

IRISH REPERTORY THEATRE

presents the World Premiere of

The Gifts You Gave to the Dark.

A performance on screen

Remind Me

Mes

Decline

Accept

By Darren Murphy

Directed by
Caitriona McLaughlin

IRISH REPERTORY THEATRE

CHARLOTTE MOORE, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | CIARÁN O'REILLY, PRODUCING DIRECTOR

WORLD PREMIERE

THE GIFTS YOU GAVE TO THE DARK

BY **DARREN MURPHY**

DIRECTED BY **CATRÍONA MCLAUGHLIN**

WITH

**MARTY REA, SEÁN MCGINLEY
AND MARIE MULLEN**

CAST

Tom	Marty Rea
Uncle Larry	Seán McGinley
Rose	Marie Mullen

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to Scott McKendry for the blue of the delft, and to Jimmy McAleavey for being our routemaster and guide.

The Gifts You Gave in the Dark was made with the assistance of the Irish Abroad Unit of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Irish Arts Council, and The Consulate General of Ireland in New York and the Howard Gilman Foundation.



THIS PRODUCTION IS MADE POSSIBLE WITH PUBLIC FUNDS FROM THE NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS, THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS, AXE-HOUGHTON FOUNDATION, AND OTHER PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS AND CORPORATIONS, AND WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE MANY GENEROUS MEMBERS OF IRISH REPERTORY THEATRE'S PATRON'S CIRCLE.

TIME & PLACE

Belfast, Northern Ireland and Dublin, Ireland

Running Time: 25 minutes

NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

The Gifts You Gave to the Dark was a way of mitigating an imagined worst-case scenario by writing it. I'm currently in Dublin with my wife, having travelled down from Belfast on the evening prior to lockdown, the day before St. Patrick's Day, and my parents live in Hampshire, a region with one of the highest numbers of Covid-related fatalities in the UK. I felt both anxious and helpless, as the UK government implemented lockdown five days after the Irish government. This delay, for those of us watching the UK news with increasing incredulity, seemed to valorise an insane gamble that didn't pay off: herd immunity. Vulnerable workers in their seventies were given conflicting information, advising them to stay at home but with no assurance that their jobs would be furloughed. Naturally, workers in lower paid positions continued to go into work until instructed to remain at home by their employers. My mother eventually did heed my advice to stay at home, but only after five days of my pleading with her, and only after official notification. I wrote the piece during those five days. I was also missing Belfast, and that journey north, so the two things melded together in my mind.

Online theatre goes against everything that real theatre celebrates: the act of sitting in the dark with strangers who, by a process that still mystifies us, become an ad hoc community for the duration of a single performance. And yet, in this moment, this digital storytelling thread that connects playwright, actor, director, and audience, is all we have. I wanted to do something that acknowledged that it was neither theatre nor film, but a strange hybrid, embracing the potential of the technology, not as a temporary space, but as a reflection of how we actually experience this savage and life-changing crisis. It's a journey, a memory, and a passing over. And it's an attempt to offer succour and comfort in the bleakest of circumstances, over separations of geography and time. It's a Belfast story.

- Darren Murphy, May 2020

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST



MARTY REA (Tom) *Epiphany, DruidShakespeare - Richard II* (Irish Times Award Best Actor), *King of the Castle, The Beauty Queen of*

Leenane, Waiting For Godot (Herald Angel Award/ Edinburgh fringe Festival), *DruidShakespeare - The Henriad Cycle, Brigit, Be Infants in Evil, The Colleen Bawn, Druid Murphy - Three Plays by Tom Murphy* (Druid Theatre, Galway) *The Glass Menagerie, Beginning, The Great Gatsby, Juno and the Paycock, The Importance of Being Earnest, The Caretaker, An Ideal Husband, My Cousin Rachel, Little Women, Hay Fever, Salomé, The Glass Menagerie, Arcadia* (Gate Theatre, Dublin) *Thirst (and other bits of Flann), Othello, She Stoops To Conquer, The Hanging Gardens, Major Barbara, John Gabriel Borkman, The Rivals, Only An Apple, An Ideal Husband, The Big House, Saved, The Importance of Being Earnest* (Abbey Theatre, Dublin) *Improbable Frequency* (E59 Street Theatre, New York); *Pentecost, Spokesong* (The Lyric Theatre, Belfast and Rough Magic Theatre Co., Dublin) *Philadelphia, Here I Come!, Hamlet* (Irish Times Best Actor) (Second Age Theatre Co.), *Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme*



