

# Centre *news*

November 2017 No. 20 (!)

## 20 YEARS Centre for Irish-German Studies!



**Centre for  
Irish-German  
Studies**  
University  
of Limerick



**Zentrum für  
deutsch-irische  
Studien**  
Universität  
Limerick

### Welcome to latest edition of our newsletter!

This autumn is a special one for us as we celebrate the first 20 years of activities and research since the Centre for Irish-German Studies was founded at our first conference in September 1997. We produced a brochure (special thanks to Frauke Bröring!) which gives an overview of our members, all our international conferences, publications, research and postgraduate studies, and includes many photos from along the way:

[https://issuu.com/centreforirish-germanstudies/docs/broschure\\_208\\_ef\\_80\\_a217\\_20final\\_20](https://issuu.com/centreforirish-germanstudies/docs/broschure_208_ef_80_a217_20final_20). We marked the occasion with another conference, our 17<sup>th</sup> international conference, bringing together experts from many different disciplines. It also celebrated the centenary of Heinrich Böll's birth. It was a wonderful event with excellent speakers (including Heinrich Böll's son René) who gave evidence of the breadth and depth of Irish-German Studies. The following pages will give you a taste of the event.

We are also happy to introduce a number of new members and our first visiting research fellow – and highlight the events of spring 2018.

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***17<sup>th</sup> International Limerick Conference in Irish-German Studies – 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference of the Centre for Irish-German Studies & Commemoration of Heinrich Böll's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday – Irish-German Relations 2017: Between Böll and Brexit, DAAD Alumni conference, Analog Devices Building, University of Limerick, 14 September – 16 September 2017.***

The 3-day conference celebrated two anniversaries: the 20-years' existence of the Centre for Irish-German Studies and the Nobel laureate Heinrich Böll, who would have turned 100 this year. The conference emphasised how Irish-German relations have changed over the last 20 years with a special focus on the event which is likely to impact on Irish-German relations in a major way, the impending departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union, or Brexit. Over 50 contributors from all areas of Irish-German relations including academics (science and humanities), diplomats, journalists, artists, poets and musicians covered a multitude of aspects, such as Heinrich Böll and Ireland, connections in science, artistic interfaces, Irish Studies in German-speaking countries, media discourses and Irish-German migration as well as historical and literary links. Speakers and other attendees (altogether over 150, including students and additional guests who attended the concert and readings) came from Ireland, Great Britain, Germany, Austria, Italy and Switzerland.

In keeping with the tradition of our Irish-German conferences, the programme contained not only academic presentations and discussions but also cultural events. On Thursday evening, a concert took place at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, a rare public (and free) performance of the Irish Sonata, written by the Austrian refugee composer Kurt Roger (1895-1966). Joachim Roewer, principal viola of the Irish Chamber Orchestra, and Lance Coburn, member of the Royal Irish Academy of Music, performed this wonderful piece of music for conference participants and other guests to great acclaim. The

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piece was introduced by Leslie Stevenson, former Reader of Philosophy at St Andrews, who told the love story of Kurt Roger and Leslie's aunt Joy Roger-Hammerschlag which lay behind the *Irish Sonata*. A collection in support of current refugees living in Ireland raised €300 and was gratefully accepted by the Limerick refugee organization Doras Luimní.

On Friday evening the programme included a reading by two writers, Joe Joyce and Eva Bourke. Joe Joyce is a journalist and author of the *Echoland*-trilogy (the Dublin One City One Book Choice 2017), a series of spy novels set in Dublin during World War II. Eva Bourke is an Irish poet and translator and a member of Aosdána. Born in Germany, she has lived for much of her life in Galway. The reading was followed by a presentation of recent publications in Irish-German Studies (see below) and a BBQ – musically accompanied by a UL-based Ceilí band which tempted at least some of the conference participants to try out Irish dancing.

The conference concluded on Saturday, with lively discussions up to the very end. It was supported by the DAAD; the Heinrich Böll Stiftung; the Austrian and German Embassies; the Goethe Institut Irland; the Centre for European Studies (CEUROS), the Schools of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics and Culture and Communication, the Faculty of AHSS and the IACF, University of Limerick.

