

Arts in Ireland, Syllabus

Course Listing: CFA AR 340

Lecturer Information:

- (i) Music Lecturer:** Padhraic Egan, eganp@bu.edu
Office: Boston University—Dublin Office: By Request

- (ii) Visual Arts Lecturer:** Dr. Caoimhghin Ó Croidheáin, caoimhgh@bu.edu
Office: Boston University—Dublin Office: By Request

Credits: 4 BU Credits + 2 HUB Units

Class Times:

Tuesdays: 5:00 - 8:00 p.m, music classes, during the first half of semester.

Fridays: 10:00 am – 1:00 pm, visual arts classes/fieldtrips, during the second half of the semester.

General Information

Course Overview

In this course students have an opportunity to study and experience the most vibrant aspects of the arts in Ireland.

Music

The music strand provides an introduction to the structure, characteristics, scope and history of Irish Traditional Music. Attention will also focus on its revival and re-development in the latter half of the twentieth century. The areas of rhythm and melody and the methods by which Irish music is taught will be covered in the practical workshop section of each class.

Art

The visual strand affords students an opportunity to study and experience the most vibrant aspects of the visual arts in Ireland. The course covers 5000 years of Irish art with particular attention to the changes and developments of recent centuries. Visits to the National Gallery of Ireland and other cultural sites to discuss and experience Irish art are an essential part of discovering Irish heritage at first hand. The important connection between Irish art and its historical and political contexts are covered as well as the history of aesthetical and philosophical movements and their influence on Irish art. An important part of the class will be practical instruction on drawing still life, portraits and the figure.

(HUB) Learning Outcomes

Aesthetic Exploration (1 unit)

- Students will demonstrate knowledge and appreciation of notable works in literature and/or the arts, including the cultural contexts in which those works were created, and be able to identify their ongoing significance and relevance.
- Students will demonstrate the reasoning skills and vocabulary necessary to interpret a work of art (literature, music, visual arts, etc.).
- Students will produce evaluative, analytical, or creative works that demonstrate an understanding of the characteristics—such as genres, modes, styles, and cultural history— of at least one literary or artistic medium.

Historical Consciousness (1 unit)

- Students will create historical narratives, evaluate interpretations based on historical evidence, and construct historical arguments.
- Students will demonstrate an ability to interpret primary source material (textual, visual, or aural) using a range of interpretive skills and situating the material in its historical and cultural context.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of religious traditions, intellectual paradigms, forms of political organization, or socioeconomic forces, and how these have changed over time.

To meet the Hub areas above, on completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Discuss ideas about Irish national identity and evaluate how the social, cultural and political structures they are introduced to both reflect and construct such an identity (Aesthetic Exploration).
- Feel confident and comfortable in their interaction with others in Ireland regarding their knowledge of Irish history in relation to the arts and music, as an important aspect of Irish cultural life. (Historical Consciousness)
- Critique the differences between different political and social movements (e.g. Nationalist and Socialist) and their differing influences on the arts in Ireland. (Historical Consciousness)
- Develop an understanding and interest in the arts beyond Ireland in the knowledge that philosophical, political and aesthetic considerations had similar outcomes abroad that can be grasped more easily through their studies in Ireland. (Aesthetic Exploration).
- Have a critical understanding and appreciation of the major themes, personalities and events that have shaped the history and development of traditional Irish Music. (Historical Consciousness)
- Demonstrate knowledge and appreciation of the different types of tunes covered within traditional Music along with the cultural contexts in which those tunes were created as well as their ongoing significance and relevance. (Historical Consciousness)
- Show an understanding of the characteristics of traditional Irish Music by developing an ability to play to a variety of tunes. (Aesthetic Exploration).

Instructional Format

Class time will combine lecturing with opportunities for discussion and group activities. Where appropriate, lectures will be supplemented with audio-visual input. For specialized topics we employ guest lecturers who are expert in their field. Lecture content is also enlivened by participating in relevant fieldtrips.

