

# THE FERRYMAN

BY JEZ BUTTERWORTH

Directed for RDG by Mark (Harry) Humble

Rhoda McGaw Theatre, Woking 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Auditions : The RDG Studio

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July and Monday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 7.30pm



The Ferryman is a wonderful family drama set in a farmhouse in 1981 in Armagh, Northern Ireland during the Troubles (specifically the Hunger Strikes) full of comedy, tension, mystery, gangsters, magical stories and a poetic, lyrical feel.

Most of the action takes place leading up to and after the gathering of the harvest and has a wonderful Irish, large family vibe - telling stories of the past and present but leading inexorably to a tragic ending.

It has 21 characters and a baby, almost all from the same family! We are also hoping for live rabbits and a goose!

Ages range from 7 to mid-80s, including 10 x under-18s (though we could cast some of the older boys up to early 20s).

See the back of the script for critics' headlines - especially:

*"A mighty affair, sending stories, characters, history, politics and love skittering across the floor with the flair of a gambler rolling the dice. It's a stunning piece of writing, teeming with life, haunted by death.... Butterworth takes the great family drama and makes it his own"*

*"A serious, seriously good, grown-up play..... something special"*

## CHARACTERS

Quinn Carney - 40s, central character, head of the household. Married to Mary (though you might spend the first 20 mins thinking he's married to Caitlin!). Ex-IRA, now a farmer.

Mary Carney - 40s - his wife, and mother to 7. Quiet, spends a great deal of time upstairs with a mysterious 'virus' brooding on Caitlin's place in their home.

Caitlin Carney - late 30s/early 40s - wife/widow of Quinn's missing brother, Seamus. When Seamus went missing 10 years ago, Caitlin and her son Oisín moved in with Quinn and Mary. Quinn and Caitlin are very close but not lovers. The action starts with the news that Seamus was murdered by the IRA and his body has just been found in a bog 'across the border'. This has enormous repercussions throughout the play.

Aunt Patricia Carney - 70s/80s - Quinn's aunt - strong Republican - hates Thatcher - battle-axe - great part!

Aunt Maggie Faraway - 70s/80s - Patricia and Pat's sister - sits in a wheelchair in the corner almost throughout - lives in a dream world 'far away', and only occasionally speaks lucidly - but the family get very excited when they get a rare 'visit' from her. When she does speak, it is with poetry, fables and stories from her youth. Several very long speeches.

Uncle Patrick Carney - 60s/70s - jocular, big drinker, very funny commentator on the action. Far less political and everyone's favourite (great-) uncle.

Quinn and Mary's seven children by age:

James Joseph/'JJ' - 16 - next in line to the farm.

Michael - 15 - mouthy - important role.

Shena - 14 - huge help round the house and with baby - wants to marry Adam Ant.

Nuala (Nunu) - 11 ]

Mercy - 9 ] all three have some very funny lines

Honor - 7 (dresses as Cleopatra) ]

(Bobby - a nine-month-old baby)

Oisín Carney - 14 - Caitlin and Seamus' son. A bit of an outsider with a chip on his shoulder - not quite 'in' with the other boys.

Father Horrigan - a weak priest, manipulated by the IRA to blackmail Quinn

Muldoon - the local IRA leader - quietly spoken, menacing, deadly gangster.

Frank Magennis and Lawrence Malone - Muldoon's heavies - they open the play but rarely speak again. An ominous presence.

The Corcoran Cousins - three fun loving and mischievous brothers, cousins of the Carneys, who come to help bring in the harvest in the second half, and trigger key events. Very important, energetic roles.

Shane Corcoran - 17 - firebrand - thinks of himself as a pocket 'soldier' for The Cause already.

Diarmaid Corcoran - 16 - the more sensible/intelligent one

Declan Corcoran - 14 - impressionable - wants to be like the older boys

Tom Kettle - 30s-50s - an Englishman who helps around the farm. A big, slow, man with a key role in the play. Good with animals. 'Unhurried' in demeanour (ie likely on the spectrum). Loved by the kids but not Aunt Pat who doesn't understand why they are harbouring an Englishman. Rural English accent (eg west country).

**Scripts are now available via post or email. Contact Harry if you are interested in auditioning.**

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