

MY RIGHT FOOT

by Michael Patrick &
Oisín Kearney

|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

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NOTE

This edition reflects a rehearsal draft of the script and may differ from the final production.

MY RIGHT FOOT was first produced in AXIS Art centre and theatre as part of Dublin Theatre Festival on 7th October 2025 and then at Lyric Belfast 12th October 2025. The cast and creative team was as follows:

- Performed by Michael Patrick
- Director Oisín Kearney
- Lighting Design Jonny Daley
- Music and Sound Design Katie Richardson
- Choreography Marc Brew and Paula O'Reilly
- Producer Kelly Phelan
- Dramaturgs..... Krystal Sweedman & Ruth McGowan
- Stage Manager Gina Donnelly



We bring world-class theatre to Dublin, support artists in creating outstanding work and provide a platform to showcase the best of Irish theatre to the world.

At the heart of the festival is the city of Dublin – its people and its stories – and a commitment to contributing to the vibrant social and cultural life of our capital. Our mission is to present a programme of exceptional theatrical experiences that will appeal to the diverse communities and visitors that make up our city.

We have a rich history, with much to celebrate, but we are most excited about what is yet to come. In the future, we want to see more people participating in culture and more artists creating bold new work that challenges and inspires.

Dublin Theatre Festival is principally funded by the Arts Council | An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

Dublin Theatre Festival

Festival House

12 Essex Street East

Temple Bar,

Dublin 2, D02 EH42

info@dublintheatrefestival.ie



Axis Ballymun is a centre of excellence with community at its core, a dynamic venue and vital resource for Ballymun and the wider city. As a hub of creative activity, Axis brings together arts professionals and local communities in a shared space of expression, development, and collaboration.

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CAST

MICHAEL PATRICK | Performer

Michael is a Belfast-based actor and writer. He both wrote and performed in the one-man show *My Left Nut*, based on his teenage years, nominated for best show under one hour at The Dublin Fringe and won a Summerhall Lustrum Award at The Edinburgh Fringe.

Other stage writing includes *The Alternative* (Fishamble), nominated for Irish Times Theatre Award and Writers' Guild of Ireland Award – best new play; *The Border Game* (Lyric Belfast), and the adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of Richard III* (Lyric Belfast).

For screen he co-wrote the TV adaptation of *My Left Nut* (BBC Three), winner RTS NI Award – best drama, and the short films *So You're Going to Die* and *Helpless*.

Radio writing includes *Bitter Pill* (BBC Radio 4) – nominated Celtic Media Festival Award, Drama (Sound); *The Hazard of the Die* (BBC Radio 4) – winner Celtic Media Festival Torc Award: Best Documentary (Sound); *This One Time On The Border* (Radio Ulster); *Quick Comedies* (Radio Ulster) and *The 100 Year Old Backstop* (BBC Radio 4).

Acting credits include the titular role in *The Tragedy of Richard III* – Winner: The Stage Awards, Judges Special Award, Winner: Falstaff Awards, Best Principal Actor/Actress. *Measure for Measure* and *The Taming of the Shrew* (Royal Shakespeare Company); *Othello* (Abbey Theatre); *Blackout* (Lyric Theatre); *Radamisto* (NI Opera); *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare Abridged* (Bruiser NI).

Michael had a leading role in the RTÉ children's comedy series *Bernard Dunne's Mythical Heroes*. He has also appeared in *Game of Thrones*, *This Town*, *Blue Lights*, *Krypton*, *Soft Border Patrol*, *The Keeper* and *The Spectacular*.

Michael originally studied Material Sciences at The University of Cambridge, before training as an actor at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts.

In February 2023 Michael was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease - but he continues to act and write.

CREATIVE

OISÍN KEARNEY | Director

Oisín Kearney is an award-winning writer and director represented by Curtis Brown. Oisín writes and directs for stage, screen and radio. He has co-written several plays with Michael Patrick and together, they have been part of the BBC's inaugural Comedy Collective scheme, Irish Theatre Institute's Six in the Attic, and Bewley's Cafe Theatre Percolate initiative. Oisín's background is in feature documentaries – assistant producing *66 DAYS* and Oscar long-listed and Emmy-nominated *ELLÁN* – and he directed a feature documentary *BOJAYÁ: CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE*, which premiered at Hot Docs Film Festival in Toronto in April 2019.

