

Abbey Theatre
Annual Review 2022

A man in a blue jacket and beige pants is captured in mid-air, performing a parkour move. He has his hands on his head, and his feet are tucked up towards his chest. He is wearing white sneakers and colorful socks. The background shows a building with large windows and a concrete structure.

CHANGE THE CONVER- SATION

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The Abbey Theatre
Image: Ste Murray

It is our hope that the recent years have incubated a new generation of dramatists whose innovative forms allow them to create work on their own terms, and in so doing, enrich our already vast literary and dramatic canon.

Co-Directors of the Abbey Theatre,
Artistic Director Caitríona McLaughlin
and Executive Director Mark O'Brien

Eloise Stevenson
in *X'ntigone* by Darren Murphy
Image: Melissa Gordon





ALLOWING GREAT ART AND PEOPLE TO FLOURISH

Section One
Introductions

Brian Doherty, Marty Rea and Zara Devlin
in *Translations* by Brian Friel
Image: Ros Kavanagh

Section One

Welcome from the Chair

We saw a welcome return to live performances at the Abbey Theatre in 2022 after two years where COVID played havoc with our ability to produce live theatre. While the return to live performances was slow to start, as people gained confidence that theatre was a safe space, we saw the return to full capacity auditoria over the course of the year. It was heartening to see such a strong audience response. We value the continuing support of longstanding attendees and welcome those new audiences who are responding so positively to the work on our stages.

The Board is delighted to see the leadership, energy and enthusiasm of Caitriona McLaughlin and Mark O'Brien, as they complete their first full year as Co-Directors. Both Directors were engaged in developing the Senior Management Team, with four new members appointed in late 2022 and early 2023. Their appointments have strengthened the theatre's internal governance and enriched its skill sets.

Caitriona led out on an exciting programme of work centred on the theme of *Transitions*. It was wonderful to see stellar productions on our stages of works by leading Irish playwrights, including Marina Carr, Brian Friel, Conor McPherson and Darren Murphy.

Working with the Board, and particularly the Site Redevelopment Committee, Mark led on progressing the business case for the new theatre complex. The business case, required for inclusion in the Government's 2040 capital programme, and financed with support from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, was submitted to the Department for Ministerial approval in December. This was a momentous step in our journey, which started in 2017, towards the major redevelopment of the theatre.

The excellent work of the theatre would not be possible without the engagement and performances of great creative artists – and it was wonderful to see such tremendous productions and performances in 2022. A picture of these is provided in the Directors' message,



Mark O'Brien, Edna O'Brien, President Michael D. Higgins, Sabina Higgins, Dr. Frances Ruane and Caitriona McLaughlin at the world premiere of Edna's play *Joyce's Women* in the Abbey Theatre.

Section One

Welcome from the Chair

which demonstrates the diversity of the plays and productions. It was gratifying to see a wonderful and timely production of Brian Friel's *Translations*, directed by Caitríona McLaughlin, win the UK National Theatre Award for best play revival in 2022.

In January 2022, Taoiseach Micheál Martin attended our sold-out production of Brian Friel's *Faith Healer*, directed by former Abbey Theatre director, Joe Dowling. In June, Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin, and her senior departmental officials, visited the Abbey Theatre for a view of current facilities and a briefing on the site redevelopment plans currently in preparation. In November, members of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Tourism, Culture, Arts, Sport and Media visited the theatre for a meeting with the Co-Directors and several Board members on how the Abbey Theatre is progressing its redevelopment plans and a tour of the building. The Abbey Theatre was delighted to host Minister Paschal Donohoe for a meeting of Dublin Town members that focused on the North East Inner City in October. Over the course of the year, the Board and the Executive were delighted to see President Higgins and many Ministers, TDs, Senators and Councillors at opening nights for plays on both the Abbey Theatre and Peacock stages.

Four new board members, Noelle Brown, Múirne Laffan, Owen Travers, and Michael Wall took up their appointments in January 2022. In July 2022, I was honoured to be reappointed to the Board by the Minister for a two-year period. The remaining two vacancies on the Board were advertised in November 2022 and filled by Ministerial appointment in early 2023. The Minister's appointees were Nicholas Basden (a UK-based entrepreneur with experience in audience development) and Risteard Sheridan (an Irish-based finance director). Filling these vacancies has brought the Board to full complement for the first time since June 2021, combining a skill and experience mix that leaves

the Abbey Theatre well placed for the exciting years ahead.

The continuing strong support of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media throughout 2022 was greatly appreciated by the Board. Of particular note this year was engagement with officials in the consultation processes needed for completion of the business case for the site redevelopment. The Board would also like to recognise the significant role played by Dublin City Council in acquiring the sites required for the new Abbey Theatre complex.

The theatre's major recurrent funding comes from the Arts Council, and, along with all in the arts sector, we were delighted to see the very significant increase in funding which has been made available to the Council by Minister Martin. The Board of the Theatre, while welcoming the grant provided for 2022, looks forward to moving back to multi annual funding to allow us to strategically plan locally, nationally and internationally. The Board wishes to acknowledge the support from the Arts Council in 2022 for the annual funding and touring grant to support national tours of *Translations* and *Every Brilliant Thing*.

The Board wishes to acknowledge the support it received from Culture Ireland which supported our work with the Royal Court Theatre and Kiln Theatre in London.

