

## The Balally Players Theatre Company 2022 Autumn/Winter Programme

As the summer draws to a close, it's time to pull on your theatrical boots again and get involved in Balally Players' busy Autumn/Winter program. We hope as many members as possible will come along and get involved. We are planning four productions over the coming months:

1. Purple Squirrel - A one-act play written and directed by Sean T Daly.
2. A Thousand Deaths - A one-act play written by John Clancy. Directed by Joanne Keane
3. Our seasonal variety show – “Christmas at Marlay”. - Directed by Teresa Dempsey
4. Beauty Queen of Leenane - A full-length play written by Martin McDonagh. Directed by Declan Rudden.

The season will kick-off with an **Open Night on Tuesday 6th September at 7.30pm in St. Tiernan's Community School.** ([DIRECTIONS](#)) During the open night we will brief existing and new members (all welcome) on the plans and then we will immediately begin auditions for 'Purple Squirrel', 'A Thousand Deaths' and 'Beauty Queen of Leenane'. Please come along and bring a friend. There are lots of cast and crew required.

*More details, the cast of characters and audition pieces for each play:*

### **Purple Squirrel by Sean T Daly. Directed by Sean Daly.**

*This one-act play will be cast in September and will be performed at multiple venues throughout the Autumn and Winter.*

Set in a bar next door to a 24-hour international recruitment agency, a priest is drowning his sorrows, while playing chess on the bar with the barmaid and sipping his whiskey. It is the shift changeover at the recruiters, and they come to the bar to drink away the shift just finished (or to start their shift and need a few drinks on board to be able to get through it). As the drinks flow, they reveal to the priest that recruiting is not all that it seems.

There are five actors required. Character descriptions below.

#### **Persephone Morta: Bar woman, 30-50**

At heart, a good person. A bit of a cliché bartender who listens intently to her customers & provides advice but doesn't suffer fools. Doesn't like recruiters, but holds her tongue, as they make up her clientele.

#### **Michael Hendrik: Priest, 30-60**

Starts out quite downbeat and drunk but sobers up in contrast to the others and remembers he's here for a reason. Seems to be having a crisis of faith and is confiding in the bartender. He seems to have a genuine interest in what exactly recruiters do.

#### **Azrael Carver: Male shift worker, 20-35**

A young, over-confident, vulgar recruiter who is a legacy in the firm. His whole family are recruiters and isn't well-liked by anyone else. The bartender is beneath him and has very little respect for anyone who can't further his career.

#### **Anubis Aker: Female shift worker, 50-60**

Reaching retirement age, she has been in recruiting too long and it is wearing on her.

Every day is a struggle to get through the shift and on top of this, she has been given the indifferent Thanatos to mentor. She tends to drift into the background.

**Thanatos Kalma:** **Male shift worker, 30-40**

Also, a legacy, but doesn't have the aptitude for the role and would prefer something more creative. Has morality and integrity, so clashes with Azrael on all levels. Has a great interest in the priest and what he provides, in contrast to his own job.

A link to the audition pieces can be found [here](#).

**Auditions take place in St. Tiernan's Community School (D16 KW26) at 7.30pm on September 6<sup>th</sup> and September 8<sup>th</sup>. New members welcome.**

***A Thousand Deaths by John Clancy. Directed by Joanne Keane.***

*This one-act play will be cast in September and will be performed at the Mill Theatre Studio in November.*

A man mourns the death of his wife, who had dementia for the last thousand days of her life. He is joined by his son and daughter in the church on the day of her funeral. In this family reunion dark secrets are revealed and we discover how love can pull a family together or drive them apart.

There are four to seven actors required. **2M 2F** (minimum). Character descriptions below.

*(The Sacristan, The Neighbour, The Butcher's wife and The Mother may be played by the same actor)*

**Dan:** **The father, 60-70**

Dan is a mild mannered man who loved his wife dearly, yet when her dementia became unbearable his actions may have led to her untimely death. Like most Irish fathers he loves his children but finds it difficult to communicate this to them.

**James:** **The son, 25-45**

James takes his mother for a drive most days and it appears that he was devoted to her. Yet he found it difficult to be in her company and only took her out to give respite to his father thinking that would please him. He is aware that his father is hiding the much needed medication but remains silent for his own selfish reasons.

**Nora:** **The daughter, 25-45**

Nora has fled to London to escape, what she considers, her mother's constant criticism. She is under the mistaken belief that her sexuality is causing much of this angst and fails to realise the effect of her absence on her father and brother.

**Mrs. Malone:** **Male or female sacristan, 30-70**

The sacristan helps organise the funeral.

**Mary:** **Female neighbour, 50-70**

The neighbour is your typical nousey parker who is delighted to be one of the chosen few to attend the funeral in this Covid restricted time.

**Eileen:** **The butcher's wife, 50-60**

The butcher's wife has become very friendly with Dan and everyone suspects that there is more going on than meets the eye. Her own husband, the butcher, is a noted womaniser adding credence to everybody's belief.

