

# Top Five Irish Actors: The Old School, New School and Hollywood Dropouts

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HOLLYWOOD – *Silver Screen Indie Queen* here with some post-St. Patty’s Day film buzz. What better way to start a column than with the Irish? There’s an industry list as long as my arm of actors with Irish American blood including James Cagney, John Cusack and Joan Cusack, Spencer Tracy and even Lindsay Lohan. As for the list of those Irish born and bred, though, now that’s a different story.

The mission of Rachel Faith – the Hollywood-based *Silver Screen Indie Queen* for HollywoodChicago.com – is to help avoid the “beige” film experience by providing easily accessible information on indie film, film festival favorites and must-see Hollywood classics. At the end of the day, it’s all about turning people onto new and different films using the *Indie Queen’s* film geekdom for good and not evil.

After doing a little legwork, I was able to come up with quite an impressive list. Represented we have the old school, the new school and the dropouts who are conquering Hollywood as we speak. So, enjoy this nicely rounded top five list of men who have the drawl and a lil’ shot of punk-rock mentality.





Cillian Murphy: July 30, 2003  
Photo credit: IMDb

What better place to start than with my zombie-ass kickin’ No. 1. Ever since “28 Days Later,” we film geeks have paid attention. Indie roles like “Breakfast on Pluto” balanced out his million-dollar smashes like “Batman Begins”.

He’s creepy cute, has the chops and is one of my favorite actor **period**. Yes, he is no other than **Cillian Murphy**. Since most of you have seen the zombie and bat movies, step out of that comfort zone and queue up “Sunshine,” “Wind That Shakes the Barley,” and “Intermission”. Now that’s acting.





Pierce Brosnan: May 1, 2005  
*Jeff Vespa, WireImage.com*

Whether he's Remington Steele or 007, **Pierce Brosnan** seems to make aging gracefully his hobby. Any film you choose with Pierce he'll be dapper, but if you want to see a Brosnan you've not seen in a while, check out Richard Shepard's "The Matador".

While this comedy was overlooked, the only one to blame is the marketing department because this movie made me laugh right off the couch. Think trigger-sloppy hitman beyond his prime with a tad bit of a drinking problem. Makes the victim feel a little more at peace, doesn't it?



Bad boys **Colin Farrell** and **Jonathan Rhys Meyers** share the No. 3 spot for no other reason except there are too many seasoned thespians who can't possibly be left out. While Colin does the mainstream thing deliciously, don't miss "The New World" directed by Terence Malick where you see a much calmer and established actor.



On left: Jonathan Rhys Meyers on Jan. 16, 2006; On right: Colin Farrell on Sept. 2, 2007  
*Left image credit: Steve Granitz, WireImage.com; Right image credit: WireImage.com*

Usually when one thinks of King Henry VIII, the piercing eyes of Jonathan Rhys Meyers don't come to mind.

Colm Meaney: Jan. 28, 2002  
Credit: Buena Vista Pictures

Once he stepped into those testosterone-filled boots in the hit series “The Tudors,” though, he has been winning hearts across the globe. I prefer “Velvet Goldmine” because it’s a daring and flawless performance. It seems like everyone has an indie nugget in their closet.



Next we have **Colm Meaney**. While some of you may not know him by name, you’d recognize that his mug of his anywhere.

You Trekkies will know him from the record 14 seasons of “Star Trek” he’s done, and still, he’s no stranger to the silver screen. He’s done everything from “Die Hard” to “Layer Cake” to Irish indie favorites “The Commitments” and “The Snapper”.

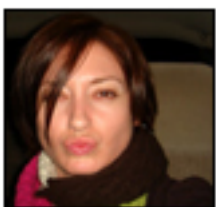
Peter O'Toole: Feb. 11, 2002  
Credit: Columbia Pictures

Last but certainly not least we have **Peter O'Toole**. I hate that I left out important peeps like **Ciaran Hinds**, **Stephen Rea** and **Gabriel Byrne** who truly walk on water, but for the love of Pete: it’s freaking O'Toole!

Run – don’t walk – to your computer and put “The Lion in Winter” **at the top** of your Netflix queue. Also, make sure to include “Beckett” and this little movie called “Lawrence of Arabia”. Breathe... It’s going to be OK.

So that’s my list and I’m sticking to it. Even if you don’t agree with my order, you can’t disagree with some heavy-hitting talent that has come our way from the Emerald Isle.

Here’s the *Indie Queen* signing off until next Wednesday for part two on HollywoodChicago.com. Remember: If you don’t like what’s in the theatre, don’t suffer through! Your next favorite movie could be right there in your Netflix (or Blockbuster Online; we don’t show favoritism!) queue.



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