## **New Members of the Centre**

### **Dr Maria Rieder**

Maria Rieder is currently a Post-Doctoral Researcher in the area of sociolinguistics at the University of Limerick where she works in different projects that critically study the role of language in situations of economic and social inequality.



Her main current project is a major interdisciplinary and international study of the news coverage of Thomas Piketty's book *Capital in the 21st Century* using Critical Discourse Analysis, Framing and Content Analysis. Further, she is involved in projects on media and social protest, issues of immigration and asylum, critical intercultural communication and minority

languages and economics. Prior to her research position, she undertook a folk-linguistic and ethnographic study of the Irish Traveller Cant. Her research interests lie in the fields of social and economic inequality, human rights and minority communities, with a specific focus on the role of language, language perceptions and language ideologies in the production of power and social conflict. She also teaches modules in Sociolinguistics and Applied Linguistics, such as Language and Cultural Theory, Introduction to Applied Linguistics and Research Methods, with a focus on Critical Discourse Analysis, Pragmatics and Gender and Race Studies.

### **Fabian Ram, DAAD-Lektor**



Fabian Ram studied German Philology, Intercultural Communication and Business Management at the University of Regensburg in Germany and Wheaton College, MA in the United States. Since September 2017 he is DAAD Lektor in German at the School of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics, UL. Prior to that he was working for the Goethe

Institute in Cape Town, South Africa and the Centre of Languages and Communication at the University of Regensburg. He teaches various modules on German literature, culture and history as well as German for business. In addition he represents the German Academic Exchange Service, promotes studying or doing research in Germany, and also informs about funding opportunities.

### **Natascha Guggi, Austrian Lektor**



In September 2017 Natascha Guggi joined the School of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics as OeAD-lecturer. She studied German language and literature at the University of Graz in Austria and at the University of Modena, in Italy. Natascha began her career as a language assistant with the OeAD in Verona, Italy. She then went to work for Caritas in Austria, teaching German to

refugees, while working on an additional degree in GFL and GSL. As a new member of the Centre for Irish-German Studies she is particularly interested in the relationship between Austria and Ireland, which has deep historical roots. Natascha brings in an Austrian point of view and is happy to organise cultural events that foster Irish-Austrian relations. She is currently organising a reading by the young Austrian author Anna Weidenholzer at UL in March 2018.

**Dr Deirdre Byrnes, external member at NUI Galway**

Dr Deirdre Byrnes is Senior Lecturer in German at the National University of Ireland, Galway. Her research interests include memory, language and identity in contemporary German-language literature. Deirdre's recent work is concerned with memorialisation and museology; she has published an article on trauma, memory practices and the recovery of marginalised voices at the Berlin-Hohenschönhausen memorial site. She has a particular interest in GDR literature and is the author of the monograph *Rereading Monika Maron: Text, Counter-Text and Context*.

Together with Dr Gisela Holfter and Dr Jean Conacher, she is currently co-editing the volume *Exploring Connections between Ireland and the GDR*.

**Raphael Schmitt, intern**

Raphael Schmitt started his three months internship on the 1<sup>st</sup> September. He studied history and cultural studies for his BA (2016) and is currently studying for his MA in *Kulturwissenschaften* (Cultural Studies) at the University of Vechta, Germany.

When he considered where to go for his internship, which is a compulsory part of his MA at the University of Vechta, former UL lecturer Dr Monika Albrecht, who is now teaching in Vechta, recommended the Centre for Irish-German Studies. An additional reason why he chose the Centre was his general interest in Irish culture, music in particular, as well as in Irish-

German relations and encounters. He joins traditional Irish tune sessions on a weekly basis. He is also a member of a German band, the Kilkenny Band, which plays traditional Irish music (see: <https://www.facebook.com/KilkennyBand/>).

