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Georgian
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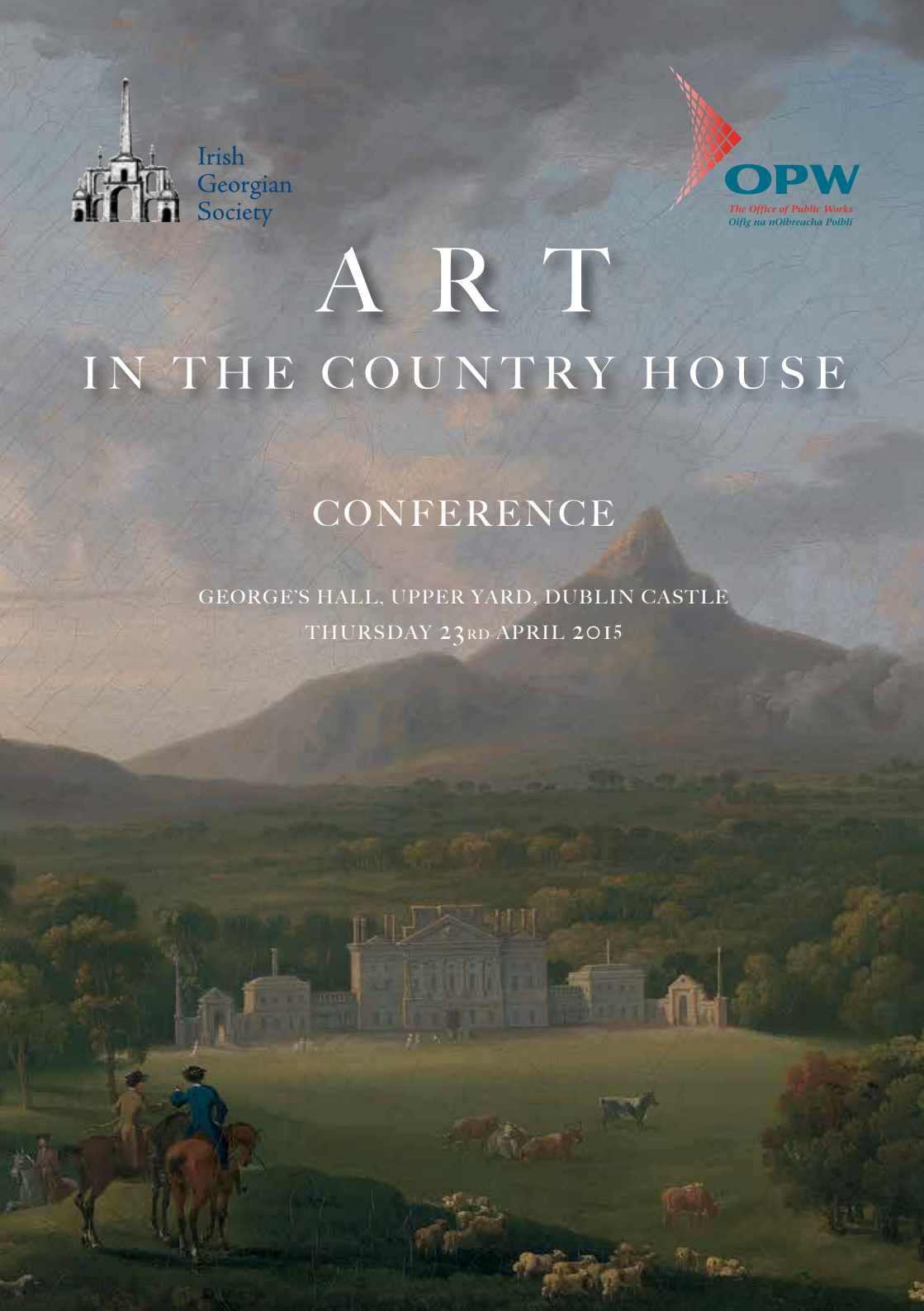
A R T

IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE

CONFERENCE

GEORGE'S HALL, UPPER YARD, DUBLIN CASTLE

THURSDAY 23RD APRIL 2015



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ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE

By direction of
COLONEL R. CLAUDE CANE, J.P.

