

Since its publication in 1937, John Steinbeck's short novel has become a classic of twentieth century literature. However, some of what it says, and how it says it, has earned the work a place in the American Library Association's list of the Most Challenged Books of the 21st Century.

The main characters, George and Lennie, move around California looking for work on ranches in the years of the Great Depression, in the United States during the 1930s. They are very different – physically and psychologically – but their fears and powerlessness, together with their hopes and their struggle to live the American dream, give them common cause; and their companionship and mutual understanding blurs their differences. Steinbeck, writing about what he called 'a base theme' in literature, commented that "if you understand each other you will be kind to each other. Knowing a man well never leads to hate and nearly always leads to love".

In a letter to a friend, Steinbeck wrote, "I think I would like to write the story of this whole valley, of all the little towns and all the farms and the ranches in the wilder hills. I can see how I would like to do it so that it would be the valley of the world." That valley is the Salinas Valley in California, where he grew up in relative comfort. Steinbeck saw how the migrant workers lived and worked as he travelled through the small valleys – then crafted what he heard into this work, which has been described as 'a beautiful tragedy'.

*'Little Mouse, you're not alone,  
Provin' foresight's overblown:  
For the best laid plans of mice and men  
Come to nothin' now and then,  
And they leave us only grief and pain,  
When they promise sun not rain!'*

The verse created for this production, and sung by Curley's Wife, was adapted from the Robert Burns poem *To a Mouse, on Turning Her Up in Her Nest With the Plough*, which inspired the title of the play.

Director: Kate Canning  
Producer: Joanne Keane  
Stage Manager: Fiona Walsh  
Assistant Stage Manager: Una Twyford  
Backstage Crew: Aengus Cooke, Cian Lucas, Michael Carthy, Hannah Crowley and Ross Smith  
Make-up: Teresa Dempsey  
Costume Design: Dympna Murray  
Set Design: Gerard Bourke  
Set Construction: Tom Ronayne and Robert Coventry  
Lighting Design: Kris Mooney  
Sound Design: Declan Brennan  
Sound Operator: Aoife Braiden  
Graphic Design and Programme: Declan Brennan  
PR and Marketing: Aoibhinn Finnegan  
Transport: Patrick Hand  
Front of House: Muriel Caslin O'Hagan, Jean Monahan, Mary Ryan, Eimear Smyth, Mark Coen and Doris Cullen

What a busy and exciting drama year it has been for Balally Players since our Open Night in September.

*At the Hawk's Well* by W. B. Yeats, directed by Aoibhinn Finnegan, our entry to the One Act Drama Festival Circuit was the winner of the Festivals in Skerries, Coolgreany, Naas, and Dundrum, picking up numerous awards en route and winning the Harlequin Award for the Ensemble Music Work at the One Act Finals in Letterkenny. The most special of the awards was the Pat O'Grady Award for Stage Management, awarded in Dundrum in honour of our long time member who sadly passed away on 20 September 2017. He will not be forgotten.

*PVT Wars* by James McLure, directed by Lorcan Dunne, played in the Maureen O'Hara Studio in October and represented Balally Players at the Bray One Act Festival in January, where Oran O'Rua won Best Actor.

We have had many sociable evenings, not least a most enjoyable outing to Naas in November, and had a great turnout for the New Year Party.

*Christmas at Marlay*, directed by Teresa Dempsey was a great success, with many of our audience members returning, as they do each year, for the 'heart warming mixture of songs and stories, mulled wine and minced pies'.

A Mask Workshop proved interesting and an Acting Workshop is planned soon. Following last year's success we look forward to holding another 'Page to Stage' evening where a variety of texts will be explored and directors, both new and old, have a chance to experiment.

We are delighted to have Kate Canning direct *Of Mice and Men* and hope you enjoyed this thought provoking play.

Our next production is *Little Gem* by Elaine Murphy, directed by Karen Carleton, coming to the dlr Mill Theatre Studio in March. In June we will continue our optimistic streak with our annual outdoor Summer Shakespeare in the beautiful walled gardens of St. Enda's Park, Rathfarnham.

To see details of what's coming up subscribe to our mailing list through our website:

[www.balallyplayers.com](http://www.balallyplayers.com) or 'Like' our Facebook page:  
[www.facebook.com/balallyplayers](http://www.facebook.com/balallyplayers)

Finally I'd like to say thanks to all of you who support us in so many ways – we really appreciate it.



Joanne Keane, Chairman, Balally Players

  
The Balally Players Theatre Company

  
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# Of Mice & Men



dlr Mill Theatre, Dundrum Town Centre  
6 to 10 February 2018 at 8pm – matinee 10 February at 2:30pm

By arrangement with Josef Weinberger Plays Ltd.





**Declan O'Loughlin – George Milton**

Declan has performed roles in productions of *Philadelphia Here I Come*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Juno and the Paycock*, *Happy Birthday Dear Alice*, *Our Town*, *From These Green Heights* and *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*. He has worked with Sundrive Players and SPARC; and this is his second production with Balally Players after *The Glass Menagerie*. Declan completed studies for an MA degree in Drama and Theatre Studies in recent years.



