

**INFORMATION PACK FOR THOSE WITH  
ALZHEIMER'S, DEMENTIA AND THEIR CARERS**

**SOFT**  
PRODUCTIONS



AN ABBEY THEATRE AND  
SOFT PRODUCTIONS CO-PRODUCTION

# AN OLD SONG, HALF FORGOTTEN

*Written by Deirdre Kinahan*  
*Directed by Louise Lowe*

**14 APR—6 MAY 2023**  
**ON THE PEACOCK STAGE**



funding  
theatre



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



# GETTING TO THE THEATRE

We are located on the corner of Lower Abbey Street and Marlborough Street, a few minutes' walk from O'Connell Street in the city centre.

## BY BUS

Take any Dublin Bus route which stops on or near O'Connell Street.

## EXPRESSWAY/INTERCITY

We're a five minute walk away from Busáras, the main bus station in the city centre, located at Store Street, Dublin 1.

## DART

The nearest station is Tara Street.

## TRAIN

Get off at Connolly Station which is located at Amiens Street, North Dock.

## LUAS

Take the Red Line to Abbey Street or the Green Line to Marlborough.

## PARKING

Parking for the Abbey Theatre is in the following nearby locations:

### Irish Life Car Park

Gardiner Street Abbey Street Lower, North City, Dublin 1, D01 Y7V2, (Closes at 10pm)

### Dublin Q-Park

The Spire Marlborough Pl, North City, Dublin 1, D01 W207

## COACH DROP OFF POINTS

There is a drop off point at Custom House Quay which is just a short walk to the Abbey Theatre. The closest coach parking spot is the NTA Coach Park in the Dublin Docklands.



# WHEN YOU ARRIVE

There are two entrances to the Abbey Theatre. The main entrance is located on Marlborough Street.



Abbey Theatre entrance.

The performance of *An Old Song, Half Forgotten* will take place in the Peacock Theatre. The entrance to the Peacock Theatre is on Abbey Street.



Peacock Theatre entrance.

# TICKETS AND ENTRY

You will need your ticket to enter the auditorium (the room the show will be performed in). If you have booked in advance, your ticket will be emailed to you and you can display it on your phone.

If you need to collect your ticket, it will be available from the Box Office in the Peacock Theatre from one hour before the performance. Some audience members might be wearing a face mask.



Abbey box office.



Peacock box office.

# STAFF

The Abbey Theatre staff will make your visit as pleasant as possible. You will recognise the staff because they are wearing all black and have a badge on with the Abbey Theatre logo.



# PEACOCK THEATRE

The entrance to the Peacock Theatre is located on Abbey Street. There is a set of automatic doors. You can use the elevator or stairs to bring you downstairs. There are 22 steps down which bring you to a foyer.



# LIGHTS

The foyer is in two areas. The outside area is dimly lit with spotlights above the tables and it is darker in the corners. There are lamps set on the tables. The inside area is well lit but not too bright. There are strings of lights hanging from the ceiling and art hanging on the walls.



# THE CAFE

The Peacock Café is where you will wait before you take your seats inside the auditorium. There are comfy armchairs and couches and lots of wooden chairs to sit on. There is a bar where you can buy drinks and tea or coffee.



# TOILETS

All the toilets are accessible for everyone including transgender and non-binary people. They are all located in the foyer area of the Peacock Theatre. There are no hand dryers.

- In the women's toilets there are three cubicles.
- In the men's toilets there are two urinals and one cubicle.
- In the accessible toilet there is a toilet and sink in the one room.



# THE PEACOCK AUDITORIUM

The performance will happen in a place called an auditorium.

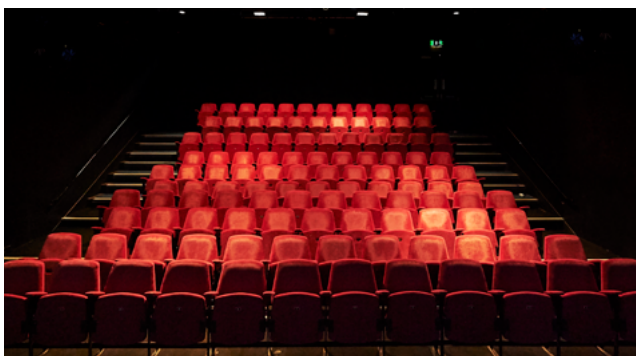
The main entrance to the Peacock auditorium is past the foyer, up five steps and through a set of double doors. Be careful – there is a sudden slope just at the top of these steps!

The wheelchair entrance is to the left of the main entrance and up a slight slope.

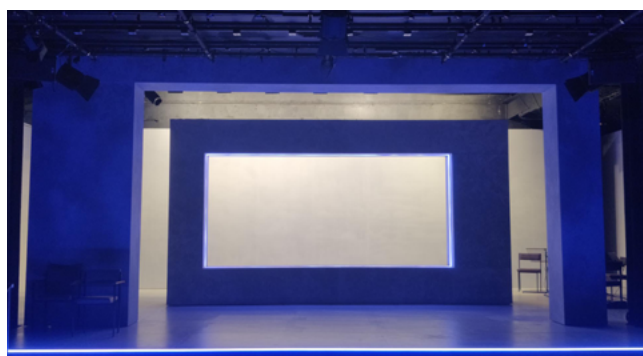


## INSIDE THE AUDITORIUM

There are 123 seats in the Peacock auditorium. All of them look the same. You can sit wherever you wish.



View the actors will have from the stage.



View of the stage when you enter the auditorium.

# THE PERFORMANCE

The whole play is about **60 minutes long** – there is no interval.

When you get to your seat you're welcome to take off your coat and put it and any other items you have with you under your seat.

