

IN THE MIDST OF PLENTY

A NEW FOLK MUSICAL



"it may become
a masterpiece
of our time"

Written by
AMY DAY

Directed by
ANNE-MARIE O'SULLIVAN

Produced by
ENCHANTED CROÍ THEATRE



A NEW FOLK MUSICAL

"In the Midst of Plenty" is a new work of historical drama set in 1847, at the height of Ireland's Great Famine. Featuring an original score of contemporary acoustic folk music performed by a cast of professional actors and a live folk band, it tells the story of Bridget Connor, a tenant on the Strokestown estate, as she struggles to protect her family from the forces of starvation, eviction, and emigration.

THE GREAT FAMINE

Set against the backdrop of the plot to assassinate Major Denis Mahon, the landlord of the Strokestown estate, the piece grapples with history's unanswerable questions: what do friendship, betrayal, forgiveness, and redemption mean for those who make heartbreaking choices so that they may protect their own? What would you sacrifice for the sake of those you love the most?



CONNECTING WITH AUDIENCES

Enchanted Croí Theatre was awarded funding from the Roscommon County Council's Local Live Performance Programming Scheme to stage "In the Midst of Plenty" in the **National Famine Museum at Strokestown Park** in June 2022. The show sold out all 300 tickets, and was immediately awarded another round of funding from the Roscommon County Council. It went on to sell out both nights of performances (400 tickets) in the **Roscommon Arts Centre** in September 2022. Recognized for sensitively reflecting the resilience of so many Irish families and members of the global Irish diaspora, the show has seen great demand for a tour across Ireland.



A LOVE LETTER TO IRISH HISTORY

The show's writer/composer, **Amy Day**, and the show's director, **Anne-Marie O'Sullivan**, collaborate out of a shared passion for the Strokestown story and a mutual belief that theatre should be used to illuminate some of history's most compelling moments. Written under the guidance of a leading Famine historian and **incubated on the grounds of the National Famine Museum**, the show's plot, music, dialogue, sets, costumes, and props reflect a thoughtful use of the historical record, breathing new life into treasured materials. Above, secret society organizer Andrew Connor, thought to be the mastermind of the Mahon assassination, holds his gun; the Cloonahee petition can be seen hanging from its bore.

WHAT AUDIENCES ARE SAYING

★★★★★ Unforgettable

by Dee from Ireland on 26 Jun 2022

Two days later I am still remembering this unbelievable work of art. The songs, the acting, the story. Truly unforgettable.

★★★★★ Emotive

by Kate from Ireland on 25 Jun 2022

My first live theatre since 2019. Wonderfully moving, tragic, emotive, heart-rending experience and the songs, perfectly reflective of the on- stage action. Cannot praise highly enough!

★★★★★ In the Midst of Plenty

by Geraldine from Ireland on 26 Jun 2022

We had the most amazing evening at the amazing awesome production of "In the Midst of Plenty ". Thank you for hosting this and we loved the New venue. We would like to wish you the very best with the new extension and refurbishment of Strokestown Park House ,

★★★★★ Charmed

by Olwyn from Ireland on 25 Jun 2022

O was enthralled by the music, the fiddle and guitar so delicately in tune with the script. Great production, loved the harmonies , when they did swell!! I would say ye can give it a lot more, and it will evolve into something that the whole world knows. Thank you for a great night. A little bit of magic :)

★★★★★ Excellent

by Geraldine from Ireland on 30 Jun 2022

Congrats to all involved. Excellent show. Such wonderful talent. Music and singing brillisnt. I wish you all every success.

★★★★★ The most powerful famine related performance I have ever seen on stage - thank y

by Caroline from Ireland on 27 Jun 2022

An amazing piece beautifully scripted exploring all the complexities and nuances of the choices different individual humans had to make during a Famine that happened 'in the midst of plenty'. Real and gritty, moments of love, moments of pain, moments of parenting, moments of laughter, moments of revenge and moments of heartbreak. Skilfully fine tuned characters performed with raw honesty by an excellent cast. Visceral vocals and music. Every last member of the audience rose to their feet spontaneously at the end. A piece with what it means to be human at its very heart.

★★★★★ Wonderful location and a fantastic show

by Mags from Ireland on 26 Jun 2022

In the Midst of Plenty is a powerful, engaging and insightful show that captures the imagination from start to finish. The music, acting, staging and performance were wonderful. Would love to see this show tour Ireland - everyone should see it. That said, the beautiful location was certainly a plus! We travelled for 3 hours to see the show and it was totally worth it!

★★★★★ An emotional, uplifting and heart warming experience.

by Marie from Ireland on 28 Jun 2022

I thoroughly enjoyed this wonderful production. The storyline was clearly presented. The acting and singing, excellent. The enthusiasm and dedication of the actors was infectious, and carried the audience along to the last memorable scene.

