

Programme announced for Dublin Theatre Festival
18 days and nights of exceptional theatre
29 September – 16 October 2016

Willie White, Artistic Director Dublin Theatre Festival has announced the programme for Dublin Theatre Festival, now in its 59th year. Over 18 days and nights this autumn, Dublin will host a myriad of exciting and intriguing/impelling/provocative theatrical experiences from Ireland and across the globe, for which the festival is renowned. The 2016 programme showcases the diversity of contemporary theatre and includes drama, opera, both classical and experimental, dance, performance art, documentary theatre and film.

Willie White said: *'This year's festival has twenty eight shows that offer many great days and nights out in the city this autumn. The programme is aimed at all ages and devised to appeal to those attending for the very first time as well as to seasoned theatre goers. We set out each year to make the best festival possible that feels authentically 'of Dublin', presenting the city's vibrant theatre scene, complemented by a keen international perspective. Artists use the festival as a platform to take risks and so do our audiences, as Irish theatre continues to develop in exciting new directions. The works in the festival have common concerns about how we live, how we make sense of the past and how we can live together now and in the future. This programme is the culmination of plans and conversations that have spanned many years. The work will delight, inspire and challenge, as the best theatre should, and I look forward to artists being met by an adventurous public that is excited for the possibilities of theatre in 2016 and beyond.'*

Kean Lanyon
07973 843133
keanlanyon.com

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www.keanlanyon.
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With more details below, highlights include:

- The festival plays a key role in fostering the ambition of Irish companies and this year collaborates with **Corn Exchange Theatre** to present the Irish premieres of Anton Chekhov's celebrated comedy **The Seagull** in a new version by Michael West and Annie Ryan at the Gaiety Theatre.
- while at O'Reilly Theatre **Michael Colgan** will direct **First Love** by Samuel Beckett starring **Barry McGovern**.
- **Death at Intervals** from **Kellie Hughes** and **Galway International Arts Festival** at Smock Alley with Olwen Fouéré (last seen in the acclaimed *Riverrun*) and Raymond Scannell.
- At the **Gate Theatre**, we'll see the Irish premiere of **The Father** by Florian Zeller in a translation by Christopher Hampton.

A wealth of world premieres include:

- **Opera Theatre Company's** production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in a new translation by Roddy Doyle;
- a new adaptation of *Swan Lake / Loch na hEala* rooted in the Midlands of Ireland by **Michael Keegan-Dolan**;
- *Donegal*, a musical play written by Frank McGuinness with music by Kevin Doherty at the Abbey Theatre, (Abbey stage);
- a new play by Carmel Winters, *The Remains of Maisie Duggan* at the Abbey Theatre (Peacock stage)
- *These Rooms* by **CoisCéim Dance Theatre** and **ANU**;
- **Druid's** production of *Helen & I* by Meadhbh McHugh. Annabelle Comyn directs a cast that includes Cathy Belton, Rebecca O'Mara, Seána O'Hanlon and Paul Hickey
- *Breaking Rainbows* from visual artist and shepherd Orla Barry;
- *The Circus Animals' Desertion* by **Brokentalkers**; commemorating the first anniversary of the Carrickmines tragedy;
- *Ireland Shed a Tear?* by **Michael Collins**; *Alien Documentary* by **Una McKeivitt**;
- **THEATREclub** refuse to commemorate 1916 in *It's Not Over*, their version of Sean O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars*;
- an experimental opera *The Last Siren* from **Ian Wilson**.

A mix of theatrical voices from around the world, this year include exceptional works from Australia, Belgium, Spain, Iceland, UK, Norway, Sweden and Germany and the UK. Productions include:

- *Ancient Rain* (**Far and Away Productions** and **Brink Productions**, Australia) starring Camille O'Sullivan;
- Australian singer-songwriter Paul Kelly and Feargal Murray in a new music theatre work inspired by the works of W.B. Yeats and other great Irish poets;
- **BERLIN** (Belgium), with a documentary style approach to film and theatre, tell the story of survival, hope and love in an abandoned town in *ZVIZDAL (Chernobyl – so far so close)*;
- from **Kriðpleir and LÓKAL Performing Arts**, (Iceland) *Crisis Meeting; Backstage in Biscuit Land* from **Touretteshero** stars Jess Thom, who has Tourettes syndrome, in a show weaving comedy, puppetry and singing;
- from **El Conde de Torrefiel**, one of the most exciting and provocative theatre companies to emerge from Spain in recent years, comes *Guerrilla*;
- **Verk Produksjoner** (Norway) looks ahead into our uncertain future, with satirical and political undertones, in *Wishful Beginnings*;
- **Paines Plough** and **Pentabus Theatre's** bring their internationally successful production of *Every Brilliant Thing* (UK)

