Acting Edition

HELLO CHARLIE

by Caoimhe Farren

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SAMUEL FRENCH

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ISBN 978-0-573-00140-6

concordtheatricals.co.uk
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NOTE

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

HELLO CHARLIE was originally produced by SkelpieLimmer Productions, Front & Centre, and An Grianán Theatre, in association with Pavilion Theatre, Fishamble: The New Play Company, and the Lyric Theatre Belfast, with support from Gallagher Films. It was first performed at the Pavilion Theatre on 16 September 2026, and subsequently transferred to the An Grianán Theatre on 25th September and to The Lyric, Belfast on 7th October as part of The Belfast International Arts Festival. The cast and creative team were as follows:

MAEVE MCGINTY ..... Caoimhe Farren
KATE MCGINTY ..... Clare Monnelly
FINN MCGINTY ..... Vincent Higgins
ALAN BEASLEY ..... Callum Payne

Writer ..... Caoimhe Farren
Directors ..... Seón Simpson & Gina Donnelly
Set Design ..... Sinéad Owens
Lighting Designer ..... Jonathan M Daley
Dramaturg ..... Karis Kelly
Company Stage Manager ..... Jonathan Rainey Reid
Intimacy Co-ordinator ..... Paula O'Reilly

SKELPIE LIMMER

SkelpieLimmer believes “serious theatre doesn’t have to feel serious”. Led by Gina Donnelly and Seón Simpson they are a creative duo committed to tackling social issues using comedy, with a priority placed on entertaining.

Their partnership debuted at Dublin Fringe 2019 with their show T*wo Fingers Up*. The show, called ‘a raucous and unapologetic celebration of female friendship and female sexuality’ by The Irish Times, focused on the silence around female masturbation and called for a full reform of the Northern Ireland sex education system. *Two Fingers Up* went on to win the Abbey Theatre and Dublin Fringe Creative Thinking Award, The Summerhall Lustrum award for unforgettable theatre, the Melbourne Fringe tour ready award, and was nominated for the Fishamble New Play Award.

In 2023 SkelpieLimmer produced the award-winning *Scaredy Fat* by Colm McCready, which went on to win a Pleasance National Partnership Award with Les Enfants Terribles in London. *Scaredy Fat* had a month long run at Edinburgh Fringe 2023 which was met with a host of 4-star reviews and a run at the Dublin Fringe Festival 2023, where it was the most nominated show of the year, including awards for ‘Best Performer’ and ‘Radical Spirit’. In 2024, SkelpieLimmer continued their commitment to Colm McCready’s career development by producing his work *Shame Show* written alongside Fergus Wachala-Kelly. *Shame Show* won the First Fortnight Award at Dublin Fringe 2024, and then went on to a successful run at Edinburgh Fringe 2025, including sold out shows and multiple 4 and 5 star reviews.

2024 saw SkelpieLimmer enter their first co-production with Brassneck Theatre Company on *Anthem For Dissatisfaction* by Gina Donnelly. *Anthem For Dissatisfaction* went on to win the Solas Nua New Voices Award at Dublin Fringe 2024, The Bragi Award at Edinburgh Fringe 2025 and received multiple 5-star reviews during a sold out run at Summerhall.

In 2025 they premiered Seón Simpson’s *On A Tangent* at Dublin Fringe; a meta examination of artists relying on their own trauma for content using theatre, stand up and poetry. The show went on to receive a 4-star review from The Irish Times and a run at the Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival in Belfast.

As well as *Hello Charlie*, SkelpieLimmer are currently associate producers on Carley Magee’s *Growing Pains* which premieres in the Derry Playhouse late august, following a short tour to the Dublin Fringe Festival and The MAC Belfast.



Front & Centre is a collective of artists, academics and policymakers working in the arts across the island of Ireland, dedicated to advancing and championing women and non-binary playwrights from the North. The collective launched its inaugural Front & Centre Festival in 2025 with a three-day playwriting symposium in partnership with Queen's University Belfast. Bringing together performances, panel discussions, workshops and scratch presentations, the festival created a vital platform for ambitious new writing and critical conversation. Our staged readings showcased works which had won or been shortlisted for prestigious playwriting awards, but had not yet secured programming on the island of Ireland. One of those plays was *Hello Charlie*. Following a sold-out and critically acclaimed staged reading at the festival, the play generated significant industry interest, leading to the formation of a group of co-producers committed to bringing the play to the stage. For 2026, our festival travelled to the North West over International Women's Day, to highlight the work of Derry playwrights in collaboration with The Playhouse, Derry~Londonderry. *Hello Charlie* is Front & Centre's inaugural production, tangible proof of the collective's mission in action: identifying outstanding new writing, creating opportunities for artists, and transforming recognition into production.

