

"For the theatre one needs long arms...an artiste with short arms can never make a fine gesture." SARAH BERNHARDT

Little John Nee

theatre residency

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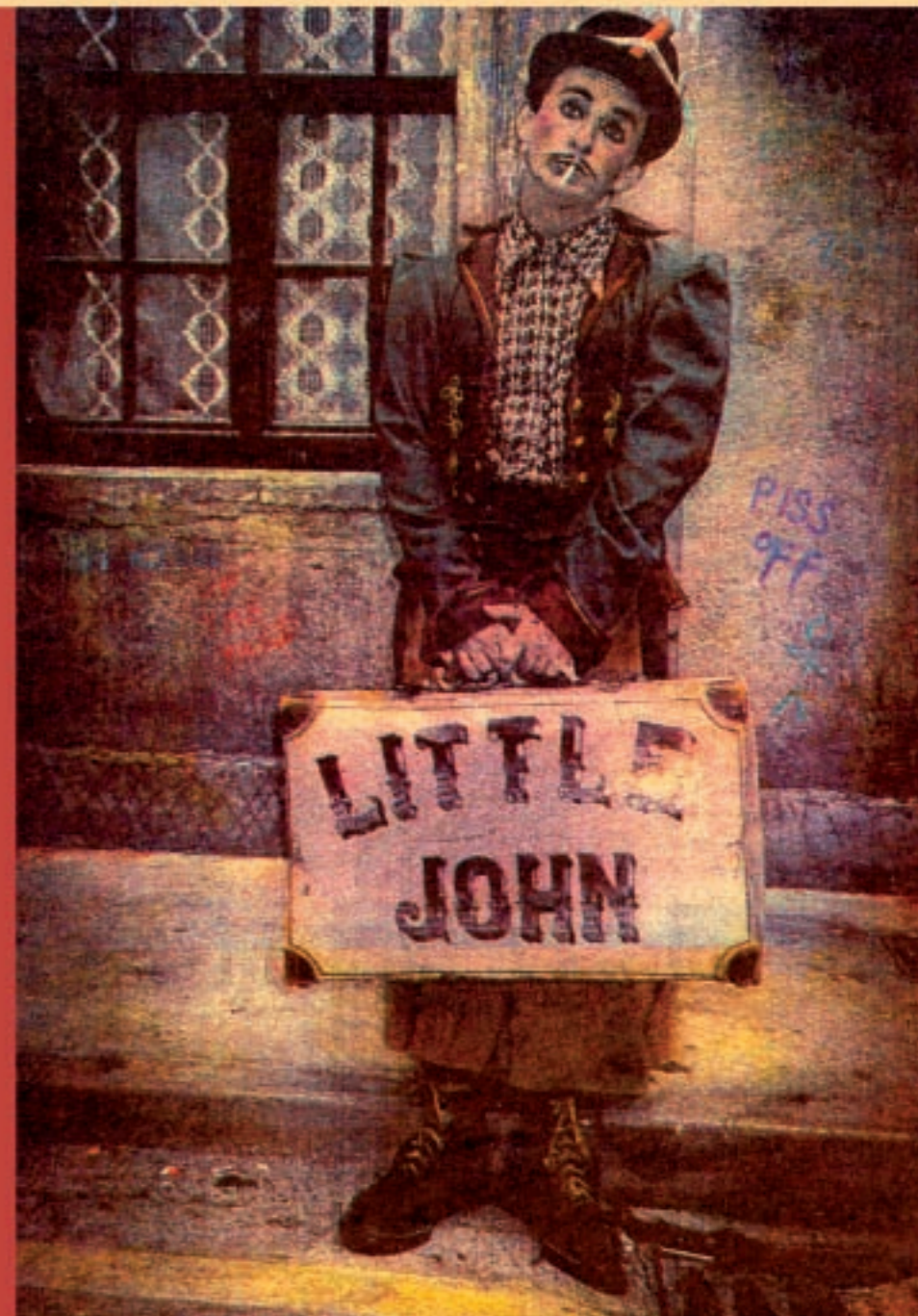
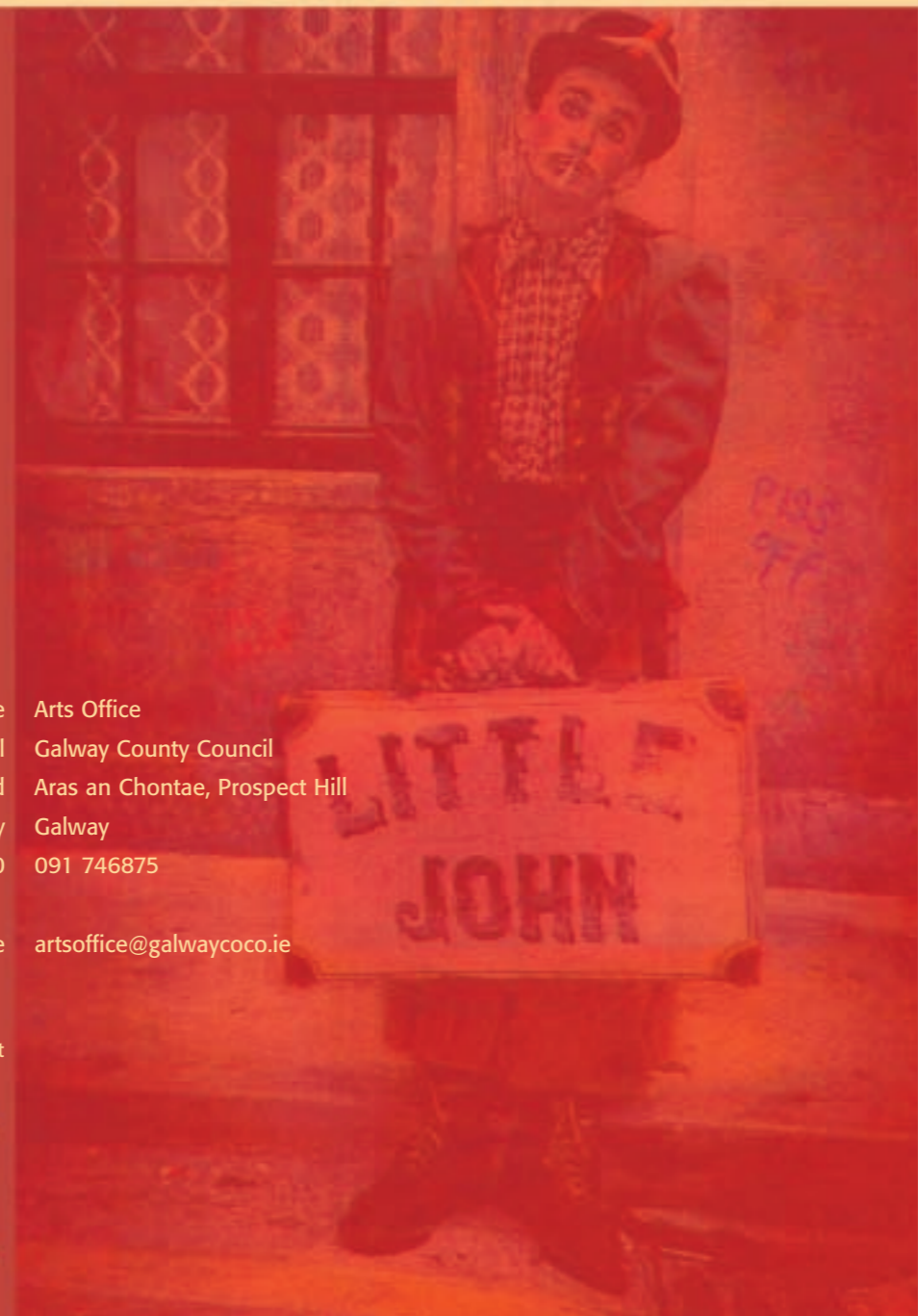
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2007 - 2008





For twenty-one years Littlejohn has been one of Galway's most exciting artists. A skillful writer, performer and musician, John Nee stands for all that is good in the arts in Ireland and we are lucky that he has chosen to live and work in Galway, making ever more successful forays into the rest of the world, but always returning back to the west. John is an accomplished performer, an innovative writer and a thoughtful, committed and expert presence on the Galway arts scene.

