

The play's the thing, veteran actor says

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Ron Gural, far right, joins the ensemble, from left, Joel Derby, Janet Shea, Kristin Witterschein, James Bartelle (back), Yvette Bourgeois (front), Alex Martinez Wallace and John Grimsley in The NOLA Project's production of the play *Sive*. (Photo by Caitlyn Ridenour)

Ron Gural brings decades of acting experience to the ensemble players of [The NOLA Project](#), which presents the Irish drama *Sive* this month at the Ashé Power House Theater.

[Gural](#), who taught for nearly 40 years in the Tulane University [Department of Theatre and Dance](#), has directed more than 70 productions. He taught all levels of acting and video production classes, as well as Shakespeare and Ensemble, a course in which the class would delve deeply into a play that was "foreign to them."

"Memorizing lines is the easiest thing," says Gural, who has played King Lear three times. "The hardest thing is making the character come alive. The playwright gives you the lines, and you fill

it in as an actor.”

Síve is a dark story of greed and passion told in the wit and sharp tongue of Irish playwright John B. Keane. Though renowned for decades in Ireland, *Síve* is a largely unfamiliar to Americans; it has been produced only a handful of times in this country since its 1959 publication.

The title character is a 17-year-old girl sent to live with her uncle and his wife after her mother’s death. When a town matchmaker brings news of an offer for a great deal of money in exchange for Síve’s hand in marriage to the 70-year-old Seán Dóta — played by Gural — the family must make a painful decision.

“I saw this play in 2014 in County Cork while scouting plays in Ireland and was completely transfixed and haunted,” says director Alex Ates.

In addition to honing his Irish accent, Gural says one of the factors that drew him to this production is the opportunity to take the stage again with his longtime friend [Janet Shea](#), who plays Síve’s grandmother, and [John Grimsley](#).

The production runs March 10–26.

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Ron Gural, actor