A
CATALOGUE
OF THE
FURNITURE, PICTURES,
STATUARY, BRONZES, OLD SILVER,
CHINA, &c.,
AT
ST. WOLSTAN'S,
COUNTY KILDARE, IRELAND.

1/2 mile Haslebach Station, G.S. Ry.
1/2 " the Spa Hotel, Lucan.
1/2 " Dublin.

WHICH
MESSRS. BENNETT & SON
WILL SELL BY AUCTION

In the above Mansion.

Commencing MONDAY, JULY 25th, 1921

Continuing on the next four days, and on Monday and Tuesday in the
following week, at 12 noon precisely each day.

The Collection will be on View from Monday, July 18th, to Saturday, July 23rd. Admission to View
and Sale will be by Catalogue only, price 2s. 6d., and such Catalogue will only admit two persons.
A limited number of Illustrated Catalogues, price 7s. 6d. each, may be obtained from the Auctioneers,
at their address.

6 UPPER ORMOND QUAY, DUBLIN.

Above: Frontispiece from *Catalogue of Furniture, Pictures, Statuary, Bronzes, Old Silver, China, Etcetera at St. Wolstan's, County Kildare, Ireland, Dublin, 1921*

Cover Image: *A View of Powerscourt, Co. Wicklow, Ireland* by George Barret, RA. c. 1728-84, Yale Centre for British Art

ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE

The *Art in the Country House* conference coincides with *Ireland: 1690-1840, Crossroads of Art and Design*, which includes many paintings and objects from Irish country houses. Christopher Monkhouse, the Art Institute of Chicago's Eloise W. Martin Chair and Curator of European Decorative Arts, who is the curator of the exhibition, is the keynote speaker. The conference will trace the cycle of the acquisition of great collections in Ireland to their dispersal, while also exploring the lively intersection of art and the country house today.

Art in the Country House attendees may purchase *Ireland: Crossroads of Art and Design, 1690 - 1840* (Art Institute of Chicago & Yale RRP: €50) special offer €40 and *Irish Architectural and Decorative Arts, Vol. XVII* (Irish Georgian Society RRP: €25) special offer €15 or with a further reduction if attendees purchase both publications together for the price of €50.

The Irish Georgian Society would like to acknowledge the following for their work in convening this study day:

- Emmeline Henderson, Assistant Director & Conservation Manager, Irish Georgian Society
- William Laffan, Board member, Irish Georgian Society

We would like to acknowledge the work of Amy Hastings, Chair of the Irish Georgian Society's Architectural Conservation and Planning Committee, for the graphic design of this programme.

Grateful thanks to conference sponsors: Apollo Foundation; Merrion Property Group, Merrion Hotel; Yale University Press; and Domini & Peaches Kemp at the Dubh Linn Tea Rooms & Feast Catering.

ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE PROGRAMME

WELCOME & REGISTRATION

9.00am Registration

9.15am Welcome: Patrick Guinness, President, Irish Georgian Society



Robert Fagan (Irish, born England, active in Italy, 1761-1816). *Portrait of a Lady as Hibernia*, c.1801 (detail). Private collection

ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE

PROGRAMME

9.30am

SESSION 1: ACQUISITION

Chair: Mary Heffernan, National Historic Properties, OPW

Dr Lynda Mulvin

Irish Collectors of Classical Sculpture: From Downhill to Russborough and The Getty Venus

This lecture presents some of the classical sculpture which made its way into Irish Collections during the eighteenth century and adorned interiors, exteriors and gardens of the many great houses with a particular focus on the Russborough Collection and the recently re-named 'Getty' Venus. It considers the ideal canon of classical sculpture as defined by Polykleitas as interpreted in the long eighteenth century and explores procurement of certain antique moulds for cast replicas for the teaching collections in the National Museum of Ireland and Dublin Metropolitan School of Art.

