

## The Irishness of Irish Writers



Four study mornings

led by

**Dr Elaine Oswald**

**Tuesdays, 2nd-23rd April  
2019 from 10-1 p.m.**

William Elder Building

56-58 Castlegate

Berwick, TD15 1JT

In this course we will explore some of the most distinctive features of the Irish literature tradition, including a lyrical use of language; well-drawn characters; a sense of place; and recurring thematic concerns. Ireland has the distinction of having four Nobel Prize winners for Literature, which is an impressive number for a small country, and its authors are renowned worldwide as great storytellers. Irish Literature has its own genre categorization—you'll find Irish writers grouped together in many bookstores. The Irish have a skill in depicting place, spirit, and people so specifically that readers recognize the land and it feels familiar.

The phrase 'sense of place' is often used to refer to the quality that makes somewhere distinctive. It is the environmental equivalent of saying somebody has a strong personality. It's the presiding spirit of the land that the Romans referred to as *genius loci* and maybe it's what we feel when a landscape is like coming home. Great writers can convey this sense of place and make us want to follow their characters 'down the rabbit hole' whether we love or hate them. We'll explore some modern Irish writers such as Bernard MacLaverty, Anne Enright, and Colm Tóibín, as well as Yeats, Synge, Joyce, Heaney, and Boland.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What will I achieve?

By the end of this course you should be able to...

Assess the work of some significant Irish writers.

Identify some key themes of Irish authors.

Discuss the social and historical context for the texts.

Discuss how authors achieve a sense of place in their works.

### What level is the course and do I need any particular skills?

No previous knowledge is required. Anyone with an enthusiasm for literature and a willingness to participate in discussions will be welcome.

### How will I be taught, and will there be any work outside the class?

A variety of teaching methods will be used, including large and small group discussions. A reading list will be sent to you before the course begins and you'll want to have completed the week's reading before coming to class so that you can take full advantage of the discussion topics.

### Is there anything I need to bring?

You will need to buy or borrow most texts from the reading list; some photocopies of extra readings will be provided. You'll want to keep a notebook in order to make notes of your reading and of discussion points and please bring this to class.

### Will I need to attend all four classes?

You'll get the most out of your study of Irish literature if you do so, as each class will build on what we have talked of previously.

**Tickets £36, including refreshments. All are welcome and no previous knowledge is assumed.**

If you supply us with your personal data (name, address or email), we will hold this in accordance with our privacy policy, available [here](#) or by request to BEA, 7 Ravensdowne, Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 1HX. If you have any queries, please email [berwickea@gmail.com](mailto:berwickea@gmail.com) or phone Cian McHugh on 01289 303254

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*(Irish Writers)*

