



Brian Friel in Conversation (Theater: Theory/Text/Performance)

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The reluctance of contemporary Irish playwright Brian Friel to speak with the press is legendary. Fortunately, his willingness on occasion to grant interviews has fortuitously coincided with the productions of his pivotal works, including the highly celebrated *Dancing at Lughnasa*, recently released as a motion picture starring Meryl Streep. In this comprehensive volume, theater critic and scholar Paul Delaney gathers an amazingly broad and consistently engaging range of Friel's conversations with interviewers on both sides of the Atlantic.

Friel talks with disarming openness about his own life. He is also surprisingly candid in decrying a "dehydration of humanity" in Pinter and an "abnegation of life" in Beckett, in pondering the dangers of Irish writers who are "having to use a language that isn't our own," in revealing that his plays grow out of a willingness to "delve into a particular corner of yourself that's dark and uneasy," and in talking about the way that *Dancing at Lughnasa* manifests his sense of "a need for the pagan in life."

Friel has preferred to talk primarily with Irish interviewers throughout much of his career, and many of his most important interviews were printed in rather obscure publications. *Brian Friel in Conversation* makes available interviews that were formally virtually inaccessible, as well as more recent interviews in places such as the *New York Times*, *Vanity Fair*, and *Vogue*. The book concludes with an extensive bibliography and discography of Friel interviews to aid further reading and research.

Paul Delaney is Professor of English, Westmont College. He is the author of *Tom Stoppard: The Moral Vision of the Major Plays* and editor of *Tom Stoppard in Conversation*, a collection of interviews.



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