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Organisatrices : Marie Mianowski, Valérie Morisson et Eugenia Reznik



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ABSTRACTS

GUEST KEYNOTES:

David Nally

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“Ruling the Unruly: Potatoes, Subversive Ecologies and Famine in Ireland”

Finola O'Kane

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“Landscape Design in Post-Famine Ireland: Domesticating the Pineapple to Potato Gradients.”

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DESCRIPTION OF ARTWORK:

Temu Ana Mendieta (2026) considers what it means to seek connection with nature within a landscape already shaped by human intervention. Referencing Ana Mendieta's exploration of the body's relationship to the earth, the artist enters a Sitka spruce plantation wearing a handmade costume made of synthetic, petroleum-derived, moss-like fabric, attempting to reconnect with the earth through a material born of its extraction. The costume serves as both a disguise and an imitation, allowing the artist to merge visually with the forest while revealing the impossibility of fully separating the natural from the industrial. The artificial costume blends in and out of the forest floor, where carpets of moss grow beneath the dense canopy of Sitka spruce in the acidic conditions created by the mono-crop plantation.

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“Domesticating Irish Nature in Emily Lawless’s *A Garden Diary* (1901)”

In this paper I examine Emily Lawless’s *A Garden Diary* (1901) through the question of Irish nature, exploring how gardening, botanical knowledge and memory shape her representations of landscape and belonging. Written in Surrey, the diary records the making of an English garden while repeatedly returning to the landscapes of Lawless’s native Ireland, particularly the West of Ireland. Her creation of a “Burren corner,” “West Galway corner,” “Kerry corner” and “Kildare corner” transforms gardening into an act of remembrance and cultural translation, as transplanted Irish plants become carriers of place and memory. At the same time, Lawless’s reflections on weeds, “native” plants and colonisation challenge conventional distinctions between cultivated and wild nature and expose the political implications of botanical classification and ownership. *A Garden Diary* thus emerges as a complex meditation on Irish nature, displacement, colonial histories and ecological belonging.

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“Art and the Turf Wars”

As environmental awareness increases, the bogs and the ecosystems they sustain are increasingly viewed as threatened by human exploitation. The ban on extraction and

exploitation has antagonized supporters of peat harvesting and has stirred a turf war. In this context, artists have sought ways to heighten the perception of the vulnerability of the bogs and to encourage sensory attunements with the living, breathing ecosystem. Through this review of artistic depictions or evocations, we see that the boundary between domesticated nature and untamed wilderness is ceaselessly reappraised and debated. The arts open a dialogue over land use, preservation and, more broadly, geographical imaginings. Figurative paintings, anthropological photographs and postcards often feature turf cutters and women in traditional clothes carrying basketfuls of turf bricks. More modern art works celebrate the bogs as places imbued with mystery or epitomizing an Irish wilderness. Several contemporary participative art projects tap into a long and multi-faceted history to stage the ongoing debates over the preservation of the Irish bogs and turf rights.

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SPEAKERS:

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“I thought: I am that jackdaw”: the role of animals in Sara Baume *A Line Made by Walking* and Kerri Ní Dochartaigh’s *Thin Places*.

The aim of the presentation is to analyse the role of animals in contemporary works of fiction and non-fiction by female authors in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, analysing how these authors decentre anthropocentric perspectives in their texts. In particular, the presentation will argue that these writers offer a privileged viewpoint for articulating posthuman relationality, as women in Ireland embody Braidotti’s “continuum” (2014, p.75) that links together marginalised human subjects and “naturalised others” (2022, p.75). These subjects are “left disposable and unprotected” (ibid.), physically exploited and culturally discriminated in a world centered around a majority of wealthy, white males. In this light, the presentation will focus on selected chapters of Sara Baume’s *A Line Made by Walking* (2017) and of Kerri Ní Dochartaigh’s *Thin Places* (2022), to see how women writers in Ireland are rediscussing existing hierarchies, interpreting animals not only as passive companions, but as active and undomesticated participants. By engaging with posthuman and feminist perspectives, the presentation will try to show how these texts offer concrete examples of what Haraway defines as sympoiesis (2016, p.58), as a characteristic of “complex, dynamic, responsive, situated, historical systems [...] a word for worlding-with, in company” (2016, p.58). Through acknowledging the perspective of animals and situating them within the Irish natural

environment, these texts demonstrate how the literary field in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland is particularly receptive to posthuman theories, depicting multi-layered relationships between humans and non-humans, particularly animals. Ultimately, the presentation suggests that contemporary women's writing in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland contributes to an ongoing cultural transformation, turning the island into a space where differences can productively coexist (Meaney, 2007, p.27). Selected references: Baume, S. (2017). *A Line Made by Walking*. William Heinemann. Braidotti, R. (2014). *Il Postumano. La vita oltre l'Individuo, oltre la specie, oltre la morte*. DeriveApprodi. Braidotti, R. (2022). *Posthuman Feminism*. Polity. Haberstroh, P. B., & St Peter, C. (Eds.). (2007). *Opening the field: Irish women, texts and contexts*. Cork University Press. Haraway, D. J. (2023). *Chthulucene: Sopravvivere su un pianeta infetto*. Nero. Meaney, G. (2009). *Gender, Ireland and Cultural Change: Race, sex and nation*. Routledge. Ní Dochartaigh, K. (2022). *Thin places: A natural history of healing and home*. Canongate. O'Brien Johnson, T., & Cairns, D. (Eds.). (1991). *Gender and Irish Writing*. Cork University Press. Peter, C. S. (2000). *Changing Ireland: Strategies in Contemporary Women's Fiction*. Springer.

