



LT 354 THE FINEST MUSIC – THE CRAFT OF IRISH POETRY

IES Abroad Dublin

DESCRIPTION: Over 12 weeks this course will facilitate student engagement with writing creatively with a concentration on poetry. Concurrently participants will trace the development of Irish poetry from early Irish poetry to Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire through WB Yeats and Seamus Heaney, and on through the 21st Century to younger generation poets and poets in the Irish language. Though constructed as a survey course, from the outset students will also be exposed to a wide range of contemporary voices in order to give a flavour of the excitement and diversity of the current scene and its relationship to the tradition. Taking place in Dublin, UNESCO City of Literature, the course is a unique opportunity to use the literary heritage and present-day life of the city as a venue for inspiration and learning.

The course will explore themes of nation and conflict up to and through the Northern Irish Troubles in the poetry of Seamus Heaney, Derek Mahon, Paul Muldoon, Colette Bryce and others; the dual language tradition and major poets in the Irish language including Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, as well the representation of women in the canon, both as subject and object, through the poetry of Eavan Boland, Paula Meehan and others. The concerns and influences of the generation of Irish poets who emerged from the 1990's up to the present day continue to be varied and among those we will look at are Colette Bryce, Victoria Kennefick, Ailbhe Darcy, and others. Our last session will look at the lively performance poetry and spoken word scene in Dublin.

Concurrent with this we will focus on the craft of poetry and development of student's own writing. They will respond to a varied programme of exercises, craft challenges and 'poetry ideas' as well as supportive critiques, in order to draft and redraft a body of work. In weekly workshop sessions we will explore and draw on relevant aspects of craft drawn from the week's reading and seminar. These will include exploring rhyme and metre in forms such as the sonnet and the ballad as well as in free verse. We will also take example from the way poets have drawn from myth, daily life, observation and memory.

Course-related trips will include a visit to Marsh's Library, The Chester Beatty Museum, the National Gallery of Ireland Seamus Heaney exhibition, and the National Gallery.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- Seminars
- Writing exercises
- Workshops
- Course-related trips

Each session will consist of a presentation by the tutor/s and a forum for discussion of the assigned readings. This will be followed by group and individual writing exercises drawn from aspects of the readings set. Course-related trips to sites of cultural, historical, and literary significance, attendance at public readings, performances, and film screenings will complement the students' experience of this course.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Course participation - 10%
- Class journal – 20%
- Midterm draft portfolio (poetry manuscript & craft essay) – 20%

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- Final revised portfolio (poetry manuscript & craft essay) – 50%

PARTICIPATION:

This component will facilitate students to learn from each other and give them the opportunity to practice and develop listening, speaking and persuasion 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.
- **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.

Class Journal

The course journal will provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their experience of required readings as well as the weekly writing exercises and workshop. Topics will be identified and prompts provided to ensure that entries are focused and encourage students to work towards a deeper understanding of the craft and art of poetry writing, for their own writing but also their reading of poetry. 10 entries, 400 words each.

Midterm draft portfolio

By the half-way mark students will have approached the writing of poetry through a variety of forms and approaches. The Midterm draft portfolio will consist of 4- 6 pages of draft poems which will include at least one poem in a set form (i.e. ballad, sonnet, etc.) as well as the first section of the craft essay (see below)

Final revised portfolio

- 30%: This portfolio of work will consist of at least eight and no more than twelve pages of poems that have been workshopped and redrafted (i.e. eight to twelve poems of one page or four to six poems of two pages or any variant of same). This selection will include at least two poems in a set form. These poems will represent the student's best work of the term, and will be considered for inclusion in the IES Abroad Anthology of Writing.
- 20%: The portfolio will also include a 2000-word craft essay looking at aspects of the work of one or more of the poets on the course, with reference to their influence on student's own work.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

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

- Assimilate the connections between the poetry tradition in the Irish language and 20- 21st Century Irish poetry
- Engage critically and analytically with wide range of Irish poets and place them within a literary and cultural framework.
- Approach writing poetry in its various forms
- Effectively critique draft work and provide constructive oral and written feedback
- Value writing and literature as a means of engaging with and understanding new cultures

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

IES Abroad courses are designed to take advantage of the unique contribution of the instructor, and the lecture/discussion format is regarded as the primary mode of instruction. Class attendance, including course-related trips, is mandatory.

