

Museums and other Institutions¹

THE UNIVERSITY ART COLLECTIONS

Curator and Head of the University Art Collections. Catherine Giltrap, M.A.

Trinity College Dublin possesses a significant art collection acquired over a period of some three hundred years, including a distinguished collection of historic portraits and sculptures by Irish and international artists. Additionally, the College holds important silver artefacts, many collected for commemorative and continued ceremonial purposes. Further information is available at www.tcd.ie/artcollections and *Paintings and Sculptures in Trinity College Dublin* by Anne Crookshank and David Webb (Dublin: Trinity College Dublin Press, 1990) plus *The Silver Collection. Trinity College Dublin* by Douglas Bennett (Dublin: Trinity College Dublin Press, 1988).

Actively collecting contemporary Irish and international visual art, the 'Modern Collection' comprises sculpture, paintings, prints, drawings, and, more recently, photographic and digital media. Many major Irish artists from the 1950s to today are represented alongside international counterparts, with campus sculpture being a particular highlight. Information may be sought from www.tcd.ie/artcollections; *George Dawson: An Unbiased Eye. Modern and Contemporary Art at Trinity College Dublin since 1959* edited by Catherine Giltrap (Dublin: Associated Editions, 2010); and *The Modern Art Collection Trinity College Dublin* compiled by David Scott (Dublin: Trinity College Dublin Press, 1989). The art collections are dispersed throughout the College, enhancing communal areas, staff offices, student and guest rooms. Contact artcollections@tcd.ie.

The College Gallery

The *College Gallery*, as it has been known since its inauguration in 1959 by the late George Dawson, Professor of Genetics, was a sub-collection featuring artworks traditionally hired during Michaelmas term by students and staff with rooms and offices in College. The student scheme has been reorientated, in order that, where feasible, every common living area in the student residences on the main campus displays an artwork from the collections all year round. Acquisitions were supported by hire fees until recently, and bolstered, initially, by a grant from the Trinity Trust, the Gulbenkian Foundation and the Arts Council. In addition, artworks are also donated by individuals, including many given by Professor Dawson and artists. The new Art in Rooms scheme (AIR) does not charge the students. The staff AIR scheme will be introduced in phases, commencing in 2026.

SAMUEL BECKETT THEATRE

Theatre Manager. Tim Scott, B.A.

The Samuel Beckett Theatre (www.tcd.ie/beckett-theatre), named after one of the most innovative playwrights of the twentieth century, was opened in 1992 to celebrate Trinity's quatercentenary. It is both the campus theatre of the School of Creative Arts, and a working theatre that hosts performances by theatre companies from Ireland and abroad. During the academic year, the theatre primarily showcases the work of academics, practitioners, and students.

As the biggest black-box theatre space within the city, the Samuel Beckett Theatre regularly hosts performances for the Dublin Theatre Festival, the Dublin Fringe Festival and the Dublin Dance Festival.

¹Societies and institutions which are recognised by the College but in respect of whose activities the College does not accept any responsibilities are marked with an asterisk. They are listed in this section for information purposes only.

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The Samuel Beckett Centre, the building in which the theatre is situated, also houses academic and administrative offices, a seminar room and a dance studio, as well as Players' Theatre, the studio theatre of Dublin University Players, Trinity's student drama society.

BOTANIC GARDEN

Director. Jennifer McElwain, B.A., PH.D.

Curator/Administrator. [vacant]

The College Botanic Garden is situated on the Trinity Hall site. The purpose of the garden is to support botanical teaching and research, and the collections and facilities reflect this. There is a walled garden, arboretum, glasshouses, specialised growth facilities, and a laboratory/office complex. The garden also houses the 'Threatened Irish Plant Genebank', a store of deeply frozen seeds of rare plants. Several species in the living collection are not in cultivation elsewhere. Although not a public garden, the Botanic Garden welcomes visitors and groups by arrangement with the curator. Further information is available at www.tcd.ie/botany/facilities/botanic-garden.

JOHN GABRIEL BYRNE COMPUTER SCIENCE COLLECTION

Curators. Brian Coghlan, B.E., PH.D., Dan McCarthy, B.E., PH.D.

This remarkable collection is located in the School of Computer Science and Statistics. Its title is in recognition of Professor John Gabriel Byrne (1933-2016), who founded and led the Department of Computer Science during its first forty years of rapid development, and has been called both a "genuine Renaissance Man, with a huge range of interests" and "the father of computing in Ireland, responsible, directly or indirectly, for most of the extraordinary success of the Irish software sector". Over his entire life he gathered an impressive and invaluable collection of early computing books and documents, sliderules, software, instruments and machines, which form the basis for the collection. With further donations there are now about three thousand items, see the online catalog at: www.scss.tcd.ie/SCSSTreasuresCatalog.

