



DECADENT and GALWAY ARTS CENTRE present

Donal Ryan's
**FROM A LOW
AND QUIET SEA**

Directed by Andrew Flynn

with AOSAF AFZAL, EVA BARTLEY,
DENIS CONWAY, STEPHEN O'LEARY

GAIETY
THEATRE

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**FROM A LOW
AND QUIET SEA**

Cast in order of appearance

John	Denis Conway
Farouk	Aosaf Afzal
Lampy	Stephen O'Leary
Florence	Eva Bartley

From a Low and Quiet Sea premiered in
the 2022 Galway International Arts Festival.
The production was adapted for the stage
in a collaborative way by Donal Ryan,
Andrew Flynn and the original cast actors.

GAIETY
THEATRE



Directed by	Andrew Flynn
Lighting Design	Ciaran Bagnall
Composer/Sound Design	Carl Kennedy
Backdrop Design	Ger Sweeney
Costume Design	Sara Ben-Abdallah
Set Construction	Brian Moroney
Tour Set Construction	Simon Daly
Scenic Painter	Ger Sweeney
Set Crew	Simon Daly
LX Technician	Ann Marie Langan
Stage Manager	Rae Visser
Production	Mattie Hynes
	Mark Byrne
Graphic Design	Brendan Foreman
Photography	Declan Colohan

Running time: 2 hours 15 minutes, including interval.

Special thanks for Script Workshops and Development:

Backstage Longford Activate Residency, Bríd Ní Neachtain, Frankie McCafferty, Kyle Hixon, Curtis Lee, Declan Conlon, Sashi Rami, Cathal Ryan and Denis Conway.

Thanks to: Paul Fahy and all at Galway International Arts Festival, Mona Considine and the staff of Backstage Theatre, Megs Morley and the staff at Galway Arts Centre, Fergal McGrath and all at Galway Town Hall, Peter Ashton, Shantalla Community Centre, Eilish McCarthaigh, Eva Birthistle, Melanie Scott and Tipperary Arts Festival.



Q & A with Andrew Flynn, Decadent Theatre Company Artistic Director

Andrew Flynn is Artistic Director of Decadent Theatre Company. One of Ireland's busiest creatives, he directed the Irish premiere of Martin McDonagh's *Hangmen* which just wrapped sold-out runs in Dublin and Galway. Later in 2023 will see Andrew direct *Every Brilliant Thing* in the Galway International Arts Festival in July and Billy Roche's *As Such As We* in Nov/Dec in The Jerome Hynes Theatre in the National Opera House, Wexford.

How did you go about sourcing the theatre rights for From a Low and Quiet Sea and arrange for yourself and author Donal Ryan to adapt it?

From A Low and Quiet Sea began life as a novel. It is a brilliant work of fiction that came from Donal's imagination. A novel is a very different form of literature to a play. I was in awe of Donal's skill and talent from reading *The Spinning Heart*. Then I read *The Thing About December* and I fell in love with that book. I approached Donal about trying to adapt it for the stage and through the great work of Jarlath Tivnan and a brilliant cast, we staged *The Thing About December* in 2019. In 2020 the world stopped, and I approached Donal about adapting *From a Low and Quiet Sea*. The novel had wonderful characters and three

separate stories, and I spent several months editing the book, trying to distil the novel into a dramatic text. Several workshops with great actors and Donal were facilitated where we challenged and tested the work. This continued in rehearsals, and we finally had a show in July 2022.

Given the four stories intertwining in the piece, I wonder how much were the cast involved in structuring the final work as it appears on stage?

The cast and actors were central to the process. The workshops and rehearsals were very collaborative and together we helped shape and edit the dramatic text.

In respect of designing the play, what were your considerations as a director?

The play is all about the characters, their stories, and words. The design needed to be very simple, it needed to provide a space where the characters can exist but would never distract or take away from the play's language and words. In truth, this play goes back to the very essence of theatre. All you need is the actor, a space and the audience.

What is next for Decadent after this tour?

Following the tour Decadent will mount a production of a Duncan McMillan play at the Galway International Arts Festival in July. Then the company will embark on a winter production of *On Such as We* by Billy Roche.

