

FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

VIBRANT NEW WRITING | UNIQUE REDISCOVERIES

February-May Season 2020

The English premiere

ON McQUILLAN'S HILL

by Joseph Crilly.

Directed by Jonathan Harden.

Set and Costume Design by Norman Coates. Lighting by Holly Ellis. Music and Sound by Declan Feenan.

Presented by Doreen Productions in association with Neil McPherson for the Finborough Theatre.

Cast: Helena Bereen. Gina Costigan. Julie Maguire. Kevin Murphy. Declan Rodgers. Johnny Vivash.

"There's a lock o' new houses down in the village and there's a Sinn Féin advice centre and the shop's a Spar now, but nothin' much else is different. The whole world is changin' and Gentry stays the same."

The English premiere of acclaimed Northern Irish playwright Joseph Crilly's *On McQuillan's Hill* opens at the Finborough Theatre for a four-week limited season on Tuesday, 4 February 2020 (Press Nights: Thursday, 6 February and Friday, 7 February 2020 at 7.30pm).

Rural Northern Ireland, 1999. Proud IRA man Fra Maline returns home - released early from prison under the Good Friday Agreement - and to celebrate his daughter, Theresa, throws a party at the local community hall on McQuillan's Hill.

Unknown to the revellers the hall has been bought by Fra's sister, Loretta, who turns up ready to demolish it after a twenty-year absence across the water.

With peace on a knife-edge, bitter memories, family secrets and lies long buried in the bog threaten to resurface as an accidental family reunion descends into pitch black farce...

A vicious satire from a playwright hailed as "Ulster's Martin McDonagh" (*The Guardian*), *On McQuillan's Hill* gets under the dirty fingernails of small town Northern Ireland, confronting the horrors of abuse and the corrosive legacy of conflict with explosive wit and an insider's eye for detail.

Originally produced by the renowned Tinderbox Theatre Company in 2000 at the Lyric Theatre, Belfast, *On McQuillan's Hill* now receives its long-overdue English premiere.

Playwright **Joseph Crilly** (1962-2017) was an acclaimed writer and actor from Co. Armagh, Northern Ireland. His first stage play *Second-Hand Thunder*, produced by Tinderbox Theatre Company in 1998, won the Stewart Parker Trust New Writing Award. His other plays include *No Tide on the Lough* (Lyric Theatre, Belfast, and Royal Shakespeare Company New Play Festival 1995), *A Wedding*, *A Jail and the Fifty Minute Shuttle* (shortlisted for the Verity Bargate Award 1996), *The Steps to Strength and Fame* and *Kitty and Damnation*. He also wrote three radio plays for BBC Radio 4 – *Comforting* (2001), *Stumbling* (2003) and *The Trick of Togetherness* (2004). As an actor, he appeared in television (*The Bill*, *A Time to Dance* and *Bergerac*) and film (*Resurrection Man*, *Children of the North* and *Crossfire*). Joe Crilly tragically died by suicide in 2017. In 2018, *The Crilly Trilogy*, a volume comprising three of his most acclaimed plays – *Second-Hand Thunder*, *On McQuillan's Hill*, and *Kitty and Damnation* – was published, featuring a preface by Queen's University Belfast academic Dr Mark Phelan, a tribute from actor Hugh Bonneville and play commentaries from the television producer Stephen Wright and the actor Ruairi Conaghan.

Director **Jonathan Harden** returns to the Finborough Theatre where, as an actor he played the lead role in Caitlin McLeod's production of renowned Ulster playwright Stewart Parker's *Northern Star*. Direction includes Artistic Director at the Lyric Theatre Studio, Belfast, where he directed *X6*, a portmanteau of shorts, by Declan Feenan and Lisa McGee, having previously worked with them on their early work including *Jump!* and *The Young Man with the Cream Tarts*. He was Creative Producer for *The 24hr Plays* at the Lyric Theatre Belfast where he directed *October* by Declan Feenan, and Creative Producer at new writing theatre company twentyfivebelfast, directing *Debris* by Dennis Kelly and

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Service by Lisa McGee. Most recently, he directed two short films, *Guard and Troubles*, which have so far competed at over forty festivals and won a number of awards including the European Independent Film Award for Best Short Film 2017 and the Northern Ireland Short Film Award for Best Drama 2018. He was recently welcomed to the directing chapter of the Irish Film and Television Academy, and is currently working on a short documentary, funded by BFI Network via NI Screen.

His stage work as an actor includes *Much Ado About Nothing*, directed by Tamara Harvey (Theatr Clwyd), *Children of the Sun*, directed by Howard Davies (National Theatre) and *Sanctuary*, directed by Roisin McBrinn (Arcola Theatre). His television work includes *Small Island*, *Titanic: Blood and Steel*, *The Life and Adventures of Nick Nickleby*, *Unforgotten*, *EastEnders*, *Halo: Nightfall*, *Casualty*, and *Peep Show*. He has also featured in numerous films including *Whole Lotta Sole*, *The Invisible Woman*, *The Truth Commissioner*, *Another Mother's Son*, *Doing Money* and *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*. He has also provided voices for several video games, most notably *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part I*, and the voiceover for 2015 Oscar-nominated and BAFTA-winning short film *Boogaloo* and *Graham*. Harden has also lectured in Drama at Queen's University Belfast, read scripts as part of the Hothouse New Writing Panel at Tinderbox Theatre Company, and is the actor behind *The Honest Actors' Podcast*.