Founding members: Karis Kelly, Olwen Dawe, Ciara McAllister, Trish McTighe, Caoileann Curry-Thompson, and Alice Malseed.

AN GRIANÁN THEATRE

Located in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, An Grianán Theatre is at the heart of the county's vibrant cultural life and a flagship arts venue in the Northwest of Ireland. Since opening its doors in October 1999, the theatre has built a strong reputation for artistic excellence and community engagement.

An Grianán presents an ambitious and diverse programme spanning drama, comedy, music, dance, family entertainment and much more. Our programme brings the very best of local, national and international work to the Northwest, while creating opportunities for audiences to discover new artists, new ideas and new experiences.

Our work extends well beyond the mainstage. We run a vibrant programme of community and outreach initiatives throughout the year, including our Youth Theatre, which provides weekly classes and creative opportunities for children and young people during the school year. We also take theatre into communities across the county through workshops, performances and collaborative projects, working with artists including Paul Curley and creating opportunities for people of all ages to engage with the arts.

As a producing company, An Grianán has developed and staged ambitious full-scale productions of work by some of Ireland's most celebrated playwrights, including Brian Friel, Martin McDonagh and John B. Keane. Our producing partnerships have included Pavilion Theatre, Civic Theatre and The Lyric, Belfast. On a more intimate scale, we produced work by theatre practitioners from the region, including Little John Nee, Joe Brennan, Maggie Hannon, Louise Conaghan, Kieran Kelly and Frankie McCafferty. We have also delivered several ambitious community arts projects giving local amateur and semi-professional performers the opportunity to work alongside theatre professionals. These have included projects by writer Guy LeJeune that celebrate the local history and heritage of Donegal and our experience of living on the border with Northern Ireland.

Our Acorns Bursary Awards provide emerging artists with bursaries of €1,000 or €2,000 alongside rehearsal space, creative mentoring and tailored development support from our Artist-in-Residence, Ultan Pringle, and the wider An Grianán team. The programme is designed not simply to fund new ideas, but to give artists the time, space, guidance and practical support they need to take those ideas to the next stage.

The impact of this approach can already be seen in the work of our Acorns recipients. In 2026, we worked with Acorns recipient Gráinne Curistan to develop her play Saving for a Helicopter from an early-stage idea into a full production. The show premiered at An Grianán in June before transferring to Dublin Fringe Festival in September.

Our commitment to collaboration extends beyond Donegal. As an active member of the NASC and NOMAD theatre networks, we work alongside regional venues across Ireland to champion high-quality touring productions and strengthen connections between artists, venues and audiences.

At its core, An Grianán Theatre is more than a place to see a show. It is a place where artists create, communities connect, young people find their voice and new ideas are given room to grow. For more than 25 years, we have been bringing exceptional work to the Northwest while investing in the people and creativity that will shape its cultural future.

PAVILION THEATRE

For more than 100 years, **Pavilion Theatre** has been an iconic marker on the landscape of Dún Laoghaire, beloved and frequented by local and visiting patrons. As a leading theatre and creative hub for the performing arts, the venue presents on average 360 events per year. We offer a carefully curated, diverse, multi-disciplinary programme of national and international performances spanning theatre, music, dance, comedy, literature, family events and cinema.

Pavilion Theatre is a critical part of the regional arts infrastructure. We provide opportunities for artists to develop their practice and to perform on our stage. We also aim to maximise audience potential with sizeable financial returns for companies, producers and artists.

Embedded in our artistic policy is a commitment to supporting and showing work of quality across a wide range of performance and related disciplines. It reflects a dual focus: the public/audience and the artist/maker. Attracting audiences through the presentation of work that challenges the range of their experience is accompanied by a strong emphasis on creating a supportive environment for artists - one that respects and rewards their work, and invests in the development and creation of new work via bursaries, residencies, co-commissioning and co-production. Our artist development programme is artist-led and is grounded in a participatory decision-making process.

First launched in 2015, our Patron Donation Award is a performance-based award to co-commission and co-produce ambitious main stage works by established artists and organisations. In 2025, there were 10 awardees, working across theatre, music and dance in all four provinces. Made possible by the generous contributions of Pavilion Theatre's loyal patrons, €140,000 in total was allocated to support these projects, including *The House Must Win* by Mick Flannery, *NUALA* by Hugo Hamilton, Dún Laoghaire Folk Festival and *Hello Charlie* by Caoimhe Farren.

We also administer the Pavilion Pulse Award to support artists across Ireland with grants of between €1,500 and €5,000 to create and develop ambitious projects. In the first year, there were 30 awardees, working in theatre, music, dance, live podcasting, family and multidisciplinary work, based across all four provinces. With the kind support of the Arts Council, in 2026 a total of €50,000 in funding will be awarded to 15 artists, who will also join our Pulse community with access to in-kind supports and informal networking events.