## Dr Deirdre Mulrooney – first Visiting Research Fellow of the Centre



Since her Phd, *Orientalism, Orientation, and the Nomadic Work of Pina Bausch* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2002), was launched at Dublin's Goethe Institute, Deirdre has been restoring the body, and work by Irish women artists of the body to Irish Cultural History. In May 2004 coinciding with the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Dance Festival Ireland, "Nice Moves", Deirdre's 5-part documentary series on the history of dance and physical theatre in Ireland was broadcast on RTE Radio One. Deirdre's book *Irish Moves, an illustrated history of Dance & Physical Theatre in Ireland* (Dublin: The Liffey Press, 2006), was launched by Fintan O'Toole at the Abbey Theatre as part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Dance Festival Ireland. In 2011 Deirdre's feature radio documentary on the Abbey Theatre Ballets, "Doreen – Telling the Dancer from the Dance" was broadcast on RTE Lyric FM. Deirdre has made two film documentaries on Irish-German Modern Dance pioneer Erina Brady: "1943 – A Dance Odyssey" (RTE One Television, 2013), and her *TG4 Splanc!* documentary "Dance Emergency/ *Damhsa na hEigeandala*" (TG4, 2015), which have been selected for several Film festivals, from Galway Film Fleadh to the Lincoln Center NYC's Dance on Camera Festival. In May 2015 Deirdre's script for "Dance Emergency" was published bilingually in *TANZ Magazine* (Berlin), and an abbreviated version appeared on the

Goethe Institute Ireland website. Her biographical essay on Erina Brady was published in “Selected Irish-German Biographies 2” (Trier: WVT, 2015) edited by Sabine Egger, and she co-organised the “Irish-German Connections in Motion” conference at UL in 2016. Deirdre’s research at Cologne Dance Centre comprises substantiating the German traces of Erina Brady’s training and performance history, before her 1939 arrival to Dublin. As part of her research fellowship she will give a public lecture in spring 2018.

## German groups visiting UL to hear about Böll



A travel group from different German further education institutions (VHS) came to UL on 21 August 2017 to hear a lecture on Heinrich Böll in Ireland by Gisela Holfter. It was the third group who came to visit us this year with

that purpose (the other two in May and June 2017 were organised by the Heinrich Böll Foundation Berlin and Bremen and by Gaeltacht Reisen respectively). All reflect the strong German interest in Ireland currently because of Heinrich Böll’s centenary this year.



## Visit of Sydney Glass



On the 10<sup>th</sup> of October Sydney Glass visited the Centre of Irish-German Studies. Glass came to Ireland (to be precise, Castlebar), as a six-year-old child. His parents were involved in a hat-factory set up by German-speaking Jewish refugees. Thanks to the ‘German-speaking refugees in

Ireland research project 1933-1945’ we were able to supply new information about his family background.

## Readings and presentations by Sophia Kingshill



Acclaimed author and editor Sophia Kingshill has visited the Centre from 2<sup>nd</sup> October - 4<sup>th</sup> October and met with students of the MA in Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies and the MA in Creative Writing as well as with students of the IWAMD. Sophia Kingshill is the author of a range of acclaimed books – from children’s books (*Between the Raven and the Dove*, Accent Press 2017) to folklore (*Mermaids*, Little Toller Books

2015 and, with Jennifer Westwood, *The Fabled Coast*, Random House 2012). She also helped editing her father Peter Kingshill’s memoirs *Footnote*. Peter’s parents came to Ireland in the late 1930s as refugees from Germany.

## Talking with Bernhard Schlink

Embedded in the programme of the seminar ‘German 20<sup>th</sup> century literature’, taught by Gisela Holfter, was the reading of German author Bernhard Schlink’s famous novel *Der Vorleser* (1995). The students hardly expected discussing the book individually with the author himself, by means of a skype conversation. The students prepared questions about the book for this very special session, which were answered in a friendly and patient manner by Bernhard Schlink.