SEÁN MCGINLEY (*Uncle Larry*) Born in Donegal and graduated from University College Galway, Seán was a member of the Druid

Theatre Company from 1977-1989. Plays included *The Playboy of the Western World, Conversations on a Homecoming, Famine* by Tom Murphy, *The Glass Menagerie, A Touch of the Poet, Loot, Endgame* along with *Geography of a Horsedreamer and Action*, both by Sam Shepard. Other theatre includes *The Iceman Cometh, The Power of Darkness, The Shaughraun, The Corsican Brothers, A Whistle in the Dark* (Irish Theatre Award and Time Out London Award) – all at the Abbey Theatre and most recently *Ages of the Moon* by Sam Shepard at the Peacock Theatre, Dublin and the Atlantic Theater, New York, with Stephen Rea. Television credits include; “Family” (BBC) “Who Bombed Birmingham” (Granada); “The Street” (Ch.4), “Bleak House” (BBC), “Minder”, “Taggart”, “Waking the Dead”, “The Vice”, “Cold Feet”, “Midsomer Murders” and “New Tricks”

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and "Love/Hate" Films include: "The Field", "Michael Collins", "The Butcher Boy", "Braveheart", "Trojan Eddie", "The General", "The Tiger's Tail", "The Claim", "Dead Bodies", "The Wind That Shakes the Barley", "The Tiger's Tail", "Simon Magus", "The Closer You Get" and "On A Clear Day" (IFTA Award for Best Supporting Actor in a Feature film).



MARIE MULLEN (*Rose*)
Crestfall, Sive, The Beauty Queen of Leenane, Druid Shakespeare, Brigit, Bailegangáire, The Colleen Bawn,

Conversations on a Homecoming (Irish Times Theatre Award for Best Supporting Actress), *Famine, The Cripple of Inishmaan, Druid Synge* (Irish Times Theatre Award for Best Actress; Herald Angel Award/Edinburgh Fringe Festival), *Long Day's Journey Into Night, The Playboy of the Western World, The Beauty Queen of Leenane* (Tony Award for Best Actress in a Leading Role)

DARREN MURPHY (*Playwright*) Darren is Belfast based and an Associate Playwright at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, where he has also taught. He is currently working towards a Creative

Practice PhD in Playwriting at Queen's University, Belfast, where he also teaches playwriting. Plays include: *Many Mansions* (Abbey Theatre commission); *Bunny's Vendetta* (commissioned for the inaugural UK City of Culture, Derry, 2013); *Irish Blood, English Heart*, Trafalgar Studios (London's West End); *Tabloid Caligula, Arcola*, London/E59E, NY, for the Brits Off-Broadway Festival); *The Flats*, Chelsea Theatre (shortlisted for the Verity Bargate Award), and *A Road in Winter*, Soho (Westminster Prize). He is represented by Nick Quinn at The Agency, and is published by Oberon.

CATRÍONA McLAUGHLIN (*Director*) Caitriona is currently Associate Director of The Abbey Theatre, Ireland where she will direct Marina Carr's six hour play cycle *The Boy*. In 2020 she was to direct Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio* for Irish National Opera and create a production of Sean O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars* with a community cast from the East Wall region of Dublin to be performed on The Abbey Stage, both have been cancelled because of Covid-19. Caitriona has directed primarily in London, Dublin, and New York. Recent productions at the Abbey include *On Raftery's Hill* (Best Director,

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2019 Irish Times Theatre Awards), *Citysong* by Dylan Coburn Grey (ITTA nomination Best New Play), *Two Pints* by Roddy Doyle, *Josephine K and The Algorithms* by Stacey Gregg and *Monsters Dinosaurs Ghosts* by Jimmy McAleavey. Projects elsewhere include *This Hostel Life* by Melatu Uchenna Okorie and *Evangelia Rigaki* for Irish National Opera, *Blood in the Dirt* by Rory Gleeson for Landmark Productions, *Autumn Royal*, by Kevin Barry, and *Foyle Punt* for The LocalGroup. Opera includes Vaughan Williams *Riders to the Sea*, and Lennox Berkeley's *A Dinner Engagement*, both for Wexford Opera. *Banished* by Stephen McNeff, *III Ballo delle Ingrate*, *Monteverdi* and *Scipio's Dream*, by Judith Weir for The Royal Irish Academy of Music. Work with youth and emerging theatre artists includes, directing and teaching at; The Lir Academy Dublin, and Mountview Drama School, London. Associate Director of The Playground Studio, London and Education Director at Theatre Peckham, London.

