

Outside the Box...

Youth Theatre Practice Symposium

Date: Wednesday, November 21st 9.30 – 4.30

Venue: Mary Immaculate College, Limerick



How are we pushing the boundaries of youth theatre practice in new ways?

Join us in Limerick to share, learn and network with other youth theatre practitioners! This year's symposium will explore diverse approaches and ways of working to inspire practitioners to push their youth theatre practice in new directions.

Through presentations, workshops and discussions we'll explore: the relationship between digital arts and youth theatre; site-specific theatre work; international perspectives; multi-disciplinary work with partner organisations; design thinking in youth theatre; a physical approach to youth theatre workshops; the dramaturg in youth theatre and much, much more!

The Youth Theatre Practice Symposium will be delivered on an all-Ireland basis in partnership with **Youth Theatre Ireland**, **Theatre NI** and the BA in Contemporary and Applied Theatre Studies in **Mary Immaculate College**, University of Limerick. The symposium is aimed broadly at those already engaged in youth theatre practice as well as participants with an interest in youth theatre from the theatre, education, youth work and community sectors. Participants can expect to:

- Explore current youth theatre practice through a series of presentations, discussions and practical workshops
- Discover recent projects and developments through the lens of the 'Outside the Box' theme
- Learn new skills and approaches through participation in a specialist drama workshop
- Network with organisations and individuals interested in youth theatre practice
- Share practice and discuss key questions and themes with other participants

REGISTRATION

Please register at Eventbrite.ie: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/outside-the-box-youth-theatre-practice-symposium-tickets-51547341486>

Attendance at the symposium is free of charge, however registration is essential. Participants can select a workshop of their choice for the afternoon when registering. Tea/coffee will be provided for participants. Lunch is not provided but is available to purchase from the college restaurant or other local venues.

A number of bursaries are available for Northern Irish practitioners to attend the symposium. Please contact Niamh Flanagan : director@theatreNi.org.

You are advised to book early to secure a place in the workshop of your choice. Contact Rhona at 01 878 1301 / rhona@youththeatre.ie with any registration enquiries. Symposium information can also be downloaded from: <http://www.youththeatre.ie/news/press/>.

SYMPOSIUM PROGRAMME

9.30 – 10.00	Registration
10.00 – 10.15	Welcome and Introduction
10.15 – 12.00	<p>'VIEWPOINTS' PRESENTATIONS & PANEL Q&A</p> <p>1 Youth Theatre in the Digital Age <i>Speaker: Alan King, Youth Theatre Ireland</i></p> <p>2 Why don't we do the play here? <i>Speaker: Tony McCleane-Fay & Marnie McCleane-Fay, Co Wexford Youth Theatre</i></p> <p>3 Programming a Children's and Young People's Theatre <i>Speaker: Carl Jørn Johansen, Rogaland Teater</i></p> <p>4 The Creative Show <i>Speaker: Angie Smalis & Deirdre Wilson, Limerick Youth Theatre</i></p> <p>5 Youth Theatre in a Youth Work Setting <i>Speaker: Brian Mullan, Patrician Youth Centre</i></p> <p>Panel Discussion chaired by Ella Daly.</p>
12.00 – 1.00	Lunch
1.00 – 3.00	<p>WORKSHOPS</p> <p>Workshop 1: Designing Outside the Box Facilitated by Niall Rae</p> <p>Workshop 2: What is a dramaturg? How do I find one? How on earth should I use one? For what? ...and why? Facilitated by Carl Jørn Johansen, Rogaland Teater</p> <p>Workshop 3: Polaroid Moments of Engagement Facilitated by Kevin O'Connor, Gonzo Youth Theatre and MIC</p>
3.00 – 3.15	Break
3.15 – 4.15	<i>Roundtables:</i> Themed Group Discussions
4.15 – 4.30	Close

'VIEWPOINTS' PRESENTATIONS

1 Youth Theatre in the Digital Age

As we stand on the cusp of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, what does the future hold for young people? With massive advances in AI and automation, how will young people survive in a world that predicts 800 million jobs will be lost globally to automation by 2030?

This presentation will look at valuing youth theatre practice as a prized technology in the Digital Age. While we may think of theatre and drama as analogue activities, participation could hold the key to future life success. We will look at some of the ways that youth theatre practice already gives us an edge and how we might further use digital technologies to enhance the life changing work we already do.

Speaker: Alan King

Alan is the Youth Theatre Officer for Youth Theatre Ireland and has been involved in youth theatre since 1991. He has produced the National Youth Theatre since 2015 and has run the Young Critics programme since 2010. Alongside youth theatre, he has been a professional actor for over 20 years, a theatre director, producer, venue manager and freelance facilitator. He has worked across a broad range of projects, contexts and media.

He has recently completed studies on the inaugural *NUI Certificate in Digital Creativity in Youth Settings [Level 8]* at Maynooth University. He has developed a Digital Learning Plan for Youth Theatre Ireland, which will be implemented over the next three years and hopes to see youth theatre embrace digital practice to enhance the creative work we already do.

