Ireland and Cinema
Ireland and Cinema
Culture and Contexts

Edited by

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I began my career in 1974 and spent the next 40 years teaching film and media studies until my retirement in 2014. During those years, as well as developing and teaching courses in film and television studies, I also lobbied and campaigned on behalf of a film industry in Ireland, at first in the south as Education Officer with the Irish Film Institute from 1980 to 1986 and latterly in the north during a 28-year career at the University of Ulster at Coleraine. I have also written extensively over those years on Irish film and television and wrote many policy documents for various institutions on the need to develop film and media education in tandem with the slowly developing film industry. I haven’t very often written in an autobiographical mode during this time – after all, I told myself, the lobbyist, the educator and the critic should remain objective and dispassionate as much as possible. However, these current ruminations are, I fear, slightly more autobiographical than normal. Perhaps it is the valedictory mode that retirement allows; the self-indulgence that age sanctions. However, I have discovered that retirement does not just mark the end of a phase in one individual’s personal narrative, it also allows – even compels – a reconsideration of the larger narrative within which that career developed. In this case, I want to consider nearly 40 years in the development of film culture in Ireland, a recent history that I lived through and played a very small part in but which has also shaped me, my career and the cultural environment in which that career has come to an end. My motivation here is, therefore, more pedagogic than self-obsessed, more political than personal. After all, the present has a history, the now has a past and it is this recent history that I want to mull over, the better to appreciate where we have arrived at in the present.

The title I have chosen for these thoughts is suggested by an article which was very influential on my generation of film scholars in the 1970s and which provides a good starting point for assessing how we have developed since then. French critic Guy Hennebelle’s article
‘Z-movies or What Hath Costa-Gavras Wrought?’ which appeared in the American journal *Cineaste* in 1974, raises a number of key issues that continue to have relevance to national and regional filmmaking today, especially to those film industries, like Ireland’s, that live within Hollywood’s looming presence. Costa-Gavras is a largely forgotten filmmaker today outside of France and his native Greece (and that, in itself, is a sad reflection on contemporary film concerns). But in the 1970s and 1980s, he was synonymous with a kind of filmmaking that attempted to marry highly political subject matter with mainstream narrative forms, especially the investigative thriller. His most famous and most enduring film remains *Z* (1969), which, through the investigation into the death of a politically progressive Greek politician, explores the increasing erosion of democracy that preceded the 1967 right-wing military coup in Greece. Subsequently, Costa-Gavras tackled the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in *The Confession* (1970) and the role of the CIA in Uruguay in his film about the Tupamaros guerrillas, *State of Siege* (1972). In the 1980s, he made a series of American films that explored the dirty side of US politics; *Missing* (1982), about the 1973 US-backed coup against Salvador Allende’s democratic government in Chile; *Betrayed* (1988), about white supremacist neo-Nazis in America’s own heartland; and *The Music Box* (1989), about Nazi war criminals in the USA. Costa-Gavras argued that his approach to filmmaking was dictated by the desire to engage with popular audiences, and therefore the need to wrap the political in generic forms that popular audiences are already familiar with: ‘Cinema is about seducing an audience to have them go away and think’ (http://www.theguardian.com/film/2009/apr/04/costa-gavras).

Hennebelle’s objection to Costa-Gavras is that the genre forms he utilizes are not neutral and have meaning already inscribed into their generic conventions. If you want to make political films, he argues, you have to make films politically, challenging or disrupting rather than merely adopting dominant forms. Hennebelle was careful not to promote the kind of counter-cinema that Godard expounded: Godard, he felt, alienated and lost the audience and so his cinema was politically nullified. But merely to adopt conventional forms – established genres – meant that Costa-Gavras’ cinema was hampered by its reliance on individual psychology and surface realism, and the politics, as a result, were rendered simplified and naïve. He coined the phrase ‘Z movies’ to dismiss Costa-Gavras’ whole approach to political filmmaking and the debate that ensued became a key issue in the developing field of film studies during the 1970s and 1980s.
It also informed independent filmmaking at the time and this proved to be a particularly rich period for the political avant-garde. In the 1970s and early 1980s, indigenous Irish cinema was struggling into existence and many of the first independent films to emerge reflected the times and their debates. The first film to alert audiences to this emerging cinema was Bob Quinn’s *Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoire* (*Lament for Art O’Leary*, 1975), a political film of such formal complexity that Hennebelle would have approved. Indeed, if you consider the films that emerged between 1975 and 1987, it is fair to say that they were concerned as much with film form as they were with the politics and society of a rapidly changing Ireland and, if they were oppositional in a political sense, they were also challenging in a formal sense. I would argue as well that the Costa-Gavras strategy of adapting a popular form for political purposes informed Frank Deasy and Joe Lee’s Dublin-set *The Courier* (1987), a film that does not enjoy a very favourable reputation today but which, nonetheless, can be considered a ‘Z movie’ in the Hennebelle sense, and one that brings into an Irish context the debate about how genre can construct meaning and stifle political intent.