Andrew Flynn and Donal Ryan were recipients of a 2021 Elevate bursary grant to adapt and workshop the script of *From a Low and Quiet Sea*. Decadent Theatre Company and Galway Arts Centre gratefully acknowledges the support of the Arts Council of Ireland/An Chomhairle Ealaíon and Galway County Council and RTÉ Supporting the Arts.



Denis Conway | John

Denis is delighted to work with Andrew Flynn again having recently played Harry in the Irish premiere of Martin McDonagh's *Hangmen*, directed by Andrew and produced by Gaiety Productions in association with Decadent Theatre Company. It was Denis' third role in a McDonagh play having previously played Coleman in *The Lonesome West* in Dublin and Donny in *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* in the West End. He recently filmed a Netflix TV series, *Bodkin*, and worked in the UK on *Alone in Berlin*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Wallenstein* and Gloucester in *King Lear* at Chichester and New York.

Abbey Theatre highlights: Hugh in *Translations* and Hjalmar Ekdal in *The Wild Duck*.

Gate Theatre: The Irishman in *The Gigli Concert*; George in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*; Victor in *The Price*; Moss in *Glengarry Glen Ross*; Mitch in *A Streetcar Named Desire*; and Finbar in *The Weir*.

He was the original Dinny in *The Walworth Farce* and Dunne in *Penelope* (Enda Walsh) for Druid, both of which toured nationally and internationally.

As Artistic Director of Ouraboros he produced large scale tours of Brian Friel's *Making History* and *Translations*. *Making History* (playing Hugh O'Neill) marked the quatercentenary of the Flight of the Earls. This production toured throughout Ireland and subsequently through France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy, ending in O'Neill's death place in Rome. Denis also played Salieri in *Amadeus*, the title role in *Macbeth*, Ulysses in *Troilus and Cressida*, Hugh in *Mutabilite*, the title role in *Richard III* and Odysseus in *Myrmidons*.

Television includes: *North Sea Connection*, *Blod 2*, *Sliced*, *Normal People*, *The Young Offenders*, *The Running Mate*, *Scúp*, *Tri Sceal*, *Single Handed*, *Bailout* and *Trial of the Century*.

Film includes: *Aisha*, *Sweetness in the Belly*, *End of Sentence*, *The Truth Commissioner*, *Brooklyn*, *Garage*, *The Wind that Shakes the Barley*, *Alexander*, *Intermission*, *I Went Down* and *Michael Collins*.

Denis was awarded the Irish Times Theatre Award for Best Actor on two occasions: for Richard in *Richard III* and for The Irishman in *The Gigli Concert*. He was nominated for Best Supporting Actor for Mitch in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and the IFTA Best Actor award for *Running Mate*.

Denis is a board member of the Brian Friel Trust.



Aosaf Afzal | Farouk

Following a successful twenty-year scientific career – which, in 2006, included his being awarded an MBE in the UK's national honours for Services to Science – Aosaf ran away to join the theatre! He trained at London's Mountview Academy and received his MA in Acting and Performance in 2017. Since then he has toured extensively in the UK and Ireland. More recently, he has appeared in a number of internet, television and film projects including *Mrs Sidhu Investigates* for ITV and the BAFTA TV Award-nominated *How to be a Person* for Channel 4/E4.



Stephen O'Leary | Lampy

Stephen's TV and Film credits include *Shoshana* (Dir: Michael Winterbottom), *Fair City* (RTÉ) *Smalltown*, written and directed by Gerard Barrett, nominated for best drama IFTA (TV3), *Can't Cope*, *Won't Cope* written by Stefanie Priessner, (RTE) & *We Ourselves* directed by Paul Mercier.

