

# IRISH REPERTORY THEATRE

A STAGED READING AS PART OF

The Letters Series.



A.R. GURNEY'S

LOVE

LETTERS

DIRECTED BY CIARÁN O'REILLY

STARRING

**MATTHEW BRODERICK & LAURA BENANTI**

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# IRISH REPERTORY THEATRE

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

presents

A STAGED READING AS PART OF THE LETTERS SERIES

ON THE FRANCIS J. GREENBURGER MAINSTAGE

# LOVE LETTERS

BY **A.R. GURNEY**

DIRECTED BY **CIARÁN O'REILLY**

STARRING

**MATTHEW BRODERICK** AND **LAURA BENANTI**

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**LOVE LETTERS** IS PRESENTED BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH DRAMATICS PLAY SERVICE, INC., NEW YORK

**LOVE LETTERS** WAS PRESENTED AT THE LONG WHARF THEATRE,  
M. EDGAR ROSENBLUM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; ARVIN BROWN, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

IRISH REPERTORY THEATRE'S 2022-2023 SEASON IS SUPPORTED, IN PART, BY YOUR TAXPAYER DOLLARS THROUGH THE NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTSWITH THE SUPPORT OF GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL AND THE NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE AND THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY COUNCIL; AS WELL AS CULTURE IRELAND, THE AGENCY FOR THE PROMOTION OF IRISH ARTS WORLDWIDE; THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE CONSULATE OF IRELAND IN NEW YORK; THE HOWARD GILMAN FOUNDATION, THE SHUBERT FOUNDATION, THE CHARINA ENDOWMENT FUND, THE HAROLD & MIMI STEINBERG CHARITABLE TRUST, IRELAND FUNDS AMERICA, MUTUAL OF AMERICA, THE MICHAEL TUCH FOUNDATION, AND OUR MANY GENEROUS MEMBERS AND DONORS.

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## CAST

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*Andrew Makepeace Ladd III*..... Matthew Broderick\*  
*Melissa Gardner*..... Laura Benanti\*

\*Member of Actors Equity

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## TIME & PLACE

Letters exchanged over the span  
of 1937-1985.

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**Running Time:**

1 hour and 45 minutes with a 15 minute intermission

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## WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

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**MATTHEW BRODERICK** (*Andrew Makepeace Ladd III*) made his stage debut at 17 in Horton Foote's *On Valentine's Day* opposite his father, James Broderick. Off-

Broadway: *Torch Song Trilogy* (OCC, Villager Award), *The Widow Claire*. He has appeared twice at Irish Rep in *The Seafarer* and *Shining City* (combined Obie Award with *Evening at the Talk House* at The New Group in 2017). Broadway: *Brighton Beach Memoirs* (Tony, OCC, Theatre World awards), *Biloxi Blues*, *How to Succeed in Business...* (Tony, DD, OCC awards), *Night Must Fall*, *Taller Than a Dwarf*, *The Producers* (Tony, DD, OCC nominations), *The Foreigner*, *The Philanthropist*, *The Odd Couple*, *Nice Work If You Can Get It*, *It's Only a Play* and *Plaza Suite*. Films include: *Max Dugan Returns*, *WarGames*, *1918*, *On Valentine's Day*, *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, *Project X*, *Ladyhawke*, *Biloxi Blues*, *Glory*, *Family Business*, *The Freshman*, *The Lion King*, *Infinity*, *The Cable Guy*, *Addicted to Love*, *Election*, *You Can Count on Me*, *The Last Shot*, *Marie and Bruce*, *Wonderful World*, *The Producers*, *Bee Movie*, *Tower Heist*, *Rules Don't Apply*, *Margaret*, *Manchester By The Sea*, and the upcoming *No Hard Feelings*. Coming soon: *Only Murders in the Building*, and *Painkiller* for Netflix.