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“Black mold, slime and fungi: the need to dislocate the centrality of humans in Irish folk horror cinema”

This paper seeks to study a corpus of Irish films pertaining to the folk horror subgenre as defined by Adam Scovell (2017): *Isolation* (Billy O'Brien, 2005); *Shrooms* (Paddy Breathnach, 2007) and *The Hallow* (Corin Hardy, 2015). In each of these productions, the plot revolves around the confrontation of a displaced group of people (either a family or a group of friends) with a hostile and mysterious environment. These gothic locales are systematically staged in the light of the traditional paradigm that opposes the forest and its murky surroundings to the allegedly homely dwelling of the protagonists – a conventional token of civilisation, but secluded or inaccessible. I wish to argue that these films however transcend what ecofeminists movements have exposed as unproductive dualities (nature vs culture) by rewriting Ireland's natural milieu – especially the forest – as a liminal space (Victor Turner, 1967), and by locating the source of horror and uncanny returns in fungi – a natural component that is neither mineral nor vegetal. I will therefore analyse the use of fungi (mushrooms, but also mold and viscous substances) from a posthuman and ecofeminist perspective, arguing that their “viscous porosity” (Nancy Tuana, 2008) and hybrid nature complicate the existing discourse on Ireland's extractive and, therefore, ecocidal practises. If the human bodies infected by fungi in these films can be read as the ecosomatic markers (Chia-Hung Lin, 2014) of past ecotrauma, the physiological imprint of

postcolonial technological toxic waste (Rosi Braidotti, 2022), they are also posited as hybrid entities, “natureculture” bodies (Haraway, 2003) “dislocating the centrality of humans” (Braidotti, 2022) and celebrating, eventually, “the return to animality and earthly slime” (Carolyn Merchant, 1980). keywords: folk horror cinema; ecogothic; ecofeminism; posthuman feminism; trauma studies Marine Galiné holds a PhD in Irish Studies on the study of women and femininity in nineteenth century Irish Gothic fiction, under the supervision of Professor Sylvie Mikowski. She is also interested in the circulation of Gothic motifs in current popular culture and the interactions between body and space in these productions. She is currently a teaching fellow in English at the Campus des Comtes de Champagne (University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne) and an associate researcher at CIRLEP (Centre Interdisciplinaire de Recherche sur les Langues et la Pensée).

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A Floral Solution to the 'Irish Problem': The Irish Flower Garden as a Site/Sight of Social Control

This paper explores why flowers and their cultivation was seen by some as a solution to Irish socio-economic problems in the immediate pre-Famine period, by exploring the work of two English writers who visited Ireland in 1838: Charlotte Elizabeth Tonna and George Nicholls. When Tonna published a travel account of her visit, she described her delight in encountering a shabby gardener tending a blooming flower garden. Nicholls, appointed to Ireland to supervise the nationwide building of new workhouses, wrote an agricultural treatise while in his post: *The Farmer's Guide*. In his volume he promoted the virtues of cultivating flowers, emphasizing their positive effect on domestic life. As both authors had explicit colonial agendas and supported systems of acculturation, they can be read through scholarship which interprets 19th-century global flora-culture through the lens of imperial ‘soft power’ (Frances O’Morchoe, 2024; Eugenia W. Herbert, 2011).

Colonial agendas notwithstanding, with repeated outbreaks of famine, disease and violence, this emphasis on Irish floral cultivation seems at odds with local realities. Yet for both authors the flower garden was a potent site of creating and maintaining social stability. To understand this ‘floral solution’, this paper sets the ideas put forward by Tonna and Nicholls in a wider British discourse around gardens and their role in social control, especially their ability to quell potential revolt. This paper also argues that the flower garden was a site/sight of multiple meanings: a place where the wild (potentially violent) landscape was domesticated, a space where the base nature of humanity was elevated, and a site of pleasurable sensory experience. Finally, Tonna and Nicholls depicted flower gardens as spaces of societal value and healing. Informed by recent research on gardening’s role in ‘cultivating citizen-subjects’, this paper connects nineteenth-century views on the purpose and possibility of garden-human relationships, exploring legacies regarding the prioritization of certain kinds of nature as more useful to society than others (Pudup, 2008).