Fishamble: The New Play Company is an Irish theatre company that discovers, develops, and produces new plays of national importance with a global reach. It has toured its productions to audiences throughout Ireland, and to twenty-three other countries. It champions the role of the playwright, typically supporting over fifty percent of the writers of all new plays produced on the island of Ireland each year. It has a number of award-winning outreach and education initiatives which it runs with partners in Dublin and elsewhere. Fishamble: The New Play Company has received many awards in Ireland and internationally, including an Olivier Award.

'excellent Fishamble… Ireland's terrific Fishamble' – *The Guardian*

'Ireland's leading new writing company… innovative Irish theatre company' – *The Stage*

'the much-loved Fishamble [is] a global brand with international theatrical presence…an unswerving force for new writing' – *The Irish Times*

'the respected Dublin company… forward-thinking Fishamble' – *The New York Times*

'when Fishamble is [in New York], you've got to go' – *Time Out New York*

'that great Irish new writing company, Fishamble' – Lyn Gardner, *Stage Door*

'the superb Irish company… legendary Irish company Fishamble' – *The Scotsman*

'Fishamble puts electricity into the National grid of dreams' – Sebastian Barry

Fishamble Staff: Jim Culleton (Artistic Director & CEO), Eva Scanlan (Executive Director), Gavin Kostick (Literary Manager), Laura MacNaughton (Producer), Sarah Bragg-Bolger (General Manager), Allie Whelan (Marketing, Outreach, and Engagement Manager), Evie McGuinness (Assistant Producer), Róisín Daly (Literary Assistant)

Fishamble Board: John McGrane, Ronan Nulty, John O'Donnell, Siobhan O'Leary (Chair), Colleen Savage, Christine Sisk, John Tierney, and Denise Walshe (Vice Chair)

Former Chairs of Fishamble: Eoin Kennelly, Andrew Parkes (Honorary Life Member), Doireann Ní Bhriain

Fishamble is funded by the Arts Council, Dublin City Council, and Culture Ireland.



As Northern Ireland's premier full-time theatre, producing its own productions from page to stage, the **Lyric Theatre Belfast** is at the heart of Northern Ireland's cultural landscape. A shared civic space for artists and audiences alike, the Lyric is a creative hub for theatre-making, nurturing talent and promoting the critical role of the arts in society. From its beginnings in 1951 in the home of our founder Mary O'Malley, to its permanent home on Ridgeway Street, this special place has been a springboard for internationally acclaimed playwrights, poets and actors including Liam Neeson, Anthony Boyle, Tara-Lynne O'Neill, David Ireland, Zara Devlin, Marie Jones and Ciarán Hinds. For seventy-five years we have been changing lives through the transformative power of live theatre, our award-winning actor training programme, Lyric Drama Studio, and our commitment to creativity and cultural talent. The Lyric also plays a key role in bringing together all communities in Northern Ireland. A meeting place for dialogue, the Lyric was the place chosen for an iconic moment of the peace process: the handshake between Queen Elizabeth and Martin McGuinness in 2012.

With a longstanding reputation for staging and promoting original plays, the Lyric is the home of new writing in Northern Ireland, most recently Meghan Tyler's *Crocodile Fever*, Erica Murray's *All Mod Cons*, Owen McCafferty's *Agreement*, Clare McMahon's *The Gap Year*, and John Morton's *Denouement*.

GALLAGHER ▸ FILMS

Gallagher Films is an independent film and television production company based in Belfast, founded by Louise Gallagher.

Major recent Gallagher Films projects include BAFTA and IFTA award-winning 'Blue Lights', a BBC drama series set against the backdrop of policing in Northern Ireland, on which Louise is Co-Creator / Executive Producer. IFTA award winning short film *ROUGH* and an RTS award for short film *SPINSTER*. In 2025, Louise was the recipient of the Brian Waddell RTS NI Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Industry.

Gallagher Films first feature film, *A Bump Along The Way*, had a successful cinema release and won several awards at home and internationally. Written by Tess McGowan, directed by Shelly Love and produced by Louise, it starred Bronagh Gallagher and Lola Petticrew. *A Bump Along the Way* was developed with the assistance of Northern Ireland Screen through their

New Talent Writers and New Talent Focus programmes. It was further supported by Yellowmoon Post Production and Roma Downey.

Louise has been working in the media industry for 30+ years, with twenty-three of those years spent at the BBC in Belfast in various production roles across Radio, TV and Online services. In 2011 she flew the BBC nest and moved into the independent film and TV sector, working on independent shorts and features, before founding Gallagher Films in 2018.

In the period between working as a BBC staffer and founding Gallagher Films, Louise was a freelance Production Manager, Line Producer and Producer on short films, feature films, children's TV drama, commercials and live television for clients such as Nickelodeon, BBC, RTE, TG4, Netflix, Radio 4 and The Guardian.

