

IASIL Japan Newsletter

2022 No. 2

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

September 2022

1. IASIL Japan Conference 2022 (online)

The IASIL Japan Conference 2022 will be held online in the form of a Zoom Meeting on **Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th October**, with the theme of ‘*Ulysses and Beyond*’. **Please go to our Conference website** <<http://iasil.jp/conference.html>> **and register by 30 September 2022**. Access information and the Zoom meeting details will be sent to your registered email address no later than 4 October. **The conference programme and book of abstracts are downloadable from the IASIL Japan website** <<http://iasil.jp/conference.html>>. We hope to meet you all online.

About the Guest Speakers

Eimear McBride was born in Liverpool in 1976 to Irish parents. The family moved back to Ireland when she was three. She spent her childhood in Tubbercurry, Sligo, and Mayo. At the age of 17, she moved to London to begin her studies at The Drama Centre.

McBride wrote her first novel, *A Girl Is a Half-formed Thing*, in six months but it took nine years to get it published. Galley Beggar Press of Norwich eventually published it in 2013. *A Girl Is a Half-formed Thing* won the inaugural 2013 Goldsmiths Prize and the 2014 Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction, amongst others.

Her second novel, *The Lesser Bohemians* (2016), won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize, and was shortlisted for the Goldsmiths Prize and the RSL Encore Award and the International Dublin Literary Award. In 2017 she was awarded the inaugural Creative Fellowship of the Beckett Research Centre, University of Reading. In a 2018 Times Literary Supplement poll of 200 critics, academics, and fiction writers, McBride was named one of the ten best British and Irish novelists writing today. Her third novel *Strange Hotel* was published by Faber in 2020.

She has contributed forewords to the *Selected Poems of Anna Akhmatova* (Folio Society), *Sundog: the lyrics of Scott Walker* (Faber & Faber) and Edna O'Brien's *The Country Girls Trilogy*. Her short stories have appeared in *The Guardian*, *Prospect*, *The Long Gaze Back* (Little Island Press), *Dubliners 100* (Tramp Press), *Winter Papers* (Curlew Editions) and on BBC Radio 4.

Critics on both sides of the Atlantic have praised *A Girl Is a Half-formed Thing* as a bold and daring debut. Anne Enright called McBride a “genius”; Joshua Cohen in the *New York Times* thought it “a future classic”, and James Wood in the *New Yorker* hailed it as a “blazingly original novel ... fuelled by

fractured, adventurous language and raw emotion.” This acclaim, combined with the story of McBride’s almost decade-long search for a publisher, made the book one of the most celebrated literary debuts of recent years.

John McCourt was born in Dublin in 1965 and educated at Belvedere College and University College Dublin. He is Professor English at the University of Macerata. He previously taught at the Universities of Trieste and Roma Tre. He is the author of *The Years of Bloom: Joyce in Trieste 1904-1920* (Lilliput Press, 2001), which has been published in Italian, Hungarian, Spanish, and Japanese. He is also the author of *Writing the Frontier: Anthony Trollope between Britain and Ireland* (Oxford University Press, 2015). He has edited many volumes, including *Roll Away the Reel World: James Joyce and Cinema* (Cork University Press), and *James Joyce in Context* (Cambridge University Press). He co-edited *Problems with Authority: New Essays on Flann O’Brien*, with Ruben Borg and Paul Fagan (Cork University Press, 2017). An edited collection entitled *Reading Brendan Behan* was published by Cork University Press in 2019. His study of the reception of Joyce’s *Ulysses* in Ireland *Consuming Joyce: One Hundred Years of Ulysses in Ireland* was published by Bloomsbury in 2022, to mark the centenary of the novel’s publication.

He is co-director of the Trieste Joyce School and President of the International James Joyce Foundation. In June 2022 he was elected, on the first count, Rector of the University of Macerata.

