



J.M. BARRIE'S

MARY ROSE

TOUR PACK | SPRING 2022

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Touring from the **Connaught Theatre**, Worthing from **3rd March 2022** until the end of **April 2022** (with possible extension into May).

Conn Artists Theatre Company

An introduction

We are the professional theatre company in residence at the Connaught Theatre supported by Worthing Theatres since 2013.

We create live theatre that really engages its audiences; good stories that resonate with timeless, universal themes about the human condition which are relevant and have a genuine social impact for today's society; often a reimagining or adaptation of a classic or neglected work.

In 2019, we mounted a regional tour of George Eliot's *Silas Marner* adapted by Geoffrey Beevers. Supported by Arts Council England and The George Eliot Fellowship in the writer's bicentenary year the production was highly praised as the company's best work to date by the reviewer from Theatre South East and

gained 5 star and 4 star reviews from The Argus, Remote Goat and The Stage. Integral to this tour was the engagement with GCSE students, the homeless and refugees through workshops and outreach sessions.

In 2017 we toured an adaptation of Hilaire Belloc's book *The Four Men* adapted by local playwright Ann Feloy and directed by former Artistic Director of the Connaught Theatre, Nick Young. Supported by and working in partnership with the South Downs National Park Authority and Worthing Museum, the show was a huge hit with regional audiences receiving 5 star and 4 star reviews in The Argus, The Stage, The Sussex Newspaper and Theatre South East.

Prior to this, we produced four successful productions in the Connaught Theatre and Studio including the UK premiere of 'Courage' by John Pielmeier and an ACE funded revival of Neil Simon's 'The Good Doctor'.

Venue Quotes:

"We loved working with the company everyone was really helpful and accessible especially in terms of marketing and promotion of the show."

(The Albany Theatre, Coventry)

"Conn Artists are straightforward to deal with and will always try and be flexible on dates. Great to have so many assets available. Look forward to working with you again in the future." (The Capitol, Horsham)

"The experience of working with both Matthew Pike and Ross Muir on the day was a joy and their ability to make the show fit and work in what is probably the smallest of the venues was brilliant." (The Phoenix Theatre, Bordon)

"The marketing pack provided was very comprehensive and provided useful information regarding the marketing for this show. Please let us know what you're doing next!" (The Spring, Havant)

Press Quotes:

"a riveting example of ensemble theatre at its very best." ★★★★★ (The Brighton Argus on *Silas Marner*)

"It is, in my opinion, the company's best work to date, not only did I leave feeling inspired, it also left me feeling very proud to see such fantastic work created in Worthing." ★★★★★

(Theatre South East on *Silas Marner*)

"strong, vivid and emotional story telling." ★★★★★ (Remote Goat on *Silas Marner*)

"This new touring production from Worthing company Conn Artists has made regional theatre feel in ruder health overnight." ★★★★★

(The Stage on *The Four Men*)

About the Production | Mary Rose

An old, tiny Sussex manor house standing empty and for sale is haunted by the ghost of a young woman who once lived there. 37 years earlier, a 12 year old girl by the name of Mary Rose goes missing on a small island in the Outer Hebrides whilst on holiday with her parents. A month later she mysteriously returns unaware that she has been away for any length of time.

Years later, Mary Rose returns to the same island with her young husband and disappears for a second time. After the passage of 23 years, when her family have come to terms with her loss, she reappears yet again but by now her parents, husband and child have all aged whilst Mary Rose has remained just the same as the day she vanished.

In this hauntingly beautiful play, from the creator of Peter Pan, comes an exploration of time, love and loss. These timeless themes are given a thrilling revival with a fresh treatment in the trademark style of Conn Artists; with an ensemble cast of five actors, and featuring some of Barrie's own stage directions as interwoven pieces of narrative, original music, a digital soundscape, and a bold reimagining of the 'traditional' set design, all creating what living, modern theatre does best.

