

# A SOLAS NUA PRODUCTION

J.M Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World* retold by Nigerian-Irish Playwright Bisi Adigun, and one of Ireland's best known writers Roddy Doyle.

A New adaptation by: Bisi Adigun + Roddy Doyle  
Directed By: Shanara Gabrielle  
US Premiere Production

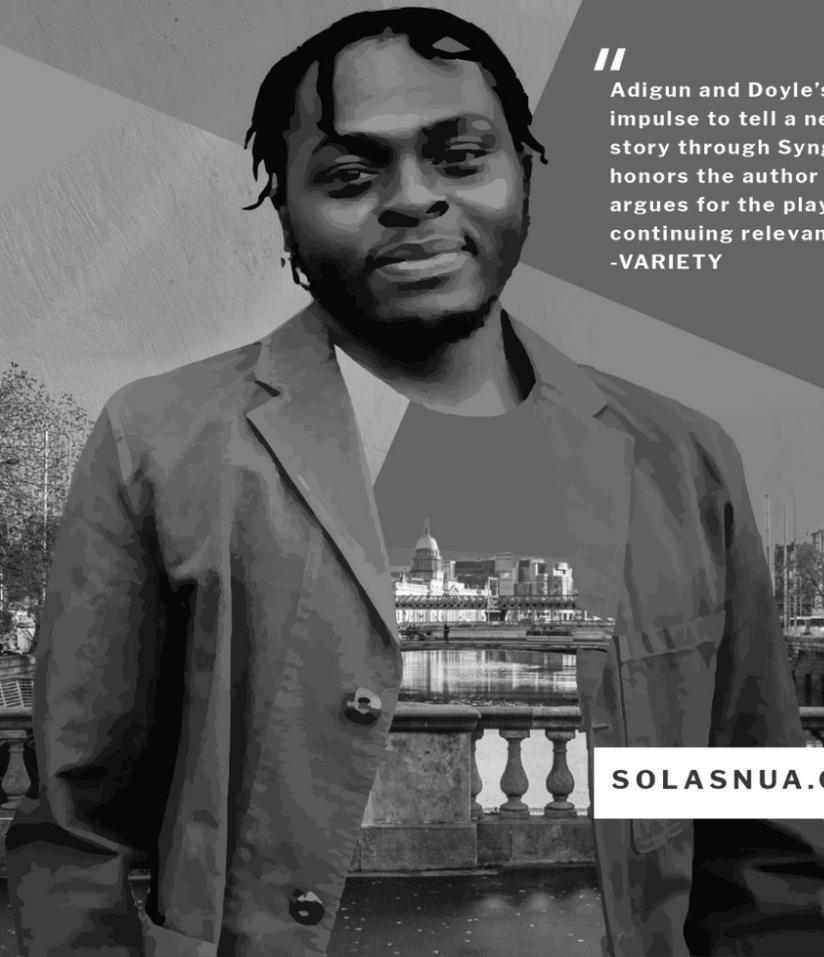
## NOVEMBER 3-20

# the *Playboy* WESTERN of the WORLD

SOLAS NUA NEW IRISH ARTS



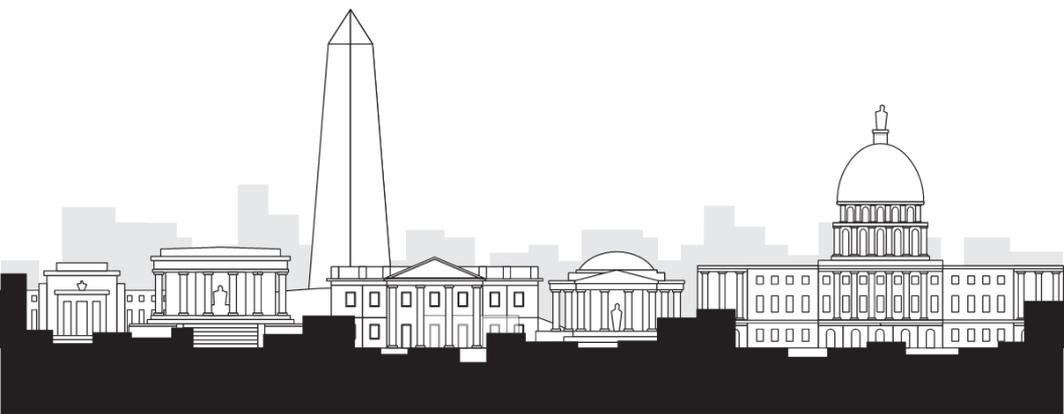
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Adigun and Doyle's impulse to tell a new story through Synge honors the author and argues for the play's continuing relevance.  
-VARIETY

