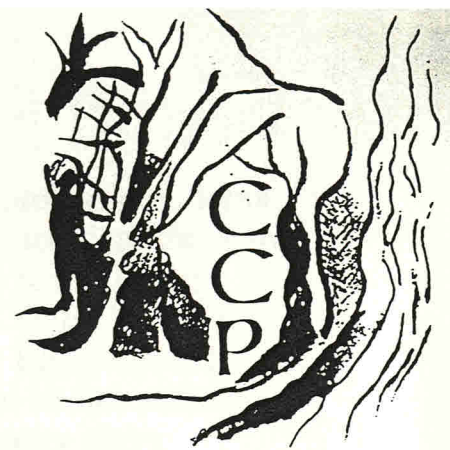


Cricklewood Community Play Association

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29 June, 1993

Michael D. Higgins
Minister for the Arts, Culture
& the Gaeltacht
Mespil Road, Dublin 4
IRELAND

Dear Mr Higgins,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Cricklewood Community Play Association with regards to our forthcoming production of John B. Keane's *THE BODHRÁN MAKER*. Sally Clarke, Secretary to Dick Spring, a patron and supporter of the project, suggested we contact you.

Our aim is to stage an adaptation of John B. Keane's wonderful novel as a large-scale promenade integrated arts production. The project was described recently in the *Irish Post* "as the biggest ever event of its kind to be staged by the Irish Community in this country or, for that matter, in Ireland" (30.1.93). It has the enthusiastic support of John B. himself, who not only felt it was an ideal context for the work but that the production team were sensitive to the spirit of the work. Gerry Greg hopes to make a documentary about the project. A further and important aim is to present a positive image of Irish people in London, and celebrate the vibrant and dynamic contribution made to the cultural life of the city.

The response amongst the Irish community has been extraordinary. As part of the Brent Festival we ran workshops in Drama, Music, Theatre Design, Writing and Dance - these were well attended and enjoyed. Our fundraising events, particularly our Ceilidhs, have attracted large, enthusiastic audiences. The Association has a reputation for bringing together the finest musicians and dancers on the London scene today.

We hope to stage the play in a large venue in December 1993 - the Galtymore has expressed a positive interest, and Express Dairy, a large local factory, due to close, has given us permission to use their extensive premises. It will have over 250 active participants from the Irish community and we expect audiences in the region of 6,000 for its two week run. The project will, as it has already proved, attract a section of the community who are unlikely to benefit from any already existing arts provision.

Steering Committee : P Baker, A Geaney, B Hourigan, J Hourigan, M Hourigan, K O'Connell, M Quirke, R Rae, E Rudkin, M Ryan, J Wardlaw
Trustees : M Hourigan, Fr M Kennelly, B McCloone, K O'Connell, M Ryan
Patrons : Fr H Haines, K Livingstone MP, J Marshall MP, M Matura, B Mulker, Federation of Irish Societies

We enclose an information pack which includes details of the professional input into the project. Since its preparation Peter Cox has joined us to adapt the novel. Peter's plays have been seen at the National Theatre and at the Royal Court Theatre, where his play "UP TO THE SUN AND DOWN TO THE CENTRE" won the George Devine Award, he is also a regular writer for BROOKSIDE. As well as being sensitive to the spirit and language of the original he has written a number of highly successful and innovative large-scale community plays.

We are working very hard to fundraise and though our efforts have raised £4,000. Together with support from the London Boroughs of Brent and Barnet, the London Boroughs Grants Committee, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the Milly Apthorpe Trust, we have raised in total just over £18,000. While we have a number of applications outstanding (including London Arts Board) and expect good box office receipts, we are still short of the amount needed to make the project happen.

The number of letters written and applications made now runs into the hundreds. Everybody has said how impressed they have been with our submissions and with the project but have had to limit the size of their contributions e.g. London Boroughs Grants committee had hoped to grant \$£10,000 but due to the extraordinary demands upon their resources resulting from a general decline in levels of arts funding, could only grant us £5,000

The response from the business community so far has been disappointing, despite the attraction of matching funding from the British Government. We hope to attract at least one major sponsor from Irish companies operating in London.

We are aware of the demands that must be made upon your resources, however given the unique nature of the project and the extraordinary efforts already made by the Irish community in getting it so far along the road, we can leave no stone unturned in our efforts to raise the required funding. We would, on behalf of the community be extremely grateful for any support you can offer us.

We would of course be happy to answer any questions you may have about us and to send any further information might require.

We appreciate how busy you are and thank you for your time in considering us.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Wardlaw
Steering Committee Member