

1 FAMILY

James Joyce was born in Rathgar, a suburb of Dublin, on 2 February 1882.

He was the oldest surviving child of John Stanislaus Joyce and May (Murray) Joyce. John Joyce was well-known in Dublin for his storytelling and conviviality, as well as for his ill-fated business plans. At the time of James' birth, his family was fairly well-off, - having inherited a good deal of land - but John Joyce's fortunes declined dramatically as James progressed through school. John and May Joyce had nine more children after James. James was very close to his mother and was much affected by her death in 1903, though he refused to follow the Roman Catholic faith that was very important to her.



Joyce, his maternal grandfather, his mother and father, c.1888.

The Poetry/Rare Books Collection, State University of New York at Buffalo

2 DUBLIN

Throughout Joyce's childhood, Dublin was the administrative centre of British rule in Ireland and had been so since the Act of Union between the two countries was passed in 1800. The city was a site of contest between different cultural movements, many of them working to shape a more autonomous future for the nation. While Joyce's early writings are characterised by his frustrations with the city's paralysis and insularity, he would later speak with fondness of its beauty, vivid history and deep hospitality. Joyce left Dublin in October 1904 with his future wife, Nora Barnacle. He returned only rarely, and for the last time in 1912.

Ulysses is one of the most detailed and affectionate portraits of a city in all of literature, yet Joyce wrote none of it there.

joyce's journey

DUBLIN TRIESTE
ROMA TRIESTE
ZURICH TRIESTE
PARIS ZURICH



3 SCHOOL

As the oldest child, Joyce benefited from his family's short-lived wealth. At the age of six, he was sent to Clongowes Wood College, one of Ireland's most exclusive schools, though after three years his family was unable to afford the costs. Subsequently he went to Belvedere College in Dublin. Both were, and still are, Jesuit schools, and Joyce acknowledged the influence of the Jesuits on his intellectual development. He then went to University College in Dublin, from which he graduated in 1902. Joyce was a gifted intellectual but an erratic student. Though his essays won prizes, as he got older his interest in a career as a creative writer overtook his more scholarly pursuits.



James Joyce and his UCD class
Special Collections and Archives, McFarlin Library, University of Tulsa



James Joyce at 6 1/2 years of age
The Poetry/Rare Books Collection, State University of New York at Buffalo

ULYSSES AS HERO

Even as a young boy Joyce was fascinated by the ancient story of Odysseus, the Greek warrior who reluctantly fought in the Trojan War and then took ten years to return home. When, at the age of twelve, Joyce was asked to write about his favourite hero, he chose Odysseus, who triumphed through cunning and intelligence more than violence. As he was writing *Ulysses* (which is the Roman name for the same character), Joyce told friends that Odysseus was the most human and complete character in literature.

In *Ulysses*, Joyce made Odysseus into an average man, and Odysseus' epic struggles into the small trials of an average day.

