

Media Contact:

Steve Runk
Director of Communications
Lewis Center for the Arts
Princeton University
185 Nassau Street
Princeton, New Jersey 08544
srunk@princeton.edu
609.258.5262

For Immediate Release

February 3, 2017

**Fund for Irish Studies at Princeton University presents
“If It Wasn’t for the Irish and Jews”**
*Irish scholar and theater critic Fintan O’Toole delivers
the 2017 Robert Fagles Memorial Lecture at Princeton University*



Photo caption: Fintan O’Toole, Visiting Lecturer in Theater at the Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton University

Photo credit: Courtesy of Fintan O’Toole

What: “If It Wasn’t for the Irish and Jews,” a lecture examining the Irish and the Jews as two of the world’s greatest diasporic cultures, the Robert Fagles Memorial Lecture presented by Princeton University’s Fund for Irish Studies

Who: Irish theater critic and scholar Fintan O’Toole

When: Friday, February 17 at 4:30

Where: James M. Stewart ’32 Theater at Lewis Center for the Arts, 185 Nassau St., Princeton

(Princeton, NJ) Irish theater critic and scholar Fintan O’Toole will present the 2017 Robert Fagles Memorial Lecture entitled “If It Wasn’t for the Irish and Jews” on Friday, February 17 at

4:30 p.m. at the Lewis Center for the Arts' James M. Stewart '32 Theater, 185 Nassau Street. Part of the 2016-17 Fund for Irish Studies series at Princeton University, this event is free and open to the public.

“If It Wasn’t for the Irish and Jews” explores these ethnic groups as two of the world's greatest diasporic cultures. Their histories have shared themes of dispossession, discrimination and self-assertion. O’Toole considers how the two cultures have interacted, from Tin Pan Alley and Broadway to struggles for religious emancipation, and from James Joyce's *Ulysses* to *Abie's Irish Rose*.

Fintan O’Toole, one of Ireland’s leading public intellectuals, has written for *The Irish Times*, *New York Daily News*, *Sunday Tribune* (Dublin), and *In Dublin Magazine*. His books on theater span a wide range of topics, from his biography of Richard Brinsley Sheridan to theater currently appearing on Irish stages. He is the assistant editor, a columnist, and a feature writer for *The Irish Times*. He also contributes to *The New York Review of Books*, *The New Yorker*, *Granta*, *The Guardian*, *The Observer*, and other international publications. In 2011, *The Observer* named O’Toole one of “Britain’s top 300 intellectuals.” He has received the A.T. Cross Award for Supreme Contribution to Irish Journalism, the Millennium Social Inclusion Award, and Journalist of the Year in 2010 from TV3 Media Awards. O’Toole’s most recent project, *History of Ireland in 100 Objects*, covers 100 highly charged artifacts from the last 10,000 years, and has been published in book form by the Royal Irish Academy.

O’Toole will be co-teaching a new course, “Introduction to Irish Studies,” with Clair Wills, Chair of the Fund for Irish Studies, this spring. He will also be co-teaching a Princeton Atelier course with actor Lisa Dwan, “*Ill Seen Ill Said*: Staging a Beckett Text,” examining Samuel Beckett’s prose writings, specifically the novel *Ill Seen Ill Said*, and challenging students to find myriad ways to dramatize a work that wasn’t initially meant for the stage.

Robert Fagles, for whom the annual Memorial Lecture is named, was a member of the Princeton faculty for 42 years in the Department of Comparative Literature and a renowned translator of

Greek classics. His critically acclaimed translations of Homer's "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey" became bestsellers.

The Fund for Irish Studies, chaired by Princeton professor Clair Wills, affords all Princeton students, and the community at large, a wider and deeper sense of the languages, literatures, drama, visual arts, history, politics, and economics not only of Ireland but of "Ireland in the world." The series is co-produced by the Lewis Center for the Arts.

Information on upcoming Fund for Irish Studies series events can be found at fis.princeton.edu and includes:

- A day-long symposium on Irish lyric and song, "Words for Music, Perhaps," features musical performances by Irish artists and panels of renowned scholars, including John Burkhalter, Matt Campbell, Aileen Dillane, Paul Hamilton, David Kellett, Darya Koltonyuk, Barry McCrea, Maureen McLane, Paul Muldoon, Diarmuid Ó Giollain, Iarla Ó Lionáird, and Dan Trueman, on March 31
- Mary Daly, Professor of Modern Irish History at University College Dublin on April 14
- Writer Kevin Barry returns to Princeton for a reading on April 28

To learn more about the over 100 events presented each year by the Lewis Center for the Arts, visit arts.princeton.edu.

###