



Pat Kinevane in "Before" at the Odyssey.(Patrick Redmond)

## ‘Before’ at the Odyssey

by Philip Brandea

**The essentials:** Acclaimed Irish actor Pat Kinevane continues his longtime association with the Odyssey Theatre in the U.S. premiere of his latest solo performance piece, “Before.” On the closing day of a 104-year-old Dublin department store, a working-class loner shops for a gift to bridge the 20-year separation from the beloved daughter he inadvertently conceived in a one-night stand but then lost in a child-custody dispute. Despite the narrator’s avowed distaste for musical theater, original song-and-dance parodies and *hommages* to classic Broadway musicals keep intruding on his internal reality. The result is a devastating collision of sentimental nostalgia, wishful thinking and harsh reality.

**Why this?** Kinevane’s earthy yet poetic confessional monologues weave fictional stories with characters who are hauntingly weird and heartbreakingly familiar. As in the previous Kinevane shows presented by the Odyssey (“[Forgotten](#),” “[Silent](#)” and “[Underneath](#)”), Kinevane’s performance here intends to stretch the solo genre’s traditional boundaries to evoke compassion for outsiders who slip through the social safety net. In “Before,” the focus is on the lasting psychological damage wrought by feuding parents who use child custody to attack each other.

**Details:** A Fishamble/Odyssey Theatre co-production at Odyssey Theatre, 2055 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles. 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays, through Dec. 8 (dark on Thanksgiving Day). \$20-\$30. (310) 477-2055, Ext. 2, [odysseytheatre.com](http://odysseytheatre.com)