



WAITING FOR
THE OFFFO



BOSCO & THE NEW THEATRE PRESENTS

WAITING FOR THE OFFO

**A NEW PLAY
BY
MAHON MCCANN**

**DIRECTED &
DESIGNED BY
CONAN MCIVOR**

TERRY JOYCE

CILLIAN LENAGHAN

NIALL FREEMAN

LIAM BIXBY

LAUREN GREENWAY

HAZEL CLIFFORD

**NORMAN LAWLESS
AKA 'YOUR MAN'**

TERRY O'NEILL

TERRY'S MA

ABIGAIL MCGIBBON

**LIGHTING DESIGN
JONATHAN DALEY**

**SOUND DESIGN
BRIAN LINCOLN**

**SET BUILDER
MATTHEW MULLAN**

**CREATIVE COSULTANT
MICHAEL J. DALY**

**STAGE MANAGER
DAIRE O'CEALLAIGH**

**COMPANY SM
EVA WALSH**

The New Theatre is supported by The Arts Council, Dublin
City of Literature UNESCO, and friends of The New Theatre.



**the
new
theatre**

WELCOME TO THE NEW THEATRE

The New Theatre is a unique producing venue. We have a full Dramaturgical and creative team whose purpose is to continually nurture, develop and stage high standard and affordable new plays.

Since 1997 The New Theatre has provided artists with a first-rate venue in the heart of Temple Bar. Our primary focus is new work and we support a varied programme of contemporary theatre, adaptations, and spoken word. We seek to give both Artists and audiences access to Irish Theatre, particularly young people who might not otherwise have access to this rich heritage. We are delighted to partner with Bosco to present this new work. Please visit www.thenewtheatre.com to see our upcoming productions.

Enjoy the show.

**Anthony Fox
Artistic Director
The New Theatre**

WRITER'S NOTE

Growing up I wasn't a theatre person, I didn't attend a drama school, and only ever saw a handful of plays - so why did I write this play?...



The idea for 'Waiting For The Offo' came to me in a flash of inspiration while reading Samuel Beckett's *Waiting For Godot* with a crippling hangover. Not something for the faint of heart. The endless cynical gallows humour of the play reminded me of the conversations on the session I'd taken part in just a few hours before. It was a strange idea, that a play written in 1953 could still be playing out in the living rooms of young Irish people today, who were, mostly like myself, theatrically illiterate? It was a question worth pursuing. *Waiting For Godot* is the archetypal modern myth of nihilism and absurdity. In dramatising Godot in present-day Dublin, I hoped to highlight the parallels between Beckett's perennial myth of the absurd and the Dublin session culture in which I'd grown up. Showing how that myth is still playing out for many young people, right under our noses, in parent's living rooms, free gafs and student houses all over the country.

Austrian Psychologist and holocaust survivor Victor Frankl said, “When a man can’t find a deep sense of meaning, they distract themselves with pleasure,” that’s how I felt about my life in the session in Dublin. Stuck in the education system, bored out of mind, nihilistic, cynical, alienated, and partying just to forget. At first, the ritual helped me make great friends and stories and to escape, but slowly over time, the session lifestyle wore away at me, creating anxiety, depression and no small amount of suffering; What was a solution became the problem.

My own story with the session began in my early teens drinking in fields and before discos and it’s became a way of life ever since. However in my early twenties, graduated from university and confronted with the challenges of growing up and becoming an adult, the session monkey on my back started to feel heavier and heavier.

By the time I wrote the play in 2018 during my creative writing MA in Belfast, I was already considering giving up and felt at some stage myself and the session would part ways - unfortunately, then I ended up writing about it for the next five years...

The play was accepted into the Dublin Fringe Festival 2020, and thanks to the kindness and generosity of 120+ donors and Michael and Conan's guidance, we were ready for a debut performance. Of course, if you are familiar with history, or more than two years old, you will know that 2020 was also the year of something else, a certain global pandemic. The world was closed, and our hopes of a 2020 production went down in flames. The theatres shut, and we had plenty of time to ask ourselves, should we keep going with this play? Would there even be a point to it after 2020? What would the world look like then?