DO NOT PRINT

POLITICS AND INDEPENDENCE

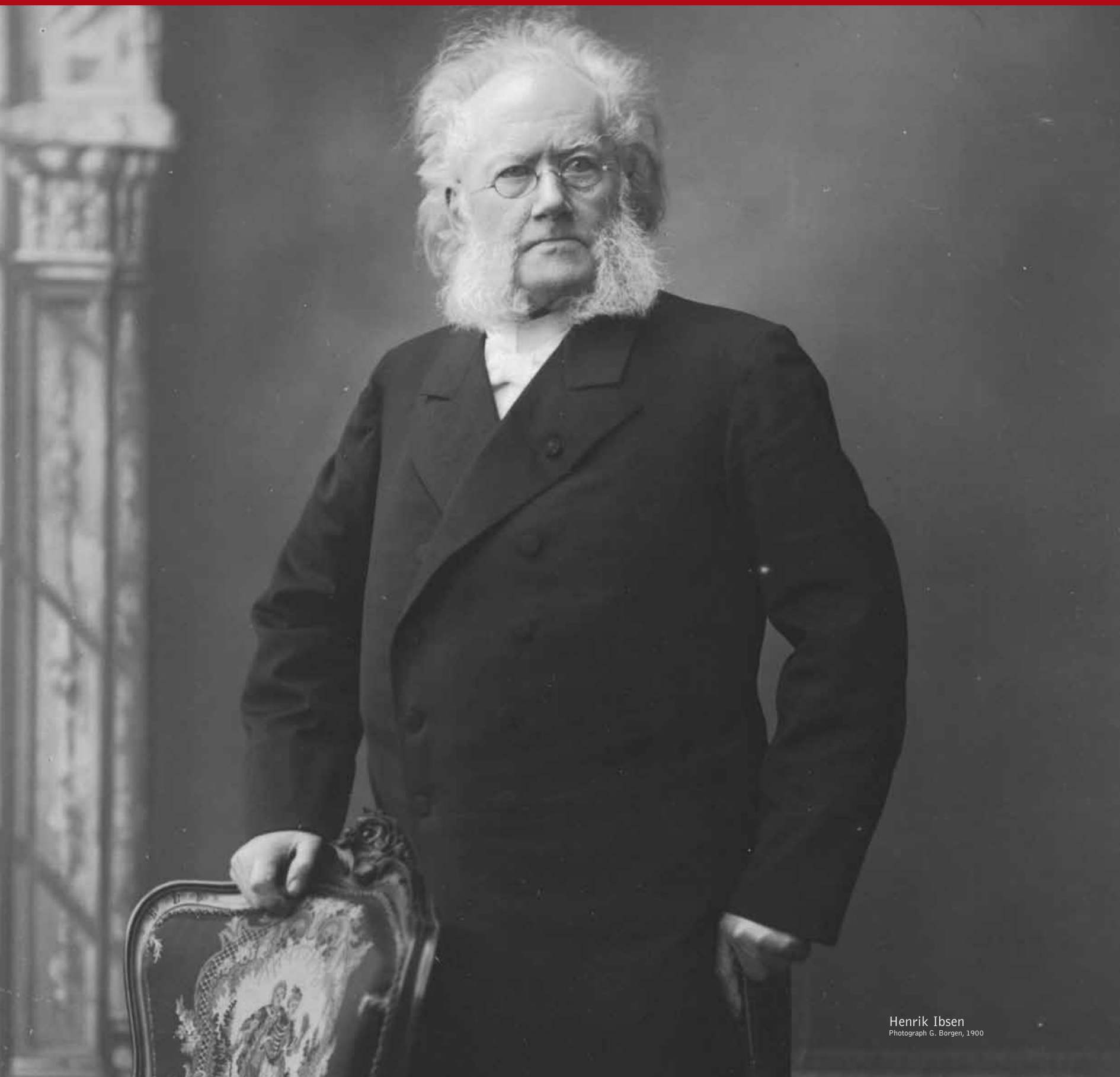
During Joyce's early years, Ireland was struggling to become independent of Britain. One of the youth's early heroes was Charles Stuart Parnell, leader of the Irish Party at Westminster. Parnell brought the Irish close to 'Home Rule' but lost influence when cited in a divorce case - he died in 1891. Joyce was proud of being Irish and wanted to see the country independent, but was also sceptical of the ways in which political movements often deny personal freedoms.

Joyce felt that individual passion was the motivating power for everything, art and philosophy included.



6 _____ IBSEN AND EUROPEAN INFLUENCES

While in college, Joyce became fascinated with the Norwegian playwright, Henrik Ibsen. He was inspired by Ibsen's courageous honesty in representing modern middle-class life and learned Dano-Norwegian in order to read his plays in their original language. When he was eighteen years old (in 1890) he published a review of Ibsen's play *When We Dead Awaken* in an important literary magazine. Ibsen himself read the review and sent Joyce a complimentary letter. This experience encouraged Joyce and affirmed his hopes to be a writer.



