

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 12, 2011

Irish Theatrical Diaspora Project
in association with
The Graduate Centre for Study of Drama and the Celtic Studies Program, University of Toronto
presents:

CANADA, IRISHNESS AND PERFORMANCE: OPENING THE DEBATE

The 8th Annual Irish Theatrical Diaspora Conference
Graduate Centre for Study of Drama, University of Toronto,
April 15-16, 2011

The history of Irish diasporas in Canada is rich and diverse, and the Irish have contributed significantly to the creation of Canadian cultural phenomena, yet the study of Irish theatre in terms of Canadian diasporic identities has not produced an equally rich body of literature.

With this scholarly lacuna in mind, this conference aims to address the scope and character of Irish influence on performance in Canada, with particular attention to the ideas of multi- and inter-culturalism. 'Performance' in this case includes theatre, dance, spectacle, and all aspects of the performing arts, as well as extra-theatrical activity – such as parades and community gatherings – that foreground 'Irishness' in some way. Canada has a well-established multicultural identity, whereas Ireland is just beginning to negotiate a civil society that is constituted by a variety of residents from different ethnic and racial backgrounds. How does Irish performance fit into the Canadian cultural 'mosaic'? Furthermore, what kinds of Irish plays are being produced in Canada, and how do these performances negotiate the relationship between Irish culture and Canadian culture? How is 'Irishness' performed in Canada, and from this, what can we learn about the mechanisms and character of cultural exchange? Please join our conference to find out, and if you choose, participate in the debate!

The conference features a host of engaging presentations from scholars and theatre and dance practitioners, as well as two exciting keynote events. On Friday evening, **Jackie Maxwell**, Artistic Director of the Shaw Festival, will be interviewed on stage by **Ann Saddlemyer**, Professor Emeritus at University of Toronto and former Master of Massey College. On the Saturday afternoon, **Lisa Fitzpatrick**, University of Ulster at Derry, will deliver a lecture titled "Invisible Interculturalism? Performing Ireland on the Canadian Stage."

Canada, Irishness and Performance: Opening the Debate

April 15-16, 2011

Robert Gill Theatre, 214 College St.

Registration \$40/\$20 students and seniors. Members of the public welcome.

Jackie Maxwell in Conversation with Ann Saddlemyer

Friday April 15 at 6pm – Admission FREE

Alumni Hall Room 400, 121 St. Joseph St.

For program, registration and location information: www.irishtheatricaldiaspora.net/toronto2011/

For interviews or conference queries: ITD2011@gmail.com

Sponsored by the Celtic Studies Speakers Series, the Graduate Centre for Study of Drama, Massey College, The British Academy, The School of English at Trinity College Dublin, and the Department of Foreign Affairs, Ireland.