

CONTEMPORARY IRISH EXPERIMENTAL POETRY: BETWEEN VITAL MATTER AND WITHDRAWN OBJECTS

The present project focuses on the poetry of six contemporary Irish experimental poets – Geoffrey Squires, Trevor Joyce, Maurice Scully, Billy Mills, Randolph Healy and Catherine Walsh – and argues that they display similar techniques of exploring and giving voice to the world outside the human. Building on the conceptual frameworks proffered by vital materialism object-oriented ontology, two rapidly developing schools of posthumanist philosophy, I set out to demonstrate that the works of the six Irish poets reveal themselves as linguistic invocations of the agentive capacities of matter, invocations that simultaneously attend to the withdrawn nature of objects existing outside of human perception.

Given the growing importance of the work of Squires, Joyce, Scully, Mills, Healy and Walsh not only as representatives of contemporary Irish innovative poetry but also as key voices in the discussions of Anglophone experimental verse in general, the present project offers a timely investigation of major bodies of work that is long overdue.