GRADFEST 2022

Mon 15 Aug – Thur 01 Sept
Book online at www.thelir.ie
GRADFEST 2022 is a season of productions directed and designed by this year’s MFA students. The four plays being produced are a culmination of an intensive year of hands-on training in theatre directing, 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 final and second-year Stage Management and Technical Theatre students.

An exhibition displaying the costumes, model boxes, set and lighting designs by MFA Design students during their training at The Lir Academy. Free for everyone.
“No... I will make it a temple.”

After finally breaking out of the shadow of obscurity artist Mark Rothko is given the commission of a lifetime. To create a series of murals for the Four Seasons restaurant in Midtown Manhattan in exchange for thirty-five thousand dollars. And yet he stalls.

A young aspiring painter is hired to assist him and as the two artists grapple with the task, questions surrounding the heavy burden of legacy, the meaning of art and its inevitable costs begin to surface. Threatened by the cynical reality of the art world, could Rothko’s masterpiece become his downfall?

A vibrant drama based on true events; RED is a layered portrait of the raw act of creation and the birth of an artist.
“Their truth is always elsewhere...”
– Jean-Paul Sartre

Two maids spend their evenings playacting the ritual strangulation of their employer.

But, one day, the game takes a turn and they find themselves prisoners in their own plot.

Inspired by the real-life crime of the Papin sisters, The Maids is an apocalyptic whirlwind that explores the human desire to find meaning in life.
“At school, were you one of the girls who talked about snogging, or assessment objectives?”

Other friends have come, got boyfriends and gone. So what? Tosh and Lou have each other.

They swear they’ll never be like the other girls. They refuse to sit in a narrative someone else thought up. They don’t need a happily ever after – they’re not interested in becoming cliches.

This is love. This is enough...isn’t it?

A searing interrogation of female friendship; all its beauty, power, toxicity and contradictions.

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**THE PRODUCTION**

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**CAST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Actor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lou</td>
<td>Aoife Morgan Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tosh</td>
<td>Hannah Brady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fran</td>
<td>Rachel Charny</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**CREATIVE TEAM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Ursula McGinn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set Design</td>
<td>Florentina Burcea*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costume Design</td>
<td>Toni Bailey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Design</td>
<td>Israel del Barco*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Design</td>
<td>Lara Gallagher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair and Makeup</td>
<td>Val Sherlock</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**PRODUCTION HEADS OF DEPARTMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage Manager</td>
<td>Eoin Daly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Stage Manager</td>
<td>Emily O’Riordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Production Manager</td>
<td>Luke Jenkins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set Construction</td>
<td>Sean Cassidy Tyrrell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenic Artist</td>
<td>Thomas O’Shea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Department</td>
<td>Leo Sheridan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Department</td>
<td>Tom Barry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costume Supervisor</td>
<td>Hanna Novak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Chief</td>
<td>Disin McMahon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Programmer</td>
<td>Josh Quigley Power</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Writing**

Miriam Battye

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**Scenes With Girls**

By Miriam Battye

Saturday 27th August – Wednesday 31st August at 7:30pm
Preview: Saturday 27th August at 7:30pm
Matinee: Wednesday 31st August at 1:00pm
Studio Two – The Lir Academy

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40 Whitfield Street, London W1T 2RH.
Image Credit: Dan Cretu

* Welcome back to all The Lir Graduates working on these productions
THE PRODUCTION

“Can we sit around being casually dysfunctional later and focus for one second?”

The estranged Lafayette family descend upon their crumbling Arkansas homestead to settle the accounts of their recently deceased Father.

As his three adult children sort through a lifetime of hoarded memories while colliding over the house’s debris and debt, something is lurking just under the surface.

But when disturbing discoveries surface among their father’s possessions, the reunion takes a turn, and the family is forced to confront the sins of their Father.

