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▲ For Theon Greyjoy (Alfie Allen), more trouble to come. (DR)

Ireland, North by North

DECORS NATURELS. A l'occasion du début de la saison 4 de *Game of Thrones* diffusée aux Etats-Unis et disponible en France sur OCS, nous vous proposons un article paru l'année dernière dans le quotidien The New York Times. Le journaliste s'était rendue en Irlande du Nord sur quelques-uns des lieux de tournage, et avait tiré un parallèle intéressant entre l'univers de la série et cette belle région au passé tourmenté.

THE NEW YORK TIMES BY STEPHANIE ROSENBLOOM

Ireland, North by North-Westeros

Réf. au film d'Alfred Hitchcock *North By Northwest* *La Mort aux trousses* et à Westeros continent imaginaire de la série télévisée américaine *Game of Thrones* *Le Trône de fer*

Dark Hedges allée de hêtres aux formes tortueuses, dans le comté d'Antrim, un des lieux de tournage de la série / **serpentine** tortueux, sinueux / **stretch** étendue, bande / **glen** vallée étroite, vallon / **rapeseed** graine de colza / **to keep, kept, kept one's eyes peeled** garder les yeux grands ouverts, être très attentif / **gas pedal (US)** accélérateur / **to spot** repérer, apercevoir / **shadowy** sombre, ombragé / **centuries-old** séculaire / **beech tree** hêtre / **sinewy** tortueux / **to twist** se tordre / **goddess** déesse / **Durga** Durga ou Devi, déesse hindoue, épouse de Shiva, pourvue de 10 bras / **bough** rameau, branche / **to stretch** s'étendre / **to overlap** se chevaucher.

2. to haunt hanter / **ghost** fantôme / **lately** récemment, ces derniers temps.

The Dark Hedges are not easy to find. You must follow a serpentine road along a bucolic stretch of Northern Ireland, past sheep and glens and yellow fields of rapeseed until somewhere between the sleepy towns of Ballycastle and Ballymoney — if you keep your eyes peeled and your foot off the gas pedal — you spot a shadowy lane flanked by centuries-old beech trees. These are the Dark Hedges. Their sinewy branches twist toward the sky like the many arms of the Indian goddess Durga. The highest boughs stretch across the lane to the trees on the opposite side, their leaves overlapping, eclipsing the sun.

2. Locals say this place is haunted by a solitary ghost known as the Grey Lady. But lately she's had company. "No one ever used to come here," said David McAnirn, a tour guide.



▲ The Giant's Causeway near filming locations for the HBO series "Game of Thrones" in County Antrim.

(HAZEL THOMPSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES)



◀ In the Dark Hedges, where the HBO series "Game of Thrones" is filmed, a shadowy lane is flanked by centuries-old trees, in County Antrim, Northern Ireland.

(HAZEL THOMPSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

-Westeros

GoT

3. The reason for the deluge? It was written on the T-shirts of a handful of tourists snapping photos amid the Hedges: "Game of Thrones." Chronicling a war among dynasties for an Iron Throne in the imaginary land of Westeros, the HBO fantasy series is a cult hit suffused with intrigue, sex and moody landscapes. The latter is making Northern Ireland a magnet for fans who want to visit places like the Dark Hedges, which appear in the premiere of Season 2 when Arya Stark, a noble girl masquerading as a boy, flees in a cart from her enemies. Or Cushendun, the rocky beach where, later in that season, the priestess Melisandre gives birth in a cave to a supernatural assassin.



4. The Northern Ireland Tourist Board has been enticing viewers to visit these and other splendors with a "Game of Thrones" filming locations guide on its blog ("Explore the real world of Westeros"). After all, a film or television series can raise a country's profile. New Zealand has "Lord of the Rings." Sweden has "Wallander" and "Millennium." But the success of "Game of Thrones" is particularly welcome and

poignant in the capital, Belfast, which for decades had been synonymous with strife.

