

FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

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



As part of the FINBOROUGH150 celebrations....

The first UK production in over 150 years

A WINNING HAZARD

Three comediettas by J. P. Wooler.

Directed by Phillip James Rouse. Set and Costume Design by Martelle Hunt. Lighting by Euan Davis. Sound by Julian Starr.

Presented by The Hazard Project in association with Neil McPherson for the Finborough Theatre.

Cast: Robert Benfield. Jasmine Blackborrow. Evelyn Lockley. Max Marcq. Edward Mitchell. Josephine Starte.

"Be assured if ever I should marry, I should do so simply to be revenged on your whole sex..."

As part of the Finborough Theatre building's 150th birthday celebrations, the first London productions since the 1860s of three comediettas – **A Winning Hazard**, **Allow Me To Apologise** and **Orange Blossoms** – by J. P. Wooler play at the Finborough Theatre for nine Sunday and Monday evenings and Tuesday matinees from Sunday, 9 September 2018 (**Press Night: Monday, 10 September 2018 at 7.30pm**).

Rediscovering and celebrating the work of Victorian playwright **J. P. Wooler** (who died in 1868, the year the Finborough Theatre building was constructed – the exact 150th anniversary of his death will occur during this run of performances), **A Winning Hazard** is an evening of three of his comediettas which combine insightful observations on the hypocrisy and vanity of the English ruling class, coupled with characters and situations that are both deeply Victorian, but also vividly progressive in their views on gender, money, and class.

A Winning Hazard (1865) centres on Dudley Croker and Jack Crawley who are unsuccessfully vying for the hands of two young ladies, Aurora and Coralie Blythe. When Dudley's uncle Colonel Croker threatens to exclude both of them from his will unless they marry, they decide to win their respective partners by concocting a fake duel...

A Winning Hazard was the very first play produced by Marie Wilton (one of London's very earliest female theatre managers) at the Prince of Wales' Theatre in 1865, starring both herself and her future husband, Sir Squire Bancroft. Both Sir Squire and Lady Bancroft are buried in Brompton Cemetery, close to the Finborough Theatre.

Allow Me to Apologise (1850s) Goliath Goth is off to find himself a wife, and his heart (and loins) are set on the young wards of Sir Peter Pedigree. Goth's own ward, Fanny Fairlove, sees her opportunity, and proposes a deal: should Goth marry one of Pedigree's girls, then she would be free to marry her love and leave his house. His refusal forces her to concoct a plan to shame him into releasing her, leading to an epic cross-dressing debacle of miscommunication, misidentification, failed seductions and absurd trysts...

Orange Blossoms (1860s) – Septimus Symmetry is a famed woman-hater – until he is visited in his garden by his friends and relations who are determined to get him to face his greatest fear: marriage. When his guests arrive, they discover that they all have histories of unfulfilled love – with each other. And, to his horror, Septimus find himself besotted by Loo who is famed for her hatred of men. He decides to upset the apple cart by reigniting old flames and fanning jealousy to prove his point about the absurdity of marriage and society.

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

Playwright **John Pratt Wooler** was born in 1824. He was a prolific playwright, producing over sixty short comedies, farces, serio-comedies and libretti during the 1850s and 1860s, performed at many of the leading theatres of the day. He died in Islington on 18 September 1868.

Director **Phillip James Rouse** makes his London debut at the Finborough Theatre. Phillip is a prolific and much acclaimed director and writer from Sydney, Australia. Phillip has been the Artistic Director of Don't Look Away Theatre Company whose works have been nominated for over ten awards in Sydney and Melbourne. Phillip's previous work includes *Night Slows Down* (Kings Cross Theatre, Sydney), *Frankenstein*, *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* and *The Rivers of China* (Theatre Works, Melbourne), *Inner Voices* and *Babes in the Wood* (The Old Fitz, Sydney), *The Legend of King O'Malley* (La Mama Courthouse, Melbourne, and Seymour Centre, Sydney). He assisted on *Arcadia* and *After Dinner* (Sydney Theatre Company), *Birdland* (Melbourne Theatre Company), and observed at Opera Australia on the Verdi masterpiece *Falstaff*. He trained at National Institute of Dramatic Art.

The cast is:

Robert Benfield | Colonel Crocker (*A Winning Hazard*), Sir Peter Pedigree (*Allow Me to Apologise*), Colonel Clarence (Orange Blossoms)

Productions at the Finborough Theatre include *The White Carnation* and its subsequent transfer to the Jermyn Street Theatre.

Theatre includes *Strangers on a Train* (English Theatre, Frankfurt), *Blood Wedding* and *The Bacchae* (Royal and Derngate Theatres, Northampton), *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Families of Lockerbie*, *Blithe Spirit* and *Chicken Soup with Barley* (Nottingham Playhouse), *Chicken Soup with Barley* (Tricycle Theatre), *The Story of Vasco*, *Double Double*, *Games*, *Journey to London*, *The Marrying of Anne Leete*, *Myth Propaganda* and *Disaster in Nazi Germany* and *Contemporary America*, *Summer Again*, *Engaged*, *The Mob*, *Saint's Day*, *Macbeth*, *All in the Wrong* and *Overboard* (Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond), *The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith* (Jermyn Street Theatre), *Corpse!* (Salisbury Playhouse), *Hobson's Choice*, *Love in a Maze* and *The Clandestine Marriage* (Watermill Theatre, Newbury) and *The Railway Children*, *Racing Demon*, *Three Sisters*, *Neville's Island*, *Pravda*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *On Golden Pond*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Golden Girls*, *Charley's Aunt*, *Twelfth Night*, *Not Now Darling*, *The Elephant Man* and *The Taming of The Shrew* (Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich).

