

BALLOONATICS THEATRE COMPANY (Dublin) present

***Dubliners* in Portugal 2014**

The Boarding House* and *Counterparts

*A centenary celebration of **James Joyce's *Dubliners****

Performed by **PAUL O'HANRAHAN and MICK GREER**

2014 marks the 100th anniversary of the publication of Joyce's *Dubliners*. To celebrate the occasion, two experienced Joyce performers - Paul O'Hanrahan from Dublin and Michael Greer from Lisbon - have reunited especially to present a new dramatised reading of two of the short stories from this ground-breaking collection: *The Boarding House* and *Counterparts*.

THE STORIES

Both 'The Boarding House' and 'Counterparts' were finished in Trieste in 1905 when James Joyce was just twenty-three years of age. In a letter of July 19 1905, Joyce wrote that: 'Many of the frigidities of "The Boarding House" and "Counterparts" were written while the sweat streamed down my face onto the handkerchief which protected my collar.' Although 'The Boarding House' is set in breezy, early summer and 'Counterparts' in February, it seems appropriate, then, to stage these stories in Portugal as the summer heat approaches, reflecting the torrid atmosphere in which they were first conceived.

Depicting Dublin at the turn of the last century, the stories are humorous, poignant and sharply observed cameos of entrapment: in the first, a young man is encouraged to marry a landlady's daughter; in the second, the need to compensate for pressures at work leads to a night on the town which promises more than it delivers.

By way of a coda, we conclude with an extract from the 'Cyclops' episode of *Ulysses*. Here Mr Leopold Bloom (Joyce's Ulysses) confronts, and then narrowly

escapes from, the blind prejudice (and biscuit tin!) of the drunken Citizen (Joyce's Cyclops).

Balloonatics Theatre Company: 1984-2014, Celebrating 30 Years

Founded in Cambridge in 1984, Balloonatics this year celebrates its thirtieth anniversary as a theatre company. It is fitting, therefore, that two of the founding members should come together for this new production from *Dubliners*. Paul O'Hanrahan directed, and Mick Greer took the lead role of Bloom in the award-winning production of *Circe*, from Joyce's *Ulysses*, at the 1983 Edinburgh Festival. Together they went on to perform in successful adaptations of Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (*Nightfall*, 1985) and *Ulysses* (*Cyclops*, 1987-1988), and of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1988).

More recently they performed in the revival of the company's production of the *Cyclops* episode from *Ulysses* at the Joyce centenary in Dublin in 2004, the Old Vic Theatre in London in 2005 and, a year later, at the Merriman Summer School in Lisdoonvarna. In 2012 they teamed up to present Joycean street theatre in Dublin on Bloomsday and led a seminar on 'Performing *Finnegans Wake*' at the International Joyce Symposium in Trinity College Dublin. Both have once again just taken part in Bloomsday events: Mick, at the now traditional celebrations in the Irish ambassador's residence in Lisbon, Paul in his 27th year of performances in Dublin.