



NATIONAL ACADEMY
OF DRAMATIC ART



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

GRAD FEST 2026

Monday, June 22nd — Thursday, July 9th
Book online at www.theiir.ie

— **GRADFEST 2026** is a season of productions directed, produced and designed by this year's graduating MFA students. The four plays presented are a culmination of an intensive year of hands-on training in theatre directing, theatre producing, lighting design, costume design, and set design. The cast of each production consists of final-year acting students and the backstage roles are undertaken by our Stage Management & Technical Theatre students.



MARBLE

BY MARINA CARR

Tuesday, 23rd — Thursday, 25th June at 7.30pm

Preview: Monday, 22nd June at 7.30pm

Matinee: Thursday, 25th June at 1pm

Book online at their.ie

When two married couples become consumed by a series of shared dreams, the boundaries between fantasy and reality begin to collapse.

As desire, jealousy, and buried longing seep into their waking lives, the emotional architecture of their marriages starts to fracture. Caught between domestic routine and the seductive pull of escape, the characters are forced to confront the terrifying possibility that the lives they have built may no longer be enough.

____ CAST

Art	Cal Cunningham
Ben	Tadhg O'Rourke
Anne	Ella O'Callaghan
Catherine	Ciara Cochrane

____ CREATIVE TEAM

Director	Conan McIvor
Stage Designer	Andrew Kirwan
Costume Designer	Blanca Sánchez Encinas
Lighting Designer	Kristóf Nagy
Producer	Anna Buchmueller
Producer	William Burke
Movement Direction	Eileen McClory
Composer / Sound Designer	Tobias Barry
	(Based on original vocal composition by Amelia Clarkson)
Featuring Soprano	Amy Ní Fhearraigh
Hair & Make Up	Leonard Daly

____ CREW

Stage Manager	Annie Jirouskova
Assistant Stage Manager	Rebecca Egan
Assistant Production Manager	Jack Clare
Set Construction	Amy Auden
Scenic Artist	Aimee Cullen
Costume Supervisor	Emma Hughes
Chief LX	Lily Conway
Lighting Programmer	Oisín Dutton
Sound Design Assistant	Kevin Smyth
Sound Design Assistant	Daniel Nolan
Prop Maker	Clíodhna Ryan
Prop Maker	Lovelle Giebe

This amateur production of Marble by Marina Carr is presented by arrangement with Marina Carr c/o The Agency (London) Ltd.

FAR AWAY

a play by **Caryl Churchill**



*You've found out something secret.
You know that don't you?*

Wednesday, 24th — Friday, 26th June at 7pm

Preview: Tuesday, 23rd June at 7pm

Matinee: Friday, 26th June at 1pm

Book online at their.ie

*"You've found out something secret.
You know that don't you?"*

What happens when the future we hope to avoid is the present we are already within? What would we do in a time of atrocity? Precisely what we are doing now.

In *Far Away*, legendary playwright Caryl Churchill explores the intimate insanity of a world at war with itself through the growing eyes of a young Joan. After unwittingly witnessing an event outside her aunt's rural home, Joan is drawn into a life where brutality slips into normality.

Over an approximately one hour run time, *Far Away* moves through a kaleidoscopic landscape of time, violence, and unravelling society – both surreal and terrifyingly familiar.

— CAST

Joan
Harper
Todd
Ensemble

Molly McLoughlin
Aoife Hall
Tom Hendry
Alexandra Silva,
Fergus Whyte,
Liza Borghesani,
Louis Tempany,
Joshua Horgan Smyth

— CREATIVE TEAM

Director
Stage Designer
Costume Designer
Lighting Designer
Producer
Producer
Hair & Make Up

Erin Boswell
Jane Boehlert
Erica Smith
Daisy Long
Caleb Chew
Sasha Pereira
Leonard Daly

— CREW

Assistant Production Manager
Stage Manager
Assistant Stage
Manager
Set Construction
Scenic Artist
Costume Supervisor
Chief LX
LX Programmer
Sound Design Assistant
Sound Design Assistant
Prop Maker
Prop Maker

Ellen Hodggers
Aoife Byrne
Eduarda Scopel Fialho
Shona McFadyen
Nell Snyder
Elena Cullen
Theo Lynch
Bradley Whelan
Kevin Smyth
Daniel Nolan
Clíodhna Ryan
Lovelle Giebe

This amateur production of *Far Away* is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French, Ltd.

