

TODS presents their KDA Full Length Play Festival Entry 2010

# THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF LEENANE

BY MARTIN MCDONAGH

Directed by Heather Leslie

Tosterden Town Hall at 7.30pm

Thursday 22nd, Friday 23rd & Saturday 24th  
April 2010

(Adjudication Night Friday 25th April)

In a small house on a big hill in County Galway the Folan women live  
out an uneasy truce, that is until an old family friend reappears...

*"The extraordinary achievement of this play is that it is wildly funny, deeply  
affecting and grotesquely macabre all at the same time... an absolute cracker."*

*Royal Court Theatre Review*





# KDA FULL-LENGTH PLAY FESTIVAL ENTRIES 2010



February 8 - 13 (Ad. 12)

**The Caucasian Chalk Circle**

Bertolt Brecht

*Medway Little Theatre Rochester*

March 19 & 20 (Ad. 10)

**The Amazing Maurice and His  
Educated Rodents**

Terry Pratchett

*Midstone Grammar School (Youth Entry)*

March 23 - 27 (Ad. 24)

**Strictly Murder**

Brian Clemens

*Home Bay Playmakers*

March 30 - April 3 (Ad. 1)

**The Graduate**

Tony Johnson

*Medway Little Theatre Rochester*

April 8 - 10 (Ad. 10)

**Funny Money**

Ray Cooney

*Theatrecraft Home Bay*

April 23 - 24 (Ad. 22)

**Way Upstream**

Alan Ayckbourn

*Broadstairs Downs Players*

April 22 - 24 (Ad. 22)

**The Beauty Queen of Leenane**

Martin McDonagh

*TODS Tanderden*

April 22, 23, 24 (Ad. 24)

**Rough Crossing**

Tom Stoppard

*Hayes Players*

May 3- 8 (Ad. 8)

**Lost in Yonkers**

Neil Simon

*Buckingham Theatre Centre*

May 6- 8 (Ad. 7)

**Bouncers**

John Goyer

*Easton Players*

May 4 - 5 (Ad. 8)

**Scenes From the Big Picture**

Owen McCafferty

*Midswade Dancers*

May 11 - 15 (Ad. 16)

**Hotel Paradise**

Feydeau

*Lindley Players Whitstable*

May 12 - 15 (Ad. 14)

**Ghost Writer**

David Tristram

*Minster Playhouse*

May 17-22 (Ad. 21)

**The Cemetery Club**

Ivan Marshall

*Chapeliers Maidstone*

May 26 - 22, 27 - 29 (Ad. 22)

**Trivial Pursuits**

Frank Vickery

*Rainbow Theatrical Society*

The Adjudicator for 2010 is  
Arthur Rochester

## Arthur Rochester GODA

Arthur Rochester is a vice-president of the Bromley (Kent) Theatre Guild, having served 14 years as its Chairman. In addition to acting and directing for many years at Bromley Little Theatre where he was Artistic Director, and with a number of other groups in the South East, he has appeared in leading roles at the Churchill Theatre, on tour in Southern Spain and regularly for six years at the Minack Open Air Theatre in Porthcurno, Cornwall.

He has participated in drama festivals for more than 30 years undertaking virtually every job, both on and off stage, and receiving awards for acting, directing and design. He joined GODA as an associate in 2004 and became a full member in 2006. He feels privileged to have been invited to adjudicate the Kent Drama Association Festival for the third time.

## Angela Patrick - *Mag*,

When Heather chose to direct *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* I was thrilled as I love this and other Martin McDonagh plays. What I particularly like is the way he has captured the distinctive Irish way of speaking although he was born in England, albeit to Irish parents. I too have Irish parentage and, like McDonagh, spent many holidays there over the years. As a consequence, I have loosely based Mag on elderly Irish women I have known although none, thankfully, as wily as her. I feel her deviousness though is based on fear, the fear of being alone, for without her daughter her future would be grim. Thus, she needs to magnify her ailments, her vulnerability and dependency in order to curry sympathy and retain the status quo. It has been challenging taking on the role of a woman whose persona is very unlike mine both physically and emotionally, particularly with regard to her relationship with her daughter. It has been interesting and rewarding building on the character as rehearsals have progressed. However, under Heather's ingenious and discerning directorial eye, I hope the intense but tenuous mother/daughter relationship has fully evolved.

Having been with TODS for well over 25 years, the variety and quality of the roles I have been fortunate enough to play, have not diminished. Among those that spring to mind are *Angela* in *Blue Remembered Hills*; *Mrs Scully* in *Warrior*; *Lady Bracknell* in *The Importance of Being Earnest* and, more recently, *Katherine* in *The Secret Rapture*. I have also enjoyed almost every aspect of backstage work and, some years ago, I added *Secretary for the Society* to my roles.

---

## Karen Wright - *Maureen*,

As soon as I read the script of *Beauty Queen* I knew, without hesitation, that I wanted to play the part of Maureen, possibly more so than any other part I've played to date. Why? What was it about this role and this play that was so appealing? After all, Maureen Folan is a lonely, deeply unhappy woman locked in a relationship with a mother she despises, but is unable to leave. As it is, I just couldn't resist the lure of a character slowly unravelling during a play, shedding layer after layer to finally reveal an ultimately broken woman. Dysfunctional relationships, hopelessness and violence lie at the heart of this play. At first sight, it sounds grim but that's what's so fascinating. Martin McDonagh has created a gritty drama with characters of substance: characters that, whilst inherently flawed and often cruel, vicious and deeply unpleasant, can still elicit sympathy from an audience. I cared about Maureen. I wanted her to find love and break away. I wanted her to triumph and to have the life she dreamed of. Taking part in this production has been a challenge. Trying to portray a different persona in each scene has not been easy and some of the scenes have been uncomfortable. Despite that, rehearsals have been great fun and we are fortunate to have been guided by a director who is passionate about this play and has invested as much time as we have in understanding the characters and their motivations.

