CROSSING BORDERS:
APPROPRIATIONS AND COLLABORATIONS

TRAVERSER LES FRONTIÈRES:
APPROPRIATIONS ET COLLABORATIONS

JUNE 29, 30 & JULY 1, 2016

Fifo Stricker, 1952
Collection of Sebastian and Debra Sulser

PLENARY SPEAKER

Prof. Veronique Plesch
Colby College
President of the International Association of Word and Image Studies: ON APPROPRIATIONS
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Stephanie Recombinant Memory: 
New Imaginaries of Enslaver and Enslaved in the US South

Stephanie Yuhl, PhD, College of the Holy Cross

As a former slave regime, Charleston and the South Carolina Low country are today post-colonial spaces where the injustices of the past, rooted in slavery and Jim Crow segregation, continue to shape the stories that are able to be told there and the images that serve those stories. Until very recently, Charleston’s public historical narrative has been framed almost exclusively by impeccably preserved planter mansions that popularize a highly selective and insidious conception of the region’s slave past -- one that favors elite white claims to harmonious race relations and undermines black claims to brutal victimization and terror under enslavement (and in the post-emancipation regimes). This paper examines a recent radical intervention in Charleston’s visual landscape as a case study for assessing the power of images to catalyze a movement toward social justice in the shaping of local historical memory.

In 2009, two artists, Susan Page (photographer) and Juan Logan (multimedia), one white, one black, were given unprecedented free reign in the Gibbes Museum of Art’s 10,000 piece collection to create an exhibition that asked probing questions about the relationship between race and art in the Low country. The resulting multi-media installation, Prop Master, quite literally appropriated and recombined images of enslaved and enslaver, as well as artifacts from the antebellum era, to underscore shared historical authority and the radical subjectivity of the artists’ black and white, female and male subjects. Through superimposition, juxtaposition, and visual dissonance, Page and Logan sought to “to hold up a mirror to the museum and the community it serves.” By playing with visual boundaries and breeching cultural taboos, Prop Master created a compelling new imaginary of race, gender, chronology, and power in the American South -- one that illuminated how, in the artists’ words, “everybody in this society was traumatized” by its history. Drawing on post-colonial theories of cultural hybridity, this paper examines how visual heritage work has contributed to an evolving cultural landscape of inclusivity, contestation, and slow justice in Charleston.

