

**The Finborough Theatre is now fully heated and air conditioned**

Rediscoveries2012 Season  
February to April 2012

Bloomsday in association with Neil McPherson for the Finborough Theatre presents  
The first London production in 80 years

# Autumn Fire

by **T.C. Murray**

Directed by Veronica Quilligan.

*"I warn you in time: Every day of your life you'll rue it if you come between us and our father"*

Following the huge sell-out success of our recent productions of rediscovered Irish drama – *Mixed Marriage* by St John Ervine and *Drama at Inish* by Lennox Robinson – we present the first professional production in the UK for 80 years of the starkly tragic *Autumn Fire*, the classic 1924 Irish tragedy by T.C. Murray, opening at the Finborough Theatre for a limited run of six Sunday and Monday performances on Sunday, 4 March 2012 (**Press Night: Monday, 5 March 2012 at 7.30pm**).

Rural Ireland, the 1920s. Farmer Owen Keegan, a middle aged widower with two grown up children, is famed throughout the county for his strength and vigour. When he falls in love with Nance Desmond, an attractive young woman half his age, he must fight the disapproval and hostility of his neighbours and relatives, as the lives of Owen, Nance, and Owen's son and daughter are torn apart by his passion.

*Autumn Fire* was first seen at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, in 1924 starring Sara Allgood, F.J. McCormack and Barry Fitzgerald. It was subsequently seen in both the West End and on Broadway, and was last seen in London at the Everyman Theatre, Hampstead, in 1931.

Playwright **Thomas Cornelius Murray** (1873–1959) was an Irish dramatist who enjoyed international popularity from 1912 to about 1950. A reclusive Roman Catholic schoolteacher, he has been called "the voice of rural Ireland", and who was closely associated with the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, Éire's national theatre. Born in Macroom, County Cork, his first play, *The Wheel of Fortune*, was produced by the Little Theatre in Cork in 1909. His play *Birthright* was performed in the Abbey Theatre in 1910 and established him as a major Irish dramatist. In all, he wrote fifteen plays, all of which were produced by the Abbey Theatre. His two most highly regarded works are *Maurice Harte* (1912) and his masterpiece *Autumn Fire* (1924). Both of these and *Birthright* were also seen in New York on Broadway. He was also the author of many short stories, articles and an acclaimed semi-autobiographical novel, *Spring Horizon* (1937).

Director **Veronica Quilligan** was until recently a Resident Assistant Director at the Finborough Theatre as part of a placement through the Birkbeck MFA in Theatre Directing course. Her directing includes *The Words Upon The Windowpane* (Phoenix Theatre, Leicester). As Assistant Director, theatre includes *The Way of the World* and *Measure for Measure* (LAMDA) and – at the Finborough Theatre – *Perchance To Dream*, *Drama at Inish* and *Foxfinder*. She began her career as an actor making her debut at the Royal Court Theatre in *A Pagan Place* for which she won the *Plays and Players* Most Promising Newcomer award. She went on to appear in *The Way of the World*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Tempest*, *Spring Awakening*, *Other Rooms Other Voices* (National Theatre), *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Phoenix Theatre and Garrick Theatre), *The Key Tag*, *From Cockney To Toffs*, *The School Leaver* (Royal Court Theatre), *Looking At You Revived*, *Please Shine Down On Me Again*, *Zigomania*, *Loved* (Bush Theatre), *Salome* (Gate Theatre and Riverside) *The Riot Act*, *High Time* (Field Day Theatre Company, Derry), *Faith Healer* (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh), *Colours* (Abbey Theatre, Dublin) and *Rosmersholm* (Almeida Theatre). Television includes *Peak Practice*, *Rough Justice*, *The Wild Duck*, *City Sugar*, *The Vanishing Army*, *Tears Before Bedtime*, *Red Shift* and *The History Man*. Film includes *My Zinc Bed*, *Memento Mori*, *The Wildcats of St Trinians*, *Call At Corazon*, *Angel*, *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne*, *Hostage* and *Maria's Song*.

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e-mail [admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk](mailto:admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk) [www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk](http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk) Artistic Director Neil McPherson

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# Press Information

**FINBOROUGH | THEATRE**

**PRESS NIGHT: MONDAY, 5 MARCH 2012 AT 7.30PM**

**PHOTOCALL: By arrangement. Please email [admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk](mailto:admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk)**

Finborough Theatre, The Finborough, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED  
Box Office 0844 847 1652. [www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk](http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk)

**Sundays and Mondays, 4, 5, 11, 12, 18 and 19 March 2012**

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](mailto:admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk) or **07977 173135**

Download press releases and images at <http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk/press-resources.php>

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