Throughout the pandemic and rejections from theatres we had lots of opportunities to quit on this play but quitting was never an option. I felt I had something to say about the session and the nihilism of the lives of young people in Dublin which was important and worth fighting for, possibly even more so in the difficult and complex world which emerged from the pandemic.

In staging the play, we hoped to go beyond the typical theater crowds and offer a new experience to a wider Dublin audience, using Conan's video design and projection skills to mix mediums and bring the digital world into the stage and the session.

Through our collaboration, we hoped to add further layers to the story by bringing in new mediums rarely seen on Irish stages that would appeal to theatre goers and non-theater goers alike, to start a conversation about the session, young men and the hedonism we often take for granted.

The session is a lot of fun, but what it taught me was that the worst things come from the corruption of the best. I watched so many people who I loved fall apart from drink and drugs, go insane, become reduced versions of themselves, and I watched myself become someone who didn't like the look of in the mirror in the mornings. They were some of the best times I ever had, but were often followed swiftly by the worst. The session lifestyle is not quite alcoholism or a drug addiction but an addiction to the dramatic cycle of rising and falling, boom and bust, like a gambler who is hooked on losing just as much as winning.

Nothing encapsulates this addiction more than *Waiting For The Offo*, this dilemma, pushing past the edge of sobriety to go back into intoxication, consciousness to unconsciousness, night into day, in order to just keep partying. It is this strange and liminal space which this play invites you to

ponder, not quite sober, not quite drunk, not quite a session but still going - a place of stalled transformations. A rebellion against the march of time.

What changed in me, if I could pick just one thing, was the decision to stop waiting. Not just on the Offo, but for another life or incarnation. To stop waiting spiritually, existentially and to give my all in this arena, to take on the adventure of my life. The session can become a purgatory, a substance fueled ritual to avoid responsibilities, relationships, thoughts, and ultimately the challenges of life that are necessary to become who you could be. And I know this because I was at one time a semi-professional session head. If I can give it up, then there's hope for us all.

Mahon McCann



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

**“Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter.
Try again. Fail again. Fail better.”**

Samuel Beckett

When I read Mahon's first draft of *Waiting For The Offo* back in 2018 I was immediately captured by his very relatable setting of 'The Session' which on the surface is just a good time but weaved throughout it were the themes and subtext of *Godot*. I felt this had great potential to offer a younger generation an accessible entry point to Theatre and Beckett, in particular. However, I had only ever designed video for Theatre and my directing experience had been limited to film work. Theatre directing seemed like a privileged space, not for someone with an unconventional background like myself. Around this time, while meeting Director/Video Designer Netia Jones on the Irish National Opera production of *In Search of Rosemary Kennedy*, it suddenly clicked – I can be a theatre director and designer, the two are not mutually exclusive. It was obvious to me that my video design background could offer *Waiting For The Offo* a unique point of view that would embrace a surreal and playful style.

My visual art practice around that time was heavily concerned with the ideas and values surrounding young men during the pandemic, specifically those of body image, emotional relationships, and attitudes to sexuality and gender. At that time there was the #MeToo wave and a diverging of male role models, from gender bending Harry Styles and the intellectual Timothée Chalamet, to the toxic masculinity of Conor McGregor and Andrew Tate. How confusing it must be for this generation of men... what should and what can a man be in present day? My TikTok was flooded with Jordan Peterson's *12 Rules* for men, most notably his first: stand up straight, with your shoulders back. This refers to how Lobsters size each other up during a confrontation and how dominant lobsters with higher serotonin levels project greater confidence, better posture, and can fight for longer. Are men just trapped by their biological programming or can we really evolve?