Karen is a member of TODS and the Charing Guild of Players. Recent credits include David Tristram's *A Bolt from the Blue*, Alan Ayckbourn's *Snake in the Grass*, Derek Benfield's *Over my Dead Body*, Tom Stoppard's *The Real Inspector Hound* and Phil Willmott's *Treasure Island*.



Angela Patrick



Karen Wright



Alastair George



Andy Clarke

**Andy Clarke - Pato Dooley,**

*The Beauty Queen of Lamma* is a great production, full of twists and turns, and it was only after sitting through several full rehearsals that I really got a clear understanding of the full extent of the play, the depth of the plot and the personalities of the characters. The brief relationship between Pato and Maureen is full of desire and passion accentuated by the disappointment of their current respective situations. I've really enjoyed trying to get inside the head of Pato Dooley and to bring his character to life. I've attempted to fully immerse myself in his day to day life, to feel his frustrations, know his hopes and share his desires. With only four characters in the play there are a lot of lines for us all to learn and we all rely on the ability of our colleagues for the continuity of the play and our own cues. It's only when you establish a familiarisation for the play that you can really start to "feel" the character and I know we have all managed to achieve this early on in rehearsals.

Previous productions for TODS have included *Kindly Leave the Stage*, *A Murder is Announced* and *Disco Inferno*.

---

**Alastair George - Ray Dooley,**

The first time I walked into TODS, I was asked to audition for Ray Dooley. Next week I was given a script, and the day after I was waiting for the audition date to come around. *The Beauty Queen of Lamma* is set in a secluded world of its own and the characters are so attractive to play and watch because each one has a deeper personality than what you see on the surface. Ray Dooley is a wannabe bad boy, who is stuck in rural Ireland. Although on the surface Ray seems like trouble, I think there's way more to his bark than his bite. I see Ray as the product of seclusion and entrapment, from spending every day of the last 20 years seeing the same faces and saying the same things. Getting inside a frustrated teenager is really fun, and it doesn't take long to feel completely absorbed into the character of Ray. Being Ray changes the way I talk, think and move and I've never played a more compelling role than this. The weeks have flown by in this performance. I've really enjoyed it and I think that a lot of work has shaped this into a hell of a show!

## Cast

Mag.....	Angela Patrick
Maureen.....	Karen Wright
Ray Dooley.....	Alastair George
Pato Dooley.....	Andy Clarke

---

## Production Personnel

Director.....	Heather Leslie
Production Assistant.....	Iris Scandrett
Costume.....	Stephie Clarke
Properties.....	Fiona Murch, Gillian Davis
Lighting and Sound.....	John Sewell
Stage Manager.....	Andy Leslie
Continuity.....	Julia Jessett
Backstage.....	Sally Klemen
Set Design.....	Heather Leslie
Set Build.....	Phil Vernal, Michael Patrick Andy Leslie, Andy Clarke Ian Playfoot , Brian Fagg & Members
Set Painting.....	Lynn Andrews, Ian & Sally Klemen
Front of House.....	Jackie Whiles & Members
Publicity.....	Michael Patrick & Julia Jessett
Programme.....	Andy Leslie & <a href="http://Inkylittlefingers.co.uk">Inkylittlefingers.co.uk</a>

---

## Acknowledgements

Thomas March & Trixie Fairbrass, Stephie Clarke, Douglas Moloney Estate Agents, Fiona Murch, Ian Playfoot, Chapman's, Richard Cheeseman, Delamere Plumbing, The Sinden Theatre and any other Members and Friends who have not been named but who helped in any way,

Thank-you all.

## Synopsis

The story is set in an Irish village Leenane, Connemara in 1989. The entire play takes place in a shabby, poorly lit kitchen, resulting in a claustrophobic sense of entrapment.

The play centres on the life of Maureen Folan, a 40-year-old spinster who takes care of her 70 year-old, selfish and manipulative mother Mag. Sisters of Maureen have escaped into marriage and family life, but Maureen, with a history of mental illness, is trapped in a seriously dysfunctional relationship with her mother.

*There will be a 20 minute interval between Act 1 and Act 2*

---

## Director's Note

On first reading of *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, I had no doubt at all that I wanted to direct this play and to see it come to life on the stage. I am effectively in love with the drama and feel it has so many elements to delight and challenge both cast and audience. At first glance it seems like a grim scenario: a mother and daughter trapped in a seriously dysfunctional relationship, each one exhibiting cruel and violent behaviour, whether through words or actions. And yet there is a strange kind of love between Mag and Maureen, and as the story unfolds we understand more about what has brought the characters to this point in their lives. It has been a fascinating process getting to the root of each character's being and working with the cast in portraying as truthfully and thoughtfully as possible these flawed people. The challenge for myself and the cast has been in trying to study the characters and to find elements that we can understand, and that the audience will hopefully find sympathy with. It has been the greatest joy to work with this talented cast of four, each of whom has thrown themselves wholeheartedly into this project. Not only have they had to cope with the huge challenge of perfecting South West Irish accents and getting their brains and tongues around the strange rhythms of the speech in this play, but also with my quest for perfection in learning the lines and constant demands for 'pace'!

The rehearsal period has been pure unalloyed joy and I hope that the audience will enjoy the results. Heather Leslie.