Henrik Ibsen
Photograph G. Borgen, 1900

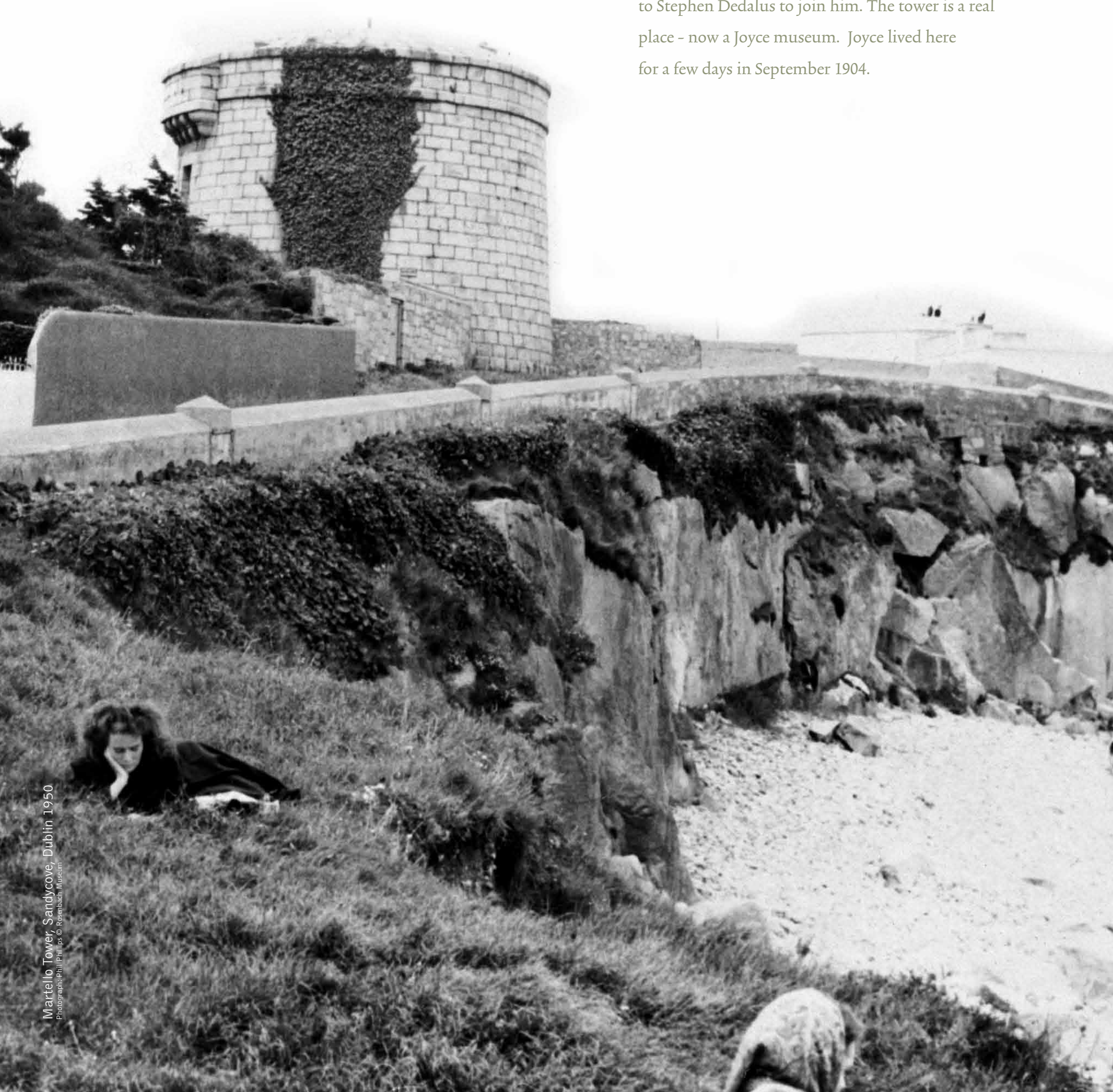
7 16 JUNE 1904

In 1902, Joyce went to Paris to study medicine and to write, but he returned home in 1903, as his mother was dying of cancer. On 10 June 1904, he met a beautiful woman named Nora Barnacle walking down Nassau Street in Dublin, and on 16 June they went out on their first date.