[SOLASNUA.ORG](http://SOLASNUA.ORG)



## **ABOUT SOLAS NUA**

Solas Nua - 'new light' in Irish, is a leading multidisciplinary arts organization that is dedicated exclusively to contemporary Irish arts. Based in Washington, D.C., our mission is to bring the best of contemporary Irish arts to U.S. audiences.

Solas Nua acts as an ambassador and advocate for Irish arts in the U.S., promoting contemporary Irish culture, multi-disciplinary arts and creativity. By offering new opportunities for artists based in both Ireland and the U.S., Solas Nua provides access and inclusion for artists and audiences to connect and participate on both sides of the Atlantic. We commission, produce and present thought-provoking and ground-breaking work across the arts and are recognized in Washington, D.C. and beyond for making a substantial, unique contribution to the artistic and cultural richness of the city. We present work that is cross-cultural, representing today's Ireland - a contemporary, globally diverse society. Our programming reflects how Irish culture is shared across borders, ethnicity, and economic lines.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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# SOLAS NUA NEW IRISH ARTS

## *the* **Playboy** **WESTERN** *of the* **WORLD**

written by Bisi Adigun and Roddy Doyle (adapted from J.M. Synge)  
directed by Shanara Gabrielle

### Cast

Ian Armstrong - Michael  
Jessica Lefkow - Widow Quin  
Jamil Joseph - Christopher  
JJ Johnson\* - Malomo  
Rebecca Ballinger - Pegeen  
Ryan Tumulty - Jimmy  
Matthew Pauli - Philly, Michael u/s  
James Lacey - Sean  
Rachel Lawhead - Susan, Quin u/s  
Danielle Gallo - Honor  
Erin Denman - Sarah, Pegeen u/s  
  
Sulmane Maigadi - Christy/Malomo u/s

### Creative Team

Bisi Adigun - Playwright  
Roddy Doyle - Playwright  
Shanara Gabrielle - Director  
Sulmane Maigadi - Cultural Consultant  
Regina Vitale - Stage Manager  
Jonathan Holmes - Assoc. Director  
Anderson Wells - Assoc. Director  
Nadir Bey - Scenic Designer  
Jessica Trementozzi - Assist. Designer  
Danielle Preston^ - Costume Designer  
Sarah Tundermann^ - Lighting  
Dominic DeSalvio - Assoc. Lighting  
Designer  
Delaney Bray - Sound Designer  
Sierra Young - Fight and Intimacy Director  
Mary Doebel - Assist. Stage Manager/  
Run Crew/Wardrobe  
Dean Leong - Master Electrician  
Rex Daugherty - Producer/Dialect Coach  
Charlotte La Nasa - Assist. Producer

**THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD**  
runs 2 hours and 20 minutes with one intermission

\*Appear courtesy of Actors' Equity Association

^Member United Scenic Artists

November 3-20, 2022

Atlas Performing Arts Center, 1333 H St NE Washington, DC 20002

# PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

In Peter Brook's words, "What a book cannot convey, what a philosopher cannot truly explain, can be brought into our understanding through theater". These words were clearly on my mind whilst writing for a book, *The Power of Laughter*, an essay, with reference to some comedies that I saw when I first arrived Ireland in the late 1990s, on how I taught myself how to laugh at Irish jokes. Why? Because that was when the idea of modernizing Synge's masterpiece struck me.

As an immigrant myself, I thought it would be really cool to deploy the familiar story of Christy Mahon, the archetypal asylum seeker, in my view, to highlight the seemingly unfamiliar phenomenon of asylum seeking in Ireland and emphasize the fact that it ain't the real reason that made an immigrant flee his/her home country that will guarantee him or her a stay in a host country, but how compelling s/he communicates the reason, even if it's false.

