

News release

Fringe play follows DNA tourists in Ireland

With DNA tests linking millions, everyone has the tools to find their 6th cousins twice removed anywhere in the world. A new play from Saskatoon at the Toronto Fringe Festival July 3-14 advises DNA tourists to proceed with caution.

In Ireland We Rented a Car from Criminals follows Tom and Mary over the rocky hillsides of County Clare in search of their long-dead ancestors in the famine graveyards. Along the way, they meet an Irish dozen of storytellers -- the landlady at the B&B, the tour guide at the stone fort, the old woman in the cottier's hut, the sister at the parish records office, the graveyard historian, plus farmers, singers, musicians, house boaters, and friendly motorists to steer them around Irish roads, Irish history, and Irish farming. They also meet Aidan, the manager of the car-rental kiosk. With the help of Yalna, Droogy, and Droogy's mom, Aidan has planned an unhappy ending for their holiday.

The play stars Lauren Allen and Nathan Coppens, directed by Andrew Johnston. Music is by Celtic band the Residuals, with sound design by Mike Klein. Rod Macpherson wrote the script. The world premiere is at the Streetcar Crowsnest Guloien Theatre, Carlaw Avenue at Dundas, Wed 3 July at 8:30 p.m.

In Ireland We Rented a Car from Criminals is a comedy. Underneath the laughter, it asks an audience what the truth is behind *their* family history, what one generation owes to another, and whether the past can be repaired.

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Photo caption and credit

"Mary *wants* it to be her great-great grandparents. Problem is, an infant child buried here is *not* part of the family tree..." Lauren Allen and Nathan Coppens, *In Ireland We Rented a Car from Criminals*. (Judith Schulz Photography)