Theatre programme for Orphans at Focus Theatre 2010

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Smashing Times Theatre Company Ltd and PlayLeft Productions in association with Focus Theatre present the Irish premiere of

ORPHANS

By Dennis Kelly

Directed by: Mary Moynihan
Open for lunch Tuesday to Friday 12.30pm to 2pm
Open for dinner Tuesday to Saturday 6pm to 10.30pm

**LUNCH MENU**
€24 2 courses  €29 3 courses

**Early Bird Menu:** €24 2 courses

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Theatre is a reflection of what it is to be human. It is a sacred ritual where we, as artists, come together to create work that is engaging and challenging, work that stimulates the mind, the soul and the senses; creating images and emotions that linger long after the play is over, joining actors and audiences together in a magical union that is alive and immediate.

We all have primitive, primal urges that are a part of us, a sense of intuition that we need to connect with to grow. But we also have shadows in our soul and how much of a primitive lustful destroyer is there in all of us? At the heart of Orphans is the question of how far we would go to protect someone we love and what happens when fear starts to control our lives? If enough pressure is put on someone what are they capable of doing, to themselves, to others? If you live in fear, or with violence, how far will you go to protect yourself? Is there an innate ability to be cruel in all of us? These are all questions about what it is to be human.

Orphans is a play about the world we live in today. It touches on family ties, urban violence and terror, the nature of fear and of ‘the other’, of the damaged child becoming the damaged adult and the realisation of how far we are capable of going in extreme circumstances. It is also “a play about not looking, and what we all choose not to see.”

There are terrible consequences when our fear of the other translates into prejudice and violence. The late, great Brazilian theatre practitioner, Augusto Boal spoke about building walls – walls against racism, against sexism, against ageism and so on and particularly today when there is a growing divide between ‘them’ and ‘us’.

In our world there is increasing fragmentation, a division between people and communities, a growing sense of ‘them and us’, a fear of ‘the other’, of outsiders. But we are all ‘the other’, there is a piece of us in everyone and everyone in us. I believe there is a need now, more than ever, to work for a celebration of difference.

Deirdre O’Connell, the founder of Focus Theatre, said that acting is an act of love. In life also it is love that binds us together, a love of life, of each other and (hopefully) of fairness and equality. We are all different, yet we all belong to the one human race. Vive la difference!

Mary Moynihan, Director
DENNIS KELLY
PLAYRIGHT

Dennis is a London-based writer for both theatre and television. His work for the stage includes Orphans (Traverse Theatre, Birmingham Repertory Theatre, Soho Theatre, winner of the Fringe First & Herald Angel Awards 2009); The Gods Weep (Hampstead, London); DNA (National Theatre); Taking Care of Baby (Birmingham Rep/Hampstead Theatre); Love and Money (Manchester Royal Exchange and Young Vic); After The End (Traverse Theatre, Bush Theatre, Leicester Haymarket and UK and international Tour); Osam the Hero (Hampstead Theatre) and Debris (Battersea Arts Centre, Traverse and Latchmere). He was awarded the Wolff Whiting Award for Taking Care of Baby and the Meyer-Whitworth award for Osam the Hero. He co-wrote the BBC Three sitcom, Pulling with writer/actress Sharon Horgan.

MARY MOYNIHAN
DIRECTOR

Mary Moynihan is an artist, theatre director, writer and facilitator. She lectures in drama and theatre studies for the Bachelor of Arts in Drama (performance) at the Conservatory of Music and Drama, Dublin Institute of Technology where she teaches the Stanislavski system of actor training, Augusto Boal and Michael Chekhov techniques, movement and drama facilitation and directs final year performances. She is a founding member and current Artistic Director of Smashing Times Theatre Company Limited and an associate director/artist with the Focus Theatre and a member of the Focus play reading panel.

Mary originally trained as an actor and director at Focus under the direction of Deirdre O’Connell, her friend and mentor. Mary has an honours MA, in Film Production from the Dublin Institute of Technology and a honours BA in Drama and Theatre Studies from the University of Dublin Trinity College.