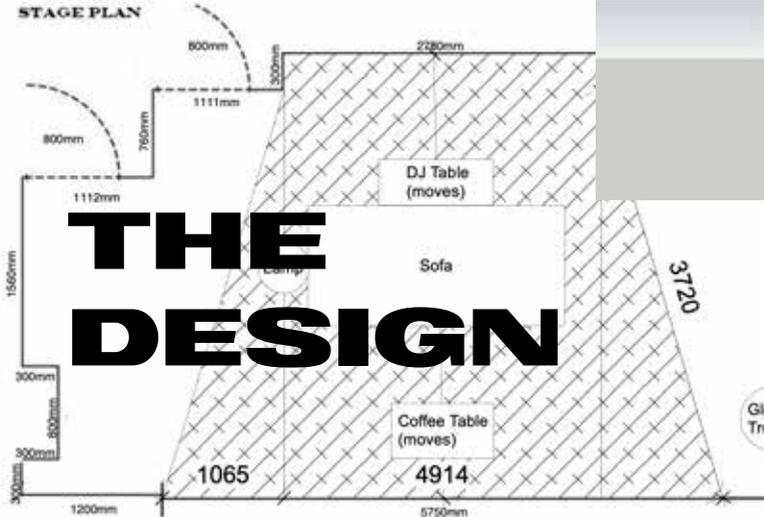
This got me thinking about my own male role model, my dad, my namesake, (I'm actually Michael Conan but that's a whole other story). In the late '90s I remember sitting shotgun in our Opel Manta heading back home and my dad asking me to put on a cassette, "The Very Best of Elton John", second song in – Rocket Man (I Think It's Going To Be A Long Long Time), what a tune, we revel on his musical prowess, but agree "it's a shame about all the fruity dressing up though". The male role models of my dad's generation were Gerry Adams and 'hard men', circumstances didn't allow for vulnerability. Twenty odd years on my dad has demonstrated the immense capacity men have for growth and change, and I'm incredibly grateful to have had his example to follow, if only the *Terry's* and *Niall's* of Dublin were as lucky.

Cut to today, after two weeks rehearsal to put this play on its feet and one tech day to put it on the stage, I'm incredibly proud of what we've been able to achieve with a modest crowdfunding campaign and the collaboration of a small but talented team.

These are exciting times for Ulster people, with an Ulsterwoman in our National Theatre and an Ulsterman taking over the host chair of our National Chatshow, it feels like a Northern Invasion is happening and it's personally very special as a Northern Irish artist to be making my own theatrical debut here in Dublin.
We haven't gone away you know.

Conan McIvor

STAGE PLAN

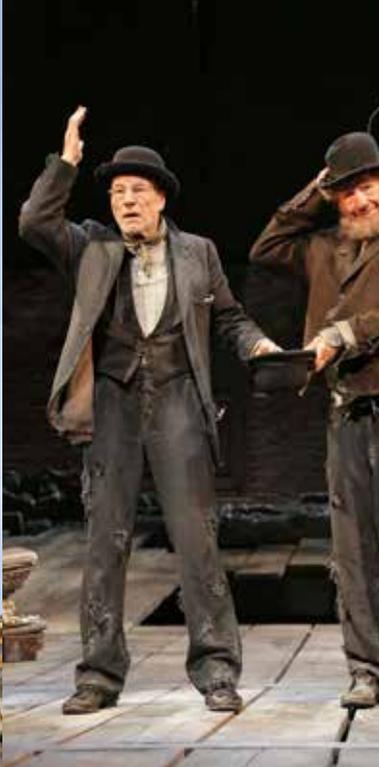


THE DESIGN



**A Tree.
A Low Mound.
An Elton John Lamp.
48 cans of Dutch Gold.
Morning.**





**Caesar
Vladimir
Hibernia
Mia Wallace
Conor McGregor
'70s Gerry Adams**



THE CREATIVES



**MAHON
MCCANN**
WRITER

Mahon is an author, playwright and podcast host.

He received a BA in Economics & Philosophy from University College Dublin and his MA in Creative Writing from Queen's University Belfast.

