

Encore Productions Residency Round up - March 2021

Spring rustles and days lengthen. Dormant seeds stir beneath the soil. So it is down in the basement of An Táin where the actors of Encore Productions are quietly germinating their new production. Yes, there are a few empty chairs around the workshop room as some of our actors continue to stay home until the threat of covid fades, but they have their scripts with them and lines are being learned. Meanwhile the nine actors who are making it into the workshop room are busy at the task of getting 'Aesop' onto its feet.

To allow us to tour our last two plays we kept sets and props to an absolute minimum – one white transit van for the lot! It seems unlikely that our new Greek style tragedy will go out on the road but we plan to stick with the stripped down aesthetic this time around – though as ever things may change in the workshop process.

We are delighted to be working with artist Órlaith Cullinane whose depictions of animals and nature will help bring Aesop's tales of wolves and ravens, bats, and birds to life. Mask is an integral part of Greek Theatre and Órlaith will also help design masks that will create the Chorus – that marvellous invention of the Greek Theatre, designed to communicate to massive outdoor audiences through choreographed unison and capable of delivering great emotional impact and spectacle.

Heedful of Aesop's warning – *Do not count your chickens before they have hatched* - we have nonetheless booked the theatre for a performance at the end of October 2021. We all hope audiences will be able to enjoy live events in some way by then. If not, we will use film and web platforms, in the increasingly creative ways we have all been doing, to insure that our story is told and shared.

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