The result is this new *Playboy* with Nigerian Christopher Malomo as its protagonist. Co-written by me and Roddy Doyle for Arambe Productions with an Arts Council of Ireland's commissioning grant, the play premiered at the Abbey Theater in 2007. It is delightful that this US premiere is finally happening. My gratitude to Solas Nua and Bowen University, Iwo, Nigeria, for making it possible for me to partake in it. I wish the entire cast and crew a great outing. To our esteemed audience, I say: *go raibh maith agat*. Enjoy!

- Bisi Adigun, PhD



# MEET THE ARTISTS

## **Bisi Adigun (Playwright)**

Bisi is a documentarist, percussionist, performing artist, dramatist, & theatre producer/director. Before joining Bowen University, Iwo, Nigeria as a senior lecturer in Oct. 2019, he was an adjunct lecturer of African Theatre & Performance Studies at Trinity College, earning his PhD in Drama. From 2000–2003, he co-presented MONO, RTE's flagship intercultural TV magazine program. He founded Arambe Productions, Ireland's first & only African theatre company. As its Artistic Director for over 16 years, he produced/directed 25+ productions in Ireland, Nigeria & USA. His 1st volume of plays, *An Other Playboy, The Butcher Babes & Home, Sweet Home (Three Plays)*, were published in 2018. He is currently editing a book of essays & tributes on Ola Rotimi, the renowned playwright/director & an adaptation of Brian Friel's *Philadelphia, Here I Come!*

## **Roddy Doyle (Playwright)**

Roddy Doyle is the author of eleven acclaimed novels, including *The Commitments*, *The Van* (a finalist for the Booker Prize), *Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha* (winner of the Booker Prize), *The Woman Who Walked Into Doors*, *A Star Called Henry*, and, most recently, *Smile*. Doyle has also written two collections of stories, and several works for children and young adults.

## **Ian Armstrong (Michael)**

Ian was born in Ottawa, raised in London and considers himself a DC native. A graduate of Woodrow Wilson PHS, The Corcoran School of Art (RIP), and The Catholic University of America, Ian has performed at Arena Stage, The Shakespeare Theatre, The Kennedy Center, The Folger Theatre, Taffety Punk Theatre, Rorschach Theatre, Scena Theatre, WSC/Avant Bard, and was a member of Source Theatre Company. He has served on the faculties of The Duke Ellington School of The Arts, The Kennedy Center Theatre For Young People, and was Drama Director at McLean PHS in Va. Favorite roles include Lord Byron at Taffety Punk, King John and Titus Andronicus at WSC/Avant Bard, and Hades at Rorschach The-

atre. Thanks to Adrienne Nelson.

## **Rebecca Ballinger (Pegeen)**

Rebecca is an actor and comedian. Her past credits include *The Outsider* and *Shakespeare in Love* at Keegan Theatre, *A Civil War Christmas* and *The Member of the Wedding* at 1st Stage, *Every Christmas Story Ever Told* and *Beehive* at NextStop Theatre, as well as *Make Way for Ducklings* and *Fairytales in the Sun* at Adventure Theatre. She has also understudied *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* at Studio Theatre as well as *Melancholy Play* and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* at Constellation Theatre. Becca has a BA in Theatre from The University of Maryland. [RebeccaBallinger.com](http://RebeccaBallinger.com)

## **Nadir Bey (Scenic designer)**

Nadir Bey is a Scene designer and Scenic artist who received his BFA from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA). DC based. He loves to challenge the main canon of theater, turning performances into all inclusive and immersive experiences. Selected Credits include *Seven Methods of Killing Kylie Jenner* (Brown), *The Agitators* (Theater at Monmouth), and *The Bacchae 2.1* (Hangar). Upcoming: *The Play-boy of the Western World* with Solas Nua.

**Delaney Bray (Sound Designer)** is very excited to be working with Solas Nua for the first time. Previous credits include *Beastgirl* (sound designer) and Acoustic Rooster's *Barnyard Boogie* (assistant sound designer) at the Kennedy Center, as well as audio engineering credits at Round House Theater, Constellation Theater Company, and Studio Theater. Outside of DC Delaney has worked at Barrington Stage Co., Delaware Shakespeare Festival, Colorado Shakespeare Festival, and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival.

