenting, for the first time, her literary face to the world'. Recent scholarship by Lesa Ní Mhunghaile, Leith Davis and Lucy Cogan has however challenged this view of Brooke, drawing attention for instance to her narrative poem *Máon*, an original composition included in the *Reliques*. In this text, the timidity and self-effacements of the 'Preface' are replaced by a much more self-assured tone and much more explicit alignment with patriotic ideals. Brooke for instance declares: 'For oft the Muse, a gentle guest,/Dwells in the female form;/And patriot fire, female breast,/May sure unquestion'd warm.' In this paper, I will focus on Brooke's unfinished and posthumously published novel, *Emma; or, the Foundling of the Wood* in order to further challenge the view of Brooke as a reluctant author. The novel will also be discussed in relation to works by other Anglo-Irish women novelists of the period.

**Cormac O'Brien (University College Dublin)**

**'HIV and AIDS in Irish Theatre: Queer Masculinities, Punishment, and 'Post-AIDS' Culture'**

This paper provides a critical survey of key Irish theatre productions that present queer men with HIV or AIDS as a central theme while also seeking to situate several of these productions within the controversial discourse of 'post-AIDS' as it plays out in Irish cultural and social discourses. Through this survey, this essay finds and critically elaborates how a discourse of AIDS as punishment is a common denominator in all of these plays; whether that be as a central metaphor in the drama, or conversely as a trope that theatre makers seek to disrupt. Throughout, this paper simultaneously attends to the ways in which non-realist, non-linear dramatic structures (as opposed to social realist narratives) have proved to be better positioned to present the realities of living with HIV or dying with AIDS in Ireland since the emergence of the first Irish AIDS epidemic in 1982. By approaching 'post-AIDS' discourses through the lens of HIV and AIDS in Irish theatre, this essay critically analyses the insidious ways in which 'post-AIDS' Irish culture is bound up with neoliberal discourses of homonormative assimilation and cultural respectability, especially the figuring of HIV/AIDS as punishment for non-assimilation.

**Kevin T. O'Connor (Phillips Academy, Andover)**

**"Kindly Forget My Existence": Colin Barrett's Dialogue with 'The Dead'"**

Among the identifiable influences of Colin Barrett's much lauded 2014 debut collection, *Young Skins*, is James Joyce's *Dubliners*, published just about a century before. Both story collections resonate with the power of exploded novels, and both are deeply immersed in a distinctive ethos and language of place. Barrett's collection also extends Joyce's innovative experiments with point-of-view. As in the structure of Joyce's *Dubliners*, *Young Skins* begins with first-person stories narrated by younger denizens of his fictional town of Glanbeigh, and subsequently employs limited omniscience and free-indirect discourse to complicate perspective and moral judgment. Barrett's final story in the collection, 'Kindly Forget My Existence', announces its intentions by taking its title from a line in Joyce's 'The Dead': by means of its narrative technique, as well as its plot, setting, tone, and characterizations, Barrett's story is in part a response to Joyce's masterpiece. Especially relevant to this discussion is James Chandler's book *An Archaeology of Sympathy*, which explores the evolution of the viewers'/readers' process of affective identification and sympathy, defined as the capacity for passing over to others' subjective viewpoints, by means of the "embedded spectator" in both fiction and film. The effect of personal storytelling focuses crises of character in both fictions, but 'Kindly Forget My Existence' pointedly refuses the sentimental epiphany offered in 'The Dead'. By using shifting, triangulated points-of-view to engage and then distance readers' sympathy with its ostensible protagonists, Barrett's story helps define a distinctively postmodern, post-Joycean Irish sensibility.

**Nathan O'Donnell (Trinity College Dublin)**

**"prophecies rather than snapshots": Caroline Blackwood and Lucian Freud'**

In a 1993 review of his work, Caroline Blackwood described her ex-husband Lucian Freud's paintings – including two famous early portraits of Blackwood herself – as 'prophecies rather than snapshots'. She was not alone in commenting upon an impression of embedded or accreted 'time' within Freud's work; coming from Blackwood, however, this statement has a particular resonance. Her own writing is marked by a preoccupation with time, fate, and 'prophecy', particularly in her Booker-shortlisted *Great Granny Webster*, in which a narrative of inevitable imperial decline was mapped onto the disastrous fates of many within her family – Guinnesses and Blackwoods, particularly her father – as well as the disintegration of the crumbling Anglo-Irish Big House where she had spent her childhood, Clandeboye. With this paper, I want to look at some interconnections – beyond the biographical fact of their short-lived marriage – between Blackwood and Freud. I am interested in how Blackwood and Bacon's uneasy inheritance might be considered in alignment with Freud's own ambivalent Jewishness, and their shared émigré status in mid-century London. I will examine this sense of dislocation in Freud's paintings and in Blackwood's writing, articulated through temporal distortions and juxtapositions. I will also examine Blackwood's critical writing, and the candid, sometime morbid confessionalist style she developed, influenced by American predecessors like Mary McCarthy and her third husband Robert Lowell. I will consider Freud's connection, through Blackwood and Francis Bacon, to particular strands of Anglo-Irish culture, and examine how both Blackwood and Freud were working, at a remove, through some of the preoccupations of modernism.

**Karl O'Hanlon (University of Leeds)**

**'An Acknowledged Legislator – Ezra Pound and Desmond FitzGerald: Poetry and Politics'**

Desmond FitzGerald is a compelling, but shadowy figure in the history of Irish literature and politics. FitzGerald was at the side of The O'Rahilly in the G.P.O. in the Easter Rising as a quartermaster, later appointed Director of Publicity for Sinn Féin in the Department for Propaganda. He served in successive ministries in the Free State, and was one of the intellectuals advising Yeats on the Blueshirt movement in the 1930s. FitzGerald was also a member of 'the forgotten club of 1909' in London out of which emerged Imagism. Ezra Pound describes fellow Imagist FitzGerald in several Cantos, including the seventh: 'the live man, out of lands and prisons, / shakes the dry pods'. This paper examines the relationship between FitzGerald, Ezra Pound, and the murky connections between literary modernism and authoritarian politics.

**Simone O'Malley-Sutton (University of Notre Dame, Indiana)**

**'The Irish Revival in China – taking a Transnational turn in criticism?'**

Irish Studies has recently taken a turn from the Transatlantic towards the Transnational. My archival research in Chinese-language journals from the early twentieth-century on how the Irish Revival was received in China argues for the 'worlding' of Irish literature and the global reach of the Irish Revival. How for example did Lady Gregory's anti-British imperialism play *The Rising of the Moon* change to become an anti-Japanese imperialism play during the 1930s in a new Chinese context? And taking a step back, what are the implications for criticism within Irish Studies if we adopt a global/Transnational approach rather than a Eurocentrist or Transatlantic approach, based upon the earlier outlines of trade and Empire? What are the implications for Postcolonial Studies in Irish literature if the Irish Renaissance influenced similar movements as far away as China? Eoin Flannery points out how Edward Said lamented that the Irish undervalue this global legacy and their influence on other anti-colonial struggles worldwide. I intend to provide one concrete example of this Irish literary legacy in order to investigate my own critical approaches to literature. What valences travel from Ireland to China and what are the critical implications of such a study or comparison? Can both Postcolonial Studies and Transnationalism be applied fruitfully and what are the advantages and disadvantages inherent to either approach? How does gender further complicate my critical approach on the legacy of Irish Revivalist literature in China? What pitfalls may await the unwary scholar when adopting such critical paradigms and how does a self-reflexive praxis benefit such critical approaches to the study of Irish literature?

**Tina O'Toole (University of Limerick)**  
**'Oscar Wilde & the Irish New Woman'**

Recent scholarship connects Oscar Wilde's work with contemporary feminist thought (Stetz, 2013; Moyle, 2011; Ledger, 2007), yet in 1895 social purity feminists received news of Wilde's downfall with cheers. Sarah Grand and her New Woman peers consistently condemned the literary aestheticism and sexual dissidence of their male peers as further proof of patriarchal excess. Not all Irish women writers of the period were of this view, however; in an undated letter to her father, George Egerton [Mary Chavelita Dunne] is unequivocal in her support for Wilde: 'John Lane will not I know (this is private) come back til Wilde case is over he does not want to appear in the thick of it [sic]. Individually, I am very sorry for Oscar he was the finest literary artist we had and I don't care a bit for an artist's private life ... If I was a literary man instead of a literary woman I would go and see him and ask him if I could procure him anything, a revolver, I suppose they searched him, or some prussic acid'. While Egerton made little reference to Wilde in her fiction, the resonance between their lives and writing was evident to their contemporary audience, as reviews and *Punch* cartoons make plain. Ideologically they had much in common; as Decadents and Irish nationalists, Wilde and Egerton were anti-colonial and anti-establishment, they flatly rejected contemporary pieties relating to gender and sexuality. This paper explores the discursive connections between the work of these two Irish literary aesthetes.

**Maureen O'Connor (University College Cork)**  
**'Edna O'Brien and Her Critics'**

Over the nearly sixty years of her writing career, Edna O'Brien has endured an infamously antagonistic relationship with a majority of her critics, beginning with her husband, writer Ernest Gébler, who, upon reading the manuscript of what would become her best-known novel, *The Country Girls*, proclaimed, 'You can write and I will never forgive you.' His nephew, Stan Gebler Davies, maintained this tone of masculine disapproval in a 1992 review of O'Brien's novel *Time and Tide*, wherein he categorised her work as 'the sort of self-indulgent drivel written by housewives seeking to escape Wimbledon', and commended his 'former aunt's' good sense in writing about herself, that is, having continued to take her husband's advice that she run 'her diaries through the typewriter. ...It is a literary technique well known to all scribblers, and while it may not often produce high literature, it is frequently lucrative'. Critical drubbing was certainly not an exclusively family affair, from Kevin Myers pronouncing his willingness to 'stick a hatchet in her head only to be applauded by the nation' in 1985, to Edward Pearce referring to O'Brien as the 'Barbara Cartland of long-distance republicanism' in the *Guardian* in 1994. Critical notices of O'Brien's work in recent years are uniformly laudatory, but this summary of the novelist's critical fortunes is misleadingly straightforward. Drawing on archival material, I propose to provide a more nuanced picture of the volatile relationship of many decades between O'Brien and her critics than has previously emerged.

**Britta Olinder (Gothenburg University, Sweden)**  
**'The Role of IASAIL/IASIL in Irish Literature and Criticism'**

What will be explored here is the early history of our association and the impact of some of the first conferences. The founding or initiative was taken by A. Norman Jeffares, one of the major Yeats scholars. A couple of years earlier he had already founded the Association for Commonwealth Language and Literature Studies. In both these associations the meeting with writers has been an important feature, the oral and physical confrontation with living literature. In both there has been a three-year interval between the main conferences, in IASIL's case always in Ireland with possibilities for gatherings in other places in between, actually every year since 1984. Apart from friendships across national borders, the acquaintances made at conferences have also offered opportunities for universities all over the world to call for well-known writers and scholars to lecture. One special aspect here is that roughly up to the founding of IASAIL, widely read Irish writers like Yeats, Shaw and Wilde, were considered as English. The radical change was to focus on those with an Irish background as Anglo-Irish, a term that was gradually

considered conservative and too colonial in attitude, making the association change in the 1990s to the more inclusive 'Irish literatures' in the plural.

**Shane O'Neill (Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick)**  
**'Writing "nothing new": Beckett's *Murphy* Manuscript'**

My paper will be a study of the manuscript of Samuel Beckett's first published novel, *Murphy*. My focus will be on the first 59 pages of the first notebook. This manuscript was acquired by the University of Reading in 2013, having been in private hands since 1968. The university succeeded in purchasing the 'most important manuscript of a complete novel by a modern British or Irish writer to appear at auction for many decades' for just under one million pounds (£962,500). In my paper, I will examine the creative difficulties faced by the young artist to write the opening chapter. I will discuss the painstaking writing processes employed by the writer to produce his finished text, *Murphy*. There are several 'false starts' to the novel, the manuscript is littered with doodles and much of the text has been heavily deleted by the author. Problems arise from the text's own sense of inertia, the author's erudition (and desire to show it off) and the difficulty of combining modernism with moments of realism to give the story momentum. The manuscript allows us to see the workings of Beckett's mind. For example, the reader often assumes that opening paragraphs as powerful as that of the published *Murphy* result from a moment of artistic inspiration: 'The sun shone, having no alternative, on the nothing new...' In my paper, I will demonstrate how the manuscript dispels this myth. It is evident how much effort was expended crafting the perfect passage to begin his text.