The cast is:

Helena Breen | Mrs Tymely

Trained at the Gaiety School of Acting and the National Theatre School of Canada.

Theatre includes *Now For The North* (The MAC, Belfast), *Lovers: Winners and Losers* (Lyric Theatre, Belfast), *All My Sons* (Arts Theatre, Belfast), *Hamlet* (Hawk's Well Theatre, Sligo), *Woman and Scarecrow* (Old Museum Arts Centre, Belfast), *Brothers in Arms* (Waterfront Hall, Belfast) and *Family Plot* (Brian Friel Theatre).

Film includes *Hunger*, *The Shore*, *A Year of Greater Love*, *The Devil's Doorway* and *I Am Belfast*.

Television includes *Glenroe*, *Fair City*, *The Clinic*, *Mo* and *Millie Inbetween*.

Radio includes *From Donegal with Love*.

Gina Costigan | Loretta Maline

Trained at New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts and Queen's University Belfast.

Theatre includes *The Ferryman* (Bernard B. Jacobs Theatre, Broadway), *Party Face* (New York City Center - Stage II), *The Suitcase Under the Bed* (Beckett Theatre), *Crackskull Row* (Irish Repertory Theatre), *The Seedbed* (New Jersey Repertory Company), *The Valley of the Squinting Windows* (Mullingar Arts Centre), *An Trial* (Irish National Tour), *Bon go Barr* (Northern Irish Tour), *I scream, you scream, the cat screams* (Project Arts Centre, Dublin), *Buile an Phice* (Andrew's Lane Theatre, Dublin) and *The Risen People* (Gaiety Theatre, Dublin).

Film includes *Veronica Guerin*, *Becoming Jane*, *Brittany Runs a Marathon*, *Halal Daddy*, *A Terrible Beauty*, *Becoming Jane* and *Black Ice*.

Television includes *I Know This Much Is True*, *Vikings*, *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* and *Fair City*.

Julie Maguire | Theresa Maline

Trained at The Lir Academy.

Theatre includes *This Girl Laughs*, *This Girl Cries*, *This Girl Does Nothing* (Irish National Tour), *The Plough and the Stars* (Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, and Abbey Theatre, Dublin), *They Called Her Vivaldi* (Theatre Lovett), *Toilers* (Painted Bird at Cork Midsummer Festival), *Anna Karenina* (Abbey Theatre, Dublin), *Glowworm* (Project Arts Centre, Dublin) and *It Only Ever Happens in the Movies* (National Youth Theatre, Ireland). Workshops include *Aonair* (Triskel Arts Centre, Cork), *Notorious Strumpets and Dangerous Girls* (Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, and Everyman Theatre, Cork), *The Lonely Whale* (Cork Opera House), *Channel 4 Writer's Workshop* (Channel 4) and *The Country Girls* (Abbey Theatre, Dublin).

Theatre whilst training includes *The Provoked Wife*, *The Cradle Will Rock*, *Buddleia*, *Once in a Blue Moon*, *By the Bog of Cats*, *Agamemnon*, *As You Like It*, *The Petty Bourgeois* and *The Seagull*.

Kevin Murphy | Dessie Rigg

Productions at the Finborough Theatre include *Over The Bridge*.

Trained at LAMDA.

Theatre includes *Tartuffe* (National Theatre), *Honest* (Bewley's Theatre, Dublin), *The Man Who Had All The Luck* (King's Head Theatre), *Juno and the Paycock* (National Theatre and Abbey Theatre, Dublin), *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* (Curve Theatre, Leicester), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Creation Theatre Company at Oxford Castle), *True West* (English Theatre Company, Essen), *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Linbury Studio at LAMDA), *Open House* (Kensal House with Riverside Studios and Spid Theatre Company) and *Faustus* (Etcetera Theatre). Other work includes workshops and rehearsed readings for the National Theatre Studio, Hampstead Theatre, The Gate, Curve Theatre and for Steven Berkoff.

Television includes *Warrior*, *Doctors*, *The Whistleblower*, *The Bill*, *The Year London Blew Up* and *The Long Walk*. He is also the narrator of BBC TV series *Mountain Vets*.

Radio includes *The Burial at Thebes*, *Space 1889* and *Red Devils*.

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Declan Rodgers | Ray McCullion

Trained at LAMDA.

Theatre includes *The Birthday Party* (National Tour), *I'm With The Band* (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh, and National Tour), *Can't Forget About You* (Lyric Theatre, Belfast), *Shoot The Crow* (Trafalgar Studios), *Carousel* (Bush Theatre), *Service* (Theatre503), *Hope Dies Last* (Arcola Theatre) and *City* (Encounter Productions).