CONTENT:

Week	Content	Assignments
Week 1	Introductory: defining poetry Contemporary Voices (brief reading by and introduction to a contemporary poet) The Finest Music: Introduction to Early Irish Poetry Poetry Writing Workshop Week 1 seminar and writing workshop	- Reading: 'The Finest Music: An Anthology of Early Irish Lyrics' by Maurice Riordan, Introduction - Optional Reading: 'The Finest Music: An Anthology of Early Irish Lyrics' by Maurice Riordan - pp 1 - 26 - Optional reading: 'Some Themes in Early Irish Poetry' - Poetry Writing Exercise Week 1 Assignment - Journal 1 Assignment
Week 2	Contemporary Voices (brief reading by and introduction to a contemporary poet) An Irish Lament; Introduction to W.B. Yeats Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire/The Lament for Art O'Leary Early Yeats poems Poetry Writing Workshop Week 1 seminar and writing workshop	- Reading: 'WB Yeats: Poems Selected by Seamus Heaney' - Introduction - Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire (extract from Thomas Kinsella translation) - Optional Reading: 'Philosophy and Passion': W. B. Yeats, Ireland and Europe - Optional Reading: 'WB Yeats: Poems Selected by Seamus Heaney' - pp 3 - 35 - Optional Reading: 'Inventing Ireland' by Declan Kiberd - pp 99 - 135
Week 3	Contemporary Voices (brief reading by and introduction to a contemporary poet) Ghosts and Things: Visit to Marsh's Library and the Chester Beatty Museum Poetry Workshop (in class presentation of poetry writing assignment followed by field trip.) On site writing assignment in Marsh's Library	- Reading: 'Poetry Ireland Review: WB Yeats Special Issue' by Vona Groarke (ed.) - pp 22 - 55 - Reading: 'Yeats as an Example?' from 'Finders Keepers' by Seamus Heaney - pp 96 - 112

Week 4	Contemporary Voices (brief reading by and introduction to a contemporary poet) Continuing Yeats; Patrick Kavanagh 'Nothing whatever is by love debarred ' The poetry of Patrick Kavanagh from anti- pastoralist to rebirth by Dublin's Grand Canal. Poetry Writing Workshop Week Four	• Kavanagh, <u>Selected Poems</u>, pp ix-xli, 3-16, 101, 119-129 • Heaney, <u>Finders Keepers</u>, pp 134-145 • Fryatt, "Patrick Kavanagh's Potentialities" in <u>Oxford Companion</u> pp181-195
Week 5	Contemporary Voices (brief reading by and introduction to a contemporary poet) Seamus Heaney Introduction to the poetry of Seamus Heaney. We'll explore the background to his work and focus on a few key poems. • Poetry Writing Workshop Week 5 seminar and writing workshop	• Seamus Heaney Nobel Prize speech • An Interview with Seamus Heaney (2011) • 'To set the darkness echoing' (interview with Dennis O'Driscoll, 2008) • Peter Sirr on Seamus Heaney • (Introductory essay included with Seamus Heaney: Collected Poems, a 15-CD box set of Seamus Heaney reading his eleven poetry collections, published by RTÉ/The Lannan Foundation) • Unhappy and at Home: Seamus Deane interviews Heaney in 1977 • Reading: Selected Poetry by Seamus Heaney from 'An Anthology of Modern Irish Poetry' by Wes Davis (ed.) pp - 325 - 356 File • Journal 5 Assignment • Poetry Writing Exercise Week 5 Assignment
Week 6	Contemporary Voices (brief reading by and introduction to a contemporary poet) Seamus Heaney Museum Continuing our exploration of the work of Seamus Heaney we visit the National Library <i>Seamus Heaney: Listen Now Again</i> exhibition at the Bank of Ireland in College Green • Poetry Writing Workshop Week 6	• Reading: 'Heaney and Etymology' by Don Paterson from 'Poetry Ireland Review' - Issue 113 by Vona Groarke (ed.) pp - 163 - 166 • Reading: 'Listen Now Again' by Nick Laird from 'Poetry Ireland Review' - Issue 113 by Vona Groarke (ed.) pp - 167 – 169 • Journal 6 Assignment • Poetry Writing Exercise Week 6 Assignment