The emerging filmmakers of the time constituted an effective lobby group on behalf of state support for film (the Association of Independent Producers was formed in 1977 and saw success in 1981 when Bord Scannán na hÉireann was established). However, the lobbying and campaigning, especially among film academics and the newly reconstituted Irish Film Institute (IFI), was also directed towards developing a broad film culture as well as a film industry, a wider culture that included film education as well as film training, film history and aesthetics as well as film technique. To this end, in 1980, the institute set up the first comprehensive film studies summer school under the general rubric ‘Film Study: The Irish Context’. During the course of an intensive week of lectures, seminars and screenings, we showed Costa-Gavras’ *State of Siege* (1972) and Godard’s *Vent d’Est* (1970) and discussed Hennebelle’s article about political filmmaking. We also showed *The Quiet Man* (John Ford, 1952) to initiate discussion about representation of Ireland and the Irish and contrasted Ford’s view of the West of Ireland with Bob Quinn’s *Poitín* (1978) and Kieran Hickey’s *Exposure* (1978): two of the best Irish short films of the period.

The IFI summer school was the institute’s attempt at introducing wider film debates into a specifically Irish context, a two-way flow where Ireland is introduced to global issues and global issues are introduced to Irish concerns. (The only film study course in the whole island at that time was the course at the then New University of Ulster at Coleraine.)
The culmination of this project was the ‘Green on the Screen’ film festival, held at the Metropole Cinema in Dublin in September/October 1984 when 80 feature films and 80 shorts were shown in a celebration of ‘film and Ireland’. The festival showed Irish and Irish-themed films from the silent period down to the present and juxtaposed the outsider image with the emerging new indigenous cinema. Earlier that year, two of these Irish films (Cathal Black’s naturalistic look at the lives and culture of Dublin inner-city squatters, Pigs [1984], and Pat Murphy’s feminist historical drama Anne Devlin [1984]) were shown out of competition at Cannes. Significantly, though, the one Irish film that was shown in competition at that year’s festival, winning the best actress award for Helen Mirren, was Pat O’Connor’s much more commercial and conventional narrative film Cal (1984), which was produced by David Puttnam and financed through a combination of British sources (Enigma and Goldcrest) and Hollywood (Warner Bros). If both kinds of film represented an emerging new cinema, there was clearly a contrast in scale, ambition and intention as well as in budget. The low-budget indigenous film tended to be more political and more formally challenging while the co-produced cinema that Cal represented was more conventionally commercial. As it happened, the future lay with the latter and, although it was not so obvious at the time, there were already underlying forces that would change the landscape for film culture generally and film production specifically.

Hennebelle’s argument was motivated by the realization that Hollywood cinema had become the one truly global cinema and that Hollywood genres, evolving in one particular film industrial complex, were not always amenable to being adapted in other cultural environments. He set up the parameters of a debate that contrasted popular Hollywood cinema and political filmmaking, popular entertainment cinema with a kind of more robust intellectual cinema, American cinema with other national cinemas, and he foregrounded the question of genre and the construction of meaning. None of these issues has gone away in the intervening period but they have certainly lost the urgency that they once had, and Hennebelle and Costa-Gavras – and Godard – and the debates about film that they represented have become mere moments in a history that has moved on.

In the 1980s, the conservative triumvirate of Ronald Reagan in the USA, Margaret Thatcher in the UK and Helmut Kohl in Germany effected the sea change that is best described as the neoliberal turn that effectively killed off the post-war social democratic consensus. Slowly but surely, the market was promoted ahead of the social sphere.
Foreword

(Thatcher even famously declaring that there was no such thing as society) and a process of privatization was undertaken. The debates of the 1970s and early 1980s began to seem rather precious and increasingly irrelevant, and arguments based on the cultural, artistic and national importance of film seemed strangely unfocused as emphasis shifted to business plans, commercial potential and ‘bed-night’ economics. The original film board was closed down in 1987 – ostensibly as a cost-cutting exercise at a time of recession – but I have always thought that there was little enthusiasm in government for the highly political and challenging films that were emerging in the 1980s.

