

# IASIL Japan Newsletter

2018 No. 2

The Japan Branch of the International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures

September 2018

## 1. IASIL Japan Conference 2018, Toyo University

The IASIL Japan Conference 2018 will be held on Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 October at Toyo University (Hakusan Campus), with the theme of 'Exits and Entrances'. The programme, book of abstracts, campus map, and poster of the conference are downloadable from the IASIL Japan website <<http://iasil.jp/conference.html>>. Students and guests are welcome to attend. We hope to meet you all there. **As of 2017, we switched to online registration system. Please go to our Conference website <<http://iasil.jp/conference.html>> and register by 30 September 2018.**

### About the Guest Speakers

**Ondřej Pilný** is Professor of English and American Literatures and Director of the Centre for Irish Studies at Charles University, Prague. His works include *The Grotesque in Contemporary Anglophone Drama* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) and *Irony and Identity in Modern Irish Drama* (Litteraria Pragensia, 2006), *Hrdina západu: Dramata a próza* (an annotated edition of Synge's work in Czech translation, 2006), *Ireland and the Czech Lands: Contacts and Comparisons in History and Culture* (with Gerald Power, 2014). He has also contributed a chapter on 'Irish Theatre in Europe' in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish Theatre* (eds. Nicholas Grene and Chris Morash, OUP 2016). He is co-editor of the international academic journal *Litteraria Pragensia. Studies in Literature and Culture*. He is the Chairperson of IASIL, Vice-President of EFACIS, and acts as committee member at various associations in English and Irish literature.

**Deirdre Madden** is from Country Antrim. She studied at Trinity College Dublin and the University of East Anglia. She has published eight novels, including *The Birds of The Innocent Wood* (1988), *One by One in the Darkness* (1996), *Authenticity* and *Molly Fox's Birthday* (2008). Her awards include the Hennessy Award, the Somerset Maugham Prize, the Rooney Prize and the Kerry Book of the Year Award. She has been shortlisted twice for the Orange Prize. Her most recent novel, *Time Present and Time Past* was published in 2013. She teaches Creative Writing at Trinity College Dublin.

## 2. Election of New Executive Committee Members

The ballot sheets were opened on 2 June by the secretariat with Kumiko Yamada (Rikkyo U), Masami Nakao and Yoko Kubo serving as Election Officers. The results will be announced at the Annual General Meeting on 14 October during the conference at Toyo University.

### 3. Payment of annual membership fees

If you have not already paid your membership fees for 2018, please do so by the end of September, as the journals will be distributed to paid-up members at the conference. This of course applies to non-paid fees for past years, as well. A Student membership fee (with JIS only) went into effect as of April 2018. If you are applying for a Student membership, please provide the office with a copy of a valid student ID with your payment.

Membership with JIS	¥7,000	Couple membership with JIS	¥10,000
Membership with JIS & IUR	¥10,000	Couple membership with JIS & IUR	¥13,000
Student with JIS*	¥5,000	*a copy of valid student ID should be provided annually	

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**Account No:** 0648854

Please add the overseas postal charge to mail you the copies of *Journal of Irish Studies* and *Irish University Review* for which you have paid, according to the table below:

International postal rates for JIS & IUR	Asia	Oceania, North America, Central America, Europe, Middle East	South America, Africa
JIS	¥ 750	¥ 1,000	¥ 1,300
JIS & IUR	¥ 1,500	¥ 2,000	¥ 2,600

### 4. Report of IASIL 2018, Radboud University, Nijmegen

The 2018 IASIL Conference was held at Radboud University in Nijmegen 23-27 July in rather hot, dry weather. Nijmegen is located in the central eastern part of the Netherlands near the border with Germany and is the oldest Roman city in the country. During the week, the academic programme was held in a modern building on the spacious campus outside the city, but some evening events were offered in the city centre. Thanks are due to the conference team headed by Margu rite Corporaal, who ensured that we were able to enjoy the whole conference in pleasant circumstances.

