

SECA NEWS

Biannual newsletter of the School of English and Creative Arts, NUI Galway

ISSUE 1



DECEMBER 2020

Top stories



Messages from Prof. Sean Ryder and Dr Charlotte McIvor



Research



News and Events



Welcome to new staff



Note from the Editors

Welcome to our first SECA Newsletter! Many thanks to all our contributors who have provided such interesting and inspiring content for this inaugural publication. In a year of new challenges and different ways of working, it's been wonderful to witness the resilience, creativity, and determination of colleagues and students within the school. In continuing to produce thought-provoking, high-quality teaching, research, and outreach activity throughout the past 9 months (when the university campus has been largely closed to us), we have hopefully grown closer together as colleagues and come to appreciate each other's contributions from different and refreshing perspectives. We hope that you find this newsletter stimulating and valuable as a snapshot of the School's recent activity. Contributions for future editions, including photos, posters, blurbs, and articles, are most welcome and should be sent to karenm.walsh@nuigalway.ie and/or dermot.burns@nuigalway.ie by email or the school's SharePoint link. Merry Christmas everyone and here's to a successful, happy, and collegial 2021!

Karen and Dermot

Welcome to New Staff!



A warm welcome is extended to our three new staff members: Dr Ciara Murphy (O'Donoghue Centre for Drama, Theatre, and Performance), Dr Emily Ridge (English), and Dr Amanda Feery (Music). We look forward to working with you and sharing in your expertise, energy, creativity, and experience as you settle into academic life at NUI Galway.

MESSAGE FROM SEAN— HEAD OF SCHOOL

Many thanks to Dermot and Karen for putting this together, our first School newsletter. This time last year we couldn't have imagined the full range of challenges we would face during 2020. Yet we have a great deal to take pride from, much of which is reflected in this newsletter. We adapted quickly
(continued on next page)

MESSAGE FROM CHARLOTTE—DEPUTY HEAD OF SCHOOL

The contents of this newsletter are a testament to the innovation and range of our SECA community's talents even during this unprecedented period of the global pandemic. In addition to translating our teaching to online formats and supporting our students, what strikes me is the ways we've still found time
(continued on next page)

MESSAGE FROM CHARLOTTE (Continued)

to share our research through the new seminar series and the huge range of artistic projects and conferences/events that still found life online, often having to shift format and organisational structures to do so. New partnerships such as with Sharon Shannon have come into being, new books and work in increasingly diverse formats like the web series continue to be launched. The challenges and toll of this moment are ongoing, but it is a welcome respite to take a moment to reflect on the creative resources and will of our colleagues as they push knowledge forward in the classroom and beyond. Looking forward to next semester, we will be announcing a limited Arts in Action programme in the new year and continuing the work of our practice-based working group which is building our knowledge and capacity amongst SECA colleagues.

MESSAGE FROM SEAN (Continued)

and constructively to the new demands of online teaching; colleagues continued to research and publish superb scholarly work; we brought forward important initiatives (such as the School Research Seminars and a new project in Creative Arts Teaching and Learning); and we are preparing a new programme for Arts in Action, building on the legacy of our much-missed colleague and friend Mary McPartlan.

As Head of School I deeply appreciate the way colleagues have shown the kind of constructiveness, innovation and respectful spirit of debate that must be the hallmarks of a successful School. It's vital that we continue to talk and plan across the disciplines in inspiring ways, seeking the right balance between our commitment to our disciplines and our commitment to the potential of the School as a shared multidisciplinary endeavour. As we look forward to the Christmas break, and to a gradual emergence from the constraints of COVID-19, I want to thank every one of our full-time and part-time staff for the extraordinary work you've put in since last March, and to wish you all the best for 2021. I want to give special thanks to Charlotte for her amazing energy and support as Deputy Head of School, to our Heads of Discipline, School Officers and Committee Chairs who have provided leadership in difficult circumstances, and to Karen and the entire team of administrators -- Aoife, Dearbhla, Dee, Emma and Irene -- for their extraordinary work and commitment over the past few months. I believe we've managed to maintain a collegial, collective spirit despite only seeing each other through screens and sometimes temperamental internet connections!

Have a well-earned holiday break. I look forward to the day we all meet again in person! -- Sean

CREATIVE WRITING NEWS

This year saw the successful restoration of the Writer-in-Residence program in partnership with the Arts Council and the NUI Galway Foundation. Arnold Thomas Fanning, author of *Mind on Fire*, took up the position in January and taught into undergraduate and postgraduate Creative Writing. He also organized a very successful webinar on 'Creativity and Wellbeing in the time of Pandemic', which was streamed from the Moore Institute and included contributions from Doireann Ni Ghriofa, Marina Benjamin, and Mike McCormack.

