JAMES JOYCE
Ulysses

The National Library of Ireland

To commemorate the centenary of Bloomsday, 16 June 1904, the day on which the epic adventures of James Joyce’s “Ulysses” take place, the National Library of Ireland opened a major exhibition on the author and his most famous work.
JOYCE’S LIFE & WORKS

James Joyce’s works have revolutionized modern literature.

He is best known for four books: Dubliners (1914), a Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916), Ulysses (1922), and Finnegans Wake (1939). Each in its own way, they have revolutionized the genre in which they were set: a collection of short stories, a novel, a modern epic and an avant-garde masterpiece.

*DUBLINERS*

*FINNEGANS WAKE* by James Joyce (1939)

Joyce was born in Dublin in 1882 and lived in Ireland until 1904, when he went to Paris to study. He then travelled to Germany, France, Switzerland and Italy. He returned to Dublin in 1914 and lived there until he died in 1941.

Joyce had two children: a son, Giacomo (1904–1914), and a daughter, Lucia (1903–1957). He was married twice. His first wife was Nora Barnacle, whom he met in 1903 and married in 1915.

Joyce’s works have been translated into many languages and have been read by people all over the world.

*LEABHARLANN NÁISIÚNTA NA hÉIREANN*
THE WRITER AT WORK: 1914-22

Joyce described his working methods as those of both an "engineer" and a "scissors and paste man".

Joyce worked steadily on Ulysses for more than seven years but not from its beginning to its end. The book's contents evolved and expanded as Joyce wrote in 13 episodes in a non-sequential order. Joyce revised these drafts in manuscript and in printed form. His working methods were unusual, involving the addition of chapters, sections, and entire episodes to Ulysses.

Joyce wrote all of his novels by hand, using whatever tools were available. He used notebooks, pages, pencils, pens, and typewriters, always of the most ordinary and inexpensive kind. Joyce wrote much of Ulysses in children's exercise books that he could easily acquire at any stationary shop in Dublin, Paris, or London.

Joyce lived in Paris in 1922, and his working methods became even more distinctive. He used a continuous writing method that he called "shorthand". His manuscripts reveal his creative process and the influence of writing conventions. Much of Joyce's working method has been preserved in his manuscripts, which are stored in the National Library of Ireland.

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF IRELAND
Publishing Ulysses

"Ulysses" was published by Sylvia Beach's Shakespeare and Company in Paris on 2 February 1922, Joyce's fortieth birthday.

The novel and publishing history of Ulysses is a fascinating and complex drama. From 1904 to 1984, there were twelve published editions, each with its own unique features and characteristics. The story of Ulysses is a testament to Joyce's artistry and the power of the written word."
Controversy & Censorship

All of Joyce’s works confronted censorship and courted controversy.

An early essay was refused by his University of London magazine because it mentioned a banned book. In 1922, published the work himself. Joyce struggled to find a publisher who would publish his book because it contained offensive language.

Munsey has always been a symbol for debate, providing new and emerging voices. Its recognition was another strong and unyielding voice that championed new writers including Frank Bond and Aldous Huxley. Munsey’s editor, William Munsey, decided to publish the book. However, many did not read the work. The work that appeared in The Little Review and the avant-garde magazine was banned from being read and sold in the U.S.

In a momentous court ruling in 1934, the ban on Ulysses in the U.S. was lifted. Although never officially banned in the U.S. or Ireland, Joyce and Ulysses were still scrutinized by the authorities. Ulysses has been central in debates about censorship and copyright as well as about the cultural and financial value of literature.

“The bulk of this enormous book is quite unquotable and we hope that, as the edition is limited and price is rapidly ascending in the “curious” market, it will remain out of the reach of the bulk of the author’s fellow-countrymen.”

“...and here it is at last, as large as a telephone directory or a family Bible, and with many of the literary and social characteristics of each!”

George Slumco, Daily Herald (London), 17 March 1922.

NATIONAL LIBRARY of IRELAND
Shakespeare & Company was a vital centre of the modernist movement.

When the young American Sylvia Beach (1892–1966) moved to Paris in 1912, she opened Shakespeare and Company, an English language bookshop and lending library. James Joyce sent Beach a copy of Ulysses on 20 June 1921, days after he was named in Proust’s novel, and Sylvia Beach took on the role of promoting Joyce’s work, introducing him to influential literary figures who gathered in Shakespeare and Company.

Shakespeare and Company offered readers everything from Shakespeare to Whitman, as well as the experimental. Like Eliot and Pound, the literary group was an important part of the new movement of the 1920s.

In 1922, the young novelist Ernest Hemingway met Sylvia Beach and began to write for her shop. In 1925, he published his first novel, *The Sun Also Rises*.

JOYCE’S DUBLIN: THE CITY IN THE BOOK

Joyce made Dublin a central character in “Ulysses”.

Joyce famously stated that he wanted “to give a picture of Dublin so complete that if the city were suddenly disappeared from the earth it could be reconstructed out of its books”. Knowledge of Dublin’s history, topography, street names, buildings, traffic and even noises and shops is an essential framework for appreciating the reality and the art of Joyce’s epic of the modern city and its citizens.

In “Ulysses” Joyce followed the daily events and progressions of a week in June 1914. It has become an official guide to the city for thousands of readers around the world. Many of them make pilgrimages to Dublin to walk the streets and see the sites that Joyce’s words have made real. Although based on well-researched facts about the city he had seen in reality, the Dublin of “Ulysses” is a fictionalized reality. Ulysses celebrates the power and vision of Dublin.

Dublin, described as an inescapable dread. Truly “the city of Dublin, more than any other city in the world, is a study in the incomprehensible.”

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF IRELAND
JOYCE'S DUBLIN: MUSIC IN DUBLIN & ULYSSES

Music and song were keystones of Irish culture in 1904 and Joyce portrays their vitality in "Ulysses".

"One of the most remarkable features of Dublin life in the heyday of Mr Bloom was the boundless enthusiasm of all classes of citizens for music."

Songs of the time came from all genres: opera, sacred music, operetta, musicals, music-hall, comedy, ballads and of course folklore. Ulysses contains over two hundred citations specific to music and songs.

In 1900 Joyce made his most determined attempt to become a professional singer in the Liberty Hall Band. He failed to win the gold medal because he refused to sing a piece at right. Joyce continued to sing in public and knew that he always appeared on stage with John McCormack and J.J. Drake. Although concerts and songs remained central to Joyce's life and works, he never sang again professionally.

The time of the verse studied the poems of the world and was an exciting moment. Joyce's novel's musical structure for the central episode of Ulysses "Bloom". With its "Royal" flavor, it shows the division of several overlapping sounds of action taking place at the same time.