Professional directing credits include In One Breath (Testimonies) for Smashing Times Theatre; The Crucible by Arthur Miller, St. Dymphna’s Oratory, Grangegorman, Olga from Picasso’s Women by Brian McAvera for Focus Theatre, Orpheus Descending by Tennessee Williams, Mill Theatre, Dundrum, Two Rooms by Lee Blessing for Focus Theatre, Talk To Me Like The Rain and Let Me Listen... by Tennessee Williams, Focus Theatre, May Our Faces Haunt You (nationwide tour), A Chain of Hands (Royal Hibernian Academy), Medea (Smashing Times on nationwide tour), and Yerma and Riders to the Sea (Samuel Beckett Theatre). As a playwright, Mary’s work includes the highly acclaimed Testimonies (co-written with Paul Kennedy), May Our Faces Haunt You, Out of the Outside and Silent Screams.

Mary is the mother of three sons, Féilim, Naoise and Éanna and a daughter, Élla. She dedicates her theatre work to the memory of her mother and father Helen and Eddie Moynihan.

ANNETTE FLYNN
CAST

Annette’s theatre credits include The Winter’s Tale, Project Arts Centre; We Are Not Afraid (devised), How Tom Beat Captain Najork and His Hired Sportsmen, both Brian Friel Theatre, Belfast; award-winning Married to the Sea, Dragonfly Theatre Company; Some Explicit Polaroids, Players Theatre; Rudolph, Nationwide Tour; The Unknown Project (devised); and The Comedy of Errors, Public Shakespeare. This is her second time performing at the Focus having played Dorinda in The Beaux Stratagem in 2006. Her most exciting and unusual role to date was as a Mermaid and Starfish in the water-based musical Sinbad by Big Telly, that toured Northern Ireland and the UK.

TV and Film credits include The Covies, director Len Collin; BBC short The Deal, director Delyth Thomas; and Broken Wings, director John Walters IADT. Annette studied performance at Bull Alley and Queens University Belfast. She is currently a member of the Focus studio. Orphans is the debut production of PlayLeft Productions which she founded with cast member Colm O’Brien.
**CREATIVE TEAM**

**LISA KRUGEL**  
**Set Design**

Lisa is a graduate of DIT’s Conservatory of Music and Drama. She has worked as a Stage Manager for several years from the New Theatre to the Helix. Recent productions include The Quare Fellow (New Theatre), The Tailor and Ansty (New Theatre), Glengarry Glen Ross (dir. Miná), Portia Coughlan (Blueprint Productions), and lighting design for 1 <3 Alice <3 I (HotForTheatre) at this year’s Absolut Fringe Festival. Lisa is currently studying for her HND in technical theatre at Inchicore CFE, specialising in set and lighting design. She is delighted to be working at the Focus and with Smashing Times and PlayLeft Productions for the first time.

**ADAM TRAYNOR**  
**CAST**

Adam graduated with a BA in Drama (Performance) from the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama. He has recently finished a feature film A Fiastul of Diamonds (director Dave Keeling). Other films include leading roles in Closing Time and Midas (director Brendan Maguire), Jay & Jacinta (director Daniel Corrigan) and The Observers (director Kelly Halligan). Past theatre credits include John Proctor in Arthur Miller’s The Crucible (director Mary Moynihan), Eupridies Must Die (director Peter McDermott), Hearing Voices (Civic Theatre) and Tough Guys (Civic Theatre). Television credits include Fair City (RTÉ) and On Home Ground (RTÉ).

**MICHAL LEMAN-LEMANSKI**  
**Producer**

Michal (pronunciation is close to the Irish name Michéal) has a variety of theatre experience as a producer, production manager, stage manager and arts manager. He had opportunity to work closely with Eric Fraad, acclaimed theatre and opera director from New York, and many other artists in Ireland. He has been involved in number of arts festivals: Edinburgh Fringe Festival and Dublin Theatre Festival, to name but a few.

His biggest success as a producer is Slaughterhouse, Swan which swept three awards at AGTFD in 2010 and Tic, which was a big hit at the Focus Theatre. After hours, Michal is a loving partner, passionate sociologist, traveller, and B&W photographer.