The 2021 Writer in Residence will be announced at the end of this semester.

Our recent graduates continued their creative streak -- Alan McMonagle published his second novel with Picador, *Laura Cassidy's Walk of Fame*. Deirdre Mask's non-fiction work, *The Address Book: What Street Addresses Reveal about Identity, Race and Power* was published to acclaim and excerpted in *The Guardian*. (Continued on next page)

Active* Consent

"Active* Consent's multidisciplinary higher-education consent education programme reached over 16,000 students at 24 different colleges and universities and more than 80,000 students online through a social media campaign in autumn 2020. In September 2020, the Minister of Higher Education Simon Harris launched a new comprehensive toolkit detailing the team's research and creative arts inflected approaches and resources as well as a new eLearning module on "Sexual Violence and Harassment: Supporting Yourself and Your Peers" (featuring voice acting by Drama and Theatre Studies staff and alumni). To access the module, use this [link](#) . You can also read the toolkit [here](#).



CREATIVE WRITING NEWS (continued)

Roisin Kelly's debut poetry collection *Mercy* came out from Bloodaxe and was also excerpted in *The Guardian*.

Elaine Feeney's debut novel *As You Were* was shortlisted for the Irish Novel of the Year.

The recent special edition of [The Stinging Fly. \(The Galway 2020 edition\)](#) saw no less than ten recent graduates contributing essays, poetry, and short stories to this anthology.

Feilim O Bradaigh and Dean Fee, two of our very recent MA (Writing) graduates, secured substantial Arts Council Literature Bursaries.

Edward Foster was named Undergraduate Awards Global Winner in Classics & Archeology and – very mysterious, we cannot yet divulge his name - one of our undergrads will be shortlisted at the very end of this year for the New Irish Writing Award.

Looking forward to Spring 2021, graduates from all tiers of creative writing will be making their debuts – Una Mannion's novel [A Crooked Tree](#) is forthcoming from Faber. John McHugh's debut collection of short stories, *Pure Gold* is coming out with New Island Books and Ryan Dennis's novel *The Beast They Turned Away* will be published by *époque press*.

News and Events

Dr Justin Tonra: Article on Thomas Moore



HE WAS Ireland's first literary celebrity; he moved in exciting political and artistic circles; he was a best selling writer; a political satirist; a biographer, and above all a celebrated lyricist, admired by Hector Berlioz. Full article in [Galway Advertiser—Nov 12.](#)



The US Election: Perspectives and Prospects

This online panel discussion on Thursday 4th November reviewed the outcome of the US election, the major issues that have faced the electorate in 2020, the campaign, and ways forward for the country. The event was a collaboration between the Moore Institute and the Society of Fellows and Heyman Centre for the Humanities, Columbia University. Panellists Prof. Eileen Gillooly (Director, Society of Fellows and Heyman Centre for the Humanities, Columbia University), Prof. Stephanie McCurry (Professor of History, Columbia University), Dr Charlotte McIvor (Senior Lecturer in Drama, NUI Galway), and Prof. Josef Sorett (Professor of Religion and African American and African Diaspora Studies, Columbia University). Chair: Prof. Daniel Carey (Director of the Moore Institute, NUI Galway)

SHARON SHANNON MASTERCLASS FOR MUSIC STUDENTS

On Monday, 16th November 2020, Sharon Shannon and Win Horan had their introductory masterclass with the 1st Year Music Students, via Zoom, as part of their Irish Traditional Music module with Dr Verena Commins. Sharon and Win who are experienced Irish traditional musicians in their own right, performed live and spoke about the new partnership with NUI Galway and the forthcoming collaboration with Music. Both students and staff truly enjoyed the wonderful live performance which we had craved for so long! We very much look forward to working with Sharon in what will be a very exciting time for the BA in Music!



