

"In Their Place"

A three month season of work by women playwrights

Anarcadia Productions in association with Neil McPherson for the Finborough Theatre presents
The UK Premiere

Beating Heart Cadaver

by Colleen Murphy.

Directed by Anna Morrissey. Designed by Penny Watson. Lighting by Dan Jones.

Sound Design by Edward Lewis. Movement by Lucy Cullingford.

Cast: Richard Atwill. Tim Beckmann. Jennifer Lee Jellicorse. Maggie McCourt. Mary Roscoe.

The UK premiere of Colleen Murphy's ***Beating Heart Cadaver*** opens at the Finborough Theatre for a limited run of six Sunday and Monday performances from Sunday, 3 April 2011 (**Press Night: Monday, 4 April 2011**) as part of "In Their Place", a three month season of work by women playwrights. The three Sunday/Monday slots in the season are entirely devoted to introducing the UK to the work of one writer – multi-award-winning Canadian playwright, and our latest Playwright-in-Residence, Colleen Murphy – with a European premiere, a UK premiere and a world premiere of her work. This mini-season within a season marks Colleen's UK debut.

A car crash paralyses Danny, kills his daughter and leaves his wife, Leona, clinging to a balloon believed to contain her daughter's last breath. Surrounded by a tenacious grandmother, a brother with a secret life and a pathological grief councillor, Leona and Danny struggle to find a way back to each other and to life. A dark comedy about a domestic tragedy, *Beating Heart Cadaver* was nominated for a Chalmers Award for best new play and was shortlisted for Canada's most prestigious literary award, the Governor General's Award for English Language Drama.

Playwright **Colleen Murphy** was born in Quebec and grew up in Northern Ontario. Her plays include *The December Man* (*L'homme de décembre*), won the 2007 Governor General's Literary Award for Drama, the CAA/Carol Bolt Award for Drama and the 2006 Enbridge playRites Award. The play premiered in February 2007 at Alberta Theatre Projects as part of their Festival of New Canadian Plays. It has also been seen at The Citadel, Edmonton, and at The Canadian Stage Company, Toronto, and translated into French and German; *Beating Heart Cadaver* (nominated for a 1999 Governor General's Literary Award); *The Piper*, *Down in Adoration* and *All Other Destinations are Cancelled*. In 2008, Murphy was shortlisted for the Siminovitch Prize in Theatre. She is currently working on *Deliver Me* (National Arts Centre), *Armstrong's War* (Banff Centre) and *The Birthday Boy* (Shaw Festival). She has twice won awards in the CBC Literary Competition. Colleen's distinct, award-winning films have played in festivals around the world and include *Out in the Cold*, *Girl with Dog*, *War Holes*, *Desire*, *Shoemaker*, *The Feeler* and *Putty Worm*. Two of her plays have been seen as staged readings at the Finborough Theatre – *The December Man* (*L'homme de décembre*) in the first *Vibrant – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights* in 2009, and *Beating Heart Cadaver* in 2010's *Vibrant – An Anniversary Festival of Finborough Playwrights*.

Director **Anna Morrissey** has predominantly worked as a movement director and choreographer in theatre, opera and circus. Her credits include *My Dad's A Birdman* (Young Vic), *Dunsinane*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Drunks*, *The Grain Store*, *The Tragedy of Thomas Hobbes*, *I'll Be the Devil*, *Cordelia Dream* (Royal Shakespeare Company), *The Comedy of Errors* (Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester), *Bus Stop* (New Vic Theatre), *Rusalka* (Finnish National Opera - Restaging), *Hansel and Gretel* (Opera North), *Parklife* (No Fit State Circus - Stockton Park Residency), *Hangover Square* (Finborough Theatre), *101 Dalmatians* (Northampton Theatre Royal), *The Giant* (Royal Shakespeare Company and Hampstead Theatre), *Dr Faustus* (Resolution! At The Place) *Restoration* (Headlong Theatre), *Mother Courage* (English Touring Theatre), *A Warwickshire Testimony*, *As You Like It*, *Macbeth* (Bridge House Theatre), *Timon of Athens* (Royal Shakespeare Company and Cardboard Citizens), *Taming of the Shrew* (Creation Theatre Company), *Richard III* (Cambridge Arts Theatre), *Hamlet* (Clifford's Tower, York), *The Arab-Israeli Cookbook* (Tricycle Theatre), *Human Rites* (Southwark Playhouse), *Julius Caesar* (Menier Chocolate Factory) and *Tamburlaine the Great* (Rose Theatre). Assistant Direction includes *Caledonia* (National Theatre of Scotland), *The Barber of Seville*, *Manon Lescaut* (Opera Holland Park), *The Tempest* (Bridge House Theatre, Warwick). As a director/devisor, *Memories Cabaret* (LiT Circus, Lisbon), *Masque Arias* (Royal Shakespeare Company, New Work Concert and Stratford River Festival), *Fear and Wonder Project* (Royal Shakespeare Company).

