



Comhairle Cathrach  
Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City Council



THE ABBEY THEATRE AND DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL PRESENT

# ULYSSES

*Written by James Joyce*  
*Read by Barry McGovern*



**ABBAY THEATRE**  
**10 – 16 JUNE**  
ON THE PEACOCK STAGE

ABBAYTHEATRE.IE  
#ULYSSES



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theatre

Principal Partner:

**BANK OF AMERICA**



An Roinn Eiríomharacha, Cultúir,  
Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán  
Department of Tourism, Culture,  
Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

IMAGE: STE MURRAY



*‘The supreme  
question about a  
work of art is out  
of how deep a life  
does it spring’*

James Joyce, *Ulysses*

CREDITS

Writer	James Joyce
Read by	Barry McGovern
Curator	Ray Yeates
Lighting Designer	Blue Hanley
Photography	Ste Murray
Videographer	Ros Kavanagh
Producer	Melissa Nolan
Stage Manager	Marella Boschi
PR	Bowe Communications

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Production Manager	Cliff Barragry
Head of Producing	Jen Coppinger
Company Stage Manager	Tara Furlong
Props	Eimer Murphy
	Dylan Farrell
	Adam O’Connell
	Heather Maher
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THANK YOU

Medb Ruane; Gerard O’Toole;  
Harry Crosbie; Robert Nicholson;  
Darina Gallagher; Luca Crispi;  
Sam Slote; Seán Sweeney.

James Joyce (1882 – 1941) is one of Ireland’s most influential and celebrated writers. His most famous work is *Ulysses* (1922) which follows the movements of Leopold Bloom through a single day on June 16th, 1904. *Ulysses* is based on Homer’s *The Odyssey*. After graduating from university, Joyce went to Paris, ostensibly to study medicine, and was recalled to Dublin in April 1903 because of the illness and subsequent death of his mother. He stayed in Ireland until 1904, and in June that year he met Nora Barnacle, the Galway woman who was to become his partner and later his wife. James Joyce died at the age of fifty-eight, on 13 January 1941 in Schwesterhaus vom Roten Kreuz in Zurich where he and his family had been given asylum. He is buried in Fluntern cemetery, Zurich.



# SCHEDULE

FRI 10TH JUNE, 10am – 12.50pm: 10am **Telemachus** (50 mins), 11am **Nestor** (35 mins), 12pm **Proteus** (50 mins)  
FRI 10TH JUNE, 2pm – 5.15pm: 2pm **Calypso** (50 mins), 3pm **Lotus Eaters** (45 mins), 4pm **Hades** (75 mins)

SAT 11TH JUNE, 10am – 1.40pm: 10am **Aeolus** (75 mins), 12pm **Lestrygonians** (90 mins)  
SAT 11TH JUNE, 3pm – 4.40pm: **Scylla and Charybdis**

SUN 12TH JUNE, 11am – 12.45pm: **Wandering Rocks**  
SUN 12TH JUNE, 2pm – 3.50pm: **Sirens**

MON 13TH JUNE, 10am – 12.40pm: **Cyclops**  
MON 13TH JUNE, 2pm – 4pm: **Nausicaa**

TUES 14TH JUNE, 10am – 12.50pm: **Oxen of the Sun**  
TUES 14TH JUNE, 2pm – 5pm: **Circe (part one)**

WED 15TH JUNE, 10am – 1pm: **Circe (part two)**  
WED 15TH JUNE, 2pm – 4.45pm: **Eumaeus**

THURS 16TH JUNE, 10am – 1.05pm: **Ithaca**  
THURS 16TH JUNE, 2pm – 4.30pm: **Penelope**

There will be short breaks throughout each session on each day.

