ABSTRACTS

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Panel Session 1: Dialogic / Reflective Elements in Irish Poetry

'A little bit further': Intertextuality and the Journey of Mourning in Michael Longley's 'Marigolds, 1960'

Iain Twiddy (Kyushu University)

First published in 2011, when he was 72, Michael Longley's late elegy 'Marigolds, 1960' looks back half a century to the time his father was dying. Observing Longley's journey to Trinity College Dublin, and his entry into adulthood, the poem explores primarily the complexity of the paternal relationship and the filial burden both during life and after death, but it also presents the tensions of a number of other relationships. In its subtle echo of Yeats's 'Easter, 1916', 'Marigolds, 1960' addresses domestic conflict, intergenerational misunderstandings, the relationship between love poetry, war poetry and elegy, as well as the frictions involved in fulfilling expectations of masculinity. In analysing the intertextual roots of the poem in both classical pastoral elegy and twentieth-century poetry, and by tracing its dextrous deployment of metaphor and metonym, this presentation will explore Longley's sense of the ethical values of elegy, and his assessment of its retroactive value, guided by the responsibility that every poem should be worth – or more than worth – the paper it is printed on. The dialogic nature of 'Marigolds, 1960', in Longley's use of prosopopoeia and the incorporating of text from an earlier poem, demonstrates the fundamentally substitutive practice of writing and elegy, and it suggests that elegy is less a final statement than an ongoing conversation in the continuing inheritance and negotiation of mourning.

Designating Ecoscape in Heaney's Poetry: A Reflection on Self-discovery through Nature

Sukla Kisku (Bhairab Ganguly College, West Bengal State University)

Seamus Heaney (1939 – 2013), a pioneering figure in Irish literature, has demonstrated his genuine deep-rooted concern for his surrounding ecosphere in many of his nature poems, wherein the narrator can be noticed to discover himself in unexpected ways through his profound observation of nature or its various agencies. In fact, in this process of observation, the narrator would also find himself as one of the agents of nature. The majority of his poems centre on the ecological backdrop, allowing the reader to perceive the natural world and its vital contribution in Heaney's work. In his broad spectrum of poetry, Heaney's agency of nature can eloquently reflect his personal concern, curiosity,

and connection to his surrounding ecological space. There are also such grave times when Heaney became critical of the abuse by human practice. Heaney was inspired by the English poet William Wordsworth, and his Romantic identification with nature allowed him to develop his other voice as a spokesperson who indulged in many poems not only with admiration but also with apprehension for nature's struggle for survival in a modern civilized ambience. Since ecology advocates for the active interactions between different organisms as well as between members of other species, Heaney's association with different animals, plants, or other agencies of nature manifested his agitated voice in poems such as "Death of a Naturalist," "Blackberry Picking," "The Plantation," "Antaeus," and so on. As a human member of the ecosystem, Heaney frequently admired and yet criticized the coexistence between human beings and nature, as it occasionally threatened the existence of nature and its agencies in various domains of time, whether past or present. For instance, in his poem "Antaeus" Heaney reflected on the critical positioning of the eponymous character who is acting as one of the agents of nature. This paper will attempt to examine Heaney's self-discovery in becoming an agent of nature through the ecological space in which he was immersed, using selective poems as an example. It will further enquire about how his conscious self began to voice significant anxiety as a result of constant human interference.

Panel Session 2: Modernist Novels' Relations with Languages and Semiotics

Trans-parent Visions: Stephen Dedalus' Maternal Traces in "Proteus"

Hsiang-yun (Shane) Cheng (National Taiwan University)