RESEARCH

This semester saw the launch of some exciting new research initiatives and developments in the School. The new SECA Research Seminar Series began in October with the aim of strengthening a shared research culture amongst the different disciplines in the School and between staff and postgraduates encouraging further interdisciplinary research and collaboration amongst colleagues. To date there have been presentations by Dr Emily Ridge, Dr Charlotte McIvor and Tiana Fischer. Maria Tivnan, will present on December 8th and Prof Lionel Pilkington on December 10th. Next

semester the series will continue and we already have some speakers confirmed but there are still slots available. If interested in presenting or chairing please contact Maria Tivnan (PhD candidate in Drama) who co-organised the seminar this semester. Maria will be stepping down from her role and the Research Committee would like to thank her for all her work on this project. The research section of the school website has been updated to include a link to our finalised [School Research Strategy](#), [publications](#), and [funded projects](#). It is wonderful to see that the combined total of funding from projects reported is now currently €5,523,755. A further new section on the website has been established to spotlight the research of school

staff. This week Dr Miriam Haughon is [featured](#) and previous profiles on Dr Emily Ridge, Dr Charlotte McIvor, and Dr Justin Tonra have been [archived](#) and are available to view. If you wish to be featured in the Spotlight on Research please contact

ian.walsh@nuigalway.ie

Special thanks to Karen Walsh for all her hard work in creating and updating all these sections on the website. We are delighted that Ashley Cahillane, (PhD Candidate in English) kindly agreed to be the school's first PhD Representative, attending and contributing to staff and School Research Committee meetings since her appointment in October.

Dr Ian R Walsh, Chair of SECA Research Committee

DR JUSTIN TONRA—PARTNER IN UK-IRELAND DIGITAL HUMANITIES NETWORK

The UK-Ireland Digital Humanities Network (PIs: Prof. Jane Winters and Dr. Michelle Doran), funded by the AHRC and IRC, brings together different stakeholders in Digital Humanities and related fields to consider and interrogate critically the concepts of sustainability, inclusivity, training, advocacy and career progression, among other key questions. Institutions and individuals engaged with the network will work to propose ways in which the UK and Ireland can build a collaborative vision for the field, and create new and sustainable long-term partnerships in alignment with the international community.

ABBHEY THEATRE

Dear Ireland 3 will premiere on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube on **Thursday 17th December at 7.30pm**.

Garraí an Ghiorria were invited to perform. The piece 'Mair a Chapail/ Live my Horse' is **directed by Marianne Kennedy** of NUI, Galway and written and performed by Marina Ní Dhubháin (PhD candidate in Drama and Theatre Studies) and Beartla Ó Flatharta. Watch links will be sent out by the Abbey closer to the date.

Dear Ireland is a project created by the Abbey Theatre as a response to the COVID-19 crisis. The core aim of *Dear Ireland* is to engage our community with theatre and bring everyone together. The third instalment of the series, *Dear Ireland III*, will be a series of three-minute postcards from underrepresented voices in Irish society that highlight the hopes, experiences, and challenges facing Ireland at this moment.

Garraí an Ghiorria is a collective of Irish language artists founded in 2016.

We are a collective of multidisciplinary artists working in the Irish language on the western seaboard called 'Garraí an Ghiorria'. The hare holds a special place in Irish folklore as a shapeshifter. Our group contains artists across many forms of theatre practice.

giorriatheatre.com

Please join the live online experience. We hope to create an ongoing 'national moment' where each corner of the country can partake in the shared feeling we when we get when we settle into our seats as the lights go down and the curtain rises on a production. [Link](#)



Ceangal Dolen Commissions

As part of the *Ceangal Dolen* Conference that happened virtually in November, six artists were commissioned to make work in Irish, Scottish Gaelic, and Welsh. Please find the links below for five of them. They are a good example of how work can be made taking COVID into consideration. All are subtitled.

Ceangal Dolen was convened as a collaboration between staff from *Ealaín na Gaeltachta*, *Ollscoil na hÉireann Gaillimh*, *An Taibhdhearc*, *Theatre Gu Leòr* and *Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru*. It is proudly supported by Creative Ireland, Colmcille,

Donegal County Council, NUI, Galway and TG4. Marianne Ní Chinnéide, the co-curator of the commissions for the Conference along with Muireann Kelly and Fflur Thomas.

Sam Ó Fearraigh | Balbháin [Link](#)

Ciara Ní É | Ciúnas Anois [Link](#)

Mari Elen Jones | "Y Fantell Wen a Mar" [Link](#)

Chris Harris | "Ymyrraeth Harris" [Link](#)

Beth Frieden | "Sileadh" [Link](#)

Talking TYA 2020 was a virtual conference that brought together over 180 scholars and artists from across the island of Ireland and internationally to discuss participation in all forms of Theatre for Young Audiences performance, process, policy, training, and engagement. It is an online event, allowing people to join us from across the globe.

