

**The Finborough Theatre is now fully air conditioned,
and offers STAGETEXT captioned performances.**

FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

July to September 2012 at the Finborough Theatre Season

The Moving Theatre in association with Neil McPherson for the Finborough Theatre presents
The world premiere

THE FEAR OF BREATHING

Stories from the Syrian Revolution

Edited by Zoe Lafferty from material supplied by Ruth Sherlock and Paul Wood. Film by Fred Scott.
Directed by Zoe Lafferty. Designed by Philip Lindley. Lighting by Miguel Vicente. Sound by Edward
Lewis.

Cast: Scott Ainslie. David Broughton-Davies. Paul Cawley. Gareth Glen. Nicholas Karimi. Sirine Saba.
John Wark. Adam Youssefbeygi.

"The most dangerous thing you can do in this country is speak the word freedom"

The Fear of Breathing, the world premiere of a new play based entirely on verbatim reports from inside Syria itself, opens at the Finborough Theatre for a limited four-week season from Tuesday, 17 July 2012 (**Press Night: Thursday, 19 July 2012 at 7.30pm**).

As thousands have been tortured, jailed, maimed or killed by the Syrian regime, *The Fear of Breathing* is a hard-hitting evocation of a life or death fight for freedom, experienced from the inside.

To uncover these personal stories from the uprising, award-winning journalists Paul Wood of the BBC and Ruth Sherlock of *The Daily Telegraph*, together with theatre director Zoe Lafferty, travelled into Syria covertly, circumventing the ban on journalists and restrictions on movement for all non-Syrians. Immersed in Syria's suffocating environment of oppression and fear, they spoke to protesters facing tanks and guns, soldiers who deserted to form the Free Army, activists who dream of change, as well as citizens who love President Bashar al-Assad and are terrified of a future without him.

Featuring verbatim scenes, interviews, stories and film footage, *The Fear of Breathing* is a powerful and profoundly disturbing portrait of a revolution struggling to survive.

Interviewer **Ruth Sherlock** has just been named 'Young Journalist of the Year' in the 2012 British Press Awards. The judges praised her "astonishing collection of work" during the Arab Spring, showing "skill as well as courage" to produce a series of "harrowing" accounts. She has spent most of the past year living with fighters on the frontlines in Libya and more recently has been working undercover in Syria. She reported on Egypt, Libya and Syria for *The Telegraph*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Scotsman*, *The Los Angeles Times* and Al Jazeera. She has been nominated for the prestigious

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Gaby Rado Memorial Award, given by Amnesty International for outstanding coverage of human rights.

Interviewer **Paul Wood** has covered a dozen wars in fifteen years as a BBC foreign correspondent. He was in Baghdad for the invasion of Iraq and in Fallujah during the battle for the city. In Iraq, he and his team filmed from inside a crowd hit by multiple suicide bombs, for which he won a Golden Nymph at the Monte Carlo Television Festival and the Bayeux Award for War Correspondents. He travelled behind Serbian lines with Kosovar guerrillas in the 1999 NATO bombing and has also reported on conflicts in Bosnia, Macedonia, Chechnya, Darfur, the Palestinian territories, Afghanistan and Libya. During the Syrian uprising, he was three times smuggled across the border and into the city of Homs and produced *Homs – Journey into Hell* for BBC's *Panorama*. For the theatre, he co-wrote *Off Record* with Zoe Lafferty.

Editor/Director **Zoe Lafferty** has worked as a director, assistant director and playwright for theatre in Afghanistan, the UK, New York, Palestine and Europe, and is an Associate Director of the Freedom Theatre Palestine. Trained at Drama Centre, London, and the Vaktangov Theatre School, Moscow. Theatre includes the world premiere of Bola Agbaje's *Concrete Jungle* (Riverside Studios and Tobacco Factory), *Gaza: Breathing Space* (Soho Theatre), *Sho Khman?* (Freedom Theatre Palestine and International Tour), *Alice in Wonderland* (Freedom Theatre Palestine), *Adult Child /Dead Child* (Edinburgh Festival and Unicorn Theatre) and *Not a Step Back* (Cochrane Theatre). Assistant Direction includes *The Dresser* (Watford Palace Theatre), *Waiting For Godot* (Freedom Theatre Palestine and American Tour), *Protozoa* (The Red Room) and *Oikos* (The Red Room). She co-wrote *Off Record* with Paul Wood, a verbatim piece on the Israeli/Palestine conflict, performed at the Soho Theatre with Harriet Walter, Jennie Stoller, Hilton McRae and Madeline Appiah.

