



THE ABBEY THEATRE.

THE
IRISH
REPUBLIC

PRISON NOTEBOOKS

DOROTHY MACARDLE ARCHIVE & PERFORMANCE PROJECT

Supporting Materials, presented by Sharon Mc Ardle & Declan Gorman

Paramount Pictures

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DOROTHY MACARDLE: A BIOGRAPHY



"She is not a minor Irish revwriter but someone with a multi-faceted outlook on life; a major talent, whose real worth has been drowned in the paean of political and historical isionism

Dorothy Macardle (1889-1958) was born into a prominent Dundalk brewing family. Her father was a 'Home Ruler' and her English mother a Unionist. Educated at Alexandra College and University College Dublin, she lectured at Alexandra during the war of independence, rejected her own social and political background and become an ardent republican, working secretly in Sinn Féin's publicity bureau and living with Maud Gonne. Arrested for her anti-treaty propagandist work, she was incarcerated without trial, went on hunger-strike and was subjected to torture and beatings.

She is remembered for her monumental study *The Irish Republic* (1937), a major history of Ireland's struggle for independence, commissioned by Eamon DeValera. Macardle's own struggle for independence led to radical breaks with him when she fought against the reduced status of women in the 1937 Constitution, and Ireland's neutrality during the second World War. She was aware of the menacing rise of Fascism and moved to London as a journalist during the war years. Her humanitarian report *Children of Europe* is a vital account of the plight of displaced and orphaned children across Europe in the direct aftermath of World War II. President of the Irish Association of Civil Liberty. She broadcast regularly on Radio Éireann and BBC, toured the USA giving lectures and was awarded an honorary doctorate.

An accomplished novelist and playwright. *The Uninvited* (1941) was turned into a Hollywood horror masterpiece. Her early play *Ann Kavanagh* was a miniature classic of the Abbey Theatre one act form. Her literary work was central to her sense of self throughout her life

– a poet, playwright, novelist, historian, feminist, progressive politician and internationalist in the true sense of the term – she declared herself to be an unrepentant propagandist, and espoused the causes she knew to be those of truth and justice." Peter Berresford Ellis

PROPOSAL

Dorothy Macardle Archive & Performance Project. Phase 1: *Prison Notebooks*



Dorothy Macardle (1889-1958) writer and revolutionary

The Dorothy Macardle Archive and Performance Project is an arts initiative established by independent theatre maker and Writer Declan Gorman, working in partnership with academic & performer Sharon McArdle. Using the medium of theatre and public art, it aims to reflect upon the life and artistic legacy of Dundalk born, Dorothy Macardle.

The First of a series of creative pieces planned for this project is entitled 'Prison Notebooks' a new play co written by Declan Gorman and Sharon (currently at 'work in progress' stage), intended for solo performance, based primarily on first-hand journals and other writings undertaken by Dorothy Macardle over the course of her six-month incarceration as a Republican prisoner during the Irish Civil War of 1922-23. Already an Abbey playwright at the time of her arrest, Dundalk-born Macardle (1889-1958) went on to become a major literary artist, Hollywood screen writer, historian and international human rights advocate. Her gaol writings, undertaken in the most oppressive conditions of deprivation, uncertainty and confinement reveal not only a dedicated political activist and thinker but a developing artist of stature.

Funding is sought to allow Declan Gorman and Sharon McArdle develop 'Prison Notebooks' from work in progress stage to a full stage performance piece, which will be presented at Dundalk Gaol and Kilmainham Gaol in May 2020, before going on National tour to site specific venues.

Prison Notebooks

Presented in Association with An Táin Arts Centre.
Devised and written by Sharon McArdle and Declan Gorman

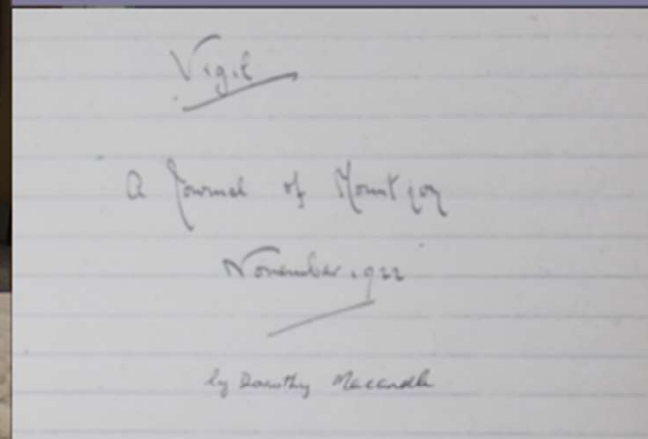
'Prison Notebooks' was presented at 'Work in Progress stage' last December at An Táin Arts Centre and took the form of a staged reading and presentation of episodic scenes, a moderated post-show Q&A and an exhibition of artefacts.