We ask that mobile phones be turned off and that it remains in your pocket or bag during the show as the light can be very distracting to the actors and others in the audience. But if a mobile phone is essential, please ensure the volume is on silent and it is only used outside the auditorium.

If you need to leave the auditorium, there are quiet spaces in the café and foyer where you can go during the show. If you want to enjoy the rest of the performance, Abbey staff will help you re-enter the auditorium where possible, at certain points in the show. Please note that you will not be in the same seats as before.

When you enter the auditorium there will be four musicians on stage playing music. When the show begins, the music and lighting will change and the actors will come on stage.

At the end of the play, the actors will come on stage to bow. The audience will clap and some may even stand up and cheer.

# THE PRODUCTION

During the play, some large pieces of the set will move, changing what the stage looks like.

There are bright strips of light on the stage that sometimes change colour.

Sometimes there will be a mist on the stage and the lights will change colour to help tell the story.

There are live musicians onstage throughout the play. They will play music at different points in the show and sometimes the music will get quite loud. The musicians play the violin, viola and cello. Sometimes you can see the musicians clearly, and sometimes they're obscured by the set.



Images by Ros Kavanagh

# SYNOPSIS

There are certain themes in the show which some viewers may find upsetting and some louder noises. These moments have been highlighted in **BOLD** in the below text.

When the show starts, there are musicians playing a classical piece of music. A dapper man, James O'Brien, in his seventies stands listening appreciatively. A younger man stands in front of him also listening appreciatively. This is the younger version of James. They often speak one after the other or even together, as though recounting the same memory at the same time, as the same person.

The musicians onstage will play certain motifs of music through the show, which represent different memories. Sometimes this music will be loud.

James and Younger James starts applauding the music and talks about years ago when he jumped in the River Liffey. Younger James pretends to be his Mother, giving out to him. James talks about his friend Danny Murray who lived in the alley – a place his mother envisions as an awful place to live. But James disagrees and talks about the wonderful people and atmosphere of the place.

**James remembers his Grandmother and how she was haunted by the shootings of the Easter Rising in 1916. He describes how as a little girl, she would think of the blood splattering on the walls and in the floorboards and close her eyes, drop to the floor and put her hands over her ears – traumatised.**

James describes the house he grew up in on Emmet Road. **He talks about the experience of memory loss and how he writes things down to hold onto the memory.**

**James talks about children his mother had who were lost in infancy but it wasn't discussed in his house.**

James and Younger James speak of his love for his older friend Danny Murray and re-enacts a scene from *The Plough and the Stars*. They talk about the excitement of getting a television in

the house and how it inspired James' path to the stage of the Abbey Theatre. He describes the thrill of acting in his first show.

They talk about moving to London to act in the theatres there. James remembers meeting Danny Murray for a drink. There is a kiss exchanged between them but **Danny reacts badly and punches at James warning him never to mention it to anyone.**

James thinks about meeting his beloved Sara **but gets upset and worries about losing his memories of her.** The pieces of his memory of Sara begin to come back to him again **along with a memory of the bombing campaign in the UK at the time accompanied by a crashing sound.**

James re-enacts a scene from *The Importance Of Being Earnest*, the play he was acting in when he met his beloved Sara. They walk through falling in love with Sara and the first titbits of their wonderful dating life. His mother visits him in London and informs him that Danny Murray lives here now. James remembers meeting Danny, **who was torn, drunk and small, and James ignores him.**

James talks about the joy of marriage and making a home with Sara. **They talk about Sara losing two babies and wanting to leave James.**

James reminisces about a summer road trip in Ireland he and Sara took on his motorbike.

James talks about jumping in the River Liffey with Danny Murray when he was a kid and how later in life, **Danny's body was found in the Liffey.**

James talks about his daughter Sorcha who was born after their road trip and looks after him now, and how he knows **Sara has died but he must not forget her.**



Image by Ros Kavanagh

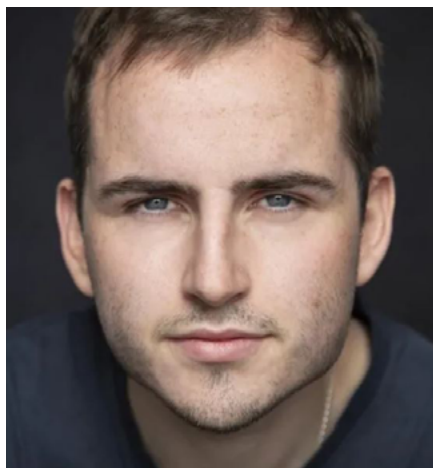


# THE ACTORS



**Left.**

This is actor Matthew Malone who plays Younger James and Bryan Murray who plays James. There is a possibility that Bryan or Michael may be unable to perform for certain shows. If this happens other actors will take their place.



**Left.**

This is actor Barry McGovern. He will play the role of James if Bryan Murray is not able to.

**Right.**

This is Darragh Feehely. He will play the role of Younger James if Matthew Malone is not able to.

## RESOURCES

This play portrays the life of a character living with Alzheimer's. It is OK therefore if the play makes you feel emotional or even upset.

If you wish to talk to someone, we recommend calling the Alzheimer's Society of Ireland National Helpline on **1800 341 341**. They're open **10am - 5pm Monday to Friday**, and **10am - 4pm on Saturday**. You can visit their website **[www.alzheimer.ie](http://www.alzheimer.ie)** for further information on living with dementia and Alzheimer's.



We hope you enjoy your experience at The Peacock. Please contact us if you have any further questions. For more information see **[www.abbeytheatre.ie](http://www.abbeytheatre.ie)** or call Box Office on **(01) 87 87 222**