**THERESE MULLAN**  
**Costume Design**

Therese studied drama at the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama, graduating with distinction in 2007. She went on to train as a puppeteer with the Lambert National Puppet Theatre and has acted in various productions on stage and radio throughout the country. She is an associate artist of Focus and is currently rehearsing for productions of Picasso’s Women and Francis and Frances by Brian McAvera. She is currently performing in Testimonies by Mary Moynihan and Paul Kennedy for Smashing Times Theatre on tour.

Costume credits to date include Spartacus and War of The Roses I, II and III (Whiplash Productions), The Importance of Being Earnest, Buggy Malone (National Association of Youth Drama), Wake Up Sleeping Beauties (Dublin Youth Theatre), Portia Coughlan (Blueprint Productions) and Neuropolis by Gary Duggan for Focus’s exciting new endeavours throughout the year.

**CONLETH WHITE**  
**Lighting Design**

Conleth has designed lighting for many theatre companies in Ireland. Most recently he lit Happy like a Fool for Red Kettle and Redline Deadline for Whiplashlights. He is currently working with Theatre of Witness on I Once Knew a Girl in the Derry Playhouse and with ArtsEkt on an event to celebrate Diwali and Samhain in Belfast. Conleth teaches lighting in Inchicore CFE.

**PRISCILLA NIC CHONMARA**  
**Stage Manager**

Priscilla holds a MA in Drama and Theatre from NUI Galway. She has been working in all aspects of the arts for over ten years. She is a founding member of Waterdonkey Theatre and has worked on such productions as Pigeon Racing Advanced Techniques and To the Back of Beyond. She was the producer for Wildebeest Theatre on their recent production of The Real World. She has worked as stage manager for Mephisto Theatre on their production of Wrecked and Suantal Theatre on their production of Ashes to Ashes. She has also worked with Fabin Teo and Taibhdhearc na Gaillimhe. She is a native of Tipperary and an award-winning musician and singer.
SMASHING TIMES THEATRE COMPANY LTD

SMASHING TIMES – THEATRE FOR CHANGE
PERFORMANCE, TRAINING, PARTICIPATION

Smashing Times Theatre Company Ltd is a professional theatre company involved in professional performance, training and participation. The work of the company is underpinned by a rights-based approach and a commitment to artistic excellence and social engagement. The company was established in 1991 by a group of women actors who met at the Focus Theatre, Dublin.

The company has four high-profile patrons – Maeve Binchy, Brian Friel, Tim Pat Coogan and Robert Kee. Smashing Times Theatre Company is supported by Dublin City Council Arts Office.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Mary Moynihan

COMPANY MANAGER
Freda Manweiler

PROFESSIONAL OUTREACH
Sinead O’Loughlin

SMASHING TIMES THEATRE – ONGOING PROJECTS
Acting for the Future uses drama and theatre to promote positive mental health and suicide prevention. This project is supported by ESB ElectricAID Ireland (ESBE) and is run in association with the Samaritans and the Irish Association of Suicidology with advice from a Panel of Advisors.

The professional theatre performance for this project is Testimonies by Mary Moynihan and Paul Kennedy and consists of three dramatic monologues adapted from the experiences of those who have lost loved ones to suicide and from the experiences of those who have been through a suicidal crisis and survived. Each performance is followed by a post-show discussion with a counsellor and invited guest speakers from the Samaritans and other organisations. Audience members are invited to discuss the issues raised by the performances. A series of performances are planned for Dublin and Leinster over the coming months.

Acting for Change is an innovative project run by Smashing Times Theatre Company with support from Donegal CDB Peace and Reconciliation Partnership. The project uses drama and theatre activities in Donegal to engage participants from a cross-border and cross-community perspective, bringing people together to explore themes that are a consequence of the conflict in Northern Ireland and the Southern Border counties.

The project consists of a series of storytelling workshops to promote reconciliation and workshops to promote anti-racism, anti-sectarianism and equality. As part of the project an original theatre performance opens on Tuesday, January 11, 2011 at the Balor Arts Centre, Ballybofey followed by performances on tour in Donegal. The project ends with a One-Day Reconciliation And Equality Seminar Through Drama taking place on Friday, January 14 at the Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny.

