



The Ark

The Ark presents

# FLIES

**Written by Shaun Dunne, in collaboration with  
Olga Buckina, Hugo Russell Connolly, Thomas  
Kelly, Evie Kenny, Anna Godson O'Doherty,  
Raymond Murphy, Naomi Ingilosi Moonveld-  
Nkosi & LilyRose Wogan-Martin**

# FLIES

**30 OCT 2025**

**The Ark Children's Cultural Centre**











## **Performed by**

Olga Buckina, Hugo Russell  
Connolly, Thomas Kelly, Evie  
Kenny, Anna Godson  
O'Doherty, Raymond  
Murphy, Naomi Ingilosi  
Moonveld-Nkosi & LilyRose  
Wogan-Martin.

## **Creative Team**

### **Writer/Director**

Shaun Dunne

### **Choreographer**

Jessica Kennedy

### **Sound Designer**

Reuben Harvey

### **Sound Engineer**

Eoin Murphy

### **Stage Manager**

Alison O'Shea

### **Production Managers**

Mark Rooney & Franco Bistoni

### **Producer**

Kelly Phelan

### **Dramaturg**

Aideen Howard

*Flies* was commissioned by  
The Ark





**“Lord of The Flies is about power and control.**

**It’s about what happens when you’re lonely...**

**It’s about what happens when you’re left alone..**

**I don’t know...**

**It’s definitely not a romance novel.”**



## Welcome Notes

I have long been inspired by The Ark's radical approach to art making for children and its original community engagement. Having been appointed Director in 2015 I was keen to introduce a child participation process to redistribute discussion and decision-making power within The Ark to promote and champion children's rights including and beyond the arts. I invited theatre maker, Shaun Dunne to come on board in a newly created role of Ark Artist in Residence to lead our new Children's Council. Launched in March 2016, it marked the beginning of a joyful journey towards rights-based child participation. Since then, more than 300 children, now fondly known as The Alumni, have been members of The Ark Children's Council.

The Ark team have embedded child participation across the organisation and across our programmes in Temple Bar, in libraries and in schools. Children co-curate programmes, create catalogues to accompany exhibitions, generate design briefs, attend shows and workshops and meet artists from home and abroad. As commissioning is at the heart of our practice, the Council are keenly involved in informing the development of new work for production. Every Ark commission includes a child consultation process from the very outset. Given the nature of new work, sometimes several consecutive Councils will have input into the development of a script or a show over many years. This is true of pieces like *Peat* by Kate Heffernan (2019), *The Making of Mollie* by Anna Carey (2024), *The Haircut* by Wayne Jordan and Tom Lane (2019), *Songs from the Soil* by Lauren Kinsella (2023), and *Gold in the Water*, a new musical by Shane O'Reilly with Paul Curley produced by Project Arts Centre and Mermaid Arts Centre with The Ark (2023).

Our discussions with children and young people have also consistently expressed their desire for a more central role in art-making, both on and off-stage. *Flies* was commissioned to address that desire developing a new model of collaboration over several years. We are proud to present *Flies* as a work in progress, showcasing the incredible work of its creators and performers. We hope that it is the first of many collaborations between children, young people and adults at The Ark.

-Aideen Howard

# Welcome Notes

This piece began in 2020 with an opportunity to write a play for The Ark. I knew I wanted to develop this commission with former members of our Children's Council, as it presented a great chance to retain members who had graduated from our programme.

Initially, I pitched a more direct adaptation of Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, but it soon became clear that getting a group of young people to engage with such a text over Zoom during the pandemic wouldn't be straightforward. I knew we would need to mess with it a little.

Slowly but surely, we built a process of monthly meetings where we discussed the themes in the work and how they related to our own lives. A personal response. In recent years, when we were able to return to our workshop (now older and taller), we resumed our conversation, focusing on a process-led collaboration that allowed the young people insight into what the theatre-making process can look and feel like.

We soon zoned in on three major areas for the play: a free class, a free house, and a park after dark. Through a series of collaborative exercises, fused with my own writing, we began to develop a new play text where a chorus of young people struggle to engage with the book, much in the same way we did. As they grapple with their report, a new boy enters their community, representing the Piggy character from the original text.

Later on, I became intrigued by the arrival of ChatGPT and AI into our lives, considering how this man-made technology might symbolise the monster, or the innate badness, alluded to in Golding's original work. Ultimately, this is a story about exclusion and cruelty among young people, but it also explores themes of loneliness, technology, impulse control, and regret.