- and from one of Sweden's most interesting performance and film artists **Gunilla Heilborns**, ***This is Not a Love Story*** is a surprising feel-good choreographic road movie.
- The 2016 festival will open with a riotous, irreverent and funny take on William Shakespeare's ***A Midsummer Night's Dream*** from **Lyric Hammersmith** and **Filter Theatre** (UK) at Bord Gáis Energy Theatre.
- Dublin Theatre Festival has again teamed up with **The Ark** to present a number of internationally acclaimed works for children including work from **Mary-Francis Doherty** in association with **Young at Art** (UK), **Junges Ensemble Stuttgart** (JES) (Germany) and **Teater Pero** (Sweden).
- The festival experience continues off stage with **FESTIVAL+**, a series of panel discussions, critical events and In Development showcases giving audiences a first look at 5 exciting new works in progress by Irish companies.

Priority booking for friends is now open.

To become a friend of the Festival go to www.dublintheatrefestival.com

Public booking opens 16 August at 10am.

The Shows in More Detail

Irish Theatre

Dublin Theatre Festival 2016 will open at Bord Gáis Energy Theatre with a comic gem - William Shakespeare's ***A Midsummer Night's Dream*** from **Lyric Hammersmith** and **Filter Theatre** (UK); a gleefully mischievous production which matches furious physical comedy with an equally electrifying soundscape including a live band performing everything from doo-wop to grunge and a tiny orchestra of electronic tweets, buzzes and magical trills.

The Seagull by Anton Chekhov in a new version by Michael West and Annie Ryan in a **Dublin Theatre Festival** and **Corn Exchange Theatre** collaboration. Premiering at the Gaiety Theatre, this celebration of love and art is a study of what we aspire to most and how easily we keep our happiness just out of reach. This new version by The Corn Exchange shows how deeply relevant, radically contemporary and exquisitely funny Chekhov remains.

Opera Theatre Company's production of Mozart's ***Don Giovanni*** in a new translation by Roddy Doyle also premieres at the Gaiety Theatre. Featuring the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, *Don Giovanni* is one of the most visceral and thrilling of all operas, beginning with seduction and murder and dramatically continuing with every misdeed imaginable in a truly gripping story of guilt, regret, love and death.

The Abbey Theatre presents two world premieres for the Festival; on the Abbey stage a new musical play by Frank McGuinness, one of Ireland's greatest playwrights with music by Kevin Doherty. In a story about family, place and country music, ***Donegal*** tells of the Day family, who are Irish country music royalty and Irene is their queen. Her relatives are completely dependent on her success. But as Irene's star fades the Days are facing financial destruction. On the Peacock Stage an explosive new play by Carmel Winters, ***The Remains of Maisie Duggan***. Only Maisie's funeral would bring her daughter back to Ireland. But it's a curious

class of corpse that greets Kathleen on her arrival. Kathleen's return brings old family troubles to the surface in this riotous dark comedy.

First Love by Samuel Beckett runs for six performances only, and stars Barry McGovern, regarded by many as one of the leading interpreters of Samuel Beckett's work. **First Love** is directed by Michael Colgan and is his final production as he leaves the Gate after 33 years as Artistic Director. Written in 1946, Beckett's novella *First Love* is full of his rich, lyrical prose. This darkly comic story explores how love fails us and how we fail love. Following an international tour this Gate production comes to Dublin for the first time.

From **Druid**, a debut play **Helen & I** by talented young Tuam writer Meadhbh McHugh. Annabelle Comyn will direct a cast that includes Cathy Belton, Rebecca O'Mara, Seána O'Hanlon and Paul Hickey. With their father dying, Lynn and her older sister Helen return to their childhood home. The weather is hot and sticky and relationships soon tangle into an intractable mess. How far back do you have to go, in order to move forward?

