The Letters of Samuel Beckett launches in style!

There could be no more fitting a venue to launch the long awaited first volume of Samuel Beckett’s letters than the Long Room at Trinity College, Dublin.

It was here, at Trinity College, that Samuel Beckett studied, and briefly taught, before going on to become one of the world’s great literary figures. And it was here, on 18th February, that guests gathered to celebrate publication and pay tribute to the efforts of all those involved in bringing this project to fruition.

Speaking on behalf of the Press, Andy Brown recounted the long and complicated journey to publication since the project’s initial approval by Beckett himself in 1985. He paid tribute to the four volume editors Martha Dow Fehsenfeld, Lois More Overbeck, Dan Gunn and George Craig, and also to Commissioning Editor Linda Bree, for their work over the subsequent years.

George Craig spoke on behalf of the editors, acknowledging that this was very much a transatlantic effort, with two of the team based in the United States and two in Europe. The formalities were concluded by a reading of selected letters by Irish actor Barry McGovern, who held the audience spellbound – it was as if Beckett himself was present.

But this was only the first of several events. The following week, esteemed actors Patrick Stewart and Sir Ian McKellen, along with acclaimed theatre director Sean Mathias, performed another reading from the book at Foyles bookshop in London. They took time out from rehearsing for Waiting for Godot (penned by Beckett), which opens at the Theatre Royal Haymarket on 30th April. Further events are planned for Paris at Dan Gunn’s ‘home’ institution, The American University of Paris, and at Emory University in Atlanta, hosted by Lois Overbeck, to truly launch this book in style!

The reviews have also been flooding in, with coverage in leading newspapers both in Ireland and the UK, including the coveted ‘Book of the Week’ slot in the Independent and in the Telegraph’s Saturday Review. Forthcoming articles have also been confirmed in the Guardian and the Times Literary Supplement. And to reinforce the transatlantic nature of this project, we also have an excellent review in the New York Times.

Independent

The Daily Telegraph
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/bookreviews/4838107/The-first-stirrings-of-a-writers-voice.html

New York Times
http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/06/books/06Book.html?ref=books

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