Stephen's Theatre credits include *Making History*, *The Summer I Robbed a Bank* (Everyman Theatre) *The Giggler Treatment* (The Ark) *Hangmen*, *The Field* (The Gaiety Theatre) *Copper Face Jacks the Musical* (Olympia Theatre & Tour) *The Twits* by Roald Dahl, *Hamlet* (Mill Theatre) *The Harvest*, *The Clancy Kid*, *Happy Birthday Jacob* (The New Theatre) *Robin Hood*, *The Snow Queen*, *Rapunzel*, *Aladdin*, *Cinderella* (Gaiety Theatre) *Love a la Mode* (Smock Alley Theatre) *Fierce Notions* (Dublin Fringe) *The Bloody Irish* (The Helix/ PBS America) *The Unlucky Cabin Boy* (Guna Nua National Tour) *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello* (Gaiety Schools Programs, National Tour) *Slender* (Theatre Upstairs) *The Critic* (Rough Magic) *I Keano*, *The Full Monty* and *Honk* (The Cork Opera House).



Eva Bartley | Florence

Eva has been working as an actor on stage and screen for the past 20 years in both the UK and Ireland. Theatre credits include: *A Christmas Carol* (Gate Theatre), *Romeo and Juliet* (Northcott Theatre), *Othello* (Second Age), *The Last Days of a Reluctant Tyrant*, *Shush* (Abbey Theatre), *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Everyman), *The Song of The Sea* (Barnstorm Theatre Company). Film and Television includes: *Vikings* (Prime Video), *Redemption* (Britbox), *The Clinic*, *On Home Ground* (RTE), *Titanic: Blood and Steel* (Titanic Films), *Trial & Retribution* (ITV).



Donal Ryan | Author

Donal Ryan is the author of five bestselling novels and a short story collection. He has won numerous awards, among them the European Union Prize for Literature, the Guardian First Book Award, and three Irish Book Awards. He was nominated for the Man Booker Prize in 2013 for his debut, *The Spinning Heart*, and again in 2018, for his fourth novel, *From A Low And Quiet Sea*. His work has been adapted for stage and screen and translated into over twenty languages. *The Spinning Heart* was voted Irish Book of the Decade in 2016 in a nationwide poll run by Dublin Book Festival. Donal lectures in Creative Writing at the University of Limerick. His latest novel, *The Queen of Dirt Island*, was published in August 2022 by Penguin Books.

Works:

The Spinning Heart (2012)

The Thing about December (2013)

A Slanting of the Sun: Stories (2015)

All We Shall Know (2016)

From a Low and Quiet Sea (2018)

Strange Flowers (2020)

The Queen of Dirt Island (2022)

Recognition:

2012: Irish Book Awards, winner, Newcomer of the Year (*The Spinning Heart*). 2012: Irish Book Awards, winner, Book of the Year (*The Spinning Heart*). 2013: Irish Book Awards, shortlist, Novel of the Year (*The Thing About December*). 2013: Booker Prize, longlist (*The Spinning Heart*). 2013: Guardian First Book Award, winner (*The Spinning Heart*). 2014: International Dublin Literary Award, shortlist (*The Spinning Heart*). 2015: European Union Prize for Literature (Ireland), winner (*The Spinning Heart*). 2015: Irish Book Awards, winner, Short Story of the Year (*A Slanting Of The Sun*). 2016: Irish Book Awards, shortlist, Novel of the Year (*All We Shall Know*). 2016: Dublin Book Festival, winner, Irish Book of the Decade (*The Spinning Heart*). 2018: Man Booker Prize, longlist (*From a Low and Quiet Sea*). 2018: Irish Book Awards, shortlist, Novel of the Year (*From a Low and Quiet Sea*). 2018: Costa Book Awards, shortlist (*From a Low and Quiet Sea*). 2019: Royal Society of Literature Ondaatje Prize, longlist (*From a Low and Quiet Sea*).

Andrew Flynn

Director

Andrew Flynn is the Artistic Director of Decadent Theatre Company and the director of Theatre at Galway Arts Centre. He also works as a freelance theatre director. In March 2023, Andrew directed Martin McDonagh's *Hangmen*, a co-production of Gaiety Productions and Decadent Theatre Company. Other recent work includes *Blackbird* and *Eden* for Decadent (2022).