## Connect Mentoring Training in UL in October 2017



A group of thirty participants from several countries (Germany, Finland, Poland, Spain and Portugal – as well as Ireland, of course) were hosted by the Centre for Irish-German Studies for five days. Starting on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017, this Mentor training was part of the ‘CONNECT –

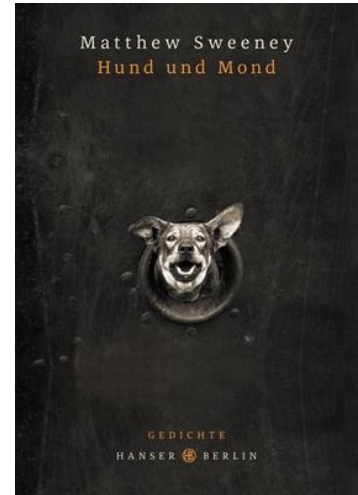
Intercultural Learning Network for Europe’ project, a three-year cross-sectoral project bringing together practitioners and experts from the university and youth sector. It is funded by the European Union under ERASMUS+. Integrating methods and concepts from non-formal youth education to formal education, the project was initiated to create an innovative intercultural learning scenario consisting of an e-learning platform and curricula for pre-departure and re-entry orientation to support Erasmus+ participants (students, interns, and volunteers) before, during and after their exchange. Contact points in Ireland are Dr Gisela Holfter and Dr Maria Rieder.

## Upcoming events

### Readings

#### Jan Wagner, Matthew Sweeney 14/15 February

On 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> February, acclaimed Irish poet Matthew Sweeney and prize winning German poet Jan Wagner (Preis der Leipziger Buchmesse 2015 and Georg-Büchner-Preis 2017) will visit UL to read from Sweeney's newest collection of poems which was translated into German by Wagner and published as *Hund und Mond* (*Dog and Moon*). The book was chosen as 'Buch des Monats' (Book of the month) by the *Darmstädter Jury* and has been praised for its surreal approach to everyday life. The author himself sees the texts as 'alternate realism'. Further readings of both poets will take place in Cork and Galway, in co-operation with the Centre.



#### Gabrielle Alioth – February/March 2018



Swiss-Irish writer Gabrielle Alioth has been a great friend of the Centre over years and has been giving a number of wonderful readings. She will return again in the last week of February/first week of March 2018 (date to be confirmed, please see

website and Facebook nearer the time) and discuss her novel *Die entwendete Handschrift* (Basel: Lenos 2015) and other Irish-German (Swiss) writing.

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### Anna Weidenholzer, 19-23 March 2017

The Austrian journalist and writer Anna Weidenholzer comes to UL to present her book *Weshalb die Herren Seesterne tragen*. The visit is organised by our Austrian Lektor Natascha Guggi and is supported by the Austrian Embassy. Anna Weidenholzer will also read in Cork and Dublin.



### Dmitrij Kapitelman, April 2017

Between 9-16 April (check website and Facebook for precise dates) the German-Ukrainian-Jewish novelist and *Zeit* journalist Dmitrij Kapitelman will visit UL to read from his book *Das Lächeln meines unsichtbaren Vaters* (The smile of my invisible father), for which he received the Klaus-Michael-Kuehne-Preis of the Harbour Front Literaturfestival in 2016. The book is about his and his father's search for identity, which leads both of them to Israel.

### The Centre is on Facebook!

The Centre for Irish-German Studies goes online! The new Facebook website will be another source of information on upcoming and past events of the Centre, and other topics of Irish-German interest. The Centre is glad to have the possibility of sharing those information more quickly now and to be connected to a broader audience. Please feel free to visit our page and 'like' it:

<https://www.facebook.com/Irishgermancentre/>

## **Exhibition of Dietrich Blodau's works**

Dr Joachim Fischer will formally open the retrospective exhibition of the works of Limerick-based German-Irish artist Dietrich Blodau “Dietrich Blodau – A Life of Observations” on 1 December 2017. The exhibition will run in the Hunt Museum Limerick from 1 December 2017 to 14 January 2018. For further information, see

<http://www.huntmuseum.com/event/retrospective-dietrich-blodau/>.

## **Film Series on 1968 student revolution**

The Centre will co-operate with the Ralahine Centre for Utopian Studies in a film series marking the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the student rebellion in 1968 entitled *Realising Utopia: Cinema & 1968*. The series will include films from several countries and is scheduled to run at Ormston House Limerick between March and May 2018. Dr Joachim Fischer will introduce Hans Weingartner's film *Die fetten Jahre sind vorbei / The Edukators* (2004) on 11 April 2018, the anniversary of the assassination attempt on Rudi Dutschke. Dr Fischer is also one of the organisers of the Ralahine workshop scheduled for 26 May 2018 which will conclude the film series and will also feature a session on Germany.