PENELOPE

BY
ENDA WALSH



Monday, 6th — Wednesday, 8th July at 7pm
Preview: Saturday, 4th July at 7pm
Matinee: Wednesday, 8th July at 1pm
Book online at their.ie

At the bottom of a drained swimming pool, Penelope's four remaining suitors eke out a ridiculous existence.

While her husband is away fighting the Trojans, her home has become the stage for a pathetic contest of manhood, with each suitor vainly attempting to win her favour through increasingly deranged displays of devotion. With Penelope's husband fast approaching, the suitors devise a plan for how they might escape their fates and find meaning in the bizarre lives they've chosen for themselves. Enda Walsh delivers tragedy and comedy in equal measure in this modern reimagining of the classical myth.

____ CAST

Quinn	Eoghan Kenna
Dunne	Sheik Bah
Fitz	Daire O'Hagan
Burns	Finian Duff Lennon
Penelope	Ciara Cochrane

____ CREATIVE TEAM

Director	Mark Anthony O'Reilly
Set Designer	Piper Lynn McDonald
Costume Designer	Erica Smith
Lighting Designer	Daisy Long
Producer	Abigail Palmer
Producer	Aisling Whelan
Hair & Make Up	Leonard Daly

____ CREW

Stage Manager	Aimee Hartigan
Assistant Stage Manager	Lina Lambert
Assistant Production Manager	Jack Clare
Scenic Artist	Adam Rafter
Costume Supervisor	Charlotte Sloan
Chief LX	Brad O'Brien
Lighting Programmer	Madison Tredway
Sound Design Assistant	Daniel Nolan
Sound Design Assistant	Kevin Smyth
Prop Maker	Clíodhna Ryan
Prop Maker	Lovelle Giebe



The Moors

a play by JEN SILVERMAN

Tuesday, 7th — Thursday, 9th July at 7.30pm

Preview: Monday, 6th July at 7.30pm

Matinee: Thursday, 9th July at 1pm

Book online at their.ie

On the eerie, savage moors live two sisters. While the eldest commands the household, the youngest spends her days writing in a diary or minding their dog – a great big mastiff filled with poetic longing. The sudden arrival of a governess and a moorhen disrupts their world and pushes them all to the edge of violence.

In this darkly comic play, Jen Silverman riffs wildly on the lives and works of certain 19th-century author-sisters, offering a queer perspective on love, repression, and human desire.

____ CAST

Agatha	Eiméar Dolan
Huldey	Katie St John
Emilie	Isabella Swoboda
Marjory / Mallory	Lily Boss-Bailey
The Moorhen	Elinore Ford
The Mastiff	James Gwilym

____ CREATIVE TEAM

Director	Julia Sirna-Frest
Dramaturgy	Lexi Silva
Set Designer	Niamh Kearney
Costume Designer	Blanca Sánchez Encinas
Lighting Designer	Kristóf Nagy
Producer	Charlotte Donkers
Producer	Sawyer Estes
Sound Designer	Ultan de Stáinleigh
Hair & Make Up	Leonard Daly

____ CREW

Company Stage Manager /	
Deputy Stage Manager	Caoimhe Glynnmartin
Assistant Stage Manager	Briana Gawley
Assistant Production Manager	Ell Hodgers
Set Construction	Ally-Ann Traynor
Scenic Company	Nell Snyder
Scenic Company	Aimee Cullen
Scenic Company	Adam Rafter
Costume Supervisor	Kate Nugent
Chief LX	Theo Lynch
Lighting Programmer	Hannah McIlwaine
Sound Department	Kevin Smyth
Sound Department	Danny Nolan
Prop Maker	Lovelle Giebe
Prop Maker	Clíodhna Ryan