**Stephen O'Neill (Trinity College Dublin)**  
**'Brecht for the Border: Partitioning PEN International'**

This paper examines the 25th Congress of PEN International, an event which was jointly held between Dublin and Belfast, and entailed trips to both Áras an Uachtaráin and Stormont by some 700 delegates including Bertolt Brecht. The PEN Congress was transformed into an all-Ireland event at the behest of Richard Rowley, who insisted that: '[m]uch of what these writers see in Ireland would be carried to the ends of the earth: it was of vital importance, therefore, that their views would not be confined to one part of the island'. This view was shared even by northern republicans, since all of the delegates, including the Irish contingent, were targeted by the Belfast Branch of the Anti-Partition League in a letter campaign. Attached to this mass letter was Ireland's right to unity: the case stated by the All-Party Anti-Partition Conference, Mansion House, Dublin, Ireland (1949), a political pamphlet that vociferously argued for Irish Unity on the 'incontestable' facts of the island being 'a geographic unit, a national language, a separate culture and code of laws, a homogeneous people, a distinctive national tradition'. Despite these calls, the respective PEN centres in Dublin and Belfast were soon partitioned in themselves, with the Belfast Branch, at the behest of John Hewitt, separating into a six-county entity. This separation, a culmination of Hewitt's own long proselytisation for Ulster regionalism as well as the establishment of an Irish Republic, exemplifies the cultural tensions between north and south in this era, and forms a powerful case-study of the slow exposure of partition on Irish culture. Although one of the founding principles of PEN was the promotion of a literature that 'knows no frontiers', the organisation soon became a platform for the promotion of a distinct cultural identity in 'Ulster' which adhered to the boundaries of the northern state.

**Soichiro Onose (University of Tokyo)**  
**'The Contemporary Club and *Fin-de-Siècle* Dublin'**

This paper will reassess the Contemporary Club's role as a political and cultural forum in *fin-de-siècle* Dublin. The Contemporary Club has often been described by contemporaries as a fashionable debating club where members of every political hue could congenially exchange views on topical issues of the day. As W. B. Yeats, who habituated its meetings, recounted in his memoir, at the Contemporary Club 'Unionist and Nationalist could interrupt one another and insult one another without the formal and traditional restraint of public speech. Sometimes they

would change the topic and discuss Socialism, or a philosophical question'. The Club's eclectic membership, which included Michael Davitt, John O'Leary, Maud Gonne, Douglas Hyde, Katharine Tynan, and William Morris (invited as a guest speaker) seems to bear out Yeats's description of it as an intellectual salon. Yet, the Contemporary Club was much more than an intellectual salon. Insofar as the Contemporary Club's founder, Charles Hubert Oldham, and his fellow Trinity-educated Protestant nationalists were concerned, the club was to serve as a sounding board for the brand of politics that they espoused, which was essentially that of Gladstonian Liberalism plus Young Ireland cultural nationalism. In this connection, it is significant that the Contemporary Club was set up in 1885, which saw the Irish Parliamentary Party forging an alliance with the Catholic Church. This paper will focus on the activities of Oldham and other Protestant nationalists at the Contemporary Club during this period, and examine how their politics informed that of other members including Yeats.

**Kübra Özermis (Freie Universität Berlin)**

**'Trials and Tribulations: The Limitations of Writing Poetry about Bloody Sunday (1972)'**

This paper will analyse how concerns over negative literary criticism and a fear over a possible backlash has impacted the writing about the massacre Bloody Sunday (1972, Derry). Because of the persistent opinion in Irish literary discourse that political poetry corrupts poetry's aesthetic value, poets like Thomas Kinsella and Seamus Heaney have displayed caution in the publication processes of their poems 'Butcher's Dozen' (1972) and 'The Road to Derry' (1972) respectively. While Kinsella published 'Butcher's Dozen' in his newly set up publication house *Peppercanister Press*, Heaney withheld the poem for 25 years only to publish it in 1997 in the *Derry Journal*. Medbh McGuckian destroyed her initial response to Bloody Sunday and only took up the matter of the massacre again in 2015 in her collection *Blaris Moor*. Paul Muldoon published three poems dealing with Bloody Sunday in his collections *New Weather* (1973), *Moy Sand and Gravel* (2002) and *One Thousand Things Worth Knowing* (2015) while insisting that he does not take a political position in his poetry and merely writes about political events. The literary criticism and reviews of some of these poems underline that the fear over a backlash was indeed justified. Especially, 'Butcher's Dozen' and 'The Road to Derry' have attracted overwhelmingly bad criticism and were described as propaganda. At the same time, some literary critics hardly concealed their own political bias and seemed to consider writing about Bloody Sunday as republican propaganda by default. Hence, in this paper I will analyse the limitations and negotiations taking place when poets write about matters that are as politicised as Bloody Sunday. I will also elaborate on how this impacts the way poets write about the massacre, the focus they set in the poem and the way the victims of the massacre are represented.

**Pietra Palazzolo (University of Essex)**

**'Afterlives of a supreme fiction: John Banville's dialogue with Romantic and Modernist aesthetic modes'**

This paper examines Banville's engagement with Romantic and Modernist aesthetic modes, drawing particular attention to key figures (Keats, Schlegel, Wallace Stevens) and concepts (imagination, supreme fiction, abstraction and transcendence) deriving from those projects. In tracing Banville's appreciation of a range of precursors and critical movements, I will consider points of proximity and departure, using his relentless concern with the world's alterity as a measure of his dialogue with what has been defined as a 'romantic modernity' (Critchley, 1997). For Banville, it is the realization of the world's resistance to critical scrutiny that introduces the writer's conundrum: while naturally gravitating towards the desire for self-expression in the representation of reality, one is forced to acknowledge the limits of artistic resources. Conflating Stevens's, Rilke's and Beckett's insights, Banville has stressed that poetry springs precisely from this tension between the artist's wish to say things, to go on writing and imagining, and the awareness of 'liv[ing] in a place/That is not our own'. The term 'romantic modernity' reflects the continuing, haunting presence of the romantic legacy for the shaping of our modernity and posits itself beyond historical labelling, since it refers not to the post-romantic modernity of authors such as Yeats and Eliot (Bornstein, 1976), but to a peculiar mode of poetic yearning – Stevens's insistence on the romantic as 'meaning always the living and ... the imaginative' – that cuts across generic or periodic categories. In this way my analysis will provide a



dynamic investigation of the legacy of Romantic and Modernist aesthetics in Banville's work, focusing on critical movements as 'mode[s] of becoming' (Blanchot, 1993).

**Pádraig de Paor (Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Claith)**  
**'Micheál Ó hAirtnéide agus an misteachas'**

This paper will look at Michael Hartnett's translations into Irish of poetry by St John of the Cross. It will also look at the influence of the mystical imagination on Hartnett's Irish language poems.

**Márta Pellérdi (Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest)**  
**'Women and Nationality in George Moore's Fiction: Esther Waters and Lucy Delaney'**

George Moore's contribution to the Irish Revival has been frequently neglected in Irish criticism dealing with this significant literary period, with the singular exception of Adrian Frazier's major biographical study of Moore, published in 2000. Moore's relative absence from critical discussion of the Revival compares unfavourably to the more distinguished standing of Wilde, Yeats, Synge, and Joyce. Perhaps one way of restoring Moore's reputation in Irish literary criticism is to compare his English and Irish fiction in gender terms. Investigating the differences between the English and Irish female characters in his fiction, for example, throws light not only on the sympathy that Moore had for the situation of women in the different layers of English and Irish society, but on his critical views concerning national distinctions and stereotypes. Irish gender criticism has been especially concerned with the archetypal representation of Ireland as mother, as for instance in Yeats's *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, neglecting Moore's more naturalistic approach to representations of women's experience, both Irish and English. In this paper I will compare two of Moore's female characters: Esther Waters from the eponymous novel (1894) set in England, and Lucy Delaney from the story 'Fugitives' in his short-story collection set in Ireland, *The Untilled Field*, originally published in 1903. In doing so, I demonstrate that many of Moore's Irish female characters give proof of their inner strength and independence, thereby resembling more their English counterparts than the mythical, symbolic, and stereotypical mother figures that the major poets and writers of the Irish Revival reinforced in Irish literature. In other words, Moore consciously breaks away from these constraints, troubling the distinctions between Ireland and England that were important to many Revivalists in the process.

**Emma Penney (University College Dublin)**  
**"Of all the art forms, poetry is the most economical": Gender, Class and Form in Working-Class Women's Writing'**

The institution of Irish poetry has understood poetic form to be something mobilised by access-to, and not something that is brought into being by a lack of access, a shortage of time or an absence of resources. Mobility has also become a central factor in discussing the value of women's poetry in Ireland: In *Object Lessons*, Boland remarks that her flat 'was near enough to Stephen's Green to make it a short walk and a safe one' and how this allowed her to become 'fluent in street lamps'. Equally, the innovative aspects of poetry written by Vona Groarke, Máiread Byrne and Mary O'Malley have been attributed to their experience of travelling abroad and encountering new languages and cultures (Collins, 2015). While these observations are useful my paper will question whether women's poetry can also be understood as valuable when it is formed through conditions of immobility. Cathleen O'Neill reports that she, like other working-class women *used* poetry precisely because 'it's cheap, it's accessible, you don't necessarily need a typewriter' (O'Neill, 2017). This speaks to the fact that even form is a class issue. This paper will present the formal distinctiveness of working-class women's writing and look at how it challenges the universalism of poetic value that has been institutionally adhered to for so long. By introducing critical perspectives from working-class women writers themselves, this paper invites participants to begin to consider what impact class has on creative form and to what extent it has shaped the institution of Irish criticism more broadly.

**Mark Phelan (Queen's University Belfast)**  
**'The Queen's not Gonne: Performing the Peace and A History of Staged Violence'**

This paper considers how institutional theatre and performance as cultural practices have been pressed into narratives of peace, reconciliation, and shared history, often as part of the ongoing Decade of Centenaries. In the North, this was spectacularly enacted at the Lyric Theatre in the iconic meeting of Queen Elizabeth II and Martin McGuinness, which was stage-managed by the peacebuilding charity, Co-Operation Ireland in a mediated performance that climaxed in their choreographed handshake before the world's press. The fact that this visit took place in the Queen's Jubilee year, seems a far cry from the last Jubilee encounter (1897) between the head of Britain's royal family and the symbolic figurehead of separatist Irish nationalism, Maud Gonne. In a series of political protests harnessing the disruptive power of performance, Gonne choreographed a range of events throughout Dublin, from a massive magic lantern show projecting images of evictions onto a building in Parnell Street, to a mock funeral procession down Dame Street, where mock mourners carried a coffin symbolising the British Empire before being attacked by the police. This paper counterpoints this ignored history of radical street theatre which sought to counteract the colonial processional drama of the Royal visit with its contemporary counterpart at the Lyric in 2012 to critique assumptions about performance and acting which underpin contemporary Irish theatre history and criticism.

**Wit Pietrzak (University of Łódź)**

**“The stars above have their own kind of grammar”: Material Ecocriticism and Contemporary Irish Poetry’**

Over the last decade ecocriticism has become a more widely adopted critical lens through which to investigate Irish literature in general and poetry in particular. The presentation begins by offering a brief overview of the most significant critical approaches to the work of poets like Derek Mahon, Paula Meehan and Moya Cannon so as to point out in the direction of material ecocriticism as a vital critical methodology for taking stock of the latest Irish poetry. I depart from Iovino and Oppermann's definition of material ecocriticism as 'tak[ing] matter as a text, [...] a storied matter, a corporeal palimpsest in which stories are inscribed', and go on to explore the ways in which the theory becomes a fruitful critical (but also epistemological and ethical) apparatus for discussing contemporary poetry. In the final part of the presentation I offer a tentative reading of a few poems by Meehan, Maurice Riordan and Sean Lysaght so as to indicate the new avenues of thought and understanding that this critical perspective opens.

**Lionel Pilkington (National University of Ireland, Galway)**

**‘Acting and Ethics in Irish Theatre History’**

*‘[L]a vertu centrale de l'acteur n'est pas technique, elle est éthique.’* What does this mean? Within contemporary Irish theatre history and commentary, Alain Badiou's insistence that the central virtue of the actor is ethical rather than technical appears meaningless – even confusing. How can the actor possess a 'virtue' other than that provided by her technical subservience to production? Loyalty to production is, surely, what acting is all about. This paper assesses the degree to which the figure of the actor has been elided in twentieth century Irish theatre history and critical commentary except as a cipher or vehicle of authorial or directorial meaning. I will argue that this elision relates to Irish theatre's deep structural connection to ideas of capitalist production, and note how the question of the actor's ethical obligations become matters of intense importance at historical moments when capitalist production is perceived to be under threat or in need of refurbishment. Using the case of the actor-activist Siobhán McKenna in her final role as Mommo in Garry Hynes's 1985 production of Tom Murphy's *Bailegangaire* as an example, the paper goes on to consider how an alternative critical methodology for theatre history and commentary might be constructed.

**Anna Pilz (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität)**

**‘This wild coast’: Encounters with Nature in early nineteenth-century Connemara’**

Ireland's Atlantic coastline has inspired writers at least from the late eighteenth century onwards. The resulting cultural productions of real and imagined encounters in and with this particular landscape offer rich opportunities to query the historical development of an environmental imagination. Although often imagined and represented as a place untouched by progress, modernity, industrialism, and technological advancement, an 1835 cover of the *Dublin Penny Journal* features a map of Ireland with a projected railway network that makes the south-west, Galway bay and the north-western part of Connemara accessible via transport. Despite the region's supposed remoteness in the early nineteenth century, travellers and writers were drawn to the western coast's distinctiveness; writers admired its bucolic and sublime appeal; tourists bemoaned the lacking infrastructure; agricultural improvers saw potential for progress and improvement. This paper explores the cultural development of a tradition of imagining and writing Ireland's wild Atlantic in the early nineteenth century.