As well as leading Gallagher Films, Louise joined Hat Trick Productions at the start of 2020 to run their most westerly outpost in Belfast, seeking out new and exciting projects from across Ireland.

CAST

CAOIMHE FARREN | Maeve McGinty and Writer

Caoimhe Farren is an actress and writer from Derry. She trained at The Academy of Live and Recorded Arts (ALRA) in London. As an actress, she has worked extensively in theatre, including: *Consumed* (Paines Plough); *Yerma* (Tinderbox); *This Sh*t Happens all the Time* (Lyric Theatre); *Scenes from an Inquiry* (The Playhouse, Derry); *Chemistry* (The Finborough Theatre, London); *The Ferryman* (Gielgud Theatre, London).

Television credits include: *Blue Lights*, *The Woman in the Wall*, *Willow*, *This Way Up*, *Hope Street*, and *Doctors*.

Caoimhe is best known for playing Janet Taylor in the second series of *Derry Girls* and DS Sorcha Conlon in *Crá*.

Hello Charlie is Caoimhe's debut play. Developed as part of the Lyric Belfast's New Playwrights Programme, then co-ordinated by Rebecca Mairs. It was a finalist for the inaugural Victoria Wood Playwriting Prize for Comedy, shortlisted for the Women's Prize for Playwriting, and in the top one percent of the BBC Writers Open Call. Caoimhe is currently in the development stages of a project with Fine Point Films (*Kneecap*, *Saipan*).

CLARE MONNELLY | Kate McGinty

Clare Monnelly is an actor, writer and director from Dublin. As an actor, Clare has worked with Druid, the Abbey, the Gate, Livin' Dred and many more. She has been nominated for three Irish Times Theatre Awards – for her debut play *Charlie's a Clepto* and *Livin' Dred's Bailegangaire*. On screen she has worked with Deadpan Pictures, RTÉ, Sky One and TG4 among others. She recently reprised the role of Anita Fallon in Series 2 of *The Gone* for Keeper Pictures and Kingfisher Films. She plays the lead role of Shoo in Aislinn Clarke's Irish language horror film *Fréwaka*. She is best known for her roles of Mary in *Nowhere Fast* and Fidelma in *Moone Boy*.

VINCENT HIGGINS | Finn McGinty

Vincent Higgins is an actor and writer from Co Antrim. His previous performances include *The Tunnel* (Brassneck Theatre); *Suspect Device*, *Green & Blue*, *Those You Pass On The Street*, *Inventors*, *1 in 5*, *Titans*, *Reunion*, *Carnival* and *Two Roads West* (Kabosh); *Juno and The Paycock*, *John Bull's Other Island*, *Conversations on a Homecoming*, *Animal Farm*, *Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme* and *After Easter* (Lyric Theatre); *Hamlet* (Abbey/Lyric co-production); *Shibboleth*, *The Freedom of the City* and *As the Beast Sleeps* (Abbey Theatre); *All that Fall* (Unreal Cities, Liverpool & Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris); *Ohio Impromtu* (Happy Days International Beckett Festival, Enniskillen and Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris); *Lally the Scut* and *Convictions* (Tinderbox); *Lish and Jerry* at the Shrine (Windsor Park and Stormont); *Hold Your Tongue*, *Hold Your Dead* (Global Arts Corps, Boston); *Binlids*, *Working Class Heroes* and *A Cold House* (Dubbeljoint); *The Crock of Gold* (Storytellers); *The Scarlet Web*, *Bog People*, *Cuchulain* and *To Hell with Faust* (Big Telly). Vincent's film and television credits include: *Blue Lights* (Two Cities/Gallagher Films); *Go Ye Afar* (Frank Sweeney); *No Ordinary Heist* (Picture Locked Productions); *C'est Moi Dans la Poubelle* (Armchair and Rocket); *Life after Life* and *Lá Choronaithe* (BBC NI); *Soldier* (Underdog Media); *Family Fortunes – De Valera's Irish Press* (Mint Productions); *Trespasses* (NI Screen); *Eoin O'Duffy – the making of a Fascist* and *Eoin MacNeill – the forgotten man of 1916* (Doubleband Films). Vincent is also a renowned playwright with multiple stage and radio credits.

CALLUM PAYNE | Alan Beasley

Callum Payne is an actor originally from Whiston, Merseyside however has been based in Ireland for almost two decades. He trained at Queen's University Belfast and Lyric Drama Studio and is represented by Nova Artists. His theatre credits include work with Lyric Theatre Belfast, Playhouse Derry, Interacting Theatre, SkelpieLimmer, Dark Forest Theatre, Belfast Playwrights and Patchwork Productions, alongside screen work with the BBC, CBBC, BFI and ITV. Recent credits include Dark Forest Theatre's *Alice in Wonderland* at the Grand Opera House Belfast and the upcoming ITV show *First Woman*.