I hope it will return to this wonderful venue again.

★★★★★ Very entertaining

by Maura from Ireland on 26 Jun 2022

Brilliant cast & venue, wonderful singing & performances from everyone involved, highly recommended it

★★★★★ Stunning

by Paula from Ireland on 27 Jun 2022

This musical was stunning, brought tears to my eyes. The performances where faultless. The musical magical. This needs to be preformed worldwide for the Irish community.

★★★★★ What a show!

by Kieran from Ireland on 28 Jun 2022

This musical was spectacular. This theatre experience will stay with me. The music was powerful and evocative, I've still got some of the songs in my head 3 days later. The story is challenging but it was told so respectfully and skilfully with the most brilliant detail and by such an incredibly talented and passionate cast. The attention and care that was shown to the symbols of this national tradegy was exquisite. Experiencing this in the National Famine Museum, in Strokestown Park was moving and the most worthy venue for this fantastic show. I hope to see this again!

★★★★★ A powerful piece of musical theatre!

by Catherine from Ireland on 29 Jun 2022

This show was absolutely fabulous. The music, the singing, the acting - all outstanding. The Strokestown famine story was told brilliantly through word, song and music in an emotive piece of theatre which was beautifully written. The costuming and the use of symbolism throughout was very clever - a truly creative production. Would love to see this production on a bigger stage reaching a wider audience! Huge congratulations to everyone involved.

★★★★★ Sheer excellence

by Peter from Ireland on 03 Jul 2022

This was a wonderful telling of a factual story from the Irish Famine in word song and music. My wife and I travelled from Dublin and were simply fascinated by all the elements that came together to make this a great production; the story, the acting, the singing and the music were just superb. The enjoyment of the audience was palpable and there was nothing half-hearted about the standing ovations. The only downside is knowing that we may not experience this again as the show only had a three night run. I hope, though, that "In The Midst of Plenty" will hit the bigger stage where it can be enjoyed by the many. It may become a masterpiece of our time. Peter O'Grady

★★★★★ In the Midst of Plenty

by Sarah from Ireland on 01 Jul 2022

Brilliant show overall, fantastic musicians, actors and a haunting experience and one I will never forget. Would love to see that show taking on the world. Well done to all the people involved and well done to Strokestown House for hosting it. Sarah Byrne





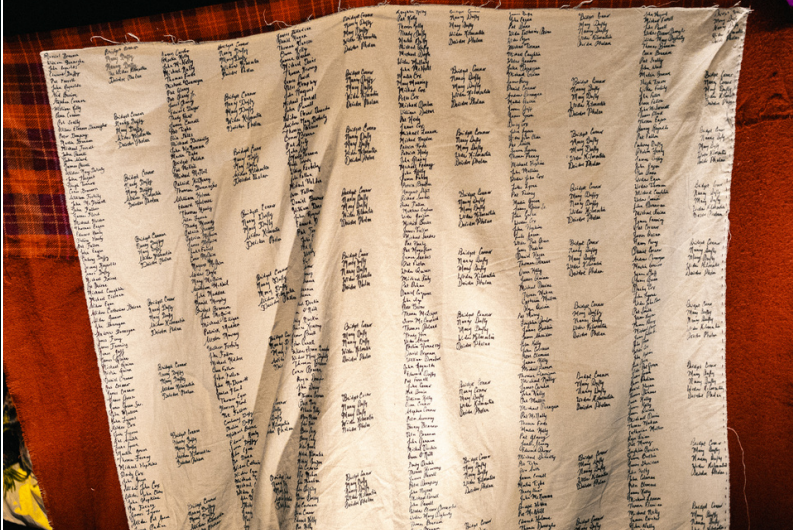
ACOUSTIC FOLK SCORE

The show features 16 contemporary folk songs and a series of recurring melodic themes that are woven throughout the performance. The music was composed exclusively for "In the Midst of Plenty," amplifying the emotional expression of the characters on stage.

LIVE FOLK BAND

Under the music direction of composer Amy Day, the show's music is performed on stage by a live folk band consisting of renowned trad fiddler Neil FitzGibbon, acclaimed folk artist Grainne Hunt, drummer Jules Stewart, and Amy Day.