## **Rex Daugherty (Producer/Dialect Coach)**

Rex is a DC based theatre artist and serves as the Artistic Director of Theatre at Solas Nua. Originally from Oklahoma City, both of his parents grew up on farms and taught him the value of hard work and good company. Rex has made the DC area his home since 2007, and he shares his life with his

wife, Lee, and son, Beckett. Beckett is 5 years old and loves to crash Zoom meetings. During his 7 years with Solas Nua, Rex has garnered international acclaim for his productions and earned multiple Helen Hayes Awards & nominations. His work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The Washington Post*, on the cover of *American Theatre Magazine*, *The Irish Times* and aired on RTE. Recently, his one-man show *The Smuggler* was listed by *The New York Times* as one of the best theatre productions of 2019, nationwide. [rex-daugherty.com](http://rex-daugherty.com)

### **Erin Denman (Sarah)**

Erin is thrilled to be working on her first show with Solas Nua. Originally from Minneapolis, Minnesota, Erin moved to DC to get her MFA from the Academy for Classical Acting in 2018. Locally, you may have seen her with Pipeline Playwrights, Flying V, and in Rorschach Theatre's *Klecksography*.

### **Mary Doebel (Assistant stage manager)**

Mary is a professional stage manager and actor. Mary has written, directed, and acted in her own play, produced 5 short films, was the lead in an immersive play and she was the director for an award winning 48 Hour Film Festival submission. Mary worked as a production assistant for Better Together Media Group, doing production and post-production work. Mary is currently working as a stage manager for Keegan Theatre for shows such as *N*, *An Irish Carol*, *Yoga Play*, and *The Outsider*. She was also an understudy and performed for one part in *An Irish Carol* and two parts in *The Outsider*. This will be Mary's second time working with Solas Nua, previously assistant stage managing *Maz and Bricks*. Mary is a proud graduate of The National Conservatory of Dramatic Arts acting program and advanced program

### **Shanara Gabrielle (Director)**

Shanara Gabrielle is a theatre artist working in a wide variety of mediums with a focus on gutsy, inventive, engaging theatre for all audiences. Driven by exploring stories of justice and tales of imagination, Shanara fosters new work and reimagines traditional texts with artists of courage and depth. Shanara has worked professionally at theaters across the country, including: Arena Stage, Signature Theatre,

Shakespeare Theatre, The Guthrie, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Great Lakes Theatre, Northern Stage, Idaho Shakespeare, Imagination Stage, Coterie Theater, Chesapeake Shakespeare, the cell nyc, Goethe Institut, Metropolitan Playhouse, St. Louis Rep, Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival, Stages, Theatre for the New City, Shakespeare Festival St. Louis, Hollywood Playhouse, The Black Rep, Upstream Theater, and many more. Shanara most recently spearheaded WORKING IN DC as the Artistic Producer, which performed on Black Lives Matter Plaza in collaboration with the national AFL-CIO. She has worked as an Artistic Associate at Arena Stage and in collaboration with Shakespeare Theatre Company. She is a proud member of SDC, AEA, and SAG-AFTRA and she loves to connect, so find her at [www.shanaragabrielle.com](http://www.shanaragabrielle.com) or IG: [@shanaragabrielle](https://www.instagram.com/shanaragabrielle)

### **Danielle Gallo (Honor)**

Danielle is absolutely thrilled to join the cast of *The Playboy of the Western World!* Previous credits include: *Spy Academy*, *S.P.I.E.S. II* and *Paper Dreams* at Imagination Stage; *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Love's Labor's Lost* at the Folger Shakespeare Theatre; *Romeo and Juliet* at Chesapeake Shakespeare Co.; *The Revolutionists* and *The Whole Shebang* at Prologue Theatre; *She Kills Monsters* and *Waiting for Iggy Pop* at Rorschach Theatre; *Enron* at 4615 Theatre Co.; and many more. Danielle also works as a Pre-K teacher at Bancroft Elementary School, is an international Brazilian Jiu Jitsu competitor, and has worked for gender and disability rights organizations across the world. Danielle has written award-winning plays, won Helen Hayes Awards for assistant directing work with Imagination Stage, and is an Equity Membership Candidate. [Danielle-Gallo.wix.com/work](http://Danielle-Gallo.wix.com/work)