At the onset of "Proteus" in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Stephen Dedalus walks along Sandymount Strand, contemplating Aristotle's theory of the diaphane—the translucent medium through which light passes. With such an idea in mind, he closes his eyes to "see" without the ineluctable modality of the visible, allowing touch and other senses to emerge with renewed prominence. This shift invites the question: is the world Stephen imagines diaphanous, transparent in their mediation? How does his preoccupation with the diaphane relate to his following associations with parturition, the womb, and maternal intimacy? Resorting to Julia Kristeva's theory of the semiotic in *Revolution in Poetic Language*, this paper argues that the paternal symbolic language of Stephen's stream of consciousness is haunted by pre-Oedipal semiotic traces: tactile impressions like touching, kissing, biting, and sucking. Serving as the mechanism of denial to paternal authority, these sensory associations gesture toward the maternal body beyond articulation, encoding grief, guilt, and the longing for the archaic mother-son bond. In this sense, "Proteus" stages Stephen as a subject fluidly traversing the symbolic and semiotic realms, with language rendered "trans-parent"—that is, not merely in its etymological sense, but as a linguistic

movement "beyond" the limitations of paternal signification. Stephen, in this respect, resonates "the boy that can enjoy invisibility" (*U* 1.260-63) in the alluded verves from *Turko the Terrible* in "Telemachus," positioning himself as a fluid subject deconstructing the outward seeable signifiers with the inward archaic desire relating to maternal forces and affliction.

What Was Sweeny Doing on the Tree?
—On the Simplified Chinese Translation of *At Swim-Two-Birds*

Chih-hsien Hsieh (Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages)

The publication of *At Swim-Two-Birds* in 1939 firmly established Flann O'Brien as one of the leading figures in modern and postmodern Irish literature. Though written in English, the novel, much like James Joyce's *Ulysses*, experiments with a variety of English styles, including erudite prose, translationese, 18th-century English, American Western, and Hiberno-English. In addition to paying tribute to Joyce, this interplay of diverse stylistic registers also represents O'Brien's direct response to the linguistic invasion of Ireland by its former coloniser. For translators, rendering these styles while conveying the identity crisis of post-independence Ireland poses an enduring challenge. *At Swim-Two-Birds* has been translated into at least fifteen languages, broadening its readership in the Western world. However, it was not until the late 20th century that Sweeney finally "jumped" to the Far East, with Masayoshi Oosawa's Japanese translation of the novel published in 1998. Nearly two decades later, the Simplified Chinese rendition, titled *Shuangniao Du* (雙鳥渡), was released in 2019. This paper examines how the Simplified Chinese translation interprets the novel's title and translates its intricate parodies, layered humour, and distinct language styles. By analysing these elements, the paper sheds light on how the translation navigates the challenges of adapting O'Brien's uniquely Irish text for a Chinese audience.

Panel Session 3: Contemporary Fiction Looking into Ireland's Past

Silence Is Not Always Gold:
Silence and Complicity in Claire Keegan's *Small Things Like These*

Hawk Chang (The Education University of Hong Kong)

Most people have been inculcated with the importance of silence since early childhood. They are advised to remain taciturn to avoid conflict and shun trouble. However, people's habitual reticence often encourages incessant acts of violence and fosters injustice. Claire Keegan's novella *Small Things Like These* (2021) illustrates relevant deliberations on silence and collusion in Irish society. Set in New

Ross, County Wexford, Ireland, in 1985, this fictional work relates the spiritual journey of Bill Furlong, a coal and fuel merchant who accidentally discovers that a convent is running an abusive Magdalene laundry, though ostensibly, nuns in the convent help educate the underprivileged girls in the Catholic school. Stuck between the intuitive impulse to unravel the scandal and save the tortured girls and the commonsensical tendency to step away and keep silent about the Catholic Church's misdemeanors, the protagonist is plunged into a surge of spiritual torment and guilty conscience. Furlong's struggle echoes Eviatar Zerubavel's theory of silence and denial in his book *The Elephant in the Room* (2006). Reading Keegan's *Small Things Like These* through the lens of silence and connivance, this paper investigates the problem of taciturnity in the face of inequity and, by extension, Keegan's advocacy of fairness, hope, and change via small actions each of us can take in our everyday lives. It is expected to help untangle the intricate intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships in the microcosmic town in contemporary Ireland.