Development of this work was made possible with the support of an Arts Council Theatre Projects Award. Funding is now sought to allow Declan Gorman and Sharon McArdle develop 'Prison Notebooks' from work in progress stage to a full stage performance piece, which will be presented at Dundalk Gaol and Kilmainham Gaol in May 2020, before going on National tour to site specific venues.

Post-show Q & A at An Táin Arts Centre, December 2019. L to R: Declan Gorman, Imelda O'Loane (moderator) and Sharon McArdle



Above: Artefacts and research materials on display



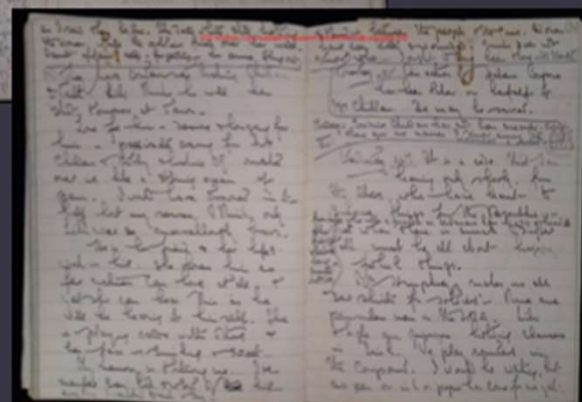
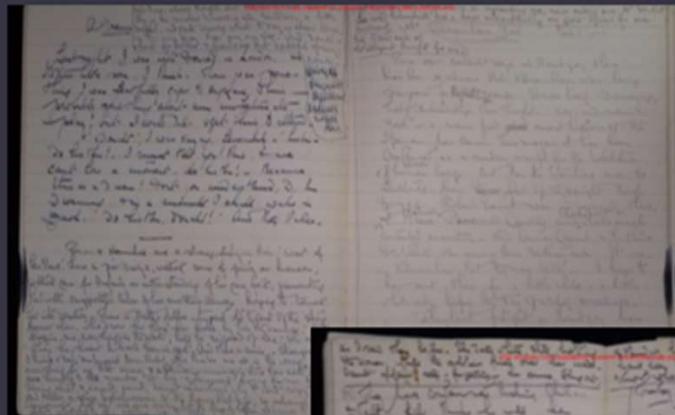
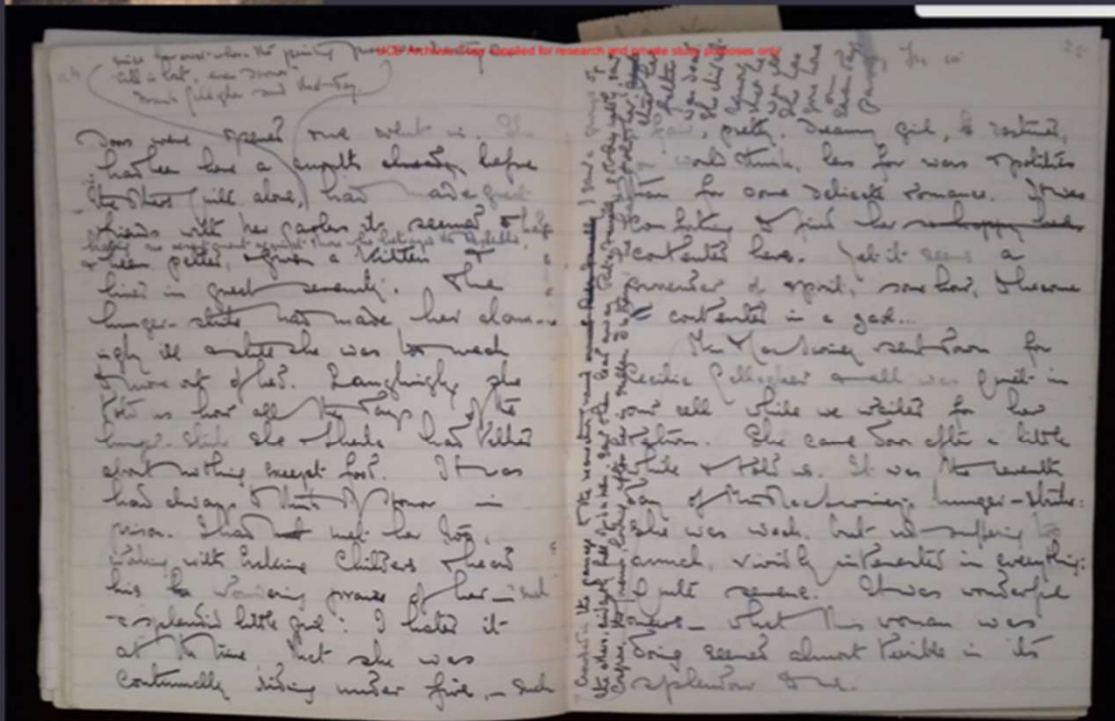
Left: Dorothy weeps at news her manuscripts have been burned by Free State soldiers :above accepts a gift of sacred soil from an enemy guard : senses the presence of a ghost – perhaps Terence MacSwiney.





