

Literary Locations (& Film & Music)

Dublin & Galway, Ireland
April 11 - 21, 2024

By Susan Pomerantz
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Slides in chronological-ish order of visits.
Photos by S. Pomerantz, April 11-21, 2024

“The Dead” from James Joyce’s collection of short stories, *Dubliners*



I LOVED teaching this story– some of the most beautiful prose in English literature. From the window of the Gresham Hotel (rebuilt since the time of the story-photo right), Gabriel Conroy looks inward at this own humanity and out at the world: “His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead.”

“It was always a great affair, the Misses Morkan’s [Gabriel’s aunts] annual dance.the dark gaunt house on Usher’s Island....the upper part of which they had rented from Mr Fullam, the corn factor on the ground floor....”

Victoria Quay along the River Liffey

[The inscription over the doorway has been covered over since the building was sold to developers.](#)



[Link](#) for above photo credit.



O’Connell Street Upper



James Joyce in Brass Husband Steve in the Flesh

Erected in 1990 (The statue, not Steve)

North Earl Street, Adjacent to O'Connell Street Upper

Sculptor: Marjorie Fitzgibbon



Merrion Square: [Oscar Wilde's childhood house](#) (his mother's salon at which he learned from the authors, artists, philosophers, and musicians of his day)



Two wits!

Guess which one actually made a living by (and left a legacy by) being a smart-mouth!

We did not get to tour the museum/home this time...it's on the list!



Grafton Street's Molly Malone statue

(and first stanza of folk song):

“In Dublin’s fair city, where girls are so pretty

I first set my eyes on sweet Molly Malone.

As she wheeled her wheelbarrow through streets broad and narrow

Crying cockles and mussels, alive, a-live O!”

- • • as to why the breasts are discolored...

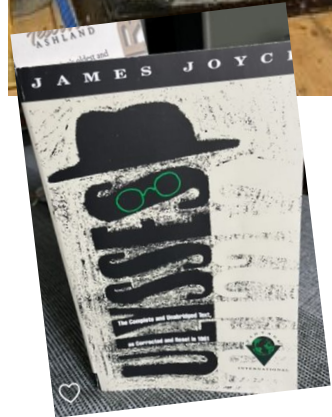
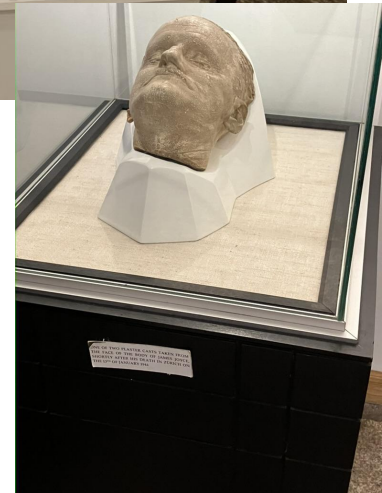
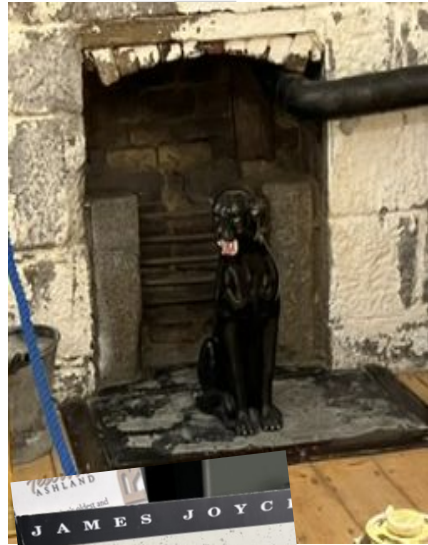


The day's view over the Irish Sea!



[The James Joyce Tower & Museum,](#)
Sandycove, County Dublin

Our wonderful tour guide explained these and the MANY exhibits in the tower:



Much of the first chapter of *Ulysses* is set in this Martello tower. It was inspirational to be in the location, [set up to look like it did in 1904](#) when Joyce spent some time here.

National Gallery of Ireland

- ONE of our favorite finds: this stunning portrait of [Jonathan Swift](#)



Francis Bindon

Clooney, Co. Clare 1690 - 1765 Dublin

Jonathan Swift

1735

Oil on canvas

This is among Bindon's most elaborate portraits of Swift, and refers to the sitter's key role in a high-profile political controversy. In 1722, William Wood purchased a licence to issue copper coinage in Ireland. Fears that this licence would devalue existing Irish currency prompted vigorous opposition, with Swift writing letters under the pseudonym 'Drapier' mocking the proposal. He also penned songs, ballads and poems ridiculing Wood, who lies contorting at his feet in Bindon's portrait. The proposal was quietly withdrawn, and though a reward was offered for disclosure of the identity of the writer of 'Drapier's letters', Swift's disparate allies remained tight-lipped. Among those to admire Swift's resolute stance was the St Lawrence family of Howth Castle, who commissioned this grandiose celebration of the Dean's triumph.

Purchased by the Government of Ireland for the National Gallery of Ireland, 2021. NGI.2021.158

National Gallery of Ireland

ANOTHER of our favorite finds: that poet W. B. Yeats had a painter brother, [Jack B. Yeats](#).