When it was re-launched in 1993, two factors dictated its nature. First, of course, neoliberalism had already begun to deliver to Ireland the so-called Celtic Tiger economy based on the tenets of the unfettered free market, easy access to borrowing and an unprecedented property boom. Second, Irish cinema and films about Ireland had begun to garner international attention: two Oscars for Jim Sheridan’s My Left Foot (1989), one for Neil Jordan’s The Crying Game (1992), both sandwiched between the critical and commercial success of Alan Parker’s The Commitments (1990). In re-launching the film board in 1993, the then minister, Michael D. Higgins, declared that his funding package represented the integration of ‘indigenous energy’ with the ‘commercial space that tax incentive creates’. The strategy marked an important turning point for film production in Ireland. On the one hand, although committed to diversity in the kind of films it would support, the new arrangements effectively killed off the more experimental, avant-garde (and more directly political) filmmaking that had been a feature of the earlier period in the 1970s and 1980s. On the other hand, however, it established Irish film production on a more secure basis and helped to establish a more comprehensive and more professional infrastructure than had existed previously.

According to official Irish Film Board (IFB) figures, the Irish film industry by 2013 was estimated to be worth in excess of €550 million, employing over 6,000 individuals, with over 560 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) operating in the sector. The IFB invested €7.5 million in production, which enabled Irish producers to raise a further €59.5 million, all of which was invested in Irish goods and services. In 2014, the IFB supported 15 Irish feature films, 11 creative feature co-productions, 11 short films, 4 feature documentaries, 2 TV dramas and 4 animated TV projects. In the period since 2003, the number of features supported by the IFB has nosed towards 200, many involving complex funding arrangements with American companies, European
agencies and especially UK film and television companies. The year 2014 saw high levels of foreign direct investment with a large number of high-profile film and TV productions filming on location in Ireland, including the third series of the History channel’s *Vikings* (Hirst, 2013–) and the BBC’s *Ripper Street* (Warlow, 2012–), as well as a second series of the Showtime Network/Sky Atlantic production, *Penny Dreadful* (Logan, 2014–). There was also particular press and public excitement about the announcement in 2014 that the producers of the latest episode of the *Star Wars* franchise, *The Force Awakens*, had chosen Skellig Michael off the coast of Co. Kerry as a film location. The IFB maintains that such high-profile international productions not only bring inward investment and generate spending in the Irish economy, but also that the Irish locations featured (Michael Hirst, the creator of *Vikings* [2013–] has claimed that 70% of the first series was shot outdoors in its Irish locations, http://www.startribune.com/entertainment/tv/194379511.html) then provide a considerable post-screening boost to tourism. In 2010, for example, the IFB claims that 20% of all tourists cited film as an influencing factor on why they visited Ireland (http://www.irishfilmboard.ie/irish_film_industry/Facts_and_Figures/35).

I think the Higgins package also had an impact on the debate in Northern Ireland, which followed a similar trajectory as in the south. The original lobbying was based on those old social democratic arguments about the artistic and cultural importance of film as an art form and the need for state subsidy of the kind enjoyed by the other arts; about the right of people in Northern Ireland to make films, to represent themselves in response to the images that flowed from the world’s media covering the ‘Troubles’ as a running news story. However, as the main funding agency, now called Northern Ireland (NI) Screen, evolved from the 1990s on, the funding strategy was driven by a more commercial, business-oriented agenda. NI Screen is currently funded by Invest Northern Ireland (Invest NI), the regional business development agency set up by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to grow the local economy; something that explains its strong interest in attracting inward development from the international screen industry. NI Screen also administers Lottery funding for film in Northern Ireland, and although it retains a strong role in supporting film culture generally through a range of training, archive and educational initiatives, its main strategy has been to attract inward investment.