Week 7	Contemporary Voices (brief reading by and introduction to a contemporary poet) Poetry and the Northern Troubles How did poets deal with the violence and social and political upheavals of the Northern Ireland Troubles which lasted for about 30 years from the late 1960s to the Good Friday Agreement of 1998? Poetry Writing Workshop Week 7	- Ilya Kaminsky: 'We Lived Happily During the War' "The Poem Is a Warning" Ilya Kaminsky on his viral poem "We Lived Happily During the War" and Ukrainian resistance. - Poetry and the Troubles poems (in Moodle) - Reading: Selected Poems by Derek Mahon from 'An Anthology of Modern Irish Poetry' by Wes Davis (ed.) pp 439 – 444 - Journal 7 Assignment - Poetry Writing Exercise Week 7 Assignment
Week 8	Contemporary Voices (brief reading by and introduction to a contemporary poet) 'Not your muse' How did the magnetic poles of Irish poetry shift as poets Eavan Boland, Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin and Paula Meehan began to publish in the 1970's and 80's? Poetry Writing Workshop Week 8 seminar and writing workshop	'Who was Eavan Boland - Peter Sirr on Eavan Boland's Dublin 'Eavan Boland: the great Dublin poet and powerful feminist voice' - Irish women poets from Lúadán to the present' - Optional Reading: Extract from 'A Journey With Two Maps' by Eavan Boland pp 3 - 98 pp - 325 - 356 - Optional Reading: Lucy Collins Reading Irish Poetry Cultures 1930-1970 - Selected Poetry by Eavan Boland from 'An Anthology of Modern Irish Poetry' by Wes Davis (ed.) pp - 470 - 493 - Reading: Selected Poetry by Paula Meehan from 'An Anthology of Modern Irish Poetry' by Wes Davis (ed.) pp - 773 - 789 - Journal 7 Assignment - Poetry Writing Exercise Week 7 Assignment
Week 9	Younger Irish Poets Focus on the work of younger Irish poets including Julie O'Callaghan, Tara Bergin, Victoria Kennefick, Sara Berkeley Poetry Writing Workshop Week 9 seminar and writing workshop	- Reading: Selected Poetry by Paul Durcan from 'An Anthology of Modern Irish Poetry' by Wes Davis (ed.) pp - 494 - 495, 498 - 504 - Selected Poetry by Sinéad Morrissey from 'An Anthology of Modern Irish Poetry' by Wes Davis (ed.) pp - 921 - 935 - Younger Voices Book (in Moodle, Julie O'Callaghan, Tara Bergin, Victoria Kennefick) - Journal 8 Assignment - Poetry Writing Exercise Week 8 Assignment

Week 10	Contemporary Voices (brief reading by and introduction to a contemporary poet) Ceist na Teangan: The Language Question Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill and the Innti generation of poets in the Irish language seminar and writing workshop Poetry Writing Workshop Week 10 seminar and writing workshop	• Reading: Poems by Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill 1, 2 and 3 (pdfs) • Irish language poets (Moodle book with poems by Irish language poets including Michael Hartnett, Gearóid MacLochlainn and others) • Journal 8 Assignment • Poetry Writing Exercise Week 8
Week 11	Image as inspiration: trip to National Gallery Alongside with a field trip to the National Gallery we will look at the work of poets who draw inspiration and subject matter from visual material. Trip to the National Gallery of Ireland from where many poets have drawn their inspiration, and an onsite writing workshop	• Davies <u>Modern Irish Poetry</u>, pp 921-935, 827843 • Morrissey, <u>Parallax</u>, pp 1-25 • Groarke, <u>Frames</u>, pp9-33 • Carvalho Homem, 'Private Relations' in <u>Oxford Companion</u>, pp282-296
Week 12	The Spoken Word: poetry as Performance The history and technique of poetry as a dramatic art form will be explored, and students will be invited to read from the work they have produced during the semester	• Groarke, <u>The Rising Generation</u>, pp19 – 29 • Smith, Kraynak, <u>Take the Mic</u>, pp 1-21, 49108