Jack B. Yeats
London 1871-1957 Dublin

The Liffey Swim

1923
Oil on canvas

In this painting, Yeats captures the atmosphere and thrill of an event that has been part of Dublin's annual sporting calendar since 1920. His depiction of the occasion also represents a return to the sporting themes that had inspired much of his early work. He invites his audience to engage with the event by placing them among the spectators, who lean forward to catch a glimpse of the swimmers as they surge towards the finish line. The painting marked Yeats's growing interest in Expressionism and his adoption of fluid brushwork and a charged palette.

Presented, Trustees of the Haverly Trust, 1931.

NGI 941



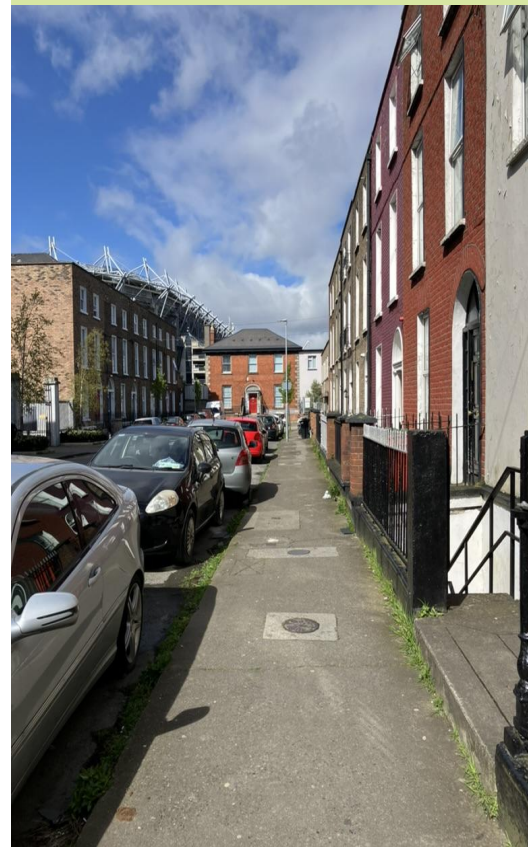
James Joyce Cultural Center

A museum and cultural center, not far from O'Connell Street Upper. A treasure trove of memorabilia, history, and snapshots into the history and impact of Joyce's work. More on *Ulysses*, considered by many as a modernist masterpiece. If I had my career to do over again, I would try to do it. It would take an entire career!

Center: The actual [7 Eccles Street](#) doorway and framing stones set up inside the museum!



Later, we walked to the setting for the opening scene of “Araby,” another James Joyce story I loved to teach.



“North Richmond Street, being blind [cul-de-sac], was a quiet street except at the hour when the Christian Brothers’ School set the boys free. An uninhabited house of two storeys stood at the blind end, detached from its neighbours in a square ground. The other houses of the street, conscious of the decent lives within them gazed at one another with brown imperturbable faces.”



I can't explain why I felt so moved actually being there, but the mystique lingers.

Glásnevin Cemetery

Stirring re-enactment of Padraig Pearse's "Ireland unfree shall never be at peace" graveside speech at O'Donovan Rossa's graveside.

Hear/view it [here](#) as well (not my recording).



Our witty, knowledgeable, wonderful guides.

[Michael Collins](#), still beloved, rests here.



O'Connell Tower

We, of course, reached in and reverently touched O'Connell's casket (for blessings and luck).



View of [Charles Stewart Parnell's](#) grave from mass grave of cholera victims.



Jewish Irish Museum



A small museum in Dublin's Portobello section curated and preserved by devoted volunteers.

Jam packed with artifacts.



Museum of Literature Ireland

MoLI



Here we are on Monday, our last day in Dublin, having just learned that Monday hours at MoLI do not begin until summer. The lovely woman at the desk took pity and gave us open-ended, transferable tickets to tour the museum. Of course, that now means we **MUST** go back.

The Long Room- The Library of Trinity College

In many ways, more awe-inspiring than the Book of Kells tour. Most of these shelves have been emptied in the Old Library redevelopment effort. I feel fortunate that we got to see it—the Brian Boru harp, the Gaia, the busts, the screens showing the book preservation process...much more.



On to Galway!

Look who greeted us here, too! Oscar with Steve, again.

[Oscar Wilde & Eduard Vilde statue](#) near Eyre Square





Gaynor's ("The Field") Bar & Shop, Leenaun Village, Connemara

Where part of the film was shot!

- *The Field*, Jim Sheridan's 1990 film shot almost entirely in and around Leenaun Village. Starred Richard Harris and John Hurt. We stopped in Leenaun for a coffee and comfort break.
- Saw a road sign that pointed to Cong where John Ford's 1952 *The Quiet Man* was filmed. Starred John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara.

On my list: watch those films again!

Man of Aran Cottage

Inis Mór, the largest of the Aran Islands

Man of Aran, a controversial 1934 “staged documentary” written and directed by Robert Flaherty about life on the Aran Islands.



Seaweed washed up on Kilmurvey Beach. Our guide told us they clean it up for the summer season.



Poet Gerard Reidy's "Vortex" chiseled in stone on the bank of the turbulent River Corrib





Music everywhere.



Music for all.