

“WHO’S HE WHEN HE’S AT HOME?”

This year, 2017, marked the fourth Bloomsday to be hosted by the Department of English in the aptly named Schönes Haus.

We celebrated the day on which James Joyce’s *Ulysses* takes place with the usual custom of dramatizations and musical interludes, and what has now become our own tradition of the culinary odyssey. We attracted quite a crowd – approximately 150 over the course of the day and evening! – and enlisted the help of 50 staff, students and community members, so it was a true representation of literary collaboration!



The celebrations began with “A Culinary Portrait of Stephen Dedalus.” The ever-popular “culinary odyssey” presented the talents of 26 bakers (even more than in previous years!), stretching their imagination in the interpretation of the theme, “A Culinary Portrait of Stephen Dedalus.” As this was Stephen’s odyssey through Joyce’s works, the chefs were assigned quotations from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and the ten episodes of *Ulysses* in which Stephen appears, each of which mentioned ingredients or food items. Then, using this as their foundation, the chefs created a culinary portrait of Stephen – a feat of artistry in itself! – based around these quotations.





The dishes inspired by quotations from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* included:

Book 1

- Laura Gianesi – *“A Remembrance of Clongowes Past”*
- Michael Berger – *“The Chocolate Train Home”*
- Jane Berger – *“Whisky (just a thimbleful!) and Yoghurt Cake”*
- Viviane Blätter and Carole Martin – *“That’s the real Ally-Daly”-vegetable Turkey”*

Book 2

- Elliot Reitzer – *“Apple-Raisin Barrel”*
- Lesley Löw – *“Madam, I never eat muscatel grapes... only cake!”*
- Daniel Lüthi – *“Recovering the Pastoral”*
- Mara Inhelder, Elizabeth Adams, Melissa Varela – *“A Season of Merrymaking”*



Book 3

- Johanna Schüpbach – *“Life’s a Picnic for Stephen”*

Book 4

- Stephen Dedalus – *“A Mortification of the Senses”*

Book 5

- David Mathys – *“Ivy, Ivy up the Tzatziki Wall”*
- Julia Streicher – *“The Aesthetics of the Bacon Mandala”*
- Melanie Löw – *“Figs Dating Muffins”*

Those inspired by quotations from *Ulysses* included:



“Telemachus” (Episode 1)

- Flurina Wyss – *“Paris Fads and Sandycove Puffs”*

“Nestor” (Episode 2)

- Julia Klepel – *“literal figrolls - soft, crumbly, jammy, sweet - just everything you need”*

“Proteus” (Episode 3)

- Emily Harries – *“La Madeleine de Dedalus”*

“Aeolus” (Episode 7)

- Julia Brosi – *“One-Handled Plum Pudding”*

“Scylla and Charybdis” (Episode 9)

- Helen Gilroy – *“Bed of Roses”*

“Wandering Rocks” (Episode 10)

- Denise Kaufmann – *“Sweet Green Death – Agenbite, bite agen?”*

“Oxen of the Sun” (Episode 14)

- Michelle Witen – *“Beer, Beef, Bulldogs, Bishops as pies”*

“Circe” (Episode 15)

- Joana Gut – *“Madame Watermelon (for Molly Malone)”*

“Eumeus” (Episode 16)

- Heidi Haas – *“Coffee and a Specimen of a Bun Tiramisu”*

“Ithaca” (Episode 17)

- Nora Sandmeier – *“The Creature Cocoa” and “The Viscous Cream”*
- Nadine Plattner – *“The Heaventree of Stars Tart”*



* * *

The dramatizations began in the 2nd floor foyer, with the performance of “Met him what?” from episode 4 of *Ulysses*, “Calypso” when Leopold and Molly Bloom first makes their appearance. This conversation between the couple is a pivotal moment in the text, as it is when Bloom realizes that his wife, Molly, has set an adulterous *rendezvous* with Blazes Boylan (a thought that haunts Bloom throughout the novel).



Since we had already opened up the Bloomsday celebration to include *Portrait* in the culinary odyssey, we thought we might as well make the day into a celebration of Joyce’s works (instead of only *Ulysses*). As such, we performed four short scenes from Book 1 of Joyce’s final work, *Finnegans Wake*. This text is one of the most difficult books in the English language (if you consider it to be written in any language), but it is nevertheless very fun to read out loud. As Joyce himself famously said, “if anyone doesn’t understand a passage, all [one] need do is read it aloud”!

The first of the *Finnegans Wake* sketches appears at the end of Book 1, Chapter 1. What follows is a sequence where two narrators switch hats and survey the “talent” coming into the pub. Just as things are starting to look very dire, in comes “Jute.” Hilarity ensues as “Mutt” and “Jute” attempt to barter over a drink, a particularly difficult task when one has a speech impediment and the other is hard of hearing...





The second *Finnegans Wake* sketch, “The Ballad of Persse O’Reilly” depicts Hosty’s composition of the ballad that leads to the downfall of HCE (one of the main characters of *Finnegans Wake*) at the end of Chapter 2. Inciting the crowd to perform his catchy tune, Hosty showed that “he’s the mann to rhyme the rann, the rann, the rann, the king of all ranns”!

Hosty’s triumph was then followed by the quiz show of Chapter 6, when the four old men (Belfast, Cork, Dublin, and Galway) are asked to identify “What Irish capitol city (a dea o dea!) of two syllables and six letters, with a deltic origin and a nuinous end, (ah dust oh dust!) can boast of having *a*) the most extensive public park in the world, *b*) the most expensive brewing industry in the world, *c*) the most expansive peopling thoroughfare in the world, *d*) the most phillohippuc theobibbous paùpulation in the world: and harmonise your abecedeed responses?” The answer is clearly “Dublin” but all four cities try to distort the question in their favour (i.e. “Delfas,” “Dorhqq,” “Dalway”), with only Dublin confusedly responding “Nublid.” Similarly, all four embody the qualities of their four corners of Ireland and their accents.



The final sketch from *Finnegans Wake*, “Anna Livia Plurabelle” shows the washerwomen gossiping about the elusive ALP (Anna Livia), freely sharing all of the rumours about her toilette, her suitors, and everything in between. As they move further and further away from each other, putting their laundry on the line, the slowly turn into an Elm and a Stone.



* * *



* * *

In addition to the dramatizations, the audience was also entertained by the poetry of Andrew Shields, and the musical performances from Balduin Landolt, Martina Liniger, Lesley Löw, Michelle Witen, and Stephanie Zundel.



The celebrations went well into the evening, ending at around 1am. I am grateful to all those who helped behind the scenes, in addition to all the performers and culinary artists. The poster was once again designed by Lester Bal-ut, and was wonderfully abstract (though if you look carefully, you can see Joyce in the corner!).

Once again, this event could not have taken place without the sponsorship, facilities and support of the Department of English!

I look forward to welcoming all of you again at the next Bloomsday – June 16, 2018!