Ulysses is set on that day, 16 June 1904, as a tribute to a day on which his entire life changed.

Ever since *Ulysses* was published, 16 June has been celebrated by readers all over the world as Bloomsday.

Ulysses begins on a warm morning in June, 1904, Buck Mulligan, a medical student, climbs to the top of the tower where he lives and begins to shave. He calls down to Stephen Dedalus to join him. The tower is a real place - now a Joyce museum. Joyce lived here for a few days in September 1904.



8 NORA BARNACLE

When James Joyce met Nora Barnacle in the summer of 1904, she was working as a chambermaid in a Dublin hotel. She was from Galway in the west of Ireland, and while she was not as well-read or educated as Joyce, she was practical and funny and they fell in love. Friends and family did not consider them an ideal match, but in October of that year they left Ireland as emigrants. This was a brave and risky decision by Nora, for Joyce's prospects in the countries of mainland Europe were uncertain, and for reasons of principle he refused a formal marriage. Many aspects of Nora's personality were recreated in one of Joyce's most memorable characters - Molly Bloom in *Ulysses*. They had two children and eventually married in Kensington Registry Office in 1931.

Nora, Lucia and Giorgio Joyce in 1918
The Poetry/Rare Books Collection, State University of New York at Buffalo



DUBLINERS

Dubliners, a collection of fourteen short stories, was Joyce's first book of fiction. He began writing it in the summer of 1904 while he was still living in Dublin and continued working on the book during his early years in Pola, Rome and Trieste, finishing the last story, "The Dead", in Trieste in 1907. Because of its unflinching portrayal of the darker sides of contemporary life, Joyce had enormous difficulties finding a publisher who would print it.

One Dublin publisher printed it in 1912, but immediately decided to destroy all the copies he had made for fear of controversy. It was eventually printed in London in 1914.



TRIESTE

When Joyce and Nora left Ireland in 1904, they travelled across Europe and first settled in Pola, now Pula in Croatia, but after a few months, they moved to Trieste, a port on the Adriatic Sea in what is now Italy, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Joyce and Nora grew to love Trieste, made friends there and thought of it as their second home. Joyce's brother Stanislaus and sister Eileen both came there from Dublin. Trieste had a diverse, international population that strongly influenced Joyce's work. When Italy entered the First World War in 1915, Stanislaus was interned as a prisoner of war and the Joyce family fled to Zürich. They returned briefly in 1920, but were not as happy there as before, and went on to Paris.



Barriera, Trieste, c.1900
James Joyce Museum

ROME AND THE BEGINNINGS OF ULYSSES

After his son Giorgio was born in 1905, Joyce felt he needed to move to Rome in order to earn more money. For part of 1906 and 1907 he worked for a bank, but disliked the job and the city, and grew restless. Despite his unhappiness in Rome, it was an important period in his artistic career. He softened the critical view of Ireland that had shaped *Dubliners* and began work on the longest of his stories, *The Dead*. He also had the idea of writing a story about a day in the life of an ordinary Dubliner, a man named Mr. Hunter, whom he would transform into a modern Odysseus named Leopold Bloom.



