



CW 350 PHOTO/GRAPHIC: SHAPING VISUAL NARRATIVES

IES Abroad Dublin

DESCRIPTION:

Over twelve weekly sessions, this course will facilitate student engagement with the fundamentals of narrative and visual storytelling.

An exploration of key elements such as characterisation, language, dialogue, and plot will constitute the backbone of the course. The distinctiveness of Irish visual culture will be emphasised, from national treasures such as The Book of Kells, arguably the earliest Irish example of a graphic novel, to the vibrant, award-winning and critically acclaimed graphic illustration industry.

As part of the visual component to the course, students will develop an understanding of basic photographic technique. Building on an engagement with narrative and photography, and with the guidance of a professional graphic illustrator, each student will also develop multimedia visual narratives in graphic novel form. Initially, the drawing component will take the form of simple tracings and outline sketches, before moving on to more complex graphic art techniques. Each student will determine to what extent he or she will make use of photographic and graphic elements in his or her work, which will culminate in an end-of-term exhibition of students' work that will showcase completed written portfolios, storyboards, stencils, and photographic images.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

ADDITIONAL COST: Students are expected to have a camera to use for this course. All graphic arts supplies that are needed for the course will be provided by IES Abroad.

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

Students will engage with weekly topic areas through short presentations, guided discussion, group work and writing and imaging exercises that will focus on spontaneity, experimentation and craft. Guest speakers such as writers, photographers and graphic artists, field trips to sites of cultural, historical, and artistic significance, attendance at public readings, exhibitions, and film screenings, will complement and augment the students' experience of this course. Moodle will be used to better facilitate student engagement with primary and secondary resources, as well as provide an interactive space for project collaboration.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Participation – 20%
- Weekly Workbook – 40%
- Final Portfolio and Showcase – 40%

Participation

The ambition in including a participation component is to facilitate students learning from each other and to give them the opportunity to practice and develop listening, speaking and persuasive skills. A set of simple guidelines will be introduced at the start of Session 1. These guidelines will be discussed in detail so that students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Below is an outline of these guidelines:

Outstanding Participant: Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation. Ideas are consistently substantive and insightful, and persuasively presented. Absence would significantly diminish the quality of class discussion.

Good Participant: Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive and insightful, and often persuasively presented. Absence would diminish quality of class discussion.

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Adequate Participant: Contributions in class reflect satisfactory preparation. Ideas are sometimes substantive and insightful, but seldom offer a new direction for the discussion. Absence would diminish quality of class discussion.

Non-Participant: Little or no contribution in class. Subsequently, there is limited basis for evaluation. Absence would not affect the quality of class discussion.

Unsatisfactory Participant: Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are seldom substantive, provide little insight, and are rarely constructive. Absence would improve the quality of class discussion.

Weekly Workbook

This continuous assessment component will take the form of a chronological workbook or blog, containing written reflections and images pertinent to the aspects of the course addressed during each session. Students will document their deepened understanding of the creative process, development of an individual style, and communicate moments of significance. To be submitted weekly via Moodle and assessed by both instructors.

Final Portfolio and Showcase

Each student portfolio will include at least ten completed and themed pieces in the form of mounted storyboards, stencil works, comic strips, distinct and blended photographic and graphic pieces. The portfolio will represent the student's best work and demonstrate a high standard of competency in the areas of written, photographic, and visual narratives. The showcase will take the form of an open gallery, with students presenting their respective work and discussing the creative process behind each piece. High quality digital copies of each portfolio element will be submitted via Moodle and assessed by both instructors.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate how the forms and functions of narrative act as fundamental instruments of thought, communication, and imagining.
- Create narratives through experimentation with forming, developing, and combining written texts and visual images.
- Analyze and critique their own and others' narratives in a creative context.
- Articulate how visual narratives act as a means to understanding and responding to a new culture, particularly Irish culture.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Because IES courses are designed to take advantage of the unique contribution of the instruction and the lecture/discussion format, regular class attendance is mandatory. Any missed class, without a legitimate reason will be reflected in the final grade. A legitimate reason would include: documented illness or family bereavement. Travel, (including travel delays) is not a legitimate reason.