Oisín's recent theatre work as director includes *My Right Foot* (Dublin Theatre Festival 2025); *Good With Faces* (Dublin Fringe 2025); *The Tragedy of Richard III* (Lyric Theatre Belfast, Winner of The Stage Judge's Award 2025); *Lie Low* by Ciara Elizabeth Smyth (Royal Court, Traverse, Abbey 2023) and *My Left Nut* (Edinburgh Fringe 2018 and BBC Three series 2020).

JONNY DALEY | Lighting Design

Jonathan is a writer and lighting designer based in Belfast.

Recent lighting design credits include: *ShedMan* (Keith Singleton), *Good With Faces* (Oisín Kearney), *Dressed For Space* (Patrick J O'Reilly), *The Velvetten Rabbit* (Replay Theatre Company & Lyric Theatre, Belfast); *The Adventures of Red Riding Hood* (The MAC, Belfast); *The Gap Year* (2025) & *The Tragedy Of Richard III* (Lyric Theatre, Belfast); *All Growned Up* (BYMT); *I Always Liked The Name Marcus & Holding Ground* (Tinderbox Theatre Company); *Rose + Bud* (Commedia of Errors); *Touch Hear Feel* (Helen Hall/Belfast International Arts Festival); *Waiting For The Offo* (Bosco Productions); *No Citation* (Bourke Productions) and *Mirrorball & The Untold Truth of Captain Hook* (Replay Theatre Company).

Upcoming lighting design work includes: *My Right Foot* (Oisín Kearney/Michael Patrick), *The Arcadia* (Steven Millar & Ensemble) & *Jack Frost* (The MAC, Belfast).

Jonathan's written work has been performed all over the UK and Ireland.

Recent writing credits include: *Sylvan* (Tinderbox Theatre Company), *The Revolution Will Be Streamed & Vection* (Headrush, Ireland), *Release & A Body, Twice* (Ever Unique Productions).

Jonathan is currently working on a new play about the Belfast DeLorean factory, which started life as a Lyric Theatre Belfast seed commission.

KATIE RICHARDSON | Music and Sound Design

Katie composes, curates, designs and directs music and sound. As well as her extensive experience performing and touring in the live music sector she has worked and been commissioned by many award winning theatre, film, TV and immersive companies across the UK and Ireland as a composer and sound designer. In 2024 she was selected to be a participant on the coveted WFTV mentorship programme and currently sits on the Ivors Academy Senate.

Work includes: composition and sound design for *Shadowdock*; Ireland's largest immersive installation to date; Composition and sound design for *The Tragedy of Richard III* in Lyric Theatre Belfast; Composer for *Dating Amber*; with Landmark Productions, Galway Arts Festival and Irish Arts Center NYC; Composer for *The Death of a Projectionist* by BAFTA award winning Out of Orbit Films; Composer and award winning musical director for *Good Vibrations* in GOH Belfast and NYC transfer. www.katierichardsonmusic.com

PAULA O'REILLY | Choreography

Paula O' Reilly is a Belfast-based Choreographer and Movement Director with a rich body of work that spans across Theatre, Opera, Musicals, TV and Film. Using her understanding of both classical and contemporary dance styles, she fuses physical storytelling with inventive choreography, creating visceral and captivating experiences on stage and screen. Paula is known for her ability to evoke emotional depth through movement

Paula has also moved in to Intimacy Direction for theatre and feels passionately about advocating for the physically and mental safety of all involved on a production. She is currently undertaking a Post-Grad in Intimacy Coordination for TV & Film at The NFTS.

Over her years of collaborating with leading directors, performers, and creatives, Paula has shaped the movement for many productions, most recently: *The Adventures of Red Riding Hood* (The MAC); *Malaprop's HotHouse*, *Xnthonny Ltd Lourdes! The Musical!* WIP, *Callings* by Kabosh, *Tartuffe* and *Somewhere Out There You* (The Abbey Theatre); *Lie Low* (The Royal Court); *Hansel & Gretel* and *Little Women* (Lyric Belfast).

