

FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

VIBRANT **NEW WRITING** | UNIQUE **REDISCOVERIES**

October 2019-January 2020 season

The first London production in 75 years

THE WIND OF HEAVEN

by Emlyn Williams.

Directed by Will Maynard.

Designed by Ceci Calf. Costume Design by Isobel Pellow. Lighting Design by Ryan Stafford.

Composition and Musical Direction by Rhiannon Drake. Sound Design and Composition by Julian Starr.

Historical Consultation by Paul Griffiths / Ymgynghoriad hanesyddol gan Paul Griffiths.

Produced by Bertie Taylor-Smith and Jonathan Taylor.

Presented by Weighed In Productions in association with Neil McPherson for the Finborough Theatre.

Cast: Louise Breckon-Richards. Rhiannon Neads. Kristy Philipps. Seiriol Tomos. David Whitworth. Jamie Wilkes.
Melissa Woodbridge.

"Is something coming to us that for two thousand years
the tear-stained blood-sick world has been waiting for?"

The first London production in nearly 75 years of Welsh playwright Emlyn Williams' **The Wind of Heaven** opens at the Finborough Theatre for a four-week Christmas season on Tuesday, 26 November 2019 (**Press Nights: Thursday, 28 November 2019 and Friday, 29 November 2019 at 7.30pm**).

Dilys Parry lives in Blestin, a Welsh mountain village which has no children and worships no god since a disaster snatched away all its youth.

Inconsolable since her husband died in the Crimean War, Dilys is gradually re-awakened to life when a prophet-like child working in her household is called by God to serve the world.

In the wake of vast social inequality and a mismanaged war, one small community rediscovers its lost faith, with startling consequences for the village, and the world beyond...

A parable about healing the wounds inflicted by a national trauma, *The Wind of Heaven* was first produced in the West End in April 1945, just three weeks before the end of the Second World War in Europe, starring Emlyn Williams himself. It now receives its first London production in nearly 75 years at the Finborough Theatre, well known for its recent rediscoveries of Emlyn Williams' work, including the multi-award-winning *Accolade*.

Playwright **Emlyn Williams** (1905-1987), dubbed "the Welsh Noël Coward", was one of the most successful actor-dramatists of the 1930s and 1940s. His greatest works, *Night Must Fall* and *The Corn Is Green*, were made into films starring Albert Finney, Bette Davis and Katharine Hepburn, and remain much revived. Williams' plays have twice been rediscovered by the Finborough Theatre – *The Druid's Rest* in 2009, and *Blanche McIntyre's* multi-award-winning production of *Accolade* in 2011, which subsequently transferred to St James Theatre. Williams was a pioneering LGBTQ+ figure, and his remarkable life began in a working-class family in North Wales, where he spoke no English until the age of eight and could barely read or write. He lived much of his adult life in Dovehouse Street, a short walk from the Finborough Theatre.

Director **Will Maynard's** work includes *Open* (VAULT 2019), *Head-Rot Holiday* (Hope Theatre), *Tiger* (VAULT 2018), *Finding Mr Hart* (Blackburn Exchange for the University of London) and *Blavatsky's Tower* (Barons Court Theatre). Shorter plays include *Classical Studies* (Arcola Theatre), *Crocodile* (Old Red Lion Theatre), *Sunflower* (Bunker Theatre) and *Gold Star* (Hen and Chickens Theatre). Assistant Direction includes *Bloody Poetry* (Jermyn Street Theatre) and *Mary Rose* (Brockley Jack Theatre).

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

Press Information

The cast is:

Louise Breckon-Richards | Bet

Trained at Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Theatre includes Can You Hear Me Running? (Pleasance London), Haunted Hotel, The Merchant of Venice (Kiklos Teatro, Italy), Romeo and Juliet (English Shakespeare Company), Happy Birthday Brecht (National Theatre) and The Boys from Syracuse (Harrogate Theatre).