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“[T]he earth that lay all round to receive you”¹: Lesbian Pastoral in Mary Dorcey’s “A Noise from the Woodshed” (1989)

The Irish pastoral imaginary has been traditionally associated to nationalist and heteronormative ideals. In his 1943 speech, “The Ireland that we dreamed of,” Éamon de Valera articulated a bucolic vision of Ireland that aligned land, morality, and bourgeois heterosexual social reproduction in consolidating Irish nationstatehood. Forty-six years later, Mary Dorcey’s short story “A Noise from the Woodshed”, from the 1989 collection of the same name radically reclaims and reconfigures this pastoral imaginary. This paper argues that Dorcey’s text articulates an ambiguously liberated pastoral space in which lesbian desire, rurality, and ecological intimacy converge. Despite her prominence as a feminist and lesbian writer and activist, Dorcey’s literary work remains largely underexplored, leaving a crucial aspect of her writing overlooked: the representation of Irish nature as a site of lesbian eroticism, feminist agency and subculture, and ecological imagination. This paper reads “A Noise from the Woodshed” as lesbian pastoral writing that both naturalizes queer sexuality and unsettles the very notion of the “natural”. The story presents nature as a queer erotic participant through embodied encounters with landscape and water, enabling pastoral romance and queer erotic possibility. These spaces foster a rural lesbian separatist sociality that is at once escapist and politically charged, offering refuge from heteronormative structures while remaining deeply entangled with lesbian feminist and ecological activism. Methodologically, the analysis draws on Donna Haraway’s concept of naturecultures and David Bell’s queernaturecultures, Catriona

¹ Dorcey, Mary. *A Noise from the Woodshed*. 1989. Onlywomen Press. 5.

Mortimer-Sandilands and Bruce Erickson's queer ecology, and David Shuttleton's work on the gay pastoral. Through these lenses, the paper traces how Dorsey's text stages an ecofeminist and lesbian subcultural imaginary in which bodies, landscapes, and desire are mutually constitutive. This reading contributes to queer studies, Irish studies, and ecofeminist criticism by mapping how lesbian pastoral writing reclaims Irish rural space as a site of erotic, political, and ecological liberation.

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“The barometer / can't control the creeping mercury”: Climate Change in Jessica Traynor's *Pit Lullabies* (2022)

Ostensibly a collection that charts new motherhood, Jessica Traynor's *Pit Lullabies* is attentive to the anxieties faced by those living in the contemporary world. In particular, poems from the collection recognise the causes and consequences of climate destruction in both overt and subtle ways. This paper examines how the speaker charts changes in her local environment of Dublin's northside, while also opening up to more mystical ways of interacting with the natural world. The poems of the collection enumerate environmental changes, with the poet noting in “Ophelia in Ballybough”, “I record these symbols, / this slippage in the order of things, / the brown trout swimming upstream.” At the same time, they open up to alternate, non-scientific ways to understand the world around from the sequence “On Poisons”, which imagines plants such as rue and wolf's bane speaking, to boundary-crossing, inter-species dialogue in poems such as “Rock Pool” and “In the Wrong Place”. Finally, the collection displays a consistent concern with the pervasiveness of plastic, most evident in the poem, “On Plastics.” This paper argues that, for Traynor, explorations of the changing climate mean encountering her immediate material reality, cultural connections of the natural world, and metaphysical discourses. It will close read these poems and others alongside contemporary ecocritical thought in order to demonstrate the interaction of the human and the non-human across the collection, while also suggesting that the enormity of the topic of climate destruction requires a multifaceted approach in terms of both form and content.

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Jessica Traynor: Of Exploitation and Enchantment

In her four volumes of poetry, Jessica Traynor has been sounding the problematic relation of humans with the environment, also in an urban context, where domesticating processes and domesticated nature prevail and are taken for granted, but can also spin out of control. Pondering, for instance, on the exploitation of rivers and seas as transport routes and channels for sanitary and communication infrastructure, Traynor points to industrialism taking its toll

not only on the natural world but also on the unprivileged and underaged strata of society, quite in an ecofeminist vein. In urban gardens, the human drive for “moulding // of the natural into the ordered” meets the resistance of both botany and man-made structures, and mirrors the protagonists’ physical/mental illness. Traynor would not be the fine poet she is had she not cast her real-life observations and reflections on history in the imaginary/oneiric dimension of her oeuvre. City rivers flood the streets in the speaker’s dreams, while witches defy the patriarchal econarrative in poem sequences (*The Quick* 2018) and book covers (*Pit Lullabies* 2022). Elements of the environment provide the poet with literary strategies: her first collection (*Liffey Swim*, 2014) has been divided into three parts named after the rivers of Dublin, bearing consequences on both the form and the contents of the volume, and evoking concepts of ecopoetry. Last but not least, Traynor’s book covers raise controversy and pose questions about the approach represented; for instance, presiding over her second volume (*The Quick*) is a pyramid of animals, a collage in which birds prepare to scavenge on (?) a fox, inviting comparisons with other animal pyramids (the Grimm brothers’, Katarzyna Kozyra’s). After Caitriona O’Reilly and Sinead Morrissey, Jessica Traynor thus emerges as the most eco-aware (though not at all comfortably eco-friendly) of younger generation of Irish women poets.