MARC BREW | Choreography

Acclaimed International disabled choreographer, Artistic Director and dancer, Marc Brew trained as a professional dancer at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School and The Australian Ballet School. He has been working in the UK and Internationally for over twenty years as a director, choreographer, dancer, teacher and speaker; with the Australian Ballet Company, State Theatre Ballet Company of South Africa, Infinity Dance Theatre, candoco dance company and AXIS Dance Company. Marc was Associate Director with Scottish Dance Theatre,

Associate Artistic Director with Ballet Cymru in Wales and was Associate Artist in 2015 at Tramway Theatre in Glasgow. Since 2008 Marc has been dedicating time to his own choreography with Marc Brew Company and his recent choreographic commissions include San Francisco Ballet School, Dancing Wheels, Scottish Ballet, Ballet Cymru (Wales), YDance (Scotland), AXIS Dance Company (USA), Candoco Dance Company (UK), Touch Compass (NZ), Amy Seiwert's Imagery (USA) and Scottish Dance Theatre (Scotland). Marc was presented with a Centenary Medal for Outstanding Contribution as a dancer and choreographer. His work *Remember When* was nominated for an Isadora Duncan Dance Award for Best Performance (individual) and his recent solo work *For Now, I am...* was listed in the Guardians Top 10 Dance Shows for 2016.

Marc is currently Artistic Director at AXIS Dance Company and Associate Artistic Director at Ballet Cymru.

KELLY PHELAN | Producer

Kelly is programme producer for The Ark, Children's Cultural Centre and her work for them includes *The Giggler Treatment* by Roddy Doyle, adapted by Fionn Foley, *The Haircut* by Wayne Jordan and Tom Lane and *The Race* by Marc Brew as well as The Right Here, Right Now festival. She is a broadly experienced producer, project manager and casting director. With a strong passion for working in the arts highlighted in multi-disciplinary projects and theatre shows, including *Blue Thunder* by Padraic Walsh and *Lie Low* by Ciara Elizabeth Smyth. As Casting director for The Abbey Theatre, Kelly cast over sixty productions including world premiere's, *Our Few and Evil Days* by Mark O'Rowe starring Ciaran Hinds and Sinead Cusack, *Cyprus Avenue* by David Ireland, starring Stephen Rea and the acclaimed revival of *By The Bog of Cats* by Marina Carr and starring Susan Lynch. She convened three international symposia around the decade of centenaries and also produced the world premiere of Roddy Doyle's, *Two Pints*. She began her career as programme manager for The Performance Corporation. She holds a H.Dip and MA in Theatre from UCD.

KRYSTAL SWEEDMAN | Dramaturg

Krystal Sweedman is a dramaturg, facilitator and writer residing in Ireland.

Krystal facilitates a playwrighting class for emerging playwrights at the Axis Theatre, Ballymun, and provides dramaturgical assistance through Axis's Literary Department.

As a script reader/dramaturg she provides feedback to writers submitting to the annual Papatango prize. She also works with selected writers to develop their scripts for the annual NEWvember, New Writing Festival and works one on one with a number of writers as a freelance script dramaturg.

As a facilitator, Krystal has led creative a series of creative writing workshops that focus on process, prompts and the neuroscience that underpins creativity

Krystal studied Writing for Performance at the National Institute of Dramatic Art in 2013. Prior to NIDA, Krystal completed a dual degree of Business Management and Arts (Majoring in Drama and Psychology) at the University of Queensland.

In Ireland, she's presented work during The New Theatre's New Writing Week, The Provoke Festival, The NEWvember New Writing Festival and Smock Alley's Scene and Heard Festival, as well as had a Tiny Play selected for Fishamble's Tiny Play initiative, and had a small play produced by About Theatre as part of their Transatlantic Tales zoom festival. Her full-length play *Black Cherry* is available to listen to on Near FM's Woman's Hour, audio drama webpage.

In Australia her play *Sunnytown* was produced at La Boite Theatre. Her adaptation of the Angela Carter's *The Tiger's Bride*, played at the Loft Theatre, and she was one of six writers commissioned to write scenes for *The Wheel of Fortune*, which played at Metro Arts Theatre.

Recent bursaries and residencies include: the Axis Assemble program in 2022, an Agility Award in 2023. In 2024, she was an artist in resident with Mother Tongues. She is thrilled to be The ACRE project Artist in Residence, in 2024/2025.