*Flies* is absolutely not a finished piece; please view this material as a work in progress. We're still very much at the beginning of something yet to fully take form. I'd like to thank our cast for their unwavering enthusiasm and collaboration. We're very excited to share this work with you at its current stage of development.

-Shaun Dunne

## Welcome Notes

Over the past five years, we've developed this project through a series of workshops with Shaun Dunne, exploring our thoughts and ideas through writing and speech exercises. We expressed our movement in the space through improvisation games and choreography exercises.

Together, we experimented with improvisation, choreography, and storytelling exercises. All of these things over the last few years have contributed to the world-building of this story we wanted to tell, and have been poured into this performance.

What makes *Flies* so raw and compelling is how deeply our voices are embedded in it. A piece about young people, created by young people, is something rare, and that's what makes this project feel so authentic.

The story comes directly from us, and Shaun, our opinions and ideas were always valued and have left a mark on the final product. The performers are also the creators, which we think is a unique and immersive way to create stories, especially ones that are about young people.

-The Alumni



## **Shaun Dunne**

Hello! I'm Shaun Dunne, a Dublin-based film and theatre artist. I've been the Engagement and Participation Artist at The Ark, with specific responsibility for the Children's Council coming on 10 years now. Working here, I get to collaborate with young people on projects like the 2021 play *What Did I Miss?*, which explored the impact of the 2020 lockdown on children. I've also made two short films for the Ark, working with Gaeilscoil Coláiste Mhuire and St. Patrick's Boy's School, Ringsend. Alongside my work at the Ark, I'm most interested in making films and plays that reflect on the here and now.

## **Olga Buckina**

Hi, my Name is Olga and I am 17 years old. I've been involved in The Ark since I was 11 years old! I'm really excited about this project and to perform what it's become! This project has grown up alongside me. I started working on this project when I was twelve, all the way back in 2020 when our meetings were on zoom. It's been an adventure, and a journey. From exploring William Golding's vast desert island, to the colourful halls of The Ark, and then to explore our own minds and the minds of young people, working on *Flies* has been a brilliantly unique, wild and wonderful experience. This project is an amazing culmination of all the bits and pieces, improv and writing exercises, "Bank that!" moments, and imaginative thought that we've all put into it over the years, and I'm so grateful to have developed alongside all these amazing and talented young (and older!) people.

## **Hugo Russell Connolly**

My name is Hugo and I am a seventeen year old living on a normal Dublin estate where some people have an extension and everyone knows everyone. Since joining The Ark Children's Council in 2019 I have had a wonderful time working with artists and having my voice heard by giving input on performances. Starting work on *Flies*, I have collaborated with other people my age to help create this project, inspired by *Lord of The Flies*. This has been a new experience for me, but enjoyable nonetheless as we all work well together and our skills are being shown on full display.

## **Thomas Kelly**

Hello, my name is Thomas, I'm 18 years old. The Ark has been an active part in my life for almost 10 years now, starting with The Ark Children's Council in 2017. This piece has been in the works since late 2020, when we went into the 2nd lockdown we moved our sessions to Zoom where we read the novel this piece originally takes inspiration from, *Lord of the Flies*. Over the last 5 years, we created and developed this project through many sessions with Shaun where we explored our thoughts and ideas through writing and speech exercises. We expressed our movement in the space through improvisation games and choreography exercises. All of these things over the last few years have contributed to the world building of this story we wanted to tell and has been poured into the very script we plan to read out.

## **Evie Kenny**

My name is Evie Kenny and I am a secondary school student from Dublin. I had the absolute privilege to be involved with the show *Flies*. Co creating the show was a process like no other. My voice and input felt so valued and heard through the entire writing, improvisation and rehearsal stages. *Flies* is such a unique piece of work that I feel really connects to many teenage themes and feelings. This adaptation of a classic book is modern and engaging and I hope everyone who gets to hear it loves it!



## **Anna Godson O'Doherty**

Hi, my name is Anna Godson, I'm sixteen years old, and I live in Phisborough, Dublin. I'm a very creative person, so I love anything to do with the arts - reading, writing, painting, music films... I love them all. I really enjoyed working on *Flies*. I feel so lucky to be able to work with so many talented, like-minded individuals. This play truly feels like ours, and I'm so grateful to Shaun and everyone else at The Ark.

