

Gúna Nua Theatre & Civic Theatre, Tallaght
present

LITTLE GEM

by Elaine Murphy

Three generations of Dublin women on a wild and constantly surprising journey. Sex, birth, death, dildos and salsa classes. One extraordinary year of courage, comedy and romance in the award-winning hit of the 2008 Dublin Fringe Festival.

The UK premiere of Gúna Nua Theatre & Civic Theatre, Tallaght's production of Elaine Murphy's award winning debut, *Little Gem*, will be staged at The Traverse Theatre, Cambridge Street, Edinburgh from Thursday 6 (preview) to Sunday 30 August as part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2009.

Kay's got an itch that Gem can't scratch (but maybe Kermit can) ... Lorraine attacks a customer at work and her boss wants her to see a psychiatrist ... Amber has fierce bad indigestion and the Sambucas aren't getting rid of it. And then there's Paul, who is just using Amber until he can get to Australia ... The hairy man who fancies Lorraine but fails to rise to the occasion ... and Gem who doesn't like the neighbours coming in to 'mind' him. If all that wasn't bad enough, *Little Gem* makes his presence felt and life is never the same again.

Under the direction of Paul Meade, Hilda Fay, Anita Reeves and Sarah Greene interweave their characters' life experiences as they cope with modern life's daily pressures and the heart-breaking toll of inevitable tragedies, expertly blending slapstick humour and sharp comic timing with strength, courage and honesty.

"...as hilarious as it is poignant" – THE SUNDAY TIMES

"An impressive debut quite wonderfully acted by a perfectly cast trio" – THE SUNDAY INDEPENDENT

Gúna Nua Theatre & Civic Theatre, Tallaght premiered *LITTLE GEM* at the 2008 *Dublin Fringe Festival* and it was an immediate sell out success. It received the Dublin Fringe Festival/Fishamble Best New Play and Best Female Performance Awards (awarded to the entire Cast) and was subsequently nominated for Best Play and Best Actress (Anita Reeves) at the Irish Times Theatre Awards. *Little Gem* was recently awarded the BBC Northern Ireland Drama Award (Stewart Parker Trust Annual Awards).

(*LITTLE GEM* marked Gúna Nua's first appearance at the Dublin Fringe Festival since 2001, when they won Best Fringe Production with *Scenes From a Watercooler*).

Info on other Funders here please

LISTINGS INFORMATION:

Gúna Nua Theatre & Civic Theatre, Tallaght production of *Little Gem*, by Elaine Murphy. Cast: Anita Reeves, Hilda Fay and Sarah Greene. Director: Paul Meade

Traverse II, Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh - <http://www.traverse.co.uk/>

Thursday 6 to Sunday 30 August 2009

Preview Thursday 6 @ 1.45pm / Opens Friday 7 @ 3.15pm

Performance Times: Sat 8 @ 5.30pm, Sun 9 @ 8.15pm, Tues 11@ 11.15am, Wed 12 @ 1.45pm, Thur 13 @ 3.15 pm, Fri 14 @ 5.30pm, Sat 15 @ 8.15pm, Sun 16 @ 11.45am, Tue 18 @ 1.00pm, Wed 19 @ 3.15pm, Thur 20 @ 5.30pm, Fri 21 @ 8.15pm, Sat 22 @ 11.00am, Sun 23 @ 12.45pm, Tue 25 @ 3.15pm, Wed 26 @ 5.30pm, Thur 27 @ 8.15pm, Fri 28 @ 10.45am, Sat 29 @ 1.00pm, Sun 30 @ 3.15pm

Tickets - £14/£10/£5 and £16/£11 at weekends.

Traverse Box Office: +44 (0)131 228 1404 / <http://www.traverse.co.uk/>

Fringe Box Office: +44 (0)131 226 0000

Media Contact:

Paddy Cuthbert

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Cast: Anita Reeves, Hilda Fay and Sarah Greene

Director: Paul Meade

Set and Costume Designer: Alice Butler

Lighting Designer: Mark Galione

Sound Designer: Karl Kennedy

Elaine Murphy said about her inspiration for Little Gem: "I've worked part time in a women's health organisation for years. The staff and clients strength, courage, honesty and humour in the face of adversity have always stayed with me. Little Gem grew from there, a mish-mash of all the women I've met over the years, hardworking, not particularly rich or poor, ignored by the Celtic Tiger; and the recession probably won't make much of a difference to them either, you know, women like us, getting on with it with that unique Dublin wit."

Gúna Nua Theatre is an independent theatre production company based in Dublin, Ireland. The company has a strong commitment to devising and producing new Irish writing as well as presenting radical interpretations of classic plays. It has established a reputation for innovative, vital and exciting theatre which has received an overwhelmingly positive response from audiences and critics alike. Founded in 1998, Gúna Nua has received numerous awards and nominations for its ground-breaking work, and is now firmly established on the Irish theatre landscape.

Gúna Nua Theatre is grant-aided in Ireland by the Arts Council and by Dublin City Council.

The Civic Theatre opened its doors in 1999 and has consistently mounted an artistic and challenging programme of contemporary and classical Irish and international work in Theatre, Dance, Opera and Music for the community of South County Dublin, for the wider population of the city and the surrounding counties.

Although primarily a receiving venue for professional productions the Civic Theatre produces and tours its own shows and has developed a successful co-production strategy with non-venue based companies as well as mentoring young theatre professionals by offering training opportunities on their in house productions/co-productions.

Since it opened it has developed and co-produced with Storytellers, Quarehawks, Galloglass, Everyman Theatre Company, Tall Tales and with Gúna Nua Theatre.

Little Gem is the fifth collaboration between Civic and Gúna Nua Theatre.