ARCHITECTURE IN THE HUMANITIES: A BIOGRAPHY OF ARCHITECT JAMES HOBAN, EILEEN GRAY, SCOTT TALLON WALKER ARCHITECTS

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Architecture in the Humanities: Irish Studies

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James Hoban, was an Irish-born architect, born in Callan, Co. Kilkenny to Edward Hoban and Martha Bayne. He studied architectural drawing under Thomas Ivory. Hoban won numerous awards and competitions while at school. Around 1785, Hoban traveled to America, within two years he was designing the State House at Columbia, South Carolina. By 1775, Hoban had gained recognition amongst members of Congress who suggested the architect to George Washington, about designing the new Executive Department buildings in Washington, DC. In 1792, Hoban was hired to oversee the construction of the White House, as well as the State and Treasury buildings. Hoban’s designs were reflective of his Irish heritage, the plans were designed after the Duke of Leinster’s House, near Dublin.

Project: The White House
Date: 1792-1800
Location: Washington D.C., U.S.
Style: Palladian and Neoclassical

Eileen Gray was born into a distinguished Irish family. The granddaughter of the Earl of Moray, she spent her childhood years both in Ireland and London. In 1902 she began studying graphic art and painting at École Colarossi in Montparnasse. She studied the art of lacquer under Seizo Sougawara. In 1918, Gray had her first interior design project, for Madame Mathieu-Lévy, an apartment at Rue de Lota. It was not until 1926 that she ventured into the field of architecture, with the influence of her husband, John Badovici. Although, self-taught she designed many architectural works, such as the famous Villa at Roquebrune E.1027. Her building even drew the interests of famous architect Le Corbusier. The villa is most famously remembered for the murals that Corbusier graffitied on the walls. “To create, one must first question everything.” - Eileen Gray

Project: Villa E.1027
Date: 1926-1929
Location: Roquebrune-Cap-Martin
Style: Modern

A tulach or burial mound is a place of connection between the “other world” and the living. The project was built as a memorial to celebrate the bicentenary of the 1798 Rebellion. Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland awarded the project Gold Medal -Highly Commended in 1989-91.