In this latest issue of *Humanities Update* the feature describing the five new colleagues who have joined the School over the past year offers a welcome boost at this time of recession and austerity. In their research and training, they enhance the University’s international profile and compensate in part for colleagues who have recently left. Some of the latter we still see from time to time, but not Dr. Tom Duddy who is a sad loss, intellectually irreplaceable and who, as things now stand, will not be replaced. The next feature on recent publications by members of Humanities, including six new books, highlights the School’s vibrant research culture, also underlined by the announcement of a sequel next spring to *Professing the Humanities* in the Civic Engagement series – three public lectures by two new professors and by Dr. Riana O’Dwyer who recently retired from English.

All this paints the School in a favourable light, and has no doubt helped to enhance NUI Galway’s position in the University Rankings. The infectious optimism of the outgoing Head of School, Dr. Lionel Pilkington, has also helped here. Colleagues have manifestly succeeded in doing more with less, and the same could be said of other initiatives like the School Office or the new programmes presently being planned. There is, however, a limit to what may be done here; and the latest round of government-imposed cuts certainly brings us much closer to that limit.. (continued page 2)

**THE NUI CLUB LONDON SCHOLARSHIP AWARD**

Fourth year BA with Film Studies student Conor Burke was awarded the 2012 Club London Scholarship. This Scholarship of €2,000, introduced in 2005, was established as a Memorial Scholarship with funds from a Bequest from the NUI Club London following its dissolution in 2003. The Scholarship is offered for competition annually amongst students registered in different NUI Faculties/Colleges as decided by the Senate. For the first time this year it was open to students of Film Studies. Congratulations Conor!

Dr Maurice Manning, Chancellor of the NUI and Conor Burke
Cutbacks are nothing new, unfortunately, but this latest demand for ‘instant cuts’ leaves us with no room for manoeuvre. The College of Arts share of the 5% reduction in posts demanded over three years is 9 academic posts (with 2.5 support posts following, and a total saving of €0.9 million), the posts to be advised this month by the Dean. All that could be done in the circumstances was to offer a list of posts which will fall vacant during this three-year period through a combination of planned retirements and non-renewal of contract posts – and not too many of the latter, since the financial target has also to be met.

The School’s contribution to this latest cull (on top of earlier sacrifices) is those posts held by Tom Duddy (already vacant) and by a colleague in English who has the misfortune to be 65 during this three-year period, a saving of over €270,000. In other circumstances, staff-student ratios, redeployment, sharing of posts and modules, and rationalising programmes might have been looked at, but the imperative was an ‘instant’ list of posts.

Unfortunately, this is not an end of the matter. The HEA is looking at regional duplication and rationalising subjects. The University needs to secure greater efficiencies by redeploying surviving staff to teach increasing numbers of students. Casual vacancies over the next three years will facilitate this, and validation requirements in areas like Education will demand it. We cannot simply sit back and say we have already done our bit. We need as a School to plan for a more efficient use of our staffing resources along the lines of what might have been attempted across the College had time permitted. The more we do for ourselves here, the better the chances of recovering some of these losses. Equally, if we sit back, the chances are that more of our resources will be picked off. Colleagues have already made large sacrifices, but unfortunately it is in our best interests to look for more.

We welcome Máirín McCarron who has been awarded the prestigious new NUI Dr Garret Fitzgerald Postdoctoral Fellowship. The main purpose of these fellowships is to encourage and support graduates of proven academic excellence to advance their scholarly research. It is expected that the research undertaken will result in a substantial contribution to knowledge, worthy of publication and contribute to the learning culture in the constituent institutions.

Máirín will be doing her post-doctoral research with Prof Dáibhí Ó Cróinin (History). Máirín is pictured here with Mary Fitzgerald, daughter of the late Garret Fitzgerald.

Some of our Philosophy staff members participated in the CKI Youth Academy project delivering a pilot philosophy course to talented primary school kids. The course ran for six weeks in early Summer. 62 children from primary schools across Galway city took part in one of four subject offerings on a Saturday morning. The subject choices were Engineering, Italian, Philosophy and Psychology. On the final week a Certificate and Celebration Ceremony was held where students received certificates on completion of the pilot phase of the Youth Academy.

Kara Mc Kenna, age 11, Ruth Mc Nulty, age 11 and Emily Naughton, age 11 from Scoil Íde, Salthill.
NEW STAFF MEMBERS

We have a number of new staff who joined our School over the past few months. Some are familiar faces!

We welcome them all to the School and wish them well.

Dr Adrian Paterson joins the Department of English as Lecturer post-1800 after completing an IRCSS-funded research fellowship in the Moore Institute at NUI Galway entitled Perfect Pitch: Music in Irish Poetry from Moore to Muldoon. He has previously taught at Oxford University and Bath Spa University, and has masters degrees from studies at Trinity College, Dublin and Worcester College, Oxford, where he finished his DPhil under the supervision of Bernard O’Donohue. His work attempts to consider literature as a wider artistic field, examining interplays ofaurality, orality, print, art, music, performance, broadcasting – especially radio broadcasting – and technology in the material and immaterial forms of texts. He writes on nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature with a particular interest in the artistic interactions of the fin-de-siècle and modernist periods, from Yeats to Mallarmé, but considers many collisions of sound and sense in poetry from the Romantic period to the present day. At NUI Galway he runs the interdisciplinary ECHO Humanities Research Forum and is always on the look out for speakers and workshop ideas.

