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**Play On Words Theatre Presents
Tom Crean - Antarctic Explorer
Written & Performed by Aidan Dooley**

8PM, SAT 24 OCTOBER

DURATION: 80MINS | NO INTERVAL

Tom Crean (1877-1938) the intrepid Antarctic explorer who hailed from Annascaul, county Kerry is brought to life in Tom Crean – Antarctic Explorer; a compelling and humorous solo performance by Aidan Dooley.

Awarded 'Best Solo Show' at its premiere at the 2003 New York International Festival and a Fringe First at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2006, Tom Crean – Antarctic Explorer is a grippingly vivid, surprisingly funny account of sheer heroism in the face of impossible odds.

"This magnetic revelation of a fascinating character, simply compels a standing ovation" **The Irish Times**

**TOM CREAN**

Born 1877 in Co. Kerry, Ireland, Tom Crean joined the Royal Navy at 15 years of age. He served on 'Discovery' (1901-1904) and 'Terra Nova' (1910-1913) under Captain Robert Scott and from 1914–1916 served on 'Endurance' under Sir Ernest Shackleton. For months, he survived trapped on the ice floes after the ship was crushed and he journeyed with Shackleton and four others in a 21-foot lifeboat, across the South Atlantic (800 miles). They scaled the uncharted glaciers of South Georgia to reach help for their stricken colleagues left behind. Crean received the 'Albert Medal' for bravery. He returned to the UK in 1916 to serve out the remaining time of WW1 and was medically discharged in 1919. He married a girl from Annascaul, Nell Herlihy, and returned home to Ireland. They brought up two daughters Mary and Eileen. Sadly, their middle daughter Kate died aged 4 in 1924. He remained in Annascaul, where he ran a public house with Nell until his death in 1938 of a burst appendix, aged 61.



THE JOURNEY OF THE PLAY

Tom Crean – Antarctic Explorer written and performed by Aidan Dooley premiered at Medway Fuse Festival in 2003 and then onto The New York International Fringe Festival, where it won the ‘Best Solo Performance Award’. In the same year the show played the Dublin Fringe Festival, where it picked up a ‘Best Actor Nomination’.

The show originated from a fifteen minute Living History performance on Tom Crean created by Aidan Dooley for London’s National Maritime Museum’s Antarctic Exhibition ‘South’ in 2001. Following the publication of Michael Smith’s book about Tom Crean called ‘Unsung Hero’ the show was developed over a two year period with several small tryout performances in Ireland, including a performance in front of Crean’s remaining family at the Tom Crean Society’s memorial in Annascaul.

Between 2004 and 2005 the show toured to over 30 venues across Ireland, and also played two sell-out seasons at the Northern Stage Theatre Vermont, USA.

2006 saw the show return to the USA playing a sell-out three week season at The Segan Theatre at Boston Centre for the Arts where the show was nominated for an ‘Outstanding Solo Performance Award’ at that years’ Elliot Norton, Boston Theatre Critics Awards. The show then returned to Ireland to play the first of two sell-out, five week seasons at Andrews Lane Theatre Dublin, the second season

following the triumphant success at the 2006 Edinburgh Fringe Festival where the show won a Fringe First Award.

In 2007 after its sell-out success at the Brighton Festival, the show returned to Ireland to play two capacity weeks at Dublin’s Olympia Theatre, before travelling to the Adelaide Fringe Festival Australia, via seasons in Florida, Vermont, Malta, Dubai and Geneva. It then went back to the USA to play an eight week sell-out season at the Award Winning Irish Repertory Theatre in New York before returning to the UK to complete a four week UK tour.

2008 saw the production receive its London premier at the New End Theatre, where it played a six week limited run to capacity houses and got awarded the Time Out Critics Choice before returning to Dublin for a third sell-out week engagement at the Olympia Theatre which, by popular demand, then transferred to the Gaiety Theatre Dublin for a further two weeks.

From 2008 the show continued to tour extensively both in Ireland and Internationally. 2013 saw it’s first tour of N. Ireland, the Olympia Dublin for the sixth time and completed an Irish tour including Cork’s The Everyman for the eight time.

In 2014 the show was seen in New Zealand at the International Arts Festival and in 2015 – 2019 it returned ‘by popular demand’ to the UK and Ireland including a week at The Gaiety, Dublin (2018).



@tomcreansho



@tomcreanshow

For more tour details and to sign up to the Tom Crean mailing list:

www.tomcreanshow.com



AIDAN DOOLEY

Aidan is from Galway. He trained at Guilford School of Acting and works as a freelance actor, writer and director in London.