CREATIVE

GINA DONNELLY | Director

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 was the recipient of the Solas Nua New Voices Award at Dublin Fringe 2024 for her play *Anthem For Dissatisfaction*, which she directed alongside Tony Devlin. *Anthem For Dissatisfaction* also won the Summerhall Bragi Award at Edinburgh Fringe after a sell out run, toured to Brussels in February 2026 and can be seen on tour around the UK at the end of 2026. 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). Her other directing credits include *Two Fingers Up* and a role as Assistant Director on the Paines Plough Women's Prize for Playwriting Winner *Consumed* by Karis Kelly. In 2026 SkelpieLimmer Productions partnered with Front & Centre, An Grianán Letterkenny, Fishamble: The New Play Company, Lyric Theatre Belfast and the Pavilion Theatre to produce *Hello Charlie* by Caoimhe Farren. Gina will direct *Hello Charlie* alongside long term creative partner Seón Simpson. Gina 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* by Colm McCready and Fergus Wachala-Kelly and Edinburgh Fringe hits *Good With Faces* by Oisín Kearney and *Brainsluts* by Dan Bishop.

SEÓN SIMPSON | Director

Seón Simpson is a multi-award-winning writer/director for theatre and one half of creative partnership SkelpieLimmer. Seón has worked in assisting roles on projects such as David Ireland's *Sadie* (Lyric theatre/ BBC arts) and *SPUD!* (Lyric Theatre) Dir. Conleth Hill; *Removed* (Brian Friel Theatre) Dir. Emma Jordan, and *Ubu The King* (The MAC) Dir. Patrick J O'Reilly. Her Directing credits through SkelpieLimmerinclude: *Two Fingers Up*, *Scaredy Fat* and *Shame Show* which all had successful Edinburgh Fringe runs following international touring to Australia, Sweden, UK and Ireland, Carley Magee's *Growing Pains*, and the awaited SkelpieLimmer premiere of Caoimhe Farren's award winning play *Hello Charlie*. She was the recipient of the Brian Friel Medal (2017) and the James Ellis Bursary for Directing (2018), and was a MAC Hatch artist (2020). She was awarded the Dublin Fringe Festival, Irish Theatre Institute and Fishamble Duets programme (2021) under which she Co-wrote and directed Heave: a theatre/film hybrid. *Two Fingers Up*, won the Lustrum award (Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2022), the Abbey Theatre and Dublin Fringe Festival's Creative Thinking Award (2019), and was shortlisted for Fishamble New Writing Award (2019). She was selected for the MAKE residency (2022), INVEST programme and GAP DAY 2023, and C21's dramaturgy bursary 2024. She was awarded best

newcomer at the pavilion comedy club and has performed across Belfast and Edinburgh. Recently, Seón was selected as part of the inaugural Amplify XR bursary to develop her theatre skills for creating XR content.

JONATHAN M DALEY | Lighting Designer

Jonathan is a writer and lighting designer based in Belfast. Jonathan is a writer for stage and screen. His stage work has been performed all over the UK and Ireland.

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

Jonathan has just finished the Channel 4 New Writers' Scheme, and is developing his debut TV series. Jonathan is also an accomplished lighting designer for theatre & dance.

Recent lighting design credits include: *My Right Foot* (Oisín Kearney/ Michael Patrick), *The Arcadia* (Steven Millar & Amadan Ensemble), *ShedMan* (Keith Singleton), *Good With Faces* (Oisín Kearney), *Dressed For Space* (Patrick J O'Reilly), *The Velveteen 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 Growed 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: *Hello Charlie* (Skelpie Limmer Productions), *Body Count* (Replay Theatre Company), *Goldilocks & The Three Bears* (The MAC, Belfast)

SINÉAD OWENS | Set & Costume Design

Sinéad is a highly sought after and accomplished Production Manager, Stage Manager and Theatre Maker with nearly a decade of professional experience in the theatre industry.

She has worked extensively across Ireland and the UK, with productions staged internationally including North and South of Ireland, London, Oxford, Edinburgh, Auckland, Marseille, San Francisco and New York. An Associate Artist with Big Telly Theatre Company and a 2023/24 Arts Council ACES Awardee, her "truly magic" technical work has earned global recognition, including an award for "most innovative use of technology" and praise in the New York Times. She is passionate about creating ambitious, technically excellent theatre that reaches wide and diverse audiences. This is Sinéad's first experience as a set designer and she cannot wait for you all to see and enjoy *Hello Charlie*.