**Aurora Piñeiro (National Autonomous University of Mexico)**

**'The Importance of Being in Possession of *A Reader*: Raymond Bell's 2012 John Banville *Reader*'**

In 2012, the publishing of *Possessed of a Past: A John Banville Reader* suggested the existence of an academic discipline called Banville Studies, as McKeon stated in a review of the same year. The field has proved to be a vigorous one: from Rüdiger Imhof's *John Banville: A Critical Introduction*, issued in 1998, up to 2018 inspiring works such as Hedda Friberg's *Reading John Banville Through Jean Baudrillard* and Neil Murphy's *John Banville*, the books by the Irish writer have been the object of varied and abundant critical approaches. The aim of this paper is to analyse the impact of the 2012 *Banville Reader*, with a special focus on the section titled 'A Blest World', which gathers seven non-fiction texts by Banville and provides readers with references to identify an important range of influences in his works, among other crucial aspects of his creative practise. The transcendence of the *Reader* mentioned above will be studied with a three-fold purpose: first, the analysis of Banville's role as a critic of his own work and that by other artists, with the intention of articulating an *ars poetica*; second, the active role of both editor and writer to construct an "authorial figure"; and third, to illustrate the 'afterlife' of this non-fiction material in other academic endeavours, such as the EFACIS Banville Project 'Literature as Translation', which draws on the essays collected in the *Reader* and has promoted an international conversation among writers, translators and critics of Banville's writings all over the world.

**Alexandra Poulain (Université Sorbonne-Nouvelle, Paris)**

**'The Playwright as critic: critical discourse in Yeats's *The King of the Great Clock Tower* (1934) and *A Full Moon in March* (1935)'**

This article looks at two of Yeats's late plays, *The King of the Great Clock Tower* (1934) and *A Full Moon in March* (1935), and reflects on the ways in which they recycle, and thus critique, earlier material – *The King of the Great Clock Tower* revisiting Wilde's *Salome*, *A Full Moon in March* rewriting *The King of the Great Clock Tower*. Thus the focus of this paper is on Yeats's practice of (self-)criticism as encoded in his playwriting activity. In particular, I will argue that the plays, engaging with Wilde's *fin-de-siècle* aesthetics, articulate a critical discourse which embraces both dramaturgical concerns and issues linked to gender politics. Comparing the plays with Yeats's critical prose writings of the same period, I will attempt to define the specific modalities of the critical discourse which is deployed in theatrical form.

**Graham Price**

**'Oscar Wilde, Postmodern Identities and Brian Gilbert's *Wilde*'**

In Brian Gilbert's film, *Wilde* (1997), Oscar Wilde is portrayed as a gay icon for the twentieth century whose life is conveyed to the viewing audience via scripted dialogue that owes as much to Wilde's own writing as to historical record or original scripting. The short story 'The Selfish Giant' is also told as a framing narrative that is intended to act as a (failed) parable for Wilde's own personal history. This paper argues that *Wilde* as a cinematic text bears the marks of the various identities that Oscar Wilde has been asked to shoulder since his death in 1900. What emerges

is a film that acts as a comment upon the simultaneously shallow and layered nature of individual subjecthood and how the times in which a person and those who remember him live can determine how he is represented and perceived by both his contemporaries and also by future inheritors of his memory. Thus, Jacques Derrida's (often misquoted) assertion that 'there is nothing outside the *context*' can be regarded as a relevant observation in relation to this cinematic text and its status as a meta-biography. Stephen Fry's casting in the titular role is significant in this regard because of his own public and private performance of a 'gay identity'. It shall be argued that the casting of Fry is a classic example of life and art comingling in this cinematic version of Wilde's life and persona. A comparative analysis between this film and Tom Kilroy's *The Secret Fall of Constance Wilde* (1997) shall form part of the latter part of this paper and shall examine how (to quote Kilroy) both works perform a postmodern biography 'but with the facts changed of course'.

**Jack Quin (Trinity College Dublin)**  
**'John Hewitt's Belfast art writing and curation'**

This paper examines the art writing of the poet, critic, and curator John Hewitt in mid-twentieth century Ireland and Northern Ireland. Hewitt's promotion of modern art and artist collectives in Ulster through shifting definitions of internationalism and regionalism will be linked to the art writing of Sir Herbert Read. In 1934, the Ulster Unit of artists was a slightly 'naïve tribute to [Read's] Unit One', according to Hewitt, who penned the preface to the Unit's first and only exhibition in Locksley Hall in December 1934. Later, in war-time Belfast, Hewitt quoted liberally from Read's political and art writing in CEMA (NI) exhibition catalogues and pamphlets. I argue that Hewitt negotiated and adapted Read's ideas on collectivist anarchism, guild socialism, and the role of industry for an Irish and Northern Irish audience and newly emerging artists on the island. Taking an interdisciplinary approach to Hewitt's poetry and art writing reveals the sustained imbrication of politics, poetry and the visual arts in his thinking. Beyond Hewitt's oft-quoted inter-arts definitions of 'regionalism' or 'the rooted man' archetype, I will show that profounder connections between Irish and British art, and between John Hewitt and Herbert Read, can be recovered through close-reading Hewitt's extensive art criticism.

**Bryan Radley (University of York)**  
**'Banville as Essayist'**

John Banville's prominence as a critic is often overshadowed by his reputation as a novelist. This paper will shift the focus to materials that are often at the margins of critical discourse on the author, allowing Banville the essayist and working journalist to take centre stage. It will pay attention to what is revealed about Banville's critical commitments in his essays and prefaces, and throughout his prolific career as a reviewer. Examining recurrent concerns and interests in Banville's professional practice, the paper will explore the intersections between his critical and imaginative approaches, insisting that the two are mutually enabling and enriching. Banville's 2005 review 'A Case of Higher Cribbing', for example, feeds off and into motifs of twinning and theft in his fiction, while an extended 1995 review-essay on Freud for the *New York Review of Books* elucidates the dynamics of his repeated explorations of the uncanny. Similarly, paying attention to the prefaces that Banville chooses to write (for texts by Elizabeth Bowen, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, and J. G. Farrell, for example) offers a telling window into the literary lineages that he activates, while investigation of his journalism is suggestive in terms of his relationship to national institutions such as the *Irish Press* and the *Irish Times*. Drawing on an extensive archive of reviews, essays, and prefaces, this paper aims to map out the intersections between creative and critical practice in Banville's oeuvre. When Banville thinks about and theorises writing in a public forum, what can it tell us about his work, influences, and self-fashioning?

**Elena Cotta Ramusino (University of Pavia)**  
**'Richard Murphy's Autobiographical Writing'**

The aim of this paper is to investigate Richard Murphy's autobiographical writing in *The Kick* and *In Search of Poetry*. The former is an expanded memoir covering the life of the poet, a fluid text which is not divided into chapters and in which Murphy also quotes from different sources, included his own notebooks, especially towards the end. The latter is a selection of journal entries written in the period he was composing *The Price of Stone*, divided into chapters bearing the title – mostly related to places – of many of the sonnets published there, except for the first one, 'Overture'. *In Search of Poetry* is mainly a poetic autobiography in which each chapter couples a sonnet from *The Price of Stone* and the journal entries related to it. All the chapters offer a view of the construction of a poet (as poetry does not come naturally to him, Richard Murphy reminds us) and of a poem, a process which is put in relation to the construction of houses, thus, albeit tacitly, exposing its compositional roots. The two autobiographical volumes reveal preoccupations that are central to Richard Murphy's entire life and which will be explored in the present paper: the commitment to writing and the difficulty of it; the handling of words and the striving to create pattern and form; the uneasiness – paired with the necessity – of being a poet; the relation to place and belonging; architecture and houses seen as a correlative of, or a substitute for, writing and poems.

**Katharina Rennhak (University of Wuppertal)**

**'Who Else Needs a "New Narrative"? Narrative Theory and Irish Studies Today'**

Around 2000 many critics hailed a 'narrative turn'. Today, the term 'narrative' vies for precedence with and may even have replaced the formerly trendier 'discourse' as the most fashionable academic buzz word, which clearly has an effect beyond purely academic circles. At the same time, however, (the reputation of?) narratology has never quite recovered from the crisis this (formerly?) structuralist approach was plunged into by poststructuralists and new historicists in the last decades of the twentieth century. Taking into consideration recent developments in narratology and putting them alongside theories developed by literary and cultural critics who work with 'narratives' but would not classify as 'narratologists', my paper will reflect on the relationship between 1) competing groups who specialize in 'narratives' within academia, and 2) on the relationship of 'narrative studies' and uses of the term 'narrative' in public discourses. Most importantly, in this context, I will address the question of what 'Narrative Studies' can do for Irish Literary and Cultural Studies (and vice versa).

**Matthew L. Reznicek (Creighton University)**

**'The Idea of the Home: Elizabeth Bowen, Richard Wagner, and the Tension of the Domestic'**

In 'The Idea of Home', Elizabeth Bowen associates the space of the home with a 'partly conscious, partly unconscious image of what is to be desired', explaining that this space is a 'moral ideal' that involves 'some notion of the ethics and the aesthetics of living'. These ethics and aesthetics acknowledge a tension between the individual and 'the family unit' connoted by the home; Bowen declares that the home, 'like the larger, looser social communities', must allow 'play for the pull, the occasional lack of harmony, between the individual and the group'. It is the tension between the ethics and aesthetics of living within the home and those disharmonious tensions between the individual and the home that this essay seeks to explore. Through the representation of the home, its tension with the protagonist, and the ultimate destruction of the home, this essay argues that the works of both Bowen and Richard Wagner highlight an ambivalent relationship between the home and the individual that is best understood in light of the domestic traditions of the Gothic in which the 'castle as prison' signals the problems 'of freedom and compulsion' (Paulson). Ultimately, both Bowen's and Wagner's destruction of the home signals an individualism that complicates the dominant critical understandings of Bowen's *The Last September* (1929) and *Bowen's Court* (1942) and Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (1848-1876).

**Rowan Robertson-Smith (New York University)**

**'Infectious Insanity: Anglo-Irish Illness in the Big Houses of Banville, Murdoch, and Somerville & Ross'**

This paper begins by mapping the architecture of the Anglo-Irish Big House as one of elected isolation. Since its conception the policies of division and exclusion have characterized the Big House and its Protestant Ascendancy

dwellers. In his *A View of the Present State of Ireland* (1596) Edmund Spenser warned against the degeneration that befell civilized (English) people who fraternized with the native Irish population. Ironically, the theme of degeneration has deeply imbued itself in the literary genre of the Big House novel. The fortresses that were built to uphold a sense of gentility and civility find themselves host to incompetent landlords, mismanaged finances, and sterile bloodlines. Through close readings of *Birchwood*, *The Unicorn*, and *The Big House of Inver*, this work maps mental illness and infirmity as a demarcation of the narrative of decline in Anglo-Irish literature. In these novels, mental and physical illness serve as themes to establish the 'other'; Banville, Murdoch, and Somerville & Ross subvert old prejudices against the Irish by applying illness exclusively to characters of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy class. While Spenser suggests that the dangers lie in degeneration through contact with the native Irish, these novels suggest that the Big House is the locus of its own degeneration. Furthermore, the illness of the Big House proves incurable, as all subjects end up evacuated, burned, or quarantined. As mental institutionalization rose in the twentieth century, this Anglo-centric illness points towards a lasting resentment of Big House influence.

**Audrey Robitaille (Independent Researcher)**

**“To the waters and the wild”: Intertextual Links between W. B. Yeats and Jane Urquhart in *Away***

This paper focuses on the intertextual connections between W. B. Yeats's poems and Jane Urquhart's novel *Away* (1993). The latter makes references to such pieces as 'The Stolen Child' from *The Wanderings of Oisín* (1889), 'The Hosting of the Sidhe', and 'The Host of the Air', both from *The Wind Among the Reeds* (1899). All works share the same folkloric topic of fairy abduction. In this paper, I will analyse these links to canonical Irish poetry in a twentieth-century Canadian novel. This intertextuality with Yeats serves the characterisation of its heroine, Mary, but also highlights some of the book's main themes of traditions and beliefs, of displacement and belonging. Urquhart, who is of Irish descent, also uses the Hutcheonian process of parody to both challenge and pay homage to Yeats's influence on Irish writing through these references, in an allusion to her own roots.

