Artists Initiate Irish Fulbright Jubilee Celebrations

Twelve alumni and fourteen visiting U.S. scholars attended a performance of Mahler’s Third Symphony at the National Concert Hall on Friday 3rd November. This rarely performed work, requiring an augmented orchestra together with a soloist and two choirs, proved very inspiring and surprisingly accessible; any unfamiliarity with this tuneful work having been dispelled by a pre-concert talk given by Ian Fox with his customary erudition.

After the concert Fulbrighters adjoined to the Alfie Byrne Bar at the Conrad Hotel across the road where we partook of more familiar fare. The thanks of the Association and of all who attended must go to committee member, Cliona Golden, who organised the event with gracious and understated efficiency.

The Exhibition was opened by the Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs, Mr Conor Lenihan, T.D., who stressed how greatly we Irish value and treasure our relationship with the United States. He spoke with great enthusiasm about the value of educational exchange programmes and of the genius and skill of William Fulbright who could be the envy of any politician. Fulbright was only a year in the Senate when he managed to get his scheme approved without a dissenting voice.

In reply, the Ambassador of the United States, Mr. Thomas C. Foley, said that this art exhibition brought together two of his favorite topics: educational exchanges and art. “Both educational exchange and art penetrate borders, break down barriers, and improve communication and understanding between countries. The exhibit highlights the special qualities that one finds in members of the Fulbright community—they are curious, risk-takers, and high achievers. Fulbright is really a global school integration student of the top policy organisations underscored the broad range of engagement between the US Embassy in Dublin and the people of Ireland.

The Exhibition continues until April 15th. Farmleigh Gallery is open Thursdays through Sundays and on Bank Holidays but may be closed on occasion for official government use. To confirm, please phone 01-8155900 or visit the website: www.farmleighgallery.ie

Some of the participating Fulbright Award Winners will give talks at 3 o’clock on Saturdays and Sundays during the course of the Exhibition. The schedule will be found on page 2.

Jubilee Year Events

The Jubilee year, celebrating 50 years of the Fulbright Programme in Ireland will be marked by several important events. Please mark your diary accordingly.

**INTER-CHANGES Exhibition**, Farmleigh, 7 Mar-15 Apr (Closed Mon.-Wed.)

**Annual General Meeting**, May 17th, Provost’s House, Trinity College Dublin.

**Twelfth Annual Scholars’ Dinner**, Dublin Castle, 8 June 2007

**Fulbright Jubilee Concert**, Dublin Castle, 4 October 2007


Mrs Harriet Fulbright will be the keynote speaker at the conference.

**Thanksgiving Dinner** Dublin Institute of Technology, Thursday 22 November.

**Launch of Jubilee Directory**, Date and Venue to follow.
Fulbrighter Probes the Irish Psyche

‘Timeless Wisdom: What Irish Proverbs Tell Us About Ourselves’, is a unique exploration of the psychology of the Irish, based on proverbs or seanfhocail. It was published recently by UCD Press.

Written by Aidan Moran, Professor of Psychology and Director of the Psychology Research Laboratory in the School of Psychology at UCD, and Dr Michael O’Connell, Senior Lecturer in Social Psychology at UCD, this scholarly work took over two years to research.

Aidan received his Fulbright Award in 1994 and studied at the University of Florida and the State University of New York in Buffalo. He was a member of the Executive Committee of the Irish Fulbright Alumni Association for several years and served as Membership Secretary.

“One way we can use Irish proverbs to try and understand our collective psyche better is to compare them with those from other countries”, says Aidan, “and there certainly seems to be more about death and fatalism in our stock of proverbs in contrast to the self-help messages in the US, which tend to be very positive.”

He says this might be explained by our past as feudal peasants. “You worked the lands and paid rent to your landlord, so what was the point of working harder when that would just mean you paid the landlord even more rent? This anti-self improvement mentality can be found in phrases like “It’s not what you know, it’s who you know” – a kind of resignation that, no matter what you do, your destiny is pre-determined.”

Prof Moran and Dr O’Connell admit that they were surprised at the persistently negative attitude to women in Irish proverbs. “I looked at proverbs from Italy, Poland, Russia, England and Ireland than elsewhere”, says Dr O’Connell.

“One possible explanation for this is the powerlessness of males in Gaelic society until relatively recently. They rented, rather than owned land, and they had little say in the way society was run. There might have been a bit of ‘frustration displacement’ in which the anger they felt at the fact life was taken over on women.”

As regards their relevance today, Dr O’Connell feels that people have less faith now in proverbs, probably because they have less need for them. “Proverbs were used as a primary source of information, but this is not the case any more, mainly because there are so many other sources available to us.”

This book is an essential tool for students of Irish society, folklore or proverbs.


Irish Fulbrighter Guest at American Philosophical Society AGM

Professor John Hurley attended the 2006 AGM of the American Philosophical society in Philadelphia as guest of the President, Dr Baruch Blumberg.

The AGM celebrated the 300th anniversary of the birth of the American polymath Benjamin Franklin. The three day meeting reflected his life, and celebrated Franklin’s many achievements. It was attended by about four hundred people, mostly members, and included about one hundred Nobel Laureates, and a large number of US Academy of Science members and award winners.

