

World Premiere of
STARJAZZER
ANU Productions
Dublin Theatre Festival 2024



20th August 2024

Royal Society of Antiquaries Ireland, Society House, 63 Merrion Square, Dublin 2

Dates: 28 Sept, 1-6, 8-13, 15-19 Oct

Previews: 25-27 Sept

This is a once in a lifetime privilege to be the first company ever to bring Seán O'Casey's short story The Starjazzer to the world...

"Everything I have written, up to the present, has been 'combative' and the sword I have swung so long is now stuck to my hand and I can't let it go." - Seán O'Casey on the controversy of the original publication of his short story THE STARJAZZER

ANU Productions STARJAZZER, directed by Louise Lowe and designed by Owen Boss (Co-Artistic Directors of ANU), will run from Friday, 28th September to 19th October at the Royal Society of Antiquaries on Merrion Square - a world premier at Dublin Theatre Festival inspired by Seán O'Casey's short story The Starjazzer (1923)

In the same room of a Georgian Dublin house, two women, separated by 100 years, are united by their parallel experience. Each is intoxicated by the same patch of stars and the same square of sky from the back yard. Each stepping into the footprint of what was and what is to come.

Starjazzer, starring Liv O'Donoghue (Good Sex, Dead Centre 2022-2024) and Ciara Byrne (The Pull of the Stars, The Gate, 2024) is a fever dream exploration of grief, sexuality and hope. Forging a connection between two vulnerable women across a century, it explores the inventiveness needed to cope with poverty and the creativity needed to hold her humanity amid isolation.

In his biographical writings, Séan O'Casey describes watching a woman who lived at the top of his tenement house in 422 North Circular Road, Dublin. He recounts the 'relentless vigour' of her poverty and of her body, climbing, washing, struggling and suffering over and over against the daily grind. When published in 1923, his original short story THE STARJAZZER courted controversy, exploring themes of marital rape, poverty and female emancipation. In a letter to his friend Gabriel Fallon, he describes trying to capture the physical potency of the woman upstairs saying "I have just finished a short story, that isn't a short story. It's a dance, the star dance". Taking his short story that isn't a short story we will present it as a piece of intoxicating physical theatre.

Co-Founders and Co-Artistic Directors of ANU Productions, Louise Lowe and Owen Boss said:

“Seán O'Casey, proves again what a master of language and storytelling he is. In Starjazzer he presents us with a stunning physical evocation of a woman stultified by the labour of the everyday, wrapped in a glorious moment amongst the stars. This is a once in a lifetime privilege to be the first company bringing this to the world, the dance he imagined would emancipate her from her toil. The beautiful and brittle text is as important now as it was then and we cannot wait to share it with you.”

“We are thrilled to follow on from our work The Lost O'Casey in 2018 with another unknown work of O'Casey's which resonates as much today as it did back in 1923”

Listings

Dates: 28 Sept, 1-6, 8-13, 15-19 Oct

Times: 8:15pm & 9:30pm

Previews: 25-27 Sept, 8:15pm & 9:30pm

Ages: For ages 14+

Accessible Performances: Irish Sign Language interpreted performances, 17 Oct

Booking: dublintheatrefestival.ie