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“the colossal lifespan of a landscape”: collapsing historical, geographical, and ontological borders in Maggie O’Farrell’s *Land* (2026)

“[L]and is history, and history is land,” says Tomás, the father of the family whose lives are at the heart of Maggie O’Farrell’s *Land* (2026, 35), an ambitious and expansive novel which not only covers the lifespan of Tomás and Phina and their children, Liam, Enda, Rose and Eugene, but also that of “the colossal lifespan of a landscape” (*Land* 136). As Malcolm Sen notes, with some exceptions, “ecocritical assessments have often shied away from historical continuities that trace their lineage from colonial plantations, widescale deforestation, land acquisitions and evictions, the Anglicization of place-names, the suppression in the Irish language, to the geographical and political adjustments following the partition of Ireland” (Sen 2022, 14). It is almost as though Maggie O’Farrell decided to tackle all of these elements at once in her novel *Land* which also adds the Great Hunger and its devastating ramifications into the mix. This paper analyses O’Farrell’s novel through the prism of collapsing historical, geographical, and ontological borders. The “colossal lifespan of a landscape” (O’Farrell, 136) is explored by O’Farrell through the prism of human and non-human resistance to colonial practices of land appropriation and domestication. Anthropocene and/or Earth care are therefore revealed as simultaneously disrupted by the colonial-capitalist project and transcended by the expression of deep haptic, linguistic and affective attachments to the land and to thin places.

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**"for the birds too, / as for insects and glaciers, / for leverets and children, change we must"
: the Question of Change and Transformation in the Poetry of Moya Cannon, Paula Meehan and Mary O'Malley.**

About ten years ago, Paula Meehan's poetry gained greater national and international visibility when she was named 'Ireland Professor of Poetry', becoming the second woman to be awarded this prestigious post. When he announced the news, Dr Patrick Prendergast, provost of Trinity College, noted that Paula Meehan « has worked with prisoners and people from disadvantaged backgrounds and is regarded as giving a voice to people and places that are often marginalised and forgotten. »

I would like to study how Paula Meehan's poems give life to these « often marginalised and forgotten » people and places – often liminal ones such as the suburbs, the coast, the creeks – how both these people and places have somehow been “domesticated” by colonial and present history. In-keeping with Rob Nixon's idea of « slow violence », she tries to find ways to represent the « discounted », and to engage with the challenge of the « relative invisibility of slow violence », be it political or climatic². When media are obsessed by the spectacular, Meehan's poems provide different time-scales, medicinal plants and birds or bears that carry alternative histories and languages. So do Moya Cannon and Mary O'Malley, both writers from the west of Ireland, whose poems often focus on slow, problematic changes in their familiar landscapes, in the sea and its often invisible inhabitants. Placing human scale in the larger contexts of archaeology, history or mythology, they are able to tip and reverse a man-centered perspective, giving voice to disregarded animals such as oysters, clams or dogfish, rewriting old myths such as *Sweeney Astray* to blend human and animal realms, ancient and very present times and places (such as in O'Malley's 'The Ballad of Googletown')...

I will focus on different writings, choosing some key-poems from various collections and from the Winter 2025-26 issue of *The Stinging Fly* on “the climate issue”:

*P. Meehan : *The Solace of Artemis* (her latest collection), *Painting Rain* (which displays the terrible changes brought about by the Celtic Tiger), *Geomantic* (where she endeavors to read the earth in a quasi-shamanic way, to find new truths about how to inhabit the earth) and *Imaginary Bonnets with Real Bees in Them* (especially the lecture she gave on « Planet Water »).

*Mary O'Malley : *The Shark Nursery* (her latest collection, which was awarded the Derek Walcott Prize), *Gaudent Angeli*, *Playing with the Octopus*

* *Bunting's Honey*, Moya Cannon's last collection. Commenting on their primary focus, she declared that she wanted to write “about our physical, emotional, aesthetic and spiritual links

² All these quotations come from Rob Nixon's *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press (2011). I will partly use this approach too.

to sea, shore and mountains”, as well as “the layering of human histories, from the personal to the political, which mark and make a place” + her *Collected Poems* (2021)

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When Land and Lament Were Disciplined: A Metabletic Inquiry into Plantation, Keening, and Domestication in Early Modern Ireland

In 1609, Ireland witnessed two seemingly unrelated institutional reforms. First, the Ulster Plantation formalized a new colonial relationship to land as territory for survey, redistribution, and resource management. That same year, the newly royally decreed city of Kilkenny introduced fines against visible funeral vocalization, part of a growing civic and ecclesiastical effort to regulate keening (caoineadh), the embodied and usually female-led ritual of public lament. Employing metabletics, Jan Hendrik van den Berg’s phenomenological method examining how simultaneous changes in different domains may reflect broader shifts in a culture’s overall psychology, this paper posits a possible relationship between plantation-era land governance and the regulation of keening. While plantation policies redefined land and people’s relationship to it through enclosure, civic orders simultaneously disciplined ritual expressions of grief that had long-standing relationships to body, community, and place. Observed together, these measures could suggest both a material and affective domestication of Irish nature in the early seventeenth century. From a depth psychological perspective, such a concurrence raises the possibility that environmental governance and emotional life norms were historically co-constructed rather than separate domains. By situating keening within the wider colonial transformation of land, this preliminary study seeks to contribute to interdisciplinary discussions on the regulation, inhabitation and imagination of Irish nature. It also opens space to reconsider how contemporary revivals of lament might intersect with ongoing debates about ecological identity and decolonial memory in Ireland.