His plays have been performed in the Lyric Theatre, Seamus Heaney Centre in Belfast, Rua Red Gallery and awarded the Fringe Lab Fifty in Dublin.

His writing is published in numerous magazines and journals: The Cold Coffee Stand, The Honest Ulsterman, and Goblin magazine, to name a few.

A keen philosophy communicator in the online world, his weekly blog garnered over 10,000 readers in the first year and his interview podcast has featured top-ten self-improvement and education in Ireland and has hosted some of the worlds leading scientific and philosophical thinkers like Dr Anna Lembke, Dr John Vervake, Donald Robertson and Dr Massimo Pigliucci.

Photo credit: Bernie McAllister

**CONAN
MCIVOR
DIRECTOR & DESIGNER**

Conan is a Filmmaker, Theatre-maker and Video Artist who creates fiction, documentary and experimental films, visual installations, immersive environments, and video works for theatre. His work has been exhibited in cinemas, galleries, festivals, national theatres & broadcast on national television.

Conan was nominated for the Best Video Design at The Irish Times Irish Theatre Awards 2022; he received the Visual Artists Ireland Experience Award 2022 with Vivienne Dick; and was British Council Filmmaker-in-Residence at Centre Culturel Irlandais Paris November 2022.

Recent theatre credits include: *I Fall Down* (The Everyman Cork), *Abomination: A DUP Opera* (Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre London / Theatre Royal, Brighton Festival), *The Patient Gloria* (The Everyman Cork / Black Box Galway / Project Arts Centre Dublin / St. Ann's Warehouse NYC), *babyGROOVE* (Gate Theatre / Irish Tour).

Conan received an Arts Council Ireland Theatre Bursary 2022 to expand his practice as a Theatre Director & Designer.

Waiting For The Offo marks his 50th design credit and 1st directing credit for the stage.



**JONATHAN
DALEY**
LIGHTING DESIGNER

Jonathan is a writer, producer and lighting designer based in Belfast.

As the co-founder of Headrush, Ireland, he has staged three of his own plays to date: 'Sink Or Swim' (Accidental Theatre); 'We Like It Here' and 'Assembly Required' (both Naughton Studio, Lyric Theatre Belfast).

His play, 'Sylvan', was commissioned and presented by Tinderbox Theatre Company in Autumn 2021.

Recent lighting design credits include: 'Mirrorball' (Replay Theatre Company, 'No Citation' (Bourke Productions), 'Me You Us Them' (Terra Nova Productions), 'Bourbons and Baked Beans' (CRTheatre) and 'The Untold Truth of Captain Hook' (Replay Theatre Company).'



**BRIAN
LINCOLN**
SOUND DESIGNER

Brian is a Belfast-based Sound Designer from Dublin.

A Music & Sound Design graduate of Queen's University Belfast, Brian has worked in audio for over seven years, naturally progressing from Djing to Sound Design. Recent projects Brian has worked on include Turas, an Irish language rights organisation in collaboration with Belfast-based animation studio EnterYes.

As well as sound design, Brian is a documentary photographer with a recent feature in the newly released Council Magazine.



**MICHAEL
J. DALY**
CREATIVE CONSULTANT

Michael is a writer, creative producer, and medical doctor living in Dublin, Ireland.

To date, he has written and produced four short films: *Good Boy* (2015), *Mother's Milk & Cookies* (2016), *Dam* (2017), and *Forgive Me Not* (2019). In addition to successful International Film Festival runs, both *Good Boy* and *Dam* have been broadcast as part of RTÉ2's Shortscreen programme.

In 2019, Michael received an MA in Creative writing from Queen's University Belfast. His submitted thesis, the feature-length screenplay *Son of Man*, was further developed with support from Screen Ireland as part of their Spotlight Scheme in 2020-21.

Awards for his writing include the Toronto International Screenwriting Competition (2017), the LA Independent Film Festival Awards (2016), and the LA Shorts Awards (2015).

