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Hamnet

Dead Centre

Written and directed by

Ben Kidd and Bush Moukarzel

BAM Fishman Space

Oct 30—Nov 2 at 7:30pm; Nov 3 at 3pm

Running time: approx. one hour, no intermission

Presented in association with Irish Arts Center

Season Sponsor:

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Hamnet

Performed by **Aran Murphy**

Text by **Bush Moukarzel, Ben Kidd**, and **William Shakespeare**

Dramaturgy by **Michael West**

Set design by **Andrew Clancy**

Costume design by **Grace O'Hara**

Lighting design by **Stephen Dodd**

Sound design by **Kevin Gleeson**

Video design by **José Miguel Jiménez**

Choreography by **Liv O'Donoghue**

Onstage effects and costume supervisor **Eugenia Genunchi**

Stage manager **Harriet Stewart**

Producer **Aisling Ormonde**

American Stage Manager **Meg McDonald**

Aran Murphy is appearing with the permission of Actors' Equity Association.

The American Stage Manager is a member of Actors' Equity Association.



Presented with support from Culture Ireland



“LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT HAMNET”

—*Wikipedia*

Hamnet Shakespeare lived and died. He was 11 years old. Not much else is known about him. Rather more is known about his father, who lived and lived, and continues to live (perhaps longer than some of us would like). Hamnet is a typo—one letter away from greatness. And from what we know, his father wasn't able to offer him much help towards achieving greatness during his 11 years. He was too busy offering it to the rest of the world: to us. In his plays, Shakespeare has an obsession with parents telling their children how to live. But the parents are often confused, angry, scared, and wrong. Perhaps we shouldn't look to the plays of Shakespeare for a guide to how to live. Perhaps the greater conundrum is how to die.

Shakespeare's poetry is heavy with grief. There is surely no doubt that he wrote from a place of compassion and personal devastation.

Because again, however much Hamnet might stand as a symbol, he also stands—or stood—as a little boy. He lived, and then he died.

We are so often told to deal with grief through acceptance, we must accept reality. Claudius sadistically counsels his nephew: “Thou know'st 'tis common, all that lives must die.” But, while it might be common, it may even be natural, that does not mean it should ever be acceptable.

It is notable how often ghosts walk Shakespeare's stages. The dead haunt the living, and the living haunt the dead. Theater stages that space, the dead holding the living to account, the living suspended like ghosts, in a world that is not always acceptable.

—*Bush Moukarzel and Ben Kidd, co-writers and co-directors*

Who's Who

BUSH MOKARZEL (co-writer, co-director), co-artistic director and co-founder of Dead Centre, productions include *Souvenir* (Dublin Fringe Festival, 2012), *LIPPY* (Dublin Fringe Festival, 2013), *(S)quark!* (New Theatre, Dublin, 2013), *Chekhov's First Play* (Dublin Theatre Festival, 2015), *Hamnet* (co-production of Dead Centre and Abbey Theatre, 2017), and *Shakespeare's Last Play* (Schaubühne, 2018).

BEN KIDD (co-writer, co-director) is co-artistic director and co-founder of Dead Centre. With Dead Centre he has co-authored and co-directed various productions including *Shakespeare's Last Play*, *Hamnet*, *LIPPY*, and *Chekhov's First Play*. Other productions as a freelance director include *Spring Awakening* in a new adaptation by Anya Reiss (Headlong Theatre, 2014) and *In the Night Time* by Nina Segal (Gate Theatre, London, 2016).

ARAN MURPHY (performer) makes his professional acting debut with *Hamnet*. He loves acting and football, and supports Liverpool.

MICHAEL WEST (dramaturgy) has written many plays in collaboration with Annie Ryan and The Corn Exchange, including *Dublin By Lamplight*, *The Seagull*, the world premiere adaptation of James Joyce's *Dubliners*, *Man of Valour*, and *Freefall*. Recent work includes the Abbey Theatre's presentation of the world premiere of *Conservatory* in 2014, *The Chinese Room*, premiered at the Williamstown Theatre Festival in 2016, and *FRNKNSTN*, which premiered at the Abbey in 2018. He has translated or adapted many texts, among them *The Marriage of Figaro* for the Abbey; a version of *Death and the Ploughman* by the Bohemian 14th-century writer Johannes Von Saaz for Christian Schiaretto of the TNP in Lyon, produced by SITI company

and directed by Anne Bogart in the US; and work by Molière, Marivaux, Calderón, and Michel Tremblay. In 2017 he was dramaturg on Webster's *The White Devil* at the Globe, and *Hamnet*, which played at the Schaubühne, Berlin and the Abbey in Dublin. He has written plays for children, for radio, and adapted an Oscar Wilde story for the English National Ballet. He is published by Methuen.

ANDREW CLANCY (set design) is a sculptor and set designer.

GRACE O'HARA (costume and special FX design) is a freelance costume, special effects, and set designer for theater and film. For Dead Centre, she has designed special effects, costumes, and on-stage designs for *LIPPY* and *Chekhov's First Play* and costume design for *Souvenir*. O'Hara has also recently designed special effects and on-stage design for Philip Connaughton's *Extraterrestrial Events*. She was previously associate designer to Pan Pan Theatre and worked on many projects with Pan Pan including *Quad*, *Americanitis*, *Everyone is King Lear in his own home*, *The Rehearsal Playing the Dane*, *All That Fall*, and *A Doll House*.