**Julie-Ann Robson (University of Western Sydney)**

**'Sexual representation and the zeitgeist: Wilde, film, and *A Man of No Importance***

Gregory Ratoff's 1960 film *Oscar Wilde*, starring Robert Morley, begins with the camera panning across Père Lachaise Cemetery. Morley's resonant voice declares – as Wilde from beyond the grave – 'An exile in death as I was in life. This is the story of my tragedy. A tragedy that begins in England at the turn of the century'. Films that depict Oscar Wilde's biography on screen – and on stage – invariably focus on his relationship with Lord Alfred Douglas, with the trial, and with its sorry aftermath. Morley (1960), Peter Finch (1960), Stephen Fry (1997), and most recently Rupert Everett (2018) have all performed the part of Wilde with a clipped English accent, and style his life in an unashamedly English setting, symbolised perhaps most strikingly in the 1997 film with Fry – resplendent in cravat and cane – striding through a 'disputation' of lawyers outside what appears to be the Old Bailey. There is, though, one film which echoes rather than portrays Wilde's life: Suri Krishnamma's *A Man of No Importance*. This film – set in a restrictive and melancholic Ireland in the early 1960s – details the life of a closeted bus conductor determined to stage Wilde's *Salomé* in the local church hall. This paper will reflect on the recurrent effacement of Wilde's Irishness in traditional biographical representations, and examine Krishnamma's film and its complex interweaving of Irishness, sexuality, identity, surveillance, morality – and Wildean generosity.

**José Carregal Romero (University of Vigo)**

**“It is my job to look after him”: Shame, Silence and Repression in Belinda McKeon's *Tender***

Set in the Dublin of the late 1990s, Belinda McKeon's *Tender* (2015) is a coming-of-age story where the eighteen-year-old Catherine Reilly, who falls in love with James Flynn, an isolated gay man of her same age. In *Tender*, McKeon suggests that friendships between straight women and gays proliferated in the Celtic Tiger years, and that these 'alliances' acquired political connotations at a time when women and gays reclaimed new rights and freedoms. Nonetheless, in the course of the story, McKeon problematises the presumably positive and progressive

nature of James's and Catherine's friendship, as both of them become emotionally abusive of one another, and their crisis contradicts any easy correlation of gay and feminist politics. As I shall explain, the Celtic Tiger ideology shaped and promoted an exaggeratedly optimistic icon of gay modernity and liberation in order to highlight its differences from 'old' Ireland. This cultural climate somehow underlies Catherine's feelings of proprietorship and excessive protectiveness towards James: 'It is my job to look after him', she says once. Critic Patrick Mullen notes that *Tender* 'reveals Catherine as rightly opposed to homophobia but yet more invested in sexual repression than she may like to admit', thus 'expos[ing] the false optimism of the Celtic Tiger and reveal[ing] the violence of a reassembled repression'. As will be discussed, Catherine's obsession leads to the destruction of their friendship, and, contradictorily, reenacts the familiar patterns of surveillance and repression of her traditional, Catholic background.

**Stefano Rosignoli (Trinity College Dublin)**

**'T. S. Eliot and Roland Burke-Savage on Irish Literature in English: Cosmopolitanism and Insularity at the Crossroads of History'**

The status of an Irish literature in English, that is to say its nature as well as its relations with British culture, on the one hand, and the revived Gaelic heritage, on the other, were the subject of a much heated discussion in the early years of the Irish Free State. T. S. Eliot offered his contribution by debating the subject with the young Roland Burke-Savage, Auditor of the newly born University College Dublin English Literary Society, on 23 and 24 January 1936, having his response and subsequent address later summarised by *The Irish Times*. My presentation aims to reconstruct and critically address this little-known but meaningful episode by analyzing Eliot's position – which controversially pitched James Joyce as 'the most universal, the most Irish and the most Catholic writer in English of his generation' – within the broader context of the growing European tensions in the run-up to the Second World War. The presentation will also mention a rich web of modernist authors, directly or indirectly involved in the debate. They include Samuel Beckett, who, in a letter dated 29 January 1936, wrote from his family home, near Dublin, to his friend Thomas MacGreevy, in London – both being personal acquaintances of Joyce – pitching Eliot's bond between Joyce and Catholic education as nothing else than the 'old fall back on pedagogics'. Expanding on these and other details, this paper aims to critically address an episode of the international reception of Joyce at the crossroads of Irish and European history.

**Mojtaba Rouhandeh (Université Sorbonne-Nouvelle, Paris)**

**'Hafez in nineteenth-century Ireland: James Clarence Mangan and Persian Literary Heritage'**

The Irish poet James Clarence Mangan, probably one of the most influential poets of nineteenth-century Ireland, claimed to have translated poems by Oriental writers and poets. He knew hardly any Persian, but he claims to have translated the poetry of Hafez and other Iranian poets. He also adopted Persian mythology and history in his fake translations. Although Hafez's influence can be traced everywhere in Mangan's oriental translations, he only translated/wrote one poem by Hafez 'An Ode from Hafez', and some scholars such as John Mitchel, criticised him for profiting from the fact that 'Hafez paid better than Mangan' (Fegan). Looking at the manifold presence of Persian literature in Mangan's works, this paper aims to analyse the broad use of Persian language and literature in his poetry and to explain why Mangan did not publish more poetry under the name of Hafez. It also tries to uncover the extent to which this paramount presence of Persian in Mangan's poetry helped him to become a post-colonial poet, at the same time establishing identity links with both Iran and the Persian poet Hafez.

**Aileen R. Ruane (Université Laval)**

**'The monologue play in translation: encouraging Québécois critical responses to *Howie the Rookie*'**

Late twentieth- and early twenty-first century works from the monologue play genre re-examine another cultural form long associated with Ireland, storytelling. Critical responses to Mark O'Rowe's *Howie the Rookie* have thus been mainly generic in nature, focusing on its divergences. These responses have privileged semiotic perspectives,

observing the play's subversion of the previously representational space of the Irish stage. However, these same critiques have also emphasised reliance on the actor's voice and the dramatic text's linguistic properties. As these elements characterise the play, O'Rowe has been suspicious of changes that occur in international productions, where the linguistic specificity of Dublin slang may be lost in translation. Olivier Choinière's translation adapted O'Rowe's staccato, stylised language and urbanised violence into Québécois-French, whilst still locating the play in Dublin. This type of translation strategy marks Quebec's translation practices, but also problematizes the representational and generic critiques seen in Irish theatre research. Furthermore, the Québécois affinity for Irish theatre raises questions regarding their own relationship to appropriation and representation. Additionally, O'Rowe's works have not received extensive critical attention in Quebec, in spite of the popularity of their translations, and thus would benefit from engagement via a performative rather than a representational analysis, focusing on the potential *mise en scène*. Through a comparative approach supported by performance theory, this paper will develop a basis for critical responses to O'Rowe's work in translation, and thus broaden the impact of Irish theatre in the non-Anglophone world.

**Loredana Salis (Università di Sassari)**

**'Enriching the critical ground through translation: The case of Constance Markievicz's writings'**

Focusing as a case study on the Italian translation of Constance Markievicz's writings, this paper contends that translations can provide precious critical tools within the ground of Irish Studies. Born into the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy, Irish nationalist Markievicz waged an unrelenting war of words against English power in Ireland for nearly two decades, and she combined it with the armed fight and activism she is best known for. Her eventful life and daunting actions have been evoked retrospectively and through anecdotes that depict her either as a heroine or an extravagant woman, an 'average revolutionary' and a 'pestilent harridan'. Her writings, by contrast, have received partial critical attention and remain mostly uncollected to this day. Rarely, that is, scholars have allowed her to *speak for herself*. In such respect, the critical edition of Markievicz's letters, articles and speeches in translation is a rewarding starting point. Translation 'shines upon the original' but does not cover it (Benjamin), literally giving access to a new understanding of the source text itself, and thus making a significant impact upon literary and historical scholarship. Translation revisits contexts, it tests secondary sources, it pursues 'the *intentio* of the original', and 'liberates' the language therein imprisoned. This study takes Markievicz's writings as exemplary of the way the methodology of translation helps liberate her voice, rethink perceptions of her, shed a different light on her and her words, ultimately contributing to our knowledge of her times and of ours.

**Cody Sanders (University College Dublin)**

**'Synge: A Man of Music'**

John Millington Synge is one of the most influential Irish playwrights of his time. Synge's legacy is centred around his experiences travelling to the Aran Islands and the honest portrayal of peasant life there, as expressed in his plays such as *Riders to the Sea* and *The Playboy of the Western World*. At the famous suggestion of William Butler Yeats, he spent about four years there, assimilating himself into the culture of the Islands to find 'true' Irish culture and inspiration. However, there is a part of his life that is oft overlooked and, through my own research, incredibly underwritten on. The main focus of this paper, and the guiding question, 'How did music inspire Synge's writing?' led me to write on this topic. As evidenced in the writing of different Synge scholars, I will investigate how music inspired Synge and how a few unique musical forms and techniques made it into his written works as a product of his years of formal instruction in music. In this paper I will look at examples from his time at Trinity College Dublin at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, in Germany, and on the Aran Islands to see how the music that surrounded Synge throughout his life inspired his writings, giving special attention to Wagnerian leitmotifs and *Riders to the Sea* to see how Synge used musical forms in that play.

**Gulsen Sayin (Dogus University, Istanbul)**



## **'Dynamics of Space and Its Impact on Power Relations and Social/Gender Identity in Marina Carr's *Portia Coughlan* (1996)'**

Ironically enough, although today's globalized world, with its multinational corporations, prefers global color to local color and tries hard to diminish the regional varieties, fortunately enough, exploration of the place/space is gaining increased attention as a critical theory under the umbrella term of Place Studies. Marina Carr grew up in Co Offaly, in the Irish Midlands, and reflected this landscape in *Portia Coughlan*. Set by the Belmont River, the play exhibits in the predicament of Portia Coughlan, not only a beautiful natural space but also a rural social space of the post-national Ireland, imaginary liminal space between life and death, as well as Portia's mindscape. Space in the play is not something static, but fluid, dynamic and alive, and it is produced/imagined and reproduced/recreated by social, political and ideological powers. To use Henri Lefebvre's terms, space in Carr's play is not 'the passive locus of social relations' but an 'active' space, underlying 'hegemonies' of power. This paper, in alignment with Lefebvre's space theory, explores the interaction between the *conceived*, *perceived* and *lived* spaces, and how these spaces shape or reshape the power relations and the formation of both social and gender identities in Marina Carr's *Portia Coughlan*.

**Chiara Sciarrino (University of Palermo)**

### **'Corpus Stylistics and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*: new critical perspectives'**

Corpus linguistic analyses reveal meanings and structural features of data that can be detected intuitively. This has been demonstrated with regard to non-fiction data and most recently to fiction texts, too. The analysis of keywords and most frequent phrases of Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* confirms this claim by uncovering meanings that are not discussed in literary critical secondary sources. Does using these new analytic techniques provide new insights into the text's literary meanings? The analyses presented will not only replicate findings by literary critics, but also, and more importantly, reveal literary meanings of *A Portrait* that have not been previously discussed, especially in relation to *Stephen Hero*.

**Ayşem Seval (Istanbul Kültür University)**

### **"'Her Blood Do Know:": Tragic Curse in Marina Carr's Plays'**

Aristotle, in part XIII of *Poetics*, argues that 'the best tragedies are founded on the story of a few houses... who have done or suffered something terrible'. Classical tragedy repeatedly deals with curses on great families. The committing of an unspeakable act of violence such as filicide, matricide or parricide or overstepping a primal taboo such as cannibalism or incest often takes the form of a family curse, haunting the new generations and perpetuating itself. Moreover, the idea of the haunting memory of a traumatic experience tragically repeating itself over generations involves a half-knowing complicity of the characters to trigger the curse. Trauma theorists argue that unresolved psychic conflicts regarding emotional or physical abuse and silenced violent histories lead to the repetition of the cycle. Thinkers like Gabriele Schwab argue that both the victims and perpetrators of trauma pass on disavowed violent histories to their offsprings 'not only through the actual memories or stories... but also through the traces of affect... that remains unintegrated and inassimilable'. Thus, affective memories play a role on the psychic trigger that results in the repetition of tragic curse. The transgenerational family curse seems to be a recurring theme in several of Marina Carr's plays both with classical and non-classical content. Carr's characters are arrested in the repetition of the cycle in the manner of classical tragedies where wounds never heal. Drawing from the ideas of trauma theorists such as Abraham and Torok, La Capra, and Gabriele Schwab this paper seeks to analyse this mechanism of half-knowing complicity in Carr's *Portia Coughlan* and *By the Bog of Cats*.

**Barry Sheils (Durham University)**

### **'Daily-ness, Seasonality and the Sky in Post-crash literature'**

Economic recession and a still-emergent consciousness of ecological catastrophe has led to a greater public suspicion of metaphorical language (and the work of metaphor) in recent Irish writing. Yet literature persists, a witness to its own undoing. The much-talked-about turn to life-writing, personal essay, 'autofiction' and fictions of the everyday over the last decade or so, though moving against metaphoric extravagance and the parody styles associated with Irish modernism, also requires, in the context, a new presentation of self placed within everyday ecologies. Here representations of the weather are key. The accordance of weather and mood, as well as its ability to produce 'atmosphere' (Böhme 1993; Gumbrecht 2012; Rigby 2011), are effects of a literary and rhetorical tradition. The new critical discourse of the Anthropocene, however, challenges weather's metaphoric and narratological function. And what this paper aims to show, through a study of contemporary Irish fiction with its distinctive political ordinances, is how current European cultures might lose faith in the weather as a means of registering daily-ness, seasonality and the stability of national spaces. Reading *Milkman* by Anna Burns and *Solar Bones* by Mike McCormack, I will suggest three ways in which weather withdraws from its customary position within the literary text as poetic consolation or dramatic event, to become an embodied form of everyday ecological anxiety: Auto-affection; Archive; and Immigration.

