

All Ireland Issue

BALALLY PLAYERS APRIL 09

TEXT BEST WISHES

Why not text your best wishes to your friends in the cast for Wednesday night...

May 6th when they appear in the Dean Crowe Hall, Athlone in the All Ireland Finals..

And again on Monday May 11th when they appear in the Ulster Finals ...

And even if you don't know all of them that well, just make sure you wish a cast member, crew member or the director well. It's important to let them know how proud we are of their achievement.

A great night and all were welcome to the reception held in the studio to congratulate the Great Hunger team. The champagne (!) was flowing, the food was plentiful and cast, crew and ballallyers were in flying form..having had two seconds and a third going into the final two performances, expectations were low for the All Ireland but two wins in Newry and Carrickmore made all the difference...pics available later.....



Óran O'Rua, Evan Jameson and Francis Cahill rehearsing for 'The Great Hunger'

THE GREAT HUNGER & THE ALL IRELAND

Rush Drama Festival 2nd

Best Director:Geoffrey O'Keefe

Best Supporting actor:Len Nealon

Dublin Drama Festival 2nd

Best Actor; Evan Jameson
Adjudicator's Award to Cast

Cavan Drama Festival 2nd

Scholarship:Niamh Holland
Best Stage Craft

Glenamaddy; 3rd

Best Supporting Actress Judy McKeever

Best Sound Gary Wall & Hilary Madigan

Newry Drama Festival 1st

Best Director Geoffrey O Keefe

Merit Award Evan Jameson

Carrickmore 1st

Best Director Geoffrey OK

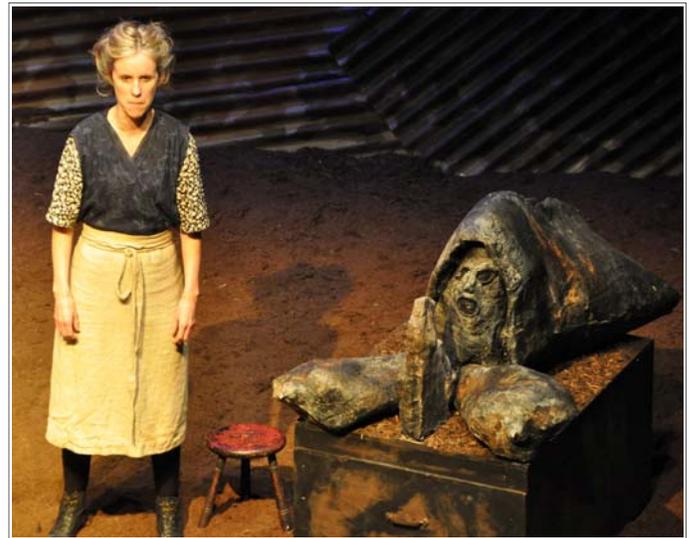
Best Actor Evan Jameson

Best Lighting Barry Donaldson

Best Costume Dympna Murray

Best Set Design Gerard Bourke

Best Set Design Gerard Bourke



Jacqueline Dooley as Mary Ann in 'The Great Hunger' at a performance in the Mill Theatre in November 2009.

Cast

Francis Cahill, John Canning, Niamh Daly, Jacqueline Dooley, Evan Jameson, Len Nealon, Judy McKeever, Oran O Rua,

Creative Team: Gerard Bourke, Barry Donaldson, Hilary Madigan

Dympna Murray, Gary Wall,

Stage Manager Patrick Hand. Crew: Ronan Goggin, Matt Powell Orla Cooney

Director Geoffrey O'Keefe

Production Manager :Muriel Caslin O'Hagan

WORKSHOPS FOR MAY AND JUNE.

Wednesday May 20th

'Inhabiting The Character'

Internalizing.. what does it mean? Being Truthful..Making your character believable? How do you do that? This is a must do workshop for all actors.

Wednesday May 27th

What Style Are We Playing?

Where's the line between tragedy and drama, between high comedy and farce, between naturalism and heightened playing ... and then there's surrealism
A fun evening for all....

Wednesday June 3rd

'The Plough & The Stars'

This workshop will be led by Gary Wall whose production of the 'Plough & The Stars' will be cast in early September for a performance date in late January in The Mill Theatre

Workshops

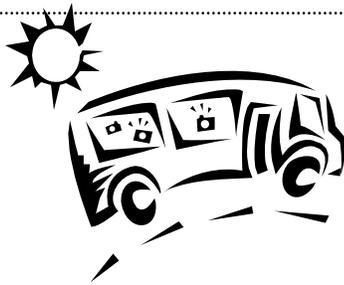
The upcoming workshops will we hope be held in Dom Marmion House in Dundrum. The Committee are in the course of finalizing arrangements. Each Wednesday workshop will begin at 7.30 with a cup of tea/coffee and end around 10p.m. There is a small charge of €5 per paid up member. Those who haven't paid up this year will be welcome at a fee of €10 per session. Very good value indeed and supported by Balally Players. The Drama League of Ireland will supply the best of professional tutors for two of these workshops.