Brokentaklers return with a major new dance theatre performance **The Circus Animals' Desertion**. This exciting new work from the makers of *The Blue Boy* is a poetic response to the imagining of nations, inspired by the Automatic Script experiments of Georgie and William Butler Yeats, in which they called upon the spirit world to assist with their creativity.

These Rooms brings together **CoisCéim Dance Theatre** and **ANU** for an immersive performance that cross-pollinates contemporary dance, visual art and theatre. Audiences will be thrust into the events of 1916 through the eyes of civilians in North King Street at the moment when the rising invaded their homes. Eye-witness testimonies from 38 female voices are combined with newly released findings of the closed British military inquiry in a fearless and embodied physical performance investigating questions of dignity and cultural trauma, belonging and dispossession.

The **Gate Theatre** present the Irish premiere of **The Father** by Florian Zeller in a translation by Christopher Hampton, which looks inside the mind of Andre, a retired dancer living with his adult daughter Anne and her husband. An intriguing and compelling black comedy, *The Father (Le Père)* won Best Play 2014 in the Molière Awards, France's highest theatrical honour.

'In a year of revisionism, whitewashing, apologies and double speak; We refuse to commemorate 1916. It's not over. It never started. Let's look at 1966.'

THEATREclub's version of Sean O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars* – **It's Not Over** – will bring back rioting like it's 1926. *'It will take place in a theatre, but it is not a play. It is a campaign. You will watch a re-enactment of the past 50 years of violent political conflict.'*

From **Kellie Hughes** and **Galway International Arts Festival** **Death at Intervals** is performed by Olwen Fouéré (last seen in the acclaimed *Riverrun*) and Raymond Scannell. Inspired by Nobel Prize winner José Saramago's darkly humorous novel, and developed in collaboration with an award winning creative team, this production combines theatre, music and original song lyrics in an unconventional and touching duet between death and her musician.

Breaking Rainbows is a live performance and a video installation, created by visual artist and shepherd **Orla Barry** that interweaves coincidence, language, humour and

a sense of despair at the direction we are taking the world. With three performers and a year's production of her own wool, Orla Barry addresses our problematic relationship with the natural world.

Michael Keegan-Dolan, one of Ireland's foremost dance and theatre-makers presents a new adaptation of *Swan Lake* which will tour to the UK in 2017. With outstanding choreography and powerful imagery, *Swan Lake / Loch na hEala* is rooted in the Midlands of Ireland where ancient mythology and the modern world meet. With a new score written and performed live by Dublin-based band Slow Moving Clouds, the 14 performers will be led by Mikel Murfi.

Written to commemorate the first anniversary of the Carrickmines tragedy, *Ireland Shed a Tear?*, a new play by acclaimed writer and actor **Michael Collins**. Using song and poetry, it portrays the life experiences of a Traveller family, while engaging the wider community in a dynamic and light-hearted way.

In *Alien Documentary*, **Una McKevitt** blends fiction and reality to create characters who, through their everyday conversations and the personal histories they share, demonstrate the power of companionship and courage. Three men are talking. Same as every other day. But it's the stories in between that make this a day they won't forget. Starring PJ Gallagher, Molly O'Mahony and James Scales.

An experimental opera *The Last Siren* by **Ian Wilson** embraces improvisation and electronica and is a memorable sonic and theatrical experience. Centring on a hermit-like woman who believes that she is the last of the Sirens, it stars acclaimed Irish singer and Jazz FM's Vocalist of the Year Lauren Kinsella with soundscape by Ireland's leading sound art collective The Quiet Club (Danny McCarthy and Mick O'Shea).

World Theatre

Irish chanteuse Camille O'Sullivan returns to the festival joined by iconic Australian singer-songwriter, Paul Kelly and her long-time collaborator, pianist Feargal Murray, in a new music theatre work inspired by the works of W.B. Yeats and other great Irish poets. *Ancient Rain* (Far and Away Productions and Brink Productions, Australia) combines the spoken word with a song-cycle of new compositions in stories of love, loss and redemption.

