

WALKING WITH GHOSTS

**Landmark Productions
Gabriel Byrne**

Supported by
James and Morag Anderson



24 – 28 August 7.30pm
25, 27 & 28 August 2.30pm

KING'S THEATRE

The performance lasts approximately
2 hours and 20 minutes
with one interval.

Please ensure that all mobile phones
and electronic devices are switched off
or put on silent.



WALKING WITH GHOSTS

Writer and Performer

Gabriel Byrne

Director

Lonny Price

Set and Lighting Designer

Sinéad McKenna

Costume Designer

Joan O'Clery

Sound Designer and Composer

Sinéad Diskin

Associate Director

Matt Cowart

Relighter

Susan Collins

Stage Manager

Leanna Cuttle

Assistant Stage Manager

Aidan Doheny

Production Manager

Eamonn Fox

Deputy Production Manager

Eoin Kilkenny

Sound Engineer

Kevin McGing

Follow Spot Operator

Gavin Kennedy

Hair and Makeup

Ola Szczygiel

Producer

Anne Clarke

Assistant Producer

Jack Farrell

Publicist

Sinead O'Doherty

Marketing

Sinead McPhillips

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This is not a one man show in any traditional sense; it's a play – adapted and expanded from my memoir *Walking with Ghosts*. In it I interpret many characters and chart the journey of my life from working-class Dublin to Hollywood and Broadway.

I have tried to deal with themes of family, exile, identity, failure and success – honestly, and with humour. Indeed humour is the driving force of the play. I've examined some dark times in this play because part of my story is growing up in a repressively religious Ireland. An Ireland that today is, thankfully, much more progressive in how it treats its citizens.

In the history of Ireland, emigration is like a psychic scar on the tribe. Leaving in the last century, and up to the 1950s and 60s, was a final act. Irish families used to have 'emigration wakes', where the family would gather together on the eve of a son or daughter departing, because they would never see them again. There's a lot of Irish music and song and poetry about leaving, because it was so traumatic.

But as Edward Said, the Palestinian writer said, all exiles suffer from a sense of longing for home, for the security that

home brings. So, when you're an exile, or an emigrant, or an immigrant, your sense of home changes. To come back is to find things changed, and to find things changed in yourself. The world cannot stay as it is, though the emigrant wants, deep down, things to stay the same.

But that's impossible because what we think of as home is actually our childhood. The town that you grew up in and you go back to intermittently is changing, and you've changed too. We all have our stories that we prefer not to talk about, not to share. But by sharing, you connect with other people, and I hope the play will provoke the audience into thinking about their own lives. Because I do believe that, in Ireland, silence and shame go together. And things that grow in the dark tend to grow more and more twisted.

Having said that, there is life and light after trauma. Soon we will all be ghosts – so we might as well, as much as we can, lob truth grenades at each other, while having fun along the way.

That is what I have tried to do with this play.

© **Gabriel Byrne**
August 2022

GABRIEL BYRNE

Gabriel Byrne started his acting career with Ireland's renowned Focus Theatre and Project Arts Centre. He later joined London's Royal Court Theatre and the Royal National Theatre, where he played leading roles before moving to the United States.

Byrne has worked with some of cinema's leading directors, including the Coen Brothers, Wim Wenders, Costa Gavras, Jim Jarmusch, Ken Loach, John Boorman, David Cronenberg and Bryan Singer. He has starred in more than 80 feature films including *Excalibur*, *Miller's Crossing*, *Into the West*, *The Point of No Return*, *Little Women*, *Spider*, *The Usual Suspects*, *Dead Man*, *The End of Violence*, *The Man in the Iron Mask*, *Vanity Fair*, *Jindabyne* and *Wah-Wah*.

On Broadway, he received a Tony Award nomination for his performance in Eugene O'Neill's *A Moon for the Misbegotten*. He won the Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Actor for his performance in another O'Neill play, *A Touch of the Poet*. In 2016, he starred opposite Jessica Lange in O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. For his performance as James Tyrone, he received Best Actor nominations from the Tony Awards and Outer Critics Circle.

His television credits include *Vikings*, *Quirke*, *Secret State* (Channel 4) and *Weapons of Mass Distraction* (HBO). He was nominated for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama Series for *In Treatment* at the 60th and 61st Emmy Awards. In 2008, he received a Golden Globe for Best Performance by an Actor in a Drama Series for the same role.

In 2019, Byrne was honoured by IFTA with a Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2021, he received the IFTA Best Actor Award for his latest film, *Death of a Ladies' Man*.

LONNY PRICE

On Broadway, Lonny Price directed *Sunset Boulevard*, *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, *110 in the Shade*, *Master Harold... and the Boys*, *Sally Marr and her Escorts* (co-written with Joan Rivers and Erin Sanders), *Urban Cowboy*, *A Class Act* (Tony Award nomination for Best Book of a Musical, co-written with Linda Kline) and Off-Broadway's *Scotland PA*, which had its world premiere at Roundabout Theatre Company's Laura Pels Theatre in 2019.

His West End credits include *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, as well as *Carousel*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Sweeney Todd* and *Man of La Mancha*, the latter four for English National Opera.

Price's film and television credits include the New York Philharmonic's *Camelot* (starring Gabriel Byrne), *Sweeney Todd* (Emmy Award), *Passion* (Emmy Award), and *Company*. He also directed the stage and filmed versions of his tribute to Stephen Sondheim, *Sondheim: The Birthday Concert!* (Emmy Award). His further television credits include *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill* for HBO, as well as episodes of *2 Broke Girls* and *Desperate Housewives*. For his first feature, *Master Harold ... and the Boys*, he received a Best Director Award from the New York International Independent Film and Video Festival.

His documentary, *Best Worst Thing That Ever Could Have Happened* premiered at the New York Film Festival and was named one of New York Times' Top 10 Films of 2016, and his documentary *Hal Prince: The Director's Life* (PBS) was also released to critical acclaim.

LANDMARK PRODUCTIONS

Landmark Productions is one of Ireland's leading theatre producers. It produces wide-ranging work in Ireland and shares this with international audiences. Led by Anne Clarke since the company's foundation in 2003, Landmark has received multiple awards and its productions have been seen in leading theatres in London, New York and beyond. It produces a wide range of ambitious work – plays, operas and musicals – and co-produces regularly with a number of partners, including, most significantly, Galway International Arts Festival and Irish National Opera. Its 27 world premieres to date include new plays by major Irish writers such as Enda Walsh, Mark O'Rowe and Deirdre Kinahan, featuring a roll-call of Ireland's finest actors, directors and designers.

Numerous awards include the Judges' Special Award at The Irish Times Irish Theatre Awards and a Special Tribute Award for Anne Clarke.

January 2021 saw the launch of Landmark Live, a new online streaming platform which enables the company to bring the thrill of live theatre to audiences around the world.

Landmark is supported by the Arts Council of Ireland. Its international touring is supported by Culture Ireland.

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