

Druid

# STRATEGY

2022 – 2024



**'The most successful Irish  
theatrical export ever'**

IRISH INDEPENDENT



# DRUID

Founded in 1975, Druid is a touring theatre company, anchored in the west of Ireland and looking to the world.

Druid passionately believes that audiences have the right to see first class professional theatre in their own communities. The company has toured the length and breadth of Ireland as well as touring internationally to the UK, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Hong Kong.

Production highlights include: *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* (1996), in a co-production with The Royal Court Theatre, which went on to win four Tony Awards, including Best Director for Garry Hynes, the first woman to win an award for directing in the history of the Tony Awards; *The Leenane Trilogy* (1997) (also with The Royal Court Theatre); *DruidSynge* (2005) – all six John Millington Synge plays in a single day; *DruidMurphy* – Plays by Tom Murphy (2011 & 2012), a trilogy of *Conversations on a Homecoming*, *A Whistle in the Dark* and *Famine*; *DruidShakespeare: Richard II*, *Henry IV (Pts. 1&2)*, *Henry V* in a new adaptation by Mark O’Rowe (2015) and *DruidShakespeare: Richard III* (2018); *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett which opened at Galway International Arts Festival in 2016 and by the end of 2018 had toured Ireland twice, played at the Abbey Theatre, Edinburgh International Festival and several US cities. In 2020, in a first for Irish theatre, Druid’s production of Anton Chekhov’s *The Cherry Orchard*, in a version by Tom Murphy, was broadcast live from Galway to 34 cinemas in Ireland and the UK.

Druid is a writer’s theatre, re-imagining classics and premiering new work annually, while exploring ambitious projects such as *DruidGregory*, a production of five of Lady Gregory’s one-act plays (2020), and Thomas Kilroy’s *The Seagull* (after Chekhov) (2021) - both of which were performed outdoors in Coole Park, Galway. In 2020, the company introduced *Druid at Home*, a new way of connecting with its audiences in Ireland and around the world, through presenting work on the digital stage. Notable successes include the company’s first live stream production, the world premiere of *Once Upon a Bridge* by Sonya Kelly. Since March 2020, Druid has reached audiences in 130 countries with ticketed and free-to-view *Druid at Home* productions.

The company continues to nurture playwrights and the next generation of theatre makers through its new writing and other artist support programmes. At the heart of our artistic programme is the *Druid Ensemble* who work closely with the Artistic Director and the *Druid* team to deliver a varied and ambitious body of work.

# VISION

Irish performance  
for the world.

# MISSION

To be a touring theatre  
without peer, anchored  
in the West of Ireland  
and looking to the world,  
producing and presenting  
the best work, both new  
and old, with boldness,  
agility, passion and flair.



# VALUES

## Originality

We offer new perspectives and are original in our thinking and our practice.

## Community

We work in the community, for the community and as a community.

## Respect

We value and respect our people and place, recognising both to be essential in the making of good theatre.

## Boldness

We are confident and courageous, always willing to take artistic risk in our pursuit of excellence.



