



bennington college drama presents

ANCESTRAL VOICES PROPHECYING WAR

a night of scenes from twentieth century irish plays

Tuesday, December 14th, 1999
8:00pm
Lester Martin Theatre

My upbringing was in Protestant East Belfast. It wasn't until my late teens that I became aware of the depth and ugliness of the sectarian divide in Northern Ireland and the extent to which religious bigotry had poisoned most social and political life in the province. In 1966 I was glad to escape to the freedom of London and drama school. I left in high dudgeon crying "A plague o' both your houses" and determined never to return.

Of course I visited my family over the years and as time passed my anger subsided. I worked first in England and then in the United States. I was a citizen of the world and I was confident I had finally broken and discarded the childhood bonds of tribal identity.

In 1986 while visiting London I went to see a new play, *Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme* by Frank McGuinness. I had read several reviews and knew it was a play about an Ulster Protestant battalion that had been virtually annihilated at the Battle of the Somme in 1916. However nothing could have prepared me for what happened at the Hampstead Theatre Club that evening. In a moment of pure catharsis, and for the first and only time in my life, I wept unashamedly for my tribe and its dark heritage. Imagine my astonishment when I discovered this inestimable gift had been given to me, and the other members of my tribe, by an Ulster Catholic.

Two other things happened that night. I knew instinctively a political settlement to the Northern Ireland conflict was possible and it marked the genesis of *Ancestral Voices Propheying War* and the scene work you are to see tonight.

Derek Campbell

ANCESTRAL VOICES PROPHEYSING WAR

STAGE MANAGEMENT	Eli Hall
LIGHTING	Monica Hubbard
SOUND	Adam Drake
COSTUMES	Kaitlin Willihnganz
POSTER AND PROGRAM	Dan Mohr

thanks to Bobby Keniston, James Nyman, Matt Sterenchock, who volunteered for scene work. Also, Frank LaFrazia, Skye Bender-deMoll, and Marlon Hurt

SCENES

two scenes from REMEMBRANCE, by Graham Reid

Jessica Caterina – Joan
Brandi Nicole – Dierdre, her sister
Summer Brennan – Theresa, their mother
Setting: Joan and Theresa's living room

from OBSERVE THE SONS OF ULSTER MARCHING TOWARDS THE SOMME,
by Frank McGuinness

Michael Metivier – Pyper
James Nyman – Craig
Setting: a makeshift army barracks, Northern Ireland, 1915

two scenes from OURSELVES ALONE, by Anne Devlin

Summer Brennan – Frieda
Brandi Nicole – Josie, her sister
Jasmine Hamedí – Donna, her sister
Michael Metivier – Joe Conran
Setting: the sisters' living room in West Belfast

Jessica Caterina – Frieda
James Nyman – John McDermot
Setting: McDermot's apartment in South Belfast

from TRANSLATIONS, by Brian Friel

Michael Metivier – Yolland
Summer Brennan – Maire
Setting: a meadow in Southern Ireland, 1830s

from AFTER EASTER, by Anne Devlin

Jasmine Hamedí – Greta
Jessica Caterina – Aoife, her sister
Brandi Nicole – Helen, her sister
Matthew Sterenchock – Dr. Campbell
Setting: a hospital, then Helen's apartment – both in England

from TRUST, by Gary Mitchell

Michael Metivier – Geordie
Bobby Keniston – Artty
James Nyman – Geordie's son
Summer Brennan – Julie
Setting: an Irish pub in Belfast