Ironic Nostalgia and Affective Tension in Patrick McCabe's *The Big Yaroo*

Shan-Yun Huang (National Taiwan University)

This paper examines Patrick McCabe's *The Big Yaroo* (2019), a sequel to his influential *The Butcher Boy* (1992), with a particular focus on irony and nostalgia. Set decades after the events of the original novel, *The Big Yaroo* returns to the voice of Francie Brady, now an aging inmate in a psychiatric institution, who narrates his life through a chaotic mix of magazine-style commentary, institutional gossip, and 1960s cultural references. Although the novel retains Francie's distinctive black humor and erratic narration, it is also haunted by a longing for a past that is both vividly remembered and clearly irretrievable. This paper argues that the novel enacts a form of ironic nostalgia—one that simultaneously mourns and mocks, gestures toward sincerity while undercutting it with parody. The text inhabits a space of affective contradiction, where conflicting emotional registers—humor and trauma, sentiment and cynicism—coexist without resolution. However, rather than resolving these tensions, *The Big Yaroo* sustains them through what might be called tonal oscillation: a shifting of voice and mood that moves between absurdity and poignancy, parody and genuine pathos. These oscillations unsettle the reader's emotional footing, reflecting both the instability of Francie's psyche and the novel's ambivalent stance toward memory and meaning. As a sequel, *The Big Yaroo* also raises questions about repetition, belatedness, and the difficulty of narrative return—not only for its central character but for readers who carry with them the cultural weight of *The Butcher Boy*. In refusing closure, the novel stages both the persistence of memory and the limits of revisiting the past—narratively, emotionally, and historically.

Panel Session 4: Multidisciplinary Approaches to W. B. Yeats

Yeats the Existentialist: 'Vacillation'

Joseph S. O'Leary

'Existentialism' is not a subjective fretting over one's personal life, but a penetrating assessment of human existence as such, based on experience of crucial and revelatory matters such as anxiety, conscience, guilt, love, death, lived time. Yeats's autobiographical poems always keep in view the riddle of human existence as such. The *existenziell* intensity and particularity of what he recounts is always underpinned by a properly *existenzial* insight into the human condition (in Heidegger's terms). The wide panoply of his interests in a philosophy of history, in mythologies, and in occult phenomena may mask this; but it is when we step back to his core concern with human existence that these sprawling interests are brought into luminous perspective.

'Vacillation' takes on its full significance when set in a sequence with previous major poems that attempt to grasp the shape of existence in a thorough examination. Of course even simple lyrics such as 'The Wild Swans at Coole' have an *existenzial* significance as they articulate deep features of human being, such as impermanence. But in the more ambitiously reflective poems, the lyric moments are knit into a wider, more searching argument, not abstract concepts but in a sequence of dramatic stances and symbolic images. Thus the *existenzial* vision never lacks *existenziell* bite. Under the appearance of a casual, digressive style, the poem brings existence itself into sharp focus.

At the centre of the poem lies the ideal of unity of being, a perfect harmony of soul and sense, which is experienced as 'joy.' A mythical tree from the *Mabinogion* plays the same symbolic role as the 'great-rooted blossomer' of 'Among School Children.' An actual experience of ecstasy confirms the existential centrality of this dimension: 'I was blessèd and could bless.' Heidegger talks of how a '*Jubel des Herzens* (jubilation of the heart) all things are transformed and are around us as if for the first time,' so that we wonder at their very being. But such transformative joy is elusive. Instead, we vacillate between extremities, for instance, between the dark night of Soul and the bright day of Self, or between the extreme views that Buddhists call eternalism (*śāśvata-dṛṣṭi)*, and nihilism (*uccheda-dṛṣṭi*).

Symposium 1
"Hearn and Ireland and Japan"

Chair: Masaya Shimokusu (Doshisha University)

Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904) has been celebrated as a prominent writer for a long time in Japan, especially with his collection of ghostly stories titled *Kwaidan: Stories and Studies of Strange Things*, which was published in the year of his demise, 1904. In the collection, Hearn skillfully, eerily, and lively describes various Japanese shape-shifters or *obake* with the help of his wife, Setsu Koizumi. In this autumn, the nationwide TV serial drama titled *The Ghost Writer's Wife* (or *Bakebake*) is being broadcasted by NHK, Japan's national public broadcasting organization. The heroine of the drama is modeled on Setsu. In response to its broadcasting, many books on or related to Hearn have been published this year. Also, a great number of events celebrating the writer and his wife have been held so far, and this symposium may be regarded as one of such celebratory events.