It also wishes to recognise the support of Bank of America to its work as Principal Partner, supporting the artistic programme as well as our work in schools and with community groups, and to its other corporate supporters, patrons and members.

Finally I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their continuing commitment to the Abbey Theatre in 2022, and to all of the members of the executive, and particularly the Co-Directors.

Dr Frances Ruane, Chair

**BOTH
REFLECTING
SOCIETY**

**WHILE
HELPING TO
SHAPE IT**

Section One

An Introduction from the Co-Directors

We were proud to lead in the full return of live, in-person theatre experiences in 2022.

As society emerged from the shadow of the pandemic, theatre-makers returned to the rehearsal room and stage with exceptional vibrancy and vigour. The result was a full season of productions, primarily self-produced and presented across both of our stages. This was a joyful and welcome moment, not only for us in our roles as Artistic Director and Executive Director, but also for audiences, artists, colleagues, the wider theatre community and the public at large.

The theme of *Transitions*, which informed our first year as Co-Directors, found its clearest expression in our approach to the 2022 season. It provided a lens through which we could explore ideas of class, gender, ethnicity and justice, opening up honest conversations around the concept of change. Meanwhile, in a period of war commemoration, and with COVID still front-of-mind for many, we explored the intersection between collective history and the present, interrogating the humanity of loss and grief, death and survival.

Portia Coughlan by Marina Carr, *An Octoroon* by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, *Translations* by Brian Friel, *A Whistle in the Dark* by Tom Murphy and *The Weir* by Conor McPherson were among the many productions through which these concerns were teased out, investigated and spoken to. These four productions also allowed us to interrogate the Irish canon with an urgency about what makes it speak to us now. New writing from Edna O'Brien, *Joyce's Women*, marked the centenary of *Ulysses* during Dublin Theatre Festival, and was co-produced between the Abbey Theatre and Eilene Davidson Productions.

The Abbey Theatre aims to tell stories for the entire island of Ireland, with the Spring season marking the anniversary of partition. From *Three Monologues* by Jennifer Johnston to *Bloody Sunday: Scenes from the Saville Inquiry*, a range of voices and perspectives were presented on the

national stage, provoking conversation and reflection on its legacy. Our Artist Spotlight with Conor Mitchell of the Belfast Ensemble later in this publication highlights the positive impact of last year's collaboration to bring *Abomination – a DUP Opera* to the Abbey stage.

Beyond Lower Abbey Street, we strengthened existing connections and forged new ones with partners across Ireland, and internationally. This allowed us to grow our audiences, not least among our diaspora. Our co-production with the Kiln Theatre of Marina Carr's *Girl on an Altar* allowed us to create opportunities for Irish artists to work on a London stage. *Translations* – our co-production with the Lyric Theatre – opened in Belfast and toured to Cork, Limerick and Donegal, while *Every Brilliant Thing* travelled to Meath, Louth, Waterford, Longford, Clare, and Galway.

The notion of transition, of who we are and who we wish to be, found manifestation organisationally as well as artistically in 2022. Given the responsibility of the Abbey Theatre to be a leader and facilitator within its artform and its cultural and social framework, we prioritised collaborating with, supporting, and engaging artists, staff and stakeholders. Our artists are at the heart of this organisation, with Marina Carr and Conor McPherson as Senior Associate Playwrights and Caroline Byrne as Associate Director. We were delighted to work with four Resident Directors in 2022 – Gea Gojak, Claire O'Reilly, Laura Sheeran and Colm Summers. These strategic decisions will further enhance the reputation of the Abbey Theatre as a storyteller and champion of new voices.

Like our colleagues across the sector, the Abbey Theatre saw a decrease in average attendance at the beginning of 2022, when compared with pre-COVID times.

While some were understandably cautious about a return to auditoria, we saw this as an opportunity to talk to our audiences and find out how they want to engage with theatre in a post-pandemic world.

And, through a combined, collaborative effort with

Section One

An Introduction from the Co-Directors

the wider arts sector, ticket sales steadily rose as the year went on.

Audience members feel safe and are overjoyed to be back watching live theatre, sharing a collective experience with artists and audiences again – something that was longed for in the two previous years. Success for the Abbey Theatre means both reflecting society and helping to shape it. In 2023 the Abbey Theatre will be a place where, by gathering artists and public together, our imaginings for a diverse, inclusive and forward-thinking Ireland can manifest.

Great progress was made on our plans for a future redevelopment of the Abbey Theatre over the course of the year. In line with government requirements, Strappe Ltd and a multidisciplinary team, including experts on international theatre specifications, completed a thorough independent analysis of our options for the site. The Abbey Theatre's Preliminary Business Case was submitted to the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media towards the end of last year. We look forward to continued progress in our plans to build a national theatre complex fit for the world stage.

We are constantly looking at the policies, procedures and structures in place that allow great art to flourish and feel very strongly that people are at the heart of everything we do at the Abbey Theatre. We began the process of refining the shape of our Senior Management Team in 2022. We advertised for a Literary and New Work Director. We also restructured the Human Resources department and function into the People and Culture department, to reflect both areas' broad and integral remit. These changes will support us in reaching our ambitions for the stage and the organisation over the years ahead.

Caitríona McLaughlin and Mark O'Brien
Artistic Director and Executive Director
Abbey Theatre



Caitríona McLaughlin and Mark O'Brien.
Image: Rich Gilligan.