Highlights of his career as an actor include 'Philadelphia Here I Come' – Wyndhams Theatre London. 'Elegies for Angels' – Criterion Theatre London. 'DA' – White Bear Theatre London. 'Players and Painted Stage', 'Last Apache Reunion' – SOS Theatre Bristol. National Tours of 'Tales of the Lost Formicans' – Bristol Old Vic Theatre Company, 'Julius Caesar' and 'Romeo and Juliet' .

He first performed 'Tom Crean – Antarctic Explorer' ten years ago at Siamsa Tire, Tralee for Tom Crean's family and then at the Medway Fuse Festival followed by The New York International Fringe Festival (Best Solo Show Award Winner). He has also been nominated for awards at The Dublin Festival, Adelaide Fringe Festival and The Elliot Norton Theatre Critics Award Boston and in 2006 won the prestigious Fringe First at Edinburgh. He was seen in Galway Girl and Melody (Celtic Coupling) in the UK Fuse Festival. He has toured his new solo show 'O'Sullivan Beara – The Last Gaelic Chieftain'.

He is a Co-Director of Play On Words Theatre Company. He has worked for many years developing various performance pieces and historical characters for all the National Museums in England including the National Maritime Museum Greenwich where the idea of a performance on Tom Crean originated.

He is an Associate Lecturer in drama at Canterbury Christ Church University.

He lives in Rochester with his wife Miriam and has two children Liam and Nancy.

PLAY ON WORDS THEATRE

Formed in 1990 and based at The Brook Theatre, Chatham, Kent UK with support from Medway Council. The company has produced: 'Prostitutes Only Marry in May' tours of N. Ireland And Scotland: 'Tom Crean – Antarctic Explorer' (2001-), touring Ireland, UK, Australia, USA including a Fringe First at The Edinburgh Festival 2006; 'Galway Girl' and 'Melody' for Medway Fuse Festival 2009. Toured Ireland in 2011-2013 with: 'Our Last Chieftain – O'Sullivan Beara'. Its educational arm has toured 'Romeo & Juliet', 'Macbeth' and numerous workshop performances on many of Shakespeare's other plays as well as performances on science and history for schools. It runs drama summer schools in the Channel Islands and is resident directing company for The Brook Youth Theatre, Chatham. Its production 'Only Prostitutes Marry in May' was seen in 2012 at Waterloo East Theatre, London, where it received a nomination in the 'off West-End' awards, for best female performance. It has co-produced the acclaimed and highly successful Christmas shows for 3-6 year old's with The Creatives at The Brook Theatre, Chatham, 2010-2019.

www.playonwordstheatre.com



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Joe Cusack | Sound Engineer

SPECIAL THANKS FROM AIDAN DOOLEY

Thanks to Jane Dewey who saw the potential of a performance on Tom Crean and was an inspiration to that process; the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich and special thanks to Burberry. Michael Smith whose book *Unsung Hero* by Collins Press – ISBN 1-903464-0909 – has been a constant and essential source in the ‘knowing’ of and the ‘being’ of Tom Crean.

Dave McGilton for the use of the ballad ‘Tom Crean’
www.davemcgilton.com



UPCOMING PLAY IT BY EAR SHOWS IN OCT-NOV

THE EVERYMAN PRESENTS

THE FOUR FACED LIAR

Written by Ger FitzGibbon

Directed by Emelie FitzGibbon

8PM, THU 29 OCT

THE EVERYMAN PRESENTS

FEELING GOOD WITH KAREN UNDERWOOD AND JOHN O'BRIEN

8PM, FRI 30 OCT

THE EVERYMAN PRESENTS

THE SEAFARER BY CONOR MCPHERSON

8PM, SAT 31 OCT

Directed by John McCarthy

THE EVERYMAN PRESENTS

MAJELLA CULLAGH WITH JOHN O'BRIEN

8PM, THU 5 NOV

All shows are available via live audio broadcast. www.everymancork.com

Box Office: 021 450 1673

SUPPORT THE EVERYMAN

The COVID-19 public health emergency is a serious challenge for The Everyman, given that we generate 92% of our income from ticket sales, but we remain optimistic and excited about The Everyman’s future.

If you are in a position to donate to The Everyman to support us in our recovery from closure due to COVID-19 you can do so on our website.

WWW.EVERYMANCORK.COM