ZÜRICH

Like many other European artists and intellectuals, Joyce went to neutral Switzerland during the First World War. When he got there, he found that the city was full of other writers and exiles, but it was also very expensive. He taught some lessons, but also received money from his writing and from various patrons. The four years Joyce spent in Zürich from 1915-1919 were incredibly productive. He finished his first novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, produced his only surviving play, *Exiles*, and wrote nearly half of *Ulysses*. When an important patron stopped giving him money in 1919, he was forced to move back to Trieste briefly and then to Paris. Joyce went to Zürich again at the outbreak of the Second World War, and died there shortly afterwards in January 1941.



A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

Even if Joyce had never written *Ulysses* or *Finnegans Wake*, he would still have a place in the history of literature for his 1916 novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The first version of this autobiographical work was called “Stephen Hero” and was begun in 1903. In 1907, during a brief stay in Rome, he decided to modify the book drastically, cutting out many early chapters and changing the narrative style to reflect his growing interest in French symbolism and naturalism. The new version of the book was completed in 1915, but was not published until 1916. Harriet Shaw Weaver, who had published much of the book in her magazine *The Egoist*, had to have it printed in the United States because of the difficulties Joyce had publishing *Dubliners*.

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JOYCE AND MODERNISM

James Joyce is often referred to as a Modernist writer. The term Modernist is usually applied to those works which refuse to conform to the traditional literary genres and which seek to subvert or re-imagine those received structures. In *Ulysses*, Joyce tells the story of a single day in a single place, but from many different points of view. There are many narrators, some identifiable, some anonymous, each of whom uses distinctive styles. Joyce is the major exponent of a method called 'stream of consciousness', a phrase which refers to an author's attempt to recreate accurately the irregular paths of everyday thoughts as they occur to his characters. He was inspired in this by predecessors from other countries, notably Leo Tolstoy from Russia and the French writer Edouard Dujardin.

Leo Tolstoy
Awaiting Credit



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EYESIGHT

In order to understand fully Joyce's achievement, it is important to understand his poor eyesight. In his autobiographical novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, the character Stephen Dedalus is unfairly punished for not doing his schoolwork even though his glasses had been broken and he could not see - an episode that happened to Joyce himself. From 1917 to 1930 he had at least 25 different operations on his eyes and often could not work. He would occasionally ask friends to take dictation if he needed to meet a deadline. Because of this it took him longer to complete his books, which are often richer in descriptions of sounds and smells than of sights.



16 ULYSSES AND JOYCE'S METHOD OF WRITING

Joyce wrote his books very carefully and slowly. He would write passages many times over in many drafts and would add new material whenever he got a chance. Friends would notice how he carried small notebooks with him wherever he went, and when he heard a word or a phrase that he liked, he would write it down. Joyce would add this found material to drafts as he revised them.

The enormous amount of detail he added to his stories is one of the reasons they are so challenging and satisfying to read.