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2 Author Interview with Susan Page, telephone, April 2015.
The internationally famous Harriet Beecher Stowe died in 1896, and 2016 marks the 120th anniversary of her death. As such, a reconsideration of her lesser-known works is warranted. Chief among these is her poetry—a significant area of her oeuvre that has attracted very little scholarly attention. Stowe is, of course, best known for her abolitionist novel, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852), but she also wrote an unknown number of poems. In 1967, *Collected Poems of Harriet Beecher Stowe*, by John Michael Moran, Jr. was published by Transcendental Books in Hartford, CT and reprinted the same year in *The Emerson Society Quarterly*. Moran’s collection ran one hundred pages and contains fifty-nine poems, about a dozen of them on the subject of slavery. These include works Stowe composed about characters from *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, such as “Eliza Crossing the River,” “The Death of Eva,” “The Sale of Little Harry,” and “Topsy at the Looking Glass.” The poems provide an interesting example of how one author appropriates her own work and moves from the genre of fiction to poetry, using content that was already being appropriated in a wider cultural context following the novel’s publication.
The artistic depiction of Indians or Native Americans is an arena of contestation and controversy, the Indian a shifting icon, with representation of aboriginal people for Americans determined by various political agendas. In the period of history from 1800 to 1860 when Americans imagined Natives extinct or doomed to extinction, painters were part of a national debate about the fate of aboriginal people, visual imagery of their canvases serving as sites that reinforced a belief—and, in some cases, a hope in the disappearance of Indians. Their work is thus part of a discourse of disappearing Indians, their paintings and sketches visual fields wherein competed an ideology of disappearing Indians articulated in the period’s poetry, fiction, drama and supposed objective historical texts. Specifically this presentation will explore a migration of Native oral traditions defining regional landscapes to Eurocentric historical narratives utilized in paintings to further the notion of a Native people disappeared or doomed to disappearance. Schroon Mountain, was painted by Thomas Cole in 1830 [at Cleveland], also subject of several period canvases, was named for an unfortunate ‘Indian maiden,’ like many of her alleged counterparts in the Northeast killing herself in an ‘unfortunate’ love affair with a Frenchman, the topography commemorating her suicide. Kensett painted Bash-Bish Falls of South Egremont, Massachusetts in 1855, [MFA, Boston] where an ‘Indian maiden’ married to a ‘chief’ but unable to bear a child and deceived by an Indian “witch,” threw herself into the Bash-Bish cascade, her horrified “lover” jumping into the falls to rescue her, both drowning. And, as another example, Mount Chocorua in New Hampshire (Also known as Mount Corway, Corroway, or Carroway, in the Sandwich range of the White Mountains) is depicted with Native association in Cole’s lost Chocorua’s Curse known from an 1830 engraving [Dartmouth College Library]; Chocorua was a seventeenth-century Indian whose dying curse either prevented crops from fully developing in the region or immigrants’ cattle from flourishing, original source materials ambiguous and contradictory, the “curse” what mattered. As other artists painted the same location, however, the name “Chocorua” is apparently sufficient to evoke the “vanished” Indians of New Hampshire. Chocorua is like Mount-Saint-Victoire painted and repainted by several French or European artists. The following all produced canvases of Chocorua: Asher Durand [1855]; J. F. Kensett [1864-66]; Aaron Draper Shattuck [1855]; David Johnson [1851]; Daniel Huntington [1861, at NY His. Soc.] and others.
Strategies of Engagement in “The Use of Life” A Multimodal Novel

Marie Thérèse Abdelmessih, Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Kuwait University

The growing importance of graphic novels and multimodal fiction intermediating text and image has augmented in Egypt, since the 2011 uprising. Tahrir Square, where protestors gathered was turned into a cultural space intermediating aural, verbal and visual cultural products breaking away with traditional genres that constructed a heterogeneous image of the nation. In Tahrir Square, creativity ceased to be considered as mere speculative detachment, to become a mode of engagement with its various processes of cultural production, involving all social groups. The use of aural, visual and verbal media in joint performances enhanced the process of collective participation, which has subsequently had cosmopolitan repercussions.

This may explain the proliferation of experimental fiction that departs from traditional trends that are either representational, or meant to inspire a conclusive message. In my research, I will focus on Ahmed Naji’s (b. 1985) *Istikhdam al-Hayat* (2014, The Use of Life), a multimodal novel combining text, along with graphics and illustrations, produced by Ayman al-Zurqany. The advent of fiction that transgresses traditional borders between high and low culture had already started in Egypt towards the 1990s. The popular has acquired new dimensions that merge local and global, with the spread of information and computer technologies, science fiction and cyberpunk subgenres, even among subcultural groups living in the margins of cyber culture.

