

Lecture by Robert O'Byrne
The Irish Country House: A New Vision

Thursday 11th September 2025

6.30 - 8 pm

Old Museum Building



Killua Castle, Co. Westmeath

Since the publication of Maria Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent* in 1800, the familiar image of the Irish country house has been one of dishevelment and decay. However, in recent decades an alternative vision has come to the fore: one of rescue, restoration and renewal. Historic houses across Ireland are being rediscovered and brought back to life as family homes. Join author and architectural historian Robert O'Byrne for an exploration of some of these properties and the stories of their decline and recovery.

Currently a doctoral student at Trinity College Dublin, Robert O'Byrne is a writer and lecturer specialising in the fine and decorative arts, and the author of more than a dozen books. A former Vice-President of the Irish Georgian Society, he is trustee of several charitable organisations including the Apollo Foundation. For fourteen years he wrote a monthly column for *Apollo* magazine, and he has also contributed to *The Burlington Magazine* and the *Irish Arts Review*. Since 2012 Robert has written an award-winning blog, www.theirishaesthete.com and last year he produced a collection of his own photographs: *The Irish Aesthete: Buildings of Ireland, Lost and Found*. His most recent book is *The Irish Country House: A New Vision*, published by Rizzoli.

Tickets are available through Eventbrite and must be purchased before the event.

Members: £12 Non-members: £15. Students: £6

Wine reception: 6.30–7pm. Lecture to start promptly at 7pm.

The Old Museum Building, 7 College Square North, Belfast BT1 6AR

Please note that due to the historic nature of the Old Museum Building, access is via a flight of stone steps. We regret that it is currently unsuitable for wheelchair users.