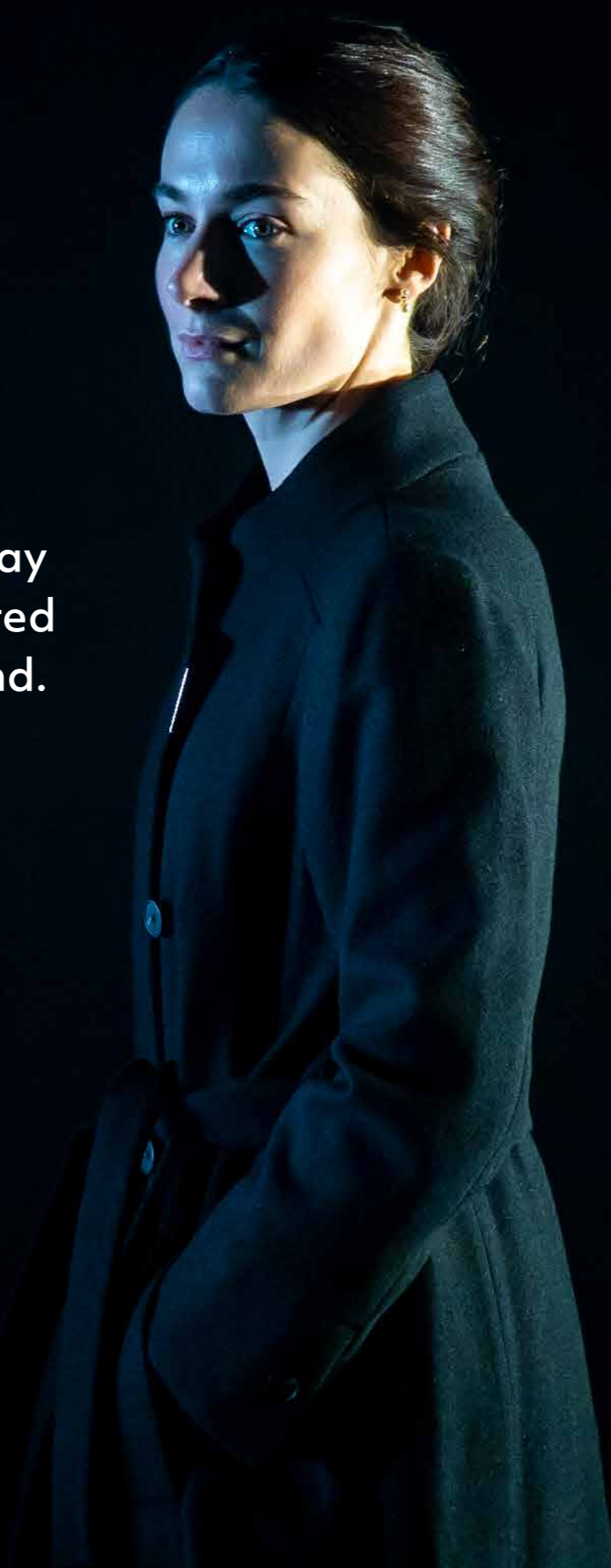
**'Ireland's most prestigious  
theatre company'**

IRISH INDEPENDENT



# 3-YEAR GOAL 2022 – 2024

In the next 3 years, Druid will: engage, challenge and inspire audiences; bring ambitious theatre to them in whatever way we can; and respect and remain committed to our sense of place in the West of Ireland.



# STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Over the next three years, Druid will focus on the following six strategic objectives: Work, People, Touring, Audience, Financial Sustainability, and Place.

For more than 45 years, the heart of Druid's ambition has been the successful combination of re-imagining classic Irish plays and bringing bold new work to Irish and international audiences. While remaining faithful to this ambition, this strategy will also begin to lay the foundation stones on the pathway to the future direction of the company, beyond its 50th anniversary in 2025.

Having the right mix of talent on and off stage – but always with the anchor of the Druid Ensemble in order to drive collaboration and ambition – is key to realising Druid's aims. An essential part of this is remaining agile and flexible enough to scale up and down as required while exploring new ways to reach our audiences. In this way, we can meet the challenges of delivering the artistic programme, as well as overcoming future external challenges to our strategic ambitions.

We will engage, challenge and serve a diverse audience, exceed their expectations and seek a high level of public engagement. We will continue to bring theatre to people in their own communities and expand our relationship with Irish and international audiences, by touring the work to both new and existing locations and continuing to present work on our digital platform, Druid at Home. We will listen to and learn from our audiences and serve them in a way which is sustained and impactful.

Druid productions, whether in-person or online, should always signal freshness, boldness and a level of ambition and surprise that reflects the values the company holds dear. However a Druid production is experienced, whether digitally from the Arctic Circle or the island of Hawaii, or in person among the fields of Ireland or at the most prestigious festivals in the cities of the US or Australasia, the experience should always be one that challenges, entertains and exceeds expectations.

