

Donnacadh O'Briain

Director

Donnacadh is an Olivier Award winning director specialising in new writing. His productions have played at The Royal Shakespeare Company, in the West End, and internationally. His acclaimed production of Rotterdam by Jon Brittain won the Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre, it subsequently ran at The Arts Theatre (West End), and will tour the UK in Autumn 2018. He and Jon are developing a new play about Friendship and assisted suicide. He recently directed Mother Christmas for Hampstead Theatre Downstairs.

In 2016 he directed Always Orange by Fraser Grace for the RSC, which reopened the famous The Other Place Theatre. His collaborations with actor/writer Bella Heesom include their lauded My World Has Exploded a Little Bit about grief and mortality, and they are currently developing a new piece about sex and the self. He has several other projects in development, including a musical, and new piece on border control with Ice & Fire and Kings College London.

Donnacadh was artistic director of Natural Shocks for whom he created the unique cross art form pop-up theatre PEEP, which featured at the Edinburgh Fringe and Latitude Festival. For NS he also directed productions of Leo Butler's The Early Bird (Finborough, London & Project, Dublin); Between Life and Nowhere (Theatre Delicatessen), and a revival of his award winning production of Mathematics of the Heart (London's Theatre 503).

Donnacadh spent three years with the RSC working on ten productions including the multi award-winning Histories Cycle (The Guardian's 'Production of the Decade'). As an Assistant director he worked along side Michael Boyd, Dominic Cooke, Simon McBurney, Greg Doran, Jonathan Mumby, Rebecca Gatward & Alan Stanford. He directs and teaches acting at major drama schools, including RADA, LAMDA, and Bristol Old Vic Theatre School.

THEATRE

| DATE | PRODUCTION (ROLE) | COMPANY | PROJECT DETAILS |
|------|---|------------------------------|--|
| 2018 | LADS | LAMDA | By Jon Brittain |
| 2018 | REJOICING AT HER WONDROUS VULVA THE YOUNG WOMAN APPLAUDED HERSELF | All About You | Co-created with writer Bella Heesom. Oval House Theatre |
| 2017 | MOTHER CHRISTMAS | Hampstead Theatre | By David Lewis. Downstairs at Hampstead |
| 2017 | ROTTERDAM | Hartshorn-Hook | By Jon Brittain The Arts Theatre (West End) and 59E59 (off Broadway) |
| 2017 | MY WORLD HAS EXPLODED A LITTLE BIT (director/ dramturg) | All About You | By Bella Heesom Vault Festival, Oval House, and UK tour. |
| 2017 | THE EMPTY CHAIR | Troupe/ Frome Festival | Play for families performed by a pianist, a cellist and a Mezzo Soprano. |
| 2017 | THE COMEDY ABOUT A BANK ROBBERY (resident director) | Mischief Theatre | Criterion Theatre (West End) Dir. Mark Bell. |
| 2016 | PETER PAN GOES WRONG (resident director) | Mischief Theatre | Apollo Theatre (West End) Dir. Adam Megideo |
| 2016 | ALWAYS ORANGE | Royal Shakespeare Company | By Fraser Grace. |