5. More than 3,500 people were killed in the sectarian fighting between British loyalists (mainly Protestants) and Irish nationalists (mostly Roman Catholics) between 1969 and the Good Friday peace agreement in 1998. The rest of the world, including people in other parts of Ireland, stayed away. "For most of my life I was in a film set," said McAnirn, who was a teenager in Belfast during those years. "And it was a horror movie."

6. In the mid-1990s, tourism industry pioneers like Caroline McComb, who along with her husband operates McComb's tours and coaches, were scratching their heads trying to figure out how to convince tourists that there was more to Belfast than the Troubles, as the 30-year period of fighting is known. "New York has its skyline," McComb said. "Sydney has its opera house. Everybody was deflated and was like, 'What do we have here?'"

7. These days, a lot. There's the Titanic Belfast museum, which tells the story of how Belfast once built the biggest ship →

3. *deluge* ici invasion / **a handful of** quelques / **to snap** prendre (une photo) / **amid** au (beau) milieu de / **to chronicle** raconter / **fantasy** fantastique / **to suffuse** se répandre sur, ici imprégner (de) / **moody** mélancolique, mystérieux / **latter** dernier (d'une énumération) / **magnet** aimant, pôle d'attraction / **to masquerade as** se déguiser en, se faire passer pour / **to flee, fled, fled** fuir / **cart** charrette / **rocky** rocheux / **priestess** prêtresse / **cave** grotte, caverne.

4. **to entice** attirer, séduire, ici convaincre / **location** lieu (de tournage) / **profile** notoriété, visibilité / **Lord of the Rings** *Le Seigneur des anneaux* / **decade** décennie / **strife** conflit(s).

5. **sectarian** sectaire (religieux) / **fighting** combat(s), lutte(s) / **loyalist** protestant d'Irlande du Nord souhaitant rester au sein du Royaume-Uni / **mainly** principalement / **nationalist** partisan de l'indépendance / **Good Friday peace agreement** accord du Vendredi Saint (également appelé accord de Belfast) / **set** plateau, décor.

6. **to operate** gérer, diriger / **coach** autocar / **to scratch one's head** se gratter/se creuser la tête / **to figure out** trouver / **skyline** perspective, horizon (profil des immeubles se découpant sur le ciel) / **deflated** découragé.

Caroline McComb nous fait découvrir l'Irlande du Nord sur la partie BASIC du CD de conversation. Belfast, la Terre du Milieu, le Titanic... Caroline vous dit tout !



7. tender ship transbordeur / **the likes of** des gens tels que / **Giant's Causeway** Chaussée des Géants, formation volcanique composée de 40 000 colonnes hexagonales juxtaposées (orgues basaltiques) / **UNESCO world heritage site** site inscrit au patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO.

8. breath inspiration, ici bouffée / **to proffer** offrir, proposer / **eager** avide, empressé, très désireux.

9. to bury enterrer / **clash** affrontement / **painful** douloureux / **The Troubles** (autre nom du) conflit nord-irlandais (recouvrant la période allant de la fin des années 1960 à 1998) / **jail** prison.

10. neighborhood (US)= neighbourhood (GB) quartier / **Crumlin Road Gaol** prison de Belfast (qui fut utilisée de 1846 à 1996) / **supposedly** soi-disant / **hot spot** endroit stratégique, haut lieu / **cell** cellule / **flogging** flagellation / **yard** cour / **to rent** louer / **wedding** mariage.

11. trail piste / **harbour** port / **working** en activité / **to locate** (se) situer / **Iron Islands** îles de fer / **surlly** maussade, revêche / **crew** équipage / **contest** concours / **footstep** pas.

12. steep escarpé, raide / **hill** colline, pente / **to trudge** cheminer, avancer péniblement / **graveyard** cimetière / **to bob** s'agiter, danser (sur l'eau) / **bell** cloche / **to clang** émettre un bruit métallique, cliqueter, tinter / **fog** brume, brouillard / **to become, came, come unmoored** rompre ses amarres / **to sail** voguer, partir / **Neverland** pays imaginaire dans lequel vit Peter Pan.