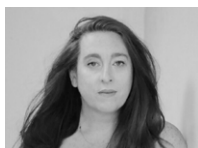
Conan
McIvor

Conan McIvor is a director and interdisciplinary artist who tells stories across stage, screen, and visual art. He creates theatre productions, fiction, documentary and experimental films, video installations, and immersive environments. His work has been exhibited in galleries, festivals, national theatres, cinemas, broadcast on national television, and is held in the ACNI collection. Conan studied Interactive Multimedia Design at Ulster University before receiving an MA in Film and Visual Studies from Queen's University Belfast, during which he was awarded NI Screen's Bill Miskelly Award. In 2022, Conan received an Arts Council Ireland Theatre Bursary to expand his practice as a director and designer. His sell-out production *Waiting For The Offo* marked his 50th design credit and first directing credit for the stage. He was nominated for Best Video Design at The Irish Times Irish Theatre Awards, received the VAI Experience Award with Vivienne Dick, and was the British Council's Filmmaker-in-Residence at CCI Paris. Most recently Conan was AUGE NEXT Artist-in-Residence at the Athens Digital Arts Festival Summer 2024.



Erin
Boswell

Erin Boswell is a director, actor, movement specialist, writer, and teaching artist from the United States. After completing the Meisner Studio programme at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, Erin moved to Atlanta and co-founded Vernal & Sere Theatre, now recognised as one of the leading experimental theatre companies in the United States. She has collaborated on all of the company's productions, contributing her expertise as a movement director to shape the physical dramaturgy and stylisation that have become hallmarks of its work. Beyond her work as a movement specialist and acting coach, Erin created Vernal & Sere's physical actor training programme, bringing multiple movement and devising methods to artists and practitioners in the southeast.
erinboswellmovement.com



Julia
Sirna-Frest

Julia Sirna-Frest is a New York City based performer, director and musician. She is a founding member of the Obie-award-winning *Half Straddle* and has toured with them throughout the US and Europe.

She has developed work and performed at: The Kitchen; Target Margin Theater; Ars Nova; New York Theater Workshop; the Baryshnikov Arts Center; The Incubator; WP Theater; Hartford Stage; St. Ann's Warehouse; the Brooklyn Museum; La MaMa ETC; Abrons Art Center; the New Museum; Mass MoCA; the Wild Project; PS 122; Joe's Pub; the New Victory Theater; The Bushwick Starr; Soho Rep; New Dramatists; and JACK. She is an alum of the 2022-2024 WP Lab, 2025 Director's Lab at Mercury Store, and an affiliated artist with New Georges.



Mark Anthony
O'Reilly

Mark Anthony O'Reilly is a Dublin-based director and actor. He trained as an actor at the TU Dublin Conservatory, graduating in 2019. Shortly after, he founded Melia Theatre Company, which debuted with a sold-out production of Robert Patrick's *The Haunted Host* at Smock Alley Theatre. Melia has also presented original work, most recently *The New Warrior* at the 2025 Scene + Heard Festival. Mark was recently the Assistant Director on David Horan's production of *Six Degrees of Separation* at The Lir Academy. Mark's background is in devised theatre, with an emphasis on experimental, ensemble-based work. After working for several years as an actor, director and facilitator, Mark has come to The Lir Academy to pursue a career more focused on directing.



**Abigail
Palmer**

Abigail Palmer is from the U.K. and trained in Stage Management at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in 2019. Her career as an Assistant Stage Manager has been primarily in West End and large-scale touring productions. Credits include: *& Juliet* (UK and Ireland tour); *The Years* (Harold Pinter Theatre); *Juno and the Paycock* (Gielgud Theatre); *Guys and Dolls* (The Bridge); *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* (UK & Ireland tour and Noel Coward Theatre); *Mamma Mia! The Party* (O2 Arena); *Everybody's Talking About Jamie* (Apollo Theatre); and *Les Miserables* (Sondheim Theatre).

Her first producing credit achieved earlier this year was for *Temple Bar the Musical*, as part of the Scene + Heard Festival 2026.



**Aisling
Whelan**

Aisling Whelan is an MFA producing student from Wexford, now based in Dublin. She completed her BA in Music, Film and Drama at University College Dublin in 2024. During her undergraduate studies, she produced a number of shows with the Drama Society and is pursuing a career as a professional producer. She is interested in producing new work, especially works that have dark comic themes and promoting voices not typically represented on stage.



