

FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

VIBRANT **NEW WRITING** | UNIQUE **REDISCOVERIES**
May-August 2019 Season

The first London production in over 120 years

AFTER DARK; OR, A DRAMA OF LONDON LIFE

by Dion Boucicault

Based on *Les Oiseaux de Proie* by Eugène Grangé and Adolphe d'Ennery.

Directed and Adapted by Phil Willmott.

Designed by Hannah Postlethwaite. Costume Design by Penn O'Gara.

Lighting Design by Zoe Burnham. Sound Design by Julian Starr.

Presented by Iona Purvis for The Phil Willmot Company in association with the Finborough Theatre.

Cast: Toby Wynn-Davies. Simon De Deney. Steven France. Tom Fyans. Victoria Jeffrey. Gabi King. Jonathan Le Billon.
Rosa Lennox. Helen Potter. Jazz Sanders. Kate Stafford. Jemima Watling.

"It's hardly the place to take a gentleman. The night- birds of London roost there...."

Written in 1868, the year that the Finborough Theatre's building was constructed, The first London production in over 120 years of Dion Boucicault's rip-roaring Victorian melodrama, **After Dark; or, A Drama of London Life**, directed by the multi-award-winning Phil Willmott, opens at the Finborough Theatre for a four week limited season on Wednesday, 12 June 2019 (**Press Nights: Wednesday, 19 June 2019 and Thursday, 20 June 2019 at 7.30pm**).

The spectacular West End hit of late Victorian London, and unseen since, Dion Boucicault's sweeping melodrama, involving train crashes, river rescues, dastardly villains, plucky heroines, salacious scandal and dark secrets, crackles with the energy of a London of fresh peril and opportunity.

The new underground railway is a thing of wonder, the early Salvation Army shines a light on the grinding poverty of the East End, and high and low-lifes frequent gambling dens and revel in the illicit sex of the music halls.

All the while Scotland Yard struggle to police increasingly sophisticated financial fraud and marauding bands of ex-soldiers lately discharged into destitution and a life of crime.

Can love and honour prevail in such a world?

Last seen on stage in London in 1896 and filmed twice in both the UK and Hollywood in 1915, **After Dark; or, A Drama of London Life** is a classic Victorian melodrama by Dion Boucicault, one of the greatest theatrical figures of the 19th century, but is also startlingly contemporary with its thrilling climax on the London Underground, and its sympathetic portrayal of London's homeless community.

Playwright **Dion Boucicault** (1820-1890) was a legendary, writer, actor and theatre manager. Born into a middle-class family in Dublin, he moved to London to study, and his first play, *A Legend of the Devil's Dyke*, opened in Brighton in 1838. He had a string of successful productions in London at Her Majesty's Theatre from 1841-1854. most notably *London Assurance* (1841) and *The Corsican Brothers* (1852). He continued a successful career as actor, playwright and theatre manager in both the United States (1854-1860), and in England (1860-1875). In his later years, he was popular on both sides of the Atlantic, finishing his acting career in London. Some of his other famous works include *The Octoroon* (1859), recently seen in London in a new version by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, *The Coleen Bawn* (1860) and *The Shaughraun* (1874). The *New York Times* hailed him in his obituary as "the most conspicuous English dramatist of the 19th century."

After Dark; or, A Drama of London Life is based on *Les Oiseaux de Proie* (1854) by French authors Eugène Grangé and Adolphe d'Ennery. **Eugène Grangé** (1810-1887), a playwright, librettist and singer, wrote over 350 plays and 300 songs. **Adolphe d'Ennery** (1811-1899) was a playwright, novelist and librettist, and wrote over 200 plays, most notably *The*

118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED Telephone 020 7244 7439 e-mail admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk
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Two Orphans (1875) which was adapted in 1921 by D.W. Griffith as the film Orphans of the Storm. He also wrote librettos for Charles Gounod, Jules Massenet and Adolphe Adam.