13. cost effective économique / **to tick the boxes** cocher les cases, ici (it) **ticked all the boxes** (l'Irlande du Nord) répondait à tous les critères.

14. to cast, cast, cast a shadow jeter une ombre, ici continuer de hanter (les lieux).

Iceland Islande / **to cull** recueillir, sélectionner / **to flee, fled, fled** s'enfuir / **backdrop** décor / **to be shipwrecked** faire naufrage / **swordsman** manieur d'épée / **to chase** pourchasser.

in the world; the recently restored S.S. *Nomadic*, an original tender ship to the *Titanic* that transported the likes of Charlie Chaplin and Elizabeth Taylor; and the visitor center at the Giant's Causeway, a UNESCO world heritage site.

Changes

8. "It's a real breath of fresh air to be able to look forward instead of back," said McComb, who began proffering a private nine-hour "Game of Thrones" locations tour. "People in Northern Ireland are all so eager to make tourism work for us."

9. That's not to say the past is buried. This is a country of ghosts. And there are still sporadic clashes. But as the city looks to the future, there is less reticence about its painful history. "When we first started doing tours," McAnirn explained, "people said, 'Don't mention the Troubles.' 'Don't mention Crumlin Road jail,'" he said, referring to the prison that held both loyalists and nationalists during that time.

10. Now tours of the neighborhoods at the epicenter of the Troubles are as common as rain. And not only can you take a guided tour of Crumlin Road Gaol, but there are "paranormal tours" of its supposedly ghostly hot spots, like a condemned man's cell and the flogging room. The prison's corridors and exercise yards can also be rented for parties, concerts and wedding receptions (for lovers with a sense of irony).

Following the trail

11. Among the most idyllic spots shown in the series is Ballintoy Harbour, built in the 1700s and still a working harbor, located 60 miles north of Belfast. This is where in Season 2 Theon Greyjoy returns to the Iron Islands. It is also where he meets the surly crew of his ship, the *Sea Bitch*. I arrived one Saturday afternoon with some "Game of Thrones" fans, winners of a contest who were spending the day walking in the footsteps of favorite characters.

12. Off a bus and down a steep hill we trudged, past a graveyard, to Ballintoy Harbour, where fishing boats bobbed, their bells clanging softly. Fog made it impossible to separate ocean and sky. If a boat were to become unmoored, you might believe it could sail to Neverland.

13. "It's one of the most beautiful places in Northern Ireland," said Naomi Liston, who works in the locations department for "Game of Thrones." When I asked her why HBO chose Northern Ireland, Liston said there were many considerations: Is it cost effective? Does the area offer evocative filming locations? Does it have studio space? "Northern Ireland," she said, "ticked all the boxes."

14. Everything in Northern Ireland — past, present, future, fantasy — overlaps like the leaves of the Dark Hedges. The past casts a long shadow. But, here and there, light is coming through. ●

On the map

While "Game of Thrones" is filmed in places like Morocco, Iceland and Croatia, home base is Northern Ireland. Here's a fan's guide to some publicly accessible locations north and south of Belfast, culled from details provided by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Northern Ireland Screen.

NORTH OF BELFAST

1 The Dark Hedges, where Arya flees in a cart (Season 2).

2 Cushendun, the caves where the priestess Melisandre gives birth to a supernatural assassin (Season 2).

3 Murlough Bay, the backdrop for Theon's horse ride with his sister and where Davos Seaworth is shipwrecked (Season 3).

4 Ballintoy and Ballintoy Harbour, where Theon sets eyes on his ship and crew (Season 2).

5 Larrybane, the site of Renly's camp and where viewers meet the female swordsman, Brienne (Season 2).

6 Downhill Beach, where Melisandre burns the old gods (Season 2).

SOUTH OF BELFAST

7 Tollymore Forest Park, where dismembered Wildlings are found and where Theon is chased by his torturer (Seasons 1 and 3).

8 Castle Ward, home of Winterfell (Season 1).

9 Audley's Field, the site of Robb's camp (Season 2).

10 Inch Abbey, where Robb's army is seen at the Trident (Season 1).