

PRESS RELEASE – Wednesday September 17, 2008

YOUNG THEATRE CRITICS MAKE THEMSELVES HEARD AT THE ULSTER BANK DUBLIN THEATRE FESTIVAL

**Sunday October 5, 1pm, FREE EVENT
Project Arts Centre, Dublin.**

“For me, as a theatre critic, editor, and educator... this programme ticks so many of my boxes I barely know where to begin. I believe passionately that high-quality criticism is an essential element of every artistic milieu, and that being a critic is an important, challenging, and rewarding undertaking.

Responding critically to theatre is a way to develop communication skills; it's a way to better understand and analyse the relationship between all the elements of performance; and it's a means towards the development of confident and independent voice and personal aesthetic.”

- Karen Fricker, Theatre Critic

The grand finale to a great year for the NAYD Young Critics' Programme will be a panel discussion as part of the *Ulster Bank Dublin Theatre Festival*. The **National Association for Youth Drama (NAYD) Young Critics' Panel** will be held on Sunday October 5th, 1pm at Project Arts Centre.

This will give 16 young people aged 16-18, from all over Ireland, an opportunity to air their views and critical opinions on the 7 productions they have seen throughout the year, including three new productions in **the *Ulster Bank Dublin Theatre Festival 2008***.

The young people will work with leading theatre critic Karen Fricker to review and assess:

- The National Theatre of Scotland's *Blackwatch* by Gregory Burke.
- *Dodgems* by CoisCeim Dance Theatre, directed and choreographed by David Bolger, written by Charlie O'Neill.
- Victoria and Tim Etchells production of *That Night Follows Day*.

Theatre critic for Variety (US) Dr. Fricker will show the young critics how to assess a production and critique it constructively. Co-founder and former Editor in Chief (1998-2005) of Irish Theatre Magazine, she is

now based in London where she is Lecturer in Drama at Royal Holloway University of London.

Building on the success of the last few years, NAYD has developed and expanded the Young Critics Programme in 2008. The young people have come together **3** times over the year to see shows, give their opinions and discuss theatre in general with Karen Fricker and youth drama practitioner, Sarah FitzGibbon.

In addition to the Theatre Festival productions, in April they attended *The Last Days Of The Celtic Tiger* by Ross O'Carroll Kelly in The Olympia Theatre and *Burial At Thebes*; A version of Sophocles' Antigone by Seamus Heaney in the Peacock. In June they attended *The Weir* by Conor McPherson at The Gate and *Three Sisters* by Chekhov (in a version by Brian Friel) at the Abbey.

The Young Critics' Programme is part of NAYD's commitment to developing youth theatre members' awareness and appreciation of the aesthetic of theatre.

The Young Critics' Programme brings youth theatre members together to:

- attend workshops in the critique of professional theatre
- attend professional performances at leading Irish festivals
- give their own critiques of the performances at the Young Critics Panel

NAYD is the development organisation for youth drama and youth theatre in Ireland, with a focus on developing theatre for young people aged between 12-25 years.

LISTINGS INFORMATION

WHAT: NAYD Young Critics' Panel

WHO: Young people reviewing *Dodgems*, *Black Watch* and *As Night Follows Day*.

WHERE: Project Arts Centre, Essex St. Dublin 2

WHEN: Sunday October 5th at 1pm

ADMISSION: FREE

NAYD is principally funded by The Arts Council, the Department of Education (Youth Affairs Section), FÁS and is also affiliated to the National Youth Council of Ireland.

The Ulster Bank Dublin Theatre Festival 2008 runs at various venues throughout the city from 22nd September until 12th October. www.dublintheatrefestival.com booking 01 677 88 99

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