CHARLOTTE MOORE (Artistic Director)

Recent directing assignments include: *Molly Sweeney: A Performance on Screen*, *London Assurance*, *Love Noël*, *The Plough and the Stars*, *On a Clear*

Day You Can See Forever, *Three Small Irish Masterpieces* by William Butler Yeats, Lady Gregory and J.M. Synge. New York premiere of Brian Friel's *The Home Place*, World premiere of Larry Kirwan's *Rebel in the Soul*, *Finian's Rainbow*, The Phyllis Newman Women's Health Initiative gala, Truman Capote's *A Christmas Memory*, and *Juno and the Paycock* and *Dancing at Lughnasa*. New York stage appearances include *A Perfect Ganesh*, *Meet Me in St. Louis*, *The Perfect Party*, *Morning's at Seven*, *Private Lives* (with Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton), and many performances with the New York Shakespeare Festival. Ms. Moore has received two Tony Award nominations, the Outer Critics Circle Award, the Drama Desk Award, the Drama League Award, the Irish America Top 100 Irish Award, The Eugene O'Neill Lifetime Achievement Award, and the 2008 Irish Women Of The Year Award. She is the recipient of the St. Patrick's Committee in Holyoke's John F. Kennedy National Award, and has thrice been listed as one of the "Top 50 Power Women" in *Irish America Magazine*. Charlotte was named "Director of the Year" by *The Wall Street Journal* in 2011. Charlotte has been inducted in to the Irish America

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Hall of Fame and was awarded the Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad, 2019 by President Michael D. Higgins.

CIARÁN O'REILLY (*Producing Director*)

Favorite directing credits include: *Lady G: Plays and Whisperings of Lady Gregory, Dublin Carol, The Shadow of a Gunman, The Seafarer, The Dead, 1904, Shining City, Off the Meter, On the Record, The Weir* (Calloway Nom.), *Banished Children of Eve, The Emperor Jones*, (Callaway Award, O'Neill Credo Award, Drama Desk, Drama League, and Lucille Lortel Nom.), *The Hairy Ape* (Drama Desk Drama League and Callaway Nom.), *Philadelphia, Here I Come!* (Drama Desk Nom). Irish Rep acting roles include *Da, Juno and the Paycock, Dancing at Lughnasa, Molly Sweeney, Candida, Aristocrats, A Whistle in the Dark, The Shaughraun*, and *The Irish and How They Got That Way*. He appeared in the Roundabout Theatre Company's production of *A Touch of the Poet* with Gabriel Byrne. He has appeared at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin and made his Broadway debut in *The Corn is Green*. Films include *The Devil's Own* (starring Harrison Ford), "Law & Order," "The Irish...and How They Got That Way," "Third Watch," "Bored to Death" and

"The Knick." Ciarán has recently been inducted in to the *Irish America Hall of Fame* and has been awarded the Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad, 2019 by President Michael D. Higgins.

IRISH REPERTORY THEATRE Founded by Ciarán O'Reilly and Charlotte Moore, Irish Repertory Theatre opened its doors in 1988 with Sean O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars* and is now in its 31st Season. Irish Rep is currently the only year-round theatre company in North America devoted to bringing Irish and Irish-American works to the stage. Recognized with the Jujamcyn Theatres Award, a special Drama Desk Award for "Excellence in Presenting Distinguished Irish Drama," the Lucille Lortel Award for "Outstanding Body of Work," and a 2013 Outer Critics Circle Special Achievement Award in recognition of 25 years of producing outstanding theatre. Irish Rep presents the very best in Irish theatre, from the masters to the new generation of Irish and Irish-American writers who are transforming the stage. Located in the heart of New York's Off-Broadway community, Irish Rep offers an engaging perspective on the Irish and their unique contributions to the world of drama.

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The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

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A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTORS

Sometimes the planets align...

The average time it takes to put together a show – be it a live theatrical presentation, a movie or even a workshop – is about two years.

In quarantine, playwright Darren Murphy felt compelled to paint his covid world and he did so in real time.

Within days, Director Caitríona McLoughlin read his fresh and vibrant piece and said “Yes.”

Ms. McLaughlin approached Irish Repertory Theatre to produce and we said “Yes.” The project was cast the following day with three of Ireland’s finest actors and within a week, it was completed.

If the Age of Corona has taught us anything, it is that time is precious.

There is nothing more authentic and powerful than a report from the front lines, and we are very proud to be a part of this moving project.

CHARLOTTE MOORE, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

CIARÁN O'REILLY, PRODUCING DIRECTOR