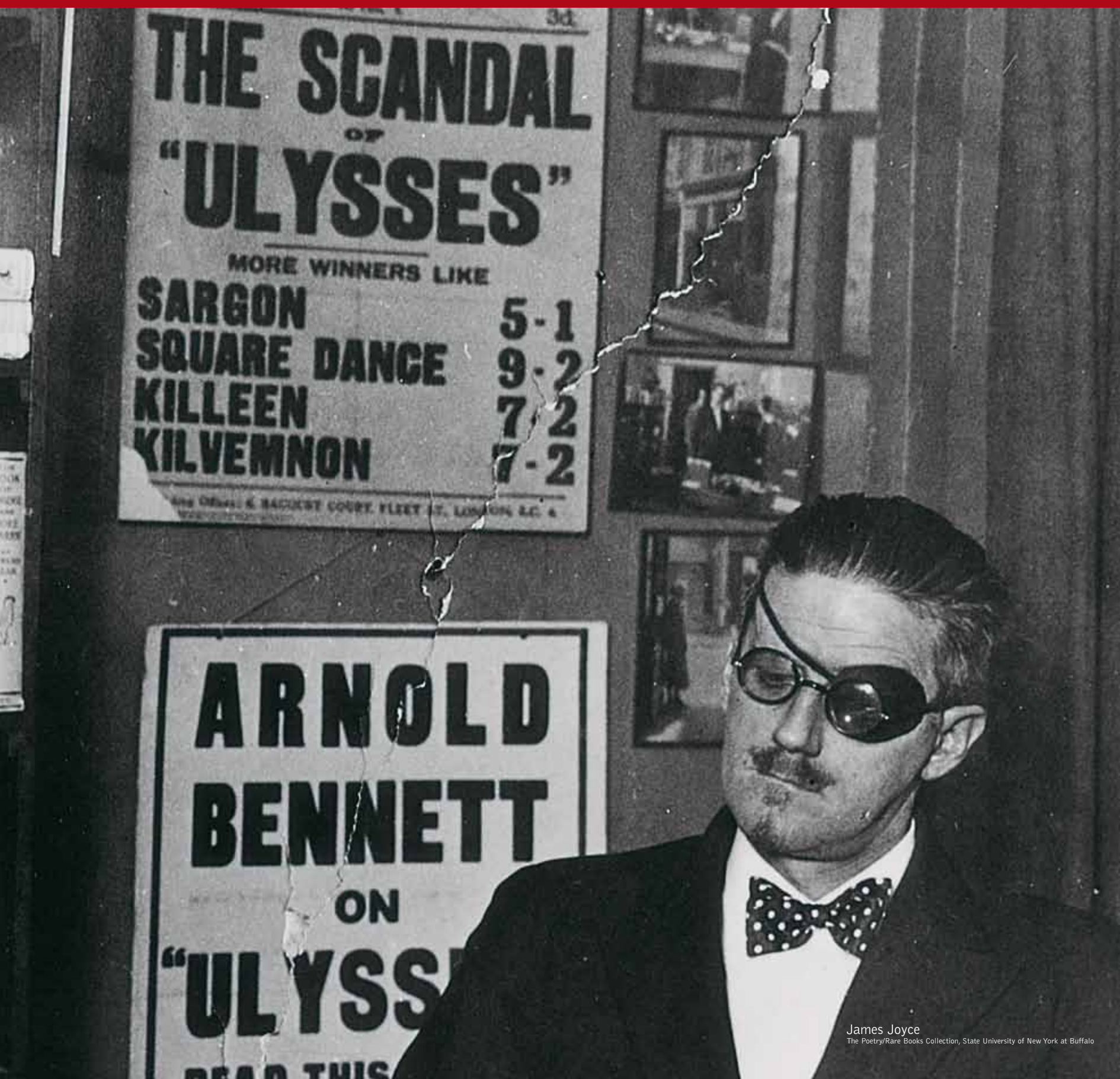


James Joyce in Zurich, 1919
The Poetry/Rare Books Collection, State University of New York at Buffalo