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| 2016 | ROTTERDAM | Hartshorn - Hook / Theatre503 | By Jon Brittain. Trafalgar Studios. Winner: Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre. |
| 2016 | MY WORLD HAD EXPLODED A LITTLE BIT (director/ dramaturg) | All About You | By Bella Heesom. Edinburgh Fringe. |
| 2016 | THE EASTER RISING AND WHAT CAME THEREAFTER | Hartshorn - Hook | By Christopher Bland. |
| 2016 | THE TEMPEST | Bristol Old Vic Theatre School | |
| 2015 | ROTTERDAM | Harshorn - Hook & Theatre 503 | By Jon Brittain. Theatre503 |
| 2015 | Lesere | Hartshorn - Hook | By Ashley Holloway. |
| 2015 | MY WORLD HAS EXPLODED A LITTLE BIT (director/ dramaturg) | Tristan Bates Theatre | By Bella Heesom. Camden Fringe. |
| 2015 | THE POET, THE LOVER & THE LUNATIC | National Portrait Gallery | Portrait Choir conducted by Greg Batsleer, with a cast of six. Music by Elgar and Vaughan Williams, and texts by Shakespeare. |
| 2014 | VAMPIRETTE | Hartshorn - Hook | Workshop for a new musical. |
| 2014 | ANONYMITY | National Portrait Gallery & Latitude Festival | Portrait Choir, New Century Baroque conducted by Greg Batsleer, with a cast of two two. Music by Handel and verbatim texts arranged by Greg Batsleer and Donnacadh O'Briain |
| 2014 | BLUE STOCKINGS | Bristol Old Vic Theatre School | By Jessica Swale |
| 2014 | THE ISLAND NATION | Southbank Centre & Ice and Fire | By Christine Bacon. Rehearsed reading. |
| 2014 | OF MORNINGTON | Theatre503 | By Billy Roche. Rehearsed reading. With Adrian Dunbar and Aislin McGuckin. |
| 2013 | MERCURY FUR | RADA | By Philip Ridley. |
| 2013 | PEEP (director/ artistic director) | Natural Shocks, Assembly & Latitude | Plays by Leo Butler, Kefi Chadwick, Pamela Carter, Kay Adshead, Luke Barnes, Melissa Dunne & Sabrina Mahfouz. |
| 2013 | EUGENIE GRANDET | Hartshorn - Hook & Assembly | Adapted from Balzac. |
| 2012 | PEEP (director/ artistic director) | Natural Shocks & Pleasance Courtyard | Plays by Leo Butler, Kefi Chadwick & Pamela Carter. |
| 2012 | FROM BOTH HIPS | RADA | By Mark O'Rowe |
| 2012 | MATHEMATICS OF THE HEART | Natural Shocks/ Theatre503 | By Kefi Chadwick. |
| 2011 | BETRAYAL | Theatre Del'orogio, Rome | By Harold Pinter. |

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| 2011 | MATHEMATICS OF THE HEART | Malborough Theatre Brighton | By Kefi Chadwick. World Premiere. Winner Argus Angel Award, and Brighton Fringe Best New Play Award. |
| 2011 | RECHNITZ | RADA | By Elfrieda Jelinek, in a new translation by Jens Peters. Staged Reading. |
| 2010 | BETWEEN LIFE AND NOWHERE (OR THE STAIRWELL) | Natural Shocks & Theatre Delicatessen | Devised by the company. |
| 2010 | THE EARLY BIRD | Natural Shocks, Finborough & Project Arts Centre Dublin | Devised by the company. |
| 2010 | THE EARLY BIRD | Natural Shocks/ Finborough | By Leo Butler. |
| 2009 | ENDGAME (development dramaturg) | Complicite | By Samuel Beckett. Dir Simon McBurney. |
| 2009 | KING LEAR | Second Age | No 1 Tour of Ireland. |
| 2006 - 2008 | THE HISTORIES CYCLE (assistant director) | Royal Shakespeare Company | Dir. Michael Boyd. |
| 2007 | RICHARD III | Southwar Playhouse | Co-directed with Daniel Goldman. |
| 2005-2006 | Canterbury Tales | Royal Shakespeare Company | Dirs. Greg Doran, Rebecca Gatward & Jonathan Mumby. |
| 2005 | HUSH | Pleasance, Edinburgh & Arcola | By Samantha Wright. |
| 2005 | BREAKING NEWS | Theatre503 | Several writers |
| 2005 | TRILOQUAY | Arcola | By Jon Grogan. |
| 2004 | BLUE VELVET | Gilded Balloon | Adapted from the David Lynch film by Duncan Macmillan, Kate Wasserberg and Donnacadh. |
| 2003 | DON'T TAKE YOUR COAT OFF | Dark Horse | By Robin Keogh. Irish Tour. Winner: Best Production at 1st Dublin Gay Theatre Festival. |
| 2003 | A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM (SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUDIENCE) | Natural Shocks and Civic Theatre Tallaght | |
| 2003 | THE COMICAL MYSTERIES | Natural Shocks & Civic Theatre Tallaght | Adapted from Daro Fo by Kevin McGee |
| 2003 | KILT | Dark Horse | By Jonathan Wilson. |
| 2003 | IRAQNAPHOBIA | Project Arts Centre, Dublin | Several writers |
| 2003 | MYSTERO BUFFO | Irish Student Drama Festival | Adapted from Dario Fo. Winner: Best Director. |
| 2003 | THE ESSENCIENCIES OF A NIGHTINGALE (assistant director) | Gate Theatre Dublin | By Tennessee Williams Dir. Dominic Cooke. |

