

FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

VIBRANT NEW WRITING | UNIQUE REDISCOVERIES

Spring Season – March–May 2016

The world premiere of a new British musical

PRINCESS CARABOO

Book and Lyrics by Phil Willmott.

Music by Phil Willmott and Mark Collins.

Directed by Phil Willmott.

Commissioned and Developed by Bristol Old Vic.

Presented by The Phil Willmott Company and The Steam Industry.

Directed by Phil Willmott. Musical Direction by Freddie Tapner. Choreographed by Michael Voss.

Cast: Althea Burey. Christian James. Nikita Johal. Ruben Kuppens. Sarah Lawn. Hilary Mulrane. Joseph O'Malley. Rebecca Ridout. Phil Sealey. Oliver Stanley.

"See only what you want to see and hear only what speaks your heart"

Originally seen as a staged reading as part of *Vibrant – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights* and commissioned and developed by the Bristol Old Vic, the world premiere of a new British musical, ***Princess Caraboo*** opens at the Finborough Theatre for a four week limited season on Wednesday, 30 March 2016 (**Press Night: Friday, 1 April 2016 at 7.30pm, and Saturday, 2 April 2016 at 3pm and 7.30pm**).

The extraordinary true story of a beautiful young woman who tricked her way from vagrancy to wealth and power in Regency England by pretending to be a shipwrecked Princess.

Maintaining the deception becomes imperative as the stakes get higher and higher and what begins as a desperate ploy by a petty criminal to evade the law escalates into a national scandal threatening to ruin anyone whose compassion, lust or ambition has blinded them to the truth.

As 'Princess Caraboo' becomes the superstar of her day she discovers the price to be paid for living a lie and the cost of drawing the man she loves into her deceit.

We all of us tell little lies; to make life run smoother, to land the perfect job, to win and keep the ones we love. This entertaining, glamorous and romantic story invites us all to consider the impact of life's embellishments in defining who we really are and who we would like to be.

Originally seen as a staged reading as part of *Vibrant – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights*, *Princess Caraboo* has been extensively workshopped with Tony award winner Tom Morris (*Jerry Springer - the Opera*, *War Horse*) at Bristol Old Vic and benefiting from the dramaturgy of the theatre's Literary Manager, James Peries.

Multi-award winning Composer, Writer and Director **Phil Willmott's** first collaboration as a composer with Mark Collins was the musical *Lost Boy* which transferred from the Finborough Theatre for an extended run at the Charing Cross Theatre and imagined the characters from Peter Pan as adults in the First World War. It will be published by Samuel French in 2016 to coincide with the anniversary of the Battle of the Somme. Following the success of *Lost Boy*, Mark and Phil have subsequently completed commissions for Adam Kenwright and Shakespeare's Globe. Phil Willmott's first musical was a finalist for the prestigious Vivian Ellis prize, and his subsequent, internationally published and regularly revived musicals include *Once Upon A Time At The Adelphi*, commissioned by Liverpool Playhouse (TMA award winner and WhatsOnStage nominee for Best Musical Production in the UK) and its U.S. version *Once Upon A Time At The Atlantic City* which premiered in Connecticut and won five Spirit of Broadway Awards including Best Score and Best Direction, *Around The World In Eighty Days*, written for BAC and revived at Liverpool Playhouse, for a UK tour, and a two-year

118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED Telephone 020 7244 7439 e-mail admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk
www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk Artistic Director Neil McPherson

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Press Information

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German tour, the *Dick Barton Special Agent Trilogy* originally commissioned by Croydon Warehouse and revived at Oldham Coliseum, Nottingham Playhouse, The Queen's Theatre in Hornchurch, Theatre by the Lake in Keswick, The Yvonne Arnaud Theatre in Guildford, Greenwich Theatre, New Wimbledon Theatre and at Southwold Rep; and adaptations of *Treasure Island* and *Jason And The Argonauts*, all of which continue to be licensed regularly by Samuel French across the globe. The adaptation of *Lysistrata* he wrote with Germaine Greer was recently presented as part of the Almeida's Greek Season starring Tamsien Grieg, and his adaptation of Gorki's *The Lower Depths* is published by Oberon Books. His recent plays in London include a dramatisation of Wagner's *Ring Cycle* which played to 40,000 people at the Scoop, *Captain Show-Off* adapted from the Roman Comedies of Plautus, and Euripides' *Trojan War Trilogy* (also at the Scoop) *Play Of Thrones*, a popular amalgamation of the Shakespeare that inspired R. R. Martin (Union Theatre) *Encounter*, a new gay love story inspired by *Brief Encounter* (Above the Stag Theatre) and his reworking of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Princess Ida* which played for a sell out run at the Finborough Theatre in 2015. He often writes about Musical Theatre as a regular columnist for *The Stage* and reviews West End and Broadway musicals for toplondontheatre.com

Co-composer **Mark Collins** is Assistant Musical Director on the West End production of *Billy Elliot The Musical* (Victoria Palace Theatre) whose recent work in new musical theatre writing includes *The Secret Diary Of Adrian Mole* (Leicester Curve), *Dessa Rose* (Trafalgar Studios), Dougal Irvine's *The Other School* (St James' Theatre for National Youth Music Theatre), *Wah! Wah! Girls* (Kneehigh and Sadler's Wells at Leicester Curve, Peacock Theatre, London and UK Tour) and Rifco's *Britain's Got Bhangra* (Theatre Royal, Stratford East and UK Tour).

The Press on Phil Willmott's musical *Lost Boy* at the Finborough Theatre

"This is a brilliant musical...A spectacular triumph" James Hodgson, *Everything Theatre* on *Lost Boy*

"Artfully structured and packed with strong, musical numbers that drive the narrative... Confidently blending musical styles, epic themes and riveting drama" Paul Vale, *The Stage* on *Lost Boy*

"An ambitious and complex work full of imaginative ideas." Howard Loxton, *British Theatre Guide* on *Lost Boy*

**PRESS NIGHTS: FRIDAY, 1 APRIL 2016 AT 7.30PM AND SATURDAY, 2 APRIL 2016 AT 3.00PM AND 7.30PM.
PHOTOCALL: WEDNESDAY, 30 MARCH 2016 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

Wednesday, 30 March – Friday, 22 April 2016

Tuesday to Saturday Evenings at 7.30pm. Saturday and Sunday Matinees at 3.00pm.

Prices until 10 April 2016 – Tickets £16, £14 concessions, except Tuesday Evenings £14 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £16 all seats. Previews (30 and 31 March) £12 all seats.

£10 tickets for Under 30s for performances from Tuesday to Sunday of the first week when booked online only.

£12 tickets for residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea on Saturday, 2 April 2016 when booked online.

Prices from 12 April 2016 – Tickets £18, £16 concessions, except Tuesday Evenings £16 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £18 all seats.

Performance Length: Approximately two hours and 30 minutes including one interval.

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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