CONTENT:

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 1	Narrative: Construction, Action, And Transmission <i>Tutor's presentation, discussion, and writing workshop</i> - Having introduced ourselves and examined the core ambitions of the course, we will consider and discuss the relationship between narrative and the nature of thought, memory, and language. Students will participate in writing exercises, exploring various forms of fictional narrative; first or third person, close or omniscient, and considering identity of speaker and identity of listener.	- Chapter 2: 'Basic Skills, Genre, and Fiction as Dream' pp 17 – 39 in Gardner, John. <i>The Art of Fiction: Notes on Craft for Young Writers</i>. New York: Vintage, 1991. - Chapters 6 & 7: 'Technique' and 'Plotting' pp 125 – 195 in Gardner, John. <i>The Art of Fiction: Notes on Craft for Young Writers</i>. New York: Vintage, 1991. - Chapter 5: 'Narration' pp 85 – 109 in Prose, Francine. <i>Reading Like a Writer: A Guide for People Who Love Books and for Those Who Want to Write Them</i>. London: Union Books, 2012.
Session 2	Flash Fiction: Postcards, Verbal Snapshots, and Vignettes <i>Tutor's presentation, discussion, and writing workshop</i> - Again, focusing on narrative fiction, this session will consider the fundamentals of characterisation (dreams, fears, strengths, and weaknesses) and plot. Students will participate in collaborative writing exercises, involving suggestion and implication, observation and consciousness; 'think about what you see, ask yourself what it means'.	- Chapter 14: 'Introducing a Character' pp 66 – 70 in Lodge, David. <i>The Art of Fiction</i>. London: Vintage, 2011. - Chapter 26: 'Showing and Telling' pp 121 – 125 in Lodge, David. <i>The Art of Fiction</i>. London: Vintage, 2011.

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 3	‘A Thousand Words’ – Photography and Visual Narrative • <i>Tutor’s presentation, discussion and image workshop</i> • Our third session will see us consider the notion of photography as a form of non-verbal communication and how a ‘successful’ photographic image prompts questions, creates uncertainty, and may even extend horizons. • Students will be introduced to the importance of awareness, training the ‘photographic eye’, and the value of patience. The spatial constraints of the viewfinder, and photographic looking and seeing, will be discussed. A gallery of images will be displayed and fundamental elements to successful photography addressed. These will include the importance of light, composition, shutter speed, aperture, focusing.	• Chapter 3: ‘That Vast and Absorbing Subject’ pp 30 – 60 in Carville, Justin. <i>Photography and Ireland</i>. London: Reaktion Books, 2011. • Chapter 1: ‘The Image Frame’ pp 8 – 30 in Freeman, Michael. <i>The Photographer’s Eye</i>. Lewes: Ilex, 2007. • Chapter 5: ‘Intent’ pp 128 – 146 in Freeman, Michael. <i>The Photographer’s Eye</i>. Lewes: Ilex, 2007.
Session 4	Stories with, and without, words: Narrative and Image • <i>Tutor’s presentation, discussion, image and writing workshop</i> • Through a series of collaborative exercises, students will explore and experiment with the connections between the written and the visual. Students will write a short fictional narrative which they will exchange with another member of the group. Each student will then have to make a single photographic image that captures their interpretation of the received written piece.	• Chapter 3: ‘Interpreting Photographs’ pp 36 – 52 in Barrett, Terry. <i>Criticizing Images: An Introduction to Understanding Images</i>. London: McGrath-Hill Higher Education, 2005. • Part 1: ‘I Say Goodbye to Everyone’ pp 3 – 80 in Guibert, Emmanuel, Lefèvre, Didier & Lemercier, Frédéric. <i>The Photographer</i>. London: First Second Books, 2009.