KARIS KELLY | Dramaturg

Karis Kelly is a playwright and Dramaturg. Karis won the Women's Prize for Playwriting 2021 for their pitch black comedy *Consumed*. Karis was selected for the 2022 Playwright's Scheme Bursary run by the Peggy Ramsay Foundation with Film4 and the Maria Bjornson Memorial Fund, developing a new play with the Lyric, Belfast, as their writer-in-residence. In 2024 Karis was selected for the inaugural UK Women In Theatre Lab, and was recently a member of Theatre and Dance Northern Ireland's INVEST programme. They are currently a writer on attachment at the National Theatre Studio.

Karis facilitates Fighting Words' Young Playwrights Programme and Papatango's GoWrite Programme. In 2025, Karis was one of the founding members of Front & Centre – a collective dedicated to the advancement of women and non-binary playwrights in Northern Ireland, addressing the critical lack of programming of women's new writing. In 2026 they were awarded the Olwen Wymark Theatre Encouragement Award for their work in mentoring, encouraging and developing new writing.

JONATHAN RAINEY REID | Company Stage Manager

Jonathan Rainey Reid is an Irish theatre maker specialising in new work and music theatre. Credits include: *We Do It For Love* (Lyric Theatre/ Ulster Orchestra); *Group!*, *Dublin Jack*, *The Necklace*, *The Doppler Effect*, *Riot Symphony* (with Ulster Orchestra); *The Headless Soldier* (all The Belfast Ensemble); *Snow White* (Brassneck Theatre Company); *Get Wed* (Harrogate Theatre); *Sherlock Holmes* and *The Sign of The Four*, *The Book of Eternity*, *Maria de Buenos Aires*, *Frida* (all Northern Opera Group); *Tinsel*, *The Not So Big Bad Wolf* and *The Not So Grimm Twins* (all Wrongsemble). He has trained with the Emma Rice Company, Opera North, the National Theatre of Great Britain and The Actor's Workshop in Florida.

PAULA O'REILLY | Intimacy Co-ordinator

Paula O' Reilly is a Belfast-based Choreographer, Movement Director, Intimacy Director and Intimacy Coordinator with a rich body of work that spans across Theatre, Opera, Musicals, Pantomime, TV and Film.

Using her knowledge of both classical and contemporary dance styles, she fuses physical storytelling with inventive choreography, creating visceral and captivating experiences on stage and screen. Over her years of collaborating with leading directors, performers and creatives, Paula has shaped the movement for many productions, including; Irish National Opera's *L'elisir d'amore* (The Gaiety Theatre); *Tartuffe* and *Somewhere Out There You* (The Abbey Theatre); *My Right Foot* (Dublin Theatre Festival, The Lyric Belfast); *The Snapper*, *The Pillowman*, *A Christmas Carol* and *An Ideal Husband* (The Gate Theatre); *The Adventures of Red Riding Hood* (The MAC); Malaprop's *HotHouse* (The Project and IAC NYC); *Lie Low* (The Royal Court); *Hansel & Gretel*, *Our New Girl*, *Little Women* and *Steel Magnolias* (The Lyric Belfast) to mention just a few.

TV/Film credits include: *Trespasses* (Wildgaze Films and Channel 4), *Here Before* (Rooks Nest, BBC Film, Pia Pressure NI Screen, Bank Side Films); *Postpartum* (NI Screen and Poli Productions, Consent – Sansalience, QUB, Three Wishes); *Escape Routes* (Beyond Visible Films, NI Screen.)

CHARACTERS

MAEVE MCGINTY – Thirty-nine – Irish
KATE MCGINTY – Forty-two – Irish
ALAN BEASLEY – Twenty-three – English
FINN MCGINTY – Sixty-two – Irish

SETTING

A one-bedroom flat in Southwest London.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

(/) indicates an interruption by the next character.

(–) at the beginning of a character's line, indicates continuous speech from their previous line.

For Mammy, Daddy, Rory, Ashling & Larry.

ACT ONE

(Music plays. A sitting room. Bottles of beer and crusty plates are dotted around the room, some used as ashtrays. There is a heaped duvet on the couch. A dim lamp stands in the corner.)

*(***MAEVE** *appears in the doorway; vape in one hand, phone in the other, headphones on. She takes a bottle of beer out of a plastic bag on the floor, opens the bottle with her teeth. She swigs from the bottle as she dances to the music playing through her headphones She vapes.)*

*(***ALAN** *enters through the unlocked door. Eyes closed, engrossed in the music,* **MAEVE** *doesn't see him. He approaches slowly, grabbing her roughly by the shoulders.)*

MAEVE. Jesus!

*(***ALAN** *pushes her onto the sofa, the music stops as her headphones fall off.)*

Oh my God.

ALAN. Shut up.

MAEVE. Please –

ALAN. I said shut up.

(He climbs on top of her.)

MAEVE. No, no, no. God, no.