**Dawn Miranda Sherratt-Bado**

**"Here We Are": Queering the Conflict in Contemporary Northern Irish Culture'**

Contemporary Northern Ireland projects the façade of an inclusive, 'post-conflict' society; however, the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement only acknowledges the existence of 'two communities' drawn along sectarian lines, thereby marginalising other social groups. This is despite the subsequent pledge made in the 1998 Northern Ireland Act, which notes that the government shall 'promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation.' Today, LGBTQ+ rights in Northern Ireland remain minimal and it is the only state within the UK where same-sex marriage is still illegal. At last year's inaugural Alternative Queer Ulster event at Stormont, speakers including drag queens and members of the trans community called for equality in marriage, healthcare, and education. The Assembly has been inactive since 2017, and no representatives from the two main political parties attended this event. The dominance of sectarian politics occluded gender and sexual politics during the Troubles, and institutionalised homophobia and misogyny in the North continue in the present day. This paper discusses responses to this exclusionary sociopolitical context within post-Agreement culture. How do contemporary representations of the LGBTQ+ community portray the intersections between queer identities and a 'post-conflict' milieu? This talk explores a range of cultural texts, including fiction, poetry, drama, and television.

**Viviane Fontoura da Silva (University of Porto)**

**'The Power of Names: Belfast, Cartography and Irishness in Ciaran Carson's poetry'**

In his memoir *The Star Factory* (1997), Northern Irish poet Ciaran Carson declares: 'Sometimes I am in religious awe of the power of names'. Onomastics (the study of the etymology, history, and use of proper names) and toponymy (the study of place names) are important features in Carson's poetic production, used to strengthen and reassure the writer's sense of Irishness and belonging – as stated by Alexander and Cooper (2013), 'the characteristic urban poetry of Ciaran Carson is inextricably bound up with his status as a citizen of Belfast'. In this paper, I will discuss Carson's awareness of language and sense of place as signatures of his body of work. For the poet, each name tells a story; one striking example is his use of street names in 'Belfast Confetti' – 'Balaclava, Raglan, Inkerman, Odessa Street' to evoke the everyday violence of the Troubles. 'The city is a map of the city', he writes, declaring his love of cartography and his interest in the idea of the map as a representation of a city. He is also concerned with the politics of naming: 'how the arbitrary power of the alphabet juxtaposes impossibly remote locations... streets named after places form exotic junctures not to be found on the map of the Empire'. I intend to analyse Carson's linguistic explorations, especially regarding toponymy, to provide an overview of his close relationship with space, place and landscape.

**Sam Slote (Trinity College Dublin)**

**“Figne toi trop”: On an Unresolvable Editorial Crux in *Ulysses***

While the most famous editorial crux in *Ulysses* is the ‘word known to all men’ passage in ‘Scylla’, the most difficult editorial problem is actually a passage in ‘Eumaeus’ (16.1453–54). This passage has drawn very little attention even though Gabler admits that his editorial intervention is ‘speculative’. Every aspect of this crux is problematic: from establishing the sequence of drafts, to deciphering the words on the page, to understanding what those words mean, and, finally, to interpreting its broader relevances to the text. I will examine this crux and its contexts in order to illustrate the intertwined problems of genetic criticism, textual studies, and annotation.

**Emily Smith (Technological University for Dublin)**

**“He'd go free yet”: Irish Masculinities and Universal Stories in the Works of John McGahern**

Inspired by the author’s own critical writings on the subject, for many years McGahern scholarship has focused on the manner in which the author renders ‘local’ dramas ‘universal’. This paper hopes to expand on this premise by examining the extent to which McGahern may be seen to cultivate and develop a uniquely ‘Irish’ form of masculinity in order to explore wider anxieties of the ‘male experience’, quite frequently those linked to existentialist schools of thought. Born into, ‘A nation of wild ideals,’ (*The Barracks*, 1963) a recurrent figure in McGahern’s oeuvre is that of the former-IRA man turned disillusioned patriarch. The characters of Moran, Mahoney, and Reegan (to name but a few) all voice dissatisfaction with the new Irish Republic, and the subsequent fall-out of these tirades often manifests itself in abusive behaviours towards their families. Whilst psychoanalytic schools have been tempted to attribute this second-hand violence to untreated issues such as PTSD, or, since the 2005 release of *Memoir*, as a retelling of McGahern’s own domineering father, the complaints of these Irish men in many respects transcend national borders to address questions of purpose, self-sufficiency, and strikingly, the power of the individual. Examples such as McGahern’s uniquely Irish representation of rural Gardaí officers, offer not just an insight into the formation of a new Irish class structure and its displaced men, but commentary on the alienating effects of hegemonic power structures on the individual man and his understanding of his role in society and subsequently what it means to be ‘a man’.

**Tara Stubbs (Kellogg College, University of Oxford)**

**‘What price stone? Rocks, waterfalls and form(s) in Richard Murphy’s *The Price of Stone***

Seamus Heaney worried that Richard Murphy’s preoccupation with the ‘shaping of his inheritance into a poetic theme’ betrayed a ‘symptomatic unease between the manner and the matter of the poetry’. Heaney quotes Edna Longley’s comment that ‘something programmatic’ in the ‘design and designs’ of Murphy’s poetry ‘stands in the way of total subjection of the offered experience’. For both, Murphy’s perceived irresolution between the content and form of his poetry comes from ‘his quarrel with himself’ as a poet straddling Anglo-Irish and ‘native’ Irish traditions. But looking closely at the sonnet form allows us to consider Murphy’s work from a different perspective. For Murphy, as he put it in an interview with *The Spectator*, the writing of *The Price of Stone* was enabling. Here he could ‘transmute remembered experience into urns of poetry’. His use of the sonnet sequence speaks, further, to a wider trend within modern Irish poetry that deserves more critical attention. This paper will play on the implications of the title of *The Price of Stone* to consider whether the forms and motifs are hammered home at the expense of ‘total subjection of the offered experience’ – inhibiting our ability to find an authentic ‘voice’ among the ruins. Or do these poems become as much about the structures themselves, each channeling Murphy’s own conflicting inheritances, and functioning individually (as he put it himself) as a ‘rock that gives shape to a waterfall’?

**Sinéad Sturgeon (Queen’s University Belfast)**

**‘Elizabeth Bowen’s Greener Gothic in *The Demon Lover***

This paper explores the intersection of the domestic and the natural world in wartime Britain, suggesting that Bowen undertakes therein a sustained critique of the gendered and aesthetic conventions of Gothic literary tradition. Through close readings of selected stories, the paper argues that Bowen's well-recognized preoccupation with houses and domestic space is richly complicated by the much less scrutinized evocation of an intrusive, often hostile natural world. The conjunction of global war, domestic space and a hostile nature is couched in the imagery of the gothic, a favourite genre of the Anglo-Irish writer and one that appropriately registers her abiding concerns with the interplay of past and present, the figure of the ruin, decay, hauntings of all kinds. Bowen's organic architecture offers her an opportunity not only to critique the tired conventions of Gothic narrative but also to pose more fundamental questions about the ontology of the non-human and man's complex relation to the unsettling otherness of the natural world. In Bowen's wartime stories, in short, nature is not a backdrop or mute accessory but an active player in a sustained reflection on man's brute existence in the world, at a time when extinction is a real possibility. With the onset of World War II, nature for Bowen becomes a force alongside history and time with which humanity must reckon for its place in the world, the otherness of its primeval power endowing it with gothic shades of haunting, desuetude and decay.

**Kelly Sullivan (New York University)**  
**'Elizabeth Bowen and Consent'**

What happens when we consider Bowen's often obstinate, unwieldy prose in relation to questions of adolescence, women's sexuality, and consent? By reconsidering stylistically subtle yet significant moments in which female characters define their own sense of agency and either confirm or deny consent, we can find in Bowen's fiction a language aesthetically engaged with questions of autonomy and bodily choice. Reading Bowen's work this way opens up novels like *The Last September*, *The Heat of the Day*, *The Death of the Heart*, and much of her short fiction to a new stylistic and political intersection.

**Diana Lu Sze Min (Nanyang Technological University)**  
**"No Surrender" — Van Morrison's Defence of Unintelligibility'**

Infamous for his hostility towards the press, Van Morrison has curated for himself a reputation as a 'caricature curmudgeon', invariably issuing 'vicious diatribes' (Rogan 2005) towards any writer who might have the ill sense to pick him as a subject for study. Nonetheless, a plethora of biographical writing surrounds the intensely private musician, with numerous biographers interpreting his music as a direct product of Morrison's Ulster roots. This paper attempts a different approach, examining instead Morrison's music, putting a literary lens to selections of his extensive body of work. A recurring theme in Morrison's work is the concept of incomprehensibility and incoherence – in his own words, the 'inarticulate speech of the heart'. Through analysing Morrison's lyrics and use of musical form, one can understand his music as encumbering attempts at interpretation. This paper pays particular attention to Morrison's appropriation (and subsequent adaptation) of jazz techniques and conventions such as scatting, syncopation, and improvisation. Morrison's musical language subverts attempts to 'read' him through his work – essentially working to form a Sontag-esque defense of his art 'Against Interpretation'. This paper argues then, that Morrison's music defends itself as art to be appreciated on its own terms, rather than picked apart to analyse its progenitor, ultimately challenging the practice of reading texts with the object of understanding the author-artist.

**Barbara Szot (Palacký University Olomouc)**  
**'Flannibalisation: Brian O'Nolan's (Pen) Names in Critical Practice'**

Typically a search for 'Flann O'Brien' in an online library catalogue produces many more results than 'Brian O'Nolan' proving that keeping track of his names and pseudonyms poses a challenge to specialized machines, let alone humans. The vast majority of monographs published on O'Nolan's work only refer to Flann O'Brien in their titles even if the scope of the analysis also covers works published under a different name. The paper offers a

metacritical survey of how the problem of multiple names/pseudonyms is approached in academic practice. The major monographs on O’Nolan and selected surveys of Irish literature and articles are analysed to reveal their strategy of dealing with O’Nolan’s literary selves with a special interest in whether the critic’s choice is explicitly communicated and explained to the reader and the implications of using solely one or more names in the title and the body text (both interpretative and the mundanely practical such as indexing and the already signalled library search issue).

**Melinda Szuts (National University of Ireland, Galway)**

**‘The Poetics of Dance: Textual Choreographies in W.B. Yeats’s *The Dreaming of the Bones*’**

In the past three decades the interest in interdisciplinary work in the field of literary modernism and modernist theatre practices has grown significantly. The previously marginalised discourses on the influence of performance (especially dance) on the oeuvre of modernist writers has gained more attention as scholarship acknowledged the importance of how the multi-disciplinary artistic endeavours of the time affected modernist literary aesthetics. In Yeats studies too, there is a growing tendency to emphasize the collaborative nature of the playwright’s dramatic output. It is, however, very rare that instead of a broader historical or biographical approach to these playwright-dancer collaborations, a study focuses on what Yeats’s textual composition inherited from its interrelations with danced theatre traditions. This paper argues that Yeats was not only a successful collaborator but a conscious choreographer as well, who constructed his dance plays according to a clearly traceable method of movement dramaturgy. This paper offers a re-reading of *The Dreaming of the Bones* as a piece of choreographic writing, placing it into the critical discourses of dance theory, space theory and dance dramaturgy. In order to demonstrate Yeats’s method of choreographic composition, the paper looks at the play’s text in the making, based on the scrutiny of its extant manuscript materials and performance history.

**Haruko Takakuwa (Ochanomizu University)**

**‘Reworking the Formula: Women and Nation in Sydney Owenson’s Later National Tales’**

The recent Brexit upheaval has once again highlighted the complexities of national identities the people of these two islands have been involved with. The early nineteenth century, heralded by the Act of Union of Great Britain and Ireland, was another such moment when nationhood was in debate; so much so that it saw innovative reworkings of the genre of national tale. Maria Edgeworth’s *Castle Rackrent* (1800) became a touchstone text for later Anglo-Irish novels and Sydney Owenson’s *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806) became the first Irish novel to declare itself as ‘A National Tale’, setting up the staple image of that genre – exotic setting in the wilds of Ireland, a homage to the Gaelic tradition and the ‘national marriage plot’, where the personal relationship becomes an allegory of union of England and Ireland. However, as she moves into the 1810s, Owenson rewrites the formula of *The Wild Irish Girl* in her Irish national tales. The marriage plots cease to revolve around the unity of different national characters. Instead, they become a clear vindication of ‘Irishness’ and their marriages are between a dispossessed Irishman and a mercurial Irish woman whose agency plays an important role in reclaiming Ireland for themselves. By tracing the revised formulae of her later national tales, I would like to consider how she defines Irishness in relation to Great Britain and overseas – and how much her tropes employing the national tale validate her cause.