Mary Rose, spanning a period of over 30 years, will leave you spellbound by its mystical nature and moved by its deepest yearnings to be reunited with the ones we love.



Conn Artists Theatre Company in association with
Worthing Theatres and Museum present:

Mary Rose by J.M. Barrie

A spellbindingly beautiful ghost story about time, love and loss from the creator of Peter Pan

Creatives:

Writer:	J.M. Barrie
Director:	Nick Young
Producer:	Ross Muir
Set & Costume Designer:	Laura Kimber
Lighting Designer:	Matthew Pike
Original Music:	Ross Muir
Assistant Producer & Marketing Officer:	TBC
Graphic Designer:	Richard Snaith
Photography & Video:	Christopher Phillips

CAST:

Mary Rose:	Evangeline Duncan
Mrs Otery/Mrs Morland:	TBC
Harry/Simon:	TBC
Mr Morland:	TBC
Mr Amy/Cameron:	Ross Muir

The Production Team

Nick Young | Director

At Oxford Nick read English and directed numerous shows, including the famous Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor Dr Faustus, when he was the student director to Professor Nevill Coghill.

He joined the RSC as a trainee director and worked with actors such as Dame Helen Mirren and Patrick Stewart. He became Artistic Director of the world-famous Ludlow Festival, staging epic Shakespeare in the Castle, which he nearly burnt down in an over-ambitious flaming battle scene in King Lear.



For ten years he was the Artistic Director of the Connaught Theatre, Worthing where he had enormous fun creating ensemble companies and directing musicals, premieres, classics, thrillers and farces. Christopher Biggins, Dora Bryan, and Arthur Askey were some of the famous names that worked with Nick.

In 1983 he formed Rainbow Theatre and wrote and directed its repertoire; which subsequently has gone onto become one of the most popular Theatre-in-Education companies touring to schools in the South East.

In 1999, he founded Rainbow Shakespeare with his wife Alex, creating exciting open-air Shakespeare for family audiences. In 2017, Conn Artists were delighted to welcome Nick back to the Connaught Theatre after several years by inviting him to direct The Four Men for which the Theatre South East reviewer commented:

"The direction from Nick Young, who previously directed at the Connaught Theatre when it used to be home to a repertory company, is superb and the characters are vivid and brought to life magnificently".

The Production Team

Laura Kimber | Set and Costume Designer

Laura graduated from Northbrook College with a BA in Theatre Arts specialising in Set, Props and Costume Design. Since then, she has worked for Worthing Theatres in various departments including Wardrobe for visiting production companies such as Bill Kenwright's Blood Brothers and pantomime at the Connaught Theatre.

Laura is a co-founder and director of Conn Artists and is the company's resident designer. She has designed every company production to date including Vintage Hitchcock: A Live Radio Play, The Good Doctor, The Importance of Being Oscar, Courage, The Four Men and Silas Marner; working with directors including Nick Young, Mitch Jenkins and Ross Muir.

In the Theatre South East review of The Four Men the reviewer commented:

"A simple set design by Laura Kimber is used to great effect, staging the transitioning worlds of the great outdoors on the Downs with the various Inns and pubs they visit along the way".

Matthew Pike | Production and Technical Manager & Lighting Design

Matthew graduated from Northbrook College with a BA in Theatre Arts specialising in Production Management, Lighting Design and Stage Management.

He is currently Technical Stage and Production Manager at Worthing Theatres where, among other duties, he has the responsibility for the technical running of the annual pantomime at the Pavilion Theatre.

Matthew is also a freelance Lighting Designer working in the South East Area; production credits include Into the Woods and Legally Blonde, Seussical the Musical and Chess (Arundel Festival 2017).

As a co-founder and director of Conn Artists he has been Production and Technical Manager and Lighting Designer on all of the company's productions to date.