Remaining true to Franklin’s idea of “promoting useful knowledge”, papers and symposia were diverse in content and addressed both the theoretical and practical in the sciences, arts and humanities. The content of the exhilarating three days included such presentations as:

JOHN MEURIG THOMAS, Hon., Professor, Cambridge University: “Turanday and Franklin”

AHMED H. ZEWAIL, Nobel Prize in Chemistry (1999). Linus Pauling Chair, Professor of Chemistry and Physics, California Institute of Technology: “Franklin’s V-Sion”

ÉDOUARD BRÉZIN, Président, Académie des Sciences (Institut de France): “Trends in French Science”


JOHN L. HEILBRON, Professor of History, Emeritus, University of California at Berkeley: “Plut and Minus: Franklin’s Zero-Sum Way of Thinking”

SYMPOSIUM American Empire? The Role of the United States in the World Today

JACK E. MATLOCK, J.R., MODERATOR

Former Ambassador to the Soviet Union

WILLIAM E. ODOM Lieutenant General (Retired) United States Army, Adjunct Professor of Political Science, Yale University: “The Nature of American Hegemony: How to Use it, How to Lose it”

JESSICA TUCHMAN MATHEWS, President, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: “How to Achieve Non-Proliferation Without Force: Solving the Problem of Rogue States”

WILLEM FREDERIK VAN EEEKEN

Former Minister of Defense, The Netherlands and

KARL KAISER Ralph Straus Visiting Professor, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, Former Director, German Council on Foreign Relations, Bonn-Berlin

“America in the World Today: Two European Views”

The APS President Dr Blumberg made reference to the Irish connection in his opening address by referring to Franklin’s visit to the Dublin Philosophical Society (Later the Royal Dublin Society), and the Royal Society in London, in the mid 18th century. Franklin said later that, in founding the American Philosophical Society, he was strongly influenced by the nature of the aims and structures of these two societies.

This was a wonderfully exciting meeting filled with ideas and intelligent discussion and ranging over a number of important topics. It even included a short concert featuring music written for Franklin’s ‘Glass Harmonica’. As a tribute to Franklin it could not be faulted. It was a most exhilarating meeting.

Professor John Hurley with Dr Baruch Blumberg, President of the American Philosophical Society.

Dear Alumnus…

You are one of about 700 privileged Irish people who received grants to study in the United States as a consequence of Senator Fulbright’s initiative. The opportunity probably shaped your career and even your life. If the stories that have emerged in the preparation of the Jubilee Directory are anything to judge by, your experience has brought benefits to the lives of many around you and to the organisations that have employed you.

The 50th Anniversary is a good time to think of putting something back. You can strengthen the Fulbright programme in Ireland by your membership of the IFAA and your support for its activities. Even better, you could give some talented young Irish person an opportunity such as you enjoyed, by sponsoring a Fulbright Award, or you might do it yourself, from your own resources. Good idea? Don’t take a ‘rain check’ on it. Just do it now.

Contact Paul Donnelly, Hon. Membership Sec., about support for the IFAA, or Colleen Dube, Exec. Director of the Commission about sponsoring a Fulbright Award. You still can make a difference!

Editor

INTERCHANGES

Talks by Fulbright Artists

The talks will take place in the Kitchen Conference Room at Farmleigh at 3pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

Sat. 10th March Bernadette Cotter

Sun. 11th March Alan Phelan

Sun. 18th March John Keating

Sat. 31st March Denis Farrell

Sun. 1st April Shane de Blacam

Archivist, Fulbright 1969

Sat. 7th April Karl Grimes

Sun. 8th April Orla Ryan

Sat. 14th April Katherine West

Sun. 15th April Bobby Campbell

US Artist, currently on Fulbright in Ireland.
The continued success of the Fulbright Programme in Ireland is dependent on the understanding of its significance shown by Companies, State Agencies and Academic Institutions. We gratefully acknowledge:

**Current Irish Sponsors of Awards**

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- Queens University Belfast
- Royal College of Surgeons
- Trinity College Dublin
- University College Cork
- University College Dublin
- University of Limerick
- University of Ulster
- Waterford Institute of Technology

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**Staying in Touch --worldwide**

A global community numbering more than 25,000 is growing around the dedicated website for participants of all US Government Exchange Programmes and their hosts:

[alumni.state.gov](http://alumni.state.gov)

You can keep in touch with Programme Co-Participants and U.S. Hosts, share ideas with alumni representing 150 countries and all the U.S. Government exchange programmes, find the latest research in your profession plus career enhancing information and participate in live web-chat dialogues with world leaders and experts.

This everchanging website features *intra alia*:

- A Calendar of upcoming professional events in every region of the globe
- A Free Research Database of Academic Journals
- Job listings and career development information
- Grant opportunity listings
- Live online discussions

Alumni news items and Photo gallery

On your first visit to the State Alumni website you are asked to register and create a password. This gives you access to all the features. The site operates over a secure connection to prevent cyber theft.

**Staying in Touch --nearer home**

**NEW WEBSITE:** The IFAA will soon have its very own website. It is currently at the design stage and is expected to be up and running by May/June. In addition to the public area, it will have areas for the exclusive use of registered alumni.

**JUBILEE DIRECTORY:** This lists about 700 Fulbrighters and will go to press shortly. A page proof showing your entry is enclosed with this newsletter. Please check the details carefully and return it immediately making any required corrections very clearly. No further proofs will be issued before printing.