2 Why don't we do the play here?

This presentation examines producing work outside of a theatre context. What is off-site theatre? What is site-specific theatre? What are the challenges of staging your work without the usual production facilities you would get in a conventional theatre venue? What are the advantages of working outside of the black box? It's stressful enough to stage a production in a well-resourced theatre, why would you consider starting from scratch and

doing everything yourselves? Tony will speak about three specific productions he staged with County Wexford Youth Theatre in spaces as diverse as: a courtroom; a promenade play in a secondary school and an office block. Marnie will speak about her experience of writing for site-specific spaces.

Speaker: Tony McCleane-Fay

Tony has a post-graduate degree in Performance Studies from Middlesex University and an MA in Drama & Theatre Studies from UCC. He has been directing stage productions for approx. twenty-five years both in Ireland and the U.K. He was Technical Director of the Institute of Contemporary Arts, Director of the Barnet Drama Centre and Manager of the Man in The Moon Theatre; all in London during the 1980's and '90's.

He is currently Artistic Director of the Granary Theatre in Cork, Bare Cheek Theatre Company and County Wexford Youth Theatre in Wexford and is a member of the Association of Theatre Directors, Ireland. He is an adjudicator on the Amateur Drama circuit and for A.I.M.S, works with the Arts Council as a peer panelist and as a Creative Associate on the Creative Schools initiative.

Speaker: Marnie McCleane-Fay

Marnie is a graduate of The Gaiety School Of Acting full-time actor training course and has worked extensively with young people since completing her training. Marnie was assistant director for 'Midsummer Night's Dream' and writer of 'Revolt' as part of Cork Midsummer Festival in 2016/17.

Marnie's work is included in Youth Theatre Ireland's 'Playshare' collection and she has written four pieces with County Wexford Youth Theatre – "Revolt" in Wexford Court House/Cork Lord Mayor Council Chambers/Samuel Beckett Theatre Dublin, 'Missing' – Wexford Arts Centre, 'Enemy' an adaption of Henrick Ibsen's 'Enemy of The People' – Wexford County Council and most recently 'Rate Me' – Wexford Arts Centre.

3 Programming a Children's and Young People's Theatre

What does youth theatre look like at the Rogaland Teater in Stavanger, Norway? Since 1957, the theatre has included a children's and youth theatre as a core part of its work and now balances an annual performance programme with weekly workshops for nearly 300 children and young people. Carl Jørn will talk about the challenges in programming performances and workshops within this unique model of youth theatre. How can we as a large institution balance the increasing economical demands with the desire to follow our artistic goals and meet the needs of our children and young people? How can we make our youth theatre relevant and vibrant in an environment where children and young people have so many other things to do to?

Speaker: Carl Jørn Johansen

Carl Jørn Johansen is a dramaturg and theatre-maker at the Rogaland Theatre in Stavanger, Norway. He studied at the Department of Dramaturgy at the University of Århus, Denmark. He has been working with youth and adult theatre for the last 20 years. He has experience working within large cultural institutions and fringe theatre. He is the project leader for international relations with the Rogaland youth theatre.

4 The Creative Show

Limerick Youth Theatre (LYT) and the Daughters of Charity, Limerick (DOC) have designed an inclusive performing arts project which fully integrates LYT members and adults with intellectual disabilities. The Creative Show is a rich, challenging, socially innovative outreach project. It supports young adults in their journey in the performing arts and focuses on improving the perception and acceptance of service users from the DOC. The purpose of the project is to bring about positive changes in the lives of all participants through the medium of performing arts while fostering lifelong friendships.

This presentation will explore the three month process which takes participants through a rehearsal process to perform an ambitious multidisciplinary piece of theatre which includes live music, song, dance and shadow puppetry tailored to suit the participants needs and abilities. The Creative Show culminates in a performance at the Lime Tree Theatre for two evenings with over 150 actors, dancers, singers and musicians participating, supported by a professional team throughout the creative process.

Speaker: Angie Smalis

Angie Smalis is the Artistic Director of Limerick Youth Theatre since 2009. She was born and raised in Athens, Greece where she trained and worked professionally as a dance artist. She studied dance and choreography at the State School of Dance and worked with several companies as a dance artist until 2001 when she moved to Vienna, Austria to join the Viennese Opera, Volks Oper Wien. Angie relocated to Limerick, Ireland in 2003 to join Daghdha Dance Company as one of the company's main dancers. She is an independent contemporary dance artist, Artistic Director of Limerick Youth Theatre and Founder and Director of Patterns Dance Collective (a group of dance artists with intellectual disabilities).

Speaker: Deirdre Wilson

Deirdre started working as the Administrator of Limerick Youth Theatre in 2008 when she moved to Limerick from the UK. She has vast experience working in arts administration having worked for the Musicians' Union, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Symphony Hall.