Recent directing credits for Decadent Theatre include: Kevin Barry's *There Are Little Kingdoms*, the World premieres of *A Thing About December* by Donal Ryan and *A Love Like That* by Billy Roche, *Eden* by Eugene O'Brien, *The Mai* by Marina Carr, *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* by Frank McGuinness, *Pumpgirl* by Abbie Spallen, *The Weir* by Conor McPherson, *The Pillowman* by Martin McDonagh, *The Dead School* by Pat McCabe, *Vernon God Little* by Tanya Rhonder, *Defender Of The Faith* by Stuart Carolan, *A Skull In Connemara* by Martin McDonagh (3 Irish Times Nominations), *Port Authority* by Conor McPhearson (for which he was nominated as Best Director at the Irish Times Theatre Awards), *Doubt* by John Patrick Shanley (2 Irish Times Nominations), *Faith Healer* by Brian Friel (Decadent /Townhall Galway), *The Seafarer* by Conor McPhearson, *The Cavalcaders* by Billy Roche (Decadent/ Nomad Theatre Network), the world premieres of *Here We Are Again Still* by Christian O'Reill, *Character* by Mark Dillon, and *Country Music* by Simon Stephens .

As the head of theatre at Galway Arts Centre Andrew has directed over 70 productions for Galway Youth Theatre. Some highlights include: *Frank Pig Says Hello* and *The Adventures of Shay Mouse* by Pat McCabe, *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller, *Portia Coughlan* by Marina Carr, *Lovely Betty* by Mark O'Halloran, *Our Country's Good* by Timberlake Vertenbaker, the Irish premieres of *Midsummer*, *Monster In the Hall* and *Yellowmoon* by David Greig, *Autobahn* by Neil La Bute, *Talking To Terrorists* by Robin Soans, *Tejas Verdes* by Fermin Cabal, *Country Music* by Simon Stephens, *Consensual* by Nina Raine and the world premiere of *Teacher* by Christian O'Reilly

Directing credits for Lyric Theatre Belfast include: *Philadelphia Here I Come* by Brian Friel, *Dockers* by Martin Lynch, *PumpGirl* by Abbie Spallen, *The Pillowman* By Martin McDonagh and *The Weir* by Conor McPherson

Other credits include: *Juno And The Paycock* by Sean O'Casey (A.R.T Northern Ireland/Cork Opera House), *Translations* by Brian Friel (Ouroboros Theatre Company), *Via Dolorosa* by David Hare, (Cuiart Literature Festival), *The Lieutenant Of Inishmore* by Martin McDonagh (Irish Premiere, Cork Opera House/Millennium Theatre Derry/Townhall Theatre Galway), *Translations* (Townhall Galway).

Ciaran Bagnall

Lighting Design

Ciaran trained at the Welsh College of Music & Drama in Cardiff. Recent Theatre includes: Set & Lighting Design *Oliver Twist* (Hull Truck); *And Did those Feet* (Macron Stadium, Bolton); *Double Cross* (Lyric Theatre Belfast & Abbey Theatre, Dublin); *The Mai* (Irish Tour/Dublin Theatre Festival); *Lovers* (Lyric Theatre, Belfast); *The Man Who Fell To Pieces, Hard to be Soft* (The MAC, Belfast); *The Great Gatsby* (Gate Theatre, Dublin – Winner Best Design Irish Times Irish Theatre Awards); *RED* (Lyric Theatre, Belfast – Winner Best Design Irish Times Irish Theatre Awards); *The Train, Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme* (Abbey Theatre); *Ashes, Educating Rita, Two, Two 2, A view from the Bridge, Love Story, Twelfth Night, Piaf, Of Mice and Men, Tull, The Glass Menagerie, Habeas Corpus, Secret Thoughts, Oleanna* (Octagon Theatre, Bolton); *A Christmas Treasure Island, Sleeping Beauty, Cinderella* (Hull Truck); *Macbeth* (Shakespeare's Globe, London); *Singin' in the Rain* (UK Tour); *Othello* (RSC, Stratford upon Avon); *Lally the Scut, The God of Carnage, Villa, Discurso, Tejas Verdes* (MAC, Belfast); *Conquest of Happiness* (Olympic Stadium, Sarajevo); *Shoot the Crow* (Opera House, Belfast); *Snookered* (Bush Theatre, London); *The Killing of Sister George* (Arts Theatre, London); *A Slight Ache* and *Landscape* (Lyttelton Theatre, National Theatre London).