THE FULL RETURN OF LIVE, IN-PERSON EXPERIENCES OF THEATRE

Rory Nolan in *An Octoroon*
by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins
Image: Ros Kavanagh



EXPLORING IDEAS
OF CLASS, GENDER,
ETHNICITY AND
JUSTICE, OPENING
UP HONEST
CONVERSATIONS
AROUND THE CONCEPT
OF CHANGE.



Zara Devlin in *Translations* by Brian Friel
Image: Ros Kavanagh



Ross Donnellan, Riley Carter
and Jamie O'Neill in
Luck Just Kissed You Hello
by Amy Conroy
Image: Ros Kavanagh

A YEAR WITH THE ABBEY THEATRE THROUGH NUMBERS

Section Two
2022 in Numbers

88,530

People attended physical events
(*total occupancy, paid + complimentary)

1

Digital premiere

404

Tickets sold for digital productions
(*total occupancy, paid + complimentary)

36

Productions, co-productions, online premieres,
supported productions and presentations

€2,501,966

Total box office revenue

1

Relaxed performance

455

Performances

12

Irish Sign Language
Interpreted performances

€7.5 M

In funding from The Arts Council

11

Audio described and
captioned performances

601,000+
VISITS

TO ABBEY
THEATRE.

1

UK National Theatre Award

109

Community and Education
workshops delivered

3

Touch tours

74%

Of our audience
booked online

1

Opera on the Abbey stage

53%

Of our audience booked for
the first time in 2022

5

Irish Times Theatre Awards

84%

Of our audience reside in Ireland

42

Actors made their debut on
the Abbey stages

68%

Total occupancy level



Amy Conroy in Every Brilliant Thing
by Duncan Macmillan with Jonny Donahoe
Image: Ros Kavanagh

HELPING CHANGE THE CONVER- SATION

Section Three
2022 Programme



Tara Flynn in *Haunted* by Tara Flynn
Image: Ruth Medjber



Stanley Townsend in *Solar Bones*
by Mike McCormack
Image: Ste Murray

Section Three 2022 Programme

The new season opened with a joyful, moving celebration of the light and dark of life in *Every Brilliant Thing*. This charming tonic to the January blues played in the Peacock and then went out on tour to Meath, Louth, Clare, Waterford, Longford and Galway. As a special gesture, a large percentage of tickets were offered to audiences free of charge – a gift from the Abbey to encourage and welcome audiences back to live theatre.

2022 saw a number of major revivals of masterpieces from the Irish canon. The Abbey stage opened and closed with new productions of seminal plays from our two Senior Associate Writers, Marina Carr and Conor McPherson – *Portia Coughlan* directed by Abbey Theatre Associate Director, Caroline Byrne, and starring Olivier Award winner, Denise Gough in the title role; and *The Weir* by Conor McPherson and directed by Caitríona McLaughlin.

A new production of *An Octoroon* – Brandon Jacobs-Jenkins' fearless and profound reworking of Irish playwright Dion Boucicault's play set on a plantation in the 1800s – directed by Anthony Simpson-Pike, was an important contemporary take on a flawed-classic, challenging accepted narratives around race, identity and bias. The Abbey Theatre is, and will continue to be, completely committed to this conversation through our programme and our wider engagement.

Artist Inua Ellams showcased the power of words when he returned to Dublin to curate and host *05 Fest* – a series of exciting cultural events at the Abbey and across the city. From *An Evening with an Immigrant*, Inua's story of leaving Nigeria and spending his teenage years in Ireland and the UK, to *R.A.P Party*, a nostalgic night of hip-hop-inspired poems and favourite hip-hop songs, *05Fest* put poetry centre stage at the Abbey Theatre.

The Abbey Theatre and Lyric Theatre in Belfast announced a new co-production of Brian Friel's

Section Three 2022 Programme

Translations, that ran for almost six months of the year in Belfast, Dublin, Limerick, Galway and Donegal. Friel's modern classic excavates small town, rural Ireland to examine language and how we communicate. *Translations* also formed part of a broader four-part season that interrogated different viewpoints on this island, over 100 years on from partition.

Jennifer Johnston's three monologues *Mustn't Forget High Noon*, *Christine* and *Twinkle Toes* are three interlinked stories, that tell the personal tragedies of victims of the conflict in Northern Ireland. The overall production was led by artist Maree Kearns and each monologue was directed by one of our resident directors, Gea Gojak, Claire O'Reilly, and Laura Sheeran.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, a reading of *Bloody Sunday: Scenes from the Saville Inquiry* was presented in person and online. This electric verbatim piece, edited by journalist Richard Norton-Taylor, distils four years of evidence from the independent inquiry into two hours of intense theatre.

Abomination: a DUP Opera challenges the power of words in the hands of the powerful. With their unique, high-impact, multi-disciplinary style, the Belfast Ensemble wrapped the story of Iris Robinson's scandalous live radio interview in a fresh web of incendiary historical comments by DUP members on the subject of gay rights and marriage equality.

Amy Conroy's *Luck Just Kissed You Hello* is a beautiful, blistering and darkly funny play, that peels back layers of masculinity to discover how our experiences shape who we are. In a new Abbey Theatre production, directed by Wayne Jordan, the main character Mark was played by LGBT trailblazer Riley Carter.