**Giovanna Tallone**

**‘In Dialogue with Writing. Clare Boylan’s Non-Fiction’**

In 1993 Clare Boylan edited a collection of essays by diverse writers on the act of writing entitled *The Agony and the Ego: The Art and Strategy of Fiction Writing Explored*. Here, Boylan takes the double stance of an outsider, as a critic, and of an insider, as a writer, and her concern with other writers’ work sheds light on her own concern with writing, thus providing an interesting insight into her own fiction too. Conscious attention to the act of writing is particularly relevant in her last novel, *Emma Brown* (2003), which Boylan developed out of the few existing pages of an unfinished novel by Charlotte Brontë. Besides writing seven novels and three collections of short stories, Clare

Boylan also produced autobiographical pieces, such as her contribution to Katherine Govier's *Without a Guide: Contemporary Women's Travel Adventures* (1994), as well as the thorough and engaging *Literary Companion to Cats* (1994). Thus Boylan's writing goes beyond fiction and her non-fiction work includes essays on Molly Keane, as well as an introduction to Maeve Brennan's posthumous novella *The Visitor*. Interestingly, her critical work shows rigorous attention to texts and imagery, but also patterns of affinities with the writers she takes into account. The purpose of this paper is to analyse samples of Clare Boylan's critical work *vis-à-vis* her own fiction. Significant patterns and cross-references can be identified which can cast new perspectives on her literary work at large.

**Fuyuji Tanigawa (Konan Women's University, Kobe)**  
**'W. B. Yeats's Poetics and Drawing Room Culture'**

My paper explores how much Yeats's poetics owes to the character of the drawing room. This is part of a project named 'a spatial approach to Irish cultures' which I have been working on over the past three years. While the consideration by time has too much affinity with a story having a linear structure of 'a beginning, a middle, and an end', and tends to introduce social myths with epitomes and climaxes, to focus on a space like a drawing room and the miscellaneous nature of people gathering there can criticize such social myths and be a counter force against the power of 'mythical ordering'. A drawing room is not as publicly accessible as 'the bridge of Avignon', but it is clearly separated from the flow line of the family, and guests could be invited there at any time without any monitoring from anyone. I will explain that Yeats's poetics was founded on this space, that is, a space for dialogue and discussion that was first developed by the landlord class, and later brought into cities. Even though landlords were generally unsympathetic towards their 'peasants', some exceptions in Bateman's list of great landlords, like Yeats's friends, the Gore-Booths, Martyn, Lady Gregory (née Persse), and Synge, made important contributions to the development of modern Irish culture. For Yeats, the drawing room was a theatre, a place to wear a mask, a place to produce and publicize himself; and the Abbey Theatre can be understood as an extension of this space.

**Toshiki Tatara (Yasuda Women's University, Hiroshima)**  
**'Neglected Rivalry: Joyce, Walsh and the Representation of Northern Ireland'**

Louis J. Walsh (1880-1940) can be regarded as one of James Joyce's rivals in his college days. In 1899, Joyce was nominated to be treasurer of the Literary and Historical Society at University College Dublin, but was defeated by Walsh. In 1900, Walsh won the society's gold medal for oratory over Joyce. Moreover, Walsh bitterly criticized Joyce's 1902 presentation 'James Clarence Mangan' at the society. In this way, Walsh must have exercised an intellectual impact on Joyce. In fact, Walsh is fictionalized as Hughes in *Stephen Hero*, and is mentioned in *Ulysses* under his real name. Strangely, however, Walsh does not show up in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, while many of Joyce's contemporary students at UCD appear as fictional characters. Why did Joyce neglect this formidable rival only in his autobiographical *bildungsroman*, written between *Stephen Hero* and *Ulysses*? This paper tries to examine the political significance of the absence of Walsh in *A Portrait*. It should be noted that Walsh was a life-long Irish nationalist originally from Maghera, Co. Derry. Walsh criticized Joyce's supposed neglect of Mangan's patriotism at UCD and published his own nationalist novels and plays after graduation. It is conceivable, therefore, that Joyce's treatment of Walsh reflects his political attitudes to northern Irish nationalism and, by extension, Northern Ireland itself. By examining the real-life relationship between Joyce and Walsh and comparing their ways of representing the Irish North, this paper reconsiders the 'critical ground' for Joyce's disapproval of Irish nationalism.

**Colleen Taylor (Boston College)**  
**'Edgeworth, Somerville and Ross, and the Depth of Irish Character'**

In 1998, Deidre Lynch's *Economy of Character* famously challenged Ian Watt's account of the rise of the novel (1957) by suggesting the material conditions of eighteenth-century Britain, rather than increasing writerly skill, induced novel characters to develop into deep subjects. With the century's explosion of consumer items, readers

began to desire personalized things as well as personalized characters, and therefore the meaning of the novelistic character, like the meaning of the keepsake, became interior or 'deep'. But how does this argument apply to the Irish novel and Irish character? To begin to answer this question, I examine the representation of Irish deep subjectivity in two examples involving a particularly Irish material object: the mantle. Edgeworth develops deep character in her first two Irish novels, I argue, through the ontology of the mantle, beginning with Thady's famous 'great coat'. Next, I examine the conclusion to Somerville and Ross's *The Real Charlotte* (1894), which rewrites the opening of *Ennui* and dramatizes Edgeworth's application of the mantle, highlighting the national complications implicated in the representation of Irish deep character. From Edgeworth to Somerville and Ross, we can chart a developing deep character unique to the Irish novel tradition and predicated on the material specificity of Irish culture. Ultimately, I suggest that critical discourses on the eighteenth-century English novel can expand our readings of the Irish novel in both aesthetic and postcolonial ways.

**Nicholas Taylor-Collins (Swansea University)**

**“Lapidescence”: Ageing John Banville, 1970-present'**

In *The Newton Letter* (1982), the unnamed narrator discusses with his reader, Clio, Sir Isaac Newton's mental collapse of 1693. '[H]is life as a scientist was over. The process of lapidescence had begun: the world was turning him into a monument to himself.' 'Lapidescence' is an obsolete term for the process of petrification, and is suited to a reading of Banville's development, from the *Long Lankin* (1971) stories to *Mrs Osmond* (2017). In that period of time, Banville's writing has grown more mature and self-aware, not only in relation to older characters, but also in terms of its consideration of temporality. Whilst there is a fear of the elder in stories like 'Lovers' and 'De Rerum Natura' and the novel *Birchwood* (1973), this develops into a respect for ageing and its processes in, for example, *Doctor Copernicus* (1976) and *The Infinities* (2009). This trajectory can be tracked in relation to theories of temporality from Einstein and Bergson, with the latter gradually gaining prominence in Banville's writing. Where the temporal disturbances of *Birchwood* follow Einstein's 'unending instant', *The Infinities* is more finely aligned with Bergson's Intuition and Duration. Ultimately, the process of ageing in Banville's writing is akin to Newton's lapidescence only if we can see from Newton's perspective: how does it feel to *feel* time working on you? This Bergsonian Intuition is evident not only in Banville's characters, but also in the way in which his published books are aged versions of the manuscripts deposited at TCD archives, where 'lapidescence' comes to take on another, more material, resonance.

**Daniela Theinová (Charles University, Prague)**

**“Everything Flowers”: Caitríona O'Reilly's Ecological Vision'**

With the access of the first 'genuinely post-national generation' to the Irish poetry scene in the 1990s, the latter gained a new level of openness and diversity. Mostly living abroad – and inspired by the emphatic internationalism of Derek Mahon and the baffling acts of identification on the part of Paul Muldoon – poets such as David Wheatley, Sinéad Morrissey, Justin Quinn and Caitríona O'Reilly testify to how globalised consciousness brings about new kinds of self-consciousness. A heightened awareness of social injustice, political exploitation and environmental damage lead to a new sense of western/human guilt, and to intriguing redefinitions of the post-colonial complex. Significantly, this characteristic mixture of a willed detachment and a keen awareness of environmental crisis developed alongside the introduction of ecocriticism into the Irish literary context. This paper explores the work of Caitríona O'Reilly, whose poems often combine acute observations of natural detail with poignant expressions of global and environmental consciousness. I will focus on O'Reilly's latest book, *Geis*, which foregrounds the poet's fascination with mythologies of the past and points to some of her more recent poetic allegiances, notably those to Mahon and Muldoon. O'Reilly believes in the restorative power of myth and its capacity to link the local with the universal. One of the motifs recurrent in most myths and local traditions is the endless cycle of loss and renewal which O'Reilly finds reconfirmed in her encounters with the non-human. As it explores the porous line between nature and culture, O'Reilly's poetry readily lends itself to ecocritical interpretation.

**Naoko Toraiwa (Meiji University, Tokyo)**

**'To bear witness to the balanced and imbalanced mechanism of the world: Sinéad Morrissey's *On Balance*'**

Criticism of poetry starts from defending its art. When does the poet feel like defending their art? Probably all the time; in a sense, to keep on writing poems itself is a defense of their art, especially when the pressure of the outer reality is strong. When Seamus Heaney delivered his lecture series as the Professor of Poetry at Oxford University, the pressure of the outer reality towards his art was still hard. Heaney opens one lecture, saying 'Professors of poetry, apologists for it, practitioners of it, from Sir Philip Sidney to Wallace Stevens, all sooner or later are tempted to show how poetry's existence as a form of art relates to our existence as citizens of society – how it is "of present use".' What are the pressures in the early stage of the twenty-first century, which is the time Sinéad Morrissey writes? Definitely many. Such as still pressing social issues, toward women, foreigners, religious conflicts, environmental crises including climate change. Anthony Bradley points out the prestigious status of Queen's University, which Morrissey was attached to until 2017 as the place for poetry: 'The commodification and the identification of northern poetry so exclusively with the university naturally raises questions about the role of poetry in society: what is use of poetry?' Morrissey must be conscious of such pressures especially because she was chosen as Belfast's first Poet Laureate in 2013. I would like to examine Morrissey's poems in *On Balance*, which hopefully suggests a certain use of poetry in the twenty-first century.

**Tony Tracy (National University of Ireland, Galway)**

**'Whose National Cinema? Audiences; Genres; Distribution'**

A key tenet of Irish cinema on levels of policy, funding, script development and analysis – has been the idea of self-expression – of the need and importance for a nation to tell its own stories to counteract narrative colonization, stereotyping and the selective gaze of others; a socially symbolic act where 'the production of aesthetic or narrative form is to be seen as an ideological act in its own right' (Frederic Jameson). Underpinned by such an understanding of national cinema, Irish film studies have been dominated by textual analysis. Within such scholarship, narratives function as palimpsests for a range of thematic concerns from gender, socio-economic transformation, immigration and place, to name but a few. But what of the wider networks and discourses within which Irish film circulates, simultaneously a cultural artefact and commercial product? Might an analysis of extra-textual circuits serve to productively enlarge not only the scope of the field of Irish cinema but provide a timely nuance in an era of platform distribution and the 'relocation of cinema' (Francesco Casetti)? This paper sets out to embark on such a project through a discussion of shifts in release and distribution practices of Irish film in recent years. Offering an overview of challenges and transnational trends in the area of fiction film, the paper then offers a number of case studies from non-fiction that suggests distinctive efforts to engage and develop audiences for often highly personal and local narratives and proposes that such small and often highly labour intensive process constitute 'ideological acts' in their own right.

**Mary Trotter (University of Wisconsin – Madison)**

**"Sing out, Louise!" Revealing and Escaping the Tropes and Traps of the Irish Actress's Memoir'**

This presentation offers a revisionist approach to Irish theatre history and the way we read particular kinds of narrative sources historically by examining how Irish women actors' autobiographical writings both participate in and resist particular critical and cultural expectations about women in theatre in twentieth-century Ireland. I am particularly interested in how these writings participate in narrative expectations around the actress's memoir established in other famous actress autobiographies internationally over a century of such writings (nervousness at being on stage, physical preparation, gratitude to directors/playwrights, domestic sacrifice); how they may signal gendered perspectives on theatre company structures (sexual harassment, salary, competition for roles); and how their autobiographies collaborated or conflicted with other readings of their public personae as Irish actors. I will also address the critical reception of these autobiographies (if they were printed). Actor/authors I will discuss include Sara Allgood, Helena Molony, Ria Mooney, Máire Nic Shiubhlaigh, and Carolyn Swift. While other theatre



artists like Lady Gregory and Maud Gonne's autobiographies will be mentioned, this presentation focuses on women known primarily as actors.