Now Galway City and County Arts Offices in partnership with the Arts Council and the Town Hall and Mall Theatres in Galway and Tuam are delighted to work with John in the presentation of a hands-on residency which will bring theatre and performance skills within the reach of all. John has brought together an outstanding corps of arts professionals who will share their skills and impart their knowledge for the benefit of the next generation of Galway theatre artists.

Drawing on John's vision and experience this residency has been devised specifically to facilitate, inform and encourage Galway's independent theatre artists and groups. It is directed at those who continue to show commitment and consistency in creating works that aspire to excellence. Participants are encouraged to use this resource to develop current or new projects through a series of talks, workshops and panel discussions covering current theatre policy and practice.

This residency marks Galway Local Authorities' formal recognition of Littlejohn's unique contribution to the arts in Galway. We are pleased and proud to have Littlejohn Nee as our inaugural Theatre Artist in Residence.

Enjoy!

Marilyn Gaughan - Galway Council Arts Officer

James Harold - Galway City Arts Officer

For twenty-one years Littlejohn has been one of Galway's most exciting artists...

'Our work often falls short of its potential due to a lack of expertise in certain areas. Companies and individuals frequently working with small budgets are forced to double up and take on jobs they have no training or expertise in thus often leaving them feeling intimidated and overwhelmed. Many artists are intimidated by administrative procedures, this excludes them from funding and something like tax returns can be frightening.'

LITTLE JOHN NEE.

Little John Nee was given his name by his father who was a Little Richard fan. He has striven to maintain the creative momentum of a childhood spent playing on the mean streets of Glasgow and in the hills of Donegal. He started the first punk band in Donegal in 1976, Joe Petrol and the Petrol Bombs.

After a lengthy period as "Navy Poet" and labourer on the building sites in London he moved to Dublin where he began performing as Charlie Chaplin on Grafton St. Around this time he joined the Grapevine Arts Touring Co. and the Pooka Childrens Theatre. In the summers he would gallivant throughout Ireland performing street shows.



To find a form that accommodates the mess, that is the task of the artist now" SAMUEL BECKETT

In 1986 he settled in a caravan in Barna and joined the fledgling Macnas, where he made many fine friends and had many fine adventures. At this time he also performed with Anet Moore as the Barna Boot Co.

He created a series of children's shows in the early nineties including the Ballygroovy Ave. trilogy, and performed in Peter Sinclair's multi-media operetta "John et la Fee Electrique" in Marseille. Since the latter half of the nineties Little John has focused on developing his unique style of musical theatre in collaboration with a host of top musicians, most recently with Laura Sheeran. Shows include "The Church of Chill" "The Derry Boat" "Dead On" "The Ballad of Jah Kettle" "Donde Esta Jesus Fahy?" "Country and Irish" "Salt o' the Earth" "Rural Electric" "The Mental" "Limavady My Hearts Delight" and "A Ukulele Cometh" In October he begins work on a commission based on the history of the Donegal Fire Brigade.

The Mental "Little John Nee, as actor and writer, has become a representative Irish figure and commentator, and never more so than here" The Irish Times

The Mental "Its beauty lies in its charm, but its depth lies in its message: we are all just a step away from one another after all" The Sunday Independent

Limavady my hearts delight "Nee's apprenticeship as a street entertainer on Grafton St. stands him in good stead, and the performance hinges on his unrivalled comic ability and his chameleon-like capacity to transmogrify from hapless hero to a range of other characters with minimal props and utter conviction. His command of gesture, voice, pace, pitch, accent and dramatic pause is second to none, his singing lusty and the idiom very much his own" The Irish Times