2022 marked 100 years since the publication of one of the greatest modern novels, *Ulysses* by James Joyce. We partnered with Dublin City Council to celebrate its centenary, with Barry McGovern taking to the Peacock

stage to read the complete book over seven consecutive days, ending on Bloomsday. Edna O'Brien, one of Ireland's greatest contemporary writers, wrote *Joyce's Women* for this occasion of the 100th anniversary of *Ulysses*. The world premiere of this powerful new play was directed by Conall Morrison and gave voice to the women who were central to the life of James Joyce.

We were delighted to present the work of both Rough Magic and Prime Cut (in co-production with The Mac) on our stages in 2022. In *Solar Bones*, Mike McCormack's multi-award-winning novel was brought to life by Stanley Townsend, directed by Lynne Parker, in an adaptation by Michael West. Darren Murphy's *X'ntigone* was a thrilling meditation on Sophocles' timeless Greek tragedy, directed by Emma Jordan.



James Doherty O'Brien and Peter Claffey in *A Whistle in the Dark* by Tom Murphy
Image: Ros Kavanagh

Panti Bliss and Tara Flynn, who have both contributed to Ireland's extraordinary recent social change, went back-to-back with two brand new solo shows in November at the Peacock. *If These Wigs Could Talk* and *Haunted* – both Abbey Theatre and Thisispopbaby co-productions – were directed by Phillip McMahon.

Collaboration is an important part of any year at the Abbey Theatre and we were proud to co-commission and co-present new work with Dublin Fringe, present three pieces of dance on the Abbey stage in association with Dublin Dance Festival, and to be part of Dublin Theatre Festival's programme for 2022.

ENABLING

INSPIRING

Section Three

Artist Spotlight

Caroline Byrne

Director, Portia Coughlan

I directed Marina Carr's *Portia Coughlan* as my first production as Associate Director at the Abbey Theatre in 2022. It was the first major revival of the play in seventeen years, and its first main stage production at the Abbey Theatre.

With the Abbey producing the play, I could realise a visually ambitious production as well as attract exceptional creatives and acting talent to join the team – the production saw the return of Olivier award-winning Irish actress Denise Gough to the national theatre after ten years, playing the titular role. I was supplied with resources to fulfil a complex video shoot in Belmont, Co Offaly, where the play is set. The design was realised with ingenuity and a profound understanding of its artistic aims. In the rehearsal room, we all benefitted from the creative input and integrity of the artistic director, Caitríona McLaughlin, whose expertise and insight into Carr's work was invaluable and always available. The collective and collaborative effort at the Abbey Theatre was enabling, humbling and inspiring. I was deeply honoured to present *Portia Coughlan* on the national stage, and witness Marina's work reverberate with audiences as powerfully as it did when it was first produced in 1996. It was a very significant experience for me as a director.



Denise Gough in
Portia Coughlan
by Marina Carr
Image: Ros Kavanagh

Section Three Artist Spotlight

Conor Mitchell

*Composer and director, Abomination
– a DUP Opera*

Abomination is an opera created in Belfast made of political comments from Northern Ireland on the subject of gay rights, composed and directed by me. It played in Belfast for five performances only and was paused because of COVID. The Abbey Theatre invited us to take it to Dublin [in 2022] for ten performances. The major benefit was very practical in that there is no touring facility from Northern Ireland to anywhere else in the world, including the Republic of Ireland, so the opera was completely at the mercy of people coming in from the outside to support it and move it forward. It was effectively paused due to a lack of capital from Northern Ireland until somebody took the risk and remounted it for us. [Artistic Director of the Abbey Theatre] Caitríona McLaughlin and [Head of Producing] Jen Coppinger decided that in Caitríona's opening season, they wanted the opera to come down, and very bravely took a financial risk in remounting it. That brought the piece back to life and brought it to the attention of others, like the Southbank Centre and Brighton Festival. The Abbey Theatre effectively resurrected what was going to be a lost work. It took someone to make that leap of faith and it was the Abbey Theatre that did that. If the Abbey Theatre did not step in to do that production, the opera would be dead. It would exist as a little historical thing. It took the national theatre of Ireland to step in and say [the opera] deserved a seat at a national level.

We're a relatively small organisation that makes quite large pieces of work – we're very top-heavy in what we make. That operational model can trap you in Belfast but we wanted to speak to the wider island of Ireland. The Abbey Theatre coming on board was quite a national step. They felt the work was bigger than five festival performances in Belfast so it totally validated the work of the company. It gave us a real kick up the ass to become a company that speaks to national identity as opposed to local identity. It championed the voice of artists for political change and brought it to a completely different audience. It was quite a politically charged move but the Abbey Theatre's primary focus was creating high quality work from all corners of Ireland for the citizens of Ireland. And on a base level it was very good to bring work to Dublin that shows the difficult position gay people are still in, in Northern Ireland.