# PROGRAMME NOTE

*Barry McGovern*

*Ulysses* is that great monster of a book that most people mean to get round to reading eventually but few do. It has acquired an aura around it from years of controversy beginning with its early days when it was first published, serially, in *The Little Review* in the late teens of the last century. The last few episodes were not published in the magazine because its editors, Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap, were prosecuted and fined for publishing the *Nausicaa* episode. It was banned in Britain and terribly burned in the United States. It was published in book form in February 1922.

For me *Ulysses* is a great hymn to Life. It is a book that has almost everything. It is a book about ordinary people in an ordinary city, living at a time that was quite recent when the book was published. But the book itself is not ordinary. It is still astoundingly fresh and shocking. Joyce used techniques that had only been hinted at before. Each chapter (or episode, as Joyce and Joyceans like to call them) is in a different style. Each also has various other attributes attached to them that needn't concern us here (e.g. a particular organ of the body, an art form, a colour, a symbol and a technique). But the greatness of the book is that it is quite simply great writing. This may seem obvious but there were many well known people who denounced that very writing. The book was revolutionary in its technique. One of the main features is its use of interior monologue -- the thoughts in the mind of the character who is 'speaking'. This had been used before but not like the way Joyce used it. Sometimes it is difficult for the first time reader to make out whether certain sentences are narration or interior monologue. But after a time this should become fairly clear when the reader gets used to Joyce's style.

The book takes place on a single day (or at least within a single 24 hour span). Thursday, June 16, 1904, the day Joyce and his wife Nora Barnacle went on their first date. It is loosely based on

Homer's *Odyssey* in as much as that great work, which Joyce loved, forms a framework for the book with regard to the characters and much of the action. But you don't have to know that to enjoy the book. That's all for later when you become a Joyce nerd! The Homeric episode titles which are now universally used (*Telemachus*, *Nestor*, *Proteus* etc.) were originally used by Joyce but he cut them before publication.

Leopold Bloom, an ordinary Dubliner who is somewhat of an outsider (he is Jewish and his family were from Hungary), has an unfulfilled marriage to Molly (a singer) who is 'entertaining' her tour manager 'Blazes' Boylan that afternoon at four o'clock. Stephen Dedalus (who was the protagonist of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*) is a tiresome young intellectual who is a bit of a lost soul. His relationship with his father is not good and he badly needs a father figure to put him straight. Bloom has a daughter but no son. His only son died when he was eleven days old. Their paths occasionally cross during the day, barely meeting until Bloom rescues Stephen from an assault at the end of the *Circe* or 'Nighttown' episode and, after some more night wandering, brings him home to sober him up. Notwithstanding this fatherly gesture, after some refreshment Stephen disappears into the night down a lane behind Eccles Street and we never hear of him again. But his alter ego will astound the literary world some years later with his follow-up to "his usylessly unreadable Blue Book of Eccles", *Finnegans Wake*.

*Ulysses* is, above all, a great comic book, and despite the difficulties of parts of the book, it is one of the few books that has made me laugh out loud on public transport. It is a book that celebrates all that it is to be human.

Barry McGovern      May 2022



# CURATOR'S NOTE

*Ray Yeates*

The 100th Anniversary of *Ulysses*' publication is a major event for Dublin equalled only by an actor of Barry McGovern's ability in a marathon reading of the book. Barry has, over thirty years, brought this book to life for audiences worldwide.

Dublin City Council through its Libraries and Arts Office want the great works of literature like *Ulysses* to be available in multiple formats that are accessible and inclusive. We are grateful for the partnership of the National Theatre in making this reading possible for Dubliners and visitors at a unique moment for Joyceans and those meeting this masterpiece for the first time.

**Ray Yeates**, Dublin City Arts Officer  
May 2022

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LYRIC

YOU CAN LEARN TO DECODE US

AN ABBEY THEATRE AND LYRIC THEATRE BELFAST CO-PRODUCTION

# TRANSLATIONS

*Written by Brian Friel*

*Directed by Caitríona McLaughlin*

ABBAY THEATRE  
13 JUNE — 13 AUGUST

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#TRANSLATIONS



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