The title of this symposium suggests diverse combinations of the one person and two countries which may evoke lively discussions and propose new aspects of their connections. As his given name, Lafcadio, suggests, Hearn was born in Greece, and before coming to Japan from Ireland, he established his career as a writer in America. The two ands in the title also imply a number of elements to be discussed at this symposium. In consideration with strong ties between Hearn's works and Ireland, the four panelists will attempt to explore new features of the multi-faceted, shape-shifting writer, Patricio Lafcadio Tessima Carlos Hearn, or Yakumo Koizumi.

Irish-Gothic Features of Lafcadio Hearn's Writings

Masaya Shimokusu (Doshisha University)

In the last dozen years, the studies of "the Irish-Gothic," "Irish Gothic novels," and "Irish gothic literature" have conspicuously developed. Thanks to their accomplishments, we can now treat Gothic features of various kinds of Irish texts as well as novels. This presentation will explore Gothic or Irish-Gothic features of Lafcadio Hearn's writings to situate him in the genealogy of Irish-Gothic writers. Hearn was brought to Ireland with his mother when he was a child. Hearn's family lived in the city of Dublin, and many of Hearn boys studied at Trinity College, Dublin, as did the two prominent Irish Gothic writers, Oscar Wilde and Bram Stoker. After his mother left Ireland, Hearn was raised by his grand-aunt Sarah Brenane. Her house was just a few blocks away from Wilde's house in Merrion Square. Mrs. Brenane was a pious converted Catholic, and one of Catholic visitors to Brenane's house deeply impressed Hearn in his infant days. Hearn's letters to Elizabeth Bisland reproduced in Bisland's book after his death describe his infant days in Ireland. The episodes written in the letters assume

strong anti-Catholic Gothic flavor; a formerly Protestant boy is confined in a big house and strictly educated by a pious Catholic lady, who daydreamingly turns into a faceless woman in front of the boy. This faceless woman later reappears as the "O-jochū" in one of Hearn's best Japanese ghost stories, "Mujina," in *Kwaidan* (1904). The fear of the revival of the past is one of main features of Gothic novels. The supernatural Gothic figure which Hearn saw as an infant in Ireland seemed to revive in his imagination and fiction even in the very late days in his life.

O-bake and Aos Sí: A Comparative Study of Lafcadio Hearn and W. B. Yeats

Eishiro Ito (Iwate Prefectural University)

This paper will explore the literary, cultural, and folkloric dynamics embedded in the supernatural narratives of Lafcadio Hearn's *Kwaidan* and W. B. Yeats's anthologies *Fairy and Folk Tales of the Irish Peasantry* and *Irish Fairy and Folk Tales*. Through a comparative lens, it will examine how both authors—writing from vastly different cultural contexts—perform similar roles: preserving vanishing traditions, translating oral narratives into literary form, and employing the supernatural not merely as a genre convention but as a means of expressing cultural identity, historical trauma, and poetic vision. Drawing on folklore studies, narrative theory, and postcolonial criticism, the paper will argue that Hearn and Yeats each act as cultural translators and literary mystics. In *Kwaidan*, fear is metaphysical and spiritual. Stories like "Mimi-nashi Hoichi" and "Mujina" build dread gradually rather than through sudden shocks. Ghosts are not simply monsters but ethical agents returning due to unresolved karmic imbalances. The aesthetics of fear are rooted in Buddhist cosmology, where illusion and suffering persist unless spiritually addressed. In contrast, Yeats's fairies play a more anarchic role. Tales such as "The Stolen Child" and others invoking the motif of the death coach portray supernatural beings as unpredictable and morally ambiguous, governed by nonhuman logic. These figures may mirror the colonial condition—capricious, irrational, and disruptive. Death in these tales becomes less a resolution than a metaphoric rupture. Furthermore, on 22 June 1901, Hearn sent Yeats a letter of "violent protest" over revisions to "The Host of the Air," revealing his deep aesthetic investment in the authenticity of folk narratives.