RUTH MCGOWAN | Dramaturg

As a dramaturg, programmer and producer, Ruth has been building creative partnerships and championing new work across performance disciplines since 2009. Specialising in idea development and talent development, she has supported hundreds of artists to bring their work from the page to the stage. She has produced world premieres in festival fields, above pubs, and in historic theatres from Letterkenny to the Lower East Side.

Ruth is the Literary & New Work Director at the Abbey Theatre, working with playwrights and theatre makers to generate future work for both stages of Ireland's National Theatre. She works closely with artists, designing and delivering bespoke dramaturgical supports to a dynamic range of commissions and ideas in development.

GINA DONNELLY | Stage Manager

Gina Donnelly is a working class theatre maker with skills in playwriting, directing, producing and stage management. She is a multi-award winning writer, and most recently was the recipient of the Solas Nua New Voices Award at Dublin Fringe 2024 and Bragi Award 2025 for her play *Anthem For Dissatisfaction*. Her other writing credits include *Two*

Fingers Up (with Seón Simpson), *Love Is Mortifying* (BBC Sounds), and *What If We'd Stayed Angry?* (Origins First Irish Festival).

She was selected by field:arts as an Emerging Creative Producer in 2023 and has since done extensive work producing a range of shows, including the award winning *Shame Show*. She is one half of SkelpieLimmer Productions, and has a strong personal belief in the company's ethos that serious theatre doesn't have to feel serious.

CHARACTERS

MICK – An actor/writer in his mid-30s. He has motor neurone disease.

DOCTOR – A posh sounding neurologist.

ORLA – An MND professor from an affluent area of Dublin.

MUM – Mick's mum. Slightly country.

TIM – Mick's father-in-law. Doesn't say much.

NAOMI – Mick's wife. Forceful.

HANNAH – Mick's wee sister. Loud.

MAURICE – Mick's wee brother. Quiet.

KATE – Mick's older sister. Emotional.

THERAPIST – Not the best.

ANDY – Mick's mate. Loves films.

ARTHUR – Mick's mate. Drinker.

PAT – Mick's mate. Dramatic.

AUNTIE – Mick's auntie. Slightly country.

OT – Occupational Therapist. Not good at his job.

UNCLE – Mick's uncle. Brash.

YOUNG MICK – Mick as a child.

KING LEAR – Shakespeare's tragic King.

OLD MAN 1 – Old man at the gym. Naked.

OLD MAN 2 – Old man at the gym. Naked.

WHEELCHAIR MAN – Scottish man. Sells wheelchairs.

All characters to be played by one actor. Some of the characters may be presented as voice overs – but if that is the case, they should be recorded by the same actor playing Mick.

SETTING & TIME

The play is set in Ireland in 2025 – but it takes place in the here and now
– whenever that is.

AUTHORS' NOTE

This was the hardest thing I've ever had to write. Not just because of the content – but because it is an ongoing story. *My Left Nut* was also autobiographical, but had a defined end point – and had all the benefit of looking back at something with fresh eyes. I'm still going through everything outlined in the play. It's hard. But hopefully we've managed to write something that both captures the last two and a half years of my life, and is also an entertaining play. I want to use this opportunity to thank everyone in my life – but particularly Oisín Kearney – who doesn't really get a mention in the play. Thanks for everything Oisín. I love you very much.

Michael Patrick

I love you too.

Oisín Kearney

To Naomi

It all starts with my right foot.

A foot drop.

Basically I can't lift it.

I can't point my toes towards the ceiling.

I trip.

I stumble.

I fall.

It's probably a trapped nerve or something.
Right?

DOCTOR. Okay Michael. Thanks very much for coming in today. Do you want to go and bring in your fiancée? Naomi isn't it?

Royal Victoria Hospital. Belfast.

The doctor gives us the worst news of our lives.

Your test results have come back. And I'm sorry to say that you have motor neurone disease. Lou Gherig's disease? ALS? Remember the ice bucket challenge?! I didn't do it myself. Bad circulation! I'm very sensitive to changes in temperature. But I did donate!

Motor neurone disease.

Or MND as it's known on the street.

It's a progressive degenerative neurological illness.

Try saying that five times fast.

Famous people with the disease included:

Journalist Charlie Bird.

Physicist Stephen Hawking.

Musician Roberta Flack.

Playwright Sam Shepard.

Comedian Ronnie Corbett.