My objective is to explore the visual and verbal aesthetic strategies in The Use of Life that disrupt the conventional division between creator and collective authorship. Strategies of engagement in multimodal fiction drive us to rethink complex local global relations ensuing from the clash between technological polities and parochialism in an uneven world.
The autobiographical bande dessiné, *Papa*, written by Aude Picault, becomes an example of an experimental form of autobiographical writing, in which the life narrative becomes the thematic foreground of a somber and depressing reality experienced by the author. In this painful account of her father’s suicide, Aude Picault grapples with the details of this very difficult moment in her life – a moment for which very little words of explanation exist. It is primarily through the vivid images that haunt the author, and that are associated with this traumatic event, that the author is able to externalize and make visible this “unspeakable” act through the *bande dessinée*. This paper aims to explore the word and image dynamic in Aude Picault’s *Papa*, in which the author uses the medium of the comic strip as the privileged means of self-expression. In order to discuss Picault’s *Papa*, we will look at theories on autobiography (Philippe Lejeune, Georges Gusdorf, Elizabeth Bruss, etc.) and the *bande dessinée* (Miller, Grove, Bruyssens, Fresnault-Deruelle, etc.) as well as critical works on the word and image dynamic (Louvel, Nancy, Barthes, etc.).
This paper will focus on the avant-garde publication Signals: News Bulletin of the Centre for the Advanced Creative Study (1964-66), edited by the Philippine artist David Medalla. Signals was the textual manifestation of a London-based multiplatform network—which also included an art institution, the Signals Gallery, and an informal band of European and Latin American artists and critics, the Signals Group. 1) Signals served as an amplifier for group members’ artworks and ideas, enabling them to circulate far wider. The broadsheet bulletin went beyond mere documentation. It included poems, scientific reports, diagrams, photographs, and experimental journalism. Drawing on the insights of Gwen Allen in relation to US magazines, we can understand Signals as “an alternative space for art.” 2) The shift to the printed page was not just a translation, but also process of mutation: graphic design decisions enabled new meanings to emerge. For instance, the addition of a humanoid form converts one of Lygia Clark’s hand-held Bichos (Critters) into a monstrous, architectonic construction recalling the stabiles of the North American artist Alexander Calder (fig. 1).

Moreover, Signals coopts the form of the newspaper—an ephemeral, mass medium that in the sixties generally transmitted factual information in a single language. With a geopolitically bounded readership, newspapers helped build perceived connections between citizens of a nation-state. Sent out via air mail systems and transcending monolingualism, the poetic words and images in Signals aimed to engender the kind of transnational “global village” cybernetician Marshall McLuhan imagined the modern media could yield (fig. 2). Via close readings of selections from Signals, I will analyze the magazine’s geographic and disciplinary border crossings.
The phrase “Arts of Peace” appeared frequently in the English poetry of the war-torn seventeenth century, and persisted into the early eighteenth century. This phrase tended to suggest either of two broad notions--artistic or other creative acts carried out in peacetime and considered impossible at times of war; or acts of diplomacy or militancy that resulted in political stability. By the early eighteenth century, however, the simplistic and tautological notion that peace was a state of not-war and war was a state of not-peace had long been exposed as a convenient fiction; peace and war needed to be understood instead in terms of one another, and the naive dream of ideal, Edenic peace had all but fallen away.

At the same time that such poets as Holland, Waller, Marvell, and Dryden were contemplating the “Arts of Peace,” the painter-diplomat Peter Paul Rubens was attempting both to broker agreements among European powers, including England, to temper the ravages of the Thirty Years’ War, and to represent in his visual art problems and questions of lasting peace. This essay will pair poems by various seventeenth-century writers with paintings by Rubens (including *The Horrors of War*, *Minerva Protects Pax from Mars*, and *The Temple of Janus*) to explain the conversation about peace that was unfolding across one of the most brutal centuries in Western history.
This paper examines how David and Ingres, teacher and student, appropriate scenes or ideas from Homer’s *Iliad* and transforms them into complex visual representations in their respective paintings. A comparison of David’s and Ingres’ paintings reveals two different approaches to the relationship between text and image, and in particular, to each artist’s representation of speech in painting. David’s *Andromache Lamenting Hector* (1783), depicts a scene occurring after the death of Hector when Andromache mourns the death of Hector in their bed chamber, while her young child Astyanax holds onto her, whereas Ingres’ *Jupiter and Thetis* (1811) treats Thetis’ supplication of Zeus in the first book of the *Iliad*.