While the Druid story is rooted in Galway and the West of Ireland, the world in which we operate faces new challenges and new realities. Druid will continue to be committed to and inspired by our homeplace, but will also seek ways to contribute positively and respectfully to our changing environment, with a renewed strategic focus on sustainability, equality and inclusivity.

Druid's reputation is defined by the vision, quality and ambition of work we present, and supporting the growth of the next generation of Irish theatre artists will be the foundation on which the company builds its artistic future.

Bold ambitions can only be realised by progressive leadership, strong governance and financial stability. Druid is committed to undertaking rigorous financial planning and reviews, ensuring prudent use of all resources and funds, and embedding a culture of financial accountability and responsibility in the organisation.

Druid is determined to continue to be a leading voice in the development of the arts in Ireland and the role culture plays within Irish society.



**'A world-class company rooted  
in the cultural fabric of Galway'**

THE IRISH TIMES





# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

## THE WORK

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1 THE WORK

To produce classics and new work in original and ambitious productions

## ACTIONS

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Commission at least 5 playwrights by YE2024

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Stage a major production which will form part of Ireland's Decade of Centenaries by YE2023

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Recognise the importance of diversity by producing work which offers opportunities for new talent in all areas

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Produce the Druid Debuts series annually as a central vehicle to the development of new writing

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Invest time and resources as early as possible in workshops and readings to test both classic and new material

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## METRICS

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Produce at least 4 world premieres by YE2024

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Produce at least 2 works from the Irish canon by YE2024

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Produce at least 2 Druid at Home productions

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# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

## THE PEOPLE

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2 PEOPLE

At any given time, to have the right people in the right place to deliver the artistic programme

## ACTIONS

Prioritise the employment and professional development of arts workers based in the West of Ireland across all parts of theatre production

Formalise paid internship and apprenticeship programmes for people in the early stages of their arts careers

Create opportunities for and support the development of Irish theatre artists through our artistic support programmes: FUEL, Marie Mullen Bursary, New Writing programme and the Druid Academy at NUI Galway

Ensure the Druid Ensemble are central to shaping the future direction of the company's work both on and off the stage, and ensure that they are stimulated, energised and rewarded by their involvement

Agree a revised Druid Ensemble mission statement and set of priorities for working together

Implement Druid's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Ensure that Druid is a welcoming, enjoyable, inspiring and safe place to work

Ensure that fair and equitable pay practices are in place across the organisation

Implement annual Druid Staff and Druid Ensemble satisfaction surveys

Be an outspoken advocate for the arts to be a sustainable and viable career in Ireland

Ensure that the Board of Directors possess the necessary skills and expertise to meet the company's needs

## METRICS

Conduct an annual assessment of the company's ability to attract and retain the best people in all areas of the organisation

Staff satisfaction metric, with baseline and target, to be defined by Q2 2022

Druid Ensemble satisfaction metric, with baseline and target, to be defined by Q2 2022

# Druid

*'A world class company rooted  
in the cultural fabric of Galway'*

IRISH TIMES

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## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3 TOURING

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3 TOURING

To bring theatre to people in their own communities – locally, nationally, and internationally

## ACTIONS

Develop and maintain strong relationships with venues and festivals across the island of Ireland

Build and maintain key strategic relationships with major international venues and festivals

Identify new international touring opportunities including a greater geographic reach

Transform the way in which we tour nationally and internationally to radically and meaningfully reduce its environmental impact

Integrate Druid's Community and Education programme into all touring activities to deepen engagement at every venue

Convert Druid at Home audiences to in-person theatre-going audiences

Actively seek multi-annual touring funding to support national touring plans

## METRICS

Tour to at least 5 Irish venues every year

Tour to a least 5 Irish venues where Druid hasn't performed in the last 5 years (2016-21) by YE2024

Tour to North America every year

Tour to the United Kingdom at least twice by YE2024

Tour to a major Australasian festival or venue at least once by YE2024

Report annually on the environmental impact of touring

Agree a multi-annual national touring plan with the Arts Council with €100k per annum invested