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 5	Stories with, and without, words: Narrative and Image (contd.) <i>Tutor's presentation, discussion, image and writing workshop</i> - Building on the experience of Session 4, we will reverse the creative process, and explore the connections between the visual and the written. Photographic images created will be exchanged and students will write a narrative piece in response to the received image.	- Preface, Introduction, and 'The Passion of Man' pp 9 – 61 in Walker, George A. <i>Graphic Witness: Four Wordless Graphic Novels</i>. New York: Firefly Books, 2007. - Part 2: 'Helicopter!' pp 80 – 160 in Guibert, Emmanuel, Lefèvre, Didier & Lemerrier, Frédéric. <i>The Photographer</i>. London: First Second Books, 2009.
Session 6	Verbal and Visual: Pictures, Words and the Space In-between <i>Tutor's presentation, discussion, image and writing workshop</i> - In conjunction with a review of topics covered and materials created during the first five sessions, we will prepare for the latter half of the course, where students will begin the process of merging graphic illustrations with their written and photographic work. We will meet with the illustrator for the first time and discuss the format and practicalities of the sessions to follow.	'Images as Narrative Tools' pp 9 – 47 in Chinn, Mike & McLoughlin, Chris. <i>Create Your Own Graphic Novel: From Inspiration to Publication</i>. Lewes: Ilex, 2006.
Session 7	Developing the Concept <i>Graphic Workshop: Pencilling, Lettering, Inking, and Colouring.</i> The graphic artist will introduce students to the fundamentals of his/her craft, and explain simple techniques for visualising narratives. What kind of a story works well in a visual format? What should be avoided, and why?	Chapter 2: 'Thinking in Words and Pictures' pp 39 – 59 in Marks, Andrea. <i>Writing for Visual Thinkers: A Guide for Artists and Designers (Voices That Matter)</i>. United States: Pearson Education, 2011.

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 8	The Story Becomes Art <i>Graphic Workshop: Panel Layouts and Framing.</i> How do you decide what to put in your frame, and what to exclude (cropping)? How do the emotional “beats” of the story become resolved into frames? What are the criteria for deciding whether to use a photographic image, a drawn image, or simply text, to advance your storyline? All these issues will be addressed.	- Panel Layouts’ pp 108 – 110 in Chinn, Mike & McLoughlin, Chris. <i>Create Your Own Graphic Novel: From Inspiration to Publication.</i> Lewes: Ilex, 2006. ‘Framing Devices and Crops’ pp 110 – 112 in Chinn, Mike & McLoughlin, Chris. <i>Create Your Own Graphic Novel: From Inspiration to Publication.</i> Lewes: Ilex, 2006.
Session 9	Representing Dialogue <i>Graphic Workshop: Creating Balloons and Lettering.</i> Introduction to the use of dialogue in the graphic form. Students will be shown, not only simple practical techniques, but also to judge when it is better to use a “narrator’s voice” and when to deploy direct speech – and the different emotional impact of each of these.	Part 6: ‘The Reader’ (Dialogue vs. Action, Dialogue vs. Image) pp 47 – 69 in Eisner, Will. <i>Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative.</i> New York: WW Norton & Co., 2008.
Session 10	Blending Narrative Elements <i>Graphic Workshop: Scanning in Hand-Drawn Art Work.</i> The artist will use this and the subsequent session as an opportunity to help students tighten-up their short narratives, and take responsibility for editorial decisions about exactly how to bring them to their final form. He/she will also examine the two-way dynamic of visual storytelling – how have the words shaped the images – but also, conversely, how has the written story itself been shaped in the process of taking visual form?	‘Getting the Script Drawn’ pp 112 – 114 in Chinn, Mike & McLoughlin, Chris. <i>Create Your Own Graphic Novel: From Inspiration to Publication.</i> Lewes: Ilex, 2006.

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 11	Presentation and Possibility <i>Graphic Workshop: Print Production and Presentation.</i> What next? How to know when the graphic story is “done”. Re-working versus overworking. Possible markets for graphic stories – competitions, publishers and websites. The graphic novel as “storyboard” – the (future) possibilities of film.	
Session 12	Gallery Showcase of Students' Work Completed portfolios, storyboards, stencils, photographic images, writings and multimedia presentations will go on display both online and in at the IES Dublin Centre or, if appropriate and where available, a gallery space in Dublin city centre. Each student will read their artist statement, outlining their intention and discussing the creative process. An open discussion forum will follow each student presentation.	