Christopher Cull, Mattew Cavan,
Sarah Richmond and Rebecca Caine
in *Abomination: a DUP Opera*
by Conor Mitchell
Image: Neil Harrison





Brendan Coyle and Jolly Abraham
in *The Weir* by Conor McPherson
Image: Ros Kavanagh



Patrick Martins,
Actor, *An Octoroon*

Patrick Martins
Actor, An Octoroon

An Octoroon is an adaptation by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins of Dion Boucicault's play *The Octoroon*. It critiques a lot of Boucicault's language in the play and the portrayal of race in his play using Brechtian methods. It was extremely challenging for us as a company to tackle the issues in the play but we did so with complete trust in one another and with a lot of research and care. In my eyes, the benefit of the partnership with the Abbey Theatre, were the resources we had accessible to us. Access to a fight choreographer, props and sets, movement choreographer, dialect coach - and a nice place to rehearse. These are just to name a few. For me there was a huge significance to the work playing at the Abbey Theatre, as it was the first time a play of this kind, that really tackled race in this manner, was put on at the Abbey Theatre. Also, the first time a cast as diverse as it was, was on the Abbey Theatre stage. I believe it truly inspired a lot of people, who may not necessarily have gone to the theatre, to go to the theatre.



Panti Bliss in *If These Wigs Could Talk*
by Panti Bliss
Image: Ruth Medjber

CREATING THE SPACE TO DREAM

Section Four
Community and Education

Section Four Community And Education

2022 was a year of old and new partnerships, reviving pre-pandemic projects and initiating new ideas.

We began with a fruitful collaboration with Prime Cut productions in Belfast, co-creating a workshop programme and resource pack around their production of Darren Murphy's *Xntigone*. The beginning of the year also saw two new relationships with Dolphin's Barn Young Women's Group and Belmayne Educate Together National School, both of which will continue into 2023.

In Easter we welcomed back the *Fighting Words Young Playwrights* for the eleventh year in a row and revived our relationship with the advocacy group BeLonGTo, culminating in their glorious devised play *Under the Tree at Gay Spar*. Another old partner was the Arts In Junior Cycle Support Service with whom we ran an extended two day workshop on the use of drama in the classroom, in conjunction with the AbbeyTheatre's production of *Translations*.

Throughout the year we continued our more regular activities like providing discounted tickets for community and school groups, setting up interviews with Abbey staff, and visiting creatives as part of Dublin City Council Culture Company popular Culture Club series.

We ended the year working once more with long term partners *The SAOL Project*, who explored long form improvisation with theatre-maker Darren Yorke. We also staged the latest in our Priming the Canon series *Her, Sive* visiting primary and secondary schools all over Dublin. Our final project was the fifth tour of the *Women in Technical Theatre Roadshow* which introduces sound, lighting and stage management skills to young women in Transition Year.



Ciara Ivie performing *Her, Sive* by Kat Woods in the classroom.
Image: Ros Kavanagh

Members of BeLonGTo who performed a devised play, *Under the Tree at Gay Spar*



THE STATS

COMMUNITY

31

Number of Community and Youth
Groups engaged with

28

Number of community groups who
availed of €5 tickets initiative

1,064

Number of attendees who saw shows
via €5 tickets initiative

EDUCATION

40

Number of schools (primary, secondary,
third-level and special education) engaged with

62

Number of workshops, performances
and talks delivered

EDUCATION

30

Number of performances
of *Her, Sive*

779

Number of students
who saw *Her, Sive*

21

Number of Women in Technical Theatre
workshops delivered

525

Number of Women in Technical Theatre
workshop students

1,546

Total number of participants
engaged with

ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCES

12

Irish Sign Language Interpreted
Performances

11

Audio described and captioned
performances

3

Touch tours of the set for
the visually impaired

1

Relaxed performance

**NEW WAYS
OF SEEING**

**NEW
VOICES
AND**

Section Four Artist Spotlight

Participants from the Dolphin's Barn Young Women's Group following the premiere of *Deadly Mas* on the Abbey stage, written by Imogen Doel and Bellary Bertrand-Webb in collaboration with the group

Imogen Doel *Facilitator and actor*

I started working with the Dolphin's Barn Young Women's Group a year ago, after they came to see a performance of *Portia Coughlan*. We met afterwards and discussed the play. They were deeply affected by the experience of both attending the Abbey Theatre and the story itself, and it felt like there was a deeper conversation to be had. The Abbey Theatre facilitated a series of sessions where we explored storytelling and character together. It quickly emerged that the group wanted to write a play based on their words and their lives, more specifically, the perception and reality about who they are and where they come from. The funding and incredible support from the Community and Education department made all of this possible and provided further funding for more sessions in 2023. Through this collaborative process between the Abbey Theatre and Dolphin House, we are creating a body of work that represents these women and gives voice to their experience and provides a platform for us to listen to them and their perspectives. They have suffered from a lack of being witnessed and understood. This work is so important and incredibly meaningful and you can see the effect it has on them. The growth and commitment of the group has been hugely rewarding and the work has had so much significance for these individuals. In particular: their openness to share their experience, the scope of their imagination and the space to dream.



Ciara Ivie in *Her, Sive* by Kat Woods.
Image: Ros Kavanagh



Ciara Ivie *Facilitator, writer, director and actor*

I worked last year as an actor on the Priming the Canon programme where we toured the production of *Her, Sive* primarily around primary and secondary schools in Dublin. For many of our audiences, it was their first experience of theatre and an introduction to classic Irish plays. For me, personally, it was a great learning experience and something completely new, I had never worked in that kind of setting before. Although challenging, it was an extremely fulfilling process. I loved engaging with the students and seeing some of their eyes light up to see theatre coming to their classrooms. Many of the students seemed to surprise themselves with how much they engaged with

and related to *Her, Sive*. Both the performance and the workshop we facilitated afterwards seemed to spark an interest in many of the students and I really felt like we encouraged them to further pursue their interest in theatre. It was not only a pleasure to work with our national theatre, but a pleasure to participate in educating and inspiring our young audiences. I had never considered this type of work as an actor before, but I will absolutely do so in the future. The Abbey Theatre and their fantastic Community and Education department truly are wonderful at what they do and I would love to be a part of their future work.

