School of English

Exploring Heritage Collections

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ECTS Weighting: 5

Semester Taught: HT

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<u>Overview</u>

Exploring Heritage Collections is a module organised in partnership with ten national institutions, exploring how archives and collections can be used as creative resources. The module focuses on a set of digitised materials from each institution, explored thematically through virtual lectures, remote creative exercises, and on-site workshops (at TCD and partner institutions), during which you will learn about the institutions, archives, and collections where Ireland's cultural heritage is maintained.

This module is taught through a mixture of online learning and practical workshops, providing hands-on experience of items from some of Ireland's most important heritage collections, and exploring some key intersections between literature, collections, objects, and memory.

Over the course of this module, you will gain practical experience working with archives, catalogues, and heritage collections. The module assessment is closely linked with the 10 heritage partners institutions, and will involve collaborative projects with industry professionals to create and curate online materials for public audiences. Together, we will reflect on the processes and theories that help to inform and organise these collections, drawing on a range of critical approaches to heritage, collection, curation and display.

The institutions connected to this module are:

- The Library of Trinity College Dublin: Manuscripts and Early Printed Books
- The National Library of Ireland
- The Irish Film Institute
- Dublin City Library and Archive
- The Irish Museum of Modern Art
- The National Archives
- Marsh's Library
- The Hugh Lane Gallery
- The National Visual Arts Library at NCAD
- The Digital Repository of Ireland

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Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the module you will be able to:

- Engage confidently with the archives and collections at the ten heritage institutions
- Demonstrate your understanding of range of key critical and creative approaches to archiving and collecting
- Articulate responses to the key themes and issues of the module across a range of written forms
- Demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the material on the module and your confident engagement with relevant critical methodologies and theoretical frameworks in an essay
- Identify items for your digital project in collaboration with the other member(s) of your group, organize and present these items in a clear and logical fashion, tailored to a public audience
- Apply the skills and knowledge acquired through the module during your internship

Provisional lecture schedule:

- Week 1: WORKSHOP
  Introduction: Exploring the Collections (JB, JC, NOD)

- Week 2: Collections and Archives: A Critical Introduction (NOD)

- Week 3: Collections, Materiality, and the Body (JC)

- Week 4: WORKSHOP
- Julie Morrissey, Poet-in-Residence 2021-22, National Library of Ireland
  Site: Conference Room, Arts Block (opposite door to Douglas Hyde Gallery, Nassau Street entrance)

- Week 5: Colonialism and the Anthropocene (JB)

- Week 6: Archival Practices: Artists Working with Archives and Collections (NOD)

- Week 7: READING WEEK

- Week 8: Counter-narratives: Strategies of Resistance (JB)

- Week 9: WORKSHOP
  TBC
  Site: Conference Room, Arts Block (opposite door to Douglas Hyde Gallery, Nassau Street entrance)

- Week 10: Commemoration, Heritage, and Memory-Work (NOD)

- Week 11: Radical Hoarders: the Limits of Collecting (JC)

- Week 12: WORKSHOP
  Digital Repository of Ireland
  Site: Conference Room, Arts Block (opposite door to Douglas Hyde Gallery, Nassau Street entrance)

ASSESSMENT

Assessment for this module is in three parts:

- Reflective week-to-week journal on module materials (1500 words – 40%)
- Digital project to be created in small groups. For these projects you are asked to generate creative responses to the individual artefacts assembled from the heritage institutions. The digital project can take a variety of forms, including online exhibitions, digital publications, and podcasts, and should be suitable for a public audience (30%)
- Short reflective essay on digital project (1000 words – 30%)

Projects can be created using any software, but your material for assessment should be uploaded to Turnitin on Blackboard in **PDF format** only. Links to online (audio and/or visual) materials can be included within this PDF.

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INTERNSHIPS

Every student who takes this module will be offered a paid short-term internship at one of the partner organisations to develop and practice new, transferable skills for the workplace, addressing the need for future skilled workers in the heritage sector.

Internships will take place over six days in Summer 2023. Particular dates and schedules will be arranged with the institutions and may be spread over several weeks.

Weekly coursework must be completed before internships are assigned.

FURTHER READING

There is a significant literature on [the nature and history of archives and collections as well as related bodies of research and theory on the various thematics explored in this module]. Below is an initial list. Students are encouraged to make full use of the library catalogue and of the bibliographies in the books listed below for a fuller exploration of the topics that are of particular interest to them.

General sources

- Hal Foster, 'An Archival Impulse', *October*, 2004
- Okwui Enwezor, *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art*, ICP catalogue, 2008
- Saidiya Hartman, *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval*, New York: Norton, 2019
- Saidiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave*, New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giraud, 2008
- Yann Chateigne and Markus Miessen (eds), *The Archive as a Productive Space of Conflict*, Sternberg Press, 2016
- Jacques Derrida, 'Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression', *Diacritics*, 1995
- Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents*, Duke Uni Press, 2014
- Lisa Parks and Nicole Starolieski, *Signal Traffic: Critical Studies of Media Infrastructures*, 2015
- Hito Steyerl, 'Is a Museum a Factory?', e-flux Journal 7 (June-August 2009) https://www.e-flux.com/journal/07/61390/is-a-museum-a-factory/