David’s painting, on one hand, does not represent a particular scene from the *Iliad*. David instead imaginatively constructs a scene that could conceivably have taken place, but does not in the Homeric text. Instead he highlights a private scene of mourning and the importance of the idea of family by placing father, mother, and child in the same room: the lifeless corpse of Hector, Andromache in the agony of grief, and Astyanax physically clinging to his mother.

In the *Iliad*, the only time that that these three characters are actually represented together occurs in Homer, *Iliad* VI, when Hector returns to Troy to bid good-bye to Andromache during an interlude in the fighting. In David’s work, this actual scene from the *Iliad*, as well as that of the later death of Hector, are carved into the bed on which Hector lies, but are not the central focus of the painting.

Moreover, although the central scene in the painting does not reflect an actual scene in Homer’s narrative, David incorporates a verbatim excerpt of a speech by Andromache from the *Iliad* as an inscription on an architectural monument. This presentation will consider in greater detail the context and content of the speech fragment and its relationship to the entire painting.

Ingres’ depiction of Thetis with Zeus, on the other hand, mirrors quite precisely a scene in the *Iliad*: Thetis’ supplication of Zeus at the beginning of the *Iliad*, in which she asks him to help her son Achilles achieve everlasting glory before he dies. In contrast to David’s painting, where a Homeric text is explicitly cited to accompany his construction of a scene of lamentation in the *Iliad*, no other reference to the text is made here; the viewer is expected to re-construct Thetis’ speech to Zeus from his/her own knowledge of the *Iliad*. Other images within the painting, such as the representation of Hera and the scene on the pedestal underneath Zeus’ throne, guide the viewer toward other private speeches within the *Iliad*, while the eroticized body of Thetis, the stiffly resistant pose of Zeus, and the presence of the eagle, perhaps evoking both justice and imperial power, all remind the viewer of other, more immediate background stories key to an understanding of the dynamics of power in this painting.

In these paintings, both artists memorialize the past by appropriating and reconstructing important scenes in the *Iliad* of Homer. I suggest that David appropriates and re-constructs Homer by taking a public scene of lamentation shared by Andromache with the women of Troy and transforming it into a private family scene; Ingres, on the other hand, appropriates the Homeric text by visually representing private speeches to emphasize the relationship of the past to the contemporary politics of empire.
Allure without Allusion: 
Quoting a Vergilian Epitaph in a 9/11 Memorial

Aaron Seider, College of the Holy Cross

When the National September 11 Memorial Museum opened last year in New York City, a quotation from the Aeneid thrust its 2,000 year old author into a contemporary debate about honor and remembrance. Emblazoned on the central wall of Memorial Hall, the sentence “No day shall erase you from the memory of time,” attributed simply to Virgil, stands high above the museum’s visitors. This elegant translation of nulla dies umquam memori vos eximet aevo (Aen. 9.447) sparked a series of conversations in newspapers and magazines about the appropriateness of transferring Virgil’s epitaph for Nisus and Euryalus to the victims of the 9/11 attacks. While these reactions focused on the challenges posed by the relationship between ancient and modern contexts, they left unexplored consequential issues of appropriation and commemoration that subtend the dynamics of nearly every act of quotation.

In my paper, I argue that this quotation exemplifies the tension between the allure of antiquity and the impossibility of controlling its meaning, as Virgil’s promise of eternal remembrance occasions larger concerns about time and audience that leave the signification of its words unstable. Already in the Aeneid, we see how this verbal memorial is first linked to Rome’s power but later undermined by Euryalus’ mother’s more somber commemoration of her son. Then, as an acknowledged quotation placed in the most significant American memorial of the twenty-first century, this vow attempts to leverage the somber gravity of Virgil’s canonical status, only to draw attention to the instability of its meaning in this new context. As questions arise about who is called to remember and who will be remembered, the quotation destabilizes its authentication of the present even as it reframes our reading of these words’ originary appearance in the Aeneid.
Ian McEwan’s recent New Yorker short story, “My Purple Scented Novel,” was written to accompany “L’image Volée,” an art exhibit curated by Thomas Demand and sponsored by the Fondazione Prada in Milan. Narrated in first-person, McEwan’s story confesses a textual theft. Two men become life-long friends at university. Later both become writers, one famous, the other not. The narrator, the not-famous writer, breaks into his friend Jocelyn’s locked study and steals his completed manuscript, which he then rewrites and publishes as his own novel. Victim of a carefully orchestrated plot, Jocelyn never recognizes the theft. At the end of the story Jocelyn’s reputation is ruined and the narrator has won the Booker. The two remain friends.