The conference was organised as a collaboration between staff from Ulster University, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, NUI, Galway and *Branar Téatar do Pháistí*. The conference was supported by Galway 2020 and is held in partnership with *Baboró* International Arts Festival for Children.

[Keynotes and papers](#)

IETM Satellite Galway 2020 Meeting

A meeting took place virtually from Galway on 2-3 December 2020. IETM is a network of over 450 performing arts organisations and individual members working in the contemporary performing arts worldwide from theatre, dance, circus and performance, to interdisciplinary live art forms and new media. In response to the concerns of members, this meeting explores relationships between artists, the arts ecosystem and the planet. Through a series of speeches, working groups, and conversations with artists, including Mary Robinson and world-renowned artistic directors Marc Mac Lochlainn and Garry Hynes, the role of mitigation, adaptation and artistic influence will be explored, and actions identified for the performing arts ecosystem to be sustainable.

Partners

Organised by IETM in collaboration with Theatre Forum, Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture and Marianne Ní Chinnéide of Drama and Theatre Studies in the National University of Ireland, Galway.

A series of interviews with artists were commissioned for the Conference giving context to the work created for their projects funded by Galway 2020. Enjoy them, particularly the Drowned Galway tour as it has performances from Drama and Theatre Studies students **Róisín Tyrell, Una Valaine, and Aoife Delaney-Reade.**

HOPE IT RAINS | SOINEANN NÓ DOINEANN: DROWNED GALWAY

Photomontages by Joe Lee, designs by Emily Ní Bhroin, Arran Murphy, Deirdre Kennedy, Ríonach Ní Néill, Jeni Roddy, Sohail Saleem, performance by Róisín Tyrell, Una Valaine, Aoife Delaney-

Reade, with community participation by Gliondar, Athenry Community Arts Group, Blackrock Babes, directed by Ríonach Ní Néill, produced by Ciotóg, commissioned for Hope it Rains | Soineann nó Doineann by Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture.

Galway City walls become backdrops for photo-montages by Joe Lee, visualising life in an inundated city, when yet another abnormal has become commonplace. Artists imagine how we might cope with this enormous and imminent change. How close does the future have to come before we care enough to act?

<https://vimeo.com/486096076/0cebf00d60>

HOPE IT RAINS | SOINEANN NÓ DOINEANN PRO-GRAMME Created and curated by Ríonach Ní Néill, produced by Ciotóg, commissioned by Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture. Ríonach Ní Néill, the project's creator and curator, talks about the weather activated surprises that have animated Galway city and county effecting a cultural change with weather and climate.

<https://vimeo.com/486096182/486096076>

VERIDITAS Saolta Arts and Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture presents *Viriditas* as part of *The Deepest Shade of Green.*

Viriditas is a song cycle composed and performed by acclaimed Irish artist and singer Ceara Conway, accompanied by Anna Mullarkey, in response to an extended process of engagement at Galway University Hospitals. Including newly composed contemporary songs and traditional European healing songs

and rhythms from Georgia and Italy, *Viriditas* takes the listener on a journey through songs inspired by conversations with staff and patients, and recordings of hospital equipment, plants, and the tools of sound healers.

<https://vimeo.com/486154267>

AERIAL / SPARKS

Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture presents Aerial/Sparks by Louise Manifold in partnership with the Marine Institute Ireland.

Aerial/Sparks created by Irish artist Louise Manifold for Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture, invites you to connect in person and online with one of the last unknown spaces on earth, the ocean wilderness. Artists, writers and composers from across Europe have produced a series of compelling standalone artworks for exhibition and radio broadcast, inspired by their experiences of joining research expeditions on board the Marine Institute Ireland's RV Celtic Explorer.

<https://vimeo.com/486096478/63d6643b0a>

AGENTS FOR CHANGE PROJECT— COMPLETED DEC 2020

'Agents for Change' was a professional capacity building project for producers, funded by the Arts Council of Ireland, that responded to abundant creative opportunities in the west over recent years. With a significant lack of skilled producers available in the region, the project aimed to create a model that support artform development producers through 2020 and beyond. Marianne Ní Chinnéide of Drama and Theatre Studies at NUI, Galway worked for 2 years with the arts officers of Galway County/City and Jane Daly of the Irish Theatre Institute in an action research regional and multi-disciplinary producer project. Sixteen producers received professional training and mentoring in producing across artforms from dance to visual arts from venues to festivals. They benefitted from remuneration, upskilling as well as networking and collaborative opportunities with creative communities across all disciplines. Through this project we have supported producers to create and present work across artforms at a local, national, and international level.