In 2020, his first full-length work for the stage *Forster Green* received funding from Arts Council Ireland.

This autumn, Michael will be devising an innovative educational programme in Narrative Medicine as a Fulbright Scholar at Stanford University Medical School in California, USA.



REHEARSAL SPACE KINDLY PROVIDED BY DONAL MCNEELA

THE REHEARSALS

2 WEEKS REHEARSAL,
1 DAY TECH



THE CAST



Photo credit: Harry Livingstone

**CILLIAN
LENAGHAN**

Cillian most recently filmed the role of Conor Skelly alongside Ruth Wilson and Daryl McCormack in THE WOMAN IN THE WALL, written by Joe Murtagh and directed by Harry Wootliff for the BBC and Showtime.

Credits for 2022 include STAGING THE TREATY written by Theo Dorgan and directed by Louise Lowe; DUBLINERS directed by Annie Ryan for Smock Alley & the Corn Exchange; Sebastian Barry's THE STEWARD OF CHRISTENDOM directed by Louise Lowe for the Gate Theatre; and A VERY OLD MAN WITH ENORMOUS WINGS alongside Karen McCartney, directed by Dan Colley.

Cillian also played the role of Joey in Martin McDonagh's THE LIEUTENANT OF INISHMORE directed by Andrew Flynn for the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin.

Cillian has previously worked with BOSCO on their short film DAM and virtual theatre experience THE ESTATE for The Lyric Theatre Belfast.

Represented by Susannah Norris
www.susannahnorris.com



Photo credit: Shane O'Connor

**LIAM
BIXBY**

Liam is a recent graduate from The Three-Year Bachelor in Acting (Hons) Course at The Lir Academy (2021).

Stage credits include the role of Conor in Thisispopbaby's critically acclaimed production PARTY SCENE by Philip Connaughton & Philly McMahon at the Cork Midsummer Festival and Project Arts Centre, which will tour to this year's Edinburgh Fringe. He also played the role of Roderick II in the Abbey Theatre production of Thornton Wilder's THE LONG CHRISTMAS DINNER directed by Raymond Keane & Sarah Jane Scaife (Nominated for Best Ensemble at the Irish Times Theatre Awards 2021/22).

Liam recently completed filming on the short film UROBOROS directed by Diarmuid Donohoe.

Credits at The Lir include the roles of Ronan in Gillian Greer's MEAT directed by Franzisca Detrez, Sebastian/Curio in Shakespeare's TWELFTH NIGHT directed by Davey Kelleher, Brian in Annie Baker's THE ANTIPODES directed by Ronan Phelan, and various roles in Anna Jordan's THE UNRETURNING directed by Jack Reardon.

Represented by The Agency Dublin
www.theagency.ie

Photo credit: Evanna Devine

**HAZEL
CLIFFORD**

Hazel Clifford is an actor and writer from Dublin.

She graduated from The Lir in 2018.

Her stage credits include THE SNAPPER at The Gate, PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD The Gaiety and Lyric Theatre Belfast, WALLS & WINDOWS The Abbey, YOU'RE STILL HERE Dublin Castle, KINDER EGG SPIRITS Smock Alley, OUR LITTLE WORD Anu Productions and NEXT PLEASE Bewley's Café Theatre.

Hazel was nominated Best Actress in The Irish Times Irish Theatre Awards 2018 for her performance as 'Sharon' in THE SNAPPER. She was also nominated for best young talent at Renaissance Film Festival 2019

Represented by Lorraine Brennan Management
www.LBMactors.com



Photo credit: Ste Murray

**TERRY
O'NEILL**

Terry is an actor and stand-up comedian who is a graduate of the prestigious Bow Street Academy in Dublin.

