

Fall 2018 Study Abroad at Trinity College Dublin

Despite the seemingly infinite expanse of knowledge offered by the internet today, it's still somehow remarkably easy to get stuck in a creative bubble of sorts. And while the University of Virginia is a truly wonderful place to learn and grow, I felt it was time to break free of my familiarity and challenge myself to new surroundings. I wanted to immerse myself entirely in a different culture and see where it led me on an academic and creative level. I ultimately decided to apply to Trinity College Dublin in order to do this, and I am very happy to say that I will be studying there during the fall 2018 academic semester.

Not only am I excited to explore everything this school and unique city has to offer, but it is also a very personal experience for me. My family heritage is incredibly Irish, which makes this adventure all the more sentimental. And although I've been to this beautiful country before, I've never quite experienced it through an academic or creative perspective.

I couldn't think of a better place to study Drama in Ireland than Trinity College Dublin. For starters, the university has an impressively rich history that dates back to the year it was founded in 1592 by none other than Queen Elizabeth I. This historical background provides the university with valuable resources and connections. Trinity College Dublin has a good number of notable alumni amongst the dramatic disciplines. These noteworthy people include the likes of Oscar Wilde, Samuel Beckett, and many more leading figures in the theatre, film and television industries. In addition to the internationally respected faculty of the drama department, Trinity College also offers many beneficial student societies and clubs that pertain to the dramatic arts. For example, the DU Players is considered to be one of the most prolific student-drama societies in Europe. This society hosts over 50 shows and events per year in the campus's Samuel Beckett Theatre. Other student societies include The DU Film Society, which consists of student filmmakers and their productions, and hosts various workshops and talks with professional filmmakers. This past year The DU Film Society even hosted their first ever film festival that took place over the course of a week.

Moreover, Trinity College Dublin is located in the very center of Dublin. This gives students the unique ability to take advantage of all the dramatic happenings this special city has to offer. Dublin has long been a city supportive to the arts, and is home to many theatres including the world-famous Gaiety Theatre. This fall I will be able to attend various events associated with the 2018 Dublin Theatre Festival. According to the festival's website, this program entails "18 days of live performance showcasing pioneering international productions, engaging and provocative Irish work, theatre for children, as well a series of critical talks, artist development programmes and industry events." Notable Irish theatre and film artists, such as Ruth Negga and Cillian Murphy, are participants in this year's festival.

Overall, I hope to expand my knowledge of theatre and film beyond what I already know about American drama. I plan on getting personally involved in various student societies and attending multiple theatre and film screenings while in Dublin. In this way, I also hope to further develop my skills as a costume designer, which is my personal area of dramatic studies. This this experience will ultimately provide me with a better understanding of cultural differences in theatre and film. Until now, I've only been exposed to what is considered to be foreign theatre and film through a distant position. I may have watched an Irish film, or seen an

American adaptation of a play. However, I've never truly immersed myself fully in a culture and then experienced these art forms directly from the source. It will be particularly interesting to note such differences between American and Irish theatrical culture, given that they are both English-speaking countries that do not initially appear to be vastly different when it comes to the dramatic arts.

I hope to accumulate a great amount of information and knowledge on Irish theatre and film, particularly in regards to the domain of costume design. I plan on noting key differences and similarities between the costume design and other general characteristics of American versus Irish theatre and film. Throughout my stay in Ireland, I will document my experiences and discoveries using photographs and written descriptions. Ultimately, I will use the accumulated knowledge and experience that I gain during my time abroad in Dublin to contribute to my final project in my Drama Major during my Senior Seminar course. This final project will draw upon my experience in the form of extensive research and costume design for a specifically Irish piece of theatre or film. I am requesting funds to cover part of the costs of traveling abroad and attending Trinity College Dublin. These funds will also cover some of the cost of attending outside theatre programs.

Timeline:

(Please note - this is only a rough outline that does not encompass the exact details of my stay and study time.)

- August 27, 2018
 - Leave for Dublin, Ireland and move in to student accommodation.
- Week of September 3-7
 - Trinity College Dublin's "Fresher's Week" and Visiting Student Orientation Week. During this week nearly every student society occupies a tent in the university's front square. I will sign up for my chosen dramatic societies during this time.
- September 10, 2018
 - Classes begin.
I have been accepted to enroll in drama modules, as well as history and classics modules. I plan on taking at least 3 drama modules while at Trinity College.
- September 27 – October 14
 - The 2018 Dublin Theatre Festival
- December 18, 2018
- Spring 2019
 - I will return to UVA and meet with my project mentor to discuss my study abroad experience and what I have learned. I will continue to meet with her as necessary as I work on my senior project and compile all of the information I have gained.
 - During this time I will also compile photographs and any relevant tangible materials to formulate my presentation of outcome and/or progress at the Center for Undergraduate Excellence.

- April 2019
 - I will present my outcome at the Center for Undergraduate Excellence sometime during the first week of April 2019.

Proposed Budget:

- Travel/Transportation (airfare, as well as transit costs while in Ireland)
 - ⇒ \$600
- Partial Cost of Accommodation
 - ⇒ \$2,000
- Money for miscellaneous theatre/film excursions
 - ⇒ \$400

Total: \$3,000