**Mother:** **The mother, 50-70**

The mother is the manifestation of each character's sub conscience. Ghost-like in appearance she interacts with each of the family in turn eliciting their fears and doubts and in turn allowing them some closure and some small comfort.

A link to the audition pieces can be found [here](#).

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[https://mcusercontent.com/b51825a8eb9b6f5a8a2e99a2e/files/277c159c-bbe7-2b91-da0f-a896e345c0d3/A\\_Thousand\\_Deaths\\_Audition\\_Piece\\_4.03.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/b51825a8eb9b6f5a8a2e99a2e/files/277c159c-bbe7-2b91-da0f-a896e345c0d3/A_Thousand_Deaths_Audition_Piece_4.03.pdf)

***Auditions take place in St. Tiernan's Community School (D16 KW26) at 7.30pm on September 6<sup>th</sup> and September 08<sup>th</sup>. New members welcome.***

***Christmas at Marlay. Directed by Teresa Dempsey.***

*This variety show will be cast over Autumn will be performed at Marlay Park House, Rathfarnham in December.*

The Balally Players show, 'Christmas at Marlay', is the perfect way to start Christmas. This delightful evening of seasonal sentiment – a heart-warming collection of music, song, recitation, monologue and comedy. Since its inception, more than ten years ago, it has become a 'must see' event on the Christmas entertainment calendar.

Teresa Dempsey will direct and will bring along some pieces to the open night for those interested in reading (however, new writers are always appreciated and very welcome). But if you have a song or poem you would like to perform, please bring it along (it should be light-hearted in tone and have a Christmas feel).

***Expressions of interest in taking part can be made at our open night in St. Tiernan's Community School (D16 KW26) at 7.30pm on September 6<sup>th</sup>. New members welcome.***

***Beauty Queen of Leenane by Martin McDonagh. Directed by Declan Rudden.***

*This full-length play will be cast in September and will be performed in the Mill Theatre in February 2023.*

A dark comedy set in the mountains of Connemara in the 1990s, 'Beauty Queen of Leenane' tells the story of a plain, lonely and frustrated Maureen; left caring for her manipulative and aging mother Mag.

There are four actors required. Character description below.

**Maureen:** Sexually frustrated spinster and carer to her mother Mag. Mentally fragile. Playing age – 40s.

**Mag:** The mother of Maureen. Manipulative and lazy (yet vulnerable). Has hygiene issues. Playing age – 70s

**Pato:** A genuine, introspective man. An emigrant builder in London; fond of a jar. Love interest of Maureen. Playing age – 40s

**Ray:** Pato's much younger brother. A total headcase. An easily bored, hyperactive young man. Quite possibly a psychopath. Playing age – late teens/early 20s

A link to the audition pieces can be found [here](#).

***Auditions take place in St. Tiernan's Community School (D16 KW26) at 7.30pm on September 6<sup>th</sup> and September 8<sup>th</sup>. New members welcome.***

**Condolences**

Our sincere sympathies go to our member Pat Hand and his wife Kay on the recent death of Kay's sister, Eleanor recently. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam dílis.

### **Congratulations!**

Congratulations to member Fiona Walsh and her husband Jim Mara on the birth of their daughter Éabha recently.

### **Social News**

Thanks to Hilary who organised the very successful trip to Kilkenny to see “The Tempest”. The next outing is to see “**The Steward of Chrisendom**” at the Gate Theatre on **Monday 29<sup>th</sup> August** – just book your ticket and we will see you there!

Our next **Quiz Night** will take place on **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September** at 7:30pm in Dundrum House. We look forward to seeing lots of our members and friends there that night. The committee would very much appreciate any donations for the raffle on the night. If you can donate something as a prize please email [info@balallyplayers.com](mailto:info@balallyplayers.com)

### **Our members treading the boards in other productions**

Two of our members are currently involved in performances. Ryan Kelly plays the part of Gram in “Looking at the Sun” in Smock Alley Theatre and in the Civic Theatre Tallaght. More details and booking [here](#).

Meanwhile, another of our members, Len Nealon will be playing the part of John in **The Long Road – Wednesday 31st August to Saturday 3rd September, 2022 in The Studio, DLR Lexicon. More details and booking [here](#).**  
**Ryan and Len would very much appreciate your support.**

### **40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations for Balally Players – Save the date!**

We are currently planning an event to celebrate 40 years of Balally Players. The event will take place on 28<sup>th</sup> October. More details in the next Newsletter.

### **Membership Reminder**

Thanks to all who have paid their subs. As the new performance year has now commenced following our AGM,, membership subscriptions for 2022 are now due. The subscription remains unchanged at €40 (€20 for unwaged/OAP) and it all goes towards covering the cost of running Balally Players, staging shows and organising events. Payment can be made online using the following details, mentioning your name as the payment reference:

BIC: BOFIE2D  
IBAN: IE61BOFI90109575039444

Kind regards,

The Balally Players Committee

Chairperson: Óran O'Rua

Treasurer: Seán T. Daly

Secretary: Úna Twyford

Ordinary Members: Muriel Caslin-O'Hagan, Doris Cullen, Hilary Madigan, Peter O'Brien and Declan Rudden