Supernatural Bonds in Transition: Lafcadio Hearn's "Yuki-Onna", Le Fanu's *Carmilla*, and the Leannán Sídhe

Yoko Kubo (Nihon University)

This presentation explores how Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* and Lafcadio Hearn's "Yuki-Onna" depict human encounters with supernatural beings, focusing on themes of intimacy, danger, and transformation. In *Carmilla*, the relationship between the vampire Carmilla and the heroine Laura

is not merely horrific but charged with desire, uncertainty, and blurred identity. The supernatural arises within familiar surroundings, offering a way to reflect on hidden fears and longings. In contrast, Hearn's "Yuki-Onna" presents a tale in which a man unknowingly marries a spirit woman, only to lose her when he violates a cultural taboo. This narrative belongs to the tradition of *irui konin tan*—stories of marriage between humans and non-humans—where the supernatural enters from beyond the known world and tests human vows and social codes. Hearn retells such stories for Western readers, blending Japanese folklore with Romantic and Gothic elements. A striking parallel appears with the Leannán Sídhe, described by W.B. Yeats as a "fairy mistress" who inspires her mortal lovers while consuming their lives, so that "the Gaelic poets die young, for she is restless, and will not let them remain long on earth" (*Fairy and Folk Tales of the Irish Peasantry*, 1888). Like the Yuki-Onna, she offers profound connection at a deadly cost, embodying a recurring cross-cultural motif: intimacy with beings beyond the human realm as both enchanting and destructive. Together, these stories reveal how supernatural love narratives reflect human vulnerability, and how cultural traditions shape our imagination of the unknown.

Insect Music: Lafcadio Hearn, Bashō and Yeats

Andrew Fitzsimons (Gakushuin University)

As David Lurie has written, 'Hearn's numerous essays on insects provide one of the most productive entry points into the central themes of his work.' I want in this paper to explore those themes, the alien and familiar, the human and non-human world, and the unknowability of nature: 'the insect world is altogether a world of goblins and fairies: creatures with organs of which we cannot discover the use, and senses of which we cannot imagine the nature'. I will look at the role that song and music play, historically and culturally, in the language used to depict insect sounds of insects, in both Hearn's work and in the work of Matsuo Bashō, and explore how Hearn's writings on insects relate to the work of W. B. Yeats, and to Hearn's Irish background.

Sunday, 5 October

Panel Session 5: Visual and Spatial Relations in Irish Drama

Staging Relations: Dion Boucicault's *The Colleen Bawn* (1860), Theatrical Spectacle, and Transatlantic Visions of Ireland

Aiko Matsuura (Meijo University)

In recent years, there has been a growing scholarly interest in the re-enactment and re-examination of nineteenth-century visual culture, particularly in relation to the rise of panoramas and other devices that shaped a new mode of visuality, as researchers seek to understand how modes of seeing were constructed, mediated, and experienced during this pivotal period. This presentation will contribute to this field by exploring the representation of Ireland in Britain through an analysis of *The Colleen Bawn* by Dion Boucicault.

The play is often categorized and analyzed as an "Irish" drama, but its reception in London suggests a more complex dynamic. Contemporary reviews even complained about the actors' strong Irish accents, suggesting that "Irishness" itself was not the primary appeal for British spectators. If Irish cultural markers did not drive its success, what then accounted for the extraordinary impact of *The Colleen Bawn* on British audiences?

To answer this question, I will focus on the play's most famous scene: the underwater cave rescue. This moment will be examined through the lens of visual culture, most recently developed by Patricia Smyth in 2022. I will propose to re-read this scene alongside Jonathan Crary's theory of the modernization of vision, arguing that *The Colleen Bawn*'s success lay less in its narrative or national themes than in its innovative use of theatrical spectacle, which resonated with the emerging visual regimes of the nineteenth century.

Furthermore, I will consider the transatlantic dimension of Boucicault's work by situating it within the visual culture of the American premiere. I will explore how *The Colleen Bawn* drew upon the aesthetics of the Romantic Sublime, linking its visual strategies to broader transatlantic cultural currents. This presentation will offer a new account of how the play's spectacle captivated British audiences beyond its Irishness.