Filmmaker **Fred Scott** has filmed much of the world's armed conflicts from bases in Hong Kong, Delhi and Beijing over the past thirty years. He has won multiple awards from the Royal Television Society as well as a Prix Bayeux and a Peabody Award. He was awarded the Rory Peck Prize for filming an attack by US warplanes in Northern Iraq that left ten people dead and wounded many others including himself. More recently, he was smuggled across the Lebanese border and into Homs with Paul Wood.

The cast includes:

Scott Ainslie

At the Finborough Theatre, Scott appeared in *The Captive* (2010), *Witchcraft* (2008) and *A Letter to England* (2007).

Theatre includes *The Old Wives' Tale* (Shakespeare's Globe), *Seven Deadly Sins* and *Measure for Measure* (Arcola Theatre), *Song of Deborah* (The Lowry, Manchester), *Escape Stories* (Soho Theatre), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Original Shakespeare Company National Tours), *Bring Me Sunshine* (Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh), *Medea* and *This to This* (Union Theatre), *Of Mice and Men* (Shaw Theatre), *Les Miserables* (Palace Theatre), *Great Expectations*, *Evita* and *Aspects of Love* (National Tours), *A Light Gathering of Dust* (Edinburgh Festival) and *Twelfth Night* (National Tour).

Film includes *Citizen V Kane* (winner of the Prix Canal Plus-Clermont-Ferrand 2009), *There's No 'I' in Team*, *Little Deaths*, *500 Miles North* and *Zombie Diaries*.

Television includes *Stockwell*, *Son of Sam*, *EastEnders* and *Much Ado About Something*.

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David Broughton-Davies

At the Finborough Theatre, David appeared in *The Druid's Rest* (2009).

Trained at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

Theatre includes *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Royal Shakespeare Company), *Romeo and Juliet* (The Young Vic), *The Devil Inside Him* (White Bear Theatre), *The Wizard of Oz* (Oldham Coliseum Theatre), *The Devils* (Union Theatre) and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (English Shakespeare Company). David has also worked extensively with the Steppenwolf Theatre Company. Film includes *Lovely Monster*, *The House of Angelo*, *The Calling*, the forthcoming *The Manual OXV* and *Shoot Me*.

Television includes *Shameless*, *Go Greek for a Week*, *Londoners* and *Casualty*.

Paul Cawley

At the Finborough Theatre, Paul appeared in *The Potting Shed* (2010 and 2011).

Trained at the Drama Studio.

Theatre includes *The Bohemians* (Etcetera Theatre), *Once in a Lifetime* (National Theatre), *Troy* (National Theatre Studio), *The Wideness of the Sea* (Arcola Theatre), *No Shame, No Fear* (Jermyn Street Theatre), *Electra* (Gate Theatre), *Partytime* and *One for the Road* (BAC), *Have I None* (Southwark Playhouse), *Humble Boy* (Gielgud Theatre), *Arsenic and Old Lace* (Strand Theatre), *The Man Who Came to Dinner* and *The Recruiting Officer* (Chichester Festival Theatre), *Lovers* and *Songs from the Left Bank* (Minerva Theatre, Chichester), *Journey's End* (King's Head Theatre), *Dicing with Death* (Edinburgh Festival and Lyric Hammersmith Studio) and *Guards, Guards* (National Tour).

Film includes *Swinging with the Finkels*, *Stitched*, *Black Circle* and *Problem*.

Television includes *Babes in the Wood*, *Frank Stubbs Promotes*, *EastEnders*, *My Family*, *Spooks*, *The Bill* and *The Wrong Man* starring James Corden.

Gareth Glen

At the Finborough Theatre, Gareth appeared in *The Captive* (2010), *What Every Woman Knows* (2010) and *Jamie the Saxt* (2007).

Trained at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

Theatre includes *The Real Thing* (Bristol Old Vic), *A View from the Bridge* and *Romeo and Juliet* (Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh), *The Riot Act* (Gate Theatre) and *Supply* (Paines Plough).

Film includes *Don't Be a Victim*.

Television includes *Casualty*, *River City*, *Low Winter Sun*, *Sea of Souls*, *Ghost Squad*, *Taggart*, *Foyle's War*, *Holby City* and *Rockface*.

Nicholas Karimi

At the Finborough Theatre, Nicholas appeared in *Outward Bound* (2012) and *I was a Beautiful Day* (2009).

Trained at Rose Bruford College.

Theatre includes *Damascus, Aleppo* (National Theatre of Scotland at Òran Mór and Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh), *War Horse* (National Theatre and West End), *Macbeth* (National Theatre), *Nova Scotia* and *The Pearlfisher* (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh), *Mother Courage* (BenchTours), *Mountain Language* (BAC), *The Dead Fiddler* (New End Theatre, Hampstead) and *The Emperor Jones* (Gate Theatre).