Limavady my hearts delight "Little John Nee does for the craggy rocks of the north-west what Dylan Thomas did for the lush valleys of Wales" The Irish Times

The Mental "Little John Nee's transformation from Joe Boyle into the figure of Irish language writer and Republican Seosamh Mac Grainna through the donning of a black jacket and the exhalation of a woodbine, with appropriate musing (as if he were part of the furniture and made of earth) is mesmeric.- Galway Theatre Review

Star of Stage, Screen and Street Corners "The thing that makes Nee's work so poignant, funny, tragic and real is that it is instantly recognisable; be it his characters, their circumstances or the situations they find themselves in. The biting wit and self-defacing humour allows him to cut through such harrowing issues as alcoholism, spousal abuse, poverty, loss without ever belittling such topics." -"The Donegal News" Rural Electric "A unique talent" -"Irish Theatre Magazine Rural Electric "a masterpiece of storytelling" ***** The Guardian

The Derry Boat "Scotland needs to see more of Little John Nee and soon" -The Scotsman

The Derry Boat "Full of pleasant surprises, the chief one being Nee himself" -Washington Post

The Derry Boat "I don't think I've seen anything this funny in years" -Sunday Independent

Country and Irish "An extraordinary performer...absolutely authentic characters...the whole of Ireland will love this show" - Rattlebag, RTE Radio

Salt o' the Earth "Nee is a genius...mesmeric and hilarious" Irish Times

Star of Stage, Screen and Street Corners "Having never caught the man in the act before-so to speak-this assortment was the perfect introduction." -"The Donegal News"

Star of Stage, Screen and Street Corners "Each snippet left me eager for more." -"The Donegal News"



October

“Independent Artists – A day of discussion”

Where: The Mall Tuam
When: 20th October 2007, 2 - 5pm
Who: Bob Quinn (filmmaker, writer, and photographic artist)
Tom Conway (Writer and Dramaturge)
Ian Kilroy (Writer and journalist)

Biographies: Bob Quinn

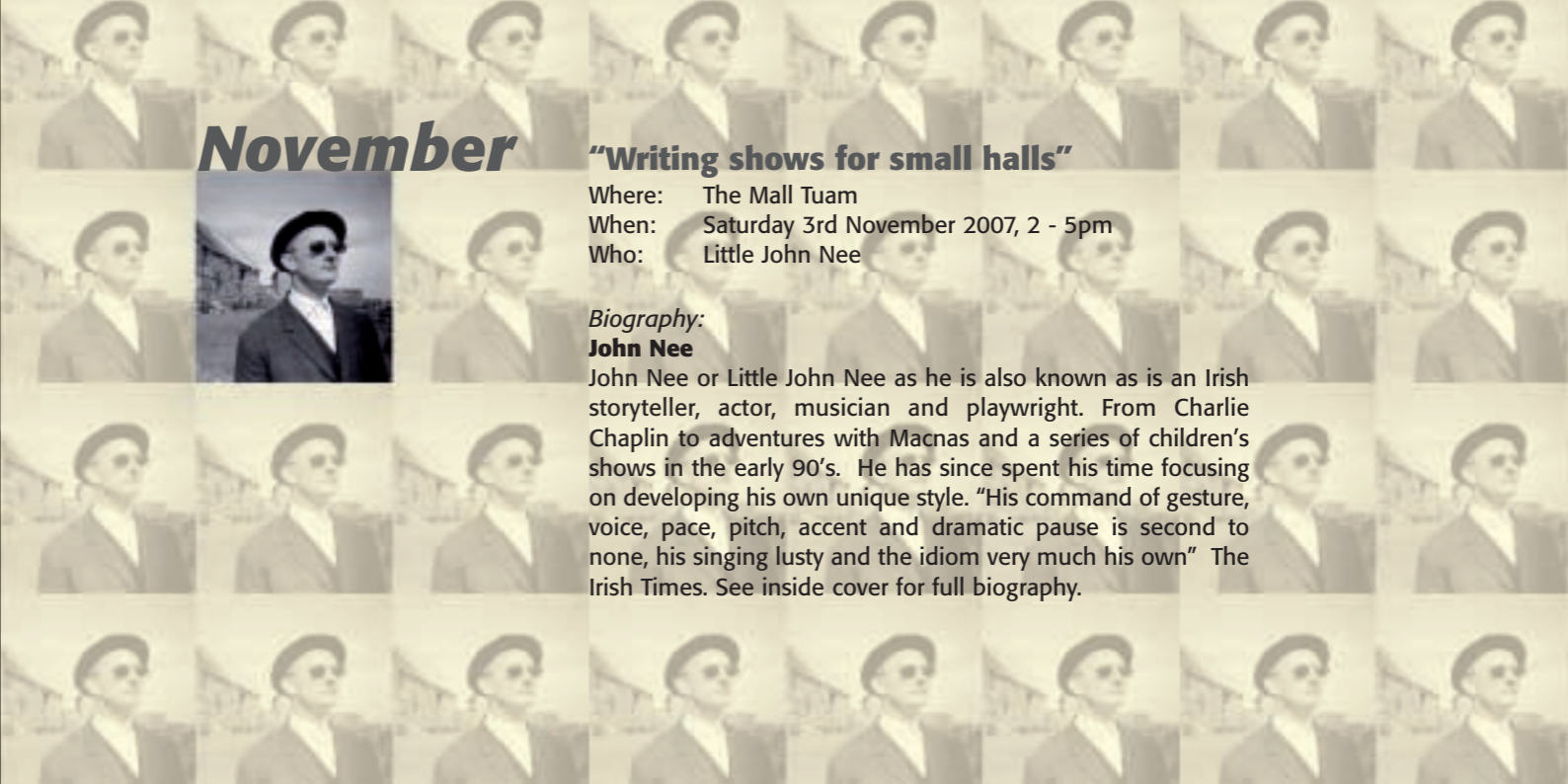
Is a writer, photographer, and film maker, he has written and directed over one hundred films, including drama, documentary and experimental.