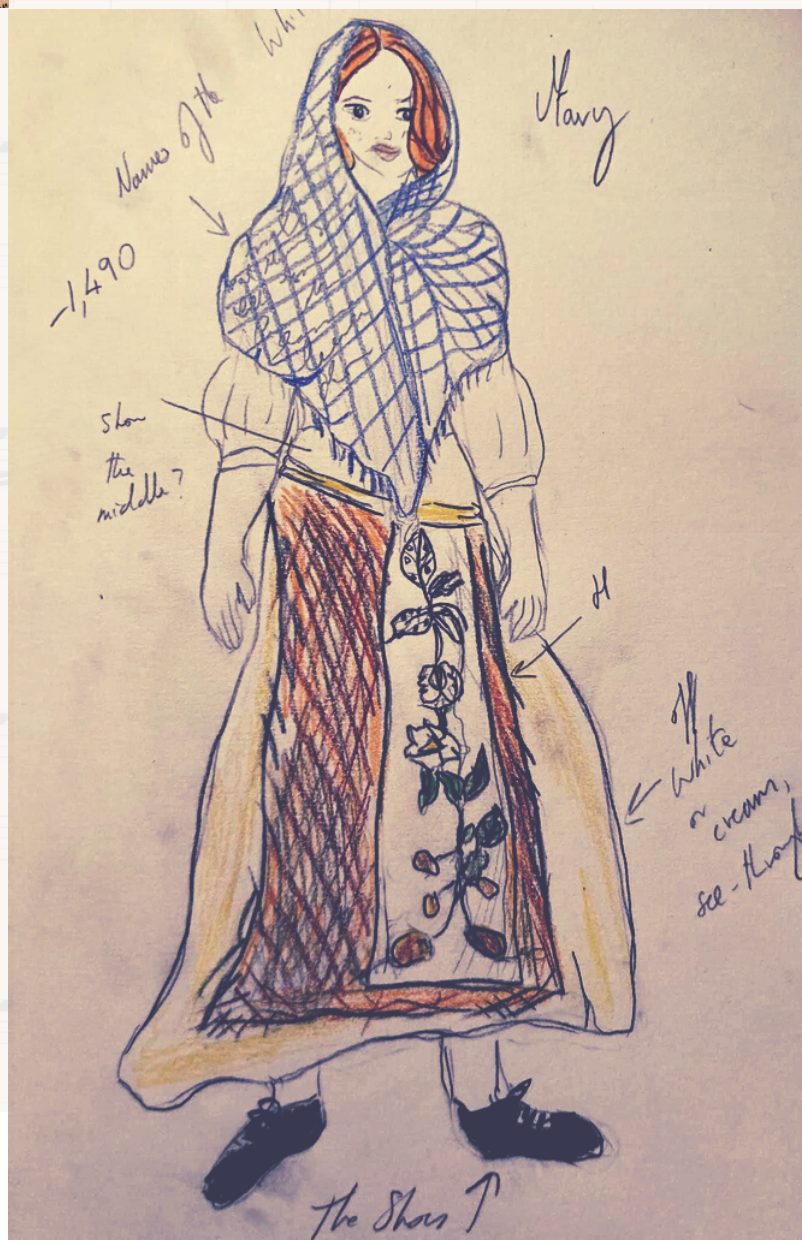


MEANINGFUL DESIGN

Director **Anne-Marie O'Sullivan** pays particular attention to archival material in the show's costumes, sets, and props. Below, the sketch of the costume designed for Mary Duffy features an illustration of a blighted potato plant, and the first pair of shoes Mary owned in many years.

ARCHIVES ALIVE

Mary's shawl bears the names of the **1490 emigrants** forced to leave Strokestown by foot to board the infamous **coffin ships** across the Atlantic. The drawn shoes, below, are bound in an image of the route they walked to Dublin, memorialized today as the **National Famine Way**. Through its "Archives Alive" project, Enchanted Croí merges history and theatre.





HISTORICAL COSTUMING

Below, Denis Mahon is seen wearing a top hat that is decoupage with many of the Roscommon's **Relief Committee** documents, and a waistcoat made up of petitions sent to him by his suffering tenantry, begging for mercy. At right, the red seals on these documents become bullet wounds, as his grieving widow holds up the garment and cries out in realization of what her family has become.



EXPLORING POWER AND PRIVILEGE

Henrietta Mahon, the wife of the landlord, is seen above in a dress that bears the imagery of the British empire. Below are her letters, found in the Strokestown archive, which offer insight into her character and her priorities. Designed by Anne-Marie O'Sullivan, Enchanted Croí Theatre works with skilled Roscommon artists to create garments infused with meaning.



ABOUT US

Enchanted Croí Theatre is a rapidly-growing, women-led professional theatre company founded in 2019 by Anne-Marie O'Sullivan, located in Strokestown, Co Roscommon. We create a range of theatrical productions, including musicals, site-specific theatre, and digital theatre. We are a major provider of theatre education and workshop facilitation in schools and educational centres, and a trusted event supplier for the National Famine Museum at Strokestown Park and the Irish Heritage Trust.



contact us: enchantedcroitheatre@gmail.com
listen and watch: www.inthemidstofplenty.com