To make sure you have a place, call Joanne at 087797 7067 or Karen at 087 670 1252. Come along and enjoy..Oh and if you would like to audition for the next production, it might be advisable to attend that particular workshop. Why not all three?

WHAT.. NO SHAKESPEARE??

For the first time in five years, we are guaranteed a great week's weather in mid June. That's because every other June it rained on Airfield at 9.00p.m. This year it will probably be sunshine all the way!

The first Shakespeare play in Airfield Gardens was 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' in June 2001. Since then, around mid-summer, we have presented the bard's best comedies to very appreciative audiences. This year, we were in a difficult situation as many of our actors were tied up in the All Ireland and Karen was directing for The Mill until early April. Shakespeare needs at least 12 weeks rehearsal. What to do? The committee discussed various options but none of them were fully satisfactory. It's disappointing, particularly for actors who were looking forward to having a role at the end of the year. It's also a shame to break the tradition even for one year but in some ways, it's a victim of the group's success. In 2010...More Shakespeare!



we

So put the date in your diary: Saturday May 23rd. Contact Teresa at 0851125882

Balally Players Summer Outing

So its off on a bus trip. .our day out. .this year head north to the beautiful area of Carlingford.

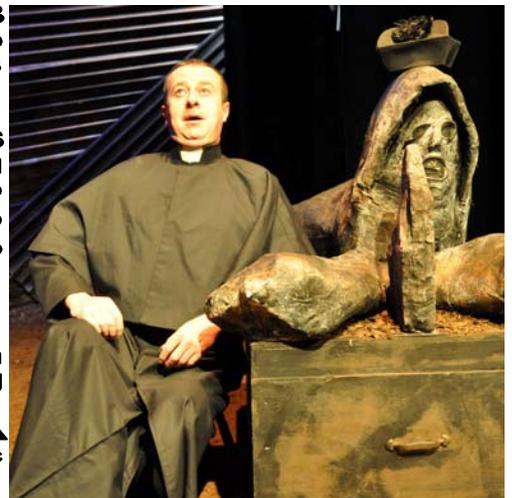
Planning Day

Your committee will meet for a planning day on Saturday June 6th. All suggestions and ideas for the next season or two or three, please text to Geoffrey at 087 993 6307

AGM

WEDNESDAY JUNE 17TH.

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'Fr' Len Nealon with the mother!

Congratulations to Niamh Holland who won her scholarship to the DLI Summer School at Cavan Festival. Well Done. The Committee has awarded this year's Balally summer school scholarship to Matt Powell.

Matt was instrumental in putting the set for the Great Hunger together with Pat Hand...the dynamic duo!
Congratulations to both.



The Board of The Mill Theatre gratefully acknowledge the support of the members of Balally Players who volunteer for front of house duties once a month. It would not be possible to run the theatre without your help and support. Thank you. New volunteers always welcome. Call Karen on 087 6760 1252

Some of our members have recently been made redundant. Others have simply lost their jobs. We wish them and all of our members a safe passage through this difficult time and hope the future brings new employment and better times.

‘HOW THE OTHER HALF LOVES’ PLAYS TO FULL HOUSES

Tuesday 24th–Saturday 28th March..The Alan Ayckbourn show began rehearsal in late 2008 and set building in February. The show required a complicated setting and it was necessary to build new patio doors and a porch. Looked wonderful! The actors had a mountain to climb in terms of lines and cueing. Four people and sometimes six all speaking together and no cue given directly. Congratulations to the hard graft and experience of the cast and their commitment to the play. The crew, particularly props, had Mount Everest to climb with over 100 pieces of props and three long tables full of stuff. List upon list from Niamh and all brought together by a very disciplined Bernard Doyle. Bernard made everybody hop! It was great to see him back in action. Doris, Jean, Teresa made their own contribution and gave a great sense of security. With twenty people or more from the group out on the circuit, we were blessed with new people:Helen, Lorraine, Aisling, Therese, Yvonne, Stacy and Sarah who all made a great contribution over the rehearsal and the run. Thanks too to Ciaran and Fergal, to Bobby and to all those who helped out. Audiences were fabulous. There’s nothing to match a full house having a ball! The best audience numbers we have had to date. Balally can give itself a pat on the back!