The collection exists to further scholarly research and teaching; to arrange a visit please contact coghlan@cs.tcd.ie or mccarthy@cs.tcd.ie.

*THE DOUGLAS HYDE GALLERY OF CONTEMPORARY ART**

Chair. Patrick John Prendergast, B.A., B.A.I., PH.D., SC.D.

Director. Georgina Jackson, B.A., PH.D.

Gallery Manager. Rachel McIntyre, B.A.

Engagement and Projects Curator. Emma Moore, B.A., M.A.

In a unique partnership, [The Douglas Hyde Gallery of Contemporary Art](#) was co-founded by the Arts Council and Trinity College Dublin. It opened to the public in March 1978 as the first publicly funded space dedicated to contemporary art and the first university gallery in Ireland. It is now an independent company limited by guarantee, with a board of directors partly appointed by the Board of the College. Throughout its history, the gallery has brought artists of significant international standing to Ireland for the first time, including Marlene Dumas, Gabriel Kuri, and Alice Neel, and presented pivotal exhibitions by Irish artists including Sam Keogh, Kathy Prendergast and Eva Rothschild.

Housed in the University's Arts building, the gallery contains two spaces: the cavernous Gallery 1, designed by Paul Koralek of ABK, which is approached down a staircase, from above, and the more intimate Gallery 2, designed by McCullough Mulvin, which was opened in 2001. The Douglas Hyde is a space for challenging and ambitious contemporary art. A key focus is the production and commissioning of contemporary art; supporting international and Irish artists to make bold new work and presenting pivotal solo exhibitions by significant artists of the present and the future. Audiences are profoundly engaged through these exhibitions, as well as artist projects, talks, events, screenings and publications. Standing at the meeting point between the city of Dublin and the leading research university in Ireland, The Douglas Hyde values

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excellence, enquiry, experimentation and diversity; knowing that art deepens our understanding of ourselves and gives us new ways of thinking and of seeing the world.

GEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

Curator. [vacant]

The Geological Museum is located in Unit 24 of the Trinity Enterprise Centre, Pearse Street (trinitygeologicalmuseum.com).

The geological collections were first assembled in 1777 and now number over 200,000 specimens. The main palaeontological holdings include Irish Silurian and Carboniferous invertebrates, Mesozoic ostracods, and Upper Palaeozoic miospores, and Pleistocene mammals. The rock and mineral collections largely date from the 1820s and contain both Irish and foreign specimens. They include the important collection of minerals assembled by the Hon. George Knox, M.P. for Dublin University (1797-1807).

Currently the collections are on display in two locations: in the main gallery on Pearse Street and in the entrance hallway of the Museum Building. The former contains the exhibition *The Story of the Earth* that provides a general overview of the geological sciences, while the latter campus exhibition contains skeletons of the iconic Pleistocene mammal, the Giant Irish Deer, as well as some topical geological exhibits.

The geological collections are available for teaching and research, and have been utilised in developing online resources for schools and universities.

TRINITY HALL

Warden. Nigel Stevenson, B.SC., PH.D.

In the year 1908 the house and grounds, now known as [Trinity Hall](#), were acquired by the University. The adjoining house and grounds were purchased in 1910 by John Purser Griffith, MICE, and Mrs Griffith, and presented to the University in memory of Frederick Purser, M.A., F.T.C.D. A further five acres were acquired in 1966 when the Dublin University Botanic Garden was transferred to part of the grounds of Trinity Hall.

Trinity Hall was originally used for women students but is now a residence for all students, with some accommodation for married students and staff. Domestic matters in the Hall are the concern of the Warden, the Assistant Wardens and the Accommodation Officer (Trinity Hall).

HERBARIUM

Curator. Peter Moonlight, B.A., M.SC., D.PHIL.

Assistant Curator. Trevor Roland Hodkinson, B.SC., M.A., M.SC., PH.D.

Though the herbarium (www.tcd.ie/botany/facilities/herbarium) and associated library houses the earliest known collections of Irish plant material (those of Caleb Threlkeld dating from ca. 1722) it was only formally established in 1835.

The herbarium's nucleus was the personal collection of Thomas Coulter, its first curator, after whom both Bigcone Pine (*Pinus coulteri*) and *Romneya coulteri* are named. However, the herbarium is really the creation of William Henry Harvey (curator 1844–1866). Harvey was incredibly hard-working. He writes, "I rise at five a.m. or before it and work until half-past eight on the Antarctic Algae....": this led to the accumulation of 100,000 specimens. More recently the herbarium has focussed on the Flora of Europe (under D.A. Webb: curator 1950-1983) and on the Flora of Thailand (under J.A.N. Parnell: curator 1983-2021).

