

## ***A Skull in Connemara***

Friday 22 February – Saturday 9 March 2019

An Oldham Coliseum Theatre Production

By Martin McDonagh

Directed by Chris Lawson

Designed by Katie Scott

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**Press Night: Tuesday 26 February, 7.30pm**

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Quentin Tarantino meets *Father Ted* in BAFTA and Academy Award-winning Martin McDonagh's black comedy ***A Skull in Connemara***.

In a rural town on the west coast of Ireland Mick Dowd sits in his cottage sipping poteen. Mick has the unfortunate occupation of exhuming bodies from Connemara graveyard to make space for new residents and this year his late wife is on the list of people to evict.

Una died under mysterious circumstances some seven years ago. What's more mysterious however, is that when Mick digs into her grave and opens her coffin there's nothing there...

Martin McDonagh's subversive style has been regularly compared to Quentin Tarantino. He is best known for feature films: *In Bruges*, *Seven Psychopaths* and *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri* (winner of three BAFTA Awards and two Golden Globe Awards). ***A Skull in Connemara*** is the second of his much celebrated Leenane Trilogy of plays, flanked by *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, which had a hit run at the Coliseum in 2009 with London Classic Theatre's visiting production, and *The Lonesome West*. It premiered at Town Hall Theatre, Galway in 1997.

The Coliseum's production is Directed by Chris Lawson, who became Acting Artistic Director of the theatre in December 2018. Chris joined the theatre in October 2015 as Associate Director and has established a reputation for bringing energy and adventure into his productions. His productions for the Coliseum include: *A Taste of Honey* (★★★★ - The Reviews Hub), *The Kitchen Sink* (★★★★ - The Stage), *Up 'N' Under* (★★★★.5 - The Reviews Hub), *Hard Times* (★★★★ - Remote Goat) and *Jumpers For Goalposts* (★★★★ - The Reviews Hub).

Chris commented: "***A Skull in Connemara*** uses both dark comedy and drama to show how people can be a product of their environment and community. The play presents the audience with a puzzle that I hope everyone will try and solve in their own way. It raises issues about morality, sense of self and the impact of rumours versus fact. Ultimately, I'm proud that we have brought the words of such a great playwright to the doorstep of Oldham".

The cast features John O'Dowd, who was last in Oldham with English Touring Theatre's *The Weir* which won the Manchester Theatre Award for Best Visiting Production; Jenny Lee, who was nominated for an Olivier Award in 2017 for It's *Easy to be Dead* at Trafalgar Studios; Griffin Stevens, who was last in Manchester for HOME's productions of *Inkheart* and *Romeo and Juliet*; and Liam Heslin, who was last in Manchester for the immersive *On Corporation Street*.

**- Ends -**

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## Notes to Editor:

***A Skull in Connemara*** runs from Friday 22 February – Saturday 9 March 2019 at Oldham Coliseum Theatre.

Tickets can be booked on 0161 624 2829 or at [www.coliseum.org.uk](http://www.coliseum.org.uk)

Link to production page: <http://www.coliseum.org.uk/plays/a-skull-in-connemara/>

For further press information, please contact Shelly Ramsdale on 0161 785 7012 or [shellyramsdale@coliseum.org.uk](mailto:shellyramsdale@coliseum.org.uk)

Oldham Coliseum Theatre is a cultural and educational charity that works with over 150,000 individuals per year.

The Coliseum has a rich history in Greater Manchester dating back to 1885. It provides a wide variety of distinctive theatre performances and participatory activities for people from all communities in Oldham, Greater Manchester and beyond. It creates eight original productions each year, of which up to half are newly-commissioned work, which are presented at the Coliseum and on tour. Intrinsic to the town's ongoing regeneration, the theatre works with its local communities and young people to develop creative programmes to facilitate learning, engagement and community cohesion.

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## Images:

A high-resolution JPEG of the artwork for ***A Skull in Connemara*** is available to download from Dropbox via: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/bajcdy7z1lle9z7/A%20Skull%20in%20Connemara.jpg?dl=0>

Rehearsal photographs will be available from Wednesday 11 February 2019

Production photographs will be available from Monday 25 February 2019

## Cast:



**Liam Heslin**  
- *Mairtin Hanlon*



**Jenny Lee**  
- *Maryjohnny Rafferty*



**John O'Dowd**  
- *Mick Dowd*



**Griffin Stevens**  
- *Tom Hanlon*

## Production team:

Director - Chris Lawson

Designer - Katie Scott

Lighting Designer - Stewart Bartles

Deputy Stage Manager (On the Book) - Emma Cook