

52nd International AICA Congress Germany 2019
Art Criticism in Times of Populism and Nationalism
October 1st – 7th 2019 Cologne – Berlin

Call For Papers

Title: **What territories for art criticism in post-Brexit Ireland.**
By Michaela Cutaya

Abstract:

In the March 2019 issue of *Texte Zur Kunst*, dedicated to Discrimination, the editors and contributors remind us of how the universalism of art criticism spring from both the emancipatory project of the Enlightenment and the discriminatory one of colonialism. Universalism comes to be defined by white Europeans and the art criticism process of distinction is paralleled by racist discrimination.

The current rise of nationalisms is pitted against globalisation rather than universalism, but it can be seen as a reaction to a project whose lofty aims eschew participation against which a recentering on national identities is seen as the only path towards a renewed sense of agency.

Historically, art criticism has participated to both projects: the founding of national identities and the international circulation of ideas. In 2016, I became editor of *CIRCA Art Magazine*, a publication that sprung from the desire of artists in Ireland to be part of a larger narrative, for their art to be discussed otherwise than from an 'Irish art' perspective. The magazine itself was an indirect offspring of the influence of the Free International University, as founding editor Anne Carlisle and Chris Coppock recall.

CIRCA at once identified with a given territory, that of the island of Ireland, and injected discourses such as post-colonialism, feminism and post-structuralism into the discussion on Irish art, as art historian Róisín Kennedy writes in *Art and Architecture of Ireland*. This was a welcomed new approach to art criticism in Ireland which, as art historian and critic Tom Duddy wrote in 1987, had been severely limited by its insistence on inner Irishness to discuss the work of Irish artists, ignoring the social, political and economical pressures these artists worked under. I propose to discuss this trajectory of art criticism between this national temptation and international aspirations, to explore about what path it should take today as part of a new editorial project for an art magazine whose unstable territory is facing further fracture with a looming Brexit.

References:

Texte Zur Kunst, issue 113, March 2019, Diskriminierung/Discrimination

Sabeth Buchmann and Isabelle Graw, 'The Critique of Art Criticism' in *Texte Zur Kunst*, issue 113, March 2019, Diskriminierung/Discrimination.

Anne Carlisle 'Circa: Around, about and very much still there' in *CIRCA* # 117 Autumn 2006 <http://circaartmagazine.net/issues/?issue=117>

Chris Coppock 'A.R.E. – Acronyms, Community Arts and Stiff Little Fingers', Vacuum # 11, the Underground Issue.

<http://www.thevacuum.org.uk/issues/issues0120/issue11/is11artartres.html>

Róisín Kennedy, 'Critical Writing and the Media' in *Art and Architecture of Ireland, Volume V: Twentieth Century*, Catherine Marshall and Peter Murray editors, Dublin and London: Yale university Press and Royal Irish Academy 2015, pp. 91-96.

Tom Duddy, 'Irish Art Criticism – A Provincialism of the Right?' Circa Art Magazine no 35, July/August 1987, pp.14-18.

Biography:

Michaële Cutaya is a writer, researcher and editor on art living in County Galway. She writes essays and reviews for Irish publications. She co-founded [Fugitive Papers](#) in 2011. She is currently lecturing in Historical and Critical Studies at the Burren College of Art. She is editor of [CIRCA Art Magazine](#) and president of [AICA-Ireland](#).

For the 52nd International AICA Congress Germany 2019, 'Art Criticism in Times of Populism and Nationalism' I will be looking at the potential for art criticism to counter the populist tendencies in cultural politics on the island of Ireland.



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