



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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VILLANOVA THEATRE PRESENTS ***SOMEONE WHO'LL WATCH OVER ME***

Villanova Theatre presents *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*, by noted Irish playwright Frank McGuinness, as the culmination of Villanova University's "Springtime in Ireland" Irish Festival. Directed by theatre professor Rev. David Cregan, O.S.A., *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* runs Friday, April 27 and Saturday, April 28 at 8pm; and Sunday, April 29 at 2pm in Vasey Hall on the Villanova University campus. **Tickets are \$15 and may be ordered by calling the Villanova Theatre Box Office at (610) 519-7474.**

In *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*, an American doctor, an English academic, and an Irish journalist are held hostage in a Lebanese prison. Having little contact with their unseen captors – and none whatsoever with the outside world – the men use dark humor and their vivid imaginations to forge their own reality within the walls of their cell. The London *Guardian* called it "hilariously funny as well as moving ... a wise and wonderful play."

Playwright Frank McGuinness based *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* on a true story. In April 1986, Irishman Brian Keenan was abducted on his way to work at the American University of Beirut. The Islamic group Jihad kept him in underground prisons and denied him all contact with the outside world. It was only after he had survived four and a half years of this treatment that he was finally released. McGuinness, inspired by his conversations with Keenan, wrote *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*, which debuted in Dublin in 1992.

Director Rev. David Cregan, O.S.A. has studied Frank McGuinness' work extensively, and is delighted to be directing *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* at Villanova Theatre. Said Cregan: "What I find so compelling about this play is its honesty. It examines a very difficult human

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experience without feeling the need to make overt political statements. McGuinness simply presents three very real, very human characters who rely on each other to make an untenable situation livable. The result is a powerful and still-relevant play.”

Frank McGuinness was born in Buncrana, County Donegal, Ireland, in 1953. He is a renowned Irish playwright, translator, and poet. His plays include *The Factory Girls* (1982); *Baglady/Ladybag* (1985); *Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme* (1985); *Innocence* (1986); *Carthaginians* (1988); *Mary and Lizzie* (1989); *The Bread Man* (1990); *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* (1992); and *Dolly West's Kitchen* (1999). He has written new translations of classic dramas, including works by Anton Chekov, Bertolt Brecht, and Henrik Ibsen. He has been awarded the London Evening Standard's Most Promising Playwright Award, the Ewart-Bigg's Peace Prize, the Irish-American Literary Prize in 1992, a Fringe First Award, and an Antoinette Perry Award nomination for Best Play for 1993 for *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*. He is a member of Aosdána, an “association which honors artists who have made an outstanding contribution to the arts in Ireland,” and lives in County Dublin.

Rev. David Cregan, O.S.A., Ph.D. is an assistant professor in the Villanova University theatre department and also teaches in the core humanities and the department of English. He spent four years working as a professional actor in New York City, where he did three national tours (one in Europe), an off-Broadway production with the Light Opera of Manhattan, and various regional work around the country. He earned his doctorate from the Samuel Beckett School of Drama at Trinity College in Ireland. His research is largely in the area of contemporary Irish theatre and Irish paradigms of dramatic performance. He has published articles on the plays of Frank McGuinness in *Modern Drama* (Winter 2004), and *Australasian Drama Studies* (October 2003), as well as in *New Voices in Irish Criticism* 5. He has a chapter in a book on the Irish author Sebastian Barry, *Out of History*, published in the spring of 2005.

The cast of *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* includes Villanova Theatre graduate Nick Falco (Adam) and current graduate students Chris Braak (Edward) and Andrew Smalley (Michael).

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