McEwan’s story is a fable about creative debts and legacies. Interviewed on March 21 about the story’s relationship to the Milan exhibit, he said, “writers you like, whose imaginations appeal to you, open up opportunities for your own imagination. Some writers—and they needn’t necessarily be great or well-known—can suggest routes to freedom, to a new mental space.”

My talk for the International Word and Image Conference explores Chaucer’s debts—unacknowledged—to Boccaccio in Troilus and Criseyde, the long romance he wrote shortly before beginning the Canterbury Tales. In writing Troilus Chaucer translated and freely adapted Boccaccio’s story, acknowledging his source only in a mysterious ascription to “myn auctor Lollius,” a name that has never been convincingly explained. In borrowing from Boccaccio, Chaucer’s literary “theft” is hardly comparable to the stunning act of appropriation in McEwan’s story. It is arguably not a theft at all. In Chaucer’s time writers routinely borrowed material from others without acknowledging sources. Nevertheless, the relationships in McEwan’s story and in Chaucer’s real-life borrowing are similarly, and uncannily, intimate; and it is that border-crossing and importing, annotated through objects, that I will explore in this talk. How does Chaucer’s borrowing, however unacknowledged, bridge places and cultures, and do so through intimate household settings? Among the “mental space[s]” that Chaucer borrows and transforms from Boccaccio are literal, material ones—the halls, bedrooms, closets, secret tunnels, and doors that stage the love story. Readers have commented on the importance of house-design in Troilus, noting that the story’s palaces seem much like late fourteenth-century London houses. Houses in Troilus also gesture to Italy, I will argue. As Chaucer Englishes a Troy story from fourteenth-century Florence, he also translates Florentine objects, bridging not just languages but also domestic material culture.

And the domestic settings of Troilus may gesture to authorial relationships as well. In McEwan’s story, the narrator is able to steal the manuscript because he knows, as an old friend, where to find the key to the locked study. His textual intimacy, that is, has a spatial counterpart. He literally and figuratively knows his friend’s ‘house of fiction’. In Troilus, private rooms at home stage a love story of extraordinary intimacy, an intimacy that uncannily parallels his text’s relationship with its source. A common medieval trope for the craft of writing was building a house. In borrowing Boccaccio’s text Chaucer also borrows and remakes his home, figuring, in his appropriations and remaking of house imagery, the work of author love.
Medieval Aesthetic and Inspiration in the Irish Arts and Crafts Movement

Virginia Raguin, College of the Holy Cross

In 1925, the Religious of the Sacred Heart transferred their Boston school for girls to the former Tudor-Revival style estate of Loren D. Towle in Newton, Massachusetts. The Boston architectural firm of Maginnis and Walsh built the chapel and a four-story school wing between 1926 and 1928. The senior partner was Charles D. Maginnis (1867-1955), an immigrant from Londonderry, Ireland by way of Toronto, Canada. Maginnis’ leadership made eclectic revival the expected style for Roman Catholic institutions in America. The Newton Country Day School of the Sacred Heart Chapel houses one of the largest and most sophisticated stained glass commissions created by the An Túr Gloine (Tower of Glass) cooperative workshop in Dublin, Ireland; seven three-light windows and a rose installed by 1929. The stained glass windows, created by artists Michael Healy, Alfred Earnest Child, Catherine (Kitty) A. O’Brien, Kathleen Quigley, and Ethel Rhind demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of medieval and renaissance symbolism and narrative strategies. The imagery was apparently inspired by models taken from illuminated manuscripts, panels paintings, and stained glass.
In the second year of his apprenticeship, Blake’s master, James Basire, accepted a commission from the antiquary Richard Gough to prepare drawings for what would later be published as the *Sepulchral Monuments of Great Britain*. Basire duly instructed Blake to make drawings for engraving, in particular of the kings and queens buried in the central chapel of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey. These included the tomb of Edward III and his queen, Queen Philippa. One can imagine the hours Blake spent in the Abbey and how he would have thought about and tried to learn all that he could about his subject, clearly exploring the life of Edward for his play in an attempt to fill a gap in the canon of Shakespeare’s history cycle.

