

The Llanarth Group (Wales), Gaitkrash (Ireland), Theatre P'yut (Korea)

playing 'the maids'



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created by

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playing 'the maids' is a newly co-created piece of theatre—a montage of text (primarily English-language, with some Mandarin, Korean, and Irish), psychophysical scores, choreography, and sound compositions created by an international ensemble of seven artists working with Kaite O'Reilly (dramaturg) and Phillip Zarrilli (director). A sound artist (Mick O'Shea) and cellist (Adrian Curtin) interact with five performers: a Chinese 'madame' (Jing Hong Okorn-Kuo) and two sets of 'sister-maids' (one Irish: Bernadette Cronin & Regina Crowley; one Korean: Jeungsook Yoo & Sunhee Kim).

As the title suggests, *playing 'the maids'* relates to Jean Genet's modernist drama *Les Bonnes* (*The Maids*, 1947). It is not, however, a production of that play. Rather, it uses Genet's text as creative inspiration, focusing on its relationships and power dynamics as part of an oblique investigation of modern servitude, wealth-as-privilege, cultural notions of guilt and oppression, phantasms, and the politics of intimacy.

playing 'the maids' was first developed by the full ensemble of nine artists at the Tyn y Parc Studio, Llanarth, West Wales between 24 August and 1 September, 2013, with a grant from the Arts Council of Wales. It was previewed at the Granary Theatre as part of the Cork Midsummer Festival in June 2014. It premiered at Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff, in February 2015.



*Underneath a bed
of spotless snow, the dirt of
the world lies hidden.*

*Faoi bhrat ghlan sneachta
bíonn salachar an domhain
faoi cheilt.*

새하얀 눈밭 밑에는 세상의 오물이 숨겨져 있다.

playing 'the maids' has been co-created by the following team of companies and artists:

The Llanarth Group

Phillip Zarrilli (director); Kaite O'Reilly (resident dramaturg)

The Llanarth Group is an association of theatre/performance artists dedicated to producing international theatre through in-depth psychophysical training of actors from all cultures.

Phillip Zarrilli is the founding Artistic Director of The Llanarth Group (2000). He is internationally known as a director, actor, and actor-trainer. Most recently he was invited Guest Director at the 2014 Taipei Arts Festival where he directed Kaite O'Reilly's *the 9 fridas*. Other recent Llanarth Group productions include *The Beckett Project* (Malta Festival, 2012) and *Told by the Wind* (Tokyo Theatre Babylon, 2013). In 2015 he will be directing Ota Shogo's *The Water Station* at Nordland Teatr (Norway). He has developed a unique method of psychophysical training for actors using Asian martial arts and yoga. He teaches this approach throughout the world—most recently at

ITI (Singapore), the Norwegian Theatre Academy, and his private studio in West Wales. He has authored/edited many books/essays including his award-winning *Psychophysical Acting* (Routledge Press).

Kaite O'Reilly, dramaturg for The Llanarth Group, has won various awards for her work, most recently The Ted Hughes Award for New Works in Poetry (*Persians* for National Theatre Wales). Her performance text *the 9 Fridas* was directed by Zarrilli for the Taipei Arts Festival in 2014, and for Hong Kong Rep' in 2016. She writes for radio, has a TV series in development, and is working on a novel thanks to a Literature Wales bursary.

Information at www.kaiteoreilly.com; www.phillipzarrilli.com.

GAITKRASH

Bernadette Cronin and Regina Crowley (The 'Irish sister-maids')
Mick O'Shea (sound artist)
www.gaitkrash.com

Since its inception in 2007 Gaitkrash has been breaking ground by continually crafting and interrogating new possibilities for live performance that take place at the intersection between theatre, sound art, and space. Central to their work is the model of a conversation, which involves perceiving, listening and responding in the liveness of the moment. Gaitkrash's signature interplay between sound, performance task, and vision is in keeping with Arnold Schopenhauer's thesis that when images are accompanied by sound, "*the sound seems to open up their most secret sense and meaning, and to constitute the clearest commentary on them*".

Bernadette Cronin is an actor and theatre practitioner-researcher with particular interests in devising, adapting, and exploring links between performance and embodied philosophies such as yoga and zazen meditation. She is currently Head of Drama and Theatre Studies at University College Cork.

