



About Dublin Youth Theatre

Since its foundation in 1977, by Educational Psychologist Paddy O' Dwyer, DUBLIN YOUTH THEATRE has forged a unique contribution to the worlds of theatre and youth work. 40 years old this year, DYT continues to provide exciting opportunities for young people in the 14 - 22 age group to gain experience in drama, theatre and the related arts. Dave Kelly, National Training Co-ordinator at Youth Theatre Ireland is the current Artistic Director.

Writers & theatre makers such as Peter Sheridan, Anne Enright, Gerard Stembridge, Paul Mercier, Lee Dunne, Mark O'Rowe, Charlie McCarthy, Art O'Briain, Desperate Optimists, Raymond Keane, David Horan, Brokentaklers, and Rachael West & Emmet Kirwan have been commissioned by DYT in the past, with many of the productions being performed at the Project Arts Centre in Dublin.

The objectives of DYT are:

- **To provide for the personal and social development of its members through participation in drama workshops and productions.**
- **To attain a high artistic standard in the public performance of plays which include work relevant to the lives of young people today.**

DYT has a current membership of over a 100 young people. Auditions are held in September of each year and between 35 and 40 members are accepted. The selection criteria used ensures that membership includes representation from many areas in Dublin and a balanced ratio of male/female. Previous drama experience is not necessary - interest and enthusiasm are what are important. Many of our new members have no previous acting or theatre experience.

ACTIVITIES OF DUBLIN YOUTH THEATRE

Workshops

Workshops are fundamental to Dublin Youth Theatre's work. The programme caters for all our members, regardless of experience. Every Saturday at 11am-1pm from October to May, a member can expect to partake in a general workshop and then sit down to a cup of coffee and a chat with the other members. To date, our workshops have included clowning, dance, devising, forum theatre, improvisation, puppetry, voice, stagecraft, stage combat, playwriting, technical theatre and much, much more. These workshops are not classes in acting or theatre. The principles of youth work in the context of community arts underpin the planning and operation of all DYT activities. First year members must be available attend workshops in the first 10 weeks of their first term.

Productions

Dublin Youth Theatre has built a reputation over the last forty years for producing high-quality, exciting, challenging theatre. The annual programme includes the production of between 6 to 12 plays. These are a combination of high profile shows in recognised professional venues and low-key productions which allow new members with little or no experience an opportunity to perform in a 'safe' environment.

In 2014 DYT performed a new translation of 'Spring Awakening' in the AXIS Ballymun, as part of the Dublin Theatre Festival that year. 'Spring Awakening' was a fearless portrayal of the lives of young people growing up in a repressive society. It was a play that explored themes of self-discovery, consequence and the loss of innocence. In 2015 DYT performed 'Show me Love', written by Colin Thornton and directed by Deirdre Molloy. 'Show me Love' took place on the main stage of Smock Alley, this was a large ensemble narrative play which explored and celebrated the ever changing complicated emotional life of 14 Dublin City teenagers on one important day of their lives. In 2016, DYT performed on the Abbey Theatre's Peacock Stage as part of the 1916 centenary celebrations. DYT presented show called 'Rising', which was devised with its 20 person cast to explore the idea of protest, and what could make a group of young people riot today like they did 100 years ago. 'Rising' was told mostly through verbatim speeches, pieces text taken from interviews that were then transcribed. At the end of September, DYT will be presenting 'this is a room...' as part of this year's Dublin Theatre Festival. Written by Dylan Coburn-Gray and directed by Veronica Coburn-Gray, 'this is a room...' features a 21 person cast and explores the idea that the places we exist and grow up in leave a large mark on who we become.

In addition, members are encouraged to avail of the DYT space for any projects which they wish to work on. Each August the Members' One Act Festival (MOAF) gives members the opportunity to write, direct, design & act in their own shows. Although our audiences are made up of largely young people, DYT produces work that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and we are constantly reaching out to new audiences. In the last two years, the MOAF produced seven new plays which were created with the help of over 40 members.

In addition, First Years have their own festival in which to present work, the First Year One Act Festival (FYOAF), which takes place each Easter and showcases the performances of our first year group in one act plays directed by professional theatre directors. Every first year that auditions for FYOAF is given a part in the festival. Some past directors of FYOAF shows include: Cathal Maguire, Tracy Martin, Dylan Coburn-Gray, Alan Howley and Roxanna Nic Liam.

National and International Opportunities

Dublin Youth Theatre welcomes opportunities for exchanges with other youth groups at local, national and international levels. We have participated in festivals and exchanges in Britain, Austria, the US, Belgium, Sicily, Denmark, Shetland Islands, Slovenia & Germany, as well as with other youth theatres all over Ireland. As members of Youth Theatre Ireland, DYT are available to apply for Youth Theatre Ireland events such as the National Youth Theatre production that takes place every two years and the National Festival of Youth Theatres. In 2016, DYT participated in an exchange with The Lyric Drama Studio in Belfast where a group of members spent the day visiting Belfast, going on a tour of the city, learning about their history, and finally seeing their production of The Patriot Game, later on in the year, some of their members visited Dublin and saw our production of Rising

The administrative and artistic work of DYT is coordinated by a Voluntary Board of directors including two young member directors, a part-time voluntary Artistic Director, a full-time General Manager and a live-in House Manager. These people are supported by a total of 46 voluntary Company Members comprising adults and young people.

Dublin Youth Theatre gratefully acknowledges the support of The Arts Council, the City of Dublin Youth Service Board, Dublin Corporation and of its private donors and sponsors.