Dr Aidan O'Boyle

Castletown: Reflections on the re-arrangement of the Red Drawing Room

The Red Drawing Room at Castletown House is part of a formal State Apartment originally designed in the 1720s for Speaker Conolly. The room in its present form was remodelled for Tom and Louisa Conolly in the 1760s. This lecture will examine the issue of devising a new picture hang for the Red Drawing Room which would be in keeping with the historic Conolly collection and the arrangement of other state rooms of the 1760s.

Dr Jane Fenlon

The Decius Mus Suite of Tapestries at Kilkenny Castle

Tapestries were considered the ultimate in luxury goods collected during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and what evidence we have indicates that their acquisition by both the aristocratic and merchant classes in Ireland seems to be in keeping with general trends in Northern Europe. Very few early tapestries have survived in this country, making the survival of the Decius Mus suite at Kilkenny all the more extraordinary. This paper will discuss the history of these tapestries and comment on their conservation and repair at Real Fabrica de Tapices (the Royal Tapestry works) in Madrid.

ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE

PROGRAMME

Dr Philip McEvansoneya

The Murillos from Ballyfin and Castletown and the taste for Murillo in Ireland

The long-standing Irish interest in Spanish art is evident from written accounts of travel in Spain, the exhibition of Spanish works in Dublin and elsewhere and the activities of private collectors. This interest has been especially strong in relation to Bartolomé Esteban Murillo since at least the time that Sir Daniel Arthur of Limerick, who died in 1705, bought his Murillos. Among the examples to be discussed are *'The Meeting of Jacob and Rachel'* and *'Four Figures on a Step'* both formerly at Ballyfin, and *'Christ after the Flagellation'* formerly at Castletown. These works express the growth in popularity of Murillo's work following the Napoleonic invasion of Spain.

MORNING TEA & COFFEE (THE ROUND ROOM)



Funeral Obsequies of Decius Mus, Office of Public Works, Kilkenny Castle

ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE

PROGRAMME

11.30 am **SESSION 2: DISPERSAL**

Chair: Donough Cahill, Director, Irish Georgian Society

Robert O'Byrne

Sales from the Irish Country House

Following the Act of Union in 1800, many Irish landowners forsook a Dublin residence and lived primarily on their country estates. The houses at the centre of such properties became rich repositories of fine and decorative art, and often remained so into the early 20th century. This talk will examine country house sale catalogues over the past two hundred years to investigate what was offered, and how much has been lost to the national patrimony.

Christopher Monkhouse

Key Note Address: Moving Objects: A Pictorial Progress. From the Irish country house to North American collections

Ireland: Crossroads of Art and Design, 1690-1840 at the Art Institute of Chicago takes a firmly internationalist stance in its exploration of the competing trends - patriotism and the desire to 'Buy Irish' on the one hand and the lure of the exotic, imported or just metropolitan on the other - which influenced material culture in the long eighteenth century. It places Ireland firmly within European and North Atlantic networks of trade, taste, production and consumption and includes objects from many of the great houses of Ireland which were dispersed at various times, from a Roman Venus from Russborough (now in the Getty Villa) to a Sebastiano Ricci history painting which Arthur Young noted when he visited Castle Oliver in Limerick. In the course of identifying over 300 objects for the show in North American collections, Christopher Monkhouse, Leslie Fitzpatrick and William Laffan assembled extensive files regarding provenance for each object, not all of which have been utilised in the catalogue and Christopher will dip into these to discuss objects from Irish country houses which have left Ireland and now greatly embellish American collections.

Peter Murray

Great Houses in Peril: Bantry House

For over half a century, Bantry House, owned by the Shelswell-White family, has been open to visitors, providing an important resource in terms of culture and heritage for the South West region. Situated on the shores of Bantry Bay, the house is of national and international importance; its collection of fine and decorative artworks encompasses paintings, prints, sculptures, tapestries and furniture. The gardens are equally famous in terms of the history of landscape and garden design. The talk focuses on the house and its art collection,

ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE PROGRAMME

detailing works acquired by the White family during their grand tours of Europe in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

Kevin Mulligan

Oculi Desolationem: the disappearance of the Bellamont busts

This talk will examine the special relationship between sculpture and eighteenth-century country house architecture, and using various historical sources will argue that the recent disappearance of a set of busts belonging to Bellamont Forest, County Cavan has left this exceptional Palladian villa by Edward Lovett Pearce bereft of intrinsic features and fittings that were integral to the original architectural concept.