**Sean Murphy – Candy**

Sean has been a member of Balally Players since 2003 and has been fortunate to play a number of wonderful roles during that period. Favourites include Benedick in Shakespeare's *Much Ado about Nothing*, William Featherstone in Ayckbourn's *How the Other Half Loves* and Parris in Miller's *The Crucible*. Sean performed with the group in the award-winning *Guests of the Nation* at the 'Spots op West' Festival in Belgium and played a part with the ensemble that performed at the Abbey Theatre's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2004.



**Barry O'Connor – Carlson**

Barry has been acting for nearly 40 years with a number of amateur and community groups including Dublin Youth Theatre, Club Players and Olivian Players. He has been a member of Balally Players for the last three years and has appeared in several productions including the role of Philip Markham in *Move Over Mrs Markham*, a Soldier in *The King*, Colonel Fitzwilliam in *Pride and Prejudice* and most recently Silvio in *PVT Wars*.



**Brendan Dunne – The Boss**

Brendan has been a member of Balally players for many years. He has performed in both the One Act and Three Act circuits over the years, and acted in the winning play in 2009. Most recently he played William Henry Blore in *Then There Were None*, Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*, Mr Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice*, a Monk in *The King*, Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet* and Joe Keller in *All My Sons*.



**Mark O'Leary – Whit**

Mark has performed in productions on stage here in Ireland and also in Hong Kong. Roles he remembers fondly include Frederick Clegg in *The Collector*, Juror #8 in *12 Angry Men* and Hal McLeavy in *Loot*. He played Francois in *Men Without Shadows*, a role for which he was awarded Best Supporting Actor at the ISDA in 2010. This is Mark's first play with the Balally Players and he is looking forward to many more.



**Declan Rudden – Curley**

This is Declan's first production with Balally Players, but not his first performance at the Mill. Since it opened, he has played in many productions at the Mill Theatre with Taney Drama Society and Mill Productions. Favourite roles include Gerry Evans in *Dancing at Lughnasa*, Oscar in *The Odd Couple*, Dinzee Conlee in *Sharon's Grave*, Johnny Pateen Mike in *The Cripple of Inishmann* and Da, the cantankerous deceased father, in Hugh Leonard's play of the same name.



**Derek Ugochukwu – Crooks**

Derek trained at the Gaiety School of Acting. Recent roles include Abioye Obatola in the crime web-series *Personal*, Olaudah Equiano aka Gustavus Vassa in *Owned for the Scene* and Heard Festival 2017. Screen credits include *Harmonies of a Tritone*, *Temper Temper*, *Dub Daze South*, *Brandon in Anthesis* and *Through the Silent Lands*. Derek's short film *Sink* (writer and director) won a Spotlight Award at the Elevation Indie Film Awards 2017; and he recently produced a Short film *Mothers* written and directed by Fiona Byrnes.



**David Walsh – Lennie Small**

Dave's most recent acting role on stage was Alain in *God of Carnage*; and he played Fat Barry in the TV3 award-winning series *Redrock*. In 2015 he played Belcher in *Guest of the Nation*, which represented Ireland at the Spots op West International Theatre Festival in Belgium. Other roles have been in *The Crucible*, *The Plough and the Stars*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. For the Abbey Theatre's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, in 2004, he played the Fool in WB Yeats' *An Baile Strand*.



**Remy Naidoo – Curley's Wife**

Having fallen in love with performing at the age of 8, Remy has graced many stages. From the National Concert Hall in Dublin to the O2 in London, the Mac Theatre in Belfast and the RTÉ television studios for the Late Late Show. She is no stranger to the Mill, having performed in the Feis Maitiú here over several years, winning the Record Cup in 2014. She has thoroughly enjoyed working with Balally Players for the first time and is delighted to be back on the very stage where she first fell in love with acting.



**Kate Canning – Director**

Kate, the Manager of the dlr Mill Theatre, received her Masters Degree in Drama and Theatre Studies from DCU. She worked in Singapore as actor and director and performed with the Singapore Lyric Opera in productions including *Il Travatore* and *The Tales of Hoffman* at the Esplanade Theatre. Following further vocal training in London, she graduated with a Higher Diploma in Vocal Performance at The Royal Irish Academy of Music. Kate's work as director includes *The Plough and the Stars* for SPARC REP, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear* and *Romeo and Juliet* for the Gaiety School, *The Importance of Being Earnest* for Smock Alley Productions and Sunflower Productions and *Spiced Beef* at the Smock Alley 'Scene and Heard Festival'.



**Will Flanagan – Slim**

This is Will's first play with Ballally Players. His most recent roles were Adam in Sundrive Players' production of *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* by Frank McGuinness. He has played the role of Biff in *Death of a Salesman*, Cormac in *Happy Birthday Dear Alice* and Eddie in *All In Favour Said No*. Will has also appeared in productions of *The Plough and the Stars* and *Philadelphia Here I Come*.



**Mac**

Our lovable guest dog is really excited to make his theatrical debut with Balally Players. At the venerable age of 11 years (approximately 77 human years) he is keen to try his paw at something new! His owners, the Lavelle family, have given him the nickname Brando and have encouraged his thespian ambitions; but they hope his role on the stage will not change his warm and humble self. Many thanks to Joan, Paudge and Joe Lavelle for their kind assistance.