### **Jonathan Holmes (Associate director)**

Jonathan is an actor, voiceover artist, teacher and director with over 30 years of professional experience. He has appeared on stages across Canada, UK, Australia and the US including work with Bristol Old Vic, Liverpool Everyman, Kneehigh Theatre, Richmond Gateway, Vancouver Arts Club, Manitoba Theatre Centre and Arena Stage. He has over 50 Film and Television credits to his name including *Rogue*, *Descendants*, *Almost Human*, *The 4400*, *Stargate: Atlan-*

tis and Peter Greenaway's *Nightwatching*. Recent highlights include creating the role of *The Childchewer* in the Steven Spielberg helmed *The BFG* and three seasons as William Barry on the Netflix series *Anne with an E*. His voice can be found on numerous animated series and can currently be heard as Runaan on the Emmy award winning Netflix series *The Dragon Prince*.

**James J. Johnson he/him (Malomo)** is excited to make his Solas Nua debut. He last appeared in the Olney Theatre Center's world premiere of *The Joy That Carries You*. Other credits include: Theater J/Folger Theatre: *Nathan the Wise*; Theater J: *Our Suburb*; Arena Stage: *Ruined*; 1st Stage: *Hero's Welcome*, *The Royale*; Mosaic Theatre Co.: *Les Deux Noirs*; Ford's Theatre: *The Member of the Wedding*; Woolly Mammoth Theatre: *The Unmentionables*; African-Continuum Theatre Co.: *Kingdom*, *Wedding Dance*; Imagination Stage: *Zomo the Rabbit*; Kennedy Center TYA: *Homer P. Figg*. EDUCATION: BFA in Theatre from Virginia Commonwealth University. James is also a founding member of Galvanize, a support network for local theatre artists of color.

### **Jamil Joseph (Christopher)**

Jamil is making his debut not only at Atlas but in the DC theatre scene. Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, from young he knew he had a passion for acting. He attended East Stroudsburg University where he majored in Theatre with a concentration in TV & Film. He was in shows such as *Spike Heels* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Post undergrad, theatre led him to Boston where he worked with Commonwealth Shakespeare Company doing shows such as *Measure for Measure*, *Julius Caesar* and *Romeo & Juliet*. In 2019 he moved to the DMV where he performed *Antigone*, directed by Danielle Drakes at Catholic University. This is his first show since then and he's excited to be working with such a wonderful cast. He wants to thank everyone in management and is grateful to be chosen for this opportunity and wants to thank his fiancée and son for their everlasting love and support

**Charlotte La Nasa (Assistant producer / community engagement)** - is a theater maker based in DC and Associate Artistic Director at NextStop Theatre Company in Herndon, VA. Directing credits include:

The Garden Script Development, Anacostia Playhouse, Rorschach Theater Company's Kleksography, Mosaic Theater Company's #Enough Festival and Shepherd University, as well as assistant directing at Olney Theater Center, Contemporary American Theater Festival and American Shakespeare Center. She has served as a new play dramaturg at Contemporary American Theater Festival, Prologue Theatre Company, 4615 Theater Company's DMV Q-Fest and The Garden Script Development. Her work as a playwright has been developed with Adventure Theater in Glen Echo, Maryland. Before coming to DC, Charlotte served in an inaugural role as the first full time theater director at Saint James School in Hagerstown, MD.

**James Lacey (Sean)** REGIONAL: *STC: Merchant of Venice* (Understudy), INTERNATIONAL: Tower Theatre: *Hamlet* (London), Teatro Technis: *Antony & Cleopatra* (London), Bloomsbury Festival: *Orphée* (London), Festival of Ancient Messene: *The Bacchae* (Greece). FILM: *Butcher, The Queue*. OTHER: Founding Member of The Undertow Collective. PERSONAL: he/him/his. ABOUT: James is a British-Paraguyan Artist and Singer-Songwriter who has worked globally performing classical and devised theatre. TRAINING: The Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (RADA): MA, The Academy for Classical Acting at the STC: MFA

### **Rachel Lawhead (Susan)**

Rachel is a New York based nonbinary actor who is overjoyed to be back home in DC for this production! They graduated from the University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater BFA Actor Training Program in 2019, found themselves dungeoning lots of dragons during the pandemic, and moved to NYC in the summer of 2021. Some of their more favorite recent roles have been Louise in *Always*, Patsy Cline and Trinculo in *The Tempest*. Much love to their partner, roommates, and precious kitty Rita.