BROWN BAG LUNCH (THE ROUND ROOM)

2.30 pm **SESSION 3: ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE TODAY**

Chair: Tim Knox, Director, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Alec Cobbe

A Unique Survival in Ireland: an Old Master Picture Gallery of 1764 complete with its original collection: some entries and exits over the centuries

The Picture Gallery/ Drawing Room added in 1764 to Newbridge House as a dedicated space for Old Master paintings, is described, as is the formation of the picture collection by Archbishop Cobbe (1686 - 1765) and his son Thomas (1733 - 1814). Erected by George Semple, employing designs of James Gibbs, the architecture of the room is outlined. In the succeeding century vicissitudes occasioned a few notable sales of pictures by Thomas's grandson, notwithstanding which both the room and the original collection survive today in situ largely intact.

ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE PROGRAMME



Drawing Room at Newbridge, c.1905

James Fennell

Art at Burtown: tradition and innovation

Burtown was built by a Quaker, near to one of the oldest Quaker settlements in Ireland, the village of Ballitore. Quakers were famous for not buying art or having their portraits painted, it being considered too ostentatious. Yet despite its Quaker history, art and sculpture have come to play a large part in life at Burtown, with many notable artists having married into the family. This legacy of art is now helping to secure Burtown for future generations to enjoy.

ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE PROGRAMME

Susan Kellett

The Challenges of Keeping Collections in Country Houses Today

All country houses look better with a well-arranged collection of furniture and paintings. Collections tell a story, of the house, of the family or just in themselves. Some collections are very valuable, other collections only valuable in the setting of the house. There are problems to be addressed, of display, of security, and of conservation. How should we address them and balance these concerns with family life and public viewing?

Giles Waterfield

The Relationship between the Country House and the Period Room

Frozen in time? The period room created in the museum from the early 20th century onwards has been increasingly criticised in recent years. Such rooms are seen as inaccurate, sentimental, lifeless, obstructive and unnecessary at a time when historic interiors can be visited with relative ease, and are often presented with a much stronger idea of historical accuracy than applied in the past. This paper considers the relationship between the historic house and the museum of decorative art: should the house shown to the public seek to instruct, by emulating the historical aspirations of the museum, or to delight by suggesting, however theatrically, the illusion of habitation and use?

Questions & Answers

Close & Thank You

Emmeline Henderson

Assistant Director & Conservation Manager, Irish Georgian Society

Wine reception and Irish launch of *Ireland: Crossroads of Art and Design, 1690 - 1840* and the journal of the *Irish Georgian Society, Irish Architectural and Decorative Studies*, Vol. XVII

ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

9.00 am Registration

9.15 am Welcome

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Dr Aidan O'Boyle

The Decius Mus Suite of Tapestries at Kilkenny Castle

Dr Jane Fenlon

The Murillos from Ballyfin and Castletown and the taste for Murillo in Ireland

Dr Philip McEvansoneya

11.00 am Morning Tea and Coffee

11.30 am **SESSION 2: DISPERSAL**

Chair: Donough Cahill, Director, Irish Georgian Society

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Key Note Address: *Moving Objects: A Pictorial Progress. From The Irish country house to North American collections*

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Peter Murray

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Kevin Mulligan

ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

1.30 pm Brown bag lunch (Round Room)

2.30 pm **SESSION 3: ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE TODAY**

Chair: Tim Knox, Director Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

A Unique Survival in Ireland: an Old Master Picture Gallery of 1764 complete with its original collection: some entries and exits over the centuries.