2. New IASIL Executive Committee for 2022-2025

Rui Carvalho Homem, IASIL Returning Officer, reported in April that the nomination process for the IASIL Executive was complete, and that the list of duly nominated members for the period 2022-2025 is as follows:

Christina Morin – Chairperson	Andrew Fitzsimons – Vice-Chairperson for Japan
Deirdre Flynn – Secretary	Naoko Toraiwa – Representative for Japan
Ailbhe McDaid – Treasurer	Yuri Yoshino – Representative for Japan
Rui Carvalho Homem – Returning Officer	Tetsuko Nakamura – Representative for Japan

All positions were filled and were uncontested. Under the applicable regulations, an election was not necessary, and the nominations were validated at the AGM at the University of Limerick.

3. Payment of Annual Membership Fees

If you have not already paid your membership fees for the fiscal year of 2022 (April 2022-March 2023), please do so by the end of September, as *Journal of Irish Studies*, vol. 36 (and *IUR* for those subscribing) will be distributed to paid-up members after the conference. This of course applies to non-paid fees for past years, as well. Late payments will be accepted, but your journal(s) will be delivered

in April 2023. 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 <i>JIS</i>	¥ 7,000	Couple membership with <i>JIS</i>	¥ 10,000
Membership with <i>JIS & IUR</i>	¥ 10,000	Couple membership with <i>JIS & IUR</i>	¥ 13,000
Student with <i>JIS</i> *	¥ 5,000		

If you live abroad, you can use PayPal. Please follow the instruction shown in the email you have received from Treasurer Tetsuko Nakamura <treasurer@iasil.jp>. Or you can transfer your membership fee to the following account:

Bank Name: MUFG Bank, Ltd.

SWIFT Code: BOTKJPJT (in 8 digits); BOTKJPJTXXX (in 11 digits)

Branch Name: Okurayama Branch (Branch No. 308)

Branch Address (**new address from 26th September, 2022**): 3-7-17 Shin-Yokohama, Kohoku-ku, Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture, 222-0033, Japan

Tel: +81(0)45-475-3822

(**Current address**): 1-17-8 Okurayama, Kohoku-ku, Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture, 222-0037, Japan. Tel: +81(0)45-544-1011

Account Name: IASIL Japan Treasurer Tetsuko Nakamura

Account No: 0688983 (Savings Account)

The membership fee for overseas members does not include the transfer charge, so please make sure that the exact amount reaches us. 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 <i>JIS & IUR</i>	Asia	Oceania, North America, Central America, Europe, Middle East	South America, Africa
<i>JIS</i>	¥ 750	¥ 1,000	¥ 1,300
<i>JIS & IUR</i>	¥ 1,500	¥ 2,000	¥ 2,600

4. Report of IASIL 2022 Conference, University of Limerick, Ireland

The IASIL 2022 Conference was held from the 25-29 July 2022, hosted by the School of English, Irish and Communication at the University of Limerick, Ireland. The conference theme was bold, innovative, challenging, important and timely: ‘Intersectional Irelands’. As the organizers put it in the conference programme: ‘Irish studies scholarship has recently begun to draw on critical race and anti-colonial theory, migration and diaspora studies, disability studies, feminist and queer theory, and class studies, among other critical perspectives, to broaden the critical discourse beyond the somewhat static literary-historical categories of the past and forge new understandings of Irish literary cultures. [...] As Irish society becomes increasingly multicultural and multilingual, it is timely for us to address the construction and representation of intersectionality in our literary culture.’

The theme facilitated some fascinating keynote addresses, panels, and papers. Professor Patricia Palmer of Maynooth University, in the address which opened the conference, ‘We Need to Think about Early Modern Ireland’, reminded us of the importance of the past, not as that which made us what we are, but as a realm of possibilities which, though they never came about, remain as potential sources of renewal. The plenary was followed by the opening reception and a reading by the Irish-language poets Celia de Fréine, Louis de Paor, and Ciara Ní É. An eye-opening element of the conference was the prominence of the Irish language, in readings, but also in plenary addresses and papers, and how lively, innovative, youthful, and humorous current writing, and indeed scholarship, in the Irish language appears to be. A special mention must also go to the much-appreciated IASIL PhD forum, presided over by Adam Hanna.