### **Jessica Lefkow (Widow Quin)**

Jessica was last seen at Solas Nua in *In the Middle of the Fields*. Other local credits; Olney Theater Center, 1st Stage, Keegan Theatre, Taffety Punk Theatre Company, Solas Nua, We Happy Few DC, Brave Spirits Theatre Company, dog&ponydc. Regional/touring credits; American Shakespeare Center, Gulfshore Playhouse. Nominee, 2021 Helen

Hayes Awards, Best Supporting Actress (Helen), *We Happy Few's Lover's Vows*. Lecturing Professor, Montgomery County Community College. BFA (Acting), The Catholic University of America; MFA, Classical Acting, GWU/STC. Equity Member Candidate; Member, AFTRA; Mom to DJE. [www.jessicalefkow.com](http://www.jessicalefkow.com)

### **Dean Leong (Master electrician)**

Dean Leong is a freelance Lighting Designer from the Washington DC area. Recent design credits include: Lighting: *Our Town*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and *The Wolves* with CUA Drama Dept. *A Tuna Christmas*, *BURST*, and *Ghost Light* with Parlor Room Theater Co. *The Infinite Tales*, *Museum 2040*, and *Tempered: A Caberet* with 4615 Theatre Co. *Chemical Exile: Synthesis*, *Dracula: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy*, *Really* with Rorschach Theater Co. Scenic: *The Wolves* with CUA Drama Dept. *Museum 2040* with 4615 Theater Co. He would like to thank his wife and daughter for their love and support. To view more of his work you can visit: [www.deanleongdesigns.com](http://www.deanleongdesigns.com)

### **Sulmane Maigadi (cultural consultant)**

Sulmane is a graduate of both Gordon-Conwell and ECWA Theological Seminary with a background in theatre, scriptwriting, and television. He is a teacher and pastor currently serving at the Church of the Resurrection. His writing and acting credits include *The Unveiled Truth* (TV Series 2013), *E.V.E - Audi Alteram Partem* (TV Series 2018- ), *Last Stand* (Theatre Premiere Production - 2014), *Innate* (Movie: Post-Production), and *MLK: A Tunnel of Hope* (Theatre, Ongoing).

### **Matthew Pauli (Philly)**

Matthew is an actor, clown, and puppeteer. In the DC area, he has performed with Faction of founders of Clown Cabaret, a performance laboratory for developing clown work. He toured for six seasons with Big Apple Circus and is a Red Nose Doc for Healthy Humor Inc, performing clown rounds at Johns Hopkins Hospital and National Children's Medical

Center. He is a graduate of Georgetown University, as well as the Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Clown College, and has an MFA from the Shakespeare Theatre Academy for Classical Acting at the George Washington University.

### **Danielle Preston (Costume designer)**

Danielle Preston (she/her) is a costume designer based in Washington DC. Previous Solas Nua production includes *The Frederick Douglass Project*. Recent selected DC credits include: *The Till Trilogy*, *Private*, and *Dear Mapel* at *Mosaic Theater Company*, and *The Joy That Carries You* at Olney Theatre. Regional credits include *Schoolgirls; Or The African Mean Girls Play* and *The Realness* at the Hangar Theatre, *Quamino's Map* at Chicago Opera Theater, and *B.R.O.K.E.N. Code B.I.R.D. Switching* at Berkshire Theatre Group. Off-Broadway credits include *Where Words Once Were* at the Lincoln Center. Preston holds an MFA in Costume Design from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. She is a proud member of United Scenic Artists Local 829. [daniellepreston.com](http://daniellepreston.com)

### **Sarah Tundermann (Lighting Designer)**

Sarah is excited to be working with Solas Nua for the first time. Recent regional lighting design credits include *Dance Nation*, *The Royale* (in co-production with 1st Stage), *Tiger Style*, and *Annie* (Olney Theatre Center); *Mlima's Tale* (1st Stage); *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, *Thumbelina*, *Zomo*, *Charlotte's Web* (Imagination Stage); *Super Cello*, *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive The Bus* (Kennedy Center); *Berta Berta*, *Cry it Out*, *Queens Girl: Black in the Green Mountains* (Everyman Theatre); *She the People* (Second City at Woolly Mammoth); *Twilight Los Angeles: 1992*, *Things That Are Round* (REP Stage). EDUCATION: MFA in lighting design from the University of Maryland. Sarah resides in Baltimore with her dog Jinx Monsoon and two kittens Billie & Olive.

