



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact:  
Ron Steelman, Director of Marketing  
Phone: (732) 345-1400  
Fax: (732) 345-1414  
email: [steelman@trtc.org](mailto:steelman@trtc.org)

Robert M. Rechnitz  
Executive Producer

Jonathan Fox  
Artistic Director

Joan H. Rechnitz  
Associate Producer

## **Two River Theatre Offers the Quentin Tarantino of the Emerald Isle**

(RED BANK, NJ) The highly acclaimed Irish drama, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* (pronounced "lee-nahn"), produced by the Two River Theatre Company, will arrive on the shores of the Irish Riviera January 20, 2005 at the Algonquin Arts Theatre in Manasquan. Written by the young Anglo-Irish sensation, Martin McDonagh, this riveting drama was a true Broadway hit, receiving four Tonys® and a long list of other awards, including the Theatre World Award, the Drama Desk Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award, and the Drama League Award.

Set in the mountains of Ireland, the play centers around the destructive relationship between a lonely woman in her forties and her controlling, manipulative mother. The daughter's first and possibly last chance at love is too much for Mom to bear. Critics have compared McDonagh to great Irish writers such as J.M. Synge, Sean O'Casey, and Samuel Beckett. Yet this playwright's startling new voice is also indebted to American theater and movies, plus a dash of punk.

"I suppose I walk that line between comedy and cruelty," admits McDonagh, "because I think one illuminates the other. And, yeah, I tend to push things as far as I can. It's like a John Woo or a Tarantino scene, where the characters are doing awful things and, simultaneously, talking about everyday things in a really humorous way. There is a humor in there that is straight-ahead and funny and uncomfortable. It makes you laugh and think."

More than writers of the theater, McDonagh says his greatest influences are film-makers (Scorcese, Lynch, Malick, Tarantino) and musicians (Nirvana, The Sex Pistols, The Pogues).

The mother, Mag, is one of the great comic monsters of the stage - senile, yet bubbling with malicious energy. Her main goal in life is to keep her daughter, Maureen, waiting on her hand and foot. The only pleasure left to Maureen is to torment and humiliate her mother in return. As mother and daughter engage in their lethal bickering, the playwright forces the

(more)

audience to shift allegiances from one character to another throughout the play, until the dark comedic plot hurtles towards its shocking and terrifying dénouement.

*The Beauty Queen of Leenane* is the first in a trilogy of plays set in a remote small town in County Galway, Ireland. It is just one of many plays penned by this prolific writer, who, in 1999, was the most produced playwright (next to Shakespeare) in North America. He also works quickly, writing *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* in only 8 days.

Actress and TRTC Board member, Maureen Silliman, returns to play the dutiful spinster daughter, after previous TRTC appearances as Annie in *The Real Thing* and Sonia in *Uncle Vanya*. Maureen has appeared on Broadway, off-Broadway, in regional theaters all across the country, and while on the west coast, won the Los Angeles Drama Critics Award and the Dramalogue Award for her performance in *Blue Window*. Jennifer Sternberg, who plays Mag, has appeared on Broadway in *The Unexpected Man*, *Honour*, *Shadowlands*, and *Good* (RSC), in *Brontosaurus* in Vienna (directed by Edward Albee), and a host of off-Broadway, regional and television productions. Peter Reardon as Pato, the gentleman caller, has appeared on Broadway in *Urinetown*, *Passion*, *Meet Me in St. Louis*, and *La Cage aux Folles*. Daniel Loeser, playing Pato's cheeky, younger brother Ray, has appeared in numerous productions for The Denver Center Theatre Company and is a recent M.F.A. graduate from The National Theatre Conservatory. The set and costumes have been designed by TRTC regulars Harry Feiner and Deborah Caney. Lighting is by Brenda Veltrie and sound design is by Kevin Dunayer.

TRTC's season will continue with the hauntingly beautiful *The Syringa Tree* and the hilarious comedy *You Can't Take It With You*. Three-play subscriptions are still available for \$57.75 - \$101.25, and \$30 for full-time students and patrons under the age of 26. TRTC is also offering the Two River Pass for \$101.25, which enables patrons to guarantee themselves tickets without having to commit to performance dates ahead of time. Single tickets are \$24 to \$40, with discounts for patrons over 65. Groups of ten or more are eligible for discounts. Performances are at the Algonquin Arts Theatre in Manasquan, NJ from January 20 - February 6, and tickets are available online at [www.trtc.org](http://www.trtc.org), or by calling 732-345-1400.

For more information and up-to-date photos of TRTC's new Red Bank theater (opening in May 2005), visit: [www.trtc.org](http://www.trtc.org).

# # # #