BTAN32001BA Introduction to Irish Studies 2017

Required for BA, British Track
two-hour lecture; written exam
Tue 12.00-13.40, Rm 111

Gula Marianna
mariannagula@gmail.com
office: 108
office hrs: Mon 9.00-10.00
Wed 13.30-14.30, Rm 108

A series of lectures offering students an introduction to Irish culture giving insights into various aspects, phenomena and authors of modern and contemporary Irish history, music, film, literature, with glances at antecedents. Each lecture is self-contained but also interconnected to the other lectures. Recurrently discussed topics in the course will be the intersections between history and culture, the past and the present, the personal and the political, forms and modes of memory (personal, collective, cultural) – as well as the interplay between memory and imagination – the local and the global, tradition and modernity; the re-inscription and subversion of stereotypes, and the role of place, myth and music in modern Irish culture.

Schedule:

Sept 12  Introduction: Ireland Today
Sept 19  Modern Ireland: Historical and Cultural Overview
Sept 26  Myth and Music
        Read excerpts from The Tain (trans. Thomas Kinsella)
        W. B. Yeats, On Baile’s Strand
        from Proinsias MacCana, Celtic Mythology: “Introduction,” “Tuatha Dé Danann,” “The Heroic Tradition”
        Lillis Ó Laoire, “Irish Music”
        Watch The River of Sound (1995 documentary on Irish music available on YouTube) &
        Folk Hibernia (2006 BBC documentary about the Irish folk music revival in the 1960s, available on YouTube)

Oct 3  The Famine
        Read Colm Tóibín, “Erasures”
        Kevin Whelan, “The Cultural Effects of the Famine”
        Watch The Great Irish Famine (2009 documentary focusing on the West Cork area)

Oct 10 The Irish Renaissance and Decolonization
        Read Yeats and Lady Augusta Gregory, Cathleen ni Houlihan
        W. B. Yeats, The Dreaming of the Bones
        J. M. Synge, The Playboy of the Western World
        Emer Nolan, “Modernism and the Irish Revival”
        Watch “Yeats and the Theatre” (1st film in W. B. Yeats and the National Library of Ireland)
Oct 17  
*Irish Film I: The ‘Troubles’ (The Irish War of Independence and the Civil War)*  
Watch *Michael Collins* (dir. Neil Jordan) and *The Wind that Shakes the Barley* (dir. Ken Loach)  
Read Luke Gibbons, “Projecting the Nation: Cinema and Culture”  
Elisabeth Butler Cullingford, “Re-reading the Past: Michael Collins and Contemporary Popular Culture”

Oct 24  
*Irish Film II: The ‘Troubles’ in Northern Ireland*  
Watch *The Crying Game* (dir. Neil Jordan)  
Excerpt from Joe Cleary’s “Fork-Tongued on the Border Bit”

Oct 31  
*Consultation week (no class)*

Nov 7  
NO CLASS, BUT in lieu of the lecture on 8 November a reading by Irish poet Gearóid MacLochlainn from Belfast as part of the EFACIS Irish Itinerary (Sikk Klub, 6 pm)

Nov 14  
*Contemporary Irish Fiction I: From ‘Troubles’ to ‘Troubles’ and Beyond*  
Read Seamus Deane, *Reading in the Dark* AND Glenn Patterson, *Fat Lad*  
Liam Harte, “History Lessons: Postcolonialism and Seamus Deane’s *Reading in the Dark*”  
Laura Pelaschiar, “Transforming Belfast: The Evolving Role of the City of Belfast in Northern Irish Fiction”  
Watch *The Story of Field Day* (2006 BBC documentary)

Nov 21  
*Contemporary Irish Fiction II: Fiction during the Celtic Tiger Years*  
Read Colm Tóibín, *The Blackwater Lightship* OR Éilís Ní Dhuibhne, *Fox, Swallow, Scarecrow*  