### **Regina Vitale (Stage Manager)**

Regina is overjoyed to be joining Solas

Nua for the first time. She is a freelance SM in the DC area. Most recently stage managing *Little Women* at NextStop. She would like to thank her whole family for their support of her theater career even through the pandemic, particularly Heather and Ted. And her partner Nicole because "With her beside me, anything is possible."

**Sierra Young (Fight and Intimacy Director; she/her)**

Sierra is a multi-hyphenate artist in the DC/Baltimore area. She is an Advanced Actor Combatant with the Society of American Fight Directors, as well as a member of Intimacy Directors & Coordinators and the Stage Directors & Choreographers Society. She is the Resident Fight & Intimacy Director for Mosaic Theater Company. Recent DC credits include *Fantastagirl* and *How I Became A Pirate* (Adventure Theatre MTC); *Red Velvet* (Shakespeare Theatre Company); *Birds of North America*, *Mary's Seacole*, *The Till Trilogy* (Mosaic); *Ain't No Mo'* (Woolly Mammoth). Recent regional credits: *Aida*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Rent*, and *Snapshots* (ArtsCentric); *The Color Purple* (Cape Fear Regional Theatre); *Fences* (Nat'l Players); *The Joy That Carries You* and *AD16* (Olney Theatre Center); *World Builders* (Prologue Theatre). Training: UMBC  
sierrayoung.org

## SOLAS NUA STAFF

**Miranda Driscoll (Executive Director)**

- is a senior arts manager, multidisciplinary cultural producer/curator and artistic director from Dublin. She was the Director of Sirius Arts Centre in Cobh, Co. Cork, Ireland, from 2014-2019 and co-founder and Director of the Joinery; a multidisciplinary art space, Dublin, from 2007-2014. She lectured on the BA Photography program at IADT Dublin from 2011-2014. She has a Masters in Art in the Contemporary World from NCAD, Dublin and a BA in Photography from IADT, Dublin.

Miranda's experience includes strategic development, event production and management, creative partnerships, international, national and community-based initiatives. She has curated, produced and managed over 500 projects, performances, exhibitions and small festivals across the full spectrum of disciplines in Ireland and the US over the last 14 years.

**Rex Daugherty (Artistic Director of Theatre) - (see bio in Meet the Artists)**

**Seán Wrenn (Website & Digital Content Manager/Assistant Producer of ClIFF)** - is a native of Grange, County Limerick and has been working professionally in film production for over a decade, covering various production styles, including News, PSA's, music videos, online video advertising and promotional strategies, bumper reels, comedic and dramatic short films, as well as experimental video art. He was involved in over 200 video productions during his three and a half years as the Co-Director, lead cameraman and webmaster of *I Love Limerick Ltd*. In April of 2013, Seán was a recipient of a Mayoral reception hosted by Mayor of Limerick Gerry McLoughlin, in honor of his work with *I Love Limerick Ltd*. and his support of the charitable organizations they worked with in communities throughout Limerick City & County. Seán is the programmer for the *ClIFF@Home film* series.

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and share the show!**

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Twitter: @SolasNuacht  
Instagram: @SolasNua\_**

# DIRECTOR'S NOTES

It's thrilling to join Solas Nua in staging this classic Irish play, boldly reimagined by Roddy Doyle and Bisi Adigun. The tension of the play's main question is palpable in our society today: do we create our own identities, through the stories we tell about ourselves, or is our community responsible for who we become? Christy, a stranger to this Irish town, is trapped not only by the story he tells about himself, but also by the expectations and assumptions of a community that is all too ready to see him as "other." In the brilliant reimagining of Christy as a Black man, Doyle and Adigun show us how this white community projects their preconceived notions on an outsider.

The original 1907 production of *The Playboy of the Western World* caused riots when it was first performed in Dublin, and it's easy to see why. The play contains a wide spectrum of human behavior - both heroic and contemptible, often embodied in the same characters: the absurd, the despicable, the tender, the shocking, the mundane. It's often laugh-out-loud funny - but we might suddenly ask ourselves why we're laughing! But this is what makes the play true to the roots of human experience; perhaps it's vital to be left at the end with more questions than answers.

