

Loco and Reckless Productions in association with Nomad Theatre Network Present

The Far Off Hills

By Lennox Robinson

By agreement with Abbey Theatre Amharclann na Mainistreach

Directed by Mikel Murfi

National Irish Tour Dates Announced

A hilarious tale of scheming siblings, love and general jiggery-pokery, Lennox Robinson's "The Far Off Hills" is set to embark on a national tour. Directed by Mikel Murfi, the production stars Steve Blount (*Moone Boy*, HBO's *Game of Thrones*), Caoimhe O'Malley (*Reign*), Julie Sharkey (*Fair City*) and Niamh McGrath (*Calvary*)

Set in a sleepy town in rural Ireland, where the far off hills are green, everything is set to change in the lives of Patrick Clancy and his three daughters, Marian, Ducky and Pet. The oldest daughter, Marian, feels duty bound to postpone her entry to the convent until her father has his long-awaited cataract operation.

Marian rules the household strictly, much to the dismay of Patrick and her more fun-loving younger sisters Pet and Ducky. Harold Mahony, one of the greatest moaners in Ireland – ever, has his sights set on the blissfully unaware oldest daughter. All is set to change however, with the arrival of the energetic young and devilishly handsome, Pierce Hegarty. Feeling left out in the cold by Marian's admirers, the two younger girls hatch a plan to get rid of their older sister which ends with unexpected results.

This revival of Lennox Robinson's classic comedy from 1928 is given new life under the direction of award-winning Mikel Murfi (creator of *The Man in the Woman's Shoes*). Set and costume design is by Sabine Dargent and lighting design by Nick McCall.

A slapstick, boisterous production that'll leave audiences spinning in their seats!

Tour Dates

Thursday 20 – Friday 21 November 2014 – Hawk's Well Theatre, Sligo <http://www.hawkswell.com/>
Saturday 22 – Sunday 23 November 2014 – Garage Theatre, Monaghan <http://www.garagetheatre.com/>
Wednesday 26 – Thursday 27 November 2014 – Mullingar Arts Centre <http://www.mullingarartscentre.ie/>
Friday 28 - Saturday 29 November 2014 – Riverbank Arts Centre, Newbridge <http://www.riverbank.ie/>
Monday 1 – Tuesday 2 December 2014 – Draíocht, Blanchardstown <http://www.draiocht.ie/>
Wednesday 3 – Thursday 4 December 2014 – Droichead Arts Centre, Drogheda <http://www.droichead.com/>
Friday 5 - Saturday 6 December 2014 – Backstage Theatre, Longford <http://www.backstage.ie/>
Monday 8 – Tuesday 9 December 2014 – Linenhall Arts Centre, Castlebar <http://www.thelinenhall.com/>
Wednesday 10 – Thursday 11 December 2014 – Roscommon Arts Centre <http://roscommonartscentre.ie/>
Friday 12 - Saturday 13 December 2014 – An Grianán, Letterkenny <http://www.angrianan.com/>
Tuesday 16 – Thursday 18 December 2014 – Pavilion Theatre, Dun Laoghaire <http://www.paviliontheatre.ie/>
Friday 19 - Saturday 20 December 2014 – Ramor Theatre, Virginia <http://www.ramortheatre.com/>

Notes for Editors

CREATIVE TEAM

Directed by Mikel Murfi

Set and Costume Design by Sabine Dargent

Lighting Design by Nick McCall

PERFORMED BY

Steve Blount (*Moone Boy*, HBO's *Game of Thrones*, RTÉ's *Fair City*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*)

Caoimhe O'Malley (*Reign*, *The Country Girls*, Ross O'Carroll-Kelly's *Breaking Dad*)

Julie Sharkey (*Fair City, 32A, Dream's End*)

Niamh McGrath (*Calvary, Alone It Stands*)

THE PLAY

The first production of *The Far Off Hills* took place in the Abbey Theatre, Dublin on October 22, 1928 and was Robinson's first three-act comedy of Irish life since *The White-Headed Boy* in 1916. A light-hearted portrayal of the marriage game, it has its roots in the same provincial background as that of the earlier plays but ends on a more optimistic note, as all the characters (except the fickle servant Ellen) realise their ambitions.

Played originally by the Abbey Theatre Irish Players during their 1932 tour of America, *The Far Off Hills* proved the first comedy success of their 1937 engagement and was continued for a run of 47 performances.

THE PLAYWRIGHT

Lennox Robinson (1886-1958)

Lennox Robinson was born in Douglas, Co Cork in 1886. He was a dramatist, poet, theatre producer and director. His first play, *The Cross Roads* was performed in the Abbey Theatre in 1909. He became Manager and Director of the theatre towards the end of that year, following the death of J. M. Synge. He resigned in 1914 but returned to the Abbey Theatre in 1918 as manager and producer, and was appointed to the board of the theatre in 1923. He spent many years as director of the Abbey School of Acting.

He continued to write many plays throughout the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. During this period he wrote *The Big House* (1926), *The Far Off Hills* (1928) and *Drama at Inish* (1933), which, when it transferred to Broadway, was called *Is Life Worth Living?* He edited *Lady Gregory's Journals* (1946) and *The Oxford Book of Irish Verse* with Donagh McDonagh (1958). In 1951 Lennox Robinson published *Ireland's Abbey Theatre*, the first full-length history of the company. He remained on the Abbey board until his death in 1958.

Lennox Robinson Bursary Award

In his will Lennox Robinson bequeathed his estate to his wife and determined that on her death the copyright would pass to the National Theatre Society Limited, now the Abbey Theatre. His wish was that the copyrights assigned to the Abbey would be held as a trust fund to be called *The Lennox Robinson Trust*. The Trust was to be used "in aid of the following persons: Playwrights, Players, Producers, Stage Designers and Stage Musicians, Any Other Servant of the Theatre." Since 1977 The Abbey Theatre has administered this fund by making awards to theatre practitioners. Past recipients include, Brien Vahey, Frank Flood, Blaithin Sheerin, Bronwen Casson, Dave Nolan, Dermot Bolger, Alan Gilsenan, Conall Morrison and Melanie Clarke Pullen.