Archive Samples of Dorothy Macardle's Gaol Journal, 1922

Macardle's three surviving gaol journals were specially transcribed by Sharon Mc Ardle and used as a key source for scripting 'Prison Notebooks'.





Biographies

- **Declan Gorman** (Director) is a playwright, director, educator and performer. His solo show "The Dubliners Dilemma" (after Joyce) has toured extensively in Ireland and to USA, Norway, Russia and India where it played alongside his drama "The Big Fellow", based on Frank O'Connor's biography of Michael Collins at Mumbai Literature Live 2017. He was formerly Artistic Director of Upstate Theatre, Drogheda, where he staged his "Border Chronicles Trilogy 1998-2007". He is a past winner of a BBC Stewart Parker Award, holds and M.Phil in Creative Writing from TCD; was awarded an Arts Council Theatre Bursary in 2018 and teaches on the New York University Study Abroad Programme in Community-Engaged Theatre.
- **Sharon McArdle** (Performer) is currently pursuing a PhD through Creative Practice at DCU on the life and works of Dorothy Macardle. Sharon trained as an Actor at Rose Bruford College, UK. Over recent years, she has been building a repertoire of pieces, predominantly one person shows, centering on culturally or historically notable Irish women with a view to performing in places significant to the people in question. Prior to Dorothy Macardle's 'Prison Notebooks', she toured a one-woman show, Brontë: A Solo Portrait of Charlotte, by William Luce. The piece was commissioned by Armagh City & Craigavon Borough Council to commemorate the bicentennial of the birth of the author. Her research interests lie in Women and Children's Rights, Socially Engaged Arts Practice and Asylum and Refugee narratives. She is a member of the Dorothy Macardle Society and presented at 'An Unrepentant Propagandist', Devised by Constance Short with Peter Berresford Ellis as conference consultant.

Budget

Funding is being sought to advance "prison Notebooks" from Work in Progress to a full scale production with touring potential.

EXPENDITURE

• Writer/Director's Fee	2000
• Actor's Fee	2000
• Rehearsal Studio An Táin Arts Centre (4 weeks eq)	1000
• Basement gallery An Táin: performance x 1	150
• Kilmainham Gaol Rental performance x 3	750
• Lighting hire equipment x 4 performances	500
• Lighting designer & technician	550
• Sound Designer & Technician	550
• Stage Management	200
• Hair & makeup x 4 performance:	100
• Costume construction/fitting fees:	500
• Set Design, Props purchase/hire:	300
• Production transport	200
• Flyers, posters, program	100
• Total Expenditure	€8900

TOTAL INCOME

• *Actor 's Fee (In Kind)	2000
• *An Táin Arts Centre Rehearsal Rental (in kind)	1000
• Basement gallery An Táin : performance day x 1 (in kind)	150
• Kilmainham Gaol Rental Performance x 1	250
• Flyers, posters, program Sponsor (An Táin)	100
• Box office	500
• CreateLouth, the Arts Office of Louth County Council, March 2020	€3000
• Total income	€7000
• Shortfall	€1900
• Amount Sought	€1900

- Actor has permanent salary.
- An Táin Arts Centre in Dundalk is formally associated as venue partner.