- Samir Bhowmik and Jussi Parikka (eds) 'Memory Machines: Infrastructural Performance as an Art Method', *Leonardo* (MIT Press), 2019
- David Capener, 'The Material Cloud and the Archive of Everyday Life', *Architecture, Media, Politics, Society*, 2020
- Yuk Hui, Archivist Manifesto: https://www.metamute.org/editorial/lab/archivist-manifesto
- Cornelia Visman, *Files: Law and Media Technology*, 2000
- Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, 1966
- Kristine Stiles (ed), *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: a sourcebook of artists' writings* (California: University of California Press, 2012)
- Jennifer Barrett, Museums and the Public Sphere (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011)
- Nick Thurston, Craig Dworkin and Simon Morris, *Do or DIY*, 2012
- Gavin Everall and Jane Rolo (eds), *Again, a Time Machine: from Distribution to Archive* (Book Works, 2012)
- 'The Museum Revisited', *Artforum* (2010)
- Dan Hicks, *The Brutish Museums: The Benin Bronzes, Colonial Violence and Cultural Restitution* (Pluto, 2020)
- Saidiya Hartman, 'Venus in Two Acts', *Small Axe*, 12: 2 (2008), 1-14
- Ian Cobain, *The History Thieves: Secrets, Lies, and the Shaping of a Modern Nation* (Granta, 2016)
- Achille Mbembe, 'The Power of the Archive and its Limits', in *Refiguring the Archive*, eds. Hamilton, Harris et al (Springer, 2002), 19-27
- Meredith J. DeBoom, 'Climate Necropolitics: Ecological Civilization and the Distributive Geographies of Extractive Violence in the Anthropocene', *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 111:3 (2021), 900-912
- Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'The Human Condition in the Anthropocene', *Tanner Lectures*, Yale University (2015)
- María Puig de la Bellacasa, "'Nothing Comes Without Its World': Thinking with Care", *The Sociological Review*, 60: 2 (May 2012): 197–216
- Rodney Harrison and Colin Sterling (eds), *Reimagining Museums for Climate Action* (Museums for Climate Action, 2021)
- Boris Groys, *On the New*, transl. E.M. Goshgarian (London: Verso, 2014 [1992])
- Bruce Althuser (ed), *Collecting the New: Museums and Contemporary Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005)
- Aruna D'Souza, *Whitewalling: Art, Race, & Protest in 3 Acts* (New York: Badlands, 2018)
- John Elsner and Robert Cardinal (eds), *The Cultures of Collecting* (London: Reaktion, 1994)
- Lizzie Muller and Caroline Seck Langill (eds), *Curating Lively Objects: Museums Beyond Disciplines* (Routledge, 2022)
- Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius and Piotr Piotrowski (eds), *From Museum Critique to the Critical Museum* (Routledge, 2016)
- Laura Raicovich, *Culture Strike: Art and Museums in an Age of Protest* (London: Verso, 2021)

Anthologies / online resources

- See the Whitechapel / MIT *Documents of Contemporary Art* book series, particularly 'The Archive', ed. Charles Merewether, 2006
- See the *What is … ?* series on the website of Irish Museum of Modern Art for helpful subject-specific overviews/introductions. Texts of the publications are online: http://www.imma.ie/en/page_212532.htm
- See Ubuweb (at www.ubu.com) for an archive of avant-garde artists and writers' publications, publishing experiments, performances.
- Michael D Higgins, 'Empire shaped Ireland's past. A century after partition, it still shapes our present', *Guardian*, 11 Feb 2021: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/feb/11/empire-ireland-century-partition-present-britain-history
- 'Archival Activism: Community-Centred Approaches to Archives', discussion by Sharon Webb, Boni Odoemene, Zakiya Collier, *DRI* (October 2020): https://repository.dri.ie/catalog/m6141k788
- 'Black and Irish: Expanding Ireland's Digital Cultural Heritage', Interview with Eric Ehigie, *DRI* (October 2021): https://dri.ie/black-and-irish-expanding-irelands-digital-cultural-heritage
- Leon Diop, Femi Bankole, Amanda Ade, Boni Odeomene, The Black and Irish Podcast, *RTE*: https://www.rte.ie/radio/podcasts/series/33229-black-irish/
- Interference Archive (Brooklyn): https://interferencearchive.org/ and https://vimeo.com/209355251
- Archive Nation podcasts: https://soundcloud.com/archive-nation and https://twitter.com/nation_archive

Conferences / research projects

- 'National Museums: Narrating the Nation', NMI and NCAD, 29 Oct and 5 Nov 2021: https://www.museum.ie/en-IE/News/National-Museums-Narrating-the-Nation
- 'Ireland, Museums, Empire, Colonialism: Collections, Archives, Buildings and Landscapes', QUB and Ulster Museum, 8-9 April 2022: https://irishmuseums.org/news/ireland-museums-empire-colonialism-collections-archives-buildings-and-landscapes
- 'Trinity Colonial Legacies', two-year research project by the School of History, TCD: https://histories-humanities.tcd.ie/research/colonial-legacies/about.php
- Yale and Slavery: https://yaleandslavery.yale.edu/ and https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-giUzqc19Q39FptW_uqHNEZv-dEvAEiu