Tomas Conway

Is a freelance director and dramaturge and currently is the literary manager with Druid.

Ian Kilroy

Is a writer and journalist and is currently arts editor of the Irish Examiner.



November

“Writing shows for small halls”

Where: The Mall Tuam
When: Saturday 3rd November 2007, 2 - 5pm
Who: Little John Nee

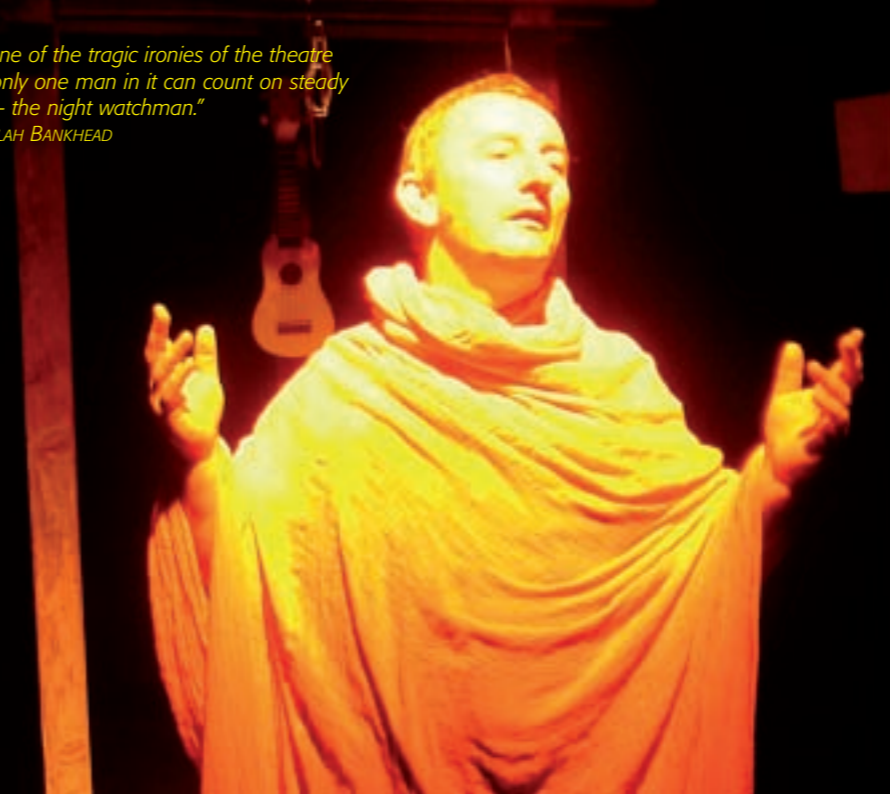
Biography:

John Nee

John Nee or Little John Nee as he is also known as is an Irish storyteller, actor, musician and playwright. From Charlie Chaplin to adventures with Macnas and a series of children’s shows in the early 90’s. He has since spent his time focusing on developing his own unique style. “His command of gesture, voice, pace, pitch, accent and dramatic pause is second to none, his singing lusty and the idiom very much his own” The Irish Times. See inside cover for full biography.

“It’s one of the tragic ironies of the theatre that only one man in it can count on steady work - the night watchman.”

KALLULAH BANKHEAD



December

“Biro or Pencil”

Where: Bank of Ireland Theatre, NUI Galway
When: Saturday 1st December 2007, 2 - 5pm
Who: Pat McCabe (Writer)

Biography:

Patrick Mc Cabe

Patrick Mc Cabe has long been recognized as a writer of rare talent and unique voice, whose vision of the world is so distinctive that “McCabesque” has become an adjective with multiple meanings including “exquisitely, beautifully, mad in the head!”

January



*"The world speaks to me in colours,
my soul answers in music"*
RABINDRANATH TAGORE

"A Cunning Plan – making it happen"

Where: Town Hall Theatre Studio
When: Saturday 26th January 2008, 2pm
Who: Ray Yeates (Director axis Ballymun) - Fergal Mc Grath (Manager Town Hall Theatre) - Tania Banotti, (Theatre Forum)

Biographies:

Tania Banotti

Theatre Forum is the representative association for the professional arts in Ireland. Membership includes all the theatre, dance and opera production companies; theatres and arts centers around the country and the main arts festivals. Tania Banotti has been the Chief Executive since its inception in late 2003. Previously she ran Screen Producers Ireland, the trade association for film and TV production companies.

Ray Yeates:

Ray Yeates is Artistic Director of Axis Ballymun which is a venue, a production company, an arts development organisation and a resource centre. He is a theatre director and a former Deputy Artistic Director of the Abbey and The Chelsea Playhouse New York

Fergal Mc Grath:

Fergal Mc Grath is Manager of Galway's Town Hall Theatre. He was previously Managing Director of Druid Theatre Company and General Manager of Galway Arts Festival. He is a board member of Theatre Forum and Cinemobile.

February

"Blood, Sweat, and Tears- The process of making the imagined physical"

Where: Town Hall Theatre Studio

When: Sat Feb 23rd 2008
2pm – 5pm

Who: Dolores Lynne
(set designer)

Biography:

Dolores Lyne

Dolores Lyne is a professional artist based in Connemara. She trained as a set designer at Motley, Drury Lane, London before returning to Ireland to work in theatre, film and television. She won an Irish Times Theatre Award for Pigtown and has designed for most theatres in Ireland. Dolores's workshop will deal with model boxes and design research.



*"Come down off the cross
we can use the wood"*
TOM WAITS

March



"Illuminating the Proceedings"

Where: Town Hall Theatre Studio
When: Saturday 29th March 2008
Who: Peter Ashton (lighting designer, and production manager)
Sinead Wallace (lighting designer)

Biographies:

Peter Ashton:

Peter Ashton has been the technical manager of the Black Box and Town Hall Theatres for the past nine years. He has previously worked as Chief Electrician for Druid Theatre and has managed the hire department of Black Light in Scotland.

