



UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

Curating, cultural capital and symbolic power: representations of Irish art in London, 1950-2010

Cotter, L.Á.

Publication date
2011

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Cotter, L. Á. (2011). *Curating, cultural capital and symbolic power: representations of Irish art in London, 1950-2010*. [Thesis, fully internal, Universiteit van Amsterdam]. Eigen Beheer.

General rights

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

Acknowledgments

Not everyone can say that they enjoyed carrying out their PhD but, if I overlook one serious dip and the marathon-like finishing phase, I can count myself among those who truly did. The joy of the work lay in the material and the process itself, but it came to life thanks to the wonderful people who populated the journey. I want to thank Mieke Bal for her supervision through the course of the last four-and-a-half years. I first became engaged with the possibility of rethinking the relationship between art history and contemporary developments through reading *Quoting Caravaggio: Contemporary Art, Preposterous History*. As my supervisor Mieke provided me with rich perspectives on every area that I touched and never let me away with less than thorough analysis, for which I am very grateful. Thanks to her, the importance of methodology became clear and cultural theory opened up in many new and exciting directions. The weaknesses and blind spots that remain in my work are there in spite of her good advice.

My co-supervisor Hanneke Grootenboer was warmly enthusiastic from the outset and kept a keen art historical eye on my case studies. I enjoyed all of our conversations and in their wake I learned to give myself space to analyze in more detail and to write more thoroughly about the Irish context for an international audience. When Hanneke was offered a position at the University of Oxford, she accepted my plea to continue supervision from afar despite her over-burdened schedule. I remain grateful for this act of sheer generosity. In Hanneke's physical absence, Esther Peeren joined my supervision team for the final year and a half. I had no idea what a gift that would be. As my dissertation starting to grow out of hand and the bureaucratic hurdles of the final round starting rearing their heads, Esther exuded a refreshing level of pragmatism and good will. I thank her for her moral, editorial and theoretical support.

The Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis provided an intellectual community that banished much of the solitary working and loneliness that typically accompanies the PhD trajectory. At the heart of this community lay the ongoing theory seminars, led by Murat Aydemir, Hanneke Grootenboer, Mireille Rosello and Mieke Bal, whom I want to thank for their inspiring critical rigour and sense of intellectual adventure. Thanks to my fellow PhD candidates, who made those seminars so enjoyable and went on to populate my academic life in various ways – including Carolyn Birdsall, Noa Roei, Ihab Saloul, Tereza Havelkova, Laura Copier, Jan Hein Hoogstad, Maria

Boletsi, Alena Alexandrova, Pieter Verstraete, Melanie Schiller, Maryn Wilkinson, Begum Firat, Cigdem Bugdayci, Jules Sturm, Eliza Steinbock, Lara Mazurski and Mike Katzberg. I did my very first theory seminar presentation with two other new candidates, Paulina Aroch Fugellie and Gözde Onaran, and happened upon two friends for life. They are now far-flung – in Mexico City and Istanbul – but the distance doesn't matter. It's rare in this lifetime to feel so understood on so many levels. My thanks and love to both of them.

I have had some wonderful office-mates over the years in the beautiful old room at the Oude Turfmarkt and the humble but happy little office at the P.C. Hoofthuis. My thanks to Vesna Madzosi, Stephan Besser, Adam Chambers, Anik Fournier, Margaret Tali, Pepita Hesselberth, Ariane Noël de Tilly, Erin La Cour, Aylin Kuryel, Jay Hetrick and Lillian for the great company. Two office companions and good friends, Astrid van Weyenberg and Jannah Loontjens, later became my paranymphs – thank you! Coming to the end of our dissertations around the same time, we formed a kind of mutual support trio in the difficult last months. We had fun, even then! Thank you also to Ania Dalecki, Jantine van Gogh and Margreet Vermeulen who helped to make ASCA run smoothly and always had a smiling face and moment to help. Special thanks to Eloe Kingma, managing director. I won't forget the day she came in person to tell me that I had received a finishing fellowship. My thanks to the University of Amsterdam for this financial support that facilitated extra working hours to finish the dissertation and to ASCA for the ongoing funding of research trips to London and Dublin.

Throughout my doctoral studies, I juggled my academic research with teaching commitments at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie. I want to thank all of my former students, who kept me close to art practice, kept me challenged and surprised and in the best of company. Feeling so appreciated by my students and colleagues was an invaluable counterweight to the ups and downs of the PhD. I would wish to thank all my colleagues individually, so I hope they will forgive me for singling out a few here for special mention: Director Tijmen van Grootheest and Head of Education, Ben Zegers, who generously lightened my teaching hours at the Rietveld's expense for nine months at a crucial stage of research, the ever-supportive Jeroen Boomgaard, *lector* and all the members of the *kenniskring* he leads, who were so attentive to my research on cultural diversity, Frank Mandersloot and Rob van der Vygh with whom I have enjoyed

teaching final year students the last three years, WJM Kok for the inspiring conversations on Deleuze and Bert Taken, my PhD companion, for his moral support and collegiality.

The other most significant juggling act was *Here as the Centre of the World*, the two-year transnational artistic research project I co-curated with Gabriëlle Schleijsen and Alite Thijsen in 2006-7. I want to thank Gabriëlle for inviting me to co-curate, as well as for her amazing energy and input throughout the project. Thanks to Alite for her integrity, her insistence on equality and her rare experience-led wisdom. I want to thank the Dutch Art Institute, the workshop leaders, partner institutions and the 75 artists who made the project a reality and a learning experience for life. My thanks also to R. Radhakrishnan, who wrote the keynote essay for the book, whose work continues to inspire me.

An important forerunner of my doctoral research was my guest editorial of a special edition of *Third Text* on Ireland in 2005. I remain grateful to Rasheed Araeen for inviting me as editor. The publication left me with a broad circle of intellectual companions, who have occupied a place in my PhD writing as an imagined community of readers. Among them the work of David Lloyd, Luke Gibbons and Daniel Jewesbury has had an important influence on my research. My doctoral analysis also benefitted from previous research commissions from the Arts Council of Ireland and from previous M.A. research under the supervision of Prof. Brandon Taylor. I am indebted to a number of institutions and the kindness of their staff for library and archival support – especially the Tate Research Centre and the National Irish Visual Arts Library, as well as the National Gallery of Ireland, the I.C.A, the Camden Arts Centre and the University of Amsterdam.

Last but certainly not least, I want to express my thanks to my friends and family in Amsterdam, Scotland and Ireland for putting up with my anti-social work schedule, my occasional forgetting of birthdays, the generally more stressed version of myself and especially the long absences. I especially missed not seeing more of my two sisters, Kate and Dorothy, and my nephew Dara since his birth almost a year ago. Thanks for being such amazing sisters and for always being there for me. Thank you Dor for the research assistance in Dublin. Thanks to my uncle Daig for not giving up on me when I entered academia, despite his principles. Thanks to my old college and school friends in

Ireland (and Bochum) whose love means so much to me, to my meditation friends, Els, Justin and Lydia, who help me stay grounded, to Mary for keeping me Irish in Amsterdam, to Sebastian and to Peter Paul for always believing in me. Thanks to the Visser family for making me feel so welcome.

I don't want to imagine what the last four and a half years would have been like without Willem, my partner, whose love always rose above the busy schedule. Thank you for taking off with me to all the places we escaped to, despite and because of my heavy work load, for taking over my share of domestic chores at the end, for the bibliographic assistance, the yoga, the great meals, the cranio sessions, the surprise dark chocolate bars, the love letters hidden in suitcases and all of the small special things you do every day of our relationship.