Alec Cobbe

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The Challenges of keeping Collections in Country Houses today

Susan Kellett

The relationship between the Country House and the Period Room

Giles Waterfield

4.00 pm Questions & Answers

4.45pm Close and Thank You

Emmeline Henderson, Assistant Director & Conservation Manager, Irish Georgian Society

5-6pm Wine reception and Irish launch of *Ireland: Crossroads of Art and Design, 1690 - 1840* and the journal of the *Irish Georgian Society, Irish Architectural and Decorative Studies, Vol. XVII*

ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE

BIOGRAPHIES

Donough Cahill is the Executive Director of the Irish Georgian Society, where he oversees its strategic and day-to-day operations and works with the Irish Georgian Foundation's Committee of Management, its sub-committees and working groups and with the Society's North America and UK based membership in promoting the appreciation and protection of Ireland's architectural heritage and allied arts. Most recently he was responsible for overseeing the restoration of the City Assembly House, which now serves as the Society headquarters and as a hub for promoting heritage and culture in the heart of the Georgian city.

Alec Cobbe was born in Dublin in 1945 and grew up at Newbridge House. Cobbe studied medicine at Oxford University, where he won a prize for anatomical drawing, and at the London Hospital. Relinquishing medical studies in 1968 he practised as a painter and went on to train as a paintings conservator at the Tate Gallery. He combined his conservation activities with the design of historic interiors, pursuing a career that was celebrated in 2014 with a retrospective at the Victoria and Albert Museum, which afterwards travelled to Dublin Castle. His publications include *James Gibbs in Ireland*, 2002 (co-authored with Terry Friedman) and *Chopin's Swansong, the pianos of his last performances*, 2010.

James Fennell was brought up and lives at Burtown House, in County Kildare, one of two houses of the 18th century in Co. Kildare never to have been sold. A few years ago he opened the gardens at Burtown to the public, opening a gallery and restaurant within the gardens, as well as a sculpture park; the house is also made available to private groups. However he is primarily a photographer specialising in interiors, portraiture and travel. On assignments around the world, he captures the vastly different people, culture and lifestyles that have led him to numerous countries. James has produced over eighteen books on many subjects including interiors, architecture, art, furniture, people and their lifestyles.

Dr Jane Fenlon acted as advisor to the Decius Mus Tapestry Project for National Historic Properties section, Office of Public Works, Dublin. Fenlon was a member of the editorial advisory committee for *Irish Art and Architecture* vol. ii [Painting] and has contributed to vols ii and iii [Painting, Architecture] of that publication. She has published extensively on sixteenth and seventeenth century Irish art and architecture.

ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE

BIOGRAPHIES

Patrick Guinness was appointed President of the Irish Georgian Society in 2012, a charity that works to promote and protect Ireland's historic architecture and decorative arts. A historian, Guinness has authored a biography on his ancestor Arthur Guinness, the founder of the Guinness brewery dynasty. He is a council member of the County Kildare Archaeological Society and of the Order of Clans of Ireland, and a trustee of the Iveagh Trust.

Mary Heffernan is the Office of Public Works' General Manager for Dublin Castle, Castletown, the Casino Marino, Rathfarnham Castle, the Glebe Gallery, Royal Hospital Kilmainham heritage sites, and Garnish Island. Mary graduated from Trinity College with a degree in pure economics; this was followed by further study at TCD and NCAD in art history and design history. Mary joined OPW in 1985 and is a founding member of OPW's Art Management Group responsible for policy regarding the State Art Collection since 1992. Mary has developed the OPW's Collections Management policies throughout several OPW properties securing The Heritage Council's Museum Standards accreditation. She is a Director on the Board of Malahide Castle and Newbridge House.

Emmeline Henderson is the Conservation Manager & Assistant Director of the Irish Georgian Society. She manages the IGS's Conservation Education Programme to include the delivery of the Society's annual Traditional Building & Conservation Skills in Action Exhibition, its 'Conserving Your Period House' courses, its online conservation skills and academic registers, as well as other seminars, conferences and study days relating to the conservation and promotion of Ireland's architecture and decorative arts.

Susan Kellett owns and manages Enniscoe House, gardens, and estate in County Mayo. She is Chairman of the Irish Historic Houses Association, a member of the Irish Family History Foundation and a board member of Mayo North East Leader Company.