CENSORSHIP

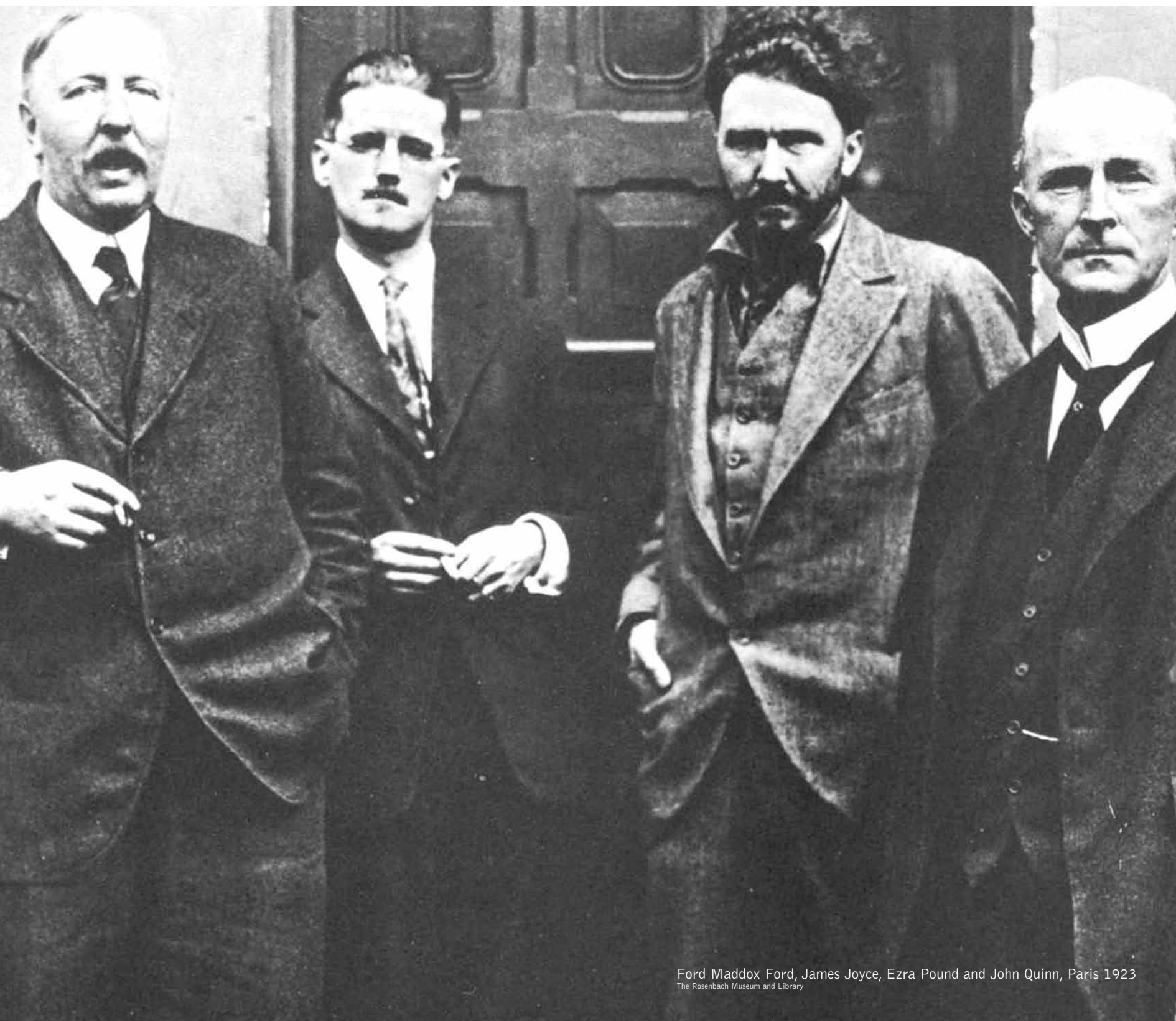
James Joyce felt that it was an artist's duty to represent every element of life as honestly as possible, especially those that were not discussed in polite society - sexual behaviour, bodily functions, religious controversy. His book of short stories, *Dubliners*, took nearly ten years to be printed. Some publishers objected to what they considered vulgar language, and at least one objected to the naming of real businesses and identifiable places and persons.

Ulysses was banned in the United States between 1920 and 1933 and in Britain for even longer. Joyce could have altered his text to meet the demands of censors, but refused for reasons of artistic integrity. *Ulysses* was never banned in Ireland.



PARIS

In the summer of 1920, the Joyce family moved from Trieste to Paris. They originally thought they would only be staying there for a few weeks but, encouraged by the American poet and editor Ezra Pound, ended up staying for twenty years. Paris was an ideal place for him to work - there was a vibrant artistic community, many friends and supporters, and fairly inexpensive rents. Joyce's writing became even more experimental and daring there; he wrote the last four chapters of *Ulysses* in Paris and all of *Finnegans Wake*. By the time *Ulysses* was published there in 1922, he was already a considerable literary celebrity. Joyce left Paris at the beginning of the Second World War in 1940, much as he had fled Trieste 25 years before.