WORK THAT
REPRESENTS WOMEN
AND GIVES VOICE TO
THEIR EXPERIENCE,
PROVIDING A
PLATFORM FOR US TO
LISTEN TO THEM AND
THEIR PERSPECTIVES.



Eileen Walsh in *Girl on an Altar*
by Marina Carr
Image: Peter Searle



Brian Gleeson in *A Whistle in the Dark*
by Tom Murphy
Image: Ros Kavanagh

NURTURING OUR EXISTING AND EMERGING TALENT

Section Five
Casting

137

Actors at the Abbey Theatre in 2022

66

Actors performing in
Abbey Theatre co-productions

2

Musicians at the Abbey Theatre in 2022

155

Performers in Abbey Theatre productions,
co-productions and presentations
across Ireland the UK

42

Actors making their debut on
the Abbey Theatre stages

560

Actor weeks for Abbey Theatre
productions and co-productions

69

Actors performing in
Abbey Theatre productions

243

Performers auditioned for roles

2

Musicians performing in
Abbey Theatre productions

1,022

Actor weeks across Abbey Theatre
productions and co-productions



INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE THEATRE

Section Six
Gender Equality

RAP Party as part of *05 Fest*,
presented by Inua Ellams,
Fuel and the Abbey Theatre

The Abbey Theatre is committed to meeting our goals in gender equality across all aspects of our programme.

*These figures are calculated using methodologies published by #WakingTheFeminists in 2017, available at wakingthefeminists.org.

22 WRITERS	27% WOMEN (6)
26 DIRECTORS	50% WOMEN (13)
14 SET DESIGNERS	86% WOMEN (12)
14 COSTUME DESIGNERS	100% WOMEN (14)
17 LIGHTING DESIGNERS	47% WOMEN (8)
19 SOUND DESIGNERS	21% WOMEN (4)
45 STAGE MANAGERS	87% WOMEN (39)
140 ACTORS (NOT INCLUDING MUSICIANS)	50% WOMEN (70)
297 TOTAL ROLES	56% WOMEN (166)

**SUPPORTING
THOSE
WHO FEEL**

**UNHEARD
TO FIND
THEIR VOICE**



Kwaku Fortune in *Absent the Wrong*
by Carys D. Coburn
Image: Issey Goold

CREATING LONG- LASTING PARTNER- SHIPS

Section Seven
Supporting the Abbey Theatre

Section Seven

Supporting the Abbey Theatre

In 2022 we celebrated the return of live theatre in earnest as we opened our doors to full capacity audiences.

Thank you to our partners, corporate supporters and individual patrons for your ongoing generosity and commitment to your national theatre. Your kind support has helped us in making our innovative and ambitious productions accessible to a wide range of audiences throughout Ireland and beyond, ensuring the work of the national theatre can be experienced by all.

Furthermore, your support has enabled us to secure the future of great Irish theatre by nurturing existing and new Irish talent via a series of mentoring programmes. We have continued to work with a growing network of diverse community groups across Ireland, supporting those who feel unheard to find their voice through the power of theatre.

Your support has also enabled us to bring the joy of theatre to young people across the country. Our work with schools has helped to build critical life skills amongst these students - from igniting creativity to growing confidence, strengthening communication skills, and building collaboration skills.

We are extremely grateful to our family of supporters for their generous and ongoing support, and we would like to thank all our wonderful partners and patrons across Ireland, the UK and the USA.



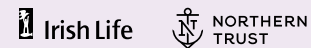
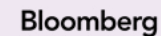
PROGRAMME PARTNER



LEARNING & ACCESS PARTNER



CORPORATE GUARDIANS



GOLD AMBASSADORS

Behaviour and Attitudes
Ecclesiastical

HOSPITALITY PARTNER

The Westbury Hotel

RESTAURANT PARTNERS

Trocadero

DIRECTORS' CIRCLE

Tony Ahearne
Pat and Kate Butler
The Cielinski Family
Deirdre and Irial Finan
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Elisabeth and Conor Kehoe
Dr. Frances Ruane
Susan and Denis Tinsley

SILVER PATRONS

Frances Britton
Catherine Byrne
Tommy Gibbons
Andrew Mackey
Eugenie Mackey
Eugene Magee
Gerard and Liv McNaughton
The Kathleen Murphy Foundation
Andrew and Delyth Parkes

Patrons who wish
to remain anonymous.