Charlotte McIvor received her Ph.D. in Performance Studies from the University of California, Berkeley in 2011 with a designated emphasis in Gender, Women and Sexuality and has also taught at California College of the Arts and Santa Clara University. She is the creator and Program Director of UC Berkeley’s Summer Sessions Study Abroad program, “Irish Theater Today,” which will enter its third summer in 2013. Her essays have appeared or are forthcoming in Irish University Review, Modern Drama, Public and InVisible Culture: An Electronic Journal for Visual Culture and edited collections including Crossroads: Performance Studies and Irish Culture and Deviant Acts: Essays on Queer Performance. She is currently working on a book manuscript entitled “The New Interculturalism: Race, Gender, Immigration and Performance in Post-Celtic Tiger Ireland” which argues that theatre and performance is at the center of conceptualizing interculturalism as social policy and aspiration in contemporary Ireland. She also works as a director, dramaturge and performer. Recent projects include directing and performing in Erik Ehn’s 32 play cycle, What A Stranger Knows, in commemoration of the 2006 Virginia Tech shooting, this past April at Santa Clara University.
NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Sarah-Anne Buckley lectures in the Department of History, NUI Galway. Her books include a history of the Haematology Association of Ireland, and a history of child welfare in Ireland to be published in 2013 titled The Cruelty Man: Child Welfare, the NSPCC and the State in Ireland: 1889-1956. She has published chapters and articles on child neglect, nurse children and incest in nineteenth and twentieth century Ireland. Her forthcoming publications include an article on deserted wives, a chapter on the beginnings of the NSPCC in Ireland and an article on children and striking. She is currently conducting research on the history of youth culture in twentieth century Ireland.

Her research interests include nineteenth and twentieth-century Irish and British social, political, and social policy history; women and gender; institutional histories; welfare history, social movement history and the history of childhood and the family. Her teaching centres on the social history of Ireland and Britain from the nineteenth century.

Kevin O’Sullivan arrived in Galway in September 2012 via the rather circuitous route of a PhD at TCD (2008); an IRCHSS post-doc at UCD (2009-11); a seven-month secondment to Irish Aid and the HEA (2011); and another IRCHSS post-doc at UCD (2011-12) - this time a CARA mobility fellowship, meaning that he spent no time in Belfield and all of his time abroad, as a visiting fellow at the University of Birmingham (where he is still an honorary research fellow). He began as an historian of modern Ireland and Africa, before shifting his attention to international history, and is currently writing a transnational history of humanitarian NGOs in Western Europe – in between teaching courses on globalisation, humanitarianism and Irish identity, of course!

Dr Justin Tonra, University Fellow in English at the School of Humanities, completed his PhD at NUI Galway in 2009. He was awarded an Irish Research Council postdoctoral fellowship in 2010, and is in the process of writing a monograph on Thomas Moore and literary-critical methodologies. Justin’s research interests are in Digital Humanities, Book History, Textual Studies, and Nineteenth-Century Literature. He has held research positions at University College London and the University of Virginia since completing his doctorate.

Mike McCormack, who teaches Fiction on the MA in Writing, has recently published, with Lilliput Press, a collection of stories, *Forensic Songs*.


Tomas Finn’s new book has recently been published by Manchester University Press at the end of November. The launch will be in the National University of Ireland, Merrion Square on Tuesday 29th January. Please contact Tomás at tomas.finn@nuigalway.ie should you wish to attend.
“But what does it mean?” - NUI Galway Professor explains abstract art

Many of us have walked round art galleries and wondered what those abstract works are all about. They have been with us for a hundred years but retain their power to puzzle and perplex.

Paul Crowther – Professor of Philosophy at NUI Galway – has offered solutions to the puzzle. In the three books he has published since arriving at Galway in 2009, abstract art has been a central research interest for him. He has now co-edited and contributed chapters to an important collection of essays dedicated to the problem. The work is *Meanings of Abstract Art: Between Nature and Theory* which has just been published in the prestigious Routledge Advances in Art and Visual Studies series.

Crowther and his co-editor Isabel Wunsche bring together scholars of international distinction, so as to focus on the major source of abstraction – nature. They are guided by the famous abstractionist Jackson Pollock’s remark ‘I am nature’. Pollock thought that action painting allowed abstract works to express symbols and ideas from the unconscious mind. Other abstract artists have different interests – and the book explores some of the most important of these. Professor Crowther’s own two chapters emphasize that – whatever the individual artist’s intentions – abstract works all involve optical illusion. This gives them the power to suggest such things as alien or unfamiliar perceptual environments, objects seen from unusual angles or under conditions of magnification or distortion. Ordinary pictures represent recognizable things, but abstract works allude to aspects of the visual field that are usually unnoticed or not accessible to ordinary vision.

The book is the first publication from an international network of scholars working on abstract art. Professor Crowther will be working to build up this network, and to further internationalize his research in the coming year through sustained work on abstract art in major European and American collections.

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**Dr Sean Crosson (Huston School of Film & Digital Media)**


‘‘For the honour of old Knock-na-gow I must win’: Representing Sport in Knocknagow (1918)’, Screening the Past: an online journal of media and history, *Special Issue: Knocknagow (1918)*, Issue 33 (2012)

‘Filming Gaelic Games: George Fleischmann and the Emergence of a Distinctive Irish film culture post-World War II,’ in *Ireland in Drama, Film, and Popular Culture* (Festschrift Werner Huber) edited by Sandra Mayer, Julia Novak, and Margarete Rubik (Trier: WVT, 2012)
The School will hold a series of public lectures in January, February and March of next year—2013. The series is entitled:

'Players, Voyagers and Viewers'

'Film Theory for Television Viewers' (Prof Rod Stoneman)
January 16

‘Two Galway Playwrights: M.J. Molloy and Tom Murphy.’(Dr Riana O’Dwyer)
February 13

'Travelling the World in Shakespeare’s Time' (Prof Daniel Carey)
March 13

The lectures will be held in the Galway City Library, Augustine Street on Wednesdays at 6.30pm sharp and all are most welcome to attend.