**Derval Tubridy (Goldsmiths, University of London)**

**'Resistant Dynamics in Cultural and Artistic Practice: How It Is with Samuel Beckett'**

Drawing on Kabakov (and with reference to scholarship by Bishop, Jones, MacMullan, Suderberg, Reiss) the paper proposes that intermedial intersections between contemporary art, performance practice and theatre-making reconfigure the site of the subject within space. The concerns of Atom Egoyan's *SteenBeckett* (loss, regret, decay) instantiated through the interplay between analogue and digital film are picked up by Haroon Mirza's *The Last Tape*, and Phil Coy's *Krapp's Schultz* (an automatic screenplay,) each responding to the disjunctive operations of memory in *Krapp's Last Tape* with reference to resistant dynamics of cultural and artistic practice. Tania Brugheria's installation performance *Endgame* (2017) – developing from her earlier *Endgame Study # 7* (2006) – operates for the viewer as a chromatic counterpoint to Miroslav Balka's sculptural installation *How it is* (2009), both works interrogating collective memory eroded through contested historical politics. The paper concludes with an analysis of Gare St. Lazare Ireland's site specific performance installation of Beckett's novel *How It Is*, Parts I and II at the Everyman Theatre, Cork (2018, 2019) to argue for the centrality of multi-medial and inter-medial operations within contemporary art practice while demonstrating that these contexts are vital for contemporary readings of Beckett.

**Lee Vahey (Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh)**

**'Grabbing from Gargantua's Gob?: Revisiting 'Rabelaisianism' in Irish-language Discourse'**

Since the introduction of the terms *Rabelaisian* ('Raibiléiseach') and *Rabelaisianism* ('Raibiléiseachas') to the Irish language at the end of the sixties (Ó Ríordáin, 1968, 1969), Irish-language authors have, with great alacrity, deployed the concept of Rabelaisianism to describe a large portion of the literary canon as well as a broad range of humour. Due to its overwhelming conspicuousness in the discourse, Máirtín Coilféir has suggested not only has the term *Raibiléiseach* achieved 'buzzword status' in Irish-language literary criticism (2013), but that *Raibiléiseachas* ranks as 'one of the most common and distinctive terms in Irish humour' (2016). As Coilféir has shown, however, far from being a neutral critical concept, Rabelaisianism has been variously defined, resulting in an array of critical usages, some complementary, some contradictory. Proceeding then from Coilféir's appraisal of the critical treatment of the concept during the period 1968-2011, this paper examines the efficacy and legitimacy of the concept, as defined by Irish-language critics, as a frame work with which to analyse humour in Irish, with particular reference to the fiction of Máirtín Ó Cadhain and Alan Titley. In support of this aim, the paper outlines the various, and often contradictory, usages of the concept from 1896 to 2013; presents the instances in which critics have appropriated the concept to suit their own aims and interests; and proposes the potential Revival-period origins of the concept. Despite casting doubt on the efficacy of the concept as a reliable frame work with which to analyse humour, as a parting *pensée* I speculate on why the concept will persist in Irish literary criticism; that is, why critics will persist in grabbing from Gargantua's gob.

**Kristina Varade (Borough of Manhattan Community College, the City University of New York)**

**'Charles Lever's Critical Lens: New Perspectives on Nineteenth-Century Anglo-Irish Literature'**

This paper explores new research related to the critical literary perspectives of Charles Lever (1806-1872), a Victorian Anglo-Irishman on the margins of British and Continental spheres of influence. As a writer, journalist, and consular representative who frequently corresponded and/or interacted with Dickens, Edgeworth, Owenson, and 'Phiz,' Lever's writing leads to the questioning of why he, as an Anglo-Irishman residing for most of his life on the Continent, failed to achieve the level of respect which his contemporaries enjoyed. Lever's correspondence and relationship with these writers disrupts previously held notions about Victorian literature. Also, I argue that Lever's frank expression of fluid national Anglo-Irish identity resulted in his marginalization. The author's humorous, refreshingly candid writing and critical lens of both himself and his contemporaries proves that the Anglo-Irish

literary worldview is richer and more varied than previous analyses have concluded. In placing Lever as central among the luminaries of the Victorian literary canon, I seek to revolutionize common beliefs about nineteenth-century Anglo-Irish identity.

**Maria Rita Drumond Viana (Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina)**

**'Yeats and Wilde posing as public intellectuals: the Letters to the Editor and influence on social/political criticism'**

A study of the strategies Wilde and Yeats uses in their engagements with the editors and the reading public of newspapers and magazines at the end of the nineteenth century, this paper examines the conventions associated with the epistolary genre/form to reveal his specific practices in the highly visible forum of the 'Letters to the Editor'. Contrary to a more general understanding of letters as tools of intimate and personal engagement or as forms of expression of sudden and sincere thoughts, I examine how both authors make political uses of these letters and engage in social criticism as public intellectuals. This research proposes to analyse in what ways these public letters reveal Wilde's and Yeats's intentions of influencing and shaping opinions through their presence in periodicals on both sides of the Irish Sea and on both sides of the Atlantic, and also to hypothesise on reasons for using letters to this end.

**Pilar Villar-Argaiz (University of Granada)**

**'New communities of secrecy in Contemporary Irish Women's Poetry'**

This paper explores the connections between critical concepts such as 'secrecy' and 'community' in contemporary Irish women's poetry, by particularly drawing on the work of Colette Bryce, Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin, and Doireann Ní Ghríofa. In particular, I will focus on how 'genuine' interpersonal relationships tend to be described in the work of these writers not only as instances of profound intimacy, but also, paradoxically, as moments of irreducible singularity, otherness and secrecy. As I intend to demonstrate, the secret of the 'Other' is not visualized in their poetry as something negative (through implication of the presence of intentional concealment), but rather as positive and liberating in a contemporary world where 'transparent' networking communication is the norm, and foreignness and alterity are conceptualized as threatening presences. In other words, the secret in the work of these Irish women poets enables them to visualize a new socio-political space where the Other's privacy and singularity is accepted, not rejected. This aspect will be studied from the perspective of the communitarian thought of Jean-Luc Nancy, Maurice Blanchot and Jacques Derrida. The three of them envisage new forms of community (which they call 'inoperative' and 'unavowable'), distant from homogeneity, immanence and essentialism, and characterised instead by heterogeneity, otherness and irreducible singularity. Secrecy is paramount in their visualisation of this new non-totalitarian world. Bryce's, Ní Chuilleanáin's, and Ní Ghríofa's poetry will also be studied from the perspective of the German philosopher Nyung-Chul Han, who warns against the danger of clinging on to the 'false' ideal of 'total transparency', thus suggesting the necessity to gesture towards a new ethico-political space open to secrets.

**Aimée Walsh (Liverpool John Moores University)**

**'Reconsidering Republican Feminism through Feminist Magazines (1975-1986)'**

The disjuncture between feminism and republicanism within the Northern Irish political landscape is evident from the historical and contemporary response of Sinn Féin to women's issues, the lack of support from male IRA volunteers for their female counter-parts, and the reluctance to use the 'feminist' label within the Republican movement. Journalist Nell McCafferty also claimed that the feminist movement north and south of the Irish border was splintered following the discussion of the Republican women's bloody protest in Armagh Gaol. The two movements, Republican and feminist, on the surface appear to be diametrically opposed to one another. However, my research on Republican feminist periodicals, such as *Women's Action*, *Belfast Women's Collective* and *Women's News*, negates the notion that the feminist movement was incapable of careful examination of the ramifications of the context of British imperialism. I argue that rather than a distinct difference, northern feminism and nationalism

can be understood as both aiming to attain autonomy, both bodily and political, with overlaps in objectives evident throughout the magazines. In presenting these republican feminist case studies, this paper will examine the interactions and intersections between feminism and Irish nationalism in the context of the Northern Irish conflict, with a particular focus on the Armagh Gaol prison protests period of 1975 – 1986.

**Ian R. Walsh (National University of Ireland, Galway)**

**“So much talk of drama”: Theatre Criticism in Irish Periodicals 1940-1960’**

This paper seeks to open up an enquiry into theatre criticism in Ireland from 1940-1960 through examination of many reviews and essays that appeared in periodical journals of this period. Terence Brown writes of the period being examined: ‘Possibly at no time has there been so much of it or so much talk of drama and plans for drama’. It is the aim of this paper to examine all this ‘talk of drama’ in the writings that appear in *Irish Monthly*, *The Bell* and *Commentary Magazine* and contrast these to other dominant critical voices such as that of Seamus Kelly in *The Irish Times*. What these writings document about productions on the Irish stage; how they consider the work in relation to questions of nation; and what particular preferences or bias they display in relation to preferred international practices and styles will be charted and analysed. Finally, drawing on the work of established theatre histories on this period by Lionel Pilkington, Christopher Morash and Paul Murphy this paper will then address how, if and where this criticism shaped the theatrical output of the time.

**W. Michelle Wang (Nanyang Technological University, Singapore)**

**Formal inventions and readerly engagements in Marina Carr’s *Hecuba***

The revival of Greek tragedies in the work of contemporary Irish playwrights has received sustained critical attention over the past twenty-five years: for example, in Fiona Macintosh’s *Dying Acts* (1994), Marianne McDonald and J. Michael Walton’s *Amid Our Troubles* (2006), and Brian Arkins’ *Irish Appropriation of Greek Dramas* (2010). Marina Carr’s plays, in particular, are notable for their vivid reimaginings of Greek heroines, including Penelope in *The Midlands Trilogy*, Medea in *By The Bog of Cats*, Iphigenia in *Ariel*, and Phaedra in *Phaedra Backwards*, amongst others. While critics dominantly attend to the plays’ thematic engagements, such as the plight of the dispossessed and ‘the politics of literary allusion’, Carr’s inventive experiments with form tend to receive less extensive attention. Using *Hecuba* (2015) as my case study, I attend to Carr’s formal innovations in the playtext, which blend drama’s typical structure of dialogism with conventions of prose such as free indirect discourse, even as characters partly appropriate lines of other onstage characters within their discourse. By explicating the effects of such devices on readerly engagement, I explain how Carr carefully calibrates our access to character minds and the corresponding shifting terms of affective and ethical engagements, in marshalling a familiar cast of characters to new ends.

**Peter Weakliam (Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath)**

**‘Áiteacha agus spásanna i bhficsean Phádraig Uí Chíobháin’**

Sa pháipéar seo iniúchfar an ról a imríonn áiteacha agus spásanna i scéalta Phádraig Uí Chíobháin. Déanfar plé ar na teicnící sainiúla a úsáideann an Cíobhánach agus é ag cur síos ar shuímh a chuid scéalta. Tabharfar suntas ar leith don chaoi a dtéann timpeallacht na gcarachtar i bhfeidhm orthu – an ‘dlí neamhchinntithe a cheanglaíonn dinnseanchas le meon an duine’, mar a thugann fear na Gráige féin air. Léireofar go bhfuil dlúthbhaint idir an ghné seo dá shaothar agus mórthéama eile dá chuid, mar atá ceist na saoirse.

**Julia M. Wright (Dalhousie University)**

**‘Literary Criticism in 1790s Dublin: Robert Burrowes, Thomas Moore, and “Easy Simplicity”’**

There is scant attention to Irish literary theory and criticism in the Romantic era, despite a deep well of work on the subject in the early volumes of the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*. My focus here will be Robert Burrowes, author of the preface to the first volume of the *Transactions* and three essays in its first decade. He also published

sermons and a book on science education, as well as shorter pieces. A founding member of the RIA, a Fellow at Trinity where he tutored Thomas Moore, and finally the Dean of Cork, Burrowes was a significant figure in Irish letters. The connection between Burrowes' 'Essay . . . On Style' (1793/94) and shifting literary theory in this era was long ago noted by M.H. Abrams, but this paper will focus on 'On the Poetical Character of Doctor Goldsmith' (1797) where Burrowes, praising criticism over theory, offers a detailed analysis of Goldsmith's work that conforms to his earlier argument that style is properly an effect of an author's character, including in his defense of Goldsmith's 'plagiarism' as marks of 'fondness' for particular works. More suggestively, Burrowes adds to his work on style by suggesting that Goldsmith's 'easy simplicity' demands a certain repetitiveness and carelessness and is fundamentally the reason for the poet's enduring popularity. After tracing some of Burrowes' key critical principles, I will close with some of the implications for Moore's poetry.

**Loic Wright (University College Dublin)**

**'Acting the Big Fellas: Masculinities and the State in Patrick Kavanagh's *Tarry Flynn*'**

In the years leading up to the foundation of the Irish Republic and the Irish Constitution in 1937, a series of legislations were passed leading to separatist gender dynamics between men and women. Many of the ideals promoted and culturally inculcated by de Valera through legislature presented paradoxical concepts of Irish manhood, of men as virile but chaste, and financially independent in an increasingly impoverished landscape. Patrick Kavanagh's novel *Tarry Flynn*, published in 1948 and consequently banned until the 1960s for its obscenity, presents the realities of these state-sanctioned ideals of manhood. Kavanagh depicts the rural landscape of men perpetually striving to achieve these ideals and the consequences of these unattainable values. This paper will interrogate Kavanagh's depiction of manhood in Cavan in the 1930s and demonstrate to what extent, if any, these performances of manhood are moulded and shaped by attempts to conform to the state-sanctioned ideals of masculinity promulgated by Éamon de Valera and Archbishop John McQuaid. Drawing on R.W Connell's *Masculinities* and Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality*, I will investigate the hegemonic masculinities of the men in Cavan in the 1930s as well the relationship between Tarry and these ideas of manhood. By investigating Tarry's perception of hegemonic masculinities, I will be analysing the correlation between the series of legislature passed in the preceding decade and the consequent cultures of rigid patriarchal dominance and in many cases, state-sanctioned misogyny.