CAST

Antoinette ‘Toni’ Lafayette
Rachael Kramer-Lafayette
Cassidy Kramer-Lafayette
River Rayner
Rhys Thurston
Beauregarde ‘Bo’ Lafayette
François ‘Franz/Frank’ Lafayette
Ansley Kramer-Lafayette

Kia Gates
Karen Kelly
Pattie Maguire
Shona Gibson*
Peter Rothwell
Oliver Filcroft
Daniel Mahon
Gus Holmes

CREATIVE TEAM

Director
Joy Nesbitt
Set Design
Fibs Porto
Costume Design
Juliana Schmidt
Lighting Design
Sophie Cassidy
Sound Design
Iain Faulker and Leon Henry
Hair and Makeup
Val Sherlock

PRODUCTION HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

Stage Manager
Alannah O’Leary
Assistant Stage Manager
David Brydone
Assistant Production Manager
Luke Jenkins
Set Construction
Emmet ‘Brady’ Dunne
Scenic Artist
Aimee Crilly
Costume Department
Gráinne Earley
Lighting Chief and Programmer
Melania Sulowska
Sound Department
Tom Barry
Sound Department
Leo Sheridan

By arrangement with Josef Weinberger Plays Ltd. This is an amateur production

Image Credit: Copyright Ken Gonzales-Day

Insta @kengonzalesday
Twitter @kengonzalesday

We’d like to give eternal gratitude to our families, our friends, our confidants, and our ancestors

* Welcome back to all The Lir Graduates working on these productions
STAGE DESIGN INCLUDING LIGHTING, COSTUME AND SET DESIGN

Clara Cohen is a Set and Scenic Designer from France. Upon completing her studies in Literature and Architecture, Clara went on to graduate with a Masters in History of Art. She has since worked as an assistant set designer for the past two years assisting with theatre productions, Ballet and Opera.

Clara has recently worked as a set designer as part of the “Festival International d’Art Lyrique d’Aix-en-Provence”. As a result of her experience to date, Clara is eager to further develop her own artistic signature and technical skills leading her to begin her studies in stage design at The Lir Academy.

Fibs Porto is an Architect and Designer from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. She graduated from Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro (PUC Rio) in 2017 with a Bachelor’s in Architecture and Urbanism. After that, she moved to São Paulo, where she worked as a collaborator at an architectural studio, acting as the architect in charge of projects for events, exhibitions, and concerts. Highlights from this include the Johnnie Walker Women’s Month event with Gilberto Gil and the Björk Digital Exhibition in São Paulo, Brasilia, and Rio de Janeiro.

Fibs moved to Dublin, Ireland, in 2021 to start her MFA in Stage Design at The Lir Academy, where she is majoring in set design and minor in dramaturgy. Her focus will be on ecological design, taking into consideration how the decisions made throughout the whole process will affect the environment and society.

Fibs is one of the recipients of the Haddad Fellowship Scholarship 2022.

Juliana Schmidt is studying for an MFA in Stage Design at The Lir Academy where she is majoring in Costume Design.

Juliana studied Fashion Design at Anhembi Morumbi University in São Paulo, Brazil. She has worked in multiple areas in the fashion industry including styling, manufacturing, fashion journalism and e-commerce.

In 2017, she founded the Hype Vintage brand to rescue and customise second-hand garments. In 2019, she also became a creative sewing teacher and a volunteer in women’s empowerment projects. She has always been fascinated by costumes and started creating small theatre productions and dance performances at the University of Campinas (Unicamp) while writing about her favourite film and TV costumes on Instagram.

Juliana is one of the recipients of the Haddad Fellowship.

Pedro Pacheco is a lighting designer and producer from Brazil. He has been working in lighting design since 2017 and graduated from the Scenic Production Technology Programme at the Federal University of Paraná (Brazil) in 2020. Since then, he has worked extensively as a designer across multiple productions in theatre, dance, music, and outdoor events across Brazil. He won two prizes for the best lighting design with the play “Casarão da Rua Malinowa”, directed by Jester Furtado. This experience in the industry has allowed Pedro to further develop his working knowledge as a theatre technician, programmer, and designer for events.

