

Regional Report 2023-2024 Czech Republic, Austria and Slovakia

Radvan Markus

Conferences and Workshops

On 3-4 November 2023, the Centre for Irish Studies, Charles University, Prague held a **workshop** at the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice. The workshop was directed at students and featured sessions on Irish literature, politics, language and music.

The department of English and American Studies at Komenský University in Bratislava along with the Embassy of Ireland organised public Irish Studies **workshops** at the occasion of Christmas (15 December 2023) and St Patrick's Day (20 March 2024). These featured sessions on the Irish language, Irish English, Irish music and Irish drama.

Irish Itinerary & EFACIS Engagement:

Irish Itinerary Podcast

Georgina Nugent (University of Vienna) in conversation with Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin, published 16 May 2024.

Irish Itinerary

A visit of poet **Ailbhe Ní Ghearbhuigh** on 16-20 October 2023. A reading and a lecture in Bratislava on 17 October was followed by a lecture ("Eco-Consciousness in Bidy Jenkinson's Short Fiction") and a reading in Prague, both on 19 October. During the reading in Prague, members and associates of the Prague Centre read Czech translations of the poems. A recording is available here: <https://irish.ff.cuni.cz/en/2023/09/25/poetry-reading-and-lecture-by-ailbhe-ni-ghearbhuigh/>.

A visit of poet **Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin** on 15-20 April 2024. A reading in Prague on 16 April was followed by a reading in Vienna on 19 April. A video from the Prague reading is available here: <https://irish.ff.cuni.cz/en/2024/04/05/poetry-reading-by-eilean-ni-chuilleanain/>.

New Centres

Starting from the next academic year, the department of English and American Studies at Komenský University in Bratislava is going to offer courses of the Irish language and Irish Studies.

Miscellaneous Information

On 26 October 2023, acclaimed Irish novelist Sara Baume presented a **multimedia performance** titled "The Alphabet of Birds" in an event hosted by the Prague Centre in the Contemporary Arts Centre DOX. The performance was followed by a Q&A with the author and her Czech translator Alice Hyrmanová McElveen. Videos and photos are available here: <https://irish.ff.cuni.cz/en/2023/10/12/sara-baume-the-alphabet-of-birds/>

The **special issue of the literary magazine** PLAV dedicated to Irish-language and Scottish Gaelic poetry was launched on 10 November 2023. A recording of the event featuring Peter Mackay / Pàdraig MacAoidh, Petra Johana Poncarová, Martin Světlík, Daniela Theinová and the band Conamara Chaos is now available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISdo6M10wrk> .

On 29 February 2024, the Prague Centre held a **guest lecture** by Dr Ken Ó Donnchú (University College Cork), titled “Literature and Politics in the Early Modern Irish period, c.1200-1650”.

On 18 April 2024, the Prague Centre held a **guest lecture** by Dr Tomás Finn (University of Galway), titled “Lost Decades or Decades of Change? Mid–Twentieth–Century Ireland”.

On 13 March 2024, the Vienna Centre for Irish Studies, in cooperation with Tourism Ireland, offered an **open seminar session** with the theme “Cultural (mis)representations of Ireland in Saint Patrick's Day Parades”.

On 15 March 2024, the Prague Centre organised an **Irish Culture Night**, featuring readings of Irish literature in translation by members and associates of the centre. The readings were followed by a concert of the local band Conamara Chaos, during which the Centre’s director, Ondřej Pilný, and the Irish Ambassador to Czechia, Alan Gibbons, launched their new CD *Anord*. A video is available here: <https://irish.ff.cuni.cz/en/2024/04/01/st-patricks-irish-culture-night/>.

On 22 May 2024, the Prague Centre for Irish Studies, the Embassy of Ireland and the DOX Centre for Contemporary Art hosted the event “**Contemporary Writer in Europe**”, combining literary readings and discussion. The event featured the authors Jan Carson, Pavla Horáková, Tadhg Mac Dhonnagáin and Jan Novák. A video is available here: <https://irish.ff.cuni.cz/en/2024/06/09/contemporary-writer-in-europe-a-debate/>.

On 11 June 2024, the Vienna Centre for Irish Studies hosted a **book launch** of *Queering W. B. Yeats and Gabriele D’Annunzio* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2024) by Dr. Zsuzanna Balázs (Òmbuda University Budapest).

On 13 June 2024, the Embassy of Ireland in Prague hosted a **Bloomsday celebration**. The event featured readings of works by James Joyce and Seamus Heaney in Czech, Irish and Ukrainian translations, prompted by the translation seminars by the Prague Centre’s associate Mariana Machová.

A member of the Prague Centre for Irish Studies, Daniela Theinová, has recorded an episode for the Cup of Tea **Podcast** run by the student association Schwa. She presented on poetry and ecology. This year’s podcasts also feature a talk by Irish poet and academic Louis de Paor on Patrick Pearse’s writings.

Matej Bel University in **Banská Bystrica, Slovakia**, has consolidated their programme of Irish-language and Irish Studies. Public events concentrated mainly around St Patrick’s day and *Seachtain na Gaeilge*.