A woman with voluminous, dark curly hair is sitting in a grassy field. She is wearing a light blue button-down shirt over a white top. She is looking upwards and to the left with a thoughtful expression. Her hands are clasped in her lap, and she is wearing several rings. To her left is a large, leafless tree with a thick trunk. The background shows a clear blue sky and some distant trees and a building. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4**  
**PLACE**



# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4 PLACE

To be inspired by, contribute to, and respect our place in the West of Ireland

## ACTIONS

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Implement Druid's Green Strategy to become a leader in sustainability, to transform our operations, and to inspire social change

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Develop Druid's Ballybane Workshop to protect the art of set-building and support craftspeople based in the West of Ireland

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Increase investment in Druid's Nun's Island Costume Department to create a high-functioning space to support the employment and development of the community of makers in the West of Ireland

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Position The Mick Lally Theatre as a cultural beacon for the development of the arts and for the public good in the West of Ireland

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Act as an outspoken leader on preserving the integrity and uniqueness of Druid's neighbourhood in Galway

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Continue to position Galway as a centre of cultural and educational excellence through Druid's strategic partnership with NUI Galway, the Druid Academy

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Develop an approach and plan for the celebration of Druid's 50th Anniversary in 2025

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## METRICS

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Achieve annual carbon reduction targets as set out in Druid's Green Strategy

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Druid's Ballybane Workshop and Nuns' Island Costume Department to be sufficiently well-resourced and developed to meet Druid's artistic needs

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The Mick Lally Theatre to be open and active no less than 250 days each year

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# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5

## AUDIENCE

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5 AUDIENCE

To engage, challenge and serve a diverse audience and exceed their expectations

## ACTIONS

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Improve and optimise every part of the theatre-going experience with a focus on minimalising environmental impact

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As per Druid's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy:

- Set out annual calendars of accessible performances in conjunction with Arts and Disability Ireland
  - Eliminate barriers to entry via actions such as introducing enhanced tiered ticketing schemes
  - Deliver an annual Community and Education programme
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Develop and nurture an online theatre-going audience through the Druid at Home programme

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Develop a public engagement strategy which encompasses Druid's website, email marketing, social media, content creation, advertising and public relations

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Design an audience development strategy by YE2022 with a focus on engaging and satisfying a new and younger audience

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## METRICS

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Maintain a high level of satisfaction among audience members polled in annual and post-show surveys

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Achieve a high level of satisfaction, engagement and impact through our Community and Education programme, with baseline and target to be defined by Q3 2022

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Increase the number of accessible performances and grow annual attendance rates for people availing of these supports

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◆ STAMPS ◆

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6**  
**FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

To secure and responsibly manage funding to achieve artistic ambition

## ACTIONS

Make a case for increased public funding to fully reflect Druid's place in the Irish theatre landscape, and in line with our growth, production and touring ambitions

Manage and grow existing individual and business supporters and develop strategic relationships with foundations

Secure and nurture at least 3 multi-annual strategic partnerships in line with the Artistic Programme

Develop the International Friends of Druid and increase income through regular engagement events

Pursue income opportunities from new sources

Conduct post-show financial reviews for all productions and embed learnings in future activities

Maintain financial stability by undertaking multi-annual financial forecasting

Ensure value for money is a core principle for expenditure; value will be derived by a balance of cost and sustainability as set out in the Green Strategy

Increase efficiency in one significant process annually

Examine at least one significant risk biannually via the Board's Audit and Risk Committee

## METRICS

Grow Arts Council funding annually in line with artistic ambitions

Achieve and exceed annual box office targets and performance revenue in line with artistic policy

Druid's development income to be at a level of 12–15% of total income by YE2024

Manage actual costs of each production within a negative 5% variance of budgeted costs at all times

Core administrative staff costs  $\leq$  17% revenue annually (average 2018-21 = 16.9%)



ON  
OST  
FICE

VICTUALS  
JAMES  
ALLER  
QUIRKE

**Druid**

Flood Street, Galway, Ireland

+353 91 568 660

[www.druid.ie](http://www.druid.ie)



@druidtheatre