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Mobilizing nature: Ireland’s political ecology before and after the revolution

Two years before his death in 1908, Thomas O’Neill Russell, a founding member of the Gaelic League, professed that, “Ireland seems to be dying; to be slowly sinking into the grave; ... and that nothing but change of the most pronounced and radical kind can save such a country from death; that is, from becoming a wilderness consigned to the breeding of quadrupeds instead of

the multiplication of men.”¹ O’Neill’s take might be seen in both cultural and material contexts; his description of Ireland as a “wilderness” suggests he saw the land as under- or mis developed, and its population with “quadrupeds” as serving foreign interests, evident in the burgeoning grazing and cattle export economy that had ascended in the wake of the Famine. These issues of land improvement and economic development converged in debates over Irish Home Rule that ensued throughout the later nineteenth and early-twentieth century. Specifically, the extent to which legislative freedom for Ireland would influence its agricultural, industrial, and overall environmental advancement. This paper pursues several far-reaching questions: what did an independent Ireland look like from an environmental point of view, and how was political ecology prioritized in the Irish Free State? More specifically, in the decades before the Irish Revolution (1916-1923), how did Home Rule advocates, cultural revivalists, agrarian agitators, and elements of political extremes conceptualize the place and utility of environments and natural resources in a potentially independent Ireland, and what was done to develop Ireland’s environmental resources after the revolution? This paper examines narratives surrounding Ireland’s environmental economy in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries as a measure toward the suitability of political self-government, and follows with discussion on environmental mobilization after independence. In particular, how various environmental projects, including drainage and land reclamation, afforestation, and the development of natural resources contributed to discussions on the practicability of Irish political independence.

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“The sea and the garden and what’s for dinner.’ Domestication, ageing and femininity in Éilís Ní Dhuibhne’s *Little Red and other Stories*.”

Éilís Ní Dhuibhne’s literary interests have run alongside her academic research and familial affiliations. She has found the language to identify with within mythological narratives and the lore of folk “set in the never never or the always always.” Her liminal spaces are transtemporal and impregnating the contemporaneity. To Ní Dhuibhne, “the roots of literature were not ... in anything that had been written down, but in a still deeper and older layer of narrative that was like a new continent, a magical world [she] had not known it existed.” Furthermore, the paradigm of liminality can too be found in her depictions of nature since it is through there that the fantastic speaks to the mundane. There is a two-way phenomenon, the invisible communicates through the non-human life, namely the plants, whereas the secular mind of the narrator attempts at domesticating these voices through the act of gardening or tending to the household. There is yet another level of analysis that underpins the alternating voices of individual and the collective in the process of establishing the power relations between the younger and older generations. What is older age and what is culturally permitted to older adults, especially women, is yet another of Ní Dhuibhne’s questions.

This paper analyses two of the short stories from the collection *Little Red and other Stories* published in 2020 by The Blackstaff Press. The “Little Red” and the “New Zealand Flax” describe the lives of Fiona and Frida, two middle-aged women, coming to terms with solitude, sorrow and crisis. Their narratives confront change through their domestication of nature “finding the soil soft” (14) and where “having to cut grass provide (one) with a reason for coming down.” (154) The gardening becomes a reflection on their place in the world, their

necessity to be (in)dependent of men, their capacity to hold power as women in older age as well as the masculine supposed superiority. Ní Dhuibhne becomes the author of feminist fiction of empowerment, yet her subversion is self-reflective and non-violent. Her fiction is quite fiction which constitutes a vantage point as it grants her female characters autonomy, penetrating the stereotypes of female passivity and masculine ego-centrism. Thus, the re-domestication becomes a narrative of poetic self-analysis and emancipation, which this paper is focused on examining.

Bios

GUEST KEYNOTES :

David Nally

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David Nally is a Professor of Historical Geography, a human geographer and a convening member of the Department's *Vital Geographies* Research Group. Broadly speaking, he is interested in the events, ideas, material processes and everyday practices that shape the world around us. He has been drawn to study different issues – famines, colonial rule, food politics, and American philanthropy – but an abiding interest is the expression of power in the social landscape, as well as its contestation and subversion.

His interest in subsistence crises, or 'starvation events', comes together in a series of publications – see below – on Ireland's Great Famine, culminating in a book, *Human Encumbrances*, published with the University of Notre Dame Press. This monograph is the foundation for his subsequent work on the political rationalities of food provisioning and colonial violence.

His interest in food regimes and agrarian transformations has drawn him to study a range of contemporary problems too, including practices of land grabbing, the 'biopolitical' dimensions of the food system, and the role of technologies (including 'social technologies') in remaking agrarian life. He has also explored the emergence of American philanthropy as a moral and political force shaping global relations, particularly in the fields of population control and food production. Finally, he maintains an active interest in social theory and the history of political thought, including the history and philosophy of geography as a field of intellectual enquiry. To that end, he has co-authored a textbook *Key Concepts in Historical Geography* (Sage Publications 2014).

