

## ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Brian Friel was born in Omagh, County Tyrone, Ireland, in 1929. Friel's father was a native of Derry and his mother was from Donegal. In 1939, the family moved to Derry when Friel's father accepted a teaching position there. Friel attended the national seminary, St. Patrick's College near Dublin. He chose to take a post-graduate course in teaching rather than enter the priesthood. Friel returned to Derry in 1950 to teach, and wrote on the side.

A towering figure in Irish literature, Friel's stories, translations, and plays have been published all over the world. His most produced play to date, *DANCING AT LUGHNASA*, received three Tony Awards in 1992. Recently, Friel was honored with a retrospective of his work at the 2009 Edinburgh Festival.

Friel co-founded the Field Day Theatre Company, which committed itself to the search for "a middle ground between the country's entrenched positions" to help the Irish explore new identities for themselves. I believe *TRANSLATIONS* is the play that most embodies that mission, by offering us a moment of recognition in which we can hear the same language. But even if we learn the words and grammar, "will that help us distinguish between privacies? I have no idea. I have no idea at all. But it's all we have."

## FURTHER READING

Herity, Michael. *Ordnance Survey Letters Donegal*. (Dublin 2000; preface Brian Friel, Four Masters Press).

Moody, T.W. and Martin, F.X. (ed.). *The Course of Irish History*. (Cork, Ireland 1995; Mercier Press).

Roche, Anthony (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Brian Friel*. (Cambridge 2006; Cambridge Univ. Press).

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## COMING UP AT THE SCHOOL OF DRAMA

### **Bat Boy: The Musical**

book and lyrics by  
Keythe Farley & Brian Flemming  
music by Laurence O'Keefe  
directed by Scott Hafso  
April 25 - May 9  
Meany Studio Theatre  
(in partnership with the  
Undergraduate Theater Society)