NI Screen’s greatest success has undoubtedly been to persuade HBO to base the production of *Game of Thrones* (Benioff & Weiss, 2011–) in Northern Ireland, utilizing the enormous paint store at the Harland and
Wolff shipyards as its main studio space and shooting on location at many venues throughout the region. Over five seasons, the series has generated spend in Northern Ireland totalling over £85 million and provided 900 full-time and 5,700 part-time jobs. Many more studio spaces have been developed and a large pool of experienced crews and ancillary staff has been trained. The worldwide success of Game of Thrones (Benioff & Weiss, 2011–) has also generated a huge spin-off for the tourist industry and specialized tours of the various locations used in the series have now become a central part of the tourist experience.

There are a great many similarities, therefore, between the film industries on both sides of the border, and it would be churlish in the extreme to gainsay the real achievements of the IFB and NI Screen in building the infrastructure that can accommodate such large-scale international production. Ireland’s success is the envy of many other regions in Europe. Lamenting that the Scottish film industry has been left to wither, a report in the Guardian noted: ‘A Scottish government inquiry, expected to report within a fortnight, has heard senior industry figures describe institutional neglect, disillusionment and deep frustration as local competitors in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Wales enjoy a big- and small-screen “gold rush”’ (http://www.theguardian.com/film/2015/feb/18/scottish-film-industry-left-to-wither-holyrood).

But there are genuine worries about all of this at the same time. In 2013, NI Screen published Opening Doors, its strategy for the years 2014–18, phase 1 of its ambitious aim to establish Northern Ireland as ‘the strongest screen industry outside of London in the UK and Ireland within 10 years’ (NI Screen, 2013: 2). However, even in its ambitious strategy document, NI Screen admits that in catering for the international screen industry, it has committed less funding for local independent filmmaking than the IFB in the south (NI Screen, 2013: 19). And Terry George, the director of the Academy Award–winning short film The Shore (2011), has observed: ‘I have to voice a note of caution as the big studios and the big productions can vanish just as fast as they appeared, so while it’s wonderful to have HBO and NBC/Universal there if local productions, local film makers and local talent are not given long-term financial and structural support we’ll be left with empty studio space and a lot of people having to go abroad to find work’ (http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2011/dec/28/northern-ireland-game-of-thrones). Nadine O’Regan argues in relation to indigenous Irish cinema in the south: ‘Irish films are often weak affairs, small of budget, limited in scope and marketed poorly. Often, they slip into the cinema like a shadow and fade away just as fast. Irish people don’t go to see
them’ (2014: 1). There is a continuing worry that despite the success of bringing in large-scale production from outside, there has been little in the way of major international success from indigenous productions and that the only two directors to have maintained a high-profile reputation remain Neil Jordan and Jim Sheridan, who established their reputations over 25 years ago.

So, to return to the original question, ‘what hath the funding regimes wrought?’, it is difficult to characterize filmmaking in Ireland as a ‘national’ cinema, at least in any narrow, essentialist definition of the term. Not only, as we have seen, is activity funded by different national bodies across two political jurisdictions, the strategies on both sides of the border follow a similar pattern that emphasizes the importance of the international screen industries as drivers for both economic growth and trickle-down cultural development. Both the IFB in the south and NI Screen in the north seek to work with the internal national and external European support agencies, but to do so in collaboration with the international industry (especially in the UK and the USA). In this regard, then, rather than seeing the situation as a national cinema in itself, it is better to see the developments in Ireland, north and south, as the successful integration of Ireland into international screen culture; the ending of the splendid isolation of the image that characterized much of the 20th century. This does not, of course, preclude the development of local independent filmmaking, but it does mean that this independent sector is supported within this wider screen culture, living with it rather than competing against it, and therefore having to adhere to a greater extent to the aesthetic conventions of that culture. It seems impossible now to envisage any way in which the more experimental, politically engaged cinema of the 1970s and 1980s could be accommodated within this culture. In assessing Scottish film culture, Duncan Petrie likened it to ‘devolved British cinema’, but in truth, it is better to see all the production emanating from Britain and Ireland as a form of ‘regional Hollywood’.

Again, these notes of caution are tempered by the real successes of indigenous films. The critical acclaim for the NI Screen (and IFB) supported Good Vibrations (Barros D’Sa & Leyburn, 2012), the Oscar win for the short film The Shore (George, 2011) and the BAFTA win and Oscar nomination in 2015 for the short film Boogaloo and Graham (Lennox, 2015) have boosted the reputation of Northern Ireland film and 2013 was a particularly strong year for IFB-funded films from the south with international and critical attention for John Michael McDonagh’s Calvary, Lenny Abrahamson’s Frank (Abrahamson seems the director
most likely to move on to international acclaim), Ferdia Murphy's *The Stag* and, of course, the IFB also supported *Good Vibrations*.