Genevieve Hulme Beaman and Stephen Hogan
in *Joyce's Women* by Edna O'Brien
Image: Ros Kavanagh

BRINGING TOGETHER GREAT CREATIVE ARTISTS

Section Eight
Staff and Board

Section Eight
Staff and Board
(end of 31/12/2022)

Administration

Fiona Reynolds
Catherine Griffin

Directors

Caitríona McLaughlin
Mark O'Brien

Voice Director

Andrea Ainsworth

Archivist

Mairéad Delaney

Head of Producing

Jen Coppinger

**Communications
and Marketing**

Maura Campbell
Fergus Hannigan
Maeve Keane
Heather Maher
Róisín McGann
Jack O'Dea
Sharon Sorohan
Muireann Kane
Christine Monk

**Community
and Education**

Lisa Farrelly
Phil Kingston
Grace McKiernan

Costume

Victoria Miller
Sandra Gibney
Donna Geraghty

Síofra Ní Chiardha

Tara Mulvihill
Ailbhe Kelly-Miller
Emily Ní Bhroin
Eimear Farrell
Nicola Burke
Yvonne Kelly
Julia MacConville

Breege Fahy
Iseult Deane
Ellen Fleming
Barbara Ryan
Esther O'Connor
Brenda Herbert
Maeve Brennan
Neasa Flannery
Izzy Jones- McAuley
Kathyann Murphy
Lauren Murphy
Mae Leahy
Juliana Schmidt Tomaz
Angela Hanna

Development

Marie Lawlor
Deirdre Daly

Facilities

Colin O'Connor
Simon O'Reilly
Jeff Conway

Finance

Derek Garland
Tara O'Reilly
Debra Doak
Orlagh Murphy

Catherine Griffin
Gus McNamara
Monika Wlodarczyk
Susan McIlreavy
Richard Bartlett

Furniture and Props

Eimer Murphy
Adam O'Connell
Dylan Farrell

People and Culture

Katie Murnane
Agnieszka Myszka
Ciara Lynch

Lighting and Sound

Kevin McFadden
Eoin Byrne
David Carpenter
Derek Conaghy
Laura Honan
Sean Treacy
Simon Burke
Connell Coleman
John Gunning
Veronica Foo
Bill Woodland
Morgan Dunne
Josh Roxby
Daire Cavanagh
Robert Flynn
Colin Doran
Aidah Sama
Karima Dillon
Scott Maguire
Kate Crook

Patrick Lehane
Laura Rainsford
Maeubh Brennan
Owen Vincent Clarke
Adrian Moylan
Christine Caldbeck
Fia Kavanagh
Sophie Cassidy
Pedro Pacheco
Jessica Fitzsimons
Peter Bond

New Work

Jesse Weaver
Sarah Jones
Craig Flaherty
Selina O'Reilly
Clara Purcell
Aoife McCollum
Rían Smith

Production

Andy Keogh
Cliff Barragry
Justin Murphy
Sally Withnell
Sarah Smith

**Sales and Customer
Services**

Con Doyle
Donna Murphy
Bridget Lynskey Faust
Elaine Mannion
Dara Hogan
James Hickson
Dermod Hicks

Section Eight
Staff and Board
 (end of 31/12/2022)

Luke Lamont
 Ciaran McGlynn
 Valentina Quiroga
 Claire Maher
 Dean Reidy
 Narges Jahani
 Sophie Furlong Tighe
 Daniel Hickey
 Laura Doyle
 William Hickey
 Éadaoin McCarrick
 Fergal Styles
 Nadine Mary Moore
 Grace Healy
 Vlatka Jeh
 Stephen Maguire
 Johanna Bear
 Lily Conlon
 Kevin Mullaney
 Karl Corr
 Sean Roper Nolan
 Tim Leech- Cleary
 Clarissa Delap
 Austin Holt
 Maureen O'Connell
 Muireann Ní Fhaogáin
 Rosa McCallig
 Maebh Carey
 Faith Akinwande
 Lauren Colhou
 Nichola Doyle
 Carina Gabilondo
 Jonathan Atkinson
 Rosa Hickey
 Brendan O'Brien
 Aoibhin Dunne

Daragh McMahon
 Adam Nealon
 Peter Crighton
 Liam Turner
 Victory Okoriee
 Emily Healy

Stage Management

Clive Welsh
 Orla Burke
 Tara Furlong
 Brendan Galvin
 Bronagh Doherty
 Audrey Rooney
 Barbara Hughes
 Aidan Doheny
 Danny Erskine
 Emma Doyle
 Roxzan Bowes
 Zoë Reynolds
 Leanne Vaughey
 Shannon Cowan
 Ilona McCormick
 Leona Nally
 Lianne O'Shea
 Jennifer Aust
 Emily Danby
 Sorcha Whyte

Stage Technicians

John Finnegan
 Pat Dillion
 Pat Russell
 Larry Jones
 Brian O'Carroll
 Shane Kenny
 Tom Kennedy

Davy McChrystal
 Michael Kyle
 Damien Woods
 Donal Ayton
 Richard Curwood
 Darren Magnier
 Dan McDermott
 Ken Dunne
 Sarah-Jane Williams
 Joseph Sanders
 Diarmuid Woods
 Martin Reid
 Adrian Leake
 Evan Connolly
 Conor Mullan

Sean Walsh
 Pawel Nieworaj
 Fergus Kelly
 Terence McGoff
 Emma-Kate O'Reilly
 Fiona Cradock
 Aoife Murphy
 Conor Kelly
 Marykerin Naughton
 Kate Finn
 Andrew Smith
 Aidan McGillon
 Philip Hughes
 Eimear O'Meara

2022 Board

Dr. Frances Ruane (Chair)
 Noelle Brown
 Múirne Laffan
 Michael Owens
 (Deputy Chair)
 Mairéad Delaney
 Máire O'Higgins
 Owen Travers
 Michael Wall
 Michael West

Reappointed 29.07.2022
 Appointed 17.01.2022
 Appointed 17.01.2022
 Appointed 17.01.2022
 Reappointed 17.01.2022



Aoibhéann McCann in
Three Monologues: Twinkletoes
by Jennifer Johnston
Image: Ros Kavanagh.

