

## HAPPY DAYS ARE BACK AGAIN AS ENNISKILLEN INTERNATIONAL BECKETT FESTIVAL RETURNS WITH CELEBRATORY 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY LINE-UP

### FULL PROGRAMME LINE-UP NOW ANNOUNCED

- *The Happy Days Enniskillen Beckett Festival returns for its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary to Enniskillen Island Town for first time since 2019.*
- *Five-day international multi-arts festival runs 21-25 July 2022*
- *Artistic line-up features exciting homegrown and international world class talent including **Toby Jones, Dame Sarah Connolly, Fleur Barron, Tadhg Murphy, Liam Ó Maonlaí and Adrian Dunbar.***
- *Also featured are **two Irish Premieres** to mark the centenary of T S Eliot's *The Waste Land* with sound and film installations featuring stage and screen stars **Russell Tovey, Rory Kinnear, Dame Harriet Walter** and a **world premiere** by New York opera and theatre Director **Robert Wilson.***
- *Venues include **Marble Arch Caves, Devenish Island, an upland mountain bog, the Regal and Samuel Beckett's former Portora Royal School** (now Enniskillen Royal Grammar).*
- *Three Festival productions return by popular demand: *Ohio Impromptu* directed by Adiran Dunbar on Devenish Island, *Walking for Waiting for Godot* around sculptor **Antony Gormley's Tree** and *INFERNO* starring **Clara Simpson.***
- *Booking now open at Ardhoven Theatre [www.ardhowen.com](http://www.ardhowen.com) with most tickets from £5-£15.*

Enniskillen is set to, once again, host the largest global celebration on Irish Nobel Laureate Samuel Beckett when the *Happy Days Enniskillen International Beckett Festival* makes a welcome return to Ireland's Island Town from 21-25 July with a plethora of Beckett inspired performances.

Celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the five-day Festival returns for the first time since 2019 after a two-year absence due to covid. Beckett spent his formative years in Enniskillen at Portora Royal School (Enniskillen Royal Grammar) and the Festival also marks the centenary of Samuel Beckett's attendance at Portora from 1920-23.

Back with a Beckettian bang the 2022 Festival will see the welcome return of three Happy Days 'Made in Fermanagh' productions of Beckett's plays that have now become classics in the Festivals repertory; *Ohio Impromptu* (July 22-24), *Waiting for Waiting for Godot* (July 24 & 25) and *Inferno-Not I* (July 21-23) as well as several newly commissioned live performance, sound and film installations.

Getting underway on Thursday 21 July, Festival classics will be performed throughout the weekend. Taking place on the 9<sup>th</sup> century Monastic Devenish Island and directed by Line of Duty star **Adrian Dunbar**, *Ohio Impromptu* will be presented at the Festival for a record fifth time due to popular demand. The intimate audience (max 48) will be transported by boat at sunset to Devenish Island, for a 12 minute play with two actors – Vincent Higgins and Lalor Roddy – who doesn't speak a word in the entire play!

'**Walking for Waiting for Godot**' (July 24 & 25) Tadhg Murphy fresh from *Conversations with Friends* stars alongside actors Andrew Bennett, Ned Dennehy and David Pearse return for the fourth year in a row with a performed reading around **Sir Antony Gormley's Tree for Waiting for Godot** and enthusiastic festival goers will once again have the opportunity to experience Dante & Beckett's hauntingly moving **Inferno- Not I** featuring Clara Simpson, a cast of 33 readers and opera mezzo soprano **Ruby Philogene MBE** in the Marble Arch Caves (July 21-23).

Festival highlights include a newly commissioned piece of work which has never been seen before in Ireland. **Beckett in Folkestone** tells the imagined stories of three people who may have encountered Beckett in Folkestone in 1960 when he travelled there in secret to marry his long-time partner. In a series of three monologues written by **Eimear McBride, Helen Oyeyemi and Rupert Thomson**, delivered at 3 venues around the town we hear from the receptionist, the journalist and the wedding witness acted on screen by **Dame Harriet Walter, Russell Tovey and Jade Anouka**.

The Festival will feature a World Premiere of **Robert Wilson: Self Video Portrait** on Samuel Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape*, in which the renowned theatre director and artist makes himself the latest subject in his unique "Video Portraits", project. Robert Wilson brought his production of *Krapp's Last Tape* to Enniskillen in 2012 to headline the inaugural Beckett Festival as part of the UK Cultural Olympiad celebrations. His new Video Portrait features the dream scene on the Upper Lake with himself as the actor *Krapp* from his production of *Krapp's Last Tape*. It is the latest in a series of Wilson's Video Portraits that have previously featured megastars **Lady Gaga, Brad Pitt, Johnny Depp, Isabella Rossellini and Winona Ryder**.

**Speaking ahead of the event Festival Founder and Artistic Director Seán Doran said:**

"After a three-year enforced silence by Covid, we are delighted to be bringing back to Enniskillen its unique and only international festival, *Happy Days*. It is a truly special festival, attracting not only international names and faces to perform but also attracting audiences from across the globe.

"We are particularly thrilled to be remounting for our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary three 'Made in Fermanagh' classics of the last 10 years – Walking for *Waiting for Godot*, *Ohio Impromptu* and *INFERNO-NOT I*. These bespoke productions define this destination festival from other summer festivals. Not only are they are site specific to Fermanagh – using the beautiful Fermanagh landscapes to heighten the experience of Beckett's plays - but they involve experiential travelling to the event by audiences whether it is on foot for *Waiting For Godot*, by boat for *Ohio Impromptu* and *INFERNO-NOT I* is truly unique.

"World renowned New York artist Robert Wilson is recognised as one of the greatest theatre and opera directors of our time and it is a coup for the festival that he has gifted to Ireland the world premiere of his Self Video Portrait inspired by his *Krapp's Last Tape* production." Sean added

This year's Festival marks the strongest programme in 10 years of Schubert Lieder and art-song with four recitals across four days from acclaimed international singers **Dame Sarah Connolly (July 22), Konstantin Kimmel & Ema Nikolowska (July 23), a Sunday Schubertiade with Feride Buyukdenktas (July 24) and Fleur Barron closing with Schubert's *Winterreise* (July 25)**. All concerts are with pianist Julius Drake. In addition there will be a reading of Beckett's short prose by acclaimed screen actor **Toby Jones (The Hunger Games, Jurassic Park, Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy)**.

This year's Happy Days Festival is especially significant as it marks the inter-related centenary anniversaries of the publication of *The Waste Land* and *Ulysses* in 1922. Modernist poet T.S Eliot was the Editor at The Criterion and published works by Beckett so it is fitting that *The Waste Land* is celebrated through two new unique presentations in Enniskillen; 'EAR TO EAR' (July 21-25), a sound installation by Pierre-Yves Macé and a filmed reading of *The Waste Land* with actors **Dame Harriet Walter, Imogen Stubbs, Jade Anouka and Bond movie actors Rory Kinnear and Colin Salmon**.

The Principal Partner of Happy Days Enniskillen International Arts Festival 2022 is the T S Eliot Foundation and the Festival is funded by Tourism NI and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

Booking now open at Ardhowen Theatre [www.ardhowen.com](http://www.ardhowen.com) with most tickets from £5-£15. For more information and the full programme of events please see [www.artsoverborders.com](http://www.artsoverborders.com)

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Lyn Sheridan – [lyn@aikenpr.com](mailto:lyn@aikenpr.com) / 07770584157 **AIKEN**

Alison Knox – [ali@aikenpr.com](mailto:ali@aikenpr.com) / 07966983336 **AIKEN**