5 Youth Theatre in a Youth Work Setting

When we talk about youth theatre it is often from a place where the young people who come and get involved are passionate about their desire to perform, or at least their parents are passionate about providing their children with creative opportunities. During his presentation Brian will talk about his experience of delivering youth theatre in a multi-disciplinary youth work setting. Examining the challenges that this type of work brings, from ensuring there is a role for everyone who wants to be involved to trying to keep things fresh in what can often be a very static and structured approach. How does a rural youth theatre in a youth work setting think 'outside the box' in terms of programming and practice? Brian will discuss some of the developments within the Patrician Youth Centre's approach to their youth theatre programme over the past couple of years.

Speaker: Brian Mullan

Brian graduated in Theatre Studies from University of Ulster 20 years ago where his studies focussed on community theatre practice. Since then he worked to establish the Youth Initiatives Creative Crosslinks programme and has spent 15 years delivering a performing arts programme for the Patrician Youth Centre. The youth centre is a multi-disciplinary centre in Downpatrick, County Down which offers many different opportunities to young people in an area of high deprivation. The centre for many years provided a traditional youth theatre programme delivering 2 large scale productions per year, usually with a cast between 40 and 60. The centre is about to participate in the National Theatre Connections programme for the 5th consecutive year. By day, Brian is CEO of Replay Theatre Company in Belfast.

Panel Discussion chaired by Ella Daly

Ella Daly is a playwright, producer and graduate research student at NUI Galway, she has over 15+ years working in the arts with a focus on theatre and youth arts including 7 years leading Dublin Youth Theatre. She currently consults with the Fresh Film Festival for young people and Co Limerick Youth Theatre and travels the country as a Judge for the Irish Times Theatre Awards. Ella began her career as a member of Limerick Youth Theatre.

WORKSHOP OPTIONS

Workshop 1: Designing Outside the Box

Facilitator: Niall Rae

This workshop will explore design thinking for young theatre makers in a fun and approachable way using spatial games to activate the visual and physical in theatre making. It will use the actor's body, the room and its contents to activate the participants' design brains! What are we trying to say when we put people and things in the performance space?

Biog

Dr. Niall Rea is a lecturer in Theatre Design and Performing Arts at the Institute of Technology, Sligo. As a professional set, lighting and costume designer he has worked all over Ireland, UK, USA and Europe. He is artistic director of Theatreofpluck, Ireland's first publicly funded LGBT theatre company. He has taught workshops on performance design processes for various groups from young people to postgraduate students.

Workshop 2: What is a dramaturg? How do I find one? How on earth should I use one? For what? ...And why?

Facilitator: Carl Jørn Johansen

Who are those annoying people in the back of the theatre, the silent ones with their little notebooks who always have a final, difficult question? Carl Jørn will give his perspective of a dramaturg's work. How can we bring a dramaturgical approach to youth theatre? How can we create a thinking machine that will help us in all aspects of a production, from pre-planning to final performance? We will have a look at the theoretical and practical aspects.

Please bring an idea for a performance with your youth theatre group - this could be a starting point such as a theme or a script that you would like to do. Participants will work together to explore how a dramaturg might pitch ideas, find the right questions to ask a director, serve the project and create a toolbox that that can help answer questions. You will become each other's dramaturgs and create a concept!

Biog

Carl Jørn Johansen is a dramaturg and theatre-maker at the Rogaland Theatre in Stavanger, Norway. He studied at the Department of Dramaturgy at the University of Århus, Denmark. He has been working with youth and adult

theatre for the last 20 years. He has experience working within large cultural institutions and fringe theatre. He is the project leader for international relations with the Rogaland youth theatre.

Workshop 3: Polaroid Moments of Engagement

Facilitator: Kevin O'Connor

Tear up the script, a picture paints a thousand words or so they say, it's all about clarity and simplicity, especially simplicity. How can we easily engage and encourage our young people to put their passion for performance and idea's into action? Workshop participants will explore storytelling, devising theatre, movement, music and character. This exploration of performance possibilities blended with an unfolding of narrative through a physical approach will harness the potential to make our young people more aware and connected to both themselves and their environment.

Biog

Kevin O' Connor is the Artistic Director and founder of Gonzo Youth Theatre which is in existence since 2010. Kevin also works as a drama facilitator, theatre director and educational drama consultant / facilitator. Since 1998, Kevin has taught and facilitated for a number of educational institutions nationally including Mary Immaculate College, Betty Ann Norton Theatre School, the Cavan Institute and Dundalk Institute of Technology. Kevin also acted as Artistic Director of Cavan Youth Drama from 2006-2010, a network of sixteen youth drama groups based all around the beautiful county of Cavan.

PARTNERS

The Youth Theatre Practice Symposium is delivered in partnership with Youth Theatre Ireland, Theatre NI and the BA in Contemporary and Applied Theatre Studies, Mary Immaculate College and is part-funded by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and the Arts Council of Ireland.



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