STEPHEN DODD (lighting design) is a lighting designer for theater, dance, and opera. Currently based in Dublin, he trained at the Samuel Beckett Centre, Trinity College. Recent lighting designs include: For Dead Centre: *Beckett's Room*, *Hamnet*, *Chekhov's First Play*, *LIPPY*. For Liz Roche Company: *I/Thou*, *Wrongheaded*. For Brokentalers: *The Examination*, *The Circus Animal's Desertion*. For Irish National Opera & United Fall: *Orfeo ed Euridice*. For Kate Stanley Brennan: *Walk For Me*. For Company SJ: *Company*. For United Fall / Emma Martin: *Birdboy*, *Girl Song*, *Dancehall*, *Dogs*, *Listowel Syndrome*. For The Emergency Room: *riverrun*.

KEVIN GLEESON (sound design), born in Tipperary, Ireland, studied music technology at both at Windmill Lane Recording Studios and Trinity College Dublin. He has worked as a composer and sound designer for Schaubühne (Berlin), Cois Ceim Dance Theatre (Dublin), and

Crash Ensemble (Dublin). His work on *Chekhov's First Play* by Dead Centre was awarded best sound design at the 2015 Irish Theatre Awards. He was the composer-in-residence for the Kerry County Council in 2013.

JOSÉ MIGUEL JIMÉNEZ (video design) is an actor, director and filmmaker based in Dublin. He is a theater graduate from Universidad de Chile and Trinity College Dublin. He is an associate artist to Project Arts Centre under the Catalyst scheme and also one third of the artist-led initiative *DRAFF Magazine*. Jiménez has developed extensive work as a video designer, collaborating mainly with visual and dance artists in Dublin. These include *Blanca* with choreographer Maria Nilsson Waller, *Elemental* with visual artist Siobhan McDonald (screened at Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris), *3D Wabi-Sabi Soul* (Dylan Tighe, Lighthouse Cinema), and *Medicated Milk* and *Horrible Creature*, two films in collaboration with choreographer Aine Stapleton based on the life of Lucia Joyce, premiered at the Irish Film Institute. His documentary film *See the Man*—for which he acted as director, DOP, editor, and producer, has been officially selected to more than 10 festivals across Europe, India, and the US—has received awards for Best Documentary, Best Cinematography, and Best Film.

LIV O'DONOGHUE (choreography) is a choreographer and performer based in Dublin. She trained at the Northern School of Contemporary Dance in the UK, graduating with the Outstanding Achievement award in 2007. Since then, she has worked with companies including Dead Centre, Liz Roche Company, Fearghus Ó Conchuir, United Fall, Irish Modern Dance Theatre, and junk ensemble, touring widely throughout Europe, Australia, and the US. Her own work has been presented widely in Norway, France, the US, Austria, Italy, the UK, Sweden, and Germany. O'Donoghue is a co-founder of *DRAFF*, an international platform, both in print and online, focussing on process in dance and theater.



EUGENIA GENUNCHI (onstage effects and costume supervisor) is a graduate of IADT Dublin with a degree in model making, design, and special effects. She has been involved with a range of productions including *By the Bog of Cats* (Abbey Theatre), *The Windstealers* (Smock Alley Theatre), *Chekhov's First Play* (Dead Centre), and *God's Ear* (Samuel Beckett Theatre). She has worked with Artastic on the St. Patrick's Day Production for the last five years (costumes and prop fabrication). For film/TV: *The Man who Invented Christmas*, *The Observer Effect*, and 390 (pilot series.)

MEG MCDONALD (American Stage Manager) Work includes: *Antigone* and *Twelfth Night* (both Mobile Unit), Baltimore Center Stage; National Playwrights Conference, Eugene O'Neill Theater Center; *Roosevelt* tour (TEAM), Royal Court, ART/Oberon, Vineyard Theatre/PS 122 COIL, University of Michigan; *Wicked Bodies*, *Healing Wars*, *The Matter of Origins*, and *Ferocious Beauty Genome* tours with Liz Lerman; *Hammock*, *Drift*, and *Blueprints of Relentless Nature* with Dance Exchange. McDonald also works in production management. MFA: Columbia University, Theater Management and Producing.

DEAD CENTRE

Dead Centre was founded by Bush Moukarzel and Ben Kidd in 2012. Their first project, *Souvenir*, was created for the Dublin Fringe in 2012 and later toured to London, New York, Brisbane, and Seoul. *LIPPY* premiered at the Dublin Fringe in 2013 and has since travelled around the world, including to Berlin, New York, and the Young Vic in London. It has won multiple awards, including the *Irish Times* Theatre Award for Best Production, two OBIE Awards, and a Fringe First. Chekhov's *First Play* premiered in 2015 at the Dublin Theatre Festival, and has toured throughout the world, including to Russia, France, Germany, London, Hong Kong, and Amsterdam. *Hamnet* premiered at the Schaubühne, Berlin, and played at the Dublin Theatre Festival in 2017. It has since toured worldwide including to London, Hong Kong, Boston, and Berlin. In 2018, Dead Centre created *Shakespeare's Last Play* with the ensemble at the Schaubühne. Their latest project was *Beckett's Room*, a co-production with the Gate Theatre Dublin which premiered in Dublin in September 2019.

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