Less famous people with the disease include me,
Michael Patrick Campbell.

No treatment. No cure. Terminal.

So... I'm going to die.

I mean we all are.

But I know what's going to kill me.

Well, I say that, I could be hit by a bus tomorrow.
As could all of you.

Death by bus is quick. Pretty instant I'd say.

Do you know the average prognosis for MND?

Four years.

The time between World Cups.

Four years.

Or Summer Olympics.

Four years.

The lifespan of a gerbil.

It killed my dad.

MND. Not a gerbil.

He was diagnosed 12th February 1998. Aged 47.
Died eight months later.

And now I have it. Diagnosed 1st February 2023.
Aged 32.

February is a shite month. In general. But
particularly for my family.

“Fuck St Brigid” my mother says.

I tend to agree.

DOCTOR. Now Michael, MND isn’t really my speciality – but there is a clinic in Dublin that’s world-renowned. They’re doing lots of great research and are running experimental drug trials.

MICK. You mean... there could be a cure?

DOCTOR. Well, a cure is a strong word. But you never know... The only issue is it wouldn’t be covered under the NHS, because Dublin is technically in a different jurisdiction... I mean, for now anyway.

I look up this ‘world-renowned MND clinic’ – the professor, Orla Hardiman even has her own Wikipedia page. So you know she’s good.

Her Dublin clinic is running experimental drug trials.

One of these could save my life!

I’m hopeful.

I’m overjoyed.

I’m going to DUBLIN!

Stick on the tunes.

(MICK sings a few lines of Come Out, Ye Black & Tans.)

Suddenly, I’m overtaken with tears.

What if I die before I see a United Ireland?

*

ORLA. So you’re gonna help us cure the disease!

Professor Hardiman. A little bird of a woman. Tiny spectacles. Absolutely loves drug trials!

ORLA. Now, there's two types of MND. Sporadic (we don't know what causes those) and Inherited. Now Michael yours is likely inherited, because of your father, but we need to figure out which of your genes is faulty.

They take my blood.

When I return for results, Professor Hardiman is grinning from ear to ear.

ORLA. Oh my gosh Michael! You have the rarest gene!

The rarest? Bad luck again.

ORLA. Oh my gosh! No, it's great! You're the only person in Ireland known to have a fault in this gene! This is BURR-ILLIANT news!

MICK. I wouldn't say it's brilliant news. Makes me seem pretty unlucky!

ORLA. No... you're very lucky actually! F.U.S.

MICK. F ME WHAT?

ORLA. The gene! It's called F.U.S.! And there's this new drug trial – It specifically targets the F.U.S. gene – it looks very promising. Michael... I can get you on it!

F.U.S... That's what all this fuss is about.

There are seventy-seven people on the drug trial – from all over the world.

And I'll be the only one in Ireland on it.

I'm representing my country... at the Terminal Olympics.

I suppose that does make me lucky.

Maybe this trial could save my life?

Maybe I'll have more than just four years?

Stephen Hawking? He lived a really long time,
and sure wasn't he bucking his nurse and
everything?

And he wasn't even on a drug trial!

Maybe I can live.

I want to live! I'm going to live!

*(Music: Black Betty by Led Belly morphs into
the Ram Jam version.)**

*

June 2022. Eight months before I'm diagnosed.

I'm in Naomi's dad's kitchen, just me and Tim.
It's kind of awkward.

He puts on a French press of coffee.

Preground. From a supermarket packet. I say
nothing...

And then I just blurt it out.

MICK. I'd like to ask Naomi to marry me! ...If you'd be
okay with that?

TIM. Yeah, that'd be lovely.

MICK. Sweet.

MICK. Right that's me – see you later!

A few days later – Naomi's birthday.

I'd given her thirty-one Freddos.

A frog for every year.

But then...

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MICK. Eh hh, there's something else I wanted to give to you... I was gonna give you this on holiday, but then, I was worried about getting flagged in security and having to do it in the airport. Anyway, I just –

NAOMI. What are you on about?

MICK. Naomi Rachel Sheehan, will you marry me?

NAOMI. Ahhhhhghhhh!

MICK. Is that a yes?

NAOMI. Yes yes yes!

She rings her mum – who tries to act surprised.

Even though Tim 100 percent told her.