**Anna
Buchmueller**

Anna Buchmueller is a Dublin-based, New York-born creative producer and director. She holds a BA in Theatre and American Studies from Wesleyan University, where she was recognised with High Honors for her direction of Will Arbery's *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*. She also studied as an Advanced Director at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center's National Theater Institute.

In the United States, Anna has worked with several theatre companies, including Colt Coeur, Keen Company, and Ojai Playwrights Conference. In Dublin, she has produced the sold-out runs of *RESIN* by Robert Downes [Scene + Heard Festival, 2024] and *I Want to Speak to Your Manager (How I was Radicalised and Became...Karen)* by Holly Hughes [Dublin Fringe Festival, 2025]. She has also production managed *The Long Way Home* and *Orson Welles' Christmas Carol* for AboutFACE Theatre Company.



**Caleb
Chew**

Caleb Chew is an actor, director, teacher, and writer from Boston, Massachusetts who has a passion for energising and bringing new audiences to theatre spaces and collaborating with fellow artists who value kindness and levity. He's been fortunate to receive training from the University of Vermont (BA in Theatre) as well as the American Conservatory Theatre of San Francisco.

Recent favorite credits include: *Waitress* (The Majestic Theatre), *Assassins* (Lyric Stage Company of Boston), *Hand to God* by Robert Askins (Royall Tyler Theatre), and *Into the Woods* (produced in an educational setting).



Charlotte Donkers

Charlotte Donkers is an emerging theatre producer, with a particular focus on theatre for young audiences. Prior to beginning her studies in Dublin, Charlotte worked across theatre, film, and visual arts in a range of producing and management roles including: theatre and film festival producing; FOH and location management; and producing visual arts and international guest programmes.

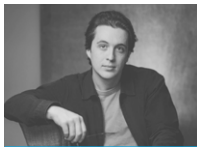
She completed two bachelors degrees in Art History and in Media & Culture Sciences from Utrecht University. Her screen producing work includes *Some Kind of Company*, produced as part of Floris Laus' graduation project at HKU.



Sasha Pereira

Sasha Pereira is an MFA Theatre Producing student from France, with a background in fashion, photography, and videography. His work focuses on telling bold, honest stories with the goal of inspiring change and sparking conversation. With a strong passion for musical theatre, Sasha believes in creating performances that feel alive and reflect the world around us.

Recent theatre credits include *DysHopelA* (director, Maurice Rondeau High School), *Sex: The Musical* (writer / director), and *365 jours* (writer). His film work includes the short film *TOO FAR AWAY*, which he wrote and directed.



Sawyer Estes

Sawyer Estes is a theatre director, playwright, and producer currently based in Dublin. Originally from the United States, he has worked extensively for the past decade primarily through the theatre company he co-founded in 2016, Vernal & Sere Theatre. Estes functioned as the Artistic Director for the ensemble-based company, which quickly established itself as a leading experimental theatre in the American Southeast with its eleven productions in a span of eight years.

His play, *Hurricane Season*, received its Off-Broadway premiere in 2024 at Theatre Row in New York City. This production from Vernal & Sere Theatre, which he both wrote and directed, was the subject of a profile in *American Theatre Magazine*. Other important credits include his original adaptations and stagings of Anne Carson's *The Glass Essay*, Luis Buñuel's *The Exterminating Angel*, and Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi*.

sawyerestes.com



William Burke

William Burke is a playwright, curator, and director based in Brooklyn. His productions include *the food was terrible* (The Bushwick Starr), *Is it Supposed to Last?* (PlayCo), *Help Me Draw Your Feelings?* (The Brick), *PIONEERS! #goforth* (JACK), *COMFORT DOGS: Live from the Pink House* (JACK), *FURRY! / LA FURIA!* (The Bushwick Starr), *Untitled American Flag Craft Project* (The Brick), and *Variations on The Main* (JACK). With Target Margin Theater, his work includes *I Made a Mistake*, *EXPLODITY!*, and *DAY!Night?fuck...* (JACK and The Staller Center at Stony Brook University).