Carl Kennedy

Sound Design

Carl was a founding member of Decadent and trained at Academy of Sound in Dublin. He has worked on over one hundred theatre productions, with venues and companies including The Abbey, The Gaiety, ANU Productions, The Lyric Theatre Belfast, Rough Magic, HOME Manchester, Fishamble, Prime Cut, Theatre Lovett, HotForTheatre, Guna Nua, Loose Canon, Peer to Peer, Siren, Broken Crow, Randolph SD and Theatre Makers. He has been nominated three times for the Irish Times Theatre Award for Best Sound Design. He also composes music and sound design for TV and video games. Game titles include *Curious George, Curious about Shapes and Colors, Jelly Jumble, Too Many Teddies, Dino Dog and Leonardo and His Cat*. TV credits include sound design for 16 letters (Independent Pictures/RTE) and SFX editing and foley recording for *Centenary* (RTE).

Sara Ben-Abdallah

Costume Designer

Sara is a Tunisian-American designer who holds a degree in film, with a concentration on Costume & Production Design from Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, USA. After working in Japan for 5 years with the Tokyo International Theatre Company costuming multiple shows such *Rocky Horror Picture Show, A Flea in Her Ear, The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Night Must Fall, Macbeth,*

and *The Diary of Anne Frank*, she moved to Ireland in 2017. Sara has over 25 credits to her name in Irish film, TV, advertising and theatre. As well as working on feature films (*Here Are The Young Men*, *There You'll Find Me*) and television shows (*Rig 45*) she has also worked with several award winning short films, including *Coco Dreams In Blue* (FilmBase), and *The Secret Box* (KTC). Her theatre credits include *She Kills Monsters* and *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* for No Drama Theatre, and *A Love Like That*, *There are Little Kingdoms* and *Blackbird* for Decadent Theatre.

Brian Moroney Set Construction

Brian has worked on building sets with Decadent Theatre for ten years. In that time he has also being the tour carpenter on over 15 national tours. Set builds include: *The Cavalcadors* (Decadent/ Nomad Network), *Doubt* (Decadent), *Faith Healer* (Decadent / Townhall Galway), *The Seafarer* (Irish Tour Decadent/ Nomad Network), *Here We Are Again Still* (World Premiere & Irish Tour), *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* (Irish Tour), *Tejas Verde*, *Lovers*, *At the Black Pigs Dyke*, Decadent productions of *The Dead School*, *Vernon God Little*, *Defender of the Faith* and *Lonesome West* and *Philadelphia*, *Here I Come!* for Lyric Theatre, Belfast. Recent builds include: *A Love Like That* by Billy Roche, *A Skull in Connemara* and *The Pillowman* by Martin MacDonagh and *The Weir* by Conor MacPherson (Decadent/ Pavilion/ Everyman/ Galway Townhall).

Rae Visser Stage Manager

Originally from South Africa, with a background in Fine Art. Rae's first work placement was with Druid. Thereafter, she has stage managed touring productions for Fíbín, Branar, Decadent Theatre Company (*There Are Little Kingdoms*, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, *The Lonesome West*, *Blackbird*), Passion Machine, Town Hall Theatre, Music for Galway, Cork Opera House, An Taibhdhearc, Keegan Theatre (Washington, D.C), Theatre Corp., Passion Machine, Zelig, Blue Pig Theatre Company, Jasango, and Galway Youth Theatre. Production management for Keegan Theatre (Washington D.C. and An Taibhdhearc.) Rae has also directed for TrueWest Theatre Company. *The Head of Red O'Brien* by Mark O'Halloran, *Mary Motorhead* by Mark O'Halloran (and for radio, *Mary Motorhead* winner of best radio drama, PPI radio awards, Drama, Ocean FM 2013). For Haw Theatre Company, *Zeitgeist* by Bernard Field and *Before the Devil Knows You're Dead* by Pat Collins and John O'Dowd. She has a new exciting project, currently in development.



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www.decadenttheatrecompany.ie