Human Existence and Spatial Relations

in Enda Walsh's Three Irish Monologue Plays

Wei H. Kao (National Taiwan University)

Unlike plays with multiple characters and scene changes, a monologue play relies heavily on the virtual space that performers create verbally, requiring the audience to engage acoustically with the intangible images conjured by the speaker. Enda Walsh, among other Irish playwrights skilled in monologue plays, excels at crafting characters who construct vivid and surreal spaces where their inner selves and external realities struggle for a sense of grounding. At times, these spaces serve as shelters for human protagonists, offering a quiet refuge for introspection or standing as silent companions as they navigate emotions such as angst, guilt, shame, irritation, or joy. Some characters may obscure the personal significance of their narratives, while others place themselves at the center of their stories. Regardless of the frame, they confront or reconcile with themselves across various temporal and spatial landscapes, striving to rebuild their relationships with a world in flux. Meanwhile, Walsh's monologue plays reveal that the human mind is never a static entity, but rather shaped by a stream of consciousness often wrestling with contradictions and ambiguities. As the result, both the characters and the audience, as the sufferers, are compelled to strike a balance within the emerging spatial politics. This paper will discuss three monologue plays by Walsh that have not received much scholarly attention, yet all portray different aspects of human existence within spatial politics delineated by the playwright, including *Room 303* (2014), *A Girl's Bedroom* (2015), and *Kitchen* (2016).

Symposium 2
"Environments in Arts and Literatures"

Chair: Naoko Toraiwa (Meiji University)

Environmental issues, natural, social, artistic and scientific, have been always vital for people around the world from the birth of human consciousness. Naturally, the world's literary works, visual arts, music, media conveying human concerns, have been reflecting this in various ways since ancient times. In many mythologies, basic ideas of social rules as well as natural terrestrial and extraterrestrial phenomena are represented in the deities usually taking the form of human beings, with whom man seeks balanced relationships.

Contemporary world literature and visual arts reveal the balanced and imbalanced relationships between humans and their various environments in more sophisticated ways, or I should say, more abstract ways, (admitting that in a sense abstraction can be more sophisticated as the abstract can mean the essence taken out of physical and concrete existences), than mythology or the social novel. Human beings woven into the network of their natural, social and scientific surroundings in time and space is one of those images strongly envisioned since the late 20th century. Michel Foucault in 1967 emphasized the occurrence of a shift from time to space in human concerns; he wrote: "We are at a moment, I believe, when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein." Network has become the key word to represent various relationships in environments through space and time, spatialized time.

This symposium will examine various relationships with and in environments, focusing on Samuel Beckett (Yoshiyuki Inoue), Michael Hartnett (Hiroko Ikeda) and Martin McDonagh (Hiroko Mikami).

Beckett's Geodesy in the Dark

Yoshiyuki Inoué (Meiji University)

In Beckett's radio play *All That Fall* Mr. Rooney says, 'one of the few satisfactions in life' is counting, and this act is associated with steps. The notion of geodesy appears in his short prose *Enough*, where 'he' and 'I' count their steps 'at an average speed of roughly three miles per day and night' through a mechanical operation of the pedometer. By this art Beckett's characters make an attempt to produce a kind of Dantean geography, based on foot.

In *All That Fall* Mrs. Rooney advances 'the country road towards the railway station' with her 'dragging feet'. The play is filled with her steps. They are not counted yet, but Dantesque atmosphere is palpable at several points, especially after the appearance of Mr. Rooney. He compares himself and his wife with 'Dante's damned' in the fourth *bolgia* [ditch] of the eight circle in the *Inferno*. Lawrence Harvey argues that in his early poem 'Text' Beckett refers to those lower regions of Hell by using the word 'ditch'. The usage of this word in the poem suggests the play's analogies with Dante. Mr. Rooney's line 'we shall fall into the ditch' also hints at the possibility that the couple are circling along one of these regions: they are trudging 'this hellish road'. These ditches (*fossés* in French) appear in Beckett's *oeuvre* again and again. His geography of the dark is partly based on Dante's *Commedia*.