(He grabs her by the throat.)

No, no, please – you're hurting me.

ALAN. Oh – I'm so sorry. Are you okay?

(Pause.)

MAEVE. Aw for fuck's sake. Why'd ye stop?

ALAN. I thought I was hurting you.

MAEVE. Did you hear me say it?

ALAN. What?

MAEVE. *Glockenspiel.*

ALAN. No.

MAEVE. Naw. What's the point in having a safe word if you're just gonny stop when I say no?

ALAN. You were so convincing.

MAEVE. Three years at drama school not a total waste then. Right. Go out and come in again.

ALAN. Do I have to?

MAEVE. Aye.

ALAN. Yes?

MAEVE. What?

ALAN. *You* what?

MAEVE. Eh?

ALAN. You were about to say something.

MAEVE. When?

ALAN. Just now. You said *I* and then stopped.

MAEVE. I didn't say *I*, I said *aye.*

ALAN. Sorry?

MAEVE. Wise up. You've known me long enough to know *aye* means *yes.*

ALAN. Sometimes it means *I.*

MAEVE. You're just stalling now.

ALAN. Sorry. I'm nervous.

*(***ALAN** *starts to tidy up.)*

MAEVE. No, no, no. Stop with the anxious cleaning. Look at me, there's nothing to be nervous about, okay?

ALAN. Okay.

MAEVE. Okay… Out. And 'member what we talked about? One: Think about your motivation. What does he want? What does he need? Two: Urgency – her husband could be back any minute – in and out. So to speak. Three: Come up with a strong opening line. Mean it. But also – just throw it away, y'know? Be aggressive. But make it natural. Don't be nervous. And most importantly – don't overthink it.

*(***ALAN** *stares blankly at* **MAEVE** *before exiting reluctantly.* **MAEVE** *potters:)*

Do, do-do, do-do. Hmm, hm-hm…

*(***ALAN** *charges into the room.)*

ALAN. GET YOUR FUCKING KNICKERS OFF BITCH.

*(***MAEVE** *laughs.)*

I'm serious – Get your – filthy knickers off, bitch… Hey! Are you deaf? I said / get your –

MAEVE. Aw naw – naw, naw – don't say it again!

ALAN. Please stop laughing.

MAEVE. I'm sorry – oh God – I cannae breathe – that was – such a belter line –

ALAN. I thought it was / – you said –

MAEVE. You're the attacker! At least have the courtesy to get them off yourself!

*(***MAEVE** *continues laughing.* **ALAN** *stares at the ground. Pause.)*

Aw come on. Lighten up for fuck's sake.

ALAN. It's not that. I don't want to hurt you.

MAEVE. That's why we have the safe word!

ALAN. This isn't me.

MAEVE. Exactly! You're pretending to be someone else. For fun! Where's the mask I told you to bring? That'll help. And maybe some sort of weapon?

ALAN. What? No. I don't want to do that.

MAEVE. But this is what I want. We do things you want all the time.

ALAN. Like what?

MAEVE. Jesus – all the black and white films we've watched these last couple of months? I feel like I'm going colour blind!

ALAN. But you like old movies.

MAEVE. …Aye, aye.

ALAN. That's how we met. It's our thing.

MAEVE. Aye, naw, ano.

ALAN. Sorry?

MAEVE. *Yes – I* know…wanna drink?

ALAN. No.

MAEVE. Suit yourself.

ALAN. It's a bit early isn't it?

(Pause.)

MAEVE. Okay. Off ye fuck.

ALAN. I didn't mean –

MAEVE. The whole point of this is the element of surprise. Come back another time.

ALAN. When?

MAEVE. *Surprise.*

ALAN. I could stay. We could put a film on?

MAEVE. No.

ALAN. Or we could just talk.

MAEVE. I don't want to talk.

ALAN. What if I took you out for dinner?

MAEVE. No. I… Listen, Al –

ALAN. Alan.

MAEVE. Just go home. Your mammy'll be wondering where you are… I didn't mean that. I'm tired. I think I need to be on me own.

ALAN. Okay… The lock on your door / is –

MAEVE. I know.

ALAN. I could fix it.

MAEVE. Naw.

(Pause. **ALAN** *opens the door.)*

MAEVE. Alan?

ALAN. Yes?

MAEVE. Don't forget the mask next time.

ALAN. ...Okay.

(He leaves. **MAEVE** *shuts the door behind him, it doesn't close properly. She downs her beer. She goes to the sofa, puts her hand down the side and pulls out a full, unopened bottle of whiskey. She opens it, closes it and puts it back in its hiding place. She lifts her phone, puts her headphones back on. Music plays. It cuts out abruptly as her phone rings. She looks at the screen, hangs up. She sways along to the music. Music cuts out a second time as her phone rings again.)*

MAEVE. Aw fuck off would ye?