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Finola O'Kane researches the designed landscape history of Ireland and of the Atlantic world, with a particular interest in the cultural, philosophical and aesthetic dimensions of this history. Her first book *Landscape design in eighteenth-century Ireland; mixing foreign trees with the natives* was awarded the inaugural J.B. Jackson Book Prize by "The Foundation for Landscape Studies", New York in 2007, a prize also awarded to her book *Ireland and the Picturesque; Design, Landscape Painting and Tourism in Ireland 1700-1830* (2013, Yale/PMC), which also won an Elisabeth Blair McDougall Honorable Mention book award from the US Society of Architectural Historians in 2016. In 2013 a Dumbarton Oaks (Harvard) research fellowship funded research for her book *Landscape Design and Revolution in*

Eighteenth-Century Ireland and the United States, 1688-1815, published by the Paul Mellon Centre/Yale University Press in June 2023, one of six books shortlisted for the 2024 Michel Déon Prize for non-fiction, one of four shortlisted for the Alice Davis Hitchcock Medallion by the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain and a prize-winner in the 2026 NUI Irish Historical Research awards. She has published widely on eighteenth-century Dublin, Irish urban and suburban history and plantation landscapes, with the volume *Ireland, slavery and the Caribbean: Interdisciplinary perspectives*, co-edited with Ciaran O'Neill published in 2023 by Manchester University Press.

She is a founding and ongoing contributor to the British Library's *Picturing Places* website, providing essays on Ireland and the British empire's wider landscape tradition. She published *William Ashford's Mount Merrion; The Absent Point of View*, a book on the evolution and representation of Dublin's Fitzwilliam estate, in 2012. In the field of conservation, she has jointly edited two books with Gillian O'Brien- *Georgian Dublin* in 2008 and *Portrait of The City; Dublin and the Wider World* in 2012, the latter as part of the UCD-OPW Framework for Cultural Significance funded research project.

Director of Ireland's leading conservation programme (UCD's Masters in Urban and Building Conservation, MUBC) from 2008-2018, she advises on the conservation and design of many key Irish public and private historic landscapes, particularly those of the Liffey, Boyne, Feale and Blackwater valleys. I provide design and communication strategies for historic landscapes where the narrative must be carefully nuanced for public presentation, in recent years working on Béal na Bláth, the site of Michael Collins' assassination (winner of two RIAI Awards), other military landscapes, Dublin's historic estate core, and the border landscapes of Northern Ireland. My art exhibition work includes "The Discovery of Scotland" exhibition at The Hunterian, Glasgow in 2020, "Shaping Ireland; Landscapes in Irish Art" at the National Gallery of Ireland in 2019 and "Ireland: Crossroads of Art and Design, 1690–1840" at the Art Institute of Chicago in 2015, the first major exhibition of Irish art by a leading world gallery. She graduated with a first-class honours degree in architecture from UCD in 1993. In 1997 she completed a Graduate Diploma in the Conservation of Historic Landscapes at the Architectural Association in London and her Ph.D. (N.U.I.) in 1999. She worked for a few years in the practice of de Blacam & Meagher Architects, where she was a project architect for the award-winning conservation design of Maynooth Castle, Co. Kildare, and where she also completed her professional part 3 exams to attain membership of the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland.

In 2017 she was elected a member of the Royal Irish Academy for publication on Irish, American and Caribbean landscape history. In August 2024 she was appointed one of the six Senior Fellows in Garden and Landscape Studies at Dumbarton Oaks by the Board of Trustees for Harvard University. She is a Visiting Fellow in TCD's School of History and Archives 2024-2027. During the academic year 2026-2027 she is on sabbatical leave at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC and Trinity College Dublin.

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ARTISTS :

Rachel Doolin

Artist, Ireland.

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Rachel Doolin is an artist based in the South of Ireland. Her interdisciplinary practice merges art, experimentation and ecology of place, to create work that is informed by durational led research and driven by a desire to test the parameters of materiality, media and the criticality of issue-based practice.

Cross- disciplinary collaboration lies at the heart of Doolin's practice, as she frequently engages fellow artists, NGOs, as well as community and professional organisations in the realisation of her artistic visions. This collaborative ethos adds depth and dimension to her work, amplifying its impact and engaging diverse audiences at the intersection of current social and ecological concerns.

Her artistic ethos is driven by a profound curiosity of, and respect for our earthly resources. Employing a methodology she terms 'simple complexity,' Doolin integrates diverse media to create thought-provoking eco-poetic installations that engage with the 'language of materiality' on aesthetic, intellectual, and visceral planes.

Her sculptural and installation-based works are intricate yet delicate compositions that explore eco-collectivist ideas surrounding notions of loss, hope, kinship, and activism.

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Katerina Gribkoff

Artist, Ireland.

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Katerina Gribkoff is an artist and researcher living in the Burren in western Ireland. She has a BFA in Drawing from the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY and a Ph.D. in practice-based artistic research from the Burren College of Art (BCA) and University of Galway. Her Ph.D. project studied how **permaculture** and **systems thinking** might affect the organisation of an artistic practice, and as part of this research, she founded the Burren Dye Garden project on campus at BCA. From the **dye garden**, Katerina harvests plants and synthesises **pigments** for use as dyes and inks.