The funding strategies for film in Ireland today highlight two other major shifts or ‘turns’ since the early days of state sponsorship. Writing in a book that I co-edited in 1996, exploring the relations between film and television, the then chief executive of the IFB, Rod Stoneman, noted: ‘The specifics of separate traditions, of the cinema and of television, in documentary as well as fiction film, must not obscure the way in which cinema lives in, on and through television’ (1996: 119). Nearly 20 years on, this is even more the case, to the extent that it might be argued that high-definition television (video) has actually replaced the cinema. The commercial success of both the IFB and NI Screen is based on attracting high-end television to Ireland (*Game of Thrones*, *Vikings*, *Penny Dreadful*) more so than major studio film production (though this remains part of the strategy). There is also an aesthetic argument to be made that the form itself, unravelling over many episodes across numerous seasons, allows for a greater complexity – in character and theme – than is possible in a two-hour feature, and the critical success of series like *The Wire* (Simon, 2002–08), *The Sopranos* (Chase, 1999–2007) and *Breaking Bad* (Gilligan, 2008–13) seems to suggest that this is now the case. The fact that Ireland has emerged as a production site for such cutting-edge narrative television is no mean achievement and one that couldn’t have been envisaged in the 1980s.

A second shift in strategy for funding agencies everywhere is that film is no longer seen as a separate cultural activity but is now considered part of the ‘creative industries’, incorporating image-making of all kinds, across computer games, digital animation, software development and electronic publishing. NI Screen actually highlights its ‘digital and interactive’ funding opportunities and both major funding agencies emphasize their commitment to developing SMEs linked to this broader creative sector.

In my own field of education, especially in the academic field, I have witnessed the slow but steady influence of neoliberal economics on our university courses. This can be seen in the wider university environment. If neoliberalism shifted the definition of the individual from ‘citizen’ to ‘consumer’, then within the academy, the ‘student’ has become a ‘customer’ and the collegiality that long underpinned university structures has largely been replaced by a management structure imported from business (and one, I would contend, that is singularly inappropriate in an educational institution). Learning outcomes are now dominated by questions of ‘employability’ and ‘skills acquisition’;
‘training’ has replaced ‘education’ as the primary focus. (When I first entered the academy, I kept in mind the injunction of one celebrated broadcaster who declared, ‘You educate them, we’ll train them.’) In film and media studies courses, I feel, especially in the UK, but also increasingly in Ireland, there has been a definite ‘production turn’ in both student expectations and college priorities (our young people coming to university today have experienced no other culture than that of neoliberal economics with its emphasis on the market and job acquisition, and universities must be seen to respond to the needs of industry or risk funding). University courses, again especially in the UK, have also become very expensive for the student who will now run up a considerable debt for the privilege of obtaining a degree. This is an added pressure to ensure ‘value for money’. In the last few years of my own teaching career, I felt that the courses I taught – on film aesthetics, film history, Irish film and representation – were merely tolerated by students anxious to get back to the studio.

The world of the neoliberal academy seems a long way away now from the social democratic institutions that pioneered film and media courses in the 1970s and 1980s, where the space was created to mull over questions about form and content and to experiment and take risks in exploring other possibilities beyond the mainstream. I do not argue that this kind of teaching has disappeared – obviously, it has not – and film and media research, its history and aesthetic concerns are still key to most good teaching in the UK and Ireland. Perhaps, as well, in recent scholarship from Ireland, there is an irritation among younger scholars with the critical concerns of the older generation who came through the original debates about national cinema. This irritation manifests itself most specifically in questions about genre and the influence especially of mainstream Hollywood on Irish filmmaking (see, for example, many of the essays in the collection edited by Claire Bracken & Emma Radley, 2013). However, it seems to me to be more challenging and more demanding to teach film theory and aesthetics today than it was when I first started my career, and I have nothing but admiration for those younger colleagues who can bring to the student experience both an informed theoretical and historical knowledge, and the necessary high levels of production skills to satisfy the expectations of ‘employability’. I am well aware that age was not the only factor in my own decision to retire!