(She hangs up and the song continues. She begins rummaging around the room. She finds a box of menthol cigarettes...)

Aha!

(It's empty.)

Bastard.

(She crumples the box. She knocks back a large gulp of beer. **KATE** *appears in the doorway.)*

KATE. Maeve. Maeve. *Maeve.*

*(***KATE** *approaches, placing a hand on* **MAEVE***'s shoulder.)*

MAEVE. Jesus! Not now for fuck sake!

(She turns to see **KATE**.*)*

AAA / AHHHH!!!!

KATE. AAAAHHHH!

MAEVE. / Fuckin hell, it's you!

KATE. Jesus Christ!

MAEVE. Why are ye sneaking up on me like that ya creep? / Jesus, me heart.

KATE. I called your name three times!

MAEVE. What?!

*(**KATE** pulls Maeve's headphones off...)*

Ow.

KATE. You expecting someone?

MAEVE. Naw.

KATE. Who'd you think I was?

MAEVE. No one.

KATE. Why ye being weird?

MAEVE. You're weird.

*(**KATE** looks around the unkempt room.)*

KATE. Charlie's still hanging around?

MAEVE. Charlie? He comes and goes I suppose.

KATE. State of the place, Maeve.

MAEVE. It's not that bad.

KATE. Your lock is busted. Safety first as always I see.

MAEVE. Cunty first as always I see.

(Pause.)

KATE. Well. Gimme a hug, ya tit.

(They hug.)

Jesus Christ wee girl you stink.

*(**KATE** tries to pull away but **MAEVE** tightens her grip. They are almost nose to nose.)*

KATE. Get off!

*(**MAEVE** opens her mouth and breathes heavily into **KATE**'s face.)*

Your breath is hoaching!

MAEVE. Oh dear.

KATE. What?

MAEVE. I think your Botox is wearing off, love.

KATE. I don't get Botox, dickhead.

MAEVE. Yet.

*(**MAEVE** goes to the couch and begins rummaging down behind the cushions.)*

Must be hard – getting aul.

KATE. I'm only two years older than you asshole.

MAEVE. Three.

KATE. Two and a half.

*(**MAEVE** finds something disgusting, throws it behind the sofa. She wipes her hand on a cushion and continues rummaging. **KATE** inspects the lock on the door.)*

Lose your keys and have to break in again? How many times is that now...five? Six?

MAEVE. *(Mimicking her.) How many times in that now, five, six?*

KATE. I could've been anyone.

MAEVE. But you're not.

KATE. But I could've been.

MAEVE. But you're not.

KATE. But I could've been.

MAEVE. But you're not.

KATE. But I…what the fuck are you doing?

*(**MAEVE** is now almost elbow deep in the couch. She pulls her hand out revealing another box of menthol cigarettes.)*

MAEVE. YES. You wee dancer.

(She opens it. It's empty.)

Ahh mother-fucking-fucker!

KATE. I thought you were vaping now?

MAEVE. I am.

KATE. But you're back on the fags as well?

MAEVE. Naw.

KATE. Then what's that?

MAEVE. They're menthol.

KATE. You hate menthol fags.

MAEVE. Exactly.

KATE. Wha–?

MAEVE. I don't enjoy them so I'm not smoking. Well, not *smoking* smoking.

KATE. That makes no sense.

MAEVE. Makes sense to me.

KATE. Your head is up your hole so that doesn't count.

Are you sleeping in here?

MAEVE. Sometimes.

KATE. A duvet without a cover?

MAEVE. It's machine washable.

KATE. Have ye ever washed it?

MAEVE. Kate, Kate, ssh ssh shh… Gone stop acting busy for two minutes. Sit down and have a drink wi' me.

KATE. Naw you're alright. Haven't had me tetanus booster.

MAEVE. Alright, your Highness… We could head over to The Ramble for one.

KATE. Aren't you barred?

MAEVE. Half-barred.

KATE. That's not a thing.

MAEVE. I'm only barred when Aine's working. Witch. Gary says I'm more than welcome any other time.

KATE. Course he did. He knows how much you put behind the bar. And she's not a witch, Maeve. It was after last orders and you threw a fit when she wouldn't serve ye.

MAEVE. I didn't throw a fit. I threw a beer mat. Not a glass or a stool. A fucking beer mat.

KATE. It hit her in the eye.

MAEVE. I didn't mean to hit her in the eye. That was pure luck……Right. Sack The Ramble then. I've enough in anyway. Beer?

KATE. No!

MAEVE. Something stronger? Good girl.

KATE. Put the kettle on.

MAEVE. Sake.

*(***MAEVE** *exits to the kitchen, leaving a cloud of vape behind her.* **KATE** *takes a folded letter from her pocket. She looks towards the kitchen.)*

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