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**CENTER THEATRE GROUP HOSTS COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS FOR DRUID'S  
"THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF LEENANE" ON DECEMBER 2, 2016, AT MUSIC CENTER ANNEX  
Pre-Show Panel Features Experts on Irish Culture Alongside CTG Artistic Director Michael Ritchie  
Directed by Garry Hynes, "Beauty Queen" Runs Through December 18 at the Taper**

Center Theatre Group will host a Community Conversations event for the Druid production of Martin McDonagh's "The Beauty Queen of Leenane," currently playing at the Mark Taper Forum, with a pre-show panel discussion to be held on Friday, December 2. Titled "**Martin McDonagh and What Makes Irish Theatre Irish**," the event will feature a discussion about McDonagh's Irish style, the legacy of his work and why it's so appealing to audiences. The discussion will take place from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at The Music Center Annex building, 601 W. Temple Street, in Rehearsal Room A, and will feature experts on Irish literature and culture as well as Center Theatre Group Artistic Director **Michael Ritchie**.

Joining Ritchie for the discussion are scholars **Rónán McDonald** and **Amy Woodson-Boulton**. McDonald is a professor of Modern Literature at the University of New South Wales, Sydney and is currently the president of the Irish Studies Association of Australia and New Zealand. His research interests span modern Irish literature and culture, modernism, theories of cultural value and the role of the humanities in the modern university.

Woodson-Boulton is an associate professor and chair of the history department at Loyola Marymount University. She earned a doctorate from UCLA in 2003, and her work concentrates on cultural reactions to industrialization – particularly the history of art museums, the social role of art and the changing status and meaning of art and nature in modern society.

The moderator for the discussion panel will be prize-winning poet and playwright **John Menaghan** who teaches courses in Irish literature and culture, 20th-century literature, the dramatic monologue and creative writing. He has a Ph.D. from UC Berkeley and also serves as the director of both the Irish Studies and Summer in Ireland programs at Loyola Marymount University.

Directed by Garry Hynes, who won a Tony for her direction of the play on Broadway in 1998, Center Theatre Group's presentation of "The Beauty Queen of Leenane" plays at the Mark Taper Forum through December 18.

"Beauty Queen," set in the mountains of Connemara, County Galway, is the tale of Maureen Folan, a plain and lonely woman in her early 40s, and Mag, her manipulative, aging mother, whose interference in Maureen's first and potentially last romantic relationship sets in motion a chain of events that are as tragically funny as they are horrific.

The cast includes, in alphabetical order, Aaron Monaghan, Marie Mullen, Aisling O’Sullivan and Marty Rea. Mullen, who played the daughter Maureen in the original 1996 production and earned a Tony Award for her performance, now plays the role of Maureen’s mother Mag; O’Sullivan plays Maureen; Rea plays Pato; and Monaghan plays Ray.

Hynes also directed McDonagh’s “The Cripple of Inishmaan” at Center Theatre Group’s Kirk Douglas Theatre in 2011, as well as Arthur Miller’s “The Price” at the Taper in 2015. Center Theatre Group presented McDonagh’s “The Lieutenant of Inishmore” at the Taper in 2010.

McDonagh is an award-winning writer and director. His work with Druid includes “The Beauty Queen of Leenane,” “A Skull in Connemara,” “The Lonesome West” (Druid/Royal Court/Broadway) and “The Cripple of Inishmaan” (Druid/Atlantic Theater Company/U.S. Tour). Other theatre includes “The Cripple of Inishmaan” (National Theatre, London/West End/Broadway), “The Pillowman” (National Theatre, London/Broadway), “The Lieutenant of Inishmore” (RSC/Garrick/Broadway), “A Behanding in Spokane” (Broadway) and “Hangmen” (Royal Court). His film work (as a writer/director) includes “Six Shooter” (a short), “In Bruges” and “Seven Psychopaths.” His awards include the Olivier Award for Best New Comedy (“The Lieutenant of Inishmore”), Olivier Award for Best New Play (“The Pillowman”), Academy Award for Best Live Action Short Film (“Six Shooter”), BAFTA for Best Original Screenplay (“In Bruges”).

Center Theatre Group, one of the nation’s preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles’ leading nonprofit theatre company, programming seasons at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and 1600 to 2000-seat Ahmanson Theatre at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles, and the 317-seat Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City. In addition to presenting and producing the broadest range of theatrical entertainment in the country, Center Theatre Group is one of the nation’s leading producers of ambitious new works through commissions and world premiere productions and a leader in interactive community engagement and education programs that reach across generations, demographics and circumstance to serve Los Angeles.

RSVPs for the Community Conversations are encouraged; please contact [CommunityConversations@CTGLA.org](mailto:CommunityConversations@CTGLA.org).

Tickets for “The Beauty Queen of Leenane” are available by calling (213) 628-2772 or online at [www.CenterTheatreGroup.org](http://www.CenterTheatreGroup.org). Tickets range from \$25 – \$85 (ticket prices are subject to change). The Mark Taper Forum is located at the Music Center, 135 N. Grand Avenue in Downtown L.A. 90012.

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November 29, 2016