



FEATURES

Dubliners Stripped Down

Anna Jurek '16

James Joyce tirelessly to transform his short novel into a mesmerizing piece of theater. To do this, she started by outlining all of the events from the novel but when their true nature is revealed, they are awe-inspiring. This can also be said of Sarah Lawrence's production of *Dubliners*, which was performed December 12, 13, and 14 in the Wright Theater.

For the director Sarah Plotkin, the project began nine months ago when she first proposed the idea. She said that she "was really ready for a huge project," and that it was inspired by Karen Lawrence's class "Who's Afraid of James Joyce". Since its approval, she has been working

year, Plotkin studied physical theater in Moscow as well as with the SITI Company in New York City. She said, "there was a sense of movement within the text and it translated best in a way that was physical." Kathryn York, the dance captain, said the lightheartedly, "physical theater is just more fun!" Watching the actors as they transformed themselves into a car, a chorus, a mob of children, was fun and it made the piece feel more alive than it would have otherwise.

The set, which was comprised of only four doors and several hanging windows, was described by Plotkin as "very symbolic and significant." Plotkin also noted that the audience should understand that the lives we see on the stage are also being lived "beyond and behind the windows."

There is a strong theme of framing throughout the show, especially because of the way that Plotkin cut and constructed her script. For example, the audience sees two characters, Gabriel and Gretia from the story "The Dead", appear before them, speaking the same lines several times throughout the show. Initially it was not clear why there was the repetition, but when



Photo by Rachel Eagan '17

the show closes with the full story of "The Dead" it is clear that we have learned about Gretia and Gabriel's true nature through their earlier scenes.



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The way that the athletics program at Sarah Lawrence approaches its core objectives is exactly the direction in which the athletics program at this institution should be taking. The program is not like any other out there, and neither are its goals. The student-athletes, coaches, staff, and administration occupying our campus seek to add to the environment of the campus in a way that is in line with its values, just like the other members of our community. Anyone can come out to practice, learn the ropes, and then compete, all in an environment that fosters exploration and education. The goal of on a team does not get you very far; not unlike

our program, and as a whole what I believe is the goal of the college, is to present a deeper, more holistic education. Coming to Sarah Lawrence, we all knew that a large part of learning takes place outside of the classroom. It turns out that a good bit of it can also happen at the volleyball net or in the pool.

Anyone reading this can point out that I have left out what precisely can be learned from heading over to the Sports Center to sign on with a team. That is because, just like conference work, you get exactly what you put into it. Sure, simply saying you are on a team does not get you very far; not unlike

Joyce wrote *Dubliners* most obviously to represent the people and city of Dublin. Because this production was performed without accents and sometimes without period costumes, the question of how it represented Joyce's Dublin was sometimes unanswered. However, Plotkin said that the essence of Dublin is in the piece. To her, Dublin is full of "change, the past, the fight of old against new, and rushing momentum." In reflection, those aspects of Dublin are certainly captured in Plotkin's version of the story. It is not a representation of Joyce's Dublin necessarily, but it is a representation of the eternal Dublin.

Photo by Rachel Eagan



Before opening night, Plotkin had a vision for her *Dubliners* that was especially unique. She anticipated an audience that would watch with "respect and excitement." She wanted the audience to dress up and check their coats before entering the theater so that they could be transformed into