Tuition in the Music option is conducted through lectures, followed by class discussion on more specific aspects of the lectures. Workshop instruction on playing the bodhrán is included in the music strand and through this the characteristics of traditional music are explored. Audio and visual material is used to vary teaching methods.

Course Bibliography

Core Text – MUSIC

Gearoid Ó hAllmhuráin - *A Pocket History of Irish Traditional Music* (O'Brien, 1998)

Supplementary Texts – MUSIC

Tomas O Canainn - *Traditional Music in Ireland* (Ossian, 1993)

Nuala O'Connor - *Bringing it All Back Home* (Merlin, 2000)

Richard Pine - *Music in Ireland 1848-1998* (Mercier Pres, 1998)

Core Texts – VISUAL ARTS

Bruce Arnold - *Irish Art: A Concise History* (World of Art) (Thames and Hudson, 1977)

Terence Brown- *Ireland: A Social and Cultural History 1922-2001* (Element, 2005)

Supplementary Texts – VISUAL ARTS

Brian Fallon - *Irish Art* (Appletree Press, 1998)

Declan McGonagle - *Irish Art Now: From the Poetic to the Political* (Merrell Publishers, 1999)

Robert Upstone - *William Orpen: Politics, Sex and Death* (Philip Wilson Publishers, 2005)

Peter Harbison - *The Golden Age of Irish Art: The Medieval Achievements* (Thames and Hudson, 1999)

Muiris O'Sullivan (Author), John Scarry (Photographer) - *Megalithic Art in Ireland* (Townhouse,1993)

Course Materials and Courseware:

Students are supplied with the Core Texts. All of the other books are available in our dedicated BU library. All lecture notes and other course materials are available to students on Blackboard.

Assignments and Grading

Assessment for the course consists of class attendance and participation (30%), two minor research papers focusing on an aspect of Irish (i) music and (ii) art (20% each) and a terminal essay-style examination (30%).

- **Class participation and attendance, (30%):** Participative class discussion is an integral part of the course; students are encouraged to ask questions and are expected to actively engage in discussion during class. Attendance at all lectures and fieldtrips is mandatory. Unexcused absence will be penalised by a reduction in grade of 1% per absence.
- **Essay (Arts) (20%):** Essay titles will be agreed on in the first week. Students are offered a choice within a wide range of topics relating to the visual arts in Ireland. Essays must address the question or topic agreed. They must include discussion of different positions from the material researched, must develop an argument and reach a conclusion. Proper and full referencing is a marking criterion. Originality of thought, theoretical insight, and clear exposition all contribute to awarding high grades. The essay is aimed at documenting the student's growing understanding of a novel cultural context.
- **Essay (Music) (20%):** Essay titles will be handed out and discussed on week 2 of this part of the module.
- **Final Exam (30%):** Exam questions will be based on topics covered in the program of lectures. Students will be invited to demonstrate their understanding of course material and an ability to relate that material to a theoretical framework. Students must answer two questions excluding the specific topic on which they wrote their essay. There will be a wide choice. Questions will be designed to interrogate those dimensions of the students' learning experience which are augmented by their own experiences travelling in Ireland.

Plagiarism

It is every student's responsibility to read the Boston University statement on plagiarism, which is available in the Academic Conduct Code. Students are advised that the penalty against students on a Boston University program for cheating on examinations or for plagiarism may be "...expulsion from the program or the University or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the Dean."

Attendance Statement

While on a Boston University Study Abroad Program, students continue their academic progress earning BU credits towards their undergraduate degree while abroad. Students who enrol in a BU Study Abroad program do so with the understanding that these are academic programs with scheduled class meetings, internship placements and program-wide activities and excursions. Attendance is expected and required. Personal travel and visits from family and friends will not be considered excused absences while on a BU Study Abroad program. Students are expected to adhere to the local attendance policies as stated above under *Class Participation and Attendance*.