Set Design :Louis O’Byrne; Construction: Brendan Dunne, Brian Dempsey, JohnC

Wonderful pics from Declan Brennan...is there no end to his talents!

Joanne & Fergal ..over 100 props each night..lists and lists....



Team:

- Director Karen Carleton. Production Manager Niamh Daly
- Stage Manager Bernard Doyle ASM Joanne Keane, Fergal Cleary
- Costume Design Dympna Murray
- Lighting Design Paul Macken
- Sound Declan Brennan
- Props Helen Martin, Lorraine Hedderman, Sarah Cunningham

Cabinteely Park Performance. Free admission.
 Sunday 17th May 4.00p.m. The dinner scene with a twist!

Louis made a superb effort with the set...

Orla Hegan, Kevin Fahey, Sean Murphy, Claire Reilly, Brian Molloy, Claire O’Donovan



ALL SET FOR MONACO

**Mondial Du Theatre
Will host representatives
from 48 companies from
different countries.**

**Hosted by the Studio of
Monaco with the support
of the Principality of
Monaco, this is the 14th
International World Festi-
val of Theatre.**

*Workshops and colloqui-
ums take place daily and
three performances take
place each evening.*

*Ireland is represented by
Melody from Balally Play-
ers, starring Geoffrey O
Keeffe and Hilary Madi-
gan, directed by Gary
Wall.*

**They will perform on
Monday August 24th
& Tuesday 25th
with India and Peru.**

*The final evening will
take place on the terrace
of the Casino of Monte
Carlo.*

*The Festival Village will
be located in the Audito-
rium Rainier 111.*

*Around 20 members of
Balally Players plan to
take their summer holi-
day in Monaco this year.*

*They will be great am-
bassadors for Ireland.*

Bon Chance!

Our 'Hunger' was well nourished on the festival circuit!

As we approach the All-Ireland and the All-Ulster Finals Balally Players may be justly proud of the success of The Great Hunger on the festival circuit. When we started out with this play, way back last year, - seasons ago, little did we think that we could acquit ourselves so well on our first venture into the full-length circuit. The play was a challenging piece to attempt, but we knew we were in capable hands under Geoffrey's direction. He put together a team of players and crew and it was a joy to be involved at every level. We worked hard, and we also managed to play hard here and there too!

The audition process was a revelation in itself. The contenders were required to do all sorts of unspeakable contortions! I think some were terrified to appear at the second round, wondering what kind of extraordinary performance this was going to produce! Nevertheless, a cast and crew were chosen and rehearsals got under way. We examined the script - such as it was, drilled to find some understanding of what the play was about and finally began to see Geoff's vision for this amazing piece of theatre. When it came to the set design discussions, I began to have a sinking feeling of being way out of my depth, but listening to those two artists Geoff and Gerard hammering out creative ideas was an eye opener for me. Then of course, we had to source the materials and props e.g. galvanise, tabernacle, mother-effigy, sturdy gate, rusty bath, buckets, horse collar etc. etc. not to mention the earth/muck for the stage, all very glamorous, I don't think! This was a dirty play! Undaunted, our Stage Manager Pat mysteriously produced the goods. Night after night, he quietly arrived to rehearsal with more 'stuff'. He is a miracle worker! He and ASM Orla ensured that each show ran on oiled wheels.

The Great Hunger is not a play that appeals to all audiences, but we were well satisfied with the support for and feedback from the run at the Mill. And so it was decided to plunge into the full-length circuit. We competed in six festivals, which in itself was an achievement. Usually groups who are new to the full-length circuit find it hard to be accepted into festivals at all. But Balally Players' well-earned reputation preceded them and opened doors. We achieved what we set out to do, i.e. qualify for Athlone. Our success is well documented on the website. The spread of awards over the cast and crew is testament to the standard of ensemble work. Acting, lighting, sound, costuming, make-up etc were of the highest standard, but my award goes to everybody who so willingly helped with set construction and more importantly set strike - sweeping up that muck was some challenge! It was a team effort all the way and everybody gave unstintingly to the success of the project. But most of all we had the 'craic'! We had sing-songs into the small hours but of course 'what goes on tour stays on tour'!!

No matter what the outcome from Athlone or Armagh, this has been a journey we will never forget. We have done well for the group. Go Balally Players!! *Muriel*

Why not put your name forward for committee 2009-2010?

Outgoing Committee

Chair: Geoffrey O'Keeffe. Treasurer: Tony McGettigan. Secretary: Karen Carleton. Festival Director: Jean Monahan, Social Committee; Teresa Dempsey, Judy McKeever; Members: Wes Scully, Gary Wall, Joanne Keane, Muriel Caslin O'Hagan Deirdre Ni Ghriofa