Pedro is one of the recipients of the Haddad Fellowship Scholarship. This has created the opportunity for him to pursue his dream of becoming a professional lighting designer by studying for an MFA in Stage Design at The Lir Academy.

Sophie Cassidy is a Lighting Designer and Technician from Drogheda, Co. Louth. They graduated from Trinity College Dublin with a BA in Drama and Theatre Studies, during which they specialised in lighting design and devising. During their time in Trinity, Sophie designed shows in both the Samuel Beckett Theatre and the Dublin University Players Theatre. They served as the inaugural Festival Technician for the Trinity Arts Festival.

Recently Sophie has designed: “Shakers” at Smock Alley Boys School, directed by Claudia Kinahan; “Gaia” at the Samuel Beckett Theatre, directed by Jade Silk Featherstone; and “Nine Weeks” alongside Ciaran O’Melia as part of the Dublin Fringe Festival. As well as designing, they have been working as a lighting technician in various venues throughout Dublin, Drogheda and at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

Sophie’s other pursuits include production management, youth work, and playwriting. Most recently their play “Tech! The Musical” was selected by Youth Theatre Ireland as one of their new plays for Playshare 2021.

Toni Bailey previously studied Costume Design at Inchicore College of Further Education. She has a wealth of experience in film and TV, specifically working in makeup and special effects but has always found herself returning to her passion for costume.

Toni is looking forward to exploring dramaturgy this year along with the new experiences that her focus on costume will bring.

Sophie Cassidy

Toni Bailey

Victor Sánchez Manso is a recent graduate in Design at the Complutense University of Madrid in Spain.

Victor has been actively engaged with theatre from a young age. At the age of eight, he became a member of an amateur musical theatre group where he began performing as an actor. Over time, he took an interest in other disciplines such as set construction, prop making, stage management, musical direction and choreography.

While studying Design at University, Victor began to fully embrace all aspects of designing for the stage. During the final two years of his degree, Victor was accepted into the CTE (Centre of Technical Theatre), a school in Madrid dedicated to the education and training of theatre technicians. From there he enrolled in set construction, prop making and stage crew disciplines.

Following these studies, Victor has come to The Lir Academy to finesse his professional ambitions by studying for an MFA Stage Design.

Clara Cohen

Fibs Porto

Juliana Schmidt

Pedro Pacheco

Sophie Cassidy

Toni Bailey

Victor Sánchez Manso
MFA GRADUATING STUDENTS
MFA THEATRE DIRECTING STUDENTS

Joy Nesbitt is a theatrical director and musician originally from Dallas, Texas. She is a recent graduate of Harvard University with a dual degree in Social Anthropology and Music, as well as a secondary in Theater, Dance and Media. In her art, she is primarily interested in the search to define and explore personal identity in every sense of the word. Joy is a 2021 recipient of the Louis Sudler Prize in the Arts for the sum of her artistic activities as a student at Harvard.


She has assisted productions at the American Repertory Theater in Boston, Massachusetts such as “Jack and the Beanstalk” (2021, dir. Rebecca Aparicio) and We Live in Cairo (2019, dir. Taibi Magar).

Joy has also worked as an Early BIPOC Theater-Maker at the Williamstown Theater Festival in association with Black Theater United. She is currently a George J. Mitchell Scholar through the US-Ireland Alliance as she studies at The Lir National Academy of Dramatic Arts in Dublin, Ireland.

Kady Duffy is an actor and director based in Annecy, France. Originally from the United States, she graduated with a degree in Theatre Arts and French from the University of Iowa and holds a certificate of theatre studies from the Regional Conservatory of the Haute-Savoie.

She is the co-founder and artistic director of the theatre company, District 41. Directing credits include the 2020 French premiere of “The Wolves” by Sarah Delappe, which she translated, and the one-woman short, “(Un)saintly Joan”. Kady was assistant director to Danya Taymor for the 2022 Gate Theatre production of Samuel Beckett’s Endgame.