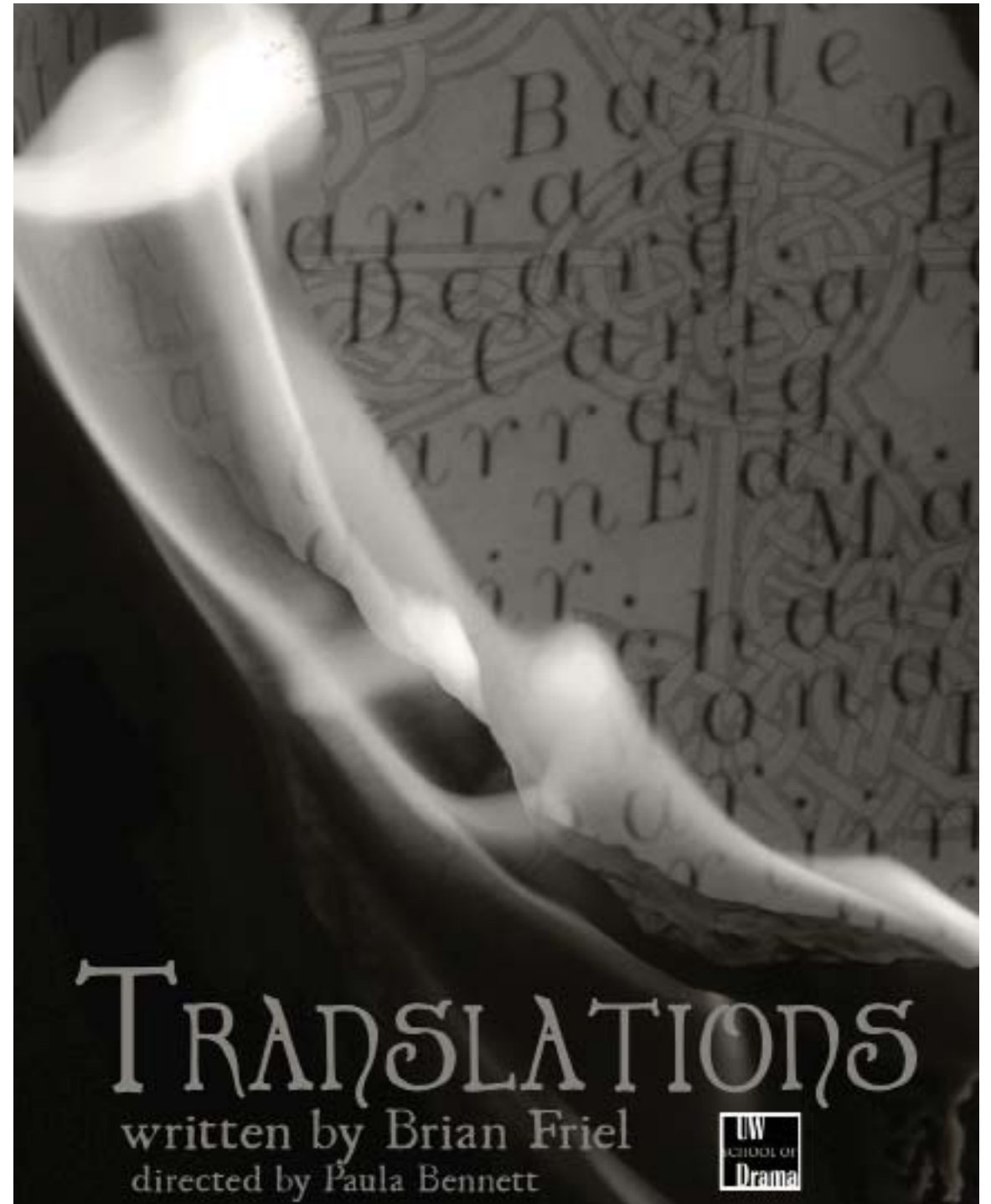
### **A U-Dubber Night's Dream**

based on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*  
adapted by Alison Carey  
directed by Geoff Korf  
May 23 - June 6  
Jones Playhouse

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# TRANSLATIONS

by Brian Friel

directed by Paula Bennett\*

Costume Design  
Anastasia Armes\*

Scenic Design  
Michael Minahan\*

Lighting Design  
Emily Van Winkle\*

Stage Manager  
Adrienne Mendoza

Sound Design  
Paula Bennett\* and Steve Brush

Production Stage Manager  
Conner Rich

.....

Technical Director  
Alan Weldin

Assistant Stage Manager  
Heather D'Arnell

Prop Master  
Andrew Mannion\*

Assistant Costume Designer  
Jenn Hill

Construction Crew  
Jinseok Lee\*  
Christopher Mumaw\*

Light Board Operator  
Ellen Bloss

Costume Shop Crew  
Linnaea Boone-Wilson\*  
Rachel Apatoff\*  
Thorn Michaels\*  
Candace Frank\*  
Elena Flory-Barnes

Scenic Artists  
Christopher Mumaw\*  
Elaine Colette Huber  
Katherine Parker

Sound Board Operator  
Johnson Yang

Running Crew  
Jeremy Spektor  
Duc Nguyen  
Muad Musead  
Sarah Winsor  
Alexei Menedes

Electrics Crew  
Conner Rich  
Evan Anderson  
Skylar Hansen

Costume Crew  
Bridget Scott  
Natalie Kim  
Aara Saldaña  
Jessica Sugianto  
Geoff Brown  
Raina Turner

Hair/Makeup Styling  
Anastasia Armes\*

Irish Language Instructor  
Liam O baoighill

Greek and Latin Instructor  
Prof. Stephen E. Hinds

\* Indicates a member of the Master in Fine Arts program in directing or design.

Acknowledgements: Bobbin Ramsey, Aomawa Shields, Garland Shields, Tiffany Krusey, Ben Barnes, "Grandy," School of Drama Faculty and Staff, and Howard and Joan Voorheis.

*Translations* is produced by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

# CAST

Manus Barry Cogswell\*  
Sarah Kayla Lian\*  
Jimmy Jack James Thomas Patrick  
Maire Heather Rash\*  
Doalty Scott Ward Abernethy\*  
Bridget Amy Frear\*  
Hugh Steven Shields  
Owen Stephen Levall\*  
Captain Lancey Matt Giampietro\*  
Lieutenant Yolland Jason Sanford\*  
Soldiers Ben Phillips  
Walter Ray

\* Indicates a member of the Professional Actor Training Program (MFA).

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## ABOUT THE PLAY

The action takes place in and around a Hedge school in the townland of Baile Beag/Ballybeg, an Irish speaking community in County Donegal, Ireland.

### ACT ONE

An afternoon in late August, 1833.

### ACT TWO, scene 1

A few days later.

### INTERMISSION

### ACT TWO, scene 2

One night later.

### ACT THREE

The following evening.

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The performance runs 2 hours and 15 minutes including an intermission.

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### Very Special Thanks to:

Marenakos Rock Center: Scott Hackney and Wayne Ross, for loaning the rock.  
Exteriorscapes: Cameron Scott, Betsy Anderson, Edwin Romero and Chris Segawa for building our traditional Irish drystack stone wall.

