

Images of Ireland

The Politics of Identity 1867-1916

Identity is something that can be imagined, performed and perceived. It can exist in the imagination, leading to new worlds that are envisioned and explored. Sometimes searching for identity can inspire major events or create political or cultural developments. These forms of identity can then be examined from afar, either geographically or over time.

From the mid-nineteenth century, in Ireland, as in many places across Europe, there was a growing interest in identity. This was linked to Romantic Nationalism that celebrated historic

and artistic traditions as part of defining national identity. In north-east Ireland, this took the form of exploring areas such as history, archaeology, art and music of the past and present, with a view to shaping identity in the future.

This exhibition explores the fascinating search for identity that existed over a century ago. Many of the issues that engaged people at that time still have relevance today.

cultural
fusions



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