TELLING THE STORIES OF A NATION

Section Nine
Programme and Events 2022

Section Nine
Programme and Events 2022

The T. S. Eliot Lecture with Es Devlin

Presented by The T. S. Eliot Estate

Online	19 Dec 2021–19 Jan
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Faith Healer

An Abbey Theatre production

Abbey stage	03 Dec 2021–22 Jan
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Every Brilliant Thing

An Abbey Theatre production

Peacock stage	10 Jan–22 Jan
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Solstice Arts Centre, Navan	25 Jan–26 Jan
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Droichead Arts Centre, Drogheda	28 Jan–29 Jan
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Glór, Ennis	01 Feb–02 Feb
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Garter Lane, Waterford	04 Feb–05 Feb
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Backstage Theatre, Longford	08 Feb–09 Feb
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The Mick Lally Theatre, Galway	10 Feb–12 Feb
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Bloody Sunday: Scenes from the Saville Enquiry

An Abbey Theatre production

Peacock stage and Online	28 Jan–30 Jan
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Portia Coughlan

An Abbey Theatre production

Abbey stage	11 Feb–16 Mar
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Jennifer Johnston Monologues: Mustn't Forget High Noon, Christine, Twinkletoes

An Abbey Theatre production

Abbey stage	18 Feb–12 Mar
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X'NTIGONE (after Sophocles)

A Prime Cut Productions and the MAC co-production presented by the Abbey Theatre

Peacock stage	16 Mar–26 Mar
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SOLIDARITY

Abbey Theatre partnered with Independent Irish Artists

Abbey stage	10 April
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An Octoroon

An Abbey Theatre production

Abbey stage	21 Apr–14 May
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Luck Just Kissed You Hello

An Abbey Theatre production

Peacock stage	29 Apr–14 May
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Love Song Part 1: Communities of Dissent

Bealtine Festival in partnership with the Abbey Theatre

Abbey stage	08 May
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Girl on an Altar

Kiln Theatre in partnership with the Abbey Theatre (London)

Kiln Theatre, London	19 May–25 Jun
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Section Nine
Programme and Events 2022

Encantado

Dublin Dance Festival in association with the Abbey Theatre

Abbey stage 20 May–21 May

Fallen From Heaven (Caída Del Cielo)

Dublin Dance Festival in association with the Abbey Theatre

Abbey stage 24 May–25 May

any attempt will end in crushed bodies and shattered bones

Dublin Dance Festival in association with the Abbey Theatre

Abbey stage 27 May–28 May

Rabbit Hole

Ballyduff Drama Group, All Ireland Drama Festival winners

Abbey stage 02 Jun–04 Jun

Ulysses

The Abbey Theatre and Dublin City Council

Peacock stage 10–16 Jun

Translations

An Abbey Theatre and Lyric Theatre Belfast co-production

Abbey stage 13 Jun–13 Aug

Lime Tree Theatre, Limerick 16 Aug–20 Aug

Town Hall Theatre, Galway 23 Aug–27 Aug

An Grianán, Donegal 30 Aug–03 Sept

Patrick Kielty – Borderline

David Hull Promotions

Abbey stage 26 June

The Midnight Run

The Midnight Run and Fuel

Dublin city 01 Jul

An Evening with an Immigrant

Inua Ellams and Fuel

Peacock stage 03 Jul

Inua Ellams, Fuel and the Abbey Theatre

Poetry + Film / Hack

IFI 05 Jul

Reel Mix

Inua Ellams, Fuel and the Abbey Theatre

Peacock stage 6 Jul–7 Jul

R.A.P Party

Inua Ellams, Fuel and the Abbey Theatre

Peacock stage 8 Jul

Muldoon's Picnic

Poetry Ireland and the Abbey Theatre

Peacock stage 14 Aug

Absent the Wrong

Once Off Productions

Peacock stage 10 Sept–24 Sept

Section Nine

Programme and Events 2022

The Rest Rooms

Co-commissioned by the Abbey Theatre and Dublin Fringe Festival and presented in association with the National Concert Hall

National Concert Hall	10 Sept–14 Sept
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It's All the Same

Co-presented by the Abbey Theatre and Dublin Fringe Festival

Dublin City	19 Sept– 5 Sept
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Gull.

Co-presented by the Abbey Theatre and Dublin Fringe Festival

Dublin City	21 Sept–25 Sept
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Joyce's Women

Abbey Theatre and Eilene Davidson Productions

Abbey stage	17 Sept–15 Oct
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A Whistle in the Dark

An Abbey Theatre production

Peacock stage	4 Oct–5 Nov
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Solar Bones

The Abbey Theatre, Kilkenny Arts Festival and Rough Magic

Abbey stage	20 Oct–29 Oct
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Haunted

An Abbey Theatre and THISISPOPBABY co-production

Peacock stage	11 Nov - 3 Dec
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If These Wigs Could Talk

An Abbey Theatre and THISISPOPBABY co-production

Peacock stage	11 Nov–3 Dec
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Her, Sive

An Abbey Theatre production

Schools-based	14 Nov–9 Dec
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The Weir

An Abbey Theatre production

Abbey stage	26 Nov–14 Jan 2023
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TELLING THE STORIES OF IRELAND