Film includes *The Backseat*, *See*, *The Final Shot*, *The Line*, *Leves Miserables: The Phone Hacking Inquiry Musical* and *Pipe Up*.

Television includes *Stella*, *The Widower*, *Doctors*, *Sherlock 2*, *Londoners*, *Emmerdale*, *Law and Order*, *Buildings of Importance* and *Indelible Evidence*.

Radio includes *The Ode to St Cecilia*, *St Patrick*, *In the Reign of Terror*, *St Francis of Assisi*, *Beric the Briton*, *The Dragon* and *The Raven*, *Jessica's Prayer*, *Titus*, *Under Drakes Flag* and *Oliver Twist*.

Jasmine Blackborow | Miss Fanny Fairlove (*Allow Me to Apologise*), Louisa (Orange Blossoms)

Productions at the Finborough Theatre include *After October*.

Trained at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

Theatre includes *Othello* and *Much Ado About Nothing* (Pop-Up Globe, Auckland, and International Tour), *Grey Man* (Theatre503), *Now This Is Not the End* (Arcola Theatre), *Dracula* (New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme), *Hood* (Theatre Royal Nottingham) and *All or Nothing* (Edinburgh Festival).

Theatre while training includes *Enemies*, *As You Like It* and *The Seagull* (Royal Central School of Speech and Drama).

Film includes *AAMIR* which was nominated for a British Academy of Film and Television Arts Award, *Arcadia*, *Lady Macbeth*, *The Swallow* and *Alone*.

Evelyn Lockley | Aurora Blythe (*A Winning Hazard*), Kitty/Mary Myrtle (*Allow Me to Apologise*), Violet Hope (Orange Blossoms)

Trained at Arts Educational Schools London.

Theatre includes *The School for Scheming* (Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond), *Gingerbread* (Almeida Theatre), *Desolate Heaven* (Theatre503), *Confidence/Supply*, *Swipe* and *Frolleagues* (Southwark Playhouse), *Farrago*, *Final Track* and *Glass Boys* (Arcola Theatre), *X&Y* (Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith), *How to Write a Topical Play* (Old Red Lion Theatre), *Mad Queen's Chess* (Park Theatre), *Between the Sheets* (Waterloo East Theatre), *Hay Fever* and *Sweet Revenge* (Manor Pavillion), *Pablo* (Greenwich Theatre) and *Thaw* (The Vaults).

Film includes *Hoodies of Boyfriends Past*, *Vita and Virginia*, *Homecomings*, *Blackout*, *Spacemen*, *The Lady in The Park*, *London Bridges Falling Down* and *Telephone Me*.

Web Series includes *M.O.T.H.E.R Knows Best*, *Amdram* and *Spads*.

Max Marcq | Dudley Croker (*A Winning Hazard*), Captain Seymour (*Allow Me to Apologise*), Septimus Symmetry (Orange Blossoms)

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Trained at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

Theatre includes Rebel Angel (Old Operating Theatre, London)

Theatre whilst training includes Free, After the Dance, Richard III, The Oresteia, The Country Wife, Look Back in Anger, Blues for Mr Charlie, A Streetcar Named Desire, Twelfth Night, An Ideal Husband, The Three Sisters and Closer (Royal Central School of Speech and Drama).

Edward Mitchell | Jack Crawley (A Winning Hazard), Goliath Goth (Allow Me to Apologise), Falcone Hope (Orange Blossoms)

Trained at East15 Acting School where he was the Spotlight Prize Winner.

Theatre includes Unearthed (Arcola Theatre and National Tour), Gloves Off (Theatre503), The Bastard Children of Remington Steele and The Secret Wives of Andy Williams (Underbelly), The Trojan Women (Brockley Jack Studio Theatre), Bent (Landor Theatre) and Granuaile (Tristan Bates Theatre).

Film includes Pirates of the Caribbean (IV) - On Stranger Tides, Justice League, The Illustrious Client, Curse of the Phoenix and Fratton.

Television includes The First Musketeer, Comfort Food and Sofia's Diary - Series 2.

Josephine Starte | Coralie Blythe (A Winning Hazard), Harriett Seymour (Allow Me to Apologise), Isabella Clarence (Orange Blossoms)

Trained at National Institute of Dramatic Art, Sydney.

Theatre includes Maria (Omnibus Theatre), The Talk (The Vaults), The White Bike (The Space), The Mutant Man (Theatre N16), I Walk in Your Words (Rich Mix), Trade (Old 505 Theatre, Sydney), Threnody (Old Fitzroy Theatre, Sydney) and The Cherry Orchard (New Theatre, Sydney).

Theatre whilst training includes Boys, Not Who I Was, Sports Play, Blood Wedding, The Greeks and Herons (National Institute of Dramatic Art), Black Bird (Corpus Playroom, Cambridge) and The Blue Room (Royal Academy of Dramatic Art).

Film includes