Sinead Wallace:

Sinead Wallace is a Dublin based, freelance lighting designer. She has been working with lighting for theatre since school and followed this interest to study Drama in the Samuel Beckett Centre, Trinity College. Since college Sinead has lit shows for companies including Rough Magic, Bedrock, TEAM theatre, and the Abbey and Peacock Theatres.

"Poetry arrived in search of me. I don't know, I don't know where it came from, from winter or a river. I don't know how or when..." PABLO NERUDA

April

"Why don't you get a real job?"

Where: Town Hall Studio (TBC)
When: Saturday April 26th 2008
Who: Little John Nee, Dathi Ramsey, Peter Jordan

Biography:

Daithi Ramsay

Daithi Ramsay has for the past eight years been the Box Office and Marketing Manager of An Grianan Theatre in Letterkenny. Prior to this he has worked as a Youth Worker, Social Worker, Promoter, D.J., Band Manager, Tour Manager, Barman and Crolly Doll Packer.

Peter Jordan

Peter Jordan is a freelance theatre technician, having worked with amongst others Macnas, Druid Theatre Company, Fabulous Beast Dance Theatre and many festivals across Ireland. He is currently a production manager within the Abbey Theatre



"Our battered suitcases were piled on the sidewalk again; we had ways to go. But no matter, the road is life" JACK KEROUAC





-“Were thought up only a little more than a century ago?” Bernice Fitz-Gibbon

May

“The Master and the Maestro”

Where: Town Hall Studio
When: Saturday May 24th 2008
Who: Donel O’Kelly and Trever Knight

**Biographies:
Trevor Knight**

Trevor studied piano in Belfast with Harriet Officer. In 1980 he formed Auto da Fe with singer Gay Woods. They recorded 3 albums, Tatitum, Five Singles and One Smoked Cod and Gazette. He has performed and recorded with artists such as Philip Lynott, Paul Brady, Luka Bloom, Mary Coughlan, Juliet Turner, Camille O’Sullivan and Leo O’Kelly.

Donal O’Kelly

Donal O’Kelly is well-known both as a playwright and as an actor. He has performed his own solo plays throughout the English-speaking world. O’Kelly’s play ‘Catalpa’ won a Scotsman Fringe First Award at the 1996 Edinburgh Fringe Festival and the Critic’s Prize at the Melbourne International Festival in 1997. He is a director of Calypso Productions, for whom he has written four plays, and of the justice, peace and human rights organisation, Afri. Donal is currently working on two new productions called ‘Running Beast’ about the Earl of Tyrone, and ‘Vive La 1798’ a spy story project.

There will also be a number of ongoing seminars, workshops, talks and panels through-out the residency. Led by the following professionals:

Gary Hynes, Fiach Mac Conngaill, Christian O’Reilly, Jon Kenny, Padraic Breathnach, Rod Goodhall, Paul Mercier, Andrew Flynn, Johnahan Gunning

PLEASE NOTE

This document is an overview of what we hope to achieve during the course of the Little John Nee Theatre Residency 2007 -2008.

If you would like any more information on the on going seminars please contact: artsoffice@galwaycoco.ie Phone: 091 746875



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Photography:

Front Cover: Brendan Lawlor- special thanks to the Galway Arts Festival
Biography: “Bango Lele” -Leo Moran (Saw Doctors)
October: Lynneke Mullholland- Scottish Artist
November: Angus Mc Mahon- Photographer
December: Laura Sheeran – Musician, Composer
January: Pat Redmund – “The Mental” (Ballymun)
February: Lynneke Mullholland- Scottish Artist
March: Peter Jordan – Production Manager
April: Little John Nee, Set design by Mike Regan
May: Pat Redmund – “The Mental” (Ballymun)

Thanks to all the Keynote Speakers for their participation throughout this residency, Marilyn Gaughan Galway Co Arts Officer, James Harrold Galway City Arts Officer, Ayoma Bowe Galway Co Arts Office Assistant, and last but not least thanks to all the people who have helped me along the way.