Sharon Mc Ardle Past Work



Brontë: A Solo Portrait of Charlotte Brontë 2017

By William Luce.

Commissioned by Armagh City & Craigavon Borough Council. Site specific, immersive work, touring to theatres, museums and historic houses 2016-2017

Performed by Sharon McArdle

Directed by Declan Gorman

Produced by Vere Lenox-Conyngham at Anaverna productions

Costumes by Sinead Roberts



From left to right:
 Anaverna Productions,
 Shackleton: First Sight
 Films - Channel Four,
 London, Easter Service:
 Upstate Theatre
 Company, Anaverna,
 Thiasos Theatre
 Company, London,
 Unicorn Children's
 Theatre, London

Declan Gorman: Past Work

- History & Human Rights
- Civic Engagement & Education
- Literary & Physical Theatre



Above: The Hijabi Monologues (Director) at Axis Arts Centre, Ballymun 2013

Left: With community cast of The Road to the Battle, during rehearsals at Westbourne Presbyterian Church, Belfast

History and Human Rights

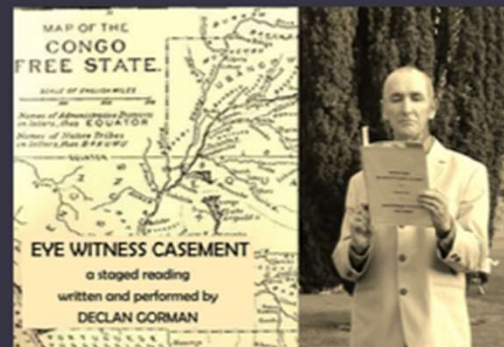
From early beginnings as an actor and rights activist in the 1980s to my recent work in Decade of Centenary contexts, the human faces and tragedies behind public histories, old or unfolding, have been a recurring concern.



The Big Fellow (writer/director) based on Frank O'Connor's biography of Michael Collins (2016)



Top: as a young actor in Song of the White Man's Burden, Project Arts Centre – ensemble performance on colonialism, presented for Nelson Mandela's 70th birthday 1988



Centre: Poster for Eye-Witness Casement, 2016 (Writer/Performer) at Nobel Mirror Room, Oslo



Bottom: Mná na hÉireann, 2019 (Script Adviser), created by Riverdance choreographer Carol Leavy Joyce: my role was to assist with narrative and dramatic aspects

Civic Engagement & Education

My practice has always included a strong element of community engagement and, whether directing with professional ensembles, leading community arts processes or (more recently) working in schools contexts, I have sought to combine principles of inclusivity with a quest for artistic innovation and excellence.



At Peace (Writer/Director: Upstate, Drogheda 2007) an international professional cast enact a story of an Irish border town in a time of demographic change.



The Streets of JJ Clarke (Theatre Artist in Residence, Co. Monaghan 2018-19) Conceived and directed street theatre event involving 60 volunteers in Castleblayney, inspired by legacy of Edwardian photography pioneer, JJ Clarke (2019)

Town (Resident Artist / Script Adviser): Students of St Oliver's Community College Drogheda in a collectively devised performance (2017)



Street Theatre Workshops with children in Castleblayney, as part of the Co. Monaghan residency.



Site specific theatre workshop with students of New York University, Cooley Mountains, 2007

Literary & Physical Theatre

Exploring the work of writers in the context of their own lived experiences and historical backgrounds is another recurring concern in my work. While I am drawn to literary figures and sources, I seek in my practice to emphasise the physical and visual aspects, as much as the literary, of the theatre art form



Above: Left – performing in my solo show *The Dubliners Dilemma* (after Joyce) Moscow 2015

Right – *The Green Fool* (2004 - writer/director) based on the memoir of Patrick Kavanagh



Below: Left – Sharon McArdle in *“Bronte”* (which I directed) : Centre – *“The Big Fellow”* drew from Frank O’Connor’s personal autobiography as well as his biography of Michael Collins : Right – *“Epic”* (2001) was part of my *“Border Chronicles”* trilogy, set in modern Cooley but drawing from the T  in myth cycle.

Future plans for the Dorothy Macardle Archive and Performance Project

Prison Notebooks is the first phase of a series of works which will be presented as part of the Dorothy Macardle Archive and Performance Project. It is intended in 2020-22 to collaborate with a group of empanelled artists and partners through archive research; workshop experimentation and occasional work-in-progress showings to explore the following aspects of Macardle's life.