Regina Crowley is a performer, director and designated Linklater voice teacher. She is the course co-ordinator of the BA in Theatre and Drama Studies at CIT Cork School of Music. In 2014 she performed in Gaitkrash's production of Samuel Beckett's *Not I* at the Crawford Art Gallery in Cork.

Mick O'Shea is a multimedia artist, a director of the Cork Artists Collective, and a founder member of The Guesthouse. His media include sculpture, drawing, sound, and cooking. All of his works spring from his essential experience in drawing. He formed The Quiet Club in 2006 with sound artist Danny McCarthy and has been instrumental in establishing a vibrant and growing sound art scene in Cork City. He set up The Domestic Godless in 2003 with fellow artists Stephen Brandes and Irene Murphy, exploring culinary activity as art through performative cooking events.

www.thedomesticgodless.com

Theatre P'yut

Jeungsook Yoo & Sunhee Kim

(company co-founders)

Based between Seoul and the U.K., Theatre P'yut was founded in 2008 by Korean artists Jeungsook Yoo and Sunhee Kim. Jeungsook Yoo is an actor, director and researcher with interests in traditional Korean aesthetics and its application to acting. Sunhee Kim is an actor, director and researcher with interests in Korean Buddhist perspectives on performance processes. Theatre P'yut develops the practice and aesthetics of performance through intercultural and interdisciplinary approaches. East-Asian traditions of body-mind cultivation play a central role in exploring the process of performance creation. Recent productions include *ing* (Singapore, Shenzhen) in collaboration with Theatre Practice, Singapore.



Independent Artists:

Jing Hong Okorn-Kuo performs, directs/choreographs, and teaches. She freelances with both dance and theatre communities, performing, creating work, and coaching performers. Her creative work has been presented at the International Contemporary Theatre Festival in Shanghai, Darwin Fringe Festival in Australia, Asian Contemporary Theatre Festival in Singapore, Japan Asia Arts Festival, and Bangkok Fringe Festival, amongst others.



Adrian Curtin is a musician, theatre artist, and academic. He is a lecturer in the Drama department at the University of Exeter and specialises in modernist theatre and sound/music in performance. He is the author of *Avant-Garde Theatre Sound: Staging Sonic Modernity* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

Po-Hsin Liu is a freelance lighting designer. She has designed for more than fifty projects, including drama, concert, Chinese opera, puppetry, dance, mime, and object theatre. She has also served as lighting coordinator and chief electrician for more than ten projects and festivals, and has toured extensively in Europe and Asia. Po-Hsin has recently completed an MA in Theatre Design (Lighting) at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff.

Bethan Dawson (stage manager) studied at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, graduating in 2011. Since then she has stayed in Cardiff and worked on theatre and dance productions in South Wales and on tour throughout the UK. Last year she worked with Wales Millennium Centre and Birmingham Hippodrome on their new production *Frozen Scream* as well as with Welsh Fargo Theatre Company and Volcano Theatre Company.



*Mirrors on the wall.
I see my many selves, and
they see me see me.*

*Beauty is plastic.
She sees herself, and winces,
and screws up her face.*



*bowing and scraping
looking up from time to time
following the beat*



*The joys, the sorrows soon will end,
The tomb confines all mortals!
Do not cry or place flowers at my grave,
Do not place a cross with my name to cover these bones!
Ah, the misguided desire to smile;
God pardon and accept me,
All is finished.*

From: Verdi's *La Traviata*.



*'...the words "capital" and "wealth"...[are] interchangeable...
[They are] perfectly synonymous.'*

*'...in all societies, income inequality is the result of adding up [...] inequality of
income from labor and inequality of income from capital. The more unequally
distributed each of these two components is, the greater the total inequality.'*

From: *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, by Thomas Piketty (2014)



Wishing not to have so much as a speck of shame toward heaven
until the day I die, I suffered, even when the wind stirred the leaves.

From: *Foreward* (1941) by Yun Dong-ju, published in *Sky, Wind, and Stars*
(translated by Kyung-Nyun Kim Richards)



Jean Genet's grave. The Spanish Cemetery, Larache, Morocco. 2014

Anyone who hasn't experienced the ecstasy of betrayal knows nothing about ecstasy at all (Jean Genet).

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photos: Ger Fitzgibbon, Kaite O'Reilly

The Llanarth
Group



GAITKRAS

극단 별
THEATRE p'ut



The Peggy Ramsay Foundation