

# Pioneering Belfast playwright Christina Reid dies at 73



Acclaimed: Christina Reid

By Staff Reporter - 02 June 2015

Renowned Belfast playwright Christina Reid has died aged 73.

A pioneer of Northern Ireland drama, Reid was an innovator in bringing the lives of working-class women to the stage and the airwaves as well as tackling social issues of class, youth disaffection, prejudice and death.

Her work examined the condition of the Protestant working class in Ireland and Britain.

But one of her major works, *Joyriders*, tackled with real power the fatal infatuation of young men in Ardoyne - where she was born - with speed and danger, as the Troubles flared.

Her 1983 breakthrough stage drama, *Tea In A China Cup*, remains an acclaimed masterpiece.

Funny, wry, quick-witted and heart-breaking, it tracked the lives of three generations of Protestant women trying to find some purpose in their lives - a theme she returned to later with *The Belle Of The Belfast City*.

Damian Smyth, Head of Drama and Literature at the Arts Council, paid tribute, saying: "Christina Reid's name will be coupled with those of Stewart Parker and Anne Devlin.

"Her work represents what was a new strain of intelligent, knowing, clever, rooted and daring writing for the stage, all vexed by violence and seeking new channels of expression both to understand the Troubles, explain them and undermine them. Her place among the classics of Irish drama is assured."

Reid was writer-in-residence at the Lyric Theatre in Belfast from 1983-84, and at the Young Vic in London from 1988-89.

She won the Thames Television Playwriting Award for *Tea In A China Cup*, the UTV Drama Award for *Did You Hear The One About The Irishman?*, The Giles Cooper Award for *The Last Of A Dyin' Race* and the George Devine Award for *The Belle Of The Belfast City*.

Reid is survived by her three children, Heidi, Tara and Suibhan.

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