Film includes *Shooting For Socrates*, *You Looking At Me?* and *The Minnits of Annabeg*.

Television includes *Patrick Melrose*, *The Deceived*, *Six Degrees*, *Holby City*, *Doctors*, *Ashes To Ashes*, *In Cold Blood* and *Maru*.

Johnny Vivash | Fra Maline

Trained at ALRA, London.

Theatre includes *Purge* (Arcola Theatre), *Fuente Ovejuna* (Southwark Playhouse), *Waiting for Lefty* (Haymarket Theatre), *Laminated* (Tristan Bates Theatre), *Arden of Faversham* (Rose Theatre, Bankside), *Hypothermia* (Lawrence Batley Theatre, Huddersfield, and Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough), *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* (Cockpit Theatre), *Howie the Rookie* (Old Red Lion Theatre), *Still* (KC Theatre, Croatia), *The Revenger's Tragedy* (Bridewell Theatre), *Can You See Me Yet* (Brockley Jack Studio Theatre), *The Lonesome West* (Tabard Theatre), *The Beaux Stratagem* (The Steam Industry at The Courtyard Theatre), *Journey's End* (Broadway Studio Theatre, Catford), *Enoch Arden in the Hope Shelter* (Rosemary Branch Theatre), *On Raftery's Hill* (Rosemary Branch Theatre) and *Lost Property* (Gilded Balloon).

Film includes *Lie Low*, *Book of Monsters*, *The Good Neighbour*, *Rendel*, *Charismata*, *90 Minutes* and *Small Town Hero*, and short films including *Eddie*, *Devil Town*, *His Wake*, *When the Sea Gulls*, *Big Bird*, *Locked In* and *Perdition County*.

Television includes *The Crown*, *Thieves of My Children* and *The Seven Ages of Britain*.

The press and quotes on Joseph Crilly and On McQuillan's Hill

"Ulster's Martin McDonagh." *The Guardian*

"It's not far short of a miracle, the number of fine playwrights Ireland produces. Here comes another: Joseph Crilly." *The Daily Telegraph*

"Crilly succeeds in presenting us with wonderfully unclichééd figures and real human beings." *The Irish Examiner*

"Joe Crilly has a gift for upsetting people in his native Northern Ireland." *The Guardian*

"I was blown away by the tumbling, lyrical flow of language and the relish of telling a tale. The sheer energy of the dialogue: raw and piercing, adventurous and full of mischievous glee. Taste the writing, savour the man." *Actor Hugh Bonneville*

"On McQuillan's Hill's strength is its unapologetic visceral quality. The viciousness of the story, the wild musicality of the language and the boldness of what Joe's story challenged – ideals of community and heroism when underneath there was self-delusion, self-aggrandisement and abuse." *Stephen Wright (Creative Director of Two Cities Television, former Head of Drama for BBC Northern Ireland)*

"What's extraordinary is Crilly's ability to shift into comedy and make his characters unexpectedly lovable." *The Daily Telegraph*

The press on director Jonathan Harden

"Harden has crafted a lyrical and disconcertingly tense thriller... More, please." *Irish Times* on *The Young Man with the Cream Tarts*

"The most intriguing production of the year." *Belfast Telegraph* on *The Young Man with the Cream Tarts*

"A master-stroke... the production ideas, values and set-ups are terrific." *The Vacuum* on *The Young Man with the Cream Tarts*

"Right from the cleverly shot and edited pre-credits sequence... Harden keeps his foot on the accelerator... [with his] fast-moving cast of seven delivering an O'Coen Brothers take on Belfast-on-the-Fargo." *Belfast Newsletter* on *Jump!*

"The Discovery of the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival." *Irish News* on *Jump!*

PRESS NIGHTS: THURSDAY, 6 FEBRUARY AND FRIDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 7.30PM

PHOTOCALL: TUESDAY, 4 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 1.00PM-1.30PM

Finborough Theatre, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED

Book online at www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk

No booking fees on online, personal or postal bookings

Box Office 01223 357851. (Calls are free. There will be a 5% booking fee.) Lines are open Monday-Saturday 10.00am-6.00pm

Tuesday, 4 February – Saturday, 29 February 2020

Tuesday to Saturday Evenings at 7.30pm. Saturday and Sunday Matinees at 3.00pm.

Prices until 16 February 2020 – Tickets £18, £16 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £16 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £18 all seats. Previews (4 and 5 February) £14 all seats.

£10 tickets for Under 30s for performances from Tuesday to Sunday of the first week when booked online only.

£14 tickets for residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea on Saturday, 8 February 2020 when booked online only.

Prices from 18 February 2020 – Tickets £20, £18 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £18 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £20 all seats.

Performance Length: To be confirmed.

For more information, interviews and images, please contact

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The Finborough Theatre is managed by The Steam Industry. Registered in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee, no. 3448268. Registered Charity no. 1071304. Registered address: 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED. A member of the Independent Theatre Council.

Press Information

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Neil McPherson on e-mail press@finboroughtheatre.co.uk or 07977 173135

Download press releases and images at <http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk/press-resources.php>

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