This production doesn't pull any punches, and neither does this group of brave theatre artists who have collaborated to bring the story to life. Laugh with us, gasp with us, and join us in this head-snapping, roller-coaster-ride - because everybody loves a good story!

**- Shanara Gabrielle**

## THANK YOU

Solas Nua is generously supported by The DC Commission on Arts and Humanities, Culture Ireland, The Government of Ireland, The Northern Ireland Bureau, The Share Fund and Aer Lingus.

This production of *The Playboy of the Western World* was underwritten by Christy Hall and Raindrop Valley Inc. Additional support from Christopher and Janet Griffin.

Special thanks to Solas Nua Cairde Members Paddy and Darlene Meskell, Dennis Houlihan and Mimi Conway, Margaret Hennessy, Anna McGowan, David and Jean Grier. Additional thanks to The National Conservatory of Dramatic Arts, Catholic University of America, Davis Performing Arts Center, Global Irish Studies at Georgetown University, Bowen University - Iwo, Alli Pearson, Hailey LaRoe, Gordon Nimmo-Smith, Thomas Keegan, Alec Wild, Matthew Ripa, the wonderful staff at The Atlas Performing Arts Center.

# **PRAISE FOR SOLAS NUA**

**DC MAYOR'S ARTS AWARD FOR INNOVATION IN THE ARTS**

**HELEN HAYES AWARD-WINNING COMPANY**

**"BEST OF THE YEAR."**

**- The New York Times**

**"It exemplifies the International art scene as surely as any  
one country can."**

**- The Washington Post**

**"Ingenious...there is no better group to bring live theatre  
back to the District."**

**- Washington City Paper**

**"Catch super stories, haunting sounds and intriguing  
conversations at Solas Nua."**

**- The Irish Times**

# COMING UP NEXT

## **The Lighthouse Keeper's Son - Theatre || 12.2.22**

**by Hannah Khalil**

Saturday, December 2nd at 7:00 PM

St. Thomas' Parish, 1517 18th St NW, Washington, DC 20036

Free, donations welcome. Register online.

*Join us for an afternoon with a new play read by some of DC's most talented performers, followed by a post-show discussion with Artistic Director of Theatre, Rex Daugherty.*

## **A poetry reading with Jessica Traynor and Victoria Kennefick - Literature || 12.7.22**

Wednesday, December 7th at 6:00 PM

NYU Washington, D.C., 1307 L St NW, Washington, DC 20005

Free, donations welcome. Register online.

*Solas Nua, in partnership with Global Irish Studies at Georgetown University and NYU DC Dialogues are delighted to welcome poets Jessica Traynor and Victoria Kennefick to Washington, D.C. The readings and discussion will be moderated by C oilin Parsons, Associate Professor of English and Director of Global Irish Studies at Georgetown University.*

## **Maija Sofia, Imbolc - Music || 2.1.23**

Wednesday, February 1st at 8:00 PM

St. Thomas' Parish, 1517 18th St NW, Washington, DC 20036

Free, donations welcome. Register online.

*Solas Nua is delighted to present Imbolc, a new work written and performed by Irish folk singer-songwriter from County Galway, Maija Sofia. Commissioned by Solas Nua especially for St. Brigid's Day (Imbolc), for this unique event, Maija Sofia will perform this new piece live for the first time in the intimate, modernist setting of St. Thomas's Parish, an Episcopal church in Washington, D.C.*

## **Capital Irish Film Festival (CIFF) - Film || 3.2 - 3.5.23**

Thursday-Sunday, March 2-5, screening times will vary.

AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center, 8633 Colesville Rd, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Passes on sale this December. Visit [SolasNua.org](http://SolasNua.org) for more information.

*Solas Nua's Capital Irish Film Festival has been showing Irish films, and films by Ireland-based filmmakers annually for 17 years. The four-day festival is based at the historic art deco American Film Institute's Silver Theatre & Cultural Center in Silver Spring MD.*

**Don't miss a moment of this exciting season.**

**Subscribe to our email list today!**

**[SolasNua.org](http://SolasNua.org)**