## **New Double Degree MA in European Studies with Irish-German elements**

A delegation from the Europa Universität Flensburg (EUF) visited the University of Limerick on 23/24 October. The high-ranking delegation which included both the EUF President and Vice President for International and European Affairs came to explore closer co-operation with UL in the area of European Studies and others fields. During their visit they met with members of the Centre. German-Irish elements will feature in the Double Degree MA in European Studies currently being planned by both universities which is due to start in 2019.

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## Next intake of the MA in Irish-German Studies in 2019/2020

The award-winning MA in Irish-German Studies (German Ireland Fund *An Duais 2012*) is currently undergoing a revamp in order to integrate a two month work experience with the Irish Embassy in Berlin and other prestigious institutions.

## Supporting the Centre

A generous 5,000 euro donation from Dr Beate Schuler was gratefully accepted by the Centre for Irish-German Studies. The grant greatly supports our work this year and has allowed us to start new initiatives such as the visiting Research Fellowship and extend our writers' programme. Dr Schuler has already supported us in the past with scholarships of partial fee waivers for MA students. A heartfelt 'Go raibh maith agat', dear Beate!

## News from the members

Dr Sabine Egger has been appointed to the International Advisory Board of the Gesellschaft für interkulturelle Germanistik (GiG/Association of Intercultural German Studies, <http://www.gig.uni-bayreuth.de/de/download/GiG-Flyer.pdf>)

Dr Gisela Holfter was awarded the Martin Miller and Hannah Norbert-Miller Visiting Fellowship at the Institute of Modern Languages Research, University of London School of Advanced Study, in May/June 2018.

Dr Gisela Holfter was appointed Visiting Scholar at the Centre for British Studies, Humboldt Universität Berlin, for the academic year 2018/2019.

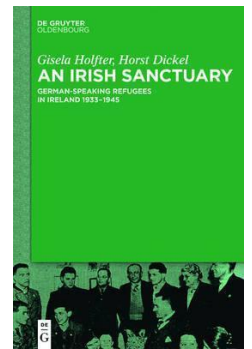
Dr Michaela Schrage-Früh left her position as DAAD Lektor in UL after five years and took up a position at NUI Galway. We miss her but are glad to have her nearby.

## Recent Publications – A Selection

Egger, S., Bonner, W. & Hess-Lüttich, E., (eds): *Transiträume und transitorische Begegnungen in Literatur, Theater und Film* (Cross-Cultural Communication 31). Frankfurt/M.: Peter Lang 2017.

Fischer, J.: On the Specificity of Irish Travel Writing in the Nineteenth Century: Maria Frances Dickson's Journeys to the Continent and Kilkee. In: *Traveling Irishness in the Long Nineteenth Century*. Eds. Marguérite Corporaal and Christina Morin. Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, 51-77.

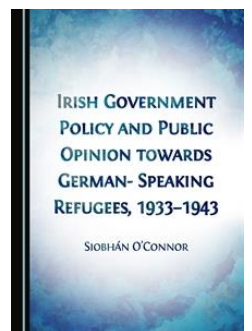
Holfter, G., Dickel, H.: *An Irish Sanctuary - German-speaking Refugees in Ireland 1933-1945*, Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter 2017, 451pp. (reviews *Irish Times*, 4 February 2017; *The Friendly Word*, September-October 2017, Vol 34/5, pp. 6-7; *AJR*, vol 17/no 10, October 2017, pp. 10-11).



Holfter, G.: Marginalised Voices – Women in Irish Exile, in: Charmian Brinson, Jana Buresova and Andrea Hammel (eds), *The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Studies* [Brill/Rododi] Vol. 18/2017, pp. 218-230.

Holfter, G.: The German Friend, in: *Dublin Review of Books*, Issue 92, 09/2017. <https://www.drb.ie/essays/the-german-friend>.

O'Connor, S.: *Irish Government Policy and Public Opinion towards German-Speaking Refugees, 1933-1943*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2017.





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