His stage credits include Dermot Bolger's LAST ORDERS AT THE DOCKSIDE (The Abbey Theatre), Una McKevitt's ALIEN DOCUMENTARY (The Harmonie Theatre, The Netherlands), Seán O'Casey's JUNO & THE PAYCOCK, Arthur Miller's A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE, Shakespeare's ROMEO & JULIET (The Gate Theatre) and Brendan Behan's BORSTAL BOY (The Gaiety Theatre).

Feature film credits include the lead role of Martin in THE MEETING, John Flynn in MICHAEL INSIDE, DUBLIN OLD SCHOOL, A DATE FOR MAD MARY, THE LETTER, and HOW TO BE HAPPY. On TV he has appeared in STRIKING OUT, REBELLION, LOVE/HATE (RTÉ), and DAWN (MGM). Short film credits include TOO SLOW, RED LAKE, JAM, THE INVISIBLE BOY, SHADOWBOXER, and SPACER.

Terry is currently developing his debut solo show ROPE-A-DOPE which he is bringing to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival this year ahead of an Irish tour.

**Represented by The Agency Dublin
www.theagency.ie**



Photo credit: Christopher Heaney

**ABIGAIL
MCGIBBON**

Abigail is an award-winning Belfast actress of the stage and screen.

Theatre credits include *The Price* (Gate Theatre), *Sadie* (Lyric Theatre), *Can't Forget About You* (Lyric Theatre, Tron Theatre), *The C**t of Queen Catherine*, *The Doppler Effect & Fall of the House of Usher* (Belfast Ensemble), *Everything Between Us* (Rough Magic).

TV & FILM credits include *Blue Lights* (Gallagher Films/Two Cities), *Ballywalter* (Empire Street Productions), *Lovers* (Sky/AMC), *Sadie* (BBCNI).

Abigail won Best Actress at The Irish Times Theatre Awards 2016 for her role in *FLY ME TO THE MOON*, written and directed by MARIE JONES

Represented by McEwan & Penford
www.mcewanpenford.com

SPECIAL THANKS



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James Scanlon, Joshua Twining, Ellie Walsh, Justin Ng, Paddy Hanlon, Conor O'Reilly, Brooke Carson, Siofra McCann, Max Murphy, Philip Halton, Chris Bent, Brian Lincoln, Valerie Mulhall, Grace Murray, Triona Mc aleese, Jamie McKeown, Miyoko McCann, Mark Ellison, John O'Regan, Shane Murphy, Diarmuid O'Neill, Stephen Corcoran, Kevin Duffy, Michael Moylan, Mihaela Ursica, Gary Grant, Frances Howlin, Eamon Howlin, Sara Howlin, Marina IG, Ben Fallon, Ciara Margolis, Alix Bent, Jeremy Maurin, Ciara Kennedy, Callum McMahan, Mathew Mullen, Claire Magner, David Sheedy, Tommy & Claire Dunne, Andrew Chapman, Marnie Kennedy, Maire Callaghan, Randall Mounts, Comhghall McKeating, Sarah Fallon, Jimmy O'Neill, Dan Lambert, Fintan Smith, Anna Doherty, Luke Abraham, Vicky Gaskin, Niall O'Reilly, Elena Ohara, Ross Coleman, Stephen McCann, Peter McCann, Gavin Fitzgerald, Tom Flynn, Killian Walpole, Jonathan Coffey, Fred Daly, Ben Sherwood, Conor Doran, Neil Walsh, Max Rockliffe, Denis Casey, AJ Ferris, Jamie Duffin, Andreas Slattery, Donal Gaughran, Michael West,

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Michael West

Dublin Fringe

The Brokentalkers

Michael and Sharon McIvor

Donal McNeela & Five Lamps Festival

Gesamtkunstwerk

gə'zamt'kʊnstvɛrk

noun German.

Total artwork; an artistic creation of performance that synthesizes the elements of music, drama, spectacle, dance and visual arts.



**BOSCO IS THE CREATIVE PRODUCING TEAM
OF CONAN MCIVOR AND MICHAEL J. DALY.**

**WE WORK ACROSS FILM, THEATRE,
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