With a documentary style approach to film and theatre, **BERLIN** (Belgium) tell a poignant story of survival, hope and love in an abandoned town in **ZVIZDAL (Chernobyl – so far so close)**. This is the story of Pétro and Nadia, an elderly couple that refused to leave their village during the evacuation from the forbidden zone in the aftermath of the nuclear disaster in 1986. From 2011 and 2016, BERLIN travelled to Chernobyl to spend time and talk with them, to see how people live, work, and survive in an environment where time seems to stand still.

From *Kriðpleir and LÓKAL Performing Arts*, (Iceland) comes *Crisis Meeting*. In the midst of writing a major arts funding application and with a deadline approaching, they have decided to let the audience in on the group's working methods and inner dynamics. An introduction to the strange world of Kriðpleir; a golden opportunity for art enthusiasts and professionals to get on the same level as the performers, watch them at work and contemplate the mysterious ways of the performing arts.

Jess Thom has Tourettes syndrome, a condition that makes her say 'biscuit' 16,000 times a day. Her unusual neurology gives her a unique perspective on life; one she's unleashing on the world. From **Touretteshero** (UK) comes this two-woman solo show, **Backstage in Biscuit Land**, weaving comedy, puppetry, singing, and incredible tics to explore spontaneity, creativity, disability, and things you never knew would make you laugh.

El Conde de Torrefiel, is one of the most exciting and provocative theatre companies to emerge from Spain. **Guerrilla** questions the future of a generation of young Europeans. We follow a group of people taking part in seemingly banal activities: a tai chi lesson, a conference, a night out. They seem relaxed and confident, but behind the scenes we can read their thoughts. A black comedy about oppression and the awakening of awareness.

Verk Produksjoner (Norway) are known for their epic and vaudevillesque style which changes swiftly between performance, storytelling and improvisation. In **Wishful Beginnings**, their newest work, the Company looks ahead, with satirical and political undertones, into our uncertain future.

Paines Plough returns to Dublin with an Irish premiere of the worldwide hit **Every Brilliant Thing**, a co-production with **Pentabus Theatre** (UK). A beautiful, heart wrenching and very funny play about the lengths we go to for those we love. *You're six years old. Mum's in hospital. Dad says she's 'done something stupid'. She finds it hard to be happy. You make a list of everything that's brilliant about the world. Everything worth living for.*

Gunilla Heilborns is one of Sweden's most interesting performance and film artists, with a unique approach to text, movement, video and imagery, spiced with dry humour and filmic timing. **This is Not a Love Story** tells of two reluctant heroes – with a disarming simplicity, they switch between dance and scattered questioning. The journey becomes not about the destination, but the transformation and reflection along the way, in this feel-good choreographic road movie.

[Theatre for Children](#)

Once again Dublin Theatre Festival has teamed up with **The Ark** to present a number of internationally acclaimed works for Children. Programmed by Maria Fleming, theatre programmer at The Ark, this year includes work from **Mary-Francis Doherty** in association with **Young at Art** (UK), **Junges Ensemble Stuttgart** (JES) (Germany) and **Teater Pero** (Sweden). Did you ever wonder what happened to Hansel and Gretel? You might find out as Johannes and Margarethe welcome you into a world full of strange tales and magical objects. Or fall in love with Aston – a little dog with a very big heart – as he shows us just how valuable even the smallest object can be. And don't miss the party of the year as Katie turns 12 years old! Alongside some interactive fun and games, share Katie's excitement (and anxiety) about that life-changing move into secondary school. Three fresh and engaging shows created for children that adults will also delight in.

The festival experience continues off stage with **FESTIVAL+**, a series of panel discussions, critical events and In Development showcases allowing audiences a peek at 5 exciting new works in progress by Irish companies.

Dublin Theatre Festival also continues the tradition of celebrating extraordinary contributions made to world theatre. In recent years the Festival has celebrated Tom Murphy and Brian Friel as part of the **Gala Night**. This year the event will honour the work of actress **Sinead Cusack**.

Booking details:

Priority booking for Friends of the Festival opens 26 July at 1pm

Public booking opens 16 August at 10am

To become a friend of Dublin Theatre Festival go to

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Tickets may be purchased:

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For further press information please contact:

Sharon Kean 07973 843133 sharon@keanlanyon.com

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