

Fringe First Award for Kinihan play in Edinburgh

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Deirdre Kinihan

Navan-based Deirdre Kinihan's play 'These Halcyon Days' has been awarded a prestigious Scotsman Fringe First Award at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The Scotsman Fringe First celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. Created in 1973, the award has built an international reputation for recognising the best of new theatre, rewarding innovation, regardless of a company's reputation or production budget. Almost 800 productions were eligible this year.

'These Halcyon Days' was first produced by Tall Tales Theatre Company and Solstice Arts Centre, and had its world premiere at the Dublin Theatre Festival in 2013. It was nominated for the 'Best New Play' award at The Irish Times Theatre Awards, and comes to Edinburgh following a run at the Irish Arts Center in New York, and an extensive tour of Ireland.

Deirdre Kinihan is one of Ireland's most celebrated contemporary playwrights and her work is produced regularly both in Ireland and on the international stage. Her previous work includes *Moment*, which played at the Bush Theatre in London in 2012; *Hue and Cry* and *Bogboy*.

Directed by Kinihan's long-time collaborator David Horan, with design by Maree Kearns, lighting by Kevin Smith, and original music and sound by composer Trevor Knight, *These Halcyon Days* stars two of Ireland's foremost actors, Anita Reeves and Stephen Brennan.

The production has received rave reviews in Edinburgh. The Scotsman said it was ‘a play that captures a generation ... honest, funny and strikingly well-observed’ and said that ‘Kinahan paints her characters with truth and dignity ... not only is this a piece those in their 20s and 30s would enjoy, it's one they need to see’. And Libby Purves, in a five-star review in The Times, praised the ‘matchless’ performances in ‘Deirdre Kinahan’s beautifully-judged new play’.

The writer of *These Halcyon Days*, Deirdre Kinahan said: ‘I think this is a terrific endorsement for Irish playwrights as to the calibre of new writing in this country. To bring home three Fringe Firsts in one year is phenomenal. I couldn’t be happier for Landmark, for David Horan, for Stephen, Anita and the entire creative team. And I think it’s a real marker for independent artists. Where there is a will, truth, talent and self-belief, there is always a way. Happy days!’

Producer Anne Clarke said: ‘I am thrilled to be working with artists of the calibre of Deirdre Kinahan, Anita Reeves and Stephen Brennan. We are incredibly fortunate that two of Ireland’s leading actors made such a commitment to new writing. They have performed the play the length and breadth of Ireland and now, thanks to the support of Culture Ireland, it is wonderful to see that commitment being rewarded. These really are halcyon days!’

Landmark Productions is one of Ireland’s leading theatre producers. Recent world premieres include plays by Colm Tóibín (*Testament*) and Emma Donoghue (*The Talk of the Town*). Enda Walsh’s *Misterman*, starring Cillian Murphy, was co-produced with Galway Arts Festival and toured to St Ann’s Warehouse in New York and to the National Theatre in London last year. It is presenting two shows in Edinburgh, *These Halcyon Days* and *Howie the Rookie*, starring Tom Vaughan-Lawlor, both of which have attracted rave reviews.

The original production and Irish tour of *These Halcyon Days* was supported by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon. The international touring is supported by Culture Ireland. Meath County Council and Solstice Arts Center have been, and continue to be, significant supporters of Deirdre Kinahan’s work in general, and this production of *These Halcyon Days* in particular.

- See more at: <http://www.meathchronicle.ie/news/roundup/articles/2013/08/20/4017212-fringe-first-award-for-kinihan-play-in-edinburgh/#sthash.fn8bqOfj.dpuf>