Film includes Time Will Tell, To Kill a King and Beautiful People.

Television includes Doctors, Coronation Street, Temple, Cuckoo, EastEnders, Sherlock, Casualty, Midsomer Murders, Dirty War, Foyles War, Battlefield Britain, Family Affairs, Bed Time, Belonging, Holby City, Mortimer's Law, Underworld and Harpur and Iles.

Radio includes Precious Bane and The Room with a View.

Rhiannon Neads | Dilys

Trained at LAMDA.

Theatre includes 3 Billion Seconds (Paines Plough Roundabout), Leia and the Roman (VAULT Festival), Adele is Younger than Us (Soho Theatre), Mary's Babies (Oak Theatre), By All Accounts Two Normal Girls (Stiff and Kitsch at Edinburgh Festival), Madonna and Child (Monday Club) and 1001 (Courting Drama at Southwark Playhouse).

Television includes Father Brown, Doctors, Midsomer Murders and Downton Abbey.

Radio includes Home Front, A Severed Head, The Stuarts – Queen Anne: Myself Alone, Baby Oil, The Last Chronicle of Barset, The Enchanted April, A Book by Lester Tricklebank, Born in the DDR, The Master and Margarita, Decline and Fall, In Aldershot and Ladder of Years.

Kristy Philipps | Menna

Trained at Royal Welsh College.

Theatre includes The Devil in the Blue Dress (Bunker Theatre).

Television includes Will, Clean Break, Informer and Vera.

Seiriol Tomos | Evan

Productions at the Finborough Theatre include Saer Doliau.

Trained at LAMDA.

Theatre includes Tuck (Neontopia), Milwr Yn Y Meddwl, The Lady From the Sea and The Tempest (National Theatre Wales).

Film includes The Dancing Floor, Merthyr, X-Row, Woman of the Wolf and Elenya.

Television includes Mofydd, Parch II, Hinterland, Gwaith or Cartref, Rownd A Rownd, Pobol Y Cwm and Britain's Secret Houses.

David Whitworth | Pitter

Productions at the Finborough Theatre include London Wall (and its subsequent transfer to the St James Theatre, now known as The Other Palace) and Rigor Mortis.

Theatre includes Skin in the Game (Old Red Lion Theatre), The Second Mrs Tanqueray (Rose Theatre, Kingston), London Assurance (National Theatre), Wuthering Heights (Birmingham Rep and National Tour), The Mousetrap (St Martin's Theatre), Pride and Prejudice, Romeo and Juliet, Twelfth Night, Much Ado About Nothing, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Henry V, As You Like It, The Dark Lady of the Sonnets, Love's Labours Lost, The Two Noble Kinsmen (Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park), Lilies and Sweets (Pleasance London), A Day by the Sea (Southwark Playhouse), French Without Tears (English Touring Theatre), Read Not Dead (Shakespeare's Globe), In the Bar of a Tokyo Hotel (Charing Cross Theatre), Aladdin, Sleeping Beauty (National Tour), The Woman in Black (Gothenburg English Studio Theatre and Stadsteater, Stockholm), French Without Tears, The Widowing of Mrs Holroyd, The Thunderbolt, Mary Goes First, A Journey to London, Double Double, Trifles, Sauce for the Goose, King Lear and Magnificence (Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond).

Film includes Love's Kitchen and Little Dorrit.

Television includes The Alan Titchmarsh Show, Poldark, The Bill, Nicholas Nickleby, Jasper Carrott, Big Deal, Miss Jones and Son, Colditz, Z Cars, Coronation Street, A Family at War, Barlow and Armchair Theatre.

Jamie Wilkes | Ambrose

Trained at LAMDA.

