Roundtable 3

Who are you? Textuality/s and Identity/s in 21st Century Ireland. A Poetry Ireland Workshop

Dermot Bolger, Ireland
Máighréad Medbh, Ireland
Cherry Smyth, United Kingdom

Through performance and discussion, 3 artists will interrogate the intersections between political and cultural discourses, with particular reference to identities formation and recognition; and how these may be seen to inform current personal and group understandings and literacies (the ability to read, write and make some sense of life and existence) in an Irish context.

Topics covered may include but not be limited to; (a) Language/s, (b) Literature/s and the Arts, (c) Culture and cultural discourse (d) Popular Culture and (e) Education. This will be a particularly apposite discussion in the light of the ethnic, familial, social, cultural and economic changes presently at play in the society.

It will be a performance-based presentation, scaffolded and framed by a short introduction and a panel discussion, which will explore some of the topics raised in and through the various performances.

Born in Dublin in 1959, Dermot Bolger is an Irish poet, novelist and playwright. His debut play, The Lament for Arthur Cleary (1989), received The Samuel Beckett Award and his most recent plays include The Ballymun Trilogy and The Parting Glass. A poet, he devised and edited the best-selling collaborative novels Finbar’s Hotel (1997) and Ladies Night at Finbar’s Hotel. In 2012 he published his poem sequence, The Venice Suite, a novella, The Fall of Ireland and also had his adaption of Joyce’s Ulysses staged in Ireland and the UK. His radio plays for BBC Radio 4 include Hunger Again, The Kerlogue, The Night Manager and The Fortunestown Kid and, for RTE Radio, Moving in and the radio version of his own
novel, *The Woman’s Daughter*, which was broadcast in seven countries and won the Worldplay Award for best script.

Máighréad Medbh was born in Limerick. Her published work includes six poetry collections and a prose work about solitude. Máighréad was a pioneer of performance poetry in Ireland in the 1990s and she has maintained a reputation for originality and for a powerful stage presence. She has performed widely – in Ireland, Europe, the USA, and across the broadcast media. She has written three novels, all available online as ebooks, and posts a blog monthly on her website in the form of an essay or poetic rumination.

Cherry Smyth is a poet, novelist, critic and curator, born in Ireland, based in London. Her debut novel *Hold Still* was published by Holland Park Press in 2013. She recently co-curated *Limber: Spatial Painting Practices* at the Herbert Read Gallery, Canterbury, and Grandes Galleries de L’Erba, Rouen, France. *Test, Orange*, 2012, her latest poetry collection is available from Pindrop Press. Her previous collection *One Wanted Thing* is available from Lagan Press. Cherry writes regularly for *Art Monthly*, *Modern Painters* and *Art Review*. She was a curatorial adviser for Axis online showcase, Open Frequency in 2006. She was guest editor of *Magma Poetry Magazine*, 2012, and was poetry editor of *Brand* Literary Magazine, 2006-2011. Cherry has been teaching writing poetry in the Creative Writing Department of the University of Greenwich since 2004. She has been appointed a Royal Literary Fellow, 2014-2016.