

Sunday, May 19

Heritage as Performance II

Dubliners are used to Americans, as well as tourists from other nations, visiting as part of a quest to search for their heritage. As mentioned when we discussed the preservation of traditional sports like hurling, many Irish emigrated from the country during the 19th century, especially during the great potato famine that began in 1845.

Places like **EPIC Irish Emigration Museum** collect the stories of emigrants and make them part of the nation's heritage. "How did such a small country make such a big impact on the world" its website asks? The museum turns what might be a story of loss into a story of triumph, "founded on the belief that emigration is one of the most interesting ways to fully understand a country. As you uncover the stories of our emigrants, you'll realise that emigration is not about what people leave behind, but what they bring with them."



The museum is in the Docklands, historically the place where emigrants would have boarded ships bound for places like America. Near the museum, you can also find memorial sculptures dedicated to the victims of the potato famine and a ship called the Jeanie Johnston that you can tour to see the conditions that awaited the emigrants.



EPIC will be much more immersive and interactive than the V&A that we visited previously, but let's still revive some of our questions about museum spectatorship.

- How does the design of the EPIC museum characterize (or cast) its spectator or visitor? What does it assume about you and your spectatorship?
- What kind of "stage" has the museum provided to perform the Irish émigré to museum visitors?

- Even if you don't claim Irish heritage, it's likely your ancestors emigrated from one national culture to another; what exhibition or display connects with you and what you know about your heritage? *How* does it make that connection?

#UKinMay assignment:

- Post an image from EPIC that captures your experience of immersive spectatorship.

Hooley Show

Johnnie Fox's pub is just outside of Dublin that prides itself on its traditional live entertainment, including music, dance, and storytelling, and the Hooley Show is on the "must" list of many travelers. It also boasts its "award-winning seafood kitchen," and if you like mussels, oh my heavens, they were caught mere hours ago and spectacular. Remember, dinner is included!

We will be attending the show with many travelers from many different locations; at some point in the show, they'll ask where people are from, a way to welcome them into an entertainment meant to share Irish folk arts with a tourist population. Locals also visit Johnnie Fox's, but they tend to come on different nights and attend smaller performances. We point your attention to this not so you'll feel labeled as "tourists," but so you'll recognize why you'll immediately feel so at home!



This is intentionally generated for YOU, the intended spectator.



Notice the space and the long tables set to pull people together for a communal gathering; this type of spectatorial arrangement goes back to medieval banquet hall entertainments, so it's proven its effectiveness many times over. Don't be surprised if one of you is pulled on stage by the dancers; we will be a visible group of energetic American college students. They know you're likely to participate with good humor. If audience participation is your worst nightmare, just don't make eye contact and the performers will skip right by.

#UKinMay assignment:

- Post an image or two from the evening that shows group spectatorship and the feeling of comradery generated by the performance.