The Cast (confirmed so far)

EVANGELINE DUNCAN as Mary Rose

Evangeline's debut with Conn Artists Theatre Company was as Eppie in *Silas Marner*. She returns at the company's invitation to play Mary Rose.

Evangeline gained a Masters in Acting from East 15 Acting School in 2017 and previously trained at Fontainebleau School of Acting in France.

Theatre credits include *Grumpy Old Scrooge*, *The Jungle Book* (Rage Arts Theatre Company, Regional Tours); *Eavesdropping Again* (Angel Theatre Company, Barons Court Theatre); *Pride & Prejudice* (Tread The Boards Theatre Company, The Attic Theatre).

Film credits include: *Family Things* (Short, dir. Tom Duncan); *Sow Wild Oats* (Short, dir. Pedro Gonçalves); *Stuck* (Short, dir. Brianna Ferguson); *The End* (Short, dir. Eduardo Chapero-Jackson, Winner of Short Films: Best Director at Málaga Spanish Film Festival).

Her most recent play, "It's a Playception", was co-written by Evangeline and performed with fellow writer at The Hope Theatre.

"Evangeline Duncan, the adult Eppie, delighted in her courtship scene and was most passionate in her loyalty to Marner."

(The Brighton Argus on *Silas Marner*) ★★★★★

"There is good support from the ensemble cast who take on multi roles throughout with Evangeline Duncan excelling in particular as the foundling, initially being the voice of the puppet until her character grows up."

(Remote Goat on *Silas Marner*) ★★★★★



The Cast (confirmed so far)

ROSS MUIR - Producer and as Mr Amy/Cameron

Ross trained at Guildford School of Acting and graduated with a BA First Class Honours in Theatre.

London appearances as an actor include the Almeida Theatre, Arts Theatre and New Players Theatre. Alongside national tours in the UK and Germany with productions of The Tempest, Figaro-the play, Black Comedy, The Real Inspector Hound and The Caretaker, Ross has performed regularly with Worthing's acclaimed open-air Rainbow Shakespeare having played the roles of Hamlet, Leontes in The Winter's Tale, Benedick in Much Ado About Nothing and Oberon in A Midsummer Night's Dream.



Ross is a founder of Conn Artists and has produced all of their shows to date. He directed the company's debut production Vintage Hitchcock: A Live Radio Play in 2013 and a revival of Neil Simon's The Good Doctor in 2014. As an actor, he starred in the lead role of Silas Marner in the company's 2019 tour, and as Myself (Hilaire Belloc) in the 2017 tour of The Four Men. Ross has also performed two one-man shows for Conn Artists as J.M. Barrie in Courage, and he received a standing ovation for his performance in the Worthing Literary WOW Festival production of The Importance of Being Oscar about the life of Oscar Wilde.

"Muir, in the title role, gave a magnificently nuanced performance, moving through a range of emotions culminating in a thundering rage when Eppie, the child that he raised, is to be taken from him. His subsidence into tears, when she elects to stay with him, was most moving."

(The Brighton Argus on Silas Marner) ★★★★★

"Ross Muir's performance is exceptional, capturing the audience's attention with the character's fragile state of mind, evoking powerful empathy as the play progresses."

(Theatre South East on Silas Marner) ★★★★★

"As Belloc, or Myself as he names himself, Ross Muir could not be bettered. He gives a marathon performance that segues effortlessly from narrator to character."

(The Brighton Argus on The Four Men) ★★★★★

"Myself, played with subtle charm by Rainbow Shakespeare's Ross Muir"

(The Stage on The Four Men) ★★★★★

"Muir's performance was a tour de force that kept his audience mesmerised . . . For many the highlight was Muir's emotive telling of The Ballad of Reading Gaol."