Sirine Saba

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Trained at RADA.

Theatre includes *Scorched* (Old Vic Tunnels), *Nation* and *Sparkleshark* (National Theatre), *Testing the Echo* (Out of Joint and Tricycle Theatre), *Baghdad Wedding* (Soho Theatre), *Midnight's Children*, *Pericles*, *The Tempest*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Tales from Ovid*, *A Warwickshire Testimony* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Royal Shakespeare Company), *The Taming of the Shrew*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Twelfth Night* (Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park) and *Cinderella* (Bristol Old Vic).

Television includes *I am Slave*, *Doctors*, *Silent Witness*, *Footballers' Wives* and *The Bill*.

Radio includes *Marley is Dead*, *My Daughter the Racist*, *From Fact to Fiction*, *Arabian Afternoons*, *English in Afghanistan*, *The Locust* and *The Bird*, *Beirut Days*, *Baghdad Wedding* and *Love and Loss*.

John Wark

At the Finborough Theatre, John played the title role in *Jamie The Saxt* (2007).

Trained at RADA.

Theatre includes *Dog in the Manger*, *Tamar's Revenge* and *Pedro, the Great Pretender* (Royal Shakespeare Company), *Tamburlaine* (Bristol Old Vic and Barbican Theatre), *Nobody Will Ever Forgive Us* (National Theatre of Scotland at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh), *The Winter Guest* (Almeida Theatre) and *The Only Girl in the World – A Play of Jack The Ripper* (Arcola Theatre). Film includes *Breaking the Waves*, *The Oxford Murders*, *Late Night Shopping* and *Within the Woods*. Television includes *Robin Hood*, *Taggart* and *G-Force*.

Adam Youssefbeygi

Trained at the Arts Educational Schools.

Theatre includes *Royal Shakespeare Company Opening Event* (Royal Shakespeare Company), *The Oresteia Trilogy* (Riverside Studios), *Victoria, Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Private Lives*, *The Cherry Orchard* and *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* (Arts Educational Schools).

Television includes *The Innocent Project*.

The Press on director Zoe Lafferty

"Powerful weapons against oppression that open new spaces for imagining a different future." *Al Jazeera*

"Intensely physical, highly stylised, no doubt of the power of the material, nor the conviction of the actors themselves. The scenes not only represent historic events but a nightmarish mind scape of fear, intimidation and violence." BBC

"Conceptually bold and visually stimulating ... both empowering and thought provoking." *Counterpunch* on *Alice in Wonderland*

"This is a dangerous play with subversive messages" *Haaretz* on *Alice in Wonderland*

"A company to be reckoned with." *Edinburgh Guide*

"Sensitive...chilling...compassionate" *British Theatre Guide*

The Press on Paul Wood's reporting from Syria

"Extraordinary, haunting reporting in Syria." *The Guardian*

"Superlative reporting from Homs deserves every award." Benedict Brogan, *The Daily Telegraph*

"Memorable reports." Bill Neely, *ITN*

"Brilliant reporting from inside Homs." Ramita Naval, *Channel Four*

"The BBC should...trumpet the achievements of superb journalists such as Paul Wood." *The Observer*

"All praise to Paul Wood of the BBC." Robert Fisk, *The Independent*

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PRESS NIGHT: THURSDAY, 19 JULY 2012 AT 7.30PM

PHOTOCALL: TUESDAY, 17 JULY 2012 AT 1.00PM-1.30PM

Finborough Theatre, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED

Box Office 0844 847 1652 Book online at www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk

Tuesday, 17 July – Saturday, 11 August 2012

Tuesday to Saturday Evenings at 7.30pm. Sunday Matinees at 3.00pm. Saturday matinees at 3.00pm (from the second week of the run).

Ticket Prices for Weeks One and Two (17–29 July 2012) – Tickets £14, £10 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £10 all seats, and Saturday evenings £14 all seats.

Previews (17 and 18 July) £10 all seats.

£6 tickets for under 30's for performances from Tuesday to Sunday of the first week when booked online only.

£11 tickets for residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea on the first Saturday of the run only.

Ticket Prices for Weeks Three and Four (31 July–11 August 2012) – Tickets £16, £12 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £12 all seats, and Saturday evenings £16 all seats.

STAGETEXT captioned performance – Saturday, 4 August 2012 at 3.00pm

Performance Length: Approximately 2 hours.

For more information, interviews and images, please contact

Neil McPherson on e-mail 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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