Katerina's artistic practice includes quilting, sculpture, drawing, and film photography. Her work is inspired by the **plants** she grows and tends and the wider landscape of **the Burren**. She has recently shown work at the Linen Biennale in Northern Ireland (2025), the Galway International Arts Festival (2024), The Irish Embassy in Indonesia (2024), and in Saarbrücken, Germany as part of *Zeitgeist Irland 2024*. Katerina regularly disseminates her **research** and interests through workshops, **collaborative projects**, and writing.

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Eugenia Reznik

GATES, MaCI, Université Grenoble Alpes, France.

Artist <https://www.eugeniareznik.com/>

Eugenia Reznik is a Ukrainian–Franco–Canadian artist working in visual and media arts. With a dual academic background—holding a Master’s degree in Applied Mathematics from the University of Kyiv in Ukraine and a PhD in Visual and Media Arts from the Université du Québec à Montréal in Canada—she is currently pursuing postdoctoral research at the Maison de la Création et de l’Innovation in Grenoble, France. Through a research-creation approach, she brings together sociological perspectives, documentary practices, digital arts, and botanical research to explore questions of uprooting, memory transmission, and the connections between the migration of plants and humans.

Her work has been presented in numerous exhibitions and events across Canada, Europe, and more recently, the United States. She has taken part in several artist residencies and has received multiple research and creation grants, including those from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et culture, and the Conseil des arts de la ville de Longueuil in Canada. She is frequently invited to contribute as an artist or speaker in various university educational programs and has extensive experience in cultural mediation with numerous organizations and museums, both in Canada and Europe.

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Sarah VanDermeer

Artist, Ireland.

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Sarah VanDermeer is an interdisciplinary artist based in Ireland whose practice explores landscape, place, and human relationships with the earth. Working across painting, sculpture, and video, she uses imitation, replication, and visual sleight of hand to highlight the strangeness of the world. After graduating from *Pratt Institute* (2012), she relocated to New Orleans, where she served as the scenic designer for Intramural Theater and co-founded the production company *All of Them, Witches*. She graduated from *Burren College of Art* (2026) with an MFA in Art and Ecology, rooting her practice in the Irish landscape. Informed by a decade-long background in theatre and film set design, she views nature through a lens of staged space. Using this understanding, she paints and constructs environments that complicate the line between natural and artificial. These constructed spaces reveal the theatrical qualities embedded within our experiences of nature, where staging and enchantment become ways of examining how landscapes are imagined and understood.

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SPEAKERS :

Caterina Begliorgio

University of Trento, Italy.

Caterina Begliorgio is a doctoral student at the University of Trento. She holds a B.A. in Foreign Languages from the University of Trento and an M.A. in Postcolonial and Comparative Literatures from the University of Bologna. Her research focuses on posthuman studies and contemporary literature by Irish and Northern Irish women writers, with particular attention to the intersections between space, gender, and ecological consciousness. She developed a strong engagement with Irish literature and culture during her studies at University College Dublin, where she is currently completing a visiting research period.

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Florence Schneider

Université Paris 10, France.

She is an associate professor in the English Department at Paris Nanterre University. She was the co-organizer of the 2021 Sofeir Conference in Paris Nanterre and she has published many articles on Irish poetry, especially on Irish women poets and nature. She teaches Irish literature to under and post-graduate students.

She(co)published *Strange Country, Ireland in Politics and Culture, 1998-2021* (Peter Lang)

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Marine Galiné

Université Reims Champagne Ardennes, France.

Marine Galiné holds a PhD in Irish Studies on the study of women and femininity in nineteenth century Irish Gothic fiction, under the supervision of Professor Sylvie Mikowski. She is also interested in the circulation of Gothic motifs in current popular culture and the interactions between body and space in these productions. She is currently a teaching fellow in English at the Campus des Comtes de Champagne (University of Reims Champagne-Ardenne) and an associate researcher at CIRLEP (Centre Interdisciplinaire de Recherche sur les Langues et la Pensée).

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Elizabeth Garner**University of Aberdeen, Scotland.**

Elizabeth Garner is a final-year history PhD student at the University of Aberdeen where she is researching the Irish poor law 1838-1847: the ways in which legislation was implemented at a local level and the socio-cultural impact of such measures. She is a freelance contributor to the *Connaught Tribune* newspaper, and was lead editor for Aberdeen's postgraduate journal *Granite* 2022-2023. She has presented her research at numerous conferences including the Society for Studies of Nineteenth-Century Ireland and the Open University's Legal History Cluster. Her research has been funded by the Helen Bosanquet Bursary and the British Association of Irish Studies.

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Bàrbara Hernández González**Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain.**

Bàrbara Hernández González is a Joan Oró FI fellow, PhD candidate, and lecturer at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Her research focuses on sapphic Irish literature in the 20th century, with particular attention to subculture and community, religion, nature, and the material conditions of literary production. She holds an M.Phil. in Irish Writing from Trinity College Dublin and a BA in English Studies from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Her transdisciplinary research aims to bring new perspectives to the study of gender, sexuality, and identity in Irish literature, with a strong focus on ecological and social contexts.