That leaves me with one final point that I’d like to make. Over the last 30 years, I have tried to gauge, through my own students’ responses, what have been both the most and the least successful Irish films. The
films that have left my own students unimpressed is led by the horror film *Shrooms* (Breathnach, 2007), *The Courier* (Deasy & Lee, 1986) and Michael Winterbottom’s *With or Without You* (2000) (though to be honest, I have found it increasingly difficult to engage students with any of the more avant-garde films of the 1970s and 1980s). But whatever their reputation, these films can be engaged with critically, and to good effect. I have been criticized for writing about many films that are considered minor or enjoy poor critical reputations – like *The Courier* or *With or Without Me* – but I do so because they raise interesting issues that bear closer scrutiny. In the case of *Shrooms*, one of the younger scholars I have referred to, Emma Radley, has offered an interesting reading of the film, applying Lacanian, but more specifically Kristevan, approaches to its low-grade horror conventions and arguing that it does constitute a particularly interesting deconstruction of genre within an Irish context (2013: 109–23). What I am referring to here is a ‘critical project’ that lies at the heart of all cultural analysis – one that should be about more than validating the ‘canon’ and deciding which films are ‘good’ and which are ‘bad’. This critical project, I believe, can have its own creative dynamic, pushing and suggesting, making connections and offering readings that ultimately adhere to no other agenda than the educational in its broadest sense. Even the most modest of culture, even the most critically reviled of films, can be engaged with creatively through this critical project ‘to seduce the audience to have them go away and think’, as Costa-Gavras would say.

As I leave the academy, I am delighted to see that this critical project is alive and well and that in Ireland, north and south, there is now a ‘critical’ mass of scholars whose work maintains and develops such a creative critical project. One can never for certain define what constitutes a ‘national’ film industry, but in Ireland we have certainly managed to develop a film culture in which that question continues to be debated.

Martin McLoone
Contributors

Laura Aguiar is a researcher at The Keynes Centre, University College Cork. She holds a BA in journalism from Fumec University, an MA in media and communication from Stockholm University and a PhD in film studies from Queen’s University Belfast. Her research interests include collaborative media practice, gender representation, media and war, and interactive storytelling. She is the editor and co-director of the documentary film We Were There (Aguiar & McLaughlin, 2014), about the women’s experience of the Maze and Long Kesh Prison during the conflict in Northern Ireland. She has also worked as a freelance journalist in Brazil, Ireland and Sweden.

Stephen Baker is Lecturer in Film and Television Studies at Ulster University. With his colleague Greg McLaughlin, he has co-authored a number of articles on the media and Northern Ireland, and two books, The Propaganda of Peace: The Role of the Media and Culture in the Northern Ireland Peace Process (McLaughlin & Baker, 2010) and The British Media and Bloody Sunday (McLaughlin & Baker, 2015).

Ciara Barrett has recently completed her PhD at Trinity College Dublin, with a research project titled Performances of Femininity in Hollywood Musicals, 1929–40. In April 2012, she co-organized the international conference in film studies, Genres in Transit: Rethinking Genre in Contemporary Cinema at Trinity College and is currently developing a book project based on this theme.

Brigitte Bastiat holds a PhD in media and communication studies from the University of Paris 8. At present, she teaches English at the University of La Rochelle, France, is collaborating with a research group on cinema based at the same university and is an associate member of the Centre d’études irlandaises (Research Centre in Irish Studies) of the University of Rennes 2 and of the CRHIA (Research Centre for International Atlantic History) of the University of La Rochelle. She has published on identities, gender representations, the Women’s Press in Ireland and France, Irish theatre and Irish, British and American cinema. She is currently involved in a research project dealing with the contemporary Northern Irish playwright Owen McCafferty. She co-translated in French
one of his plays, *Mojo Mickybo* (1998). The play was premièred in French at the University of Tours in March 2012 and has been performed in various cities in France since then. She is currently co-translating Owen McCafferty’s play *Quietly* (2012).

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**Silvia Dibeltulo** is a researcher at Oxford Brookes University. She holds a PhD in film studies from Trinity College Dublin with a dissertation on cinematic representations of Irish-Americans and Italian-Americans in Hollywood gangster film. Her research mainly focuses on the representation of identity on screen, specifically in terms of ethnicity, nationality,
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