



**Smithsonian Institution**

*National Museum of African American History and Culture*

## **Playbill for A Flea in Her Ear**

Extracted on Apr-18-2024 07:44:58

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[[image - a color photograph of a middle aged or elderly woman speaking to a worried-looking younger man. The woman looks as if she might be whispering and has a sneering expression. She is wearing a black hat, black and white blouse, gray cardigan, and dark skirt, and is sitting in a rocking chair. He has short dark hair and is wearing a black track jacket with white stripes along the sleeves and blue jeans. Across the bottom half of the picture in red bold lettering is the word "BEAUTY" followed by smaller pink lettering reading "...and the beast"]]

[[caption]]Above (l.-r.) Anna Manahan and Ray Dooley in a scene from The Beauty Queen of Leenane[[/caption]]

[[attribution]] CAROL ROSEGG

As the aging, manipulative mother in Martin McDonagh's The Beauty Queen of Leenane, Anna Manahan loves to be loathed

by Jerry Tallmer

Alfred Hitchcock, who, they say, knew a thing or two about suspense, could not have improved on the tingling moments in which the old lady in the rocking chair is trying to get her impatient young caller to go on about his business and leave with her that letter – a love letter from his brother – which young Ray Dooley has promised on oath to deliver into the hand of the old lady's daughter.

"Be off and give your letter to me so, Ray, now, and I'll make sure she gets it," says the old lady, whose name is Mag. Ray paces the room, puts the letter down, picks it up again, puts it down. She pretends not to notice. Cat and mouse.

"And it isn't opening it you would be?" says he.

"It is not. Sure, a letter is a private thing. If it isn't my name on it, what business would it be of mine?"

"And may God strike you dead if you do open it?"

"And may God strike me dead if I do open it..."

Will he or won't he? Will she or won't she? Will the young Irishman, in his boredom and irritation, walk out of her house, leaving his brother's letter behind? Will Mag, Maureen's mother, open it? What will God do if she does?

In the blackout that follows this scene in The Beauty Queen of Leenane, a fire-crackling play by Martin McDonagh, the actress in the rocking chair has more than once heard hisses.

"They vocalize, some in the audience do," says Anna Manahan, the wily, domineering Mag Folan of a production that has four brilliant performances all down the line – herself as Mag, Marie Mullen as her 40-year-old virgin daughter Maureen, Tom Murphy as feckless, sardonic Ray Dooley, and Brian F. O'Byrne as Ray's big brother Pato, the suitor who represents Maureen Folan's last chance ever to spring free of the



selfish old pseudo-invalid in the rocking chair.

"A man who saw it here on a fundraising night came up later and said to me he'd never hated anyone onstage as much since Iago. I took it as a compliment," says actress Manahan - as well she might.

[[boxed]]Clue#2 - FOR PHOTO #2 ON PAGE 6: "You'll Never Walk Alone" was just one of the Rodgers and Hammerstein gems heard in Nicholas Hytner's revival of this musical. [[/boxed]]

12 [[boxed]]WWW.PLAYBILL.COM[[/boxed]] [[image: arrow]]  
[[underlined]]PURE THEATRE ONLINE[[/underlined]]

[[end page]]  
[[start page]]

[[advertisement]]

[[image - A man stands with his back to the camera in front of a gray brick wall, framed by a worn bench with a briefcase and what appears to be a newspaper on it on his left and a pay phone on his right. He stands with his left hand on his hip in a confident stance, wearing black slacks and shoes but no shirt. His body is transparent above the waist, showing the poster on the wall in front of him through him. The poster is a photograph in sepia tones of a black 1998 LS 400. Above the car, in white print, is text reading "INTRODUCING A LEXUS FOR THOSE WHO'VE NEVER SEEN THEMSELVES IN A LEXUS." Printed in white in the bottom left corner of the poster is the Lexus logo (a white circle with an L in the center, drawn in one stroke), and the word "LEXUS" above the words "The Relentless Pursuit of Perfection."]]

[[image: in an orange box with black text is written "A NEW KIND OF LS 400"]]

It's not for everyone. Just those who demand exuberant performance. (Zero to sixty in a scant 6.4 seconds.\*) Advanced engineering. (An all-aluminum, 290-horsepower, 32-valve V8 with continuous Variable Valve Timing with intelligence.) And a little bit of fun. (A recalibrated steering system that provides exceptional road feel.) In other words, everything you've been looking for in a prestige luxury sedan. The new 1998 LS 400. When was the last time you felt this connected to a car?

1998 Lexus, a Division of Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. Lexus reminds you to wear seatbelts, secure children in rear seat and obey all speed laws. \*Road & Track, October 1997. For more information, connect to [www.lexus.com](http://www.lexus.com) or call 800-USA-LEXUS (800-872-5398).  
[[/advertisement]]

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