As for my family, they knew I was going to pop the question.

They've all been waiting outside my flat for hours!

The minute we text them they all come pouring in the back door, like a big ball of nosy, caring energy.

Ready to hear all the biz.

MUM. Mmmm hmmm, what's the news, what's the craic, how did it go?

My mum Pauline Campbell.

MUM. Let's see the ring. Let's see it. Let's see it. Mmmm hmmm.

MAURICE. Congratulations brother... That's very good news.

HANNAH. What do you mean I can't put it on instagram?! I've had the font picked for hours?!

My wee brother and sister, Maurice and Hannah. They couldn't be more different.

KATE. I'm just so happy for you both,

And my elder sister Kate. Who keeps staring at
us and crying.

KATE. I'm not crying!

She's umm... sensitive.

Ever since Dad died, when I was eight, it's always
just been the five of us.

But, now Naomi is joining the clan.

We were together in school.

Me and Naomi.

We split up when I go to England for university.

I tell people we drifted apart.

But really it's because a certain theatre director
made me shave my head for a student production
of *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*.

I don't blame Naomi.

I have a wild pointy skull.

But my hair grows back.

I move home to Belfast.

And Naomi and I get back together.

She's an architect.

Top of her class every year in uni.

Insanely driven.

She loves her work.

Loves building buildings.

She doesn't understand how people can't be good
at their job.

Because she's so good at hers.
Naomi, the love of my life, has said yes.
I'm going to be married to Naomi Campbell.
Except she's five foot nothing and incredibly pale.

*

So. There's a drug trial that could save my life.
But it doesn't start for six months.
In the meantime, I'm put on a myriad of pills.
Every morning, I take:

DOCTOR. Riluzole (for MND)

Apixiban (a blood thinner)

Carbosystene (a phlegm thinner)

Subutamol and Revlar inhalers (for the asthma)

And a Berocca (just to be safe).

Then at night, I take all those again, as well as:

DOCTOR. Melatonin and Zolpidem (for sleep)

Gabapentin (for restless legs)

Quinine (for cramps)

And a dram of whiskey – purely medicinal.

I need to remember not to take the evening tablets in the morning – I did that once – and was completely doped up all day.

“I’m fiiiine.”

But maybe I’m not fine?

THERAPIST. How does your diagnosis make you feel?

MICK. Um... Not great?

THERAPIST. But specifically? Are you angry?

MICK. Nah, I'm generally not angry at things. I'm a happy guy.

THERAPIST. Why do you feel the need to be happy?

MICK. Being happy is nice.

THERAPIST. But are you actually happy, or do you feel like you have to be happy to make other people happy in order for you to be happy?

MICK. Wha? I'm just happy.

THERAPIST. Why in God's name are you happy?! You have a terminal illness for fuck's sake!

I didn't go back to therapy.

I tell my mum.

MICK. I don't need therapy.

MUM. You're just right Michael. Therapy Shmerapy! Michael, I shouldn't say this – but... No no I'll not be saying that.

MICK. What? You can't do that. You have to say it now!

MUM. All I'm saying is... out of all my children I'm happy you got MND.

MICK. Jesus! What do you mean by that?

MUM. You know what I mean. I'm saying... the other three couldn't handle it. But you can.

MICK. You think?

MUM. Better than them other lot anyway! Mmmm hmmm.

I can handle it.

And I just need to wait for the trial to start!

But till then, I don't know how my body is going to react.

Will my symptoms get worse?

If there's anything I want to do... I need to do it now.

So – bucket list time!

Things I want to do...

Hmmm...

(Reading.)

'Run a marathon?' ...Wouldn't do that before I got MND, never mind after.

'Swim with dolphins' ...nah they're slippery rapists. Aquatic Conor McGregors.

'Go on a cruise?' ...I'm not from Ohio.

Who writes these lists?!

I have a friend, he's fond of the old (*mimes drinking*)... let's call him Arthur.

He suggests all our mates could move to Donegal and open a pub.

He says they could all chip in and get a pub mortgage.

I'm touched.

But I don't want to actually run a pub – that means I'd have to do all pub stuff like the barrels, the tubes, the debit card authorisations –

I just want to sit in a pub that's mine. With my mates. Is that too much to ask?

Sharing stories.

With a pint and a song.

Like Brendan Behan.