William is the Head Curator of The Starr Reading Series at The Bushwick Starr, Co-Chair of the Soho Rep Writer / Director Lab alongside Jackie Sibblies Drury, and was Co-Curator of Little Theatre at Dixon Place (2017–2019). He has taught at Cornish College of the Arts, Primary Stages and Stony Brook University. His podcast series, *Pep Talks for a New World*, is available on all major platforms.

williamburke.net

MFA IN STAGE DESIGN (SET, COSTUME & LIGHTING) STUDENTS



Andrew Kirwan

Andrew Kirwan is an architect and designer from West Cork. He graduated with a Master of Architecture with distinction from Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen, Scotland, in 2018. After working as an architect for several years, he joined an international team of designers and makers at Joseph Walsh Studio in Kinsale, Cork in 2019. There, he gained a deeper understanding of craft, sculpture, and the importance of materiality in design.

He established Áitiúil Studio, a multidisciplinary design studio practicing across the mediums of architecture, furniture, jewelry, and most recently, theatre, having just completed his first show, *Global Desires*, as lead designer for the Dublin Theatre Festival.



Blanca Sánchez Encinas

Blanca Sánchez Encinas started her career in the fashion industry and has worked as a stylist, assistant designer and tailor in her home country. However, she soon realised that costume design was her main focus and passion, which she demonstrated choosing to write her thesis around The Lord of The Rings' costume design. Having a background in fashion helps Blanca understand the importance of tailoring and the making of the costumes and sees it as a collaborative work between the designer and the crew. As a Costume Designer, she is focused on the storytelling capacity of it, and its attention to detail. Designing allows her to fully explore her creativity and passion for conceptualising.



Daisy Long

Daisy Long is a New York-based lighting designer with an affinity for the eclectic, unusual, and unusual. Frequent collaborators in the States include The Million Underscores, The Fire Ensemble, Mason Holdings, and Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana. She is the recipient of an IRNE Award, and a National Youth Arts award. Member of United Scenic Artists, Local 829.

www.daisylong.com; IG: @daisylong.



Erica Smith

Erica Smith is a recent graduate of Drama & Theatre Studies in Trinity College Dublin, where she trained in theatre making and costume designing.

Her recent credits include: Costume Designer for *The Pits* (director Lisa Busi (Samuel Beckett Theatre)); Performer in *Anna* (Samuel Beckett Theatre); Costume Designer for *Men Eating Dinner* (Scene + Heard, Smock Alley 2024); Costume Assistant for INOs *La Boheme* (Bord Gais Theatre); and Costume Designer for *But We're Right* (Smock Alley Theatre /Edinburgh Fringe Festival). Erica has also spent time working in costume maintenance at the Bord Gais Theatre.



Jane Boehlert

Jane Boehlert is a set designer and visual artist. She graduated from Goldsmiths, University of London with a First-Class BA (Hons) in Design in 2020 and has since worked in visual effects for film and television, where she developed a strong interest in 3D visualisation. She has also worked in commercial art departments as a set decorator, cultivating a passion for scenic painting, installation, and hands-on collaborative making. As a theatre designer, Jane brings together these varied creative disciplines with a particular interest in designing for narrative storytelling.

MFA IN STAGE DESIGN (SET, COSTUME & LIGHTING) STUDENTS



**Kristóf
Nagy**

Kristóf Nagy is a lighting designer transitioning from the music scene back to theatre, where he originally discovered his passion for lighting during high school. Originally from Budapest and now based in Dublin, he holds a BSc in Applied Physics from the University of Groningen.

His professional experience includes serving as the resident Lighting Designer at Kobuci Kert, an outdoor venue in Budapest hosting major Hungarian acts, Lighting Operator at Palace EDM club in Groningen. He also worked as the Technical Director of Broadcast at TRIP floating theatre, where he was first introduced to the world of theatre.



**Niamh
Kearney**

Niamh Kearney is a Designer from Belfast who studied Drama at Queen's University Belfast, graduating in 2017 with First Class Honours, and began working in theatre full-time in the second undergraduate year.

Her theatre design credits include: Assistant Set Designer for *An Ideal Husband* (Gate Theatre); Costume & Set Designer for *Holding Ground* (Tinderbox); *Three Pay Days* (Kabosh Theatre); Costume Designer for *Yerma* (Tinderbox); and *Scaredy Fat* (Skelpie Limmer).