**LAURA BENANTI** (*Melissa Gardner*) hailed by *The New York Times* for her "effortless" vocals, and by the *New York Post* for her ability to "whip up laughs out

of thin air," Ms. Benanti first took Broadway by storm at the age of 18 as Maria in *The*

*Sound of Music*, and has subsequently starred in ten more Broadway shows (musicals, straight plays, comedies and dramas) including *Into the Woods*, *Nine* (opposite Antonio Banderas), *Gypsy* (for which she won a Tony® Award), *She Loves Me*, *My Fair Lady*, and Steve Martin's *Meteor Shower* opposite Amy Schumer and Keegan Michael Key. Her flourishing television and film career have included widely acclaimed appearances on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* as Melania Trump, Lin-Manuel Miranda's *Tick, Tick... Boom!* and roles on Hulu's *Life & Beth*, *Inside Amy Schumer*, as well as *Gossip Girl*, *Younger*, *Nashville*, *Supergirl*, and the highly anticipated second season of *The Gilded Age*. In film, Benanti starred in Netflix's *Worth* opposite Michael Keaton, Stanley Tucci and Amy Ryan, *Here Today* opposite Billy Crystal and Tiffany Haddish, and the upcoming Sony Pictures comedy *No Hard Feelings* opposite Jennifer Lawrence and Matthew Broderick. Also a book author and creator of the HBO Max special *Homeschool Musical: Class of 2020* based on her viral social media movement: #sunshinesongs, Benanti released a self-titled audio album for Sony Music Masterworks and tours the world performing solo concerts alongside highly celebrated musicians and orchestras.

**A.R. GURNEY** (*Playwright*) (1930-2017) Plays: *Scenes from American Life*, *Children*, *The Dining Room*, *The Middle Ages*, *Richard Cory*, *The Golden Age*, *What I Did Last Summer*, *The Wayside Motor Inn*, *Sweet Sue*, *The Perfect Party*, *Another Antigone*, *The Cocktail Hour*, *Love Letters*, *The Snow Ball* (adapted from his novel), *The Old Boy*, *The Fourth Wall*, *Later Life*, *A Cheever Evening*, *Sylvia*, *Overtime*, *Let's*



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## WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

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*Do It (A Cole Porter Musical), Labor Day, Far East, Darlene and the Guest Lecturer, Ancestral Voices.* Opera: wrote the libretto for *Strawberry Fields*, with music by Michael Torke, part of the Central Park Opera trilogy presented by the New York City Opera in the Fall of 1999. Novels: "The Gospel According to Joe," "Entertaining Strangers," and "The Snow Ball." Awards: Drama Desk, N.E.A., Rockefeller Foundation, New England Theatre Conference, Lucille Lortel, American Association of Community Theatres, American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. Honorary degrees: Williams College and Buffalo State University. Gurney was on the faculty of M.I.T. until 1996. He is the husband of one, father of four, and grandfather of six. [argurney.com](http://argurney.com)

**CIARÁN O'REILLY** (*Director*) Favorite directing credits include: *Endgame, The Butcher Boy, A Touch of the Poet, Autumn Royal, A Touch Of the Poet\*, The Weir\** (\*Performances on Screen), *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* (Callaway 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 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 of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins.

**PAMELA BRUSOSKI** (*Production Stage Manager*) This summer marks 20 years since Pamela began stage managing at Irish Rep and she is so grateful to have been a part of this company for so long. She would like to thank Charlotte and Ciarán for all of the wonderful opportunities, the laughs, the loyalty and the unending support. Looking forward to the next 20...

**CHARLOTTE MOORE** (*Artistic Director*) Recent directing assignments: *Dear Liar* (as part of the *Letters Series*), *A Child's Christmas in Wales, Two by Synge, The Streets of New York, Meet Me in St. Louis\**, *Love, Noël\**, *Molly Sweeney\**, (\*Performances on Screen), *London Assurance, Love, Noël: The Songs and Letters of Noël Coward, The Plough and the Stars* as part of *The O'Casey Cycle, On a Clear Day You Can See Forever, Three Small Irish Masterpieces* by W.B. 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*

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## WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

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

theatre. Irish Repertory Theatre is proud to present 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. In May 2020, Irish Rep presented full-length digital productions as filmed during the COVID-19 pandemic as Irish Rep Online, welcoming new audiences from around the globe.