Director **Phil Willmott** is a multi-award winning director, artistic director, playwright, composer, librettist, teacher, dramaturg, arts journalist and performer. He trained as an actor at Rose Bruford in the 1980s and was made a fellow of the college in 2012. Alongside his innovative reinterpretations of the classics, musical theatre revivals and new musical development his notable productions of contemporary and recent drama include F**cking Men (Finborough Theatre, Kings Head Theatre and West End), Liza, Liza, Liza (UK tour for Bill Kenwright), Billy Liar, Athol Fugard's Master Harold... and the Boys (Liverpool Playhouse), Angels in America and Kiss of the Spider Woman (Crucible Theatre, Sheffield), Finishing the Picture, Incident at Vichy, The American Clock, The Notebook of Trigorin, Country Magic, Crime and Punishment, The Lower Depths, The Grapes of Wrath, Trelawny of the Wells and Loyalties (Finborough Theatre), Fear and Misery of the Third Reich, Three Sisters in a version by Tracy Letts, Heartbreak House and The Cherry Orchard (Union Theatre) and Encounter, a new gay love story inspired by Brief Encounter (Above the Stag Theatre). As a writer, many of his plays, musicals and adaptations have been published and are regularly produced around the world. The adaptation of Lysistrata he wrote with Germaine Greer was presented as part of the Almeida's Greek Season starring Tamsin Grieg, and his adaptation of Gorki's The Lower Depths is published by Oberon Books.

The cast is:

Toby Wynn-Davies | Chandos Bellingham

Theatre includes Innocent Erendira (Donmar Warehouse), Faust Parts One and Two (Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith), Clarissa (London Coliseum), Meat (Theatre Royal Plymouth), Blood Libel, Romeo and Juliet (Norwich Playhouse), An Enemy of the People (Union Theatre), She Stoops to Conquer (Belgrade Theatre, Coventry), Misalliance, Jamaica Inn (Tabard Theatre), The Three Sisters and Gentleman Jack (Brockley Jack Studio).

Film includes If Only, The Altogether, Escape From Cannibal Farm, Dogged, Wereminds, Waste, Nefarious and Much Ado About Nothing.

Television includes Minder, The Bill, Wycliffe, Grange Hill, The Fishing Trip, Just Desserts, A Lump in My Throat and The New Professionals.

Simon De Deney | Old Tom

Theatre includes Importance of Being Earnest (National Tour), Between The Lines (Park Theatre and National Tour), The Madness of George Dubya (Arts Theatre), The Country Wife (Mermaid Theatre), The Prisoner of Windsor (Leicester Square Theatre), A Christmas Carol (Dukes Theatre, Lancaster), Spider's Web (New Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich), The Winter's Tale (Courtyard Theatre), Tallulah for a Day (Theatre Museum), Beneath The Waves (Eastern Angles Tour), The Producers (Trinity Theatre, Kent), Felix, Unmanned (Arcola Theatre), The Duchess of Malfi (Tristan Bates Theatre), Miss Chester (Player's Theatre), Twelfth Night (Wimbledon Open Air Theatre), Frankenstein (Jackson's Lane Theatre), Music Lessons (Troubadour Theatre) and Desire (20 South Street).

Film includes Damage, Shining Through and Selfish Act of Community.

Television includes Emmerdale, The House of Eliott, The Upper Hand and Rose Cottage.

Radio includes The School for Scandal, Moonraker, Thunderball, Future Perfect and The Wooden Horse.

Steven France | Charlie Pointer

Theatre includes Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (London Palladium), Spring Storm (National Theatre) and Anna Nicole - the Opera (Royal Opera House, Covent Garden).

Film includes Perfect Life.

Television includes The Bill, Casualty, Mongrels and EastEnders.

Tom Fyans | Gordon Chumley

Trained at The Poor School.

Theatre includes Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead (Edinburgh Festival).

Film includes The King.

Television includes The Last Kingdom and Ransom.

Victoria Jeffrey | Dicey Morris

Theatre includes The Tempest (National Tour), Get Therapy (National Tour), Draft (Theatre N16), Hearing Voices (National Tour), Old King Cole (Southwark Playhouse), Animal Bordello (Soho Theatre), The Silver Sword (Theatre Royal York), Do A Dance for Daddy (New End Theatre, Hampstead), The Merry Wives of Windsor (National Tour), Measure for Measure (Gatehouse Theatre), 13 Weeks (Soho Theatre), Thermal Underwear (King's Head Theatre), Holy Terror (Duke of York's Theatre), Artefacts (New Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich), Pub! (Union Theatre), Big Pants and Botox (Stables)

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Theatre), Dancing With Jack (Edinburgh Festival), Section 28 and the Queer State (Alexandra Palace), Hamlet (International Tour) and It's Behind You - A Panto (Union Theatre).

Film includes Smile Baby Smile, Lyla and A Modest Proposal.