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

- Marsh's Library and the Chester Beatty Museum (Week 3) Visit to the atmospheric and haunting (literally!) perfectly preserved library of the early Enlightenment in central Dublin. founded by Narcissus Marsh in 1707. We'll learn about the famous writers who worked here, including Dean Swift, Bram Stoker and James Joyce, and we'll have time for some creative writing in the secret garden. This will be followed by a visit to the nearby award-winning Chester Beatty Museum in Dublin Castle, a breathtaking world class collection of manuscripts and art, and including the current exhibition First Fragments: Biblical Papyrus from Roman Egypt. Plenty of writing inspiration here!
- National Library Seamus Heaney: Listen Now Again exhibition at the Bank of Ireland in College Green. (Week 6) Complementing our study of Seamus Heaney we visit this excellent museum devoted to his work.
- Visit to the National Gallery of Ireland, (Week 11) a gallery from which many leading Irish poets have drawn inspiration. The visit will enable students to value writing and literature as a means of engaging with and understanding the city of Dublin and Irish culture. The field trip will also enable them to continue to approach poetry writing in its various forms through a writing workshop to take place in the National Gallery.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Boland, Eavan. A Journey with Two Maps: Becoming a Woman Poet. Manchester: Carcanet, 2011, pp 3-98.
- Brearton, Fran and Alan Gillis. Oxford Companion to Irish Poetry. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2012.
- Cullen Owens, Rosemary. A Social History of Women in Ireland: 1870-1970. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2004.
- Davies, Wes (ed). An Anthology of Modern Irish Poetry: Harvard, Harvard University Press, 2013.
- De Paor, Louis. Leabhar na hÁthghabhála: Poems of Re Possession: Newcastle, Bloodaxe, 2016.
- Heaney, Seamus. New Selected Poems 1988-2013.: Faber & Faber: 2014.
- Heaney, Seamus (ed). WB Yeats Selected Poems. London: Faber & Faber, 2004.
- Heaney, Seamus. Finders Keepers: Selected Prose 1971-2001: New York, NY: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2002
- Kavanagh Patrick. Selected Poems London Penguin Modern Classics 2004.
- Kiberd, Declan. Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Kiberd, Declan. Irish Classics London: Granta 2000.
- Kinsella, Thomas. The Táin: Translated from the Irish Epic, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Laird, Nick. "Listen Now Again" in Groarke Vona (ed). Poetry Ireland Review Issue 113 Seamus Heaney Special Issue Dublin: Poetry Ireland, 2015", pp 167-9.
- Longley, Edna "The Aesthetic and the Territorial" in Andrews Elmer Contemporary Irish Poetry: A Collection of Critical Essays. Palgrave & Macmillan, 1992 pp63-85.
- Mahon, Derek. Collected Poems. Loughcrew: Gallery Press, 1999.
- Meehan, Paula. Dharmakaya. Manchester: Carcanet 2000.
- Riordan, Maurice (ed). The Finest Music: An Anthology of Early Irish Lyrics. London: Faber & Faber, 2014.
- Robinson, Peter. Poetry & Translation: The Art of the Impossible. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Boran, Pat and Gerard Smyth (eds). If Ever Go: A Map of Dublin in Poetry and Song Town, Dublin: Dedalus Press, 2014.
- Brown, Terence. Ireland: A Social and Cultural History, 1992 – 2002. London, Harper Perennial, 2004.

Crotty, Patrick. The Penguin Book of Irish Poetry. London: Penguin Classics 2012.

- Falci, Eric. Continuity and Change in Irish poetry 1966-2010. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Ferriter, Diarmaid. The Transformation of Ireland, 1900-2000. London: Profile Books, 2004.
- Foster, Roy. The Apprentice Mage, 1865-1914 (WB Yeats; A Life Vol. 1) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Fryatt, Kit "Patrick Kavanagh's Potentialities" in Brearton Fran, Gillis Alan. Oxford Companion to Irish Poetry. Oxford: Oxford University Press pp181-195.
- Groarke, Vona. Frames. Loughcrew: Gallery Press, 2016.
- Groarke, Vona(ed). Poetry Ireland Review Issue 116 A WB Yeats Special Issue Dublin Poetry Ireland 2015.
- Groarke, Vona(ed). Poetry Ireland Review Issue 118 The Rising Generation, Dublin, Poetry Ireland 2016. Allen Randolph, Jody. Close to the Next Moment: Interviews from a Changing Ireland. Manchester: Carcanet, 2010.
- Heaney, Seamus. Crediting Poetry. Nobel Acceptance Speech, 1996.
- Maddern, Paul (ed.) Queering the Green, Post 2000 Queer Irish Poetry
- Morrissey, Sinead, Parallax. Manchester: Carcanet, 2013.
- Muldoon, Paul. The End of the Poem: Oxford Lectures in Poetry. Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Oliver, Mary. Rules for the Dance; A Handbook for Writing and Reading Metrical Verse. Wilmington, MA: Mariner, 1998.
- Oliver, Mary. A Poetry Handbook A Prose Guide to Understanding and Writing Poetry. Wilmington, MA: Mariner, 2001.
- O'Reilly, Catriona. Geis. Newcastle: Bloodaxe, 2015.
- O'Driscoll, Dennis. Stepping Stones, Interviews with Seamus Heaney: London, Faber & Faber, 2009.
- Paterson, Don. "Heaney and Etymology" in Groarke Vona(ed). Poetry Ireland Review Issue 113 Seamus Heaney Special Issue Dublin: Poetry Ireland, 2015", 163-66.
- Mac Monagle, Niall. Windharp: Poems of Ireland Since 1916. London: Penguin, 2016.
- Meehan, Paula. Imaginary bonnets with Real Bees in Them, The Poets Chair: Writings from the Ireland Chair of Poetry Dublin: UCD Press 2016.
- Wake Forest Anthology of Irish Women Poets: Wake Forest, Wake Forest University Press, 2011 edition.

RECOMMENDED ONLINE, ARCHIVE, AND EXHIBITION RESOURCES:

- Chester Beatty Library
- National Archives of Ireland
- National Library of Ireland
- Poetry Ireland
- Poetry Foundation
- Irish Film Institute & Irish Film Archive
- Irish Writers' Centre
- The Stinging Fly – Irish Literary Magazine and Press