

THE PEARL

THEATRE COMPANY

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THE PEARL THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

J.M. SYNGE'S

THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD

AT NEW YORK CITY CENTER STAGE II

DIRECTED BY J.R. SULLIVAN

PREVIEW PERFORMANCES BEGIN: OCTOBER 2, 2009 at 7:30 PM

OPENING NIGHT: OCTOBER 11, 2009 at 7:30 PM

LIMITED ENGAGEMENT ENDS NOVEMBER 22, 2009

Press Previews

Thursday, October 8, 2009 at 7:30pm

Friday, October 9, 2009 at 7:30pm

Saturday, October 10, 2009 at 2:30pm and 7:30pm

Sunday, October 11, 2009 at 2:30pm

NEW YORK, NY, September 8, 2009 – **THE PEARL THEATRE COMPANY** is proud to present its inaugural production at New York City Center's Stage II; J.M. Synge's **THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD**. Opening The Pearl's 26th Season, newly named Artistic Director J.R. Sullivan directs a work celebrated for its humor, insight, imagination, and power. Opening night is Sunday, October 11, 2009 at 7:30pm.

Set in a secluded tavern on the west coast of Ireland, **THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD** tells the story of young Christopher Mahon, who stumbles out of the wild and into this remote place for a drink declaring he's killed his father. The audacious act (and the fine way Mahon begins to tell it) make him a local hero—particularly to Margaret Flaherty, better known as Pegeen Mike, who quickly comes to idealize Christy Mahon as something of a savior. Premiering in 1907, a time of intense nationalist spirit, **THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD** proved a rowdy theatrical event, even causing riots that spilled into the streets as audiences debated, argued and then fought over Synge's depiction of the western Irish peasantry.

"There is little argument as to how important **THE PLAYBOY** became to contemporary theatre," according to

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J. R. Sullivan, “But what is most startling today is how **THE PLAYBOY** romances and rages audiences now, in the present hour, at the very moment. It is something any production of this great play must take to heart.”

Born in 1871, Edmund John Millington Synge was one of the co-directors of Dublin’s renowned Abbey Theatre. A staunch pacifist in the face of growing political and social upheaval, he devoted his life to revitalizing Irish art and culture despite deep and growing divisions within the country. In his short career he produced numerous poems, prose works, translations, and essays. His other stage works include *In the Shadow of the Glen*, *Riders to the Seam*, and the unfinished *Deirdre of the Sorrows*. Synge died in 1909, just before his 38th birthday.

THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD will be **J.R. Sullivan’s** first production as Artistic Director of The Pearl Theatre Company, having previously directed five productions, including last season’s *Twelfth Night*. Mr. Sullivan was the founder of the New American Theater in Rockford, Illinois, and served as an associate artistic director of the Utah Shakespearean Festival from 2002 until this past summer. Sullivan has also directed productions seen at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, the Milwaukee Repertory Theater, The Studio Theatre in Washington DC, and the Arden Theatre Company in Philadelphia.

The Cast

The cast features 2009-2010 Resident Acting Company members **Rachel Botchan** as Widow Quin, **Bradford Cover** as Michael James, **Dominic Cuskern** as Jimmy Farrell, and Obie-award winner **Sean McNall** as Christy Mahon. The production’s guest artists are **Ellen Adair** as Sara Tansey, **Stephanie Bratnick** as Susan Brady, **Michael Brusasco** as Philly Cullen, **Julie Ferrell** as Honor Blake, **Joe Kady** as Old Mahon, **Ryan G. Metzger** as Shawn Keough, and **Lee Stark** as Pegeen.

Creative Team

The creative team includes: **Harry Feiner**, scenic design; **Rachel Laritz**, costume design; **Stephen Petrilli**, lighting design; **ML Dogg**, sound design. The stage manager is **Lisa Ledwich** and the dramaturge is **Kate Farrington**.

About The Pearl Theatre Company

The Pearl Theatre Company produces a full-range classical repertory with an established Resident Acting Company, dedicated to bringing timeless stories to new and vivid life. Moving this season out of its 15-year home in the East Village, the company now performs uptown at New York City Center Stage II. The season also includes Bernard Shaw’s giddy comedy **MISALLIANCE**, directed by Jeff Steitzer; a whirlwind adaptation of Charles Dickens’ **HARD TIMES** by Stephen Jeffreys and directed by J.R. Sullivan; and the Pulitzer Prize-winning **THE SUBJECT WAS ROSES** by Frank D. Gilroy, directed by Sheldon Patinkin.

The Resident Acting Company greets the challenges of classical repertory bolstered by season-specific training and building of craft. Audiences have experienced the versatility and talents of this award-winning group of artists, who have been instrumental in The Pearl receiving an Obie grant for continued artistic excellence, two Drama League nominations for outstanding play, and an American Theatre Wing grant for consistent commitment to excellence in the professional theatre.

The 2009-2010 Resident Acting Company

The 2009-2010 Resident Acting Company consists of veterans of the New York and regional stages including: **Jolly Abraham, Rachel Botchan, Robin Leslie Brown, Bradford Cover, Dominic Cuskern, Dan Daily, TJ Edwards, Robert Hock, Sean McNall, Carol Schultz, and Edward Seamon.** The 2009-2010 resident stage managers are **Lisa Ledwich** and **Dale Smallwood.**

2009-2010 Ticketing and Performance Information

The Pearl Theatre Company provides a variety of ticketing options for their new performance space at New York City Center, including season subscription packages.

For subscription tickets and information, please contact Audience Services at 212-598-9802 or visit www.pearltheatre.org. Single tickets can be purchased by calling CityTix® at **212-581-1212**, online at www.nycitycenter.org or at the City Center Box Office (West 55th Street between 6th and 7th Avenues).

Production Schedule:

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 7:30PM; Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday at 2:30PM. Previews begin October 2, 2009 at 7:30PM. Opening night is Sunday, October 11, 2009 at 7:30PM.

Regular Ticket Prices:

\$30 for all preview performances; \$40 for performances on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday; \$50 for performances on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Youth and Senior Tickets:

\$20 weekdays and \$25 weekends. Remaining tickets at each performance can be purchased at a reduced price by people 30 and younger or 65 and older on the day of performance, up to one hour prior to curtain, subject to availability. Valid for 1 ticket only per ID in person at the box office.

Thursday Rush Tickets:

Remaining tickets for Thursday evening performances are available for \$10 on the day of the performance only, up to one hour before curtain, subject to availability at the box office.

Tuesday Talk Post-Performance Discussion:

These in-depth discussions give audiences the opportunity to participate in intimate talk-backs led by published scholars and experts within their fields. Tuesday Talks during ***The Playboy of the Western World*** will take place following the performances on October 13, 2009 and October 27, 2009.

Directions:

The company performs its 2009-2010 Season at New York City Center Stage II, located at 131 West 55th Street (between 6th and 7th Avenues) in midtown Manhattan.

The Box Office is located at 131 West 55th Street in the outer lobby of the theatre entrance.

New York City Center can be reached by taking the N/Q/R to 57th St/7th Ave, the F to 57th St/6th Ave, the D/E to 7th Ave/53rd St, the A/B/C/D/1 to 59th St at Columbus Circle, the C to 50th St/8th Ave, or the 1 to 50th St/7th Ave.

By Bus m1, m2, m3, m4, m5, m6, m7, m10, m20, m31, m57, m104

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