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**IRISH REPERTORY THEATRE** Founded by Ciarán O'Reilly and Charlotte Moore in 1988, Irish Repertory Theatre opened its doors with Sean O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars*, and is now in its 34th Season. Irish Rep is 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 in 2007, a special Drama Desk Award for "Excellence in Presenting Distinguished Irish Drama," in 1992, the Lucille Lortel Award for "Outstanding Body of Work," in 2005, and a 2013 Outer Critics Circle Special Achievement Award for 25 years of producing outstanding



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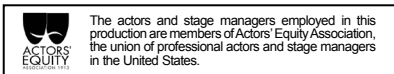


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## IRISH REP ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

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Producing Director ..... Ciarán O'Reilly  
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Director of Marketing & Art Director ..... Muireann Lalor  
Director of Audience & Play Development ..... Nicola Murphy Dubey  
Company Manager ..... Kate Mandracchia  
Production & Venue Coordinator ..... Jason Brubaker  
Audience Services Manager ..... Tina Tannenbaum  
Development Manager ..... Emilia Smart-Denson  
Development Assistant ..... Anna Collins  
Digital Media & Marketing Manager ..... Samantha Seaman  
Literary Intern ..... Andi Grene  
Box Office Associates ..... Cynthia Bajor, Maggie Winslow  
House Managers ..... Olivia Gesualdi,  
..... Caitland Winsett, Maggie Winslow, Cynthia Bajor  
Front of House Associates ..... Sam Gonzalez, Akilah Gordon,  
..... Graydon Gund, Michaela Pascuzzi, Ronan Rogers  
..... Hannah Rody-Wright, Naima Randolph  
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## SERVICES

**LATECOMERS** will be seated at the discretion of the House Manager at the first appropriate interval on a space available basis.

**ACCESSIBLE** seating is available, by reservation, for patrons with disabilities. For Infrared hearing assistance devices, please see a House Manager or Front of House Associate.

**ADVERTISE** in our program! For options and rates call 212.255.0270, or email [samantha@irishrep.org](mailto:samantha@irishrep.org)

**TICKETS** are available at [IrishRep.org](http://IrishRep.org) or by calling the box office at 212.727.2737. No refunds. No exchanges. All sales are final.

**COVID-19** audience members must properly wear face masks for all Wednesday matinees and Saturday evening performances. Learn more at [irishrep.org/covid19](http://irishrep.org/covid19)

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Production Manager ..... Josh Allen  
Associate Production Manager ..... Marissa Crowe  
Head Electrician/Programmer ..... Megan Peti  
Wardrobe Supervisor ..... Dan Bass  
Production Stage Manager ..... Pamela Brusoski  
Production Assistant ..... Bear Bosco  
Key Art ..... Muireann Lalor  
Photography ..... Carol Rosegg

## PRESS REPRESENTATION

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## FIRE NOTICE

The exit indicated by a red light and sign nearest to the seat you occupy is the shortest route to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency please do not run — WALK TO THAT EXIT.

Thoughtless persons annoy patrons and endanger the safety of others by lighting matches or smoking in prohibited areas during the performance and intermissions. This violates a city ordinance and is punishable by law.

— FIRE COMMISSIONER

## WARNING

The photographing or sound recording of any performance or the possessing of any device for such photographing or sound recording inside this theatre, without the written permission of the management, is prohibited by law. Violators may be punished by ejection and violation may render the offender liable for money damages.

New York City Ordinance prohibits use of cellular phones, pagers, personal digital assistants, and other audible electronic devices during a performance. If you are in possession of one, please be sure it is turned off prior to the performance.

Smoking is prohibited anywhere on the premises. This violates a city ordinance & is punishable by law.





## A Letter from the Directors

When A.R. Gurney first wrote *Love Letters*, he had, at the suggestion of his literary agent, submitted it to *The New Yorker* for their consideration. He was stunned when he received a swift response rejecting the work. His surprise wasn't in the quick rebuff, but in the reason for the rejection. They said, "Sorry, we don't publish plays."

*The New Yorker's* letter was news to Pete because he hadn't written it as a play. It was an "epistolary novel."

And then he thought, wait a minute, maybe they're right...

And it turned out they were. *Love Letters'* circuitous route to the stage gave A.R. Gurney, already a revered and prolific playwright as well as a Pulitzer Prize finalist for Drama, more productions than any of his other plays.

Letters are, by nature, inherently dramatic. Even the most mundane offerings express a time and place where one person shares their wishes and desires with another from that moment. They give us front-row seats to the human drama.

Letters have been around for a while. Of the 27 books in the Bible, 21 of them are letters. These days, social media posts might be considered letters – with many likes and shares from the Corinthians and the Romans!

Pete gives us two fictional characters in this play whose exchanges span from 1937 to 1985, before cellphones, before texts, before Twitter – just a pen in cursive letters and two thumping hearts.

CHARLOTTE MOORE, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

CIARÁN O'REILLY, PRODUCING DIRECTOR



IRISH  
REPERTORY  
THEATRE

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