

Editorial

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Studies in Arts and Humanities
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The publication of this second issue of Studies in Arts and Humanities offers an opportunity to reflect upon the way in which the arts and humanities can inform our understanding of some of the critical questions facing society today. One of the driving forces behind our initial desire to establish SAH Journal was the hope that we might help create a space for analysis and reflection in the field of arts and humanities, accessible to emerging and established academics in addition to a wider general audience. Those familiar with Plato's allegory of the cave will be aware that it aims to compare "the effect of education and the lack of it on our nature".¹ The establishment of a place for analytical self-reflection is essential to any process of transformation and a central task for academics and artists is to help interpret the shadows on the walls of Plato's cave for themselves, for their students and for their audience. In the case of SAH Journal, something similar is at play. A wide range of contributing authors at undergraduate, post-graduate and faculty level rely on the journal editors to establish a functional framework for the interpretation and selection of academic and artistic work in order to make this work fully accessible to its academic and artistic audience as well as to the general public interested in the area of the arts and humanities.

The issues surrounding the arts and humanities worldwide are all the more pertinent during a time of crisis and one central theme has come to the fore in recent weeks concerning the politics of identity. We are still absorbing the shocking impact of the November 13th terrorist assault on Paris when religious extremists targeted a popular music venue slaughtering 89 audience members, wounding hundreds more. Attacks were also perpetrated in the *Stade de France* during an international football match between France and Germany and on a number of sidewalk cafes, bars and restaurants in the 10th and 11th *arrondissements* on the same evening.

Media response in the western world since the Paris attacks has been dominated by jaded political analysis and the usual proposals involving reactive military response. However, as Elik Shafak wrote in a recent article in the Guardian newspaper,² art and culture do not receive adequate consideration in this response discourse despite playing a central role

¹ Josh Jones, "Two Animations of Plato's Allegory of the Cave: One Narrated by Orson Welles, Another Made with Clay," *Open Culture*, February 7, 2014, accessed November 21, 2015, <http://www.openculture.com/2014/02/two-animations-of-platos-allegory-of-the-cave.html>.

² Elik Shafak, "The Bataclan Attack in Paris Is Another Example of Art under Siege. The West Must Raise Its Voice," *The Guardian*, November 20, 2015, accessed November 21, 2015, sec. Books, <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/nov/20/paris-attacks-siege-voice-human-right>.

in much contemporary conflict. Arguing that “extremist attacks on art and artists are neither sporadic nor isolated”, Shafak suggests that “fundamentalism of all kinds is at direct odds with culture”.³ The Paris atrocities were enacted upon the cultural terrain of everyday life. The explicit targets were some of the staples of our contemporary popular recreational culture – music, sport, eating out. Perhaps it is at such a time that an open access publication such as SAH Journal can play some small part in fomenting informed public debate by resolutely defending the place and space needed for creative output and critical response. The free circulation of ideas and works is an enshrined element of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity as adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in November 2001.⁴ Our hope for this and subsequent issues of SAH Journal is to make a meaningful contribution towards the continued free circulation of ideas and works in the area of the art and humanities.

This second issue of SAH Journal contains articles engaging with such diverse areas as: the psychology of disgust; contestation in Spanish cinema under the Franco regime; a review article on how the aged interact with their environment; Irish-accented intercultural cinema, as well as a mediated memoir-piece from the Irish Diaspora in the United States illuminating the spaces between lived experience and the writing of history.

Barry Shepard and Patricia Frazer consider a specific instance of disgust (eating crickets) and test the nature of a change in that particular disgust attitude, concluding that the actions of others appear to have greater influence than information appealing to reason. Jesús Urda shows how some of the films directed by J.A. Bardem during the Franco regime were shaped and mis-shaped by the director’s use of the prevailing production and exhibition practices of casting and dubbing. Megan Josling provides a review article outlining existing literature in the field of dementia related Behavioural Gerontology in order to identify its role as a possible intervention strategy in nursing home care. From an Irish-Australian perspective, Enda Murray positions examples of Irish intercultural cinema within the wider context of the cinematic representation of colonial, gender and class struggles since the 1970s, suggesting that their commonalities may point towards the development of sustainable multicultural film culture(s). Finally, in a piece by Bill Brennan with Mary C. Kelly, we gain access to a deeply personal memoir of growing up Irish in ‘The Tip’ section of Brockton, Massachusetts in the middle part of the 20th century. Poignantly, Kelly reminds us that it was only in aftermath of achieving the American Dream that the community’s loss of ethnic identity became clear.

Alongside these articles, we are privileged to publish poems by Patrick Chapman (*Silent Bones*) and Noel Duffy (*Crime Scene*). Patrick Chapman has published six poetry collections and has written extensively for film, television and radio. His next collection of poetry *Slow Clock of Decay* will be published by Salmon in 2016. Noel Duffy holds an MA in Writing from NUI Galway. He has taught creative writing in Dublin and Galway and his third collection *Street Light Amber* will be published in 2016.

The publication of this issue comes at a time of significant development for SAH Journal as the Editorial Team endeavours to consolidate the journal following initial launch in June 2015. The Advisory Board has been expanded to include expertise from established academic journals as well as practicing artists and writers. Helen Kelly (University of Limerick) and Michael Seery (University of Edinburgh) are both editors of prestigious

³ Ibid.

⁴ UNESCO, “UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity,” November 2, 2001, accessed November 21, 2015, http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13179&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

academic journals and their insight into the process of growing an academic journal including techniques for harvesting content and driving promotion through social media has been invaluable. Patrick Chapman has joined the Advisory Board as Poetry Editor, while Fiona Cashel (Stony Brook University) has joined as Art Advisor. The impact of their vibrant intellectual and artistic contribution to the journal is already evident in the content and form of this latest issue of SAH Journal.

We are also very grateful to Fiona Cashel for contributing her compelling art work as the cover piece for this second issue of SAH Journal.

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