Ford Maddox Ford, James Joyce, Ezra Pound and John Quinn, Paris 1923
The Rosenbach Museum and Library

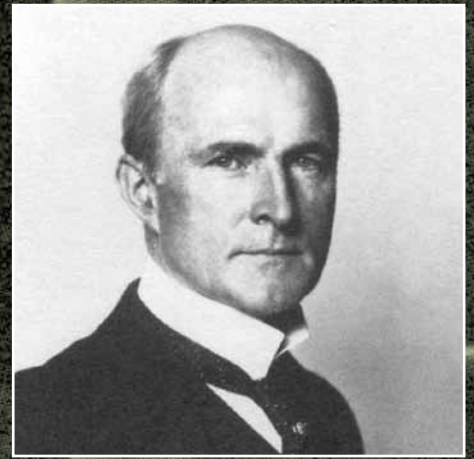
PATRONS

Joyce's imaginative and courageous work could not have been produced without the help of generous people who supported him in many different ways. *Ulysses* was published by a young American woman living in Paris - Sylvia Beach - with the help of Adrienne Monnier and the printer Maurice Darantière; they let Joyce keep most of the proceeds of the first printing. Other patrons, such as the American lawyer John Quinn, supported Joyce by providing free legal services and buying his manuscripts. Joyce's most important patron, however, was an Englishwoman named Harriet Shaw Weaver. Weaver was extremely generous to Joyce with financial, artistic and personal support, giving him tens of thousands of pounds, publishing his work, and giving advice.

Harriet Shaw Weaver
Special Collections and Archives, McFarlin Library, University of Tulsa



John Quinn
Rosenbach Museum and Library



ULYSSES

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WHY IS ULYSSES IMPORTANT?

Some have called Joyce's *Ulysses* the most important book of the twentieth century. Many people have heard of it, but far fewer have actually read it because it has a reputation for being very difficult. It is an unusual book; Joyce experiments with the conventions of the traditional novel, and he asks his readers to work hard to figure out even some of the most basic details of plot and action.

At its core, though, *Ulysses* is a book about the heroism of daily life. Some of the parts of the book that seem obscure are only so because we are not used to such familiar things being shown to us in such vivid and honest ways.

BY

JAMES JOYCE

FINNEGANS WAKE

Shortly after finishing *Ulysses*, Joyce began work on a new novel which he referred to only as *Work in Progress*. He kept the real title, *Finnegans Wake*, a secret for many years. It took Joyce seventeen years, from 1922-1939, to write *Finnegans Wake*. It is still considered one of the most radical and experimental works of literature ever written. Where *Ulysses* tells many stories of a single day, *Finnegans Wake* is a book of the night, and uses the logic of dreams to tell the story of a family of Dubliners through dense layers of puns, drawing from many different languages, allusions and myths. Joyce was surprised by the confusion and criticism that met the book when it was published in 1939; he thought he had written a book that had something everyone in the world would recognise.

Joyce's importance as a writer can be measured more through the authors and artists that have

FINNEGANS

WAKE

BY

JAMES

JOYCE

JOYCE'S LEGACY

been inspired by him than by the number of books he sold. Like Pablo Picasso, Joyce makes his readers question the assumptions they bring to works of art. Authors as diverse as Salman Rushdie, Thomas Pynchon, Ralph Ellison, Margaret Atwood and Mario Vargas Llosa show Joyce's influence. Many of the finest novels produced across the world can be said to be written either in the tradition of or in reaction against *Ulysses* and much contemporary experimental poetry can be traced back to *Finnegans Wake*.

Perhaps the most important legacy of Joyce's work is the way his stylistic innovation was tied to a reverence for, and a need to represent honestly, common human experience.