The inclusive and adventurous theme was reflected in the range of panel sessions: ‘Irish Traveller Writing’, ‘Black Irish Representations’, ‘Anticolonial Movements’, ‘“Civilizing” Process’; and the roundtable sessions devoted to ‘Irish Women Writers in London 1880-1940’, and ‘Writing While Trans’, and all on just the first morning. Such range, as well as reach, continued into the week, with almost every session and panel providing encounters with new work or new insights into the well-known. With so much going on, and with so many interesting sessions clashing with each other, one of the difficulties of the conference was choosing which to attend.

Unfortunately, Japanese representation at the conference was sparse, due partly, and as ever, to the timing of the conference, but also to the lingering complications of the coronavirus pandemic, as well as the effect on air travel of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Naoko Toraiwa gave a persuasive and detailed ecological reading of Sinead Morrissey and Fuyuji Tanigawa offered a ‘transnational’ anecdote on Seamus Heaney and senryu, while Andrew Fitzsimons gave a paper on the context within Bashō’s own work of the episode related in Derek Mahon’s ‘The Snow Party’.

Being the first face-to-face IASIL Conference since 2019 meant that the social aspects of the week were relished, and old and new friendships celebrated. At the Belltable Theatre in Limerick on the second day of the conference, there was a wine reception for the launch of the magazine Holy Show, followed by a performance of that collective’s ‘The Alphabet of Birds’, an audio-visual essay by Sara Baume, featuring the work of artists Natalia Beylis, Gary Coyle, Laura Fitzgerald, and Baume herself, who performed the spoken sections of the piece. On the Wednesday evening, there was a Spoken Word event at Dolan’s, hosted by Eoin Devereux, featuring poets in Irish and English, including a funny and powerful performance by Sarah Clancy, and a powerful rendition by Felispeaks, the subject of a paper during the conference, of her well-known poem ‘They’, as well as a boisterous performance in Irish by Dubhán Ó Longáin, which mixed to hilarious, bawdy effect, the mythological and the contemporary. The event was preceded and followed by traditional music performed by Aileen Dilane and friends. The conference’s readings and recitals came to an end in the wonderful setting of King John’s Castle on the Thursday evening, where writers connected with the University of Limerick, including Lia Mills, Donal

Ryan, Sheila Killian, Helena Close, William Keohane and Lauren Preston, read from their work, interspersed with music from Sandra Joyce and Niall Keegan.

A sincere thank you to the organisers of the conference, Tina O'Toole, Sorcha De Brun, and the Administrators, Tracy McAvinue, Tara Giddens and Niamh O'Sullivan, and to our incoming President, Tina Morin, for putting on such a splendid conference in the spectacular setting of the University of Limerick.

Andrew Fitzsimons (Gakushuin University)

5. IASIL Annual Conference, 17-21 July 2023

The IASIL 2023 conference will be hosted by The British University in Egypt, with the theme of "Sustainability". The deadline for CFP has been scheduled for **20th March 2023**. For further details, please visit the following link: <https://www.bue.edu.eg/iasil/>. If you wish to present a paper at the conference, please renew your membership by the end of November 2022 so that IASIL Japan Office can register you as eligible for application. **IASIL Japan continues to offer a scholarship for a postgraduate student to attend the IASIL conference. Details will be uploaded in November on our website.**

6. Announcement: Seamus Heaney Award, Japan

Nominations, to be received by 30 November 2022, can be sent by email using the subject line 'Seamus Heaney Award Japan Nomination' to: IASIL Japan Office: <secretary@iasil.jp> or Embassy of Ireland, Japan: <TokyoEmbassy@dfa.ie>. More information can be found on the IASIL Japan website: <http://iasil.jp/news/?p=795>.



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