Tim Knox, FSA, is Director and Marlay Curator of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. Previously he was Director of the Sir John Soane's Museum in London 2005-2013. He studied History of Art at the Courtauld Institute of Art, and was appointed Assistant Curator at the Royal Institute of British Architects Drawings Collection in 1989, moving in 1995 to the National Trust as its Architectural Historian, becoming Head Curator in 2002

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BIOGRAPHIES

William Laffan is a Board member of the Irish Georgian Society. He is an art historian and author; art curator; former editor of *Irish Architectural and Decorative Studies* the Journal of the Irish Georgian Society; member of the Society's Journal Editorial Board. Most recently he co-edited, *Ireland: Crossroads of Art and Design, 1690 - 1840* with Christopher Monkhouse.

Dr Philip McEvansoneya is lecturer in the History of Painting at Trinity College Dublin. His research interests encompass aspects of the history of art in Ireland and Britain with particular reference to the history of collections and the history of institutions.

Christopher Monkhouse studied at the University of Pennsylvania and the Courtauld Institute, London. He served as curator of European and American Decorative Arts at the Rhode Island School of Design for 15 years. In 1991 he moved to Pittsburgh to serve as the founding curator of the Heinz Architectural Center at the Carnegie Museum of Art. In 1995 he moved to Minneapolis to take the post of James Ford Bell Curator of Architecture, Design, Decorative Arts, Craft and Sculpture, which he held until 2007 when he moved to Chicago to take up his current position as the Eloise W. Martin Curator and Chair of the Department of European Decorative Arts at The Art Institute of Chicago. Most recently he curated the AIC's *Ireland: Crossroads of Art and Design, 1690-1840* (March 17, 2015 - June 7, 2015).

Kevin V. Mulligan is an architectural historian. He is a regular contributor to *Irish Architectural & Decorative Studies*, the journal of the Irish Georgian Society. He is the author of *Ballyfin: the restoration of an Irish house and demesne* (Tralee, 2011), *South Ulster* in the Buildings of Ireland series (New Haven and London, 2013). Most recently he contributed to *Ireland Crossroads of Art and Design, 1690-1840*, with an essay 'The Realm of the Irish Country House'.

Dr Lynda Mulvin, BA (Dub), MArchSc (K.U.Leuven, Belgium), MLitt, PhD (Dub) is a Senior Lecturer and Head of School, School of Art History and Cultural Policy, University College Dublin. She has specialist interests in classical antiquity and architectural history. Mulvin's publications include: *Late Roman Villas in the Danube-Balkan Region* (2002) and *Roman and Byzantine Antiquities in the National Museum of Ireland* (2006). She was also the editor of *Fusion of Neoclassical Principles* (2011).

ART IN THE COUNTRY HOUSE

BIOGRAPHIES

Peter Murray is Director of the Crawford Art Gallery Cork and Chair of the Council of National Cultural Institutions. He has curated major exhibitions on James Barry, Daniel Maclise and on many contemporary artists. Murray has been campaigning actively to save the contents of Bantry House, County Cork and to this end has co-authored a detailed report with Roisin Mulcahy which will be launched today.

Dr Aidan O'Boyle is a graduate of the Department of Art History at Trinity College Dublin. He was awarded a PhD from the University of Dublin for his thesis on the formation, arrangement and dispersal of Irish art collections 1750-1950. He is conducting on-going research on the Powerscourt, Leinster and other collections and has published on related subjects.

Robert O'Byrne is a writer specialising in the fine and decorative arts. The author of some dozen books, he is a monthly columnist for *Apollo* magazine and a contributor to *The Burlington* and the *Irish Arts Review*. He is the author of the award-winning blog www.theirishaesthete.com. O'Byrne is Vice-President of the Irish Georgian Society and a trustee of the Alfred Beit Foundation.

Giles Waterfield is an independent curator and writer, Director of Royal Collection Studies and an Associate Lecturer at the Courtauld Institute of Art. He is a trustee of the Garden Museum and the Emery Walker Trust, and a member of the Arts Panel of the National Trust. He was Director of Dulwich Picture Gallery from 1979 to 1996, and a Trustee of the Heritage Lottery Fund 2000-2006. He has curated numerous exhibitions and published on the history of museums, and his book *The People's Galleries: the art museum in Britain 1800 - 1914* appears in 2015, while his fourth novel, *The Iron Necklace*, is published in April of this year.