Television includes Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway, Autopsy, Storm City, Genie in The House, Lovejoy, Prospects and Rude Health.

Gabi King | Music Ensemble

Trained at East 15 Acting School.

Theatre includes The Trojan Women and A Midsummer Night's Dream (East 15).

Voice work includes The Angel's Shadow and Tales from the Commonwealth.

Jonathan Le Billon | George Medhurst

Trained at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School.

Theatre includes Man of La Mancha, Miss Saigon, Frankenstein, The Chronicles of Narnia, Amadeus (California Theatre, California), Venezia (Teatro San Galleo, Venice), Before the Revolution (Billy Wilder Theatre, California), The Gingerbread Man (The Lewis Family Playhouse, California), The Good Soldier Schweik (Long Beach Opera, California), River of Tides (The Smithsonian, New York City), Richard III (Northcott Theatre, Exeter), Antigone, The Merchant of Venice (National Tour) and Hansel and Gretel (Loughborough Theatre).

Film includes The Invisible Man, Lady Windermere's Fan, Supercyclone and The Apostle Peter.

Television includes Tribes of the Wind, Hollyoaks, At Home with the Braithwaites, How We Used to Live, City Central, Cold Feet and Heartbeat.

Rosa Lennox | Music Ensemble

Trained at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts.

Theatre includes The Tales of Jemima Puddle-duck and Peter Rabbit (Wilton's Music Hall), Brass (Union Theatre), World Progress (Edinburgh Fringe Festival and The Other Palace), Made in Dagenham (Mountview), The Secret Princess of Severndroog (Greenwich and Docklands International Festival) and Utopia (Limited) (Greenwich Theatre).

Helen Potter | Music Ensemble

Trained at East 15 Acting School.

Theatre includes US, The Umbrellas of Loughton, Three Sisters, Nun Fiction, The Secret History and The Winter's Tale (East 15), Pleasure Gardens (Camden People's Theatre), The Waves (Kilter Theatre), Jonjo and Michael (The Pleasance), Leaf (Edinburgh Festival and New Diorama), Bitter (New Diorama Theatre) and 2Fit (Theatre N16).

Jazz Sanders | Rose Eggerton

Trained at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts.

Theatre includes Made in Dagenham, Our Country's Good and Twelfth Night (Mountview).

Web Series includes WHAT IF.

Kate Stafford | Aviona Crumpet

Trained at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School.

Theatre includes Oysters (National and International Tour), Macbeth, An African Dream (Nanzikambe Theatre Arts), For Services Rendered (The Old Vic), Play it Again Sam (Bounds Green Theatre), Fallen (Rosemary Branch Theatre) and Twelfth Night (Etcetera Theatre).

Film includes Erreur De Jeunesse and Grave Mistakes.

Television includes The Bill and London's Burning.

Jemima Watling | Eliza Medhurst

Trained at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

Theatre includes Little Women the Musical (Hope Mill Theatre, Manchester), Romeo and Juliet (Cambridge Shakespeare Festival), Nehemiah (Richard Burton Theatre), The Happy Funeral (Market Theatre) and Who Killed Lady Cuckoo (Frinton Summer Theatre).

The press on Phil Willmott's production of Arthur Miller's Incident at Vichy at the Finborough Theatre

★★★★★ Five stars, Everything Theatre, The Jewish Chronicle, ActDrop

★★★★ Four stars, The Telegraph, Time Out, Reviews Gate, The Reviews Hub, LondonTheatre1, Jewish Renaissance and BritishTheatre.com

"This long-forgotten Miller play receives a powerful fringe revival... This is buried treasure." Dave Calhoun, Time Out

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"This excellent revival...The tension, assisted by the Finborough's cramped confines, is stoked to perfection by director Phil Willmott." Dominic Cavendish, The Telegraph

"A marvellous production...Compellingly staged and beautifully acted." Matthew Lunn, BritishTheatre.com

PRESS NIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 19 JUNE 2019 AND THURSDAY, 20 JUNE 2019 AT 7.30PM
PHOTOCALL: WEDNESDAY, 12 JUNE 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.

Wednesday, 12 June – Saturday, 6 July 2019

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

Prices until 23 June 2019 – Tickets £18, £16 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £16 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £18 all seats. Previews (12-18 June) £15 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, 15 June 2019 when booked online only.

Prices from 25 June 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

Neil McPherson on e-mail press@finboroughtheatre.co.uk or **07977 173135**

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

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