



Ros Kavanagh

ABBAY THEATRE

Two Pints

One **Liam Carney**
Two **Philip Judge**
Barman **Laurence Lowry**
Written By **Roddy Doyle**
Directed By **Caitriona McLaughlin**
Designed By **Kate Moylan**
Stage Manager **Emma Doyle**
Technician **Anthony Hanley**

PROGRAM

There will be an intermission.

Wednesday, February 27 @ 7 PM

Thursday, February 28 @ 7 PM

Friday, March 1 @ 8 PM

Sunday, March 3 @ 3 PM

Sunday, March 3 @ 7 PM

Blarney Stone Pub

PROGRAM NOTES

Director's Note

When Neil and Graham asked me to direct Roddy Doyle's new play *Two Pints*, and tour it to pubs around Ireland, I was thrilled. As someone who has made theatre in an array of found and site-sympathetic spaces, including pubs, shops, piers, beneath flyovers, and one time inside a de-sanctified church, putting theatre on in pubs around Ireland felt like a sort of homecoming. I suspect every theatre director based outside of Dublin has had a production of some sort or another perform in a pub, so why did this feel different?

Was it the fact that we were asking two of Ireland's leading actors to perform in such close and intimate surroundings?

Was it the fact that we were bringing a slice of Dublin to towns and villages around Ireland and not the other way around?

Perhaps it was that we were bringing a new Roddy Doyle play directly into the location it was set, a pub, before putting it on a stage?

Or, was it simply the fact that our National Theatre had finally realized that it had an audience and future theatre artists often living three or four hours away in parts of the country lacking in basic public transport or access to live theatre, particularly new plays written and performed by exceptional theatre artists?

We wanted the experience for rural Irish audiences seeing this play in such a small and intimate space to be like seeing the Sex Pistols at the 100 club, or at Manchester Free Trade Hall, before the rest of the country knew what was going on. We wanted them to be the first, and to give them the sense of being let in on a secret, before anyone else, as opposed to being the last. It was a very punk aesthetic. I just loved that idea. And hence, the *Two Pints* tour was born.

When you get hold of a play like *Two Pints*, you know fairly quickly you have something special on your hands. Before reading the script, I admit I was thinking, two men sitting at a bar talking about life and themselves, what's new? As it turns out: everything. With this masterful piece of writing, Roddy Doyle teaches us an old lesson that we have perhaps lost sight of in contemporary drama: plays are about the people we live with. He has written a play that is utterly true to the banter you might hear between any two men in their 60's sitting in the pub, and yet, it never once dips into any kind of bigoted, judgemental or sexist remark.

Roddy is not only teaching those of us in the theatre how to write character for a more informed and respectful world, he is showing us that empathy is created by listening. What he allows us to do is eavesdrop on the hopes, fears, desires and disappointments of two simple, but in their own way, extraordinary men. Yes, the language is colourful. Yes, there are a few four letter words. But, there is also much laughter, much love, much comedy and much life too. I hope you get to eavesdrop on these two men. Like great jazz musicians, they riff off each other, and off their own experiences.

And as I sit here in a hotel bar wondering have I said too much or not enough in writing this, the conversation of two men at the bar floats into earshot:

"One: He's mad for the ambiance, that's what they used to call it anyway, ambience!

Two: I hear they're building a hotel now, 16 stories high!

One: Fucking sharks, where's it going

Two: Jesus Christ! I told you what I know!"

...and I am struck once again by the accuracy and brilliance of Roddy's writing.

Caitriona McLaughlin
Director, *Two Pints*

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The Abbey Theatre is Ireland's national theatre. It was founded by W.B. Yeats and Lady Augusta Gregory. Since it first opened its doors in 1904, the theatre has played a vital and often controversial role in the artistic, social and cultural life of Ireland.

It is their mission is to effectively and imaginatively engage with all of Irish society through the production of ambitious and courageous theatre in all its forms. The Abbey Theatre is artist-led and audience-focused: they aim to ensure their programs are driven by ambitious, big ideas by theatre-makers of all disciplines, relevant to our times and reflective of their role as a national theatre.

In 1905, the Abbey Theatre first toured internationally and continues to be an ambassador for Irish arts and culture worldwide. Their recent tours to the U.S. include *Cyprus Avenue* (Public Theater, New York), *Quietly* (Irish Repertory Theatre, New York), *The Plough and the Stars* (U.S. and Canadian Tour), *Maeve's House* (Irish Arts Centre, New York) and *John Gabriel Borkman* (Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York).



The Abbey Theatre is proudly funded by the Arts Council of Ireland.

International representation for the Abbey Theatre by Michael Mushalla of Double M Arts & Events, LLC
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