REQUIRED READINGS:

- ***Copies of pertinent extracts and loan copies of DVDs will be provided.***
- Abbott, H. Porter. *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Badger, Gerry. *The Genius of Photography: How Photography Has Changed Our Lives*. London: Quadrille Publishing Ltd., 2007.
- Barrett, Terry. *Criticizing Images: An Introduction to Understanding Images*. London: McGrath-Hill Higher Education, 2005
- Carville, Justin. *Photography and Ireland*. London: Reaktion Books, 2011
- Chinn, Mike & McLoughlin, Chris. *Create Your Own Graphic Novel: From Inspiration to Publication*. Lewes: Ilex, 2006.
- Cooney, Daniel. *Writing and Illustrating the Graphic Novel: Everything You Need to Know to Create Great Work and Get It Published*. United States: Barron's Educational Series, 2011.
- Easton, Elizabeth, W. (ed.) *Snapshot: Painters and Photography 1888 – 1915*. Amsterdam: Van Gogh Museum, 2011.
- Eisner, Will. *Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative*. New York: WW Norton & Co., 2008.
- Fennel, James. *Vanishing Ireland*. Dublin: Hodder Headline Ireland, 2006.
- Fennel, James. *Vanishing Ireland: Further Chronicles of a Disappearing World*. Dublin: Hodder Headline Ireland, 2009.
- Freeman, Michael. *The Photographer's Eye: Composition and Design for Better Digital Photos*. Lewes: Ilex, 2007.
- Gardner, John. *The Art of Fiction: Notes on Craft for Young Writers*. New York: Vintage, 1991.
- Guibert, Emmanuel, Lefèvre, Didier & Lemerrier, Frédéric. *The Photographer*. London: First Second Books, 2009.
- Jacobson, Colin, ed. *Beyond the Moment: Irish Photojournalism in Our Time*. Dublin: PPAI, 2008.
- Lardinois, Brigitte. *Magnum Ireland*. London: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 2005.
- Lodge, David. *The Art of Fiction*. London: Vintage, 2011.
- Marks, Andrea. *Writing for Visual Thinkers: A Guide for Artists and Designers (Voices That Matter)*. United States: Pearson Education, 2011.

- Mateu-Mestre, Marcos. *Framed Ink: Drawing and Composition for Visual Storytellers*. United States: Design Studio Press, 2010.
- Meegan, Rua & Teeling, Lauren. *Irish Street Art: Stencils, Paste Ups, Murals & Portraits*. Dublin: Visual Feast Productions Ireland, 2010.
- Milledge, Gary Spencer. *Alan Moore: Storyteller*. Lewes: Ilex, 2001.
- McKee, Robert. *Story*. London: Methuen Publishing Limited, 1999.
- Prose, Francine. *Reading Like a Writer: A Guide for People Who Love Books and for Those Who Want to Write Them*. London: Union Books, 2012.
- Walker, George A. *Graphic Witness: Four Wordless Graphic Novels*. New York: Firefly Books, 2007.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- ***Copies of all texts available in the IES Dublin library:***
- Crosbie, Duncan. *Life on a Famine Ship: A Journal of the Irish Famine 1845 – 1850 (Interactive Book)*. Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 2008.
- Crowe, Catriona. *Dublin 1911 (Multimedia Book)*. Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2011.
- Hegarty, Pat & Knight, Kevin. *The Easter Rising (Interactive Book)*. Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 2010.
- Hunt, Gerry. *Blood Upon the Rose: Easter 1916: The Rebellion That Set Ireland Free (Graphic Novel)*. Dublin: O'Brien Press, 2009.
- Kubert, Joe. *Fax From Sarajevo (Interactive Book)*. Milwaukee: Dark Horse Comics, 2009.

RECOMMENDED ONLINE, ARCHIVE, AND EXHIBITION RESOURCES:

[‘Fighting Words’ Creative Writing Centre](#)

[National Photographic Archive](#)

[National Print Museum](#)

[RTÉ Online Photographic Archive](#)

[The Gallery of Photography](#)

[Irish Film Institute](#)

[PhotoIreland Festival](#)