James Joyce
A portrait of the Artist as a Young Man and Ulysses

James Joyce.
1. A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

- **A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man**: a semi-autobiographical novel, first serialized in the literary periodical *The Egoist* from 1914 to 1915, and then published in book form in 1916.

- It is divided into five chapters dealing with the spiritual evolution of Stephen Dedalus, a fictional alter-ego of Joyce, from childhood to maturity.

A contemporary edition of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. 
“When the soul of a man is born in this country, there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets.”

(From chapter 5)

- The importance of the indefinite article “A” the novel is only one of the possible interpretations of a subject.
- The setting in place Dublin
1. A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

“When the soul of a man is born in this country, there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets.”

(From chapter 5)

Like Stephen

1. Joyce was the son of a religious mother and a financially inept father.

2. Joyce was the eldest of ten children and received his education at Jesuit schools.

3. Joyce had early experiences with prostitutes during his teenage years and struggled with questions of faith.

4. Joyce left Ireland to pursue the life of a poet and writer.
2. *Portrait*: Stephen Dedalus, the hero

- **His name**
  - Stephen □ the name of the Christian martyr.
  - Dedalus □ the mythological character.

- **His transformations**
  - From a shy little boy to a bright student who understands social interactions.
  - From innocence to corruption, from an unrepentant sinner to a devout Catholic.
  - From a fanatical religiousness, to a new devotion to art and beauty.

- He escapes from the social, political labyrinth of Dublin's life.
3. *Portrait*: narrative technique

- **Third-person narrative** though Joyce does not tell what is happening but rather tries to show what is happening without explaining the events that he is showing.

- **The narrative** is not continuous but *fragmented*, with gaps in the chronology.
3. *Portrait*: narrative technique

- Every narrative detail filtered through Stephen's consciousness.

- Use of the experimental stream-of-consciousness technique to let the reader see, hear and feel what Stephen is experiencing as the action unfolds.

- Different languages and styles linked to each phase of Dedalus’s evolution.
4. **Portrait**: “Once upon a time…”

(Chapter 1)

- **Content** Stephen remembers his school days.

- **Language** Stephen is a baby so he uses a **naive vocabulary and childish expressions**.

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Clongowes Wood College
4. **Portrait**: “Once upon a time...”

(Chapter 1)

- **Stephen’s first song:**
  
  *The wild rose blossoms / On the little Green Place*  

  red = Irish patriotism.
  
  green = the Irish countryside.

- **His third song:**
  
  *Pull out his eyes / Apologise*  

  is a sort of *epiphany*  

  foreshadows *his future struggle against authority.*
5. **Portrait**: “Where was he...”

*Chapter 4*

- The importance of the setting **the beach**.

- **The epiphany** the image of **the wading girl** reveals Stephen’s transition from the belief in God to a belief in aesthetic beauty.

- **Poetic language** expressions linked to sight and hearing, several musical devices.

- **Free direct speech**.

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*An Irish beach*
6. *Ulysses*

- **Published in** 1922.

- **Setting in time** a single day, *Thursday 16th June, 1904*.

- **The setting in place** *Dublin*.

- A detailed account of ordinary life on an ordinary day.

- **The theme** is moral human life means suffering but also struggling to seek the good.

7. *Ulysses*: characters

- **Leopold Bloom** ▪ Joyce's common man; he **stands for the whole of mankind**.

- **Molly Bloom** ▪ Leopold’s wife; she stands for flesh, **sensuality**, **fecundity**.

- **Stephen Dedalus** ▪ pure intellect; he embodies every young man seeking maturity.

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Poster for Sean Walsh’s *Bloom* (2003)
8. *Ulysses*: the relation to *Odyssey*

- **Odyssey** → a structural framework for *Ulysses*.

- Characters and events arranged around Homeric model →
  - **Leopold** = **Odysseus**
  - **Molly** = **Penelope**
  - **Stephen** = **Telemachus**

- **Ulysses** is divided into →
  - **Telemachiad** (chapters 1-3)
  - **Odyssey** (chapters 4-15)
  - **Nostos** (chapters 16-18)

*Head of Odysseus* from a Greek 2nd century BC marble group representing Odysseus blinding Polyphemus, found at the villa of Tiberius at Sperlonga.
9. *Ulysses*: the mythical method

- It was linked to the progress made by:
  - psychology
  - ethnology
  - anthropology

- It allowed the parallel with the *Odyssey* and provided the book with a symbolic meaning.

- Homer’s myth used to express the universal in the particular.

- It created a new form of realism.
10. *Ulysses*: a revolutionary prose

The stream of consciousness technique
The cinematographic technique
Dramatic dialogue
Juxtaposition of events
Question and answers

Collage technique

The language ***rich in puns, paradoxes, images, interruptions, symbols, slang expressions; different linguistic registers to give voice to the unspoken activity of the mind.***
11. *Ulysses*: The Funeral  Part III

Leopold attends a funeral.

- Use of **interior monologue** → 2 levels of narration.

  1st level: **actions narrated from the outside** → neutral point of view.

  2nd level: **Leopold’s thoughts** → **Bloom’s point of view**
  
  The action takes place in his mind.

  There is no difference between past, present and future.
12. *Ulysses*: Molly’s monologue

- Use of **extreme interior monologue**.

- Molly’s thoughts are free to move **backwards** (“*they called it on...*”) and **forwards** in time (“*shall I wear...*”).

- Complete **absence of punctuation and introductions to people and events**, spelling and grammar mistakes they give voice to **her flow of thoughts**.
13. *Ulysses* and the Victorian novel

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14. Bloomsday

• 16th June.

• It is a celebration of James Joyce’s life and masterpiece *Ulysses*.

• During this celebration, **Bloom’s route through the streets of Dublin** is followed by participants in the festival, with readings along the way.

• Other locations from Joyce's pages are visited, films are shown and the Theatre Company brings Joyce to the city streets and squares.

• This festival goes on for a **week**.
15. **Finnegans Wake**

**The plot**

- It is the story of a night, a dream, a “night-maze”.
- It contains the whole human history, from creation to Judgment day in the guise of comic events linked to a family living in the western suburbs of Dublin.
15. Finnegans Wake

The plot

- As the **Finnegan** of an old Irish ballad, the father, **Earwicker**, goes to bed after drinking too much and is tormented by a series of dreams.

- No beginning and end = **CIRCULAR STRUCTURE**

The first edition of *Finnegans Wake*.
The title

• It comes from an old Irish ballad, *Finnegan’s wake*.

• It is a *pun* = *fin* (French) + *again* = end and beginning.

• If the apostrophe is restored, *Finnegan’s Wake = the wake of Finnegan, Finnegan is awake again*. 
15. Finnegans Wake

Structure

• Use of analogy and parallel, as in “Ulysses”.

• Vico’s theory of history provides the structure

  Man’s history proceeds cyclically in 3 phases

  1) Theocratic religion, family.

  2) Aristocratic heroes.

  3) Democratic cities, laws followed by anarchy, chaos.

  Then the cycles begin again.

• Joyce followed this structure 3 books + a final short book where there is a collapse.
15. *Finnegans Wake*

**Characters**

- Defined by their functions, not qualities.
- Fixed pattern of relationship (family).
15. *Finnegans Wake*

**Style**

- Logic of a dream — characters often exchanged, an idea can take different meanings.
- No customary surface.
- Continuous word-play, verbal extravagance, puns, use of different languages.
- Harmonious words = the novel has to be read aloud.
- Sentences of enormous length.
- Joyce’s aim *to express how things are at night*.

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