**Introductory notes for Class at the Bush Theatre**

Welcome to this introduction to Class , by Iseult Golden and David Horan who have also directed the production. It was first performed at the Dublin Festival in 2017.

The audio described performance at the Bush Theatre will be on Saturday 18th May. The preshow notes will begin at 2.15 and the performance itself at 2.30pm.

The play lasts for 90 minutes. There is no interval. The audio describer will be Di Langford.

The action takes place in the present in a schoolroom. It’s a functional space, with dark lino on the floor. There’s a row of windows high up just beneath the ceiling which allows light to filter in from the corridor. Just below window level the letters of the alphabet have been painted in a muted tone right around the room. Each letter is shown in upper and lower case. The upper walls are painted with blackboard paint – most are rubbed clean except for some partially visible words left from a previous lesson. A blue dado rail runs around the room about a metre from the floor and provides a convenient parking place for small pieces of chalk. The lower section of each wall is panelled with upright wooden slats and painted blue-grey.

Standing against the left hand wall closest to us there is a stack of small, wooden, primary school chairs with blue metal legs, and beyond that a row of low hooks with items that children have left behind – one of these is a red bag, the brightest colour in the room. A dark grey door in the top left corner of the back wall leads out into a corridor. The door has a narrow upright glass panel next to the handle. To the right of the door a small formica topped table with metal legs stands at right angles to the wall, with a child sized chair standing on the top of it. A second table has two upturned chairs on it, legs in the air. In the far right corner, facing into the room is a low bookcase, containing files and books. The teacher’s desk is also on the right, closest to us, facing left into the room. A man’s jacket hangs over the back of an adult sized chair with red legs which stands behind it. It’s a modern desk with grey metal legs. There’s an unwrapped sandwich amongst the papers and exercise books on top of it. Facing the desk is a formica topped table with three small chairs standing around it.

It’s the end of the day. As the action begins a teacher is seated hunched over at the desk, marking exercise books. **Ray McCafferty** is casually dressed in an open necked brown shirt under a sleeveless knitted pullover with narrow beige jeans and brown suede ankle boots.

He’s a slim man of average height in his late 30s, with neatly trimmed dark brown hair that falls forward in a soft fringe. His face is pale, with pronounced cheekbones and he has dark shadows under his eyes and a weary expression. Sitting on one of the children’s chairs he leans forward, using his hands to express himself, anxious to get his point across. When he feels misunderstood he leans back with his arms folded, shoulders slumped.

Ray has requested a meeting with the parents of one of his pupils. **Brian** **Costello** arrives first. He’s a large young man in his early thirties, He’s at least 6 feet tall and well built He has fair skin and his ginger hair is cut very short – he’s just beginning to go thin on top. He’s wearing jeans and new looking grey trainers with a blue and white striped footie type tee shirt under a grey hoodie. When he first arrives, Brian seems uncertain but gradually gains confidence. He fidgets uncomfortably as he sits on a child sized chair listening to McCafferty, and sometimes turns away and frowns as if he is trying to make sense of what he hears.

Brian’s wife **Donna** is a perky young woman in her late twenties. She has shoulder length blonde hair with a slight wave. Her pale pink jacket has elasticated cuffs and waist Her black skirt is very short and under it she has black leggings. She has bare ankles and her comfortable flat lace up shoes have fashionable white soles. Donna carries a small maroon backpack which serves as a handbag. She pays full attention to what McCafferty is saying but does not always seem to understand the significance of his words.

At times the action jumps forward – Brian becomes his son Jayden and Donna takes on the role of his classmate Kaylie as they attend Mr McCafferty’s homework club.