

PRESS RELEASE

BLOOMSDAY

16 June 2022, Ostend!



New in Ostend: a James Joyce committee composed of Joyce lovers of this kind: writers, art historians, photographers, curators, city guides, translators, academics, and artists pure and simple. But above all, avid readers. Moreover, with a passion for Ostend, whether local or from further afield. They call themselves *'de portiers van de Oceaan'* ['the porters of the ocean'], after Joyce's famous words. Because...

In the summer of 1926, the great writer James stayed in Ostend for a month and a half with his wife Nora, daughter Lucia and son Giorgio. When the phone rang in the lobby of the *Hôtel de l'Océan*, Joyce pricked up his ears. The receptionist said: *'Ici le portier de l'Océan'* [It's L'Océan's porter here]. Joyce was delighted every time he heard these words.

To celebrate the centenary of Joyce's masterpiece *Ulysses*, the committee is organising Bloomsday in Ostend on Thursday 16 June 2022 as a free, public programme. Including:

1. The publication *Ostende!*

Printed in 400 copies, with sixteen pages in newspaper format, in which we present Ostend through prose, essays, historical and recent photographs and contemporary art. Contributions by Dirk Beirens, Philippe Braem, Koen Broucke, Paul Claes, Adriaan Gonnissen, Geert Lernout, Nicola Nord, Koen Peeters, Jean-Yves Plamont, Helen Simpson, Els Snick, Hendrik Tratsaert, Xavier Tricot, Jef Van Eynde, Lieven Van Den Abeele and Hans Verhaegen. This unique edition, designed by Lodewijk Joye, is numbered and multilingual: Dutch, French, English, German and the Ostend dialect. To be distributed free of charge during Bloomsday 2022 and despatched to Joyce lovers and interested parties all over the world.

(Editors: Xavier Tricot, Helen Simpson)

2. The launch of the website *Ostendiana*, a cultural history of Ostend

www.ostendiana.be
(hosted by Helen Simpson)

3. The exhibition *James* by Hans Verhaegen
(curated by Philippe Braem & [by'ro] desk for contemporary art)

4. Bloomsday event on 16 June, from 10.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., with exhibition, picnic, and animated walk (free of charge, all welcome)
Non-compulsory dress code: 'James and Nora Joyce, Ostend 1926'.

The programme and route are as follows:

10:30 opening reception for the exhibition *James* by Hans Verhaegen, Ostend Library,
+ interview with the artist (11:00)
+ launch of the publication *Ostende!* (11:00)

12:30 Picnic with lectures, on the beach near the Inside Outside surf club (bring your picnic and drinks)

14:00 James Joyce walk > along the seafront towards the west pier and back

Group walk accompanied by the Dixieland Streetband, with readings from *Ulysses* along the way.

17:00 – 17:30 Live performance from Joe Mullen (Irish singer-musician) on the beach at L'Océan (seafront / Albert I Promenade nr. 64)

Everyone is welcome to celebrate Bloomsday in Ostend! Spread the news!

At the same time, this is a promising and flying start for future events. Other initiatives around Joyce in Ostend are being planned for the years to come, which will showcase Ostend as a literary city.

Ostend Library, Wellingtonstraat 17 from 3-30 June 2022, vernissage 16 June, 10.30 a.m.
James (2020) by Hans Verhaegen, a series of eighteen works based on James Joyce's famous book *Ulysses*, will be exhibited in the Ostend Library for the special Bloomsday celebrations.
www.hansup.be

ORGANISATION – *de portiers van de Oceaen*
Dirk Beirens, Philippe Braem, Geert Lernout, Koen Peeters, Helen Simpson, Hendrik Tratsaert, Xavier Tricot, Jef Van Eynde and Lieven Van Den Abeele.

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