In line with the conference theme ‘Reimagining Traditions’, four keynote speeches and around 130 papers were delivered, along with a roundtable discussion on theatre research. The participants were also given opportunities to listen to Anne Enright’s powerful reading, Lillis   Laoire’s sonorous singing, and Claire Kilroy’s reading as a mother. The animated feature film *The Song of the Sea* was also shown and commented on by its director, Tomm Moore.

The conference kicked off with a spectacular keynote speech by Guy Beiner, who as a historian showed how a historical episode can be reimagined as it evolves in the literary arena. The other keynote

speakers, all of whom were well known to IASIL members, provided participants with wide-ranging and insightful talks on their specialist subjects: Claire Connolly on Irish Romanticism, Joep Leerssen on memory and the Gaelic tradition, and Paige Reynolds on contemporary women's writing. Details can be seen on Twitter: @iasil2018, <https://twitter.com/iasil2018>). The IASIL Japan members who delivered papers were Hawk Chang, Nao Igarashi, Neil Murphy, Mika Yoshimoto Murtagh, Haruko Takakuwa, Toshiki Tatara, Naoko Toraiwa, Yuri Yoshino and myself.

The 2019 conference returns to Trinity College, Dublin, where the inaugural IASIL conference was held in 1970, and in 2020 it will be hosted by the University of Łódź in Poland. I hope that many members of IASIL Japan, younger members in particular, will participate in and, indeed, contribute academically to these commemorative conferences celebrating half a century of achievements by IASIL and its members.

Tetsuko Nakamura (Komazawa University)

With the help of the IASIL Japan Scholarship, I was able to take advantage of a great learning opportunity at IASIL 2018. In my own presentation about Louis MacNeice's use of refrain, I received some thought-provoking questions from specialists in my research area, which will surely help revise and enrich my argument. It was a valuable experience for me to attend this particular conference whose theme, 'Reimagining Traditions', concerns the topic of my PhD thesis.

I would like to extend my appreciation to the officers and all the members of the IASIL Japan, who made this scholarship possible.

Nao Igarashi (Durham University, Recipient of IASIL Japan Scholarship 2018)

## **5. IASIL Annual Conference, 22-26 July 2019**

2019 marks IASIL's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the conference will be hosted by Trinity College Dublin, where the first IASIL (then IASAIL) conference was held. The conference theme is 'The Critical Ground'.

In celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, IASIL is hoping to compile the archive, and IASIL Japan is invited to contribute our own history. **Members who have photographs and/or documents of our past conferences that should be posted on the IASIL website, please send them to the secretary.**

## **6. Irish University Review Online-only Subscription Option**

IASIL Japan is looking into the possibility of switching to the online subscription option of the *Irish University Review*. We started an online survey this July, and **we will continue for another three months. Please let us know whether you prefer online subscription to a paper-based one by going to the following URL: <https://goo.gl/forms/R30eNIpAwZOagWXk2>.** We would like to get answers from all members, especially those who are currently subscribing to *IUR*. The online-only subscription option will be available to the members who opt for it from 2019 (vol. 49).

## 7. Another Poet Gone: Matthew Sweeney (1952-2018)

Many will still recall the conference that we had in Hiroshima at which we welcomed two writers from the North of Ireland, Matthew Sweeney and Glenn Patterson, poet and novelist respectively, from different sides of the border. It is with sadness that I learnt earlier this year, from Padraig Rooney, our mutual friend and another attendee of our conferences, that Matthew was suffering from motor neurone disease. He died in Cork on August 5th, with his family beside him, and Padraig was one of eleven poets who read at a memorial event there, afterwards attending the funeral in Donegal.

Matthew Sweeney was 65, and with his passing we have lost a unique voice in Irish poetry, quirky and individual, more European in his outlook and appeal than most of his contemporaries, as some notices have pointed out. He spent a good deal of time in Germany, and some in Romania, and had an unusually translatable appeal: "I'm big in Mexico", he announced once at a reading, recounting some adventure there. He evidently decided not to give in to the debilitations of his condition, and went on writing till the end. A book of poems, *My Life as a Painter*, came out in April this year, and another new book, of prose poems, is scheduled for September.

David Burleigh



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