

# STRAWDOG



## THEATRE COMPANY

3829 N. Broadway Ave., Chicago IL 60613  
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**PRESS RELEASE**

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Media passes, photographs, videos, interviews and additional materials available.

### **Friel's Irish Drama "Aristocrats"** **Directed by Steppenwolf's Rick Snyder** **Opens Strawdog's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season**

**WHAT:** Strawdog Theatre Company kicks off their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season with Brian Friel's Irish family drama "*Aristocrats*," directed by Steppenwolf ensemble member Rick Snyder. Set in 1970s Ireland, "*Aristocrats*" tells the story of the esteemed O'Donnell family on the eve of their youngest daughter's wedding. This long-awaited reunion joins four siblings as they gather to celebrate their legacy as Irish political elite of County Donegal, only to find the once-noble family homestead collapsing in ruin. In addition to "*Aristocrats*," acclaimed Irish playwright Friel also wrote "*Dancing at Lughnasa*" and "*Faith Healer*," among others. "*Aristocrats*" runs about two hours with one intermission, with free admittance to Strawdog Late Night following the Friday and Saturday night shows.

**WHERE:** Strawdog Theatre, 3829 N. Broadway Ave., Chicago, IL 60613  
Red Line Sheridan stop; 36-Broadway and 80-Irving Park buses  
\$5 honor parking at Greeley School, 832 W. Sheridan, weekends after 5 p.m.

**WHEN:** Opens Sunday, October 14, 2007, 7 p.m. (reception following)  
Closes on Saturday, November 17, 2007  
Runs Fridays, and Saturdays at 8 p.m., and Sundays at 7 p.m. (Daylight Saving ends on Sunday, November 4)  
Previews on October 11 and October 12, 2007, at 8 p.m.  
Added show on Monday, October 22, 8 p.m. (\$5 industry/\$20 regular)  
Added Theatre Thursday show on November 1, 8 p.m. (\$30 ticket)  
Added Thursday show on November 15, 8 p.m. (\$20 ticket)  
Special Gala Benefit Performance Saturday, October 13 at 7 p.m. (\$40 ticket)

**TICKETS:** Publish this number: 773-528-9696, [www.strawdog.org](http://www.strawdog.org)  
\$20 for all regular performances (3-show season tickets for \$50/gala package \$100)  
\$15 for students and seniors (with ID), and for groups of ten or more  
\$10 for previews  
\$5 for industry show on October 22 (with resume/headshot/card); \$20 otherwise  
\$40 for Gala Benefit on October 13, including cocktails and appetizers  
\$30 for Theatre Thursday on November 1, 8 p.m. (includes pre-show reception with refreshments)  
Regular ticket purchase also includes admittance to Strawdog Late Nights (improv, comedy, music, etc.) directly after Friday and Saturday night shows

- more -

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- STAFF:** Strawdog ensemble members **Sean Mallary** (Lighting Design), **Aly Renee Greaves** (Costume Design), **Gregor Mortis** (Sound Design) and **Erin Carlson** (Stage Manager). With guest artists **Rick Snyder** (Director), **B. Emil Boulos** (Scenic Design), **Dan Pellant** (Properties Design), **Eva Breneman** (Dialect Coach), **Amber Bel'Cher** (Dramaturg), and **Cortney Hurley** (Production Manager).
- CAST:** Strawdog ensemble members **Jennifer Avery** (Alice), **Michael Dailey** (Eamon), **Anita B. Deely** (Judith), **Kyle Hamman** (Willie), **Tom Hickey** (Tom), **Shannon Hoag** (Claire) and **John Henry Roberts** (Casimir).
- BIO:** Playwright **Brian Friel** born in Killyclogher, County Tyrone, West Northern Ireland. He was a teacher in Derry, writing short stories and radio plays, before turning to the live theatre with "*This Doubtful Paradise*" (staged in Belfast in 1959). He gained recognition with "*Philadelphia, Here I Come!*" (1964), the first of numerous plays, including "*The Freedom of the City*" (1974), "*Faith Healer*" (1979), "*Translations*" (1980), "*Dancing at Lughnasa*" (1990), "*Wonderful Tennessee*" (1993), "*Molly Sweeney*" (1995), and "*Give Me Your Answer, Do!*" (1997), which have made him internationally the best known of contemporary playwrights in Ireland. In 2005, his play "*The Home Place*" premiered in Dublin and transferred to London's West End.
- NEXT:** Strawdog will continue their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season with a cut version of Shakespeare's "*Richard III*," directed by Artistic Director Nic Dimond, running February 21- March 29, 2008; and Brett Neveu's musical "*Old Town*," directed by Kyle Hamman, running April 24 – May 31, 2008.
- FUNDERS:** Strawdog Theatre Company is supported in part by the **Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation**, **Alphawood Foundation**, **the Illinois Arts Council (a state agency)**, **Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation**, and the annual support of businesses and individuals.
- MISSION:** From fresh takes on the classics and kitchen-sink dramas to inventive world premieres, Strawdog Theatre Company is committed to presenting great stories. We tell these stories to provoke the important questions and excite the imagination of our audiences. And we use our amazing, intimate space to fully immerse people into the unique worlds that we create for each one of our productions. Founded in 1988, the Strawdog ensemble has consistently produced shows built on authentic human connections, and our comfortable 70-seat home in Lakeview is perfect for offering our audience a quintessential Chicago storefront theatre experience. "*The whole wide world in a little black box.*"
- HISTORY:** Strawdog Theatre Company was formed in 1988 by a group of actors who had performed together in a production of Euripides's "*Helen*" at a (now defunct) theatre on the west side. The group took their name from Sam Peckinpah's movie "*Straw Dogs*" (*Theatresaurus* Rex was, thankfully, the runner-up), and they produced their first show, Len Jenkin's "*Five of Us*" at a (now defunct) space in Bucktown. At the time, the Chicago Reader said "Strawdog Theatre Company's inaugural production brings ... truth home with a vengeance," and Skyline Chicago added "The Strawdog troupe shows us what an ensemble can do." Twenty years later, Strawdog Theatre Company has survived the ups and downs of Chicago theatre, and is still dedicated to bringing the truth to audiences through the committed work of an award-winning ensemble of actors and designers.
- INFO:** Strawdog Theatre Company, 773-528-9889, [www.strawdog.org](http://www.strawdog.org)

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