In 1776 [Blake] was at work in making the drawings, as he recalled to Flaxman, when the ‘awful change threatened the Earth’ that was the onset of the American war of independence. The opening scene of *King Edward the Third* is ‘The Coast of France, King Edward and Nobles, The Army’. Edward addresses his armies:

> When confusion rages, when the field is in flame,  
> When the cries of blood tear horror from heav’n,  
> And yelling death runs up and down the ranks,  
> Let Liberty, the charter’d right of Englishmen,  
> Won by our fathers in many a glorious field,  
> Enervate my soldiers; let Liberty,  
> Blaze in each countenance, and fire the battle.

This began Edward’s ill-starred invasion of France. Bloody slaughter followed, then retreat, the Black Death, and the perpetual conflict that became the Hundred Years War. We remember the famous remark of Queen Elizabeth I comparing herself to Richard II in 1601 at the time of the Essex rebellion: ‘I am Richard II. know ye not that?’ If Blake’s *King Edward the Third* (which is only six scenes) was written at the time of the revolt of the American colonies, which seems likely, he may be suggesting a similar historical analogy. In this case, of Edward at the outset of his invasion of France, standing for King George III at the outset of what will become the debacle of the American War of Independence.
Adrian Henri “Total artist”

Catherine Marcangeli, Paris-Diderot University

Adrian Henri (1932-2000) came to prominence as a writer in the groundbreaking Penguin anthology The Mersey Sound (1967). His live poetry readings, and his ability to juxtapose everyday or pop images with highbrow cultural references, shaped several generations’ perceptions of what poetry could be about.

Henri had trained as a painter at King’s College, Newcastle under Richard Hamilton. His early Pop Art sensibility translated into urban imagery, collages and hyperrealist paintings of meat against a clinical white background.

Henri was also a pioneer of happenings in Britain, setting up the first “event” in 1962, collaborating with Wendy and Bill Harpe, Rob Con and Lol Coxhill into the 1970s, and corresponding with UK and American artists involved in performance, including Mark Boyle, Allan Kaprow and Yoko Ono. He also published a landmark book of Environments and Happenings (Total Art, Thames and Hudson: 1974).

Performance was central to Henri’s practice, both as a visual artist and as a poet. He gave numerous poetry readings and, in the 1960s and 1970s, fronted the poetry-and-rock group The Liverpool Scene, signed by RCA. In 1969, the band performed at the Isle of Wight Festival, supported Led Zeppelin and toured America.

This paper will argue that Henri’s eclectic interests and multi-faceted œuvre placed him at the centre of a distinctively local yet internationally connected counter-culture, while his embrace of total art acted as a template for later interdisciplinary art practices. Indeed, throughout the 1960s and 1970s, he collaborated with other artists, writers and musicians – Henri was radical not only because he worked across several media, but also because his work was highly collaborative. Nowhere is this more apparent than in his happenings - he developed the techniques of collage and assemblage into environments and events that invited the audience to become active in an unfamiliar participatory experience. This process was part of a strategy for drawing on the everyday as a means of narrowing “the gap between art and life”.

