

# **iGirl** **by Marina Carr**

## **Audio Description Programme Notes for the performance in the Abbey Theatre Saturday 23rd October 2021, at 2pm**

Welcome to the audio description introduction to **iGirl** by Marina Carr, at the Abbey Theatre.

The play is directed by Caitríona McLaughlin.

Set and Video Design: Joanna Parker

Costume Design: Catherine Fay

Lighting Design: Sinéad Wallace

Sound Design and Composer: Carl Kennedy

Video Design: Daniel Denton

Movement Director: Sue Mythen

Voice Director: Andrea Ainsworth

The performance lasts for approximately one hour and forty minutes with no interval.

### **ABOUT THE PLAY**

In her first production as Abbey Theatre Artistic Director, Caitríona McLaughlin reunites with Marina Carr for the world premiere of **iGirl**.

Lone performer Olwen Fouéré (The Mai, By the Bog of Cats, Woman and Scarecrow) brings to life archetypal figures like Oedipus, Jocasta, Joan of Arc, Antigone, Demeter, and our ancient human ancestors in an attempt to bring meaning to her own existence.

At once deeply individual and strikingly universal, **iGirl** is both a warning about our darkest inclinations, and a celebration of human beings' capacity for love and creativity.

## **ABOUT THE SET**

When the audience arrives, most of the set is hidden behind two screens that hang close to the front of the stage. One screen is made of dark netting material, which blurs the set behind. The second screen is of heavy black felt, completely obscuring the rest of the stage. Both screens are used to project larger than life images of the performer onto them.

The floor of the stage has a large white rectangular surface spanning almost the full width and depth of the stage, framed by a thick, black woollen carpet. This carpet forms a walkway across the front and back of the stage as well.

The rear wall of the stage is black, with another screen that can be lowered into view. Like the floor area, this screen is a large white rectangle spanning almost the full width and height of the wall, when lowered fully.

At times throughout the performance, images are projected onto this white surface – simple line drawings in thick, black, smudgy ink. They suggest locations for different sections – a long thin line of horizon, like a field boundary in the distance. Or a simple cross shape, two inky lines intersected. A thin line rising to a craggy outcrop seemingly reflected in water, or a circular smudgy stain that might have been left by a wineglass.

There are two identical desks onstage, the nearest one at the front on the left hand side, and the further one at the back on the right hand side, both sitting on the carpeted floor. Black desks with metal frames, and a black metal stool slid underneath. Both have an angle-poise lamp, a black-covered writing pad and pencil, a wine glass containing red wine, and a small smoky glass ashtray. When seated at the near desk, the performer faces the audience. When seated at the far desk, the performer turns her back to us.

On the central white floor, to the right of centre is a large mound of black dirt, like a coal slag heap, with dust trailing around it. It is high enough to make a seat for the performer, or for her to climb on top and squat on its summit.

Throughout the performance, the lighting is stark and simple, echoing the monochrome design of the set. At times it is bright, flooding the stage, making its white surfaces glow. At other times, the light softens to a pearly grey, or creamy white, or even a small focussed spotlight on the performer, leaving the rest of the stage in semi-darkness.

## **ABOUT THE CAST AND COSTUMES**

The lone performer in this production is **Girl**, played by **Olwen Fouéré**. A woman in her late sixties, Girl is short and strong; her skin tanned, and long white hair flowing midway down her back. Her steely blue eyes are piercing, with her fair eyebrows almost invisible against her tanned complexion. She is lithe and limber, her arms and legs well-toned. She moves about the stage with an assured gait, knees slightly bent and feet planted firmly – a solid, stance. Girl can dance nimbly across the floor, hop up on the desks, or climb atop the dusty slag heap. She sometimes drops to her knees and creeps and crawls across the stage, like an animal. Other times she stands proudly, throwing her arms wide, gesturing as she makes speeches.

When Girl first appears, she has gathered a kind of shroud around her. It is a silk skirt that wraps around the waist with a split up the front. The skirt hangs to her calves at the front, but forms a long, swishing train at the back. It is made of layers of folded sections of silk in purple, wine, and dark grey. On her torso, she wears a silver bodice of overlapping pewter rings, like chainmail, which comes to just under the bust line, cupping her breasts, leaving them exposed. Her sleeves are covered with pewter disks, overlaid like fish scales, attached to black net sleeves. On her shoulders are two armoured plates. On her right ankle, Girl wears a thick anklet of the same scaly silver disks as her sleeves. Her feet are bare. Later, she removes the skirt, leaving a pair of grey silk shorts underneath.

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That concludes the audio description introduction for **iGirl**. They were prepared by Bríd Ní Ghruagáin, who will audio describe the performance.

Audio description at the Abbey Theatre is provided by Arts & Disability Ireland with support from The Arts Council.

For updates about audio described and captioned performances, text **ACCESSARTS** to **51444** or head to **adiarts.ie** for more information.

Thank you. Go raibh maith agaibh.



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