## **Naomi Ingilosi Moonveld-Nkosi**

My name is Naomi Moonveld-Nkosi and I am an emerging Dublin based, mixed race multidisciplinary artist and performer in *Flies*. Best known for my work in *What Did I Miss?* by Shaun Dunne and *The Tower* by Jesse Jones. Now also a first-year undergraduate at UCD. I started working on this project during lockdown and its been an incredible opportunity to be able to grow and collaborate with Shaun Dunne and the rest of the cast. From working with *Lord of The Flies* on Zoom to rehearsing in The Ark, *Flies* hold a special place as a work made with and for young people in that age between childhood innocence and adulthood.

## **Raymond Murphy**

I am a 16-year-old 5th year student at Coláiste Eoin in Stillorgan. I'm a fluent Irish speaker, I enjoy spending time with my three brothers and experimenting in the kitchen. I love to travel, I have an eclectic taste in music, and enjoy browsing vintage clothing shops and markets. I am passionate about good food, culture and social justice.

## **LilyRose Wogan-Martin**

My name is LilyRose, and I really enjoyed working on this project as it was a fantastic opportunity to work with such amazing people at a young age. It's kinda crazy to think that in a way, I grew up with this script, as some of my 11-year-old self still exists in the text. I'm now 16 and I couldn't have imagined the project would be as big a part of me as it is now. I feel lucky to have The Ark as such a positive part of my youth.



## **The Ark's Alumni**

*Flies* was developed through a collaborative process with alumni of The Ark's Children's Council. Now teenagers, these young people reunited to work with playwright and The Ark's Engagement and Participation Artist, Shaun Dunne, to explore and respond to William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*.

The project first began in 2020, when Shaun was invited to develop a new work for The Ark, an opportunity that also created space to continue engaging members who had graduated from the Children's Council programme. Over time, this evolved into a rich, long-term collaboration, bringing together past participants to explore themes of community, identity, and belonging through creative writing and performance.

The final presentation features eight teenage performers, but the process was shaped by the contributions of many more alumni, and collaborators who worked alongside them. The Ark wishes to extend special thanks to all those who have been part of *Flies* along the way.

**They are;**

**Ke Qiao Chen, Rua McNamara, Kaelan Musi, Zoe Haslam, Charlie O'Connell, Finn O'Donaill & Cham Homan.**

**A HUGE thank you!**









## ABOUT THE ARK

The Ark was founded on the principle that children are entitled to great art made especially for them. Our purpose is to realise children's right to art and culture with ambition and joy. We do so by commissioning, producing and presenting fun and ambitious art for, by, with and about children from birth to age 12 in our home in Temple Bar, as well as in-person and online, in schools, in libraries and in early years and care settings around Ireland.

## THE ARK TEAM

Director: Aideen Howard  
General Manager: Al Russell  
Engagement & Participation Manager: Aisling Clancy  
Engagement & Participation Artist: Shaun Dunne  
Engagement & Participation Coordinator: Estibaliz Errazquin  
Production Manager: Mark Rooney  
Assistant Production Manager: Franco Bistoni  
Marketing & Visitor Services Manager: Clodagh Mooney Duggan  
Digital & Audience Development Coordinator: Kate Brady  
Learning & Schools Coordinator: Shannon Callahan  
Finance Officer: Mary Reade  
Visitor Services Coordinator: Laura Whelan  
Box Office Administrator: Ali Waters  
Visitor Services Team: Paul Derham, Baxter King-Epping, Mika Moret, Sophie McCormick, Daniella Hensman, Wren Dennehy, Shauna Harris, Uainín Lindesy, Sophia Mitchell, Aoife Sweeney O Connor, Matthew Tallon, Ashanti Wheeler

## HELP BRING THE MAGIC OF THE ARTS TO EVERY CHILD!

The Ark is where imaginations soar, creativity is celebrated, and lifelong memories are made.

We know children have the right to experience, enjoy, and create art - no matter their background. While we receive vital public funding, it doesn't cover everything.

To keep most of our events free and our doors open to all, we rely on the generosity of supporters like you. Whether you give once, donate monthly, or partner with us as a business, your support sparks creativity, builds confidence, and makes a lasting difference.

Together, we can make the arts accessible for every child.