As part of this project Smashing Times are working in collaboration with a range of organisations including the Irish Peace Centres, the Mid-Ulster Women’s Network, the Balor Arts Centre, Ballybofey and Plain Speaking Community Theatre, Omagh.

Professional Outreach work includes a long-term partnership with HACE, the Henrietta Adult and Community Education Service run by the Daughters of Charity Community Services based at 8/9 Henrietta Street, Dublin 1. Smashing Times Theatre Company has long-term partnerships with a range of organisations including the Irish Peace Centres, the Mid-Ulster Women’s Network, UCD, the Samaritans and Irish Association of Suicidology, PlayLeft Productions and Focus Theatre.

SMASHING TIMES THEATRE COMPANY LTD
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international theatre practice. We believe that actors have a unique power to illuminate the human experience through performance and engagement with audiences. We commit ourselves to exploring the most urgent human and social themes of our time, and to merging literature, design and performance in ways that test the bounds of the theatre’s artistic possibilities. We undertake to advance the craft of the actor in the service of both the professional theatre community and wider public and aim to extend that service through performance, training, education and outreach programmes that reflect our artistic mission.

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“The deeper the actor’s inner experience of his role the further will be the audience’s involvement” — Tom Hickey

For information on acting workshops please check our website: www.focustheatre.ie or call the administration office 01 6712417

FOCUS THEATRE CONTACT INFORMATION

Artistic Director — Joe Devlin
Administration Support — Michal Leman-Lemanski
Box Office/Technical Manager — Colm Maher
Outreach Co-ordinator — Sinéad Hackett
Focus Theatre Administration Office
12a Fade Street, Dublin 2
Tel: 01 6712417

Focus Theatre Venue, 6a Pembroke Place, Dublin 2. Box Office: 087 274 4125

For further information on productions please look at the Focus Theatre website www.focustheatre.ie or contact us at info@focustheatre.ie

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Help us to pay for our refurbishment and long-term rebuilding programme of the much loved Focus Theatre venue by donating €20 for a brick. We will acknowledge your donation in our programmes and on our website. Please cut out your brick campaign slip from the programme and send your donation to the Focus Administration Office (address at front of programme). Brick campaign slips can also be found in Focus Theatre Coffee Shop.

Focus Theatre Buy a Brick Campaign
I wish to buy a brick for the Focus Theatre refurbishment campaign. Please find enclosed.

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VOLUNTEERS

If you would like to volunteer to work at the Focus Theatre please contact us on (01) 671 2417.

ANGELS BEACONS OF HOPE

Focus Theatre was invited to take part in this awareness campaign by Nora Faiy co-ordinator of the Angel Parade with the support of Budd Holden. The design of the Focus Angel is by Glenn Egan. The Deirdre O’Connell quote was supplied by Tim Mc Donnell, and the Lee Strawbury quote was supplied by Anna Strawbury. This inspirational project saw dozens of celebrities, sports stars, musicians and actors help lift the national gloom while raising vital funds for three charities.

Angels: Beacons of Hope is a unique Irish project that captured the public imagination during the latter part of 2009 and early 2010. From a simple mould, sculpted in fiberglass, a limited number of beautifully crafted, 2.4m/8ft-tall angels were produced and created as a blank canvas. Angel Parade invited some of Ireland’s top artists, musicians, sports people and celebrities, along with a number of international guests, to support this charitable initiative by painting and decorating an angel to show the nation their interpretation of ‘hope’.

Over 40 well-known Irish and international names took up this artistic challenge, including Neil Jordan, Uma Thurman, The Edge, Ryan Tubridy, Brendan Gleeson, Gerry Ryan, Diarmuid Gavin, Tommy Tiernan, Amy Huberman, Pauline McLynn, Des Bishop, Ruby Walsh, Bobby Heaton and Colin Farrell.

Following the launch of the initiative in November, the Angels were displayed in Dublin until the end of December before touring the country – visiting Galway, Cork, Kilkenny and Belfast. At the end of the tour, the Angels returned to Dublin for auction in aid of three charities: Gaisce – The President’s Awards, Angels’ Quest and Right to Sight.
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