**Yen-Chi Wu (University College Cork)**

**'Revivalism and Modernism: John McGahern's *That They May Face the Rising Sun*'**

This paper, drawing on scholarship that complicates the interface between revivalism and modernism, reconsiders the ways in which John McGahern engages with Ireland's modernity in *That They May Face the Rising Sun*. McGahern's last novel, because of a gentler sentiment adopted towards rural Ireland, has been read as revealing a revivalist mode. Recent McGahern critics, such as Stanley van der Ziel and Frank Shovlin, have compared the novel with J. M. Synge's *The Aran Islands* and Tomás Ó Criomhthain's *The Islandman* for their focus on non-modern cultures. These texts, however, do not conform to a simplistic revivalist mode. Critics, such as Mark Quigley and Cólín Parsons, have unpacked the complex ways in which Synge and Ó Criomhthain engaged with the revivalist discourses of tradition and nostalgia while undermining them at the same time. The intricate narrative strategies in these texts reveal the writers' modernist sensibility that seeks to account for the modern conditions that are already there in the remote islands. Quigley and Parsons remind us that the islands are not excluded from the outside world. Through a long history of emigration and cultural and capitalist transactions, the islands have long been tied to the global network of capitalist modernity. McGahern's rural Ireland, in a similar way, is inhabited by returned migrants. Moving McGahern's work onto this critical ground reshaped by the scholarship sketched above, this paper reconsiders the revivalist mode in his last novel as a subtle engagement with Ireland's modernity.

**Shotaro Yamauchi (Seikei University, Tokyo)**

**'A Critical Introduction to the Japanese Yeatsians in the Early Twentieth Century'**

It is a matter of fact that Yeats's experimental theatre benefited from Noh, one of the Japanese theatrical forms. In the previous studies, when it comes to 'Yeats and Japan', scholars have mentioned only how Japanese culture and art had a strong influence on Yeats. For example, as stated in Joseph Lennon's 2008 masterpiece *Irish Orientalism*, Asian (and Japanese) cultures were instrumental for Yeats in constructing an imagined Celticism. However, how the Yeatsians in Japan – the country Yeats was deeply into – in the early twentieth century reacted to 'Yeats's Japan' has not been examined carefully, even in Japan. Moreover, that these Japanese Yeatsians had some interviews with Yeats is not known well either. In the turbulence of radical westernization and militarization in early twentieth-century Japan, what did the Japanese Yeatsians see and find in 'Yeats's Japan'? What aspects of Yeats can be seen from these Yeatsians' documents written in Japanese? Or did Yeats's passion for Japan stimulate their nationalism? In this paper, I would like to show the process that the Japanese Yeatsians in the early twentieth century awakened to their own 'Japaneseness' through reading Yeats.

**Iva Yates (University of Limerick)**

**'Gaining "Independence from Foreign Control": The Politics of Folklore Collecting in Ireland and Puerto Rico'**

Terry Gunnell states in 'Daisies Rise to Become Oaks: The Politics of Early Folktale Collection in Northern Europe' that 'many of the earliest collections of European 'folktales' (used here in the widest sense to include anecdotes, legends and wonder tales) from the time of the Grimm brothers and onwards were closely connected with the process of National Romanticism and the creation of national image, and particularly in those countries like Germany, Norway, Iceland, Scotland and Ireland that dreamed of attaining independence from foreign control'. Ireland and Puerto Rico are island nations which have been subjected to colonial rule by different empires; Spain and then the United States in the case of Puerto Rico, and the British in the case of Ireland. While Ireland became independent with the establishment of the Irish Free State, Puerto Rico continues to be a territory of the United States more than one hundred years after the Spanish-American War in 1898. As such, folklore collecting in both islands served different purposes. In the case of Ireland, it can be said it reaffirmed Irish national identity. But Puerto Ricans were struggling to retain their long-held Spanish identity under imposition of American culture and folklore collecting practices reinforced the otherness of Puerto Ricans. This paper examines the nature of folklore in Puerto Rico and Ireland, how the political movements in both islands influenced the nature of folklore collecting, and how this in turn affected the access to folklore by local authors.

**Li Yuan (Guangdong University of Foreign Studies)**

**'The Irish Oedipus: Adaptations of Oedipus Myth from W. B. Yeats to Frank McGuinness'**

This paper draws on contemporary theories of adaption, especially those of Linda Hutcheon and Margherita Laera, to provide a historically contextualized analysis of the motivations of W. B. Yeats and Frank McGuinness in adapting the Oedipus plays. It reveals the ways in which the different times and agendas of the respective authors led them to produce very different productions in terms of theme and pathos. Critical attention is also given to the translation/adaptation strategies that both writers adopted in engaging with the Greek texts. It argues that, given the paucity of their knowledge of Greek, the writers were effectively more engaged an intra-lingual than inter-lingual translation, and in this respect their endeavours at 'translation' or 'rewriting' resemble Lin Shu's treatment of foreign literary works amid the modernist movement in China at the turn of the twentieth century. Given that the boundary between translation and adaption is unavoidably blurred in the case of modern renderings of ancient Greek plays, this paper will also discuss the alterations and variations that Yeats and McGuinness undertook in their adaptations to find out how they contributed to the Oedipus myth and to the modern and contemporary Irish theatre.

**Wolfgang Zach (Innsbruck University)**

**'The Controversy over Swift's Views of the Irish Language'**

The editors of the Festschrift for the distinguished Swiftian Hermann Real, with me among them, decided to take 'The Enigmatic Dean' as the title of this book. To us, this characterisation appears to be one of Swift's most distinguishing features as an author. Owing to Swift's most complex literary techniques, his problematic ironies and his main interest in 'vexing' the reader in many of his works but also partially caused by widely divergent preconceptions of his critics, controversies over issues relating to Jonathan Swift are legion. A central one of these unresolved controversies among most distinguished Swiftian critics is that about Swift's attitude towards the Irish language. It is of special significance especially as Swift's 'Irishness' is often connected with it. The divergent positions of critics are sketched in this paper. Interestingly, most critics do not appear to have any doubts about their positions being the right ones although these are by no means accepted by others: some confidently make a claim to Swift's enmity towards the Irish language and his advocacy of its abolition while others deny this claim outright. In this paper the attempt will be made to show the reasons for these contradictory critical views, which reach from differing ideological premises and limited as well as one-sided selections of texts to contradictory evaluations of the textual evidence, which are caused e.g. by a straightforward or ironic interpretation of the same text. By my metacritical approach and by taking all the relevant texts into account for the first time a full picture of the range of Swift's views of the Irish language and maybe his general or at least his dominant position relating to it are hoped to emerge.

**Stanley van der Ziel**

**"remnants of some ancient shipwreck": Jennifer Johnston, Shakespearean Romance and Twentieth-Century Ireland'**

Despite being habitually regarded as one of the most significant Irish novelists of the late twentieth century, Jennifer Johnston's work has not enjoyed much critical attention. This paper begins to readdress this critical neglect by considering an important facet of Johnston's literary imagination – that which may be broadly termed intertextual. Johnston's novels are full of references to other texts, both canonical and 'popular'. This paper will focus on Johnston's uses of Shakespeare. The purpose of the paper is not to merely provide an inventory of such references, but to explore to what ends Shakespearean references are used in her fiction. The first question that needs to be addressed is: Which Shakespeare? Throughout her oeuvre, Johnston is drawn particularly, not to Shakespeare's tragedies, but to the comedies and romances. (The obvious manifestation of this preference is in the names she gives to a number of her heroines.) But this apparent preference for the 'lighter' genres should not suggest that she avoids serious subjects in her work. On the contrary: this paper argues that Johnston harnesses elements of Shakespearean romance in order to write about serious – even tragic – things. The paper will argue how lines and tropes from Shakespearean romance are used to reflect the changing social and political landscape of twentieth- and early twenty-first-century Ireland – a place inhabited, in Johnston's singular vision, not by the pathetic or tragic figures of the tragedies that we might find in the work of her male contemporaries, but by the 'foolish mortals' (a description she used for the title of a 2007 novel) of Shakespeare's comedies.

## ROUNDTABLES

### Irish University Review Roundtables

The IASIL conference this year features three roundtables curated by the *Irish University Review*. These roundtables will consider key questions for Irish Studies now, seeking to challenge prevailing assumptions within the field, asking how we might displace the canon, and opening discussion on future directions. The roundtables feature speakers from across Irish studies, and will provide a forum for open and, hopefully, challenging discussions.

#### ‘Questions for Irish Studies’

Participants: Emilie Pine (University College Dublin), Andrew Fitzsimons (Gakushuin University, Tokyo), Laura Izarra (University of São Paulo), Ronan McDonald (The University of Melbourne), Hedwig Schwall (KU Leuven)

#### ‘Questioning the Canon’

Participants: Paul Delaney (Trinity College Dublin), Clare Hutton (Loughborough University), Youngmin Kim (Dongguk University), Sarah McKibben (University of Notre Dame), Chris Cusack (HAN University of Applied Sciences)

#### ‘Displacing the Canon’

Participants: Lucy Collins (University College Dublin), Anne Mulhall (University College Dublin), Clíona Ó Gallchoir (University College Cork), Kenneth Keating (University College Cork), Emma Penney (University College Dublin), Gráinne O'Toole (Skein Press), Chiamaka Enyi-Amadi

#### ‘Perspectives on Ageing in Irish Studies: New Critical Interventions’

Until recently, age has been a critical category largely overlooked in Irish literary criticism. This roundtable proposes to consider cultural gerontology, a field which addresses the nature and experience of later years, as a new critical intervention in Irish Studies. This roundtable will continue a critical conversation recently opened out in two pioneering publications, Heather Ingman's *Ageing in Irish Writing: Strangers to Themselves* and a special issue of *Nordic Irish Studies* on 'Women and Ageing in Irish Writing, Drama and Film' (eds. Margaret O'Neill and Michaela Schrage-Früh). The panellists will consider how cultural gerontology can be harnessed to develop new critical readings of Irish poetry, drama, prose and film. In doing so, they will explore the intersections of age with, for example, gender, sexuality and disability and will address interconnecting topics such as ageing Irish families, and generational connections. A cultural gerontological approach is a key development in the evolution of the critical conversation between literary, cultural, social and political spheres. Literature and culture are central carriers of the myths, stereotypes and silences of ageing, yet also hold the capacity to illuminate and shift how we understand old age. A critical gaze on representations of ageing can contribute to counterweighting ageist beliefs as well as to steering society away from denial and exclusion of the ageing population. Thus, works informed by the material and often bleak realities of ageing and which contextualise the ageing body may be read to consider the effects of ageing on individuals, families and communities.

Participants: Heather Ingman (Trinity College Dublin), Michaela Schrage-Früh (National University of Ireland Galway), Brenda O'Connell (Maynooth University), Margaret O'Neill (University of Limerick), Ian Maleney

#### ‘Feminist Wonder? Twenty-First Century Interventions in Irish Studies’

In her 2004 article 'The Limits of 'Irish Studies': Historicism, Culturalism, Paternalism', Linda Connolly noted how 'When feminism/women's writing/gender and representation is mentioned in mainstream texts, the strong voice of Irish feminist criticism is somehow silenced.' In a similarly powerful intervention published four years later in 2008, Moynagh Sullivan elucidated a 'critical blindness to the relationship between sexuality, critical language, and the socio-symbolic order of Irish Studies'. Responding to the conference theme, this panel proposes a discussion of the impacts of feminist thinking and practice on the critical terrain of Irish Studies since the turn of the century and, especially, in the years since 2008. To what extent have feminist modes of enquiry become more widely recognized

or integrated? In what ways do feminist methodologies challenge or destabilise Irish Studies? Has the critical field changed? What landmark developments can we look to? What scholarly work can be celebrated? Sara Ahmed describes the dynamic interaction between 'the emotional response of wonder, critical thinking and forms of activism that try and break with old ways of doing and inhabiting the world.' This panel discussion will consider the ways Irish feminist scholarship opens new spaces for wonder and the critical projects that lie ahead.

Participants: Clare Wallace (Charles University, Prague), Moynagh Sullivan (Maynooth University), Mária Kurdi (University of Pécs, Hungary), Shonagh Hill (University College Dublin), Miriam Haughton (National University of Ireland Galway), Lisa Fitzpatrick (Ulster University), Tina O'Toole (University of Limerick)

#### **'The New Irish Studies: Twenty-First Century Critical Revisions'**

This roundtable draws its title from the forthcoming collection *The New Irish Studies: Twenty-First Century Critical Revisions* (Cambridge University Press, 2019). Speakers will consider topics relevant to recent work by Irish artists in film, literature, performance, and cultural practice more generally, as they engage new critical approaches to the contemporary.

Participants: Margaret Kelleher (University College Dublin), Adam Kelly (University of York), Matthew Eatough (Baruch College, City University of New York), Stefanie Lehner (Queen's University Belfast), Emma Radley (University College Dublin)