Nov 28  
*The Irish Short Story: Dubliners Then and Now*  
Read James Joyce, “Araby”, “A Little Cloud,” “A Painful Case” AND “The Dead” in *Dubliners*  
AND Joseph O’Connor, “Two Little Clouds”; Roddy Doyle, “Recuperation”;  
and Anthony Glavin, “Patio Nights” in *New Dubliners* AND  
John Boyne, “Araby”; and Paul Murray, “A Painful Case” in *Dubliners 100*  
Heather Óngman, “Introduction” to *A History of the Irish Short Story*  
Colm Tóibín, “Joyce’s Dublin: City of Dreamers and Chancers”

Dec 5  
*Contemporary Irish Theatre and Drama I*  
Read Brian Friel, *Translations*  
Tom Murphy, *Bailegangaire* OR *The House*  
excerpt from Shaun Richards, “Brian Friel: Seizing the Moment of Flux”  
excerpt from Nicholas Grene, “Talking it through: The Gigli Concert, Bailegangaire”

Dec 12  
*Contemporary Theatre and Drama II*
Read Frank McGuinness, *Someone Who’ll Watch Over Me OR Carthaginians*
Marina Carr, *The Mai OR Portia Coughlan*
Helen Lojek, “Watching Over Frank McGuinness’s Stereotypes”
José Lanters: “‘Anywhere That’s Not Here’: Three Plays by Marina Carr”

**Requirements and grades**
Although this class will be primarily a series of lectures, it is highly recommended that students read the assigned texts and/or watch the assigned films before the lectures in order to derive the most benefit from them. All critical essays are in the Course Packets, a master copy (which cannot be borrowed) is located in Rm 101. All the written texts (primary as well as secondary sources) are available in digital format in Rm 101. The written exam will cover all the lectures plus all the readings of primary and secondary sources.

**Primary Sources**

**Plays:**
- W. B. Yeats and Augusta Gregory, *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*
- W. B. Yeats, *On Baile’s Strand, The Dreaming of the Bones*
- J. M. Synge, *The Playboy of the Western World*
- Brian Friel, *Translations*
- Tom Murphy, *Bailegangaire OR The House, The House*
- Frank McGuinness, *Someone Who’ll Watch Over Me OR Carthaginians, Someone Who’ll Watch Over Me OR Carthaginians, Someone Who’ll Watch Over Me OR Carthaginians, Someone Who’ll Watch Over Me OR Carthaginians*
- Marina Carr, *The Mai OR Portia Coughlan*

**Short Stories:**
- Joyce, James, “Araby,” “A Little Cloud,” “A Painful Case” AND “The Dead” in *Dubliners*
- O’Connor, Joseph, “Two Little Clouds” AND “The Dead” in *Dubliners*
- Roddy Doyle, “Recuperation” AND “Two Little Clouds” in *Dubliners 100*
- John Boyne, “Araby” AND “Two Little Clouds” in *Dubliners 100*
- Anthony Glavin, “Patio Nights” in *New Dubliners*
- John Boyne, “Araby” AND “Two Little Clouds” in *Dubliners 100*
- Paul Murray, “A Painful Case” in *Dubliners 100*

**Novels:**
- Seamus Deane, *Reading in the Dark*
- Glenn Patterson, *Fat Lad*
- Colm Tóibín, *The Blackwater Lightship OR The Blackwater Lightship*
- Éilís Ní Dhuibhne, *Fox, Swallow, Scarecrow*

**Films:**
- *The Wind that Shakes the Barley* (dir. Ken Loach 2006)
- *Epic:*
- *The Tain (Táin Bó Cuailnge,* translated by Thomas Kinsella): excerpts (how Cúchulainn was begotten, how he was trained in arms, how he killed his son, his boyhood deeds, how he prepares for war, how he fights and mourns Ferdia)*

**Secondary Sources**

**Myth:**

**Music:**
- *Folk Hibernia* (2006 BBC documentary)
- *The River of Sound* (BBC documentary, Micheál Ó Suilleabháin 1995)
Film:


The Irish Revival:


The Famine:


Drama


Fiction (novel and short story)


Visual material/documentaries:

*The River of Sound* (BBC documentary, Micheál Ó Suilleabháin 1995)

*The Story of Field Day* (BBC documentary 2006)

*The Great Irish Famine* (documentary, dir. Pat Collins 2009)

*W. B. Yeats and the National Library of Ireland* (4 films, National Library of Ireland 2006)

For further recommended reading and documentaries see the handouts