Other roles include: Design Trainee for *Young Washington* (Iris Productions DAC); Costume Maker for the Mac Theatre and Belfast International Arts Festival; Costume Supervisor for Irish National Opera and Opera North in England; Assistant Stylist for *Dancing with the Stars* and RTE Guide; Tailor for GQ Magazine and Rod Stewart; and Head of Wardrobe for Rivedance.

IG: niamhkearneydesign



**Piper Lynn
McDonald**

Piper Lynn McDonald moved to Ireland from Waco, Texas to pursue her BA in Contemporary and Applied Theatre Studies from Mary Immaculate College (University of Limerick) in 2019.

After graduating in 2022, Piper returned home to help start Silent House Theatre Company as part of their executive team. Piper worked on a total of sixteen productions with Silent House, primarily serving as the company's Designer and Stage & Production Manager.

Her favorite productions include *The Boys in the Band*, *Crimes of the Heart*, *This is Our Youth* [director Ryan Kirby], *Cabaret*, *Machinal*, *Godspell* [director Collin Selman], and *A Streetcar Named Desire* [director Brady Braziel].

GRADUATING ACTING STUDENTS



Aoife
Hall



Cal
Cunningham



Ciara
Cochrane



Daire
O'Hagan



Eiméar
Dolan



Elinore
Ford



Ella
O'Callaghan



Eoghan
Kenna



Finian
Duff Lennon



Isabella
Swoboda



James
Gwilym



Katie
St John



Lily
Boss-Bailey



Molly
McLoughlin



Sheik
Umarr Bah



Tadhg
O'Rourke



Tom
Hendry

GRADUATING STAGE MANAGEMENT & TECHNICAL THEATRE STUDENTS



Adam
Rafter



Brad
O'Brien



Bradley
Whelan



Clíodhna
Ryan



Colette
Londres



Daniel
Nolan



Elena
Cullen



Ellen
Hodgers



Fionn
Loughman



Gráinne
Clancy



Gus
Papagiannis



Kaitlin
Gaddy



Nell
Snyder



Theo
Lynch



Zoren
Haljaste

_____ TECHNICAL CREW

Anna Tiernan
Finley Flinter
Fintan McEvoy
Mimi Lee
Petra Crowe
Rachel Balbiano
Tale Isaksen

_____ CONSTRUCTION CREW

Alisha McGarrity
Cian Murphy
Clodagh Armstrong Lynch
Rachel Delahunt
Sophie Byrne

_____ SCENIC CREW

Erin Oxley
Kalliope Parish
Maeve Grant
Monet Tabacco
Thale Tollefsen

_____ COSTUME CREW

Agnes Runnerstrom
Alannah Davis
Alex Irimia
Erika Jonnson
Mahalia Flanagan
Mary Gromis

_____ INFO

Booking Tickets

Book tickets and find out more about shows at The Lir Academy in the What's On section of our website their.ie/events

Content Warnings

Please note that these productions contain haze, strobe, flashing lights, loud noises, and adult themes. Feel free to contact our box office if you would like to discuss this further or discuss it in person with our front-of-house team. Contact details – boxoffice@their.ie or on 01 8962559.

Social Media

Follow GradFest on our social media channels #gradfest2026 and on Instagram @lirgradfest

_____ THANK YOU

Special thanks from our production teams to Tony Wilson Setiawan, The Abbey Theatre, and Colm Maher at the Bewley Cafe Theatre. Many thanks to our staff and tutors who have supported the realisation of this production.

We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to all our supporters who give so generously to our students. As always, we are immensely grateful to our bursary supporters who work with us to ensure that training at The Lir Academy is made possible for more emerging talent.

_____ SUPPORT US

The Lir Academy is a registered charity (RCN: 20076689) and financially independent of Trinity College Dublin. As a non-profit, any box office, commercial or fundraised income goes back into the work we do. This includes financial student supports and outreach programmes to widen access and equality of training to our programmes. So, your decision to train with us, see a show, be our Friend or become a donor helps keep the actors, technicians and creatives of the future in education. Please see more at their.ie/supportus. Thank you.

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