

Ladies and gentlemen, there can be no flash photography during the performances and no video or audio recording of the show. We thank you for remembering to turn off any personal electronic devices that might beep, buzz, ring, or vibrate.

Peck School of the Arts
Department of Theatre
proudly presents

By The Bog Of Cats

by
Marina Carr

Director: Michelle Lopez-Rios

October 27-31, 2010

Scenic and Properties Designer Sandra J. Strawn
Costume Designer Jeffrey Lieder
Lighting Designer..... Stephen Roy White
Sound Designer Chris Guse
Voice and Speech Michelle Lopez-Rios
Violence Director..... Bill Watson

Time: The Present

Place: Boglands of Ireland

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Marina Carr was born on November 17, 1964 in County Offaly, Ireland. She attended University College Dublin and eventually became writer-in-residence at the Abbey Theatre and Trinity College Dublin. Her play, *The Mai*, won the Best New Play in the Dublin Theatre Festival. In 1997, Carr was awarded the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize. Known for her fierce and haunting plays, Carr often explores themes of violence, incest, ghosts, myths, and death.

By the Bog of Cats retells the Greek myth of Medea. Like Medea, Hester Swane is an outsider with extraordinary abilities who has murdered for the benefit of her lover. Also like Medea, her lover has now abandoned Hester in order to marry a younger bride for financial gain. The abandonment of this lover, together with the abandonment of her mother at a young age, leaves Hester in a volatile and tenuous state.

It is Irish history and culture, however, that dominate this story. Beginning with the dead black swan being dragged on stage (swans appear throughout Irish folklore as shape-shifters for deities taking on human form), Carr introduces us to a unique world. The characters reside on peat bogs--sacred land preserving centuries of conflict dating back to early Celtic sacrifices. Ghosts walk among humans and sometimes the two interact. Being a Traveller, Hester Swane encounters the racist and xenophobic treatment of these nomadic Irish people who are crassly referred to as a "tinkers." After surviving the Irish industrial school system, notorious for rampant abuse, Hester fights to hold on to her life on the bog.

By the Bog of Cats premiered in 1998 at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin. This main-stage production at Ireland's premiere national theater was the first by a woman playwright in many years. This speaks to Carr's exceptional talent in fierce and poetic storytelling. Dubbed Ireland's premier female playwright, Carr's work continues to be produced at the Abbey Theatre and around the world.

Michelle Lopez-Rios

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