



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

November 8, 2011

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***The Hilberry Theatre Presents Dark, Irish Comedy The Cripple of Inishmaan***

Detroit, MI - On December 2, 2011 the Hilberry Theatre will continue its 49<sup>th</sup> season with the sentimental dark comedy *The Cripple of Inishmaan*. One of the few comedies by Tony-Award-nominated playwright Martin McDonagh, *The Cripple of Inishmaan* is the first play of the playwright's Aran Islands trilogy. The original production premiered at the Royal National Theatre in London in 1996, and was first produced in the United States in 1998 at the Joseph Papp Public Theatre. *The Cripple of Inishmaan* runs in rotating repertory at the Hilberry Theatre with *Frank Langella's Cyrano* until February 4, 2012. Tickets are \$12-\$30 and are available by calling the Hilberry Theatre Box Office at (313) 577-2972, online at hilberry.com, or by visiting the box office at 4743 Cass Avenue on the corner of Hancock.

Set on the small Aran Islands community of Inishmaan off the Western Coast of Ireland, circa 1934, the inhabitants are excited to learn of perhaps the most significant event in the area's history: filmmaker Robert Flaherty will soon arrive at neighboring Inishmore to make a documentary about life on the islands. "Cripple" Billy Claven, eager to escape the gossip, poverty and boredom of Inishmaan, vies for a part in the film, and to everyone's surprise, the orphan and outcast gets his chance. In a sleepy, rural town starved for something to talk about, "Cripple" Billy quickly becomes everyone's favorite topic.

One of Ireland's most celebrated playwrights, at the age of 27 Martin McDonagh became the first playwright since Shakespeare to have four plays running simultaneously in London's West End. Citing Martin Scorsese, David Lynch and Quentin Tarantino as some of his greatest influences, he made the jump to film with the Academy-Award-winning *Six Shooter* (2005), *In Bruges* (2008), and (currently being filmed) *Seven Psychopaths*. But he remains a playwright at heart, and has received Drama Desk, Outer Critics, Laurence Olivier, and Obie awards throughout his career. When *The Cripple of Inishmaan* received its Aran Islands premiere earlier this year, he attended the opening.

The historic Hilberry Theatre is known for its classic productions presented in rotating repertory. While the Hilberry also produces modern playwrights' work, the 1934 setting of the play helps place *The Cripple of Inishmaan* comfortably in the theatre's tradition of classics. The third play in the season is also the first to begin the rotating repertory model that the Hilberry Theatre is known for; *The Cripple of Inishmaan* rotates with *Frank Langella's Cyrano* beginning January 13, 2012.

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The Hilberry cast members include **Lorelei Sturm** (Eileen), **Sara Hymes** (Kate), **Brent Griffith** (Johnnypateenmike), **Joshua Rippy** (Bartley), **Megan Dobbertin** (Helen), **Christopher Ellis** (Babbybobby), **Danielle Cochran** (Mammy), **Alec Barbour** (Doctor), and **David Sterritt** (Billy). Production team includes **Veronica Zahn** (Stage Manager), **Mercedes Coley** (Assistant Stage Manager), **Peter Schmidt** (Technical Director), **Curtis Green** (Scenic Designer), **Leazah Behrens** (Assistant Scenic Designer) **Rudolph C. Schuepbach** (Properties Master), **Meghan Lynch** (Sound Designer), **Mary Leyendecker** (Costume Designer), **Jon Weaver** (Lighting Designer), **Alec Barbour** (Fight Choreographer), **Michael Wilkki** (Paint Charge), and **Jillian Zylinski** (Publicist).

### About the Hilberry Theatre Company

The Hilberry Company is unique in that it is the nation's only graduate theatre company staffed by young up-and-coming professionals that also runs on a rotating repertory schedule. About forty graduate students are selected in national competition to receive fellowships to work in this theatre and study for advanced degrees. The company performs an annual season of six plays, including high school matinees for nearly 6,000 students. Through the years four Hilberry productions have been selected to appear at the American College Theatre Festival.

Tickets are \$12-\$30 and are available by calling the Hilberry Theatre Box Office at (313) 577-2972 or online at [www.wsushows.com](http://www.wsushows.com). The box office is open Tuesday through Saturday from 2 p.m. until 6 p.m., with extended hours to 8 p.m. on performance evenings (Thursday-Saturday). Group discounts and corporate packages are also available. For more information, please call (313) 577-2972 or visit the Wayne State University Box Office at 4743 Cass Ave. on the corner of Hancock in Detroit. Performance information and tickets may also be obtained by visiting the theatre's website at [www.hilberry.com](http://www.hilberry.com).

The 2011-2012 Hilberry season is sponsored by CBS Outdoor, *Between the Lines* and Encore Michigan.

Photo #1:



Left to right: Lorelei Sturm, David Sterritt, Sarah Hymes

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Photo #2:



Left to right: Lorelei Sturm and Sarah Hymes

Photo #3:



David Sterritt as "Cripple" Billy Claven

Photo credits: Becky Pierce

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*The Cripple of Inishmaan*  
**By Martin McDonagh**

-Calendar Information-

December 2, 2011 – February 4, 2012

Wednesday 2 p.m. Dec. 7

Thursday 8 p.m. Dec. 8, Jan. 19, Feb. 2

Friday 8 p.m. Dec. 2, 9, Jan. 20, Feb. 3

Saturday 2 p.m. Dec. 3, Feb 4

Saturday 8 p.m. Dec. 3, 10, Jan. 21, Feb 4

-Special Performances-

Opening Night – Friday, December 2, 8pm

Talkback Series – Wednesday, December 7, 2pm

Discussion Series – Thursday, December 8, 7:15pm

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