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Ellen Howley**School of English, Dublin College University, Ireland.**

Ellen Howley is assistant professor at DCU's School of English. Her monograph, *Oceanic Connections: The Sea in Irish and Caribbean Poetry*, takes a Blue Humanities approach to contemporary anglophone poetry from both regions and was published by Syracuse University Press in 2025. She has published work in *Irish Studies Review*, *Comparative Literature* and the *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*. She is the Humanities Lead on the board of DCU's Institute for Climate and Society. Her other research interests include ecocriticism and postcolonialism.

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Joanna Kruckowska

University of Lodz, Poland.

Joanna Kruckowska works as Associate Professor at the University of Lodz and specialises in comparative poetry, socio-political contexts, translation, travel writing and ecocriticism. Her publications include the monograph *Irish Poets and Modern Greece: Heaney, Mahon, Cavafy, Seferis* and the edited volume *Landscapes of Irish and Greek Poets: Essays, Poems, Interviews*.

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Megan N. Sprague

Department of Clinical Psychology, Pacifica Graduate Institute, USA.

Megan Sprague, MA, is a third-year doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology with emphasis in Depth Psychology PhD program at Pacifica Graduate Institute, where her research centers on the lived experience of women keepers in twenty-first century Ireland. In ongoing study with plant and Indigenous teachers, she seeks to restore right relationship between psyche and place through ritual, story, and care for the living earth and her inhabitants. Megan currently resides in Sonoma County, California, on unceded Coast Miwok and Southern Pomo lands.

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Justin Dolan Stover

Idaho State University, USA.

Justin Dolan Stover is Professor and Department Chair of History at Idaho State University in the United States where he teaches courses on environmental history, war and revolution, and modern Ireland. He holds degrees from Central Michigan University (B.S.), University College Dublin (M.A.), and Trinity College Dublin (Ph.D.), and has held research fellowships in Paris, Dublin, and Amsterdam. He recently published *Enduring Ruin: Environmental Destruction during the Irish Revolution*, the first environmental history of the revolutionary period.

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Zuzanna Zarebska

University of Aveiro, Portugal.

Zuzanna Zarebska (PhD, Post-Doc) is an assistant professor at the Department of Languages and Cultures at the University of Aveiro and a researcher at CLLC. She was a visiting scholar at NUI Maynooth and UCD, Ireland working on Irish women's contemporary writing under the supervision of Professor Margaret Kelleher. Her research interests include Irish, Australian and British literature and culture, cultural ageing, diaspora, feminisms, gender and identity studies. She is a member of *Rhome* and *Medical Humanities* projects and steers various programmes on ageing and the PI of the *Women and Ageing: Towards equality, dignity and improvement of life and well-being*.

She is an associate editor of *Anglo Saxonica Journal* and a co-editor of a creative journal ROAM: *Representations of Home Creative Journal*.

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Fiona McCann

Sorbonne Université, Paris, France.

Fiona McCann is Professor of Irish and British literature (20th-21st Centuries) at Sorbonne Université. She is the author of over 50 publications (books, chapters, and journal articles) on contemporary literatures, with a special interest in prison writing, border politics, care poetics and the health and environmental humanities. She is currently finishing a book entitled *Care Matters in Contemporary Irish Fiction*, under contract with Liverpool University Press, and she is Principal Investigator of the ANR-funded project "Literature and the Arts as Spaces of Negotiation for Ireland's Future" (2025-2029).

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Marie Mianowski

Université Grenoble Alpes, France.

Marie Mianowski is Professor of Anglophone Literature and Irish Studies at Grenoble Alpes University and a translator. She is the author of *Post Celtic Tiger Landscapes in Irish Fiction* (Routledge, 2017) and of many articles on the representations of place and landscape in Irish contemporary literature, especially the politics and representations of hospitality and homelessness. Her current research focuses on the writings and artistic productions of Irish botanists and naturalists in the 19th century, especially women. She also works on places and plants in contemporary Irish fiction in the context of climate change. She recently published the French translation of Léonie Villard's war diary *Journal de guerre: Lyon sous l'Occupation 1940-1944* (UGA Editions, 2024) and Melatu Uche Okorie's *This Hostel Life (Cette vie. Troo: Tropismes Editions, 2024)*.

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Valérie Morisson

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Valérie Morisson is Professor of British and Irish cultural history at Université Paul Valéry Montpellier 3 (UPVM3). She is a member of EMMA (Études Montpelliéraines du Monde Anglophone) and co-director of the Sensitive Ecologies axis of the GIS EIRE. She has written extensively on Irish and British visual culture with a specific emphasis on artistic praxis and field work. Many of her publications have explored the complex relation between art and national identity. Her latest book, *Locating the Self / Welcoming the Other in British and Irish Art 1990-2020* (Peter Lang, Oxford, 2022) investigates the way contemporary artists respond to the issue of belongingness ; it addresses space and artistic praxis as relational and dialogical. Her recent research focuses on environmental art and the artists' intimate relation with the landscape or habitat. Her latest publications and conferences investigate the way artists have moved away from landscape and approached the vegetal realm through new ontologies and praxis.