

Art History and Cultural Policy: Symposium held at the Royal Irish Academy on 2 June 2017

Scholar in Focus: Françoise Henry

In 2016 the School of Art History and Cultural Policy published a book of essays, entitled *Art History after Françoise Henry* (Gandon Editions, Cork) by present and former members of staff to celebrate 50 years since the Department of the History of European Painting was established at UCD with eminent art historian and archaeologist Françoise Henry as Head of Department. This was first dedicated department for the academic discipline within the Irish university system.

The recent publication highlighted the legacy of Françoise Henry's teaching and scholarship. It was considered timely to devote a symposium to her work, covering new research into her career both in Ireland and France, which was made possible by funding from the College of Arts and Humanities Conference Fund. Two key international speakers contributed to the symposium: Prof. Janet Marquardt of East Illinois University gave a paper entitled 'The Zodiaque Series on Romanesque Art & the influence of Françoise Henry's contributions 1963-64'. The second, Dr Laurent Olivier covered the period that Françoise Henry spent working as a curator at the Museum of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France in the period before the Second World War. Other speakers who also contributed to the day's papers were Prof. Kathleen James-Chakraborty on Henri Focillon who taught Françoise Henry and Drs Eileen Kane and John O'Grady, who were among her first students at UCD, as well as Peter Harbison (MRIA), who spoke on the impact of her extensive publications.

The Royal Irish Academy was a fitting venue for the symposium, since Françoise Henry was one of the first women to be made a member of the Academy, and material relating to her in its archives was kindly displayed by the Librarian for the benefit of those attending the symposium. The recently painted portrait of Françoise Henry by Vera Klute at the Royal Irish Academy provided a backdrop to the event. The day was well attended and it concluded at the Alliance Française with a wine reception sponsored by the French Embassy, who also provided funding for the event.