



# West End Players Guild News Release

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*Kiss me, I'm Irish!*

## Tales of love and loss in the auld sod: West End Players presents Brian Friel's *Lovers*

ST. LOUIS, MO (January 31, 2014) – Brian Friel is popularly regarded not simply as a great playwright, but as the greatest *Irish* playwright of modern times. And while love may be a universal subject, Friel's play *Lovers* puts a distinctly Irish spin on the subject.

The West End Players Guild continues its 103<sup>rd</sup> season with a Valentine's Day opening of *Lovers*, directed by Jan Meyer. The play will run through February 23<sup>rd</sup>, with Thursday, Friday and Saturday evening and Sunday matinee performances. All performances will be at the Union Avenue Christian Church, 733 Union Blvd., just north of Delmar.

*Lovers* examines its subject from two very different perspectives. In the first act, Friel presents the story of Mag and Joe, a pair of 17-year-olds in their final year of high school. Mag and Joe are in love and are about to be married, not only because they are in love but also because Mag is pregnant. Despite the daunting challenges life is about to hand them, they are excited for the future that is about to begin. And yet....

Betsy Bowman and John Lampe headline the cast as Mag and Joe. Steve Callahan and Kristy Wehrle round out the cast as narrators of the tale.

In its second act, *Lovers* takes a look at a very different sort of romance. Andy Tracey is 50, a joiner by trade and never married. But it is never too late to find love, and Andy finds his match in Hanna Wilson. Hanna is just a few years younger and, before meeting Andy, had been twenty years since her last evening out with a man. But Hanna has not forgotten what love is all about; in fact, given the chance, she proves to be quite a bit friskier than Andy expected.

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But even as a spinster, Hanna was not alone in life. She weds Andy and brings along to their household her elderly, bed-ridden mother. Therein lies the challenge to this otherwise blissful match, and it is a challenge that eventually has both wondering whether the pleasure is worth the pain.

Colin Nichols and Theresa Masters play Andy and Hanna, with Suzanne Greenwald as Mrs. Wilson and Liz Hopefl as Mrs. Wilson's friend Cissy Cassidy.

Tickets to *Lovers* are on sale now at [www.WestEndPlayers.org/tickets](http://www.WestEndPlayers.org/tickets).

West End Players Guild is St. Louis's oldest continuously-operating theatre company, providing "big theatre in a small space" since November, 1911, and now presenting its second century of performances. For more information on our history, season tickets and volunteer opportunities, please visit us online at [www.WestEndPlayers.org](http://www.WestEndPlayers.org).

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Margaret Mary Enright and Joseph Michael Brennan are young, in love, not yet married and expecting their first baby. It's a challenging place in life for any Irish lovers, let alone two still in high school. But Mag and Joe are unafraid, perhaps because they are so in love, or perhaps because they are just too young to know any better. Their story is the first half of Brian Friel's *Lovers*, coming up at West End Players Guild. (Photo ID: Betsy Bowman as Mag, John Lampe as Joe) (Photo credit: John Lamb)



Andy Tracey, 50, a joiner by trade, was happy at his age to find and wed Hanna Wilson, who hadn't lost the lover's spark. But Andy didn't realize that Hanna's elderly bed-ridden mother would be such a big part of the bargain. Now they wonder if the joy of late-blooming love is really worth the trouble. Their story is the second half of Brian Friel's *Lovers*, presented by West End Players Guild. (Photo ID: Colin Nichols as Andy, Theresa Masters as Hanna) (Photo credit: John Lamb)