Maku Sisáková is a theatre director from Prague. It was there she discovered her directorial passion at the age of nine by boycotting Nativity plays in her elementary school and replacing them with her unlicensed take on “We Will Rock You, The Musical”. Much of her free time was spent around Prague’s English-speaking theatre community, which exposed her to an entirely different theatre tradition.

In high school, Maku lead the drama club and worked as an actress at the Blood, Love & Rhetoric theatre, where she directed her first original play, “Vienna”. Maku proceeded to spend four years in London, where she completed her LLB at King’s College London, and also completed a year in LAMDA, studying for a PTASS (Production & Technical Arts: Stage & Screen).

Returning to Prague in 2020, she founded the Sady 10 Apartment Theatre creating site-specific theatre inspired by the history of the building she grew up in. Throughout the various cracks and crevices of lockdown, Sady 10 produced “The Corona Monologues”, a collaborative piece of new writing centring around the Covid-19 pandemic. Maku’s ambition is to develop Sady 10 into a full theatre company.

Joy Nesbitt

Maku Sisáková

Ursula McGinn is a theatre-maker; working between Kildare and Dublin. She works as a director, facilitator and stage manager, producing theatre for all ages. Ursula is Co-Artistic Director of Bombinate Theatre, an award-winning theatre company, creating plays and workshops for families and young audiences, most notably “Halt Light” and “Susie and the Story Shredder”.


Her associate directing credits include: “Susie and the Story Shredder” (Fringe Festival 2018, National Tour 2019), “Infinity” (Vaults Festival 2019, winner of the First Fortnight Award at Dublin Fringe 2018) and “Summertime” (Murmuration, Dublin Fringe Festival 2018).

Ursula graduated from Trinity College Dublin in 2017 with a BA in Drama and Theatre Studies.

Kady Duffy

Maku Sisáková

Ursula McGinn
GRADUATING ACTING STUDENTS

Aoife Morgan Jones
Cuán Hosty-Blaney
Daniel Mahon
David Rawle
Emmet Farrell

Hannah Brady
Karen Kelly
Kia Gates
Konstantin Stanchev
Oliver Flitcroft

Pattie Maguire
Peter Rothwell
Rachel Charny
Simon Alteen
Sophie Lenglinger

GRADUATING STAGE MANAGEMENT & TECHNICAL THEATRE STUDENTS

Adam Malone
Alannah O’Leary Murray

Eoin Daly
Lucy Varley

Mela Sutowska
Rachel Ellen Bollard

GRADUATING STAGE MANAGEMENT & TECHNICAL THEATRE STUDENTS

Alison O’Shea
Avram Rosewood
Chris Nolan
David McGee (ASM)
Peter Bond
Sarah Doyle
Thomas Wall

SET & STAGE CREW

Cathal Brace
Isaac Mc Grath Long
Jovetta Tan Ler Sin
Maeve Talbot
Oliver Kampman

SCENIC & STAGE

Alison Meehan
Arden Tierney
Callum Stanley
Dragana Stevanic
Jenna Crossan
TJ Danielsson

COSTUME DEPARTMENT

Alessandro Molina
Bianca Baguio
Chiara Mangold
Elizabeth thomas
Niamh McGrath
Thea Dong

ASSISTANT PRODUCTION MANAGER

Luke Jenkins

SOUND DEPARTMENT HOD’S

Tom Barry
Leo Sheridan

SCENIC DEPARTMENT HOD’S

Aimee Crilly
Thomas O’Shea

VENUE TECHNICIAN

Thomas ‘Tony’ Allen
BOOKING TICKETS

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

THANK YOU

Many thanks to our staff and tutors who have supported the realisation of this production. We would also like to extend a special thanks to Dan Cretu and Ken Gonzales-Day for the kind use of their images in these productions.

Special thanks to the Gate Theatre, The Abbey Theatre and Padraig O’Riordan.

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.

* Welcome back to all The Lir Graduates working on these productions

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