# Translations

## Historical Context

### Life Under the Penal Laws

At the beginning of the 18th cent., the colonial government of Ireland enacted Penal Laws which decreed that a Catholic could not hold any office of state, stand for Parliament, vote, join the army or navy, practice at the bar, or buy land. By 1778 a mere five per cent of the land was owned by Catholics. As a result, Irish Catholics suffered severe discrimination, poverty, and hardship.

### The 1798 Rebellion

The French Revolution of 1789 jolted Irish political thinking into a new framework. Events in France and in America, coupled with grievances against British Imperialist powers, inspired thoughts of an Irish Republic and a rebellion. This culminated in the Rebellion of 1798, led by Wolfe Tone and the Society of United Irishmen. The rebellion failed, resulting in a large number of executions and the passing of the Act of Union in 1800, which brought Ireland under the direct rule of the British Crown. In the play, Hugh remembers riding off to join the battle, but he and Jimmy Jack go back home instead of fighting.

### Daniel O'Connell

In the play, Marie refers to Daniel O'Connell as "the liberator." He was a politician, grass-roots organizer and one of the first Catholics to enter the legal profession. He championed the movement for Catholic Emancipation, which repealed laws that limited voting rights and educational opportunities for Catholics. He set up organizations to raise money for the cause of Emancipation, namely, the Catholic Association. He also campaigned for the repeal of the Act of Union, for universal suffrage, and for a secret ballot for parliamentary elections. O'Connell is one of the most significant figures in Irish history. The main street in Dublin, O'Connell Street, is named after him.

### Hedge Schools

One of the first of the Penal Laws was "The Act to Restrain Foreign Education" which made it illegal for Irish Catholics to study abroad. There was also a domestic provision added to this forbidding "any person what so ever of the popish religion [Catholicism] to publicly teach school or instruct youth in learning." The laws resulted in the creation of an underground Hedge school system. Hedge schools have been called a kind of 'guerilla war' in education. They were run by Catholic schoolmasters who risked severe fines and even imprisonment. Classes were typically taught in Irish. Hedge schools got their name from hiding classrooms at the bottom of a hedge, but it was just as common to find a school in a dry ditch, a barn, or any abandoned ruin. When the Penal Laws were relaxed in 1782, the schools became legal. Hedge schools were the primary source of Catholic education from 1700 to 1841. During the rebellion of 1798, many hedge schoolmasters and students were members of secret agrarian societies (rebel organizations) like the ribbonmen and the whiteboys. Laurence O'Connor, a Hedge schoolmaster, was hanged for his known involvement in the United Irishmen. Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* and *Age of Reason* were widely circulated with the help of Hedge schools.

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## Historical Context, con't.

### National Schools

In 1831, Chief Secretary Stanley introduced a system of free National Education in Ireland where English was the sole medium of instruction. Irish Catholics accepted the new schools because Catholic priests were allowed to teach and assist with school management. At the time of TRANSLATIONS, Ireland is in the process of switching from Hedge schools to National Schools. By the mid 1850's, nearly all Hedge schools were gone.

### The 1830's Ordnance Survey Ireland

The Irish Survey was established in 1824 to provide a highly detailed (1:10560, 6 inches to 1 mile) survey of the whole of the island of Ireland. From 1825-46, teams of surveyors, led by officers of the Royal Engineers and men from the ranks of the Royal Sappers and Miners, traversed Ireland, thereby creating a unique record of a landscape undergoing rapid transformation.

To collect the place names for the new map, the ordnance survey employed the services of a scholar named John O'Donovan who visited every county in Ireland to check the names and local pronunciations. While recording this orthography, O'Donovan suggested Anglicized versions of the names which would appear on the maps. O'Donovan was the inspiration for the character of Owen in the play.

### Famine

TRANSLATIONS is situated 12 years prior to the start of the Great Famine. In 1833, there had already been smaller recurring famines, indicated by repeated references to the ominous "sweet smell" of potato blight in the play.

In the Great Famine (1845 – 1851), over a million people died, either from starvation or from cholera and other famine induced diseases and over 1.5 million people emigrated. Before the famine, more than 8 million people lived in Ireland. By the end of the century, the population had fallen to 4.5 million, roughly the level of today. The Great Famine played a decisive role in the decline of the Irish language, as it hit the poorer, Irish speaking rural areas of the West and South-West of Ireland the hardest.

### The Decline of the Irish (Gaelic) Language

In the beginning of the 19th century, more than half of Ireland's population was Irish speaking or bilingual. By the time of the 1851 Census, the figure had fallen to 30 per cent and by 1871, to a mere 13 to 14 per cent. The introduction of the National School system to Ireland, which enforced English as the exclusive medium for teaching, the Great Famine and the desire to learn English in order to immigrate to America were the most significant factors in the decline of the Irish language.

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