Following a grant from Lord Iveagh the existing herbarium building was added as an annex to the School of Botany in 1910. The herbarium is now of international importance and scope. It contains ca. 300,000 specimens with about 1,500 specimens being added annually. Its holdings include a large number of type specimens (those on which the original description of a species is based), the biggest international collection of plants in Ireland, one of the largest and most important collections of algae (seaweeds) in the world and core reference collections of plants from all continents on Earth. It is particularly rich in material from South-east Asia (notably A.F.G.

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Kerr's from Thailand), Southern Africa, Australia, North America and Europe. It is the only herbarium in Ireland to have digitised any part of its collections, see: plants.jstor.org. The official designation of the herbarium is TCD.

HERMATHENA

Editor. Monica Rachel Gale, B.A., PH.D.

Reviews Editor. Charlie Kerrigan, B.A., M.ST., PH.D.

Editorial Advisers. John Dillon (Dublin), David Ford (Cambridge), Werner Jeanrond (Oxford)

Hermathena, a Trinity College Dublin Review, founded in 1873, publishes scholarly papers. The periodical is published twice yearly, in the summer and in the winter.

Subscriptions: 2025-26 (two issues per year) €60. Single issues €30.

Back-numbers, if in print, may be obtained from the Editor of *Hermathena*, Trinity College, Dublin 2, price €30.

Exchange arrangements. Enquiries concerning exchange of other periodicals for *Hermathena* should be made to the Librarian, Trinity College, Dublin 2.

WEINGREEN MUSEUM OF BIBLICAL ANTIQUITIES

Curator. Zuleika Rodgers, B.A., PH.D.

The museum is located in the Arts and Social Sciences Building, and received its present title in 1977 in recognition of Dr Weingreen's efforts in the creation of the museum.

The museum consists mainly of pottery and other artefacts from the ancient near east. The collection was started in 1952 with an important gift of pottery and small objects from the Wellcome Trust, while from the year 1953 allocations were received from the Jericho and Jerusalem archaeological expeditions, to which the College had made annual contributions. Another substantial gift was received from the Wellcome Trust in 1956. A collection of Egyptian and Babylonian antiquities was added in 1957. In 1961 the late Lord Crookshank bequeathed a collection of Egyptian antiquities, Greek and Roman coins, Roman lamps, and leaves from seventeenth and eighteenth century Torah scrolls to the museum. Some pottery from excavations at Buseirah, Jordan, was added in 1977. Further donations have been made by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Professor Anne Crookshank, Dr D.B. Harden and Dr C.-M. Bennett. Loans of relevant antiquities for temporary display are welcome; the museum currently has on loan from Mrs J. L'Amie a Samaritan Pentateuch and a Hebrew Scroll of Esther. The museum is a member of the Irish Museums Association.

The museum exists to further scholarly research and teaching. Posters and postcards of some major exhibits are available. Visiting scholars, school parties, and members of the public, are welcome to visit, by appointment, during teaching term. Applications should be made in writing to the Curator of the Weingreen Museum, Arts and Social Sciences Building, Trinity College, Dublin 2 or by email to rodgersz@tcd.ie.

ZOOLOGICAL MUSEUM

Interim Curator. Paula Murphy, M.A., PH.D.

The Zoological Museum (www.tcd.ie/zoology/museum) owes its origins to the establishment of the Dublin University Museum in 1777. The collection was transferred to the Zoology Building in 1876 and following many years of change is now located in a refurbished area on the first floor.

There are over 25,000 objects in the collection, many of which are over 200 years old. A feature of the museum is the many examples of extinct and endangered species including Ireland's last Great Auk (declared extinct in 1844), the Tasmanian Wolf and the Great Indian Rhinoceros. All the main animal groups are represented in the collection which also contains a rare set of the famous Blaschka glass models of marine life dating from approximately 1880.

The museum has three main functions centered around research, teaching and outreach. While the main purpose of the museum is to provide undergraduate training in animal systematics, biodiversity and taxonomy, it has become a popular visitor attraction in the summer

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months offering guided tours, school workshops and specialised talks based around a unique interactive experience.

In 2015, the museum was awarded full accreditation of the Museums Standards Programme for Ireland. This achievement reflects the commitment of the Zoological Museum to the long-term care and development of its valuable and historic collection.