Theatre includes The Edit (Salisbury Playhouse), The Two Noble Kinsmen, The Rover, Oppenheimer, The Shoemaker's Holiday, Wendy and Peter Pan (Royal Shakespeare Company), The Comedy of Errors, Titus Andronicus (Shakespeare's Globe), Diary of a Teenage Girl, Howl's Moving Castle, The Boy James, Lorca is Dead, Atrium, Tartuffe (Southwark Playhouse), Peter Pan, The Beggar's Opera, Macbeth (Theatre Royal York), Dracula (Edinburgh International Festival),

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Metamorphosis (National Student Drama Festival Spotlight Award for Best Actor), Romeo and Juliet, As You Like It, The Tempest, Julius Caesar, The Taming of the Shrew, Love's Labour's Lost (Willow Globe), Macbeth, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Tempest, Antigone, Bensalem B&B, The Trial and The Tempest (Belt Up Theatre).

Television includes His Dark Materials, Catch 22, Vanity Fair, Philip K Dick's Electric Dreams, Mr Selfridge and Downton Abbey.

Radio includes Homefront.

Melissa Woodbridge | Mrs Lake

Trained at Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

Theatre includes Walking the Tightrope, Blithe Spirit (US Tour), Giraffe (Park Theatre), Blithe Spirit (Gielgud Theatre), Ironman (Pleasance Theatre), Strands (Theatre 503), Skanky (Arcola Theatre), Kvetch (King's Head Theatre), A Cello by David Greig (The Yard), The Female of the Species (Vaudeville Theatre), Leonardo's Canyon (Royal Court Theatre), Straight Talking and Moving the Goalposts (Soho Theatre).

Film includes The Angel, Another Table and Someone To Watch Over Me.

Television includes Be in the Now, Touching the Cloth and This is Not a List Show.

The press on Emlyn Williams' Accolade at the Finborough Theatre

"Accolade already classifies as one of the defining rediscoveries of this theatrical year." Matt Wolf, The New York Times

"In Earl's Court, the Finborough Theatre has struck gold. There's no other word for this overlooked treasure by Emlyn Williams." Lloyd Evans, The Spectator

"The reviewers' cliché 'Neglected plays are usually neglected for a good reason' carries the implicit qualifier '... except when the Finborough stages them'. The more obscure revivals presented by this little studio theatre are almost always worthwhile, often impressive and sometimes revelatory. With Emlyn Williams' 1950 drama, here receiving its first revival, we are well into revelation." Ian Shuttleworth, Financial Times

The press on The Wind of Heaven

"A play that goes very near greatness and has moments which are undoubtedly great." W. A. Darlington, The Daily Telegraph

The press on director Will Maynard's previous work

"Meticulous and sensitive direction." ActDrop on Head-Rot Holiday

"Director Will Maynard... uses the intimate space of the Barons Court Theatre to superb effect embracing its claustrophobic nature...it's a real treat to find this sparkling black comedy so beautifully revived." The Stage on Blavatsky's Tower

"Slender writing and an equally tight direction...triumphant." BroadwayWorld UK on Open

PRESS NIGHTS: THURSDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2019 AND FRIDAY, 29 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 7.30PM

PHOTOCALL: TUESDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 1.00PM-1.30PM

Finborough Theatre, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED

Book online at www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk

No booking fees on online, personal or postal bookings

Box Office 01223 357851. (Calls are free. There is a 5% booking fee.) Lines are open Monday-Saturday 10.00am-6.00pm.

Tuesday, 26 November – Saturday, 21 December 2019

Tuesday to Saturday evenings at 7.30pm. Saturday and Sunday matinees at 3.00pm.

Prices until 8 December 2019 – Tickets £18, £16 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £16 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £18 all seats. Previews (26 and 27 November) £14 all seats.

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

£14 tickets for residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea on Saturday, 30 November 2019 at 7.30pm when booked online only.

Prices from 10 December 2019 – Tickets £20, £18 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £18 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £20 all seats.

Performance Length: Approximately two hours with one interval of fifteen minutes.

For more information, interviews and images, please contact

Livvy Perrett on e-mail press@finboroughtheatre.co.uk or **07889 794858**

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