Electronic Devices

Students are permitted to use laptops during this course for notetaking purposes, for relevant online searches and for accessing instructional materials. Cell phones must be silent and out of sight.

Note: Students must retain an electronic copy of all work submitted for assessment.

Course Schedule

Class number	Lecture Title / Reading / Activity	
Music		
1	Definition and characteristics of Irish Music Music Workshop	Students will examine the various definitions and characteristics of Irish Traditional Music. Introduction to the Bodhran and Tin Whistle
2	The Bodhrán in Irish Music Bodhrán and Tin Whistle Workshop	Students will investigate the construction, history and place of the Bodhran in modern Irish Traditional Music.
3	The structure of Irish music Bodhrán and Tin Whistle Workshop	Students will investigate the types, forms and historical development of Irish Traditional Music.
4	The history of Irish Traditional Music Part 1: Bodhrán and Tin Whistle Workshop	Students will examine the historical development of Irish music from the Celts to the Ulster Plantation.
5	The history of Irish Traditional Music Part 2: Bodhrán and Tin Whistle Workshop	The development of Irish Traditional Music from the Ulster Plantation to the Cultural Revival will be examined.
6	The Revival of Irish Music Bodhrán and Tin Whistle Workshop Visit by guest musicians	Students will examine the key reasons behind the revival of Irish Traditional Music in the 1950s along with the contribution of key organizations and individuals.
	Mid-semester Break	

Visual Arts		
7	<p>History of Irish Art Part I – From Neolithic Symbolism to High Cross Sculpture</p> <p><i>Historical context / Discussion</i></p> <p>Art in Practice: Still Life (construction)</p>	<p>Students will examine early Irish history and evaluate interpretations based on historical evidence, also looking at the history of religious traditions and how they determined the context for early buildings, crafts and paintings.</p> <p>Students will engage in arts practice through learning different aspects involved in drawing still life - concentrating on line.</p>
8	<p>History of Irish Art Part II- From Romanesque to Modernism</p> <p><i>Historical context / Discussion</i></p> <p>Art in Practice: Still Life (shading)</p>	<p>In this section students will examine notable works of Irish art, focusing on the cultural contexts in which they were created, and be able to identify their ongoing significance and relevance.</p> <p>Students will engage in arts practice through learning different aspects involved in drawing still life - concentrating on volume and tone.</p>
9	<p>Field-Trip: Visit to the National Gallery of Ireland</p>	<p>Students will get to see many works discussed first hand and evaluate their experience of Irish art outside the classroom environment.</p>
10	<p>Irish Revolutionary Art – People and Politics</p> <p><i>Historical context / Discussion</i></p> <p>Art in Practice: Portraits</p>	<p>In this section students will look specifically at the links between the history of Irish art and historical/political movements associated with each period to gain an understanding of the relationship between form and content.</p> <p>Students will engage in arts practice through learning different aspects involved in drawing portraits - concentrating on line, volume and tone.</p>
11	<p>Field-Trip: Visit to Dublin City Gallery / The Hugh Lane</p>	<p>Students will get to see many works discussed first hand and evaluate their experience of Irish art outside the classroom environment.</p>

12	<p>Irish Art and Aesthetics - What is Beauty? <i>Historical context / Discussion</i></p> <p>Art in Practice: The Figure</p>	<p>Here students will examine the international philosophical background to the production of art over the centuries and how such insights affected particular works of national art taking in the particular characteristics of Irish art such as genres, modes, styles, and cultural history. Students will demonstrate the reasoning skills and vocabulary necessary to interpret a work of art from aesthetic and philosophical perspectives.</p> <p>Students will engage in arts practice through learning different aspects involved in drawing the figure - concentrating on proportion, composition and meaning/intention.</p>
13	Final Exam	<p>Students will need to answer three questions: one on music plus one on visual arts and one from either category/strand.</p>