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| 2002 | CHRISTMAS CAROL (associate director) | Gate Theatre Dublin | Dir. Alan Stanford |
| 2002 | TWELFTH NIGHT | Crypt, Dublin Castle | |

AWARDS

| DATE | PRODUCTION (ROLE) | COMPANY | PROJECT DETAILS |
|------|-------------------|------------------------------|--|
| 2017 | Rotterdam | Olivier Awards | Winner of an Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre |
| 2007 | Richard III | Southwark Playhouse | Better Bankside Shakespeare Award (with Daniel Goldman) - winner created a production of Richard III |
| 2003 | Mystero Buffo | Irish Student Drama Festival | Winner: Best Director |
| 2001 | Becket Shorts | Irish Student Drama Festival | Winner: Judges Award for Outstanding Achievement |

REVIEWS

| PRODUCTION (ROLE) | PROJECT DETAILS |
|---|---|
| ROTTERDAM | <p>Evening Standard ★★★★ Critics Choice Time Out ★★★★ Critics Choice Sunday Times ★★★★ Critics Choice The Stage ★★★★ Critics Choice</p> <p>WhatsOnStage ★★★★ "O'Briain's direction is superb – insightful, energetic and perfectly-paced "</p> <p>The Times ★★★★ "O'Briain's production... Keeps hitting the emotional sweet spot between the playful and the intimate"</p> |
| ALWAYS ORANGE | <p>The Guardian ★★★★ "... O'Briain's adroit production... Explosions don't shatter the silence – they are a profound and terrifying silence."</p> <p>Guardian 5 of the Best... "The writing is sharp and the acting fine, but it's Donnacadh O'Briain's very smart production that lends this both coherence and an explosive power."</p> <p>The Stage ★★★★ "It's directed with clarity and intelligence by Donnacadh O'Briain... a visually stunning production.</p> |
| MY WORLD HAS EXPLODED A LITTLE BIT | <p>"Reviews Hub ★★★★(and a half) "A touching, moving and yet surprisingly uplifting debut play from Heesom.</p> <p>Three Weeks ★★★★ "a show that's funny, energetic, profound and heartbreaking all at once... 'it's brave, and honest, and makes an emotional connection that'll stay with you.'</p> <p>Edinburgh Fringe Magazine ★★★★ "... beautifully crafted... a true masterpiece and an absolute pleasure to watch. By far my favourite show of the year"</p> |
| PEEP | <p>★★★★ Financial Times, ★★★★ Metro, ★★★★ EdFestMagasine, ★★★★ ScotsGay, ★★★★ Fringe Review, ★★★★ Broadway Baby, ★★★★ The Skinny, ★★★★ Metro ★★★★</p> <p>"Let's talk about sex: intelligently, humorously, candidly and brazenly. Actors are utterly committed to the material and we respond by devouring each intimate yet brief encounter" The New Statesman. "It is immaculately directed, production values are very high and the voyeuristic effect works uncomfortably well"</p> |
| BETWEEN LIFE AND NOWHERE (OR THE STAIRWELL) | <p>WhatsOnStage.com ★★★★ "Don't miss Between Life and Nowhere. It is a lovely thing to behold"</p> <p>Time Out (Critics Choice) ★★★★ "Dazzlingly playful aerial show"</p> |

THE EARLY BIRD

Independent on Sunday (Critics Choice) 5/5 "The electrifying London premiere of O'Briain's production generates an intense, interrogatory intimacy."

Metro 5/5 "...O'Briain's direction is exemplary"

Irish Independent "It's difficult to imagine a more seamlessly executed and innovative realisation of Butlers dark discordant vision."

KING LEAR

Mail on Sunday "A vibrant production that captures the dramatic essence of the play"

The Irish Times "Stylish, energetic and unconventional"