The cast includes Richard Atwill, Tim Beckmann, Jennifer Lee Jellicorse, Maggie McCourt and Mary Roscoe. **Richard**

118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED Telephone +44 (0)20 7244 7439

e-mail admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk Artistic Director Neil McPherson

Press Information

FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

Atwill's extensive credits include *Captain Oates' Left Sock* and *I Witness* (The Finborough Theatre), *The Roman Bath* (Arcola and National Theatre of Bulgaria), *Beyond The Pale* (Southwark Playhouse), *Coalition* (Theatre 503), *God In Ruins*, *Macbeth* and *The Big Lie* (Royal Shakespeare Company), and *Swing, Invisible Storms* (Cock Tavern). **Tim Beckmann's** credits include *The Philadelphia Story* (The Old Vic), *The Nature of Things* (The Place), *Laughing Wild* (English Theatre of Frankfurt), *Complete Works of William Shakespeare* (Reduced Shakespeare Company at the Criterion Theatre). Film and TV credits include *Hanna*, *Foster*, *Swinging with the Finkels*, *The Insiders*, *Ocean of Fear*. **Jennifer Lee Jellicorse's** credits include *Zadie's Shoes* (Finborough Theatre), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Theatre Royal Bath), *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Taming of the Shrew* (North Carolina Shakespeare Festival), *Man and Boy* (West End and National Tour), and many credits for BBC Radio 3 and BBC Radio 4, including *Dream Astronomy*, *As Big As Life*, *Little Women* and *Tender Is The Night*. **Maggie McCourt's** credits include *After All These Years* (Finborough Theatre), *Evening Primrose* (Sadler's Wells Theatre), *Wild Wild Women* (Orange Tree Theatre), *The Trojan War Will Not Take Place*, *The Fawn* and *Lady in Waiting* (National Theatre), *The Glass Menagerie* and *Gigi* (Theatre Royal Bath), *Listen To The Wind* (Oxford Playhouse and West End), *A Day By The Sea* (West End), *Tiger At The Gates* (West End), *A Doll's House* (Lyric Hammersmith); and **Mary Roscoe** whose credits include *Aunt Dan and Lemon* (Royal Court Theatre), *Blithe Spirit* (Queens Theatre, Hornchurch), *Mother Courage* (Shared Experience), *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (Scottish Opera), *Hunting Scenes in Lower Bavaria* (Gate Theatre) and *A Voyage Round My Father* (Oxford Playhouse).

The Press on *Beating Heart Cadaver*

"Beautifully moving. Wondrously humorous. In an extraordinary examination of the sudden and tragic death of a child, Murphy has managed to express the inexpressible." Jury Citation, Governor General's Award for English Language Drama

"Beautifully crafted... So staggeringly painful to watch that few will be able to bear it. Anyone who has lost a child would be torn apart the unvarnished emotions, while parents who do not already play host to 'what if' demons in their heads won't be able to avoid doing so in the future....As difficult as her play is to watch, Murphy has written a powerful, wrenching call to love while you can." *Variety*

"As the laughs gradually die away, giving in to pain and recognition, there is a wonderful parallel between Leona's and Danny's eventual acceptance of Amelia's death and our own dawning realization that *Beating Heart Cadaver* is serious stuff." *The Globe and Mail*

" Colleen Murphy tackles the subject with grace and toughness in her uncompromising new play....the play avoids sentimentality by exploring grief through dark humour." *Now Magazine*

PRESS NIGHT: MONDAY, 4 APRIL 2011 AT 7.30PM

PHOTOCALL: BY ARRANGEMENT. PLEASE EMAIL admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk

Finborough Theatre, The Finborough, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED

Box Office 0844 847 1652. www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk

Sundays and Mondays, 3, 4, 10, 11, 17 and 18 April 2011

Evenings at 7.30pm. Tickets £13, £9 concessions.

For more information, interviews and images, please contact

Neil McPherson on e-mail admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk or **07977 173135**

Press releases and images are available to download from

<http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk/pressresources.htm>

118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED Telephone +44 (0)20 7244 7439

e-mail admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk Artistic Director Neil McPherson

The Finborough Theatre is managed by The Steam Industry. Registered in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee, no. 3448268. Registered Charity no. 1071304. Registered address: 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED. A member of the Independent Theatre Council.