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| **About you** | **[Salutation]** | Susan | [Middle name] | Schreibman |
| Susan Schreibman is Professor of Digital Humanities and Director of An Foras Feasa, the Humanities Research Institute, at Maynooth University. Dr Schreibman has published and lectured widely in Irish poetic modernism and digital humanities. Her digital projects include *The Thomas MacGreevy Archive*, *Letters of 1916,* a crowd-sourced scholarly edition of letters about Ireland, and *Contested Memories: The Battle of Mount Street Bridge*, a 3D simulation. Her publications include *Thomas MacGreevy: A Critical Reappraisal*. (Bloomsbury 2013) and *Collected Poems of Thomas MacGreevy* (Catholic University of America Press and Anna Livia Press, 1991). She has also co-edited the C*ompanion to Digital Humanities* (Blackwell, 2004) and *A Companion to Digital Literary Studies* (Blackwell, 2008). She is currently working on a biography of Thomas MacGreevy. | | | |
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| **Your article** |
| **Thomas MacGreevy** |
| Thomas McGreevy |
| Thomas MacGereevy was a poet, art and literary critic, and Director of the National Gallery of Ireland (1950-63). Born in 1893 in Tarbert, Co Kerry, he served in the Royal Field Artillery with the British Expeditoinary Force (BEF). MacGreevy began writing poetry after the War, while becoming a prolific critic and defender of modernist writing and art. |
| Thomas MacGreevy was a poet, art and literary critic, and Director of the National Gallery of Ireland (1950-63). MacGreevy was born in 1893, during the closing decades of the British Empire, in Tarbert, County Kerry, one of the most westerly points of both the Empire and Europe. His childhood, pleasant and uneventful, provided him with the dual pillars of faith and nationalism that underpinned the vast majority of his writings. These pillars found their expression in writing in the early 1920s, after he returned to live in Ireland after working as a Civil Servant in London from 1912, and serving as a Second Lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery in the BEF in 1917-18..  MacGreevy is an extremely autobiographic poet. The poems in the single book of poetry to appear in his lifetime, *Poems*, (Heinemann, 1934) were ordered chronologically (as opposed to thematically or when they were written). War: the Great War, the Anglo-Irish War, and the Irish Civil War, are reoccurring themes. While much of MacGreevy’s poetry was about Ireland, exile provided the necessary geographic and psychic distance to write about it. MacGreevy, attuned to the new in both the written and visual arts, wrote what the Irish poet and critic Anthony Cronin described as ‘the most perfectly modulated free verse written in the period in English, Ireland, or America’.  *Poems* also reflectsthe artistic and political influences of the major sites of his life: Tarbert, London, Dublin, and Paris, In Paris in the late 1920s and early 1930s, MacGreevy was part of the Joyce circle, defending the ‘great man’ from his critics and assisting with *Work in Progress*, the as-yet unnamed *Finnegans Wake*. By the time *Poems* was published, MacGreevy had all but stopped writing poetry. His voice returned in the 1960s, several years before his death, as he returned to his early themes and style ‘half a world’ later. His critical work, however, during these decades was prolific. He wrote for some 50 publications from the 1920s-1960s. He was a consistent and vocal champion of the *avant-garde*, defending many of the Irish artists he knew personally against a hostile establishment culture that became more entrenched after Irish independence.  MacGreevy is frequently remembered for his friendships and artistic associations, a veritable Who’s Who of Modernism, including Samuel Beckett (whom he mentored in Paris in the early 1920s), James Joyce (whom he assisted with *Work in Progress)*, WB Yeats and his wife George, Jack B Yeats (who relied on MacGreevy in life to explain his work to the public, and in death as executor of his estate), TS Eliot (who mentored MacGreevy in the mid-1920s and found a kindred spirit in him during the former’s conversion to Anglicanism), and Wallace Stevens, who in the closing years of his life found in MacGreevy ‘the best of all my correspondents’).  MacGreevy perhaps found his *metier* late in life, at the age of 57, when he was appointed Director of the National Gallery of Ireland. At mid-century he brought the Gallery into the 20th century, launching into ambitious plans to expand the Gallery’s exhibition space, (completed one year after his death), instituting an in-house restoration department, and a regular lecture series (with one lecture a week in Irish). The Gallery became the palette, intangible and permanent, on which he created his vision of an independent Ireland, one that he had been writing about for decades: both ancient and young, from the Irish mediaeval monks spreading Catholicism across Europe, to the great Irish modernists of his youth invading the English language. |
| Further reading:  Thomas MacGreevy Archive <http://macgreevy.org>  *The Life and Work of Thomas MacGreevy: A Critical Reappraisal*. Ed. Susan Schreibman (Bloomsbury, 2013)  *Modernism and Ireland: The Poetry of the 1930*s*.* Ed Patricia Coughlan, Alex Davis. (Cork University Press, 1995)  *Collected Poems of Thomas MacGreevy: An Annotated Edition*. Susan Schreibman (Anna Livia Press, Catholic University of America Press, 1991)  ‘Thomas MacGreevy: Modernism not Triumphant’. Anthony Cronin. In Heritage Now: Irish Literature in the English Language(Dingle, Brandon Books, 1982) p166-160 |