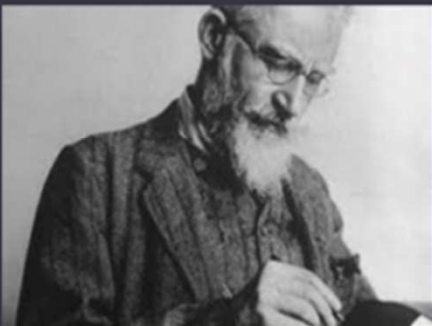
- *Radicalisation through the Irish Literary Movement & the Abbey: Connecting with the Abbey and other archives – experimental presentations in recreated literary salons and Edwardian theatre spaces*
- *Gothic Horror Novelist & Hollywood Writer: Mining Dorothy's books for narrative; drawing from mid-20th century horror cinema for lighting, sound and dramatic conventions - experimental presentations in disused cinema*
- *UN Humanitarian work in aftermath of WW2: An in-depth reading of Dorothy's immense humanitarian work for the U.N.- reflections on the Holocaust, carpet bombing of cities and the plight of unaccompanied refugee minors, then and now.*

1. *Radicalisation through the Irish Literary Movement and the Abbey Theatre.*

Key figures involved were Constance Markievicz, Maud Gonne, W.B Yeats, AE Russell, George Bernard Shaw.

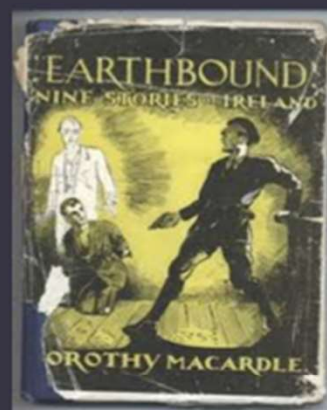
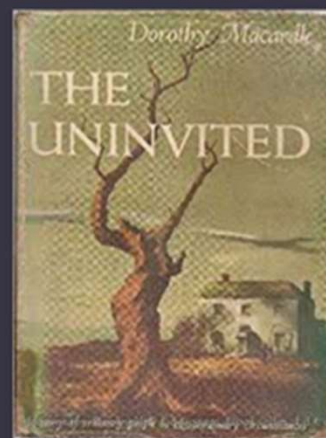


Perhaps some ancestral chord was touched and unconscious racial allegiance awakened by the genius of those poets and dramatists. I don't know; but I know that before my student years were at an end, Ireland possessed my imagination and my heart. Dorothy Macardle



*Plays written by Macardle for the Abbey Stage:
Atonement (1918) Ann Kavanagh (1922)*

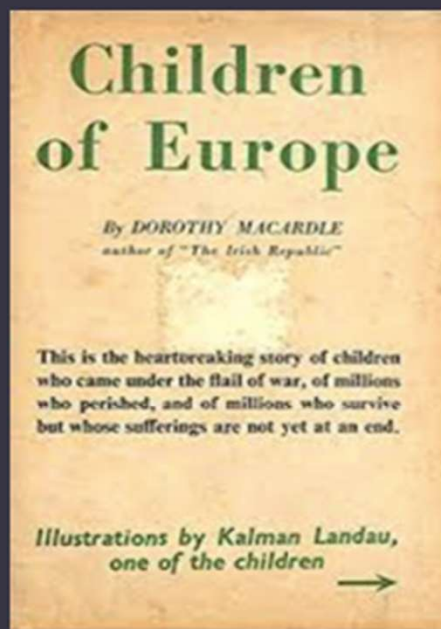
2. Gothic Horror Novelist & Hollywood Writer



The Uninvited, Paramount Pictures, United States. Written by Dorothy Macardle, Directed by Lewis Allen. Starring Ray Milland & Ruth Hussey, 1944.

3. UN Humanitarian work in aftermath of WW2

Macardle, while working with the UN was directly involved in the social reform programme in the aftermath of WW2. She was Ireland's main contact in Europe where she sought to ensure that Irish governmental aid got to its proper destinations. Her Book *Children of Europe: A study of the children of liberated countries; their wartime experiences, their reactions, and their needs, with a note on Germany* (1948) accounts the devastating experiences she witnessed of orphaned and refugee children, as she travelled across 20 countries in Europe after WW2.



Illustrations in the book By Holocaust survivor, Kalman Landau (aged 16 years), 1948.