Beckett's geodesy is applied in the most remarkable way in *Company*. Here, like Hobbes, to 'reason' is nothing but 'reckoning', an arithmetic computation. Distances are measured in terms of 'paces', being closely related to tabulation. Furthermore, the geodesy is employed beside the shade of 'your father', thus evoking another shade in the Dantean setting, namely Virgil, because 'totting up the tally' is made 'on the verge of the ditch' again. In *Company*, the 'you' is engaged in registering the number

of steps taken in the memory ledger. The geodesic *mathesis* is at work here in the form of pedometer for the cartography of the mind.

Beyond the Dark of 'foinse na staire (fountain of history)': Language and Ecology in Michael Hartnett's 'An Lia Nocht (The Naked Surgeon)'

Hiroko Ikeda (Kyoto University)

An ecological perspective sheds new light on the significance of Michael Hartnett's shift from English to Irish, marked by his public declaration, 'A Farewell to English' (1974). Distancing himself from nationalist politics, Hartnett embraced Irish as a language deeply embedded in the land and in an ancient worldview that reflects an intimate relationship between humans and non-humans. His perspective aligns with the principles of the deep ecology movement advocated by Norwegian philosopher Arne Næss in 1972. Næss called for a fundamental rethinking of human-nature relationships, asserting that all living beings possess intrinsic value and therefore share 'the equal right to live and blossom'.

Hartnett's focus remained primarily on the Irish landscape and cultural memory rather than global ecological concerns. Nevertheless, the issues he confronted—complicated and overshadowed by the legacy of colonization—have broader relevance in a world where many communities endure the destruction of indigenous environments and the accompanying psychological and physical trauma. His poem 'An Lia Nocht (The Naked Surgeon)' reflects his struggle to reclaim the Irish language as both part of the damaged environment and a vital element of his natural and cultural inheritance. The poem appears as the final piece in his bilingual anthology *The Necklace of Wrens* (1987), following the earlier release of an Irish-only version in 1985. Grounded in a close examination of both versions—one in Irish, the other in English—this paper explores how the Irish language enabled Hartnett to engage with the depth of the landscape and articulate a vision of healing that reaches beyond Ireland.

Martin McDonagh's Mythic World: From Western Ireland to Outer Space

Hiroko Mikami

Martin McDonagh made his theatrical debut in 1996 at the age of 26 with *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*. In 1997, this play was joined by *A Skull in Connemara* and *The Lonesome West*, and together the three works came to be known as *The Leenane Trilogy*. All three were performed in Galway and subsequently in London. That same year, *The Cripple of Inishmaan* was staged at London's National Theatre, running concurrently with *The Leenane Trilogy*. McDonagh's plays quickly gained international acclaim—an emergence often described as the "McDonagh phenomenon"—and have since been widely performed. In 2001, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* was staged, conceived as part of a

second trilogy—the *Aran Trilogy*—alongside *The Cripple of Inishmaan* and *The Banshees of Inisheer*, the latter of which remains unpublished and unstaged.

Fintan O'Toole once offered a striking metaphor for McDonagh's dramatic world, linking the Connemara region of western Ireland to outer space. On Europa, one of Jupiter's moons, NASA named a chaotic icy terrain "Conamara Chaos" (*Conamara* being the Irish spelling of *Connemara*) because of its resemblance to the bleak, rugged landscapes of western Ireland. ("Chaos" is a geological term for fragmented, disrupted terrain.) If we include the Aran Islands as part of the broader Connemara region, then Connemara serves as the setting for the first five of McDonagh's plays to be staged—*The Leenane Trilogy* and two plays from the *Aran Trilogy*—all of which were written (at least in draft form) by 1995. His theatrical world thus resonates with the disorder of "Conamara Chaos," extending imaginatively from rural Ireland into cosmic space.

In this presentation, I examine six of McDonagh's works—*The Leenane Trilogy*, two plays from the *Aran Trilogy*, and the film *The Banshees of Inisherin* (2023), which is set on a fictional island reminiscent of the Aran Islands—to explore how McDonagh constructs a dramatic universe that, while rooted in a specific Irish setting, expands into global and even mythic dimensions. I argue that the dark humor of his work may ultimately serve to melt the metaphorical ice of Conamara Chaos, pushing the boundaries of contemporary theatre towards a new planetary mythology.