(The Brighton Argus on The Importance of Being Oscar) ★★★★★

Technical Information

Get-in:	6 hours
Get-out:	1-1.5 hours
Stage Dimensions:	Minimum - 6m wide x 5m deep x 3m high
Touring Company:	5 Actors & 1 Stage Manager
Venue Crew:	2 in-house technical crew are required
Set:	This is a modern theatre style re-imagining of J.M. Barrie's play and will therefore be a more minimalistic set design as opposed to a box set.
LX:	An LX plan will be sent in advance
Sound:	QLab system provided by the company. Where available we will use the in-house PA
Music:	There will be some live music played and sung by cast members
Running Time:	2 hours approx. (plus a 20 minute interval)
Age Guidance:	Suitable for adults and young people aged 12+

Full tech plan available on request nearer the time

Target Audience

Our production is an uplifting, innovative re-imagining of J.M. Barrie's play Mary Rose. The production will engage mainstream regional theatre audiences who like period dramas, ghost stories, thrillers and fans of Barrie's most famous work Peter Pan.

We also want to connect with anyone who has recently experienced bereavement or a sense of loss in their daily lives; including that caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. We want the production to be cathartic; by echoing our own unresolved losses the ghost of our heroine becomes a catalyst for healing.

Audience Agency Spectrum Profiles include Metroculturals "Mostly likely to have missed arts during lockdown...risk of feeling unusually isolated during lockdown...may well be part of local mutual support groups."; Commuterland Culture Buffs "with a leaning towards..classical/traditional offers"; Dormitory Dependables "preference for...traditional mainstream arts" and Home & Heritage. "almost half are widowed."

Selling Points

- Mary Rose is a piece of theatre with absolute relevance and responds to the challenges that people are facing today. Written in 1920 not only after WWI but in the wake of the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918/19 in which 20-50 million people died worldwide, the significance in relation to the social impact of coronavirus could not be more profound.
- The Guardian theatre critic Michael Billington remarked on 3rd August 2020 in his Forgotten Plays series that “the play is due for rediscovery...I suspect today the concept of The Island That Likes to Be Visited...would still act as a potent symbol for death.”
- The production is directed by Nick Young former RSC and Connaught Theatre director.
- Entertaining, evocative and highly engaging piece of theatre, with live music, performed in Conn Artists trademark ensemble style.
- Post show Q&A's are available upon request: having watched a performance of Mary Rose the audience can be invited to discuss the play's themes during a post-show Q&A led by the cast.
- We will be reaching out to bereavement organisations and hope to engage with regional area volunteers who we will invite to several of our performances to be available in the foyer with information and helpful advice, and we will invite the rep to participate with the cast in any scheduled post-show Q&As where possible.

Marketing

We supply posters and flyers and a full Marketing Pack will be made available nearer the time which will include content on Selling the Show, Engaging Audiences and Cross Campaign Suggestions and Links to Assets including artwork, photos and a video trailer.

Education & Outreach

We are open and like to engage with students, disadvantaged groups and charities where we can on tour; including picking up our relationship with Turning Tides homeless charity in Worthing and St Francis Employability Support in Coventry who we both connected with on our previous tour of Silas Marner.

We will work with any venue that has an Education & Outreach officer or simply expresses an interest for us to engage with any local group they have external links with via a workshop or outreach session.

Interactive wrap-around workshops led by members of the Mary Rose acting company are available for schools and colleges upon request. These workshops explore the themes within the play in a practical way with students looking at and discussing key scenes.

Post-show discussions are also available upon request with some venues on the tour having already scheduled these in after specific performances.

All workshop or outreach sessions are considered on a case by case basis subject to time, availability of a suitable space for it to take place, participant numbers and duration.

Contacts

Ross Muir (Producer) - For more information and all booking enquiries

Email: ross@conn-artists.co.uk | Tel: 01903 366 825 | Mobile: 07813 275 459

Matthew Pike (Production and Technical Manager) – For all technical enquiries

Email: matt@conn-artists.co.uk | Mobile: 07900 121376

Laura Kimber (Designer) – For any tour accommodation arrangements

Email: laura@conn-artists.co.uk