Producers were from organisations including:

<http://tradpicnic.com>

<http://www.galwaydanceproject.com/>

<http://galwaytheatrefestival.com>

<https://www.clifdenartsfestival.ie>

<https://www.theatrefiftyseven.com>

<http://www.headfordlaceproject.ie>

<https://www.shorelinesartsfestival.com>

<https://interfaceinagh.com>

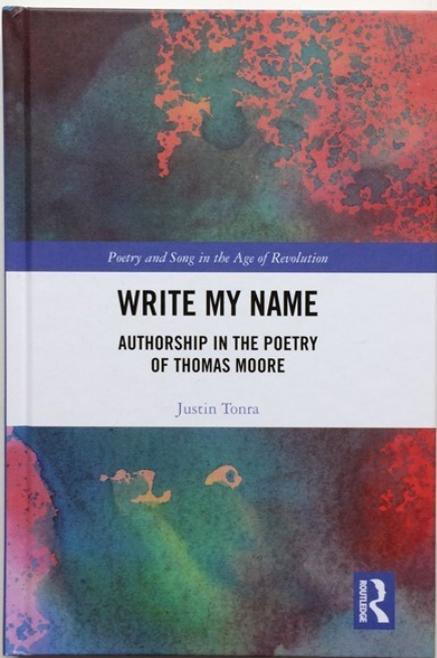


Fifth Anniversary of Wakingthefeminists Marked with Interim Report

November marked the 5 year anniversary of #WakingtheFeminists movement, a major moment in the history of recent Irish theatre.

Dr Ciara L. Murphy, who was one of the original #WTF researchers and co-authored the 2017 *Gender Counts* report, has compiled an interim report on the state of gender in Irish theatre to measure the progress made since 2015. The report was researched by Dr Ciara L. Murphy and supported by Dr Ciara O'Dowd, Dr Brenda Donohue, and Sarah Durcan.

The report demonstrates that there has been measured improvement across the sector, but that improvements across policy are still necessary. [Read the report.](#)



The Moore Institute for Research in the Humanities and Social Studies is pleased to host an online launch with the author and guest speakers, to celebrate the publication of this book (Routledge, 2020: <https://doi.org/d736>).

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LAUNCH OF *WRITE MY NAME: AUTHORSHIP IN THE POETRY OF THOMAS MOORE* BY JUSTIN TONRA

📖

Thursday 17 December 2020, 4pm GMT

SPEAKERS: Matthew Campbell, Claire Connolly, Sean Ryder

REGISTRATION is via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/WMNLAUNCH>

The
Active*
Consent
Project
incorporates
Workshops,
Online
Resources,
and Social
Media

UPCOMING CONFERENCE - JANUARY 2021

Theatre Languages / Languages of the Stage: Marginality, Culture and Performance in Contemporary Europe, *Gate Theatre Research Network (GTRN) Conference, January 28-29, 2021*, hosted by Drama and Theatre Studies and co-organised by Prof Patrick Lonergan, Dr Ian R. Walsh, and Dr Barry Houlihan.

IN THE MEDIA

RTE—Brainstorm—Dr Tony Tracy

[Ageing and Ageism in the age of Coronavirus and Cocooning](#)

[Mad, Bad and Dangerous— A Celebration of Difficult Women](#)

Documentary Series

[NUI, Galway Team Brings Colleges into the Age of Consent](#)—*Business Post*

Dr Charlotte McIvor and Dr Pádraig MacNeela—Active Consent

Latest Publications:

Write My Name: Authorship in the Poetry of Thomas Moore, Dr Justin Tonra

‘Digital Bibliography and the Irish Book Trades’, Dr Justin Tonra

Cultural Convergence - The Dublin Gate Theatre, 1928 -1960, Dr Ian Walsh

Sport, Film and National Culture, Dr Sean Crosson

Shakespeare’s Ovid and the Spectre of the Medieval, Dr Lindsay Ann Reid

The Periodical Press in Nineteenth Century Ireland, Dr Elizabeth Tilley

Rough Magic Theatre Company: New Irish Plays and Adaptations, 2010 - 2018, Prof. Patrick Lonergan

The Methuen Drama Handbook of Interculturalism and Performance, Dr Charlotte McIvor

*Enjoy the festive season and
some well deserved rest*