Immediately after the Revolution, unencumbered by British colonial navigation laws, American ships embarked for China, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and other destinations. Viewing themselves as citizens of a rising imperial state, Americans imported vast quantities of luxury goods and arts, especially porcelain, silks, lacquerware, painting, sculpture, furniture, wallpaper, and textiles. This trade made Asian visual arts and other materials less expensive and more available to all Americans, particularly in the port cities of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, Charleston, and Salem.

A substantial body of scholarship has established that the early republic (or federal period, c. 1783-1820) was the crucial period for the development of American national identity. But because of the emergence of this trade, it was also the foundational period for the emergence of American international identity. For individuals, their aesthetic choices demonstrated the global knowledge acquired through and necessary for financial triumph in the new trade. For the collective citizenry, as the country became prominent in worldwide maritime exchange, the arts represented more international dimensions of American cultural and political identities. As new materials, forms, imagery, and aesthetics arrived, I will argue, they were absorbed into American visual culture—not as marginal, or as a distinct style, but as integral to a dominant Neoclassicism.
En 1798, Bonaparte débarque à Alexandrie, accompagné de soldats mais aussi de jeunes savants lesquels avaient pour mission de dépouiller le territoire égyptien, charge qui fut accomplie durant les trois années de l’Expédition d’Egypte (1798-1801). De leurs travaux se composera, à leur retour, le célèbre ouvrage encyclopédique la Description de l’Egypte.

La première édition comporte neuf volumes in folio de textes et onze tomes de planches en treize volumes, dont les premières parties ont commencées à apparaître à partir de 1809. Il fallut plusieurs années pour que le lecteur puisse l’avoir entièrement entre les mains.


Celle-ci se penchera également sur deux documentaires ; le premier, rehla fi ketab wasf misr (Voyage dans la Description d’Egypte), réalisé par l’Egyptien A. Telmessany en 1972 où il offre au public arabe l’ouvrage colossal. Le second, Bonaparte vu d’Egypte (2008), court-métrage français de J.-M. Boulet lequel « donne la parole aux Egyptiens pour relire cette page de l’histoire des relations franco-égyptiennes ».

Muldoon-Duffy’s work is indeed entitled: *Cloth: A Visual and Verbal Collaboration* and was commissioned by the Millennium Court Arts Centre in Portadown under the general banner “Interrogating Contested Spaces in Post-Conflict Society.” There was an exhibition in Portadown in 2007 which then came to Paris in 2008. Duffy’s paintings and Muldoon’s prose – which subtly echo Yeats’ poems like “Cuchulain Comforted,” “Needle’s Eye” and “Veronica’s Napkin” – are all about delineating and crossing borders between domestic and institutional spaces; personal and political spaces; garments, skin and psyche; violence and peace; etc. Duffy’s images of vestments, shirts or handkerchiefs deprived of the human bodies that gave form to them, Muldoon’s prose focusing on flax-growing, linen production and sectarian violence, combine and dialogue to address questions of violence, power and impotence, posture and imposture, suture and elision, etc. So I would like to examine how Duffy and Muldoon exhume the past, appropriate it for their own creative purposes and re-view it, thus redefining the contours of the political landscape of the North. I would also like to show how their works are about the whole nature of looking.
In *Shipbreak*, the creative photographer Claudio Cambon chronicles the story in images and words of the life-death, and rebirth of the *SS Minole*, a US-flag merchant vessel that, in 1997, made its last journey from Baton Rouge, Louisiana to Chittagong, Bangladesh, where it was run aground and “broken up,” more or less by hand, for its raw materials, principally brass, copper, and steel that were reused in countless ways. For Cambon, the images came first and his subsequent, stirring narrative account of the ship’s voyage, destruction, and rebirth serves as textual illustration of image—a reversal that is not intended to be stagnant or one-way, but calls attention to an inverse that is actually a traverse back and forth between image and text, text and image, a movement that is also represented in the book’s creative design.