

MEDIEVAL IRISH MASTERPIECES IN MODERN REPRODUCTION

Exhibition (13 September [formal opening 23 September, 7:30-9:00 pm] 2016 to 2 April 2017)

Symposium (1 October 2016, 8:30 am to 5:15 pm)

Film Screening: *1916: A Terrible Beauty* (2 October, 1:30pm-3:30pm)

Spurlock Museum of World Cultures

600 S. Gregory St.

University of Illinois

Urbana IL 61801

Location and Parking: <http://www.spurlock.illinois.edu/visit/location/>

“Medieval Irish Masterpieces in Modern Reproduction” showcases two extraordinary University of Illinois collections of modern reproductions of medieval Irish art. The craft of metalworking is represented by two dozen superb electrotype facsimiles of jewelry and reliquaries such as the Tara Brooch and the Cross of Cong made by the firm of Dublin jeweler Edmond Johnson, originally for the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair. The art of the scribe is illustrated by ten limited-edition facsimiles of medieval Irish manuscripts such as the Leabhar Breac and the Book of Kells published by learned societies such as the Royal Irish Academy and commercial presses such as Urs Graf Verlag.

Most of these reproductions were acquired by the University in and around 1916, the year of the Irish “Easter Rising” against British rule. They celebrated Irish culture as part of an Irish Foundation envisioned by Gertrude Schoepperle, a noted Celtic scholar in the English Department.

This centenary exhibit and symposium places these reproductions in relation to their medieval originals and in the modern context of the “Gaelic Revival” and the construction, imagination, and study of Irish cultural heritage and national identity in Ireland and America.



Symposium Program

Saturday 1 October 2016
Knight Auditorium, Spurlock Museum
8:30am to 5:15pm

Free and Open to the Public

8:30: Meet and Greet with Coffee and Refreshments

9:00: Opening Remarks

Martin Camargo, Associate Dean for the Humanities, College of LAS

Session I: 9:15-10:45

Things Irish: Collecting, Contemplating, Conserving

Session chair: Renée Trilling (UIUC, English Department)

1. Charles D. Wright (UIUC, English Department): “‘But now poor Miss Schoepperle has been driven from Urbana’: Gertrude Schoepperle and the Medieval Irish Collections at the University of Illinois”
2. Vicki Mahaffey UIUC, English Department): “The Material Object in Irish Literature and Culture”
3. Christa Deacy-Quinn (UIUC, Spurlock Museum): “Conserving and Cleaning the Edmond Johnson Replicas”

Respondent: Estibalitz Ezkerra Vegas (UIUC, CWL)

Lunch Break 11:00-12:15

Informal Exhibit Walk-Through 12:30-1:00

Session II: 1:00-2:45

Edmond Johnson’s Metalwork Replicas: Medieval Origins and Gaelic Revivals

Session Chair: Eleonora Stoppino (UIUC, Director, Program in Medieval Studies)

4. Karen Overbey (Tufts Univ.): “Crafting Presence and Memory: Luxury Metalwork in Medieval Ireland”
5. Margaret Williams (William Paterson Univ.): “Edmond Johnson’s Electrotpe Replicas as ‘Icons’ of Irishness”
6. Tara Kelly (Independent Art Historian, Dublin): “St. Patrick’s Bell Shrine and Its Facsimiles: An Object Biography”

Respondent: Areli Marina (UIUC, Art History Department)

Session III: 3:00-4:45

Copying Irish Culture: From Medieval Manuscripts to Modern Facsimiles

Session Chair: Kelly Williams (UIUC, English Department)

6. Dáibhí Ó Cróinín (National University of Ireland, Galway): “The Evolution of Irish and Insular Illuminated Gospel-books”
7. Brian Ó Broin (William Paterson Univ.): “Gaelic Antiquarianism and Medieval Irish Manuscript Facsimiles”
8. Damian Bracken (University College, Cork): “Reclaiming the Past: Facsimile Reproduction of Ireland’s Historical Manuscripts”

Respondent: Bonnie Mak (UIUC, School of Information Sciences)

Reception: 4:45-5:15

The symposium is hosted by the Spurlock Museum of World Cultures and sponsored by the Program in Medieval Studies; the College of LAS; the School of Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics; the University Library; the School of Information Sciences; the European Union Center; the Department of English; the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory; the School of Art and Design; and the Departments of Comparative World Literatures, Art History, and History.

On Sunday 2 October there will be free screening of the docudrama *1916: A Terrible Beauty*, dir. Keith Farrell (90 min.) in the Spurlock Knight Auditorium, 1:30pm-3:30pm.