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**Internationally acclaimed rugby story *ALONE IT STANDS*, about the shocking 1978 Irish defeat of New Zealand's champion team, makes NYC premiere as part of Origin's 1<sup>st</sup> Irish Festival at 59E59 Theaters**

*New York, New York November 26, 2018* — **59E59 Theaters** (Val Day, Artistic Director; Brian Beirne, Managing Director) is thrilled to welcome the NYC premiere of ***ALONE IT STANDS***, written and directed by **John Breen**. Produced by Gyre and Gimble Productions as part of Origin's 1<sup>st</sup> Irish Festival, ***ALONE IT STANDS*** begins performances on **Thursday, January 10** for a limited engagement through **Sunday, January 27**. **Press Opening is Thursday, January 17 at 7:30 PM**. The performance schedule is **Tuesday – Saturday at 7:30 PM; and Sunday at 2:30 PM**. **Please note: there is an added performance on Saturday, January 12 at 2:30 PM**. Performances are at **59E59 Theaters** ([59 East 59<sup>th</sup> Street](#), between Park and Madison). Single tickets are **\$25 - \$35** (\$24.50 for 59E59 Members). Tickets are available by calling the **59E59 Box Office** on **646-892-7999** or by visiting [www.59e59.org](http://www.59e59.org).

On October 31, 1978 a small Irish provincial rugby team called Munster beat the New Zealand All Blacks 12-0. It was an event that rocked Ireland. The All Blacks was rightly considered one of the best rugby teams in history. Ireland was in the grip of a recession and war was waging in the North. This David vs Goliath victory captured and entranced Irish people everywhere. This is the story of that great day.

A cast of six actors play 62 characters, including: two rugby teams, the coaches, the fans, The Bunratty singers, nurses, street urchins, a pregnant woman in labor, two babies, and a dog. There is a bonfire, a birth, a wake, and a rugby match that will never be forgotten.

***ALONE IT STANDS*** opened at the Gaiety Theatre in Dublin in 2000 and transferred to the West End, where *The Guardian* said it was "A small play with a big, unaffected heart...staged with considerable verve... Like the match itself, the whole evening is a gloriously live experience." The play has since gone on to tour



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throughout the world to wide acclaim. The 1st Irish festival run marks its NYC premiere.

The cast features **Chase Guthrie Knueven** (NYC Debut); **Ed Malone** (*The Home Place, Juno and the Paycock, The Weir* at Irish Rep); **Rob McDermott** (*It Folds* at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin), **David O'Hara** (*Three Small Irish Masterpieces, Juno and the Paycock* at Irish Rep), **Henry Raber** (*Theatre Smash* at the York Theatre); and **Sarah Street** (*Rebel in the Soul* at Irish Rep).

**John Breen** (playwright/director) is best known as the writer/ director of the hit play *Alone It Stands* which tells the story of Munster's victory over the All Blacks in 1978. He was awarded the Irish Times/ESB Theatre Award in February 2000 for Best Director for his direction. The play has been seen all over Ireland, the UK, Australia, France, Malaysia, New Zealand and in Tasmania. It is estimated that two hundred and sixty thousand people worldwide have seen the play. It is on the National curriculum in Ireland for Middle schools. Before moving to New York in 2014, he was the artistic director of Second Age Theatre Company in Dublin, producing Shakespeare for high school students. Previously he was the artistic director of TEAM Educational Theatre and Yew Theatre Productions in Mayo a post he held for ten years. *Breakdown*, an Opera he wrote with Composer Andrew Synnott, was performed at the National Concert Hall in January 2015. Directing work for the City Arts Centre, Dublin: *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* by Frank McGuinness for Island Theatre Company Limerick; *The Road to Mecca* by Athol Fugard; *Galileo* by Berthold Brecht; *Our Country's Good* by Timberlake Wertenbaker; *Our Town* by Thornton Wilder; and *The Pillars of Society* by Henrik Ibsen. Directing work for Yew Tree: *Big Maggie* by John B. Keane; *Grand* by Max Hafler; *Village Wooing* by George Bernard Shaw; *The Playboy of the Western World* by JM Synge; *Mrs Warren's Profession* by G. Bernard Shaw; *Sarah's Comfort* by Niamh Mc Grath; *Fr Mathew* by Sean Mc Carthy. He also directed his own plays: *Alone It Stands*, *Charlie*, and *The Magic Boy*. His play *Falling Out of Love* was directed by Mikel Murfi for Yew Tree in 2007. Directing work for TEAM: *Devotion* by Leo Butler; *Skin and Blisters* by Audrey O Reilly; *Light Signals* by Paul Meade; *Doughnuts* by Eoin Byrne; *Sherbet and Tiffin* by Pauline Shanahan. Most recently John directed *Othello* for Second Age. His new version of *The Quiet Man* was produced by the Galway Arts Festival in 2017. Film, TV and Radio: John has developed a script for Working Title Australia about legendary All Black Colin Meads, and has directed this own short film *Old Friends* as well as *The Ring* by Christian O Reilly. In 2003 he directed the Comedy series *Camera Café* and *Guards* for RTE and the documentary *Alone It Stands* for Setanta Sports. He has made a Radio Documentary *GUSAC; Diverse Divers* about a Sub Aqua Club in County Mayo for Mid West Radio/BAI. He is currently under commission by the Irish Film Board to adapt his stage play *Alone It Stands* into a feature film. ###