



# Moved by Mayo

## Monaco-Ireland Arts Society celebrates a poet inspired by the west of Ireland

Lucky is the writer who finds his muse. Irish playwright J.M. Synge (1871-1909) found his Calliope, his muse of eloquence, in the 'Western World', his phrase for the West of Ireland, County Mayo and the Aran Islands. Had fate not thrown the Irish poet W.B.

Yeats and Synge together in Paris, Synge and his muse might never have met. It was Yeats who signed Synge's destiny when he suggested that his fellow countryman go to the West of Ireland and "express a life that has never found expression". Synge did. "Why," he wondered, later, "is anyone left in Dublin, or London, or Paris, when it would be better to live in a tent or hut with this magnificent sea and sky, and to breathe this wonderful air, which is like wine in one's teeth."

The 'West' inspired almost all of Synge's greatest plays, placing him firmly among the giants in Ireland's pantheon of letters. Riviera audiences will be able to experience the singularity of Synge's work as a prelude to St. Patrick's Day

(which exceptionally, by Papal decree, falls on the 15th of March) when the Monaco-Ireland Arts Society performs



A drawing of J.M.Synge

the first acts of four of Synge's plays on March 7th at 8:30pm in the Auditorium du Lycée Technique de Monte-Carlo, Avenue de l'Annonciade.

The Gaelic of the West of Ireland enchanted Synge's musician's ear. He assimilated the rhythms and transposed them into an English that is surging and poetical in both text and tone.

"We took their language and gave it a sense of beauty," the Irish playwright said. Synge

was a perfectionist, a writer who revised incessantly until he had achieved such a balance of mood, tone and colour that the alteration of a single word could destroy the balance.

First on the Monaco-Arts Society March 7th programme will be 'The Tinker's Wedding', a rollicking collision of characters - tinkers, potential mother-in-law and priest. It will be followed by the satirical 'In the Shadow of the Glen' one woman's rebellion against custom, the 'The well of the Saints', which poses the question of life lived as a dream or fact; 'The Playboy of the Western World', Synge's fourth play, which was greeted by the stormiest audience reception in theatre history after Ibsen's 'Ghosts'.

The shy solitary Irishman not only wrote memorable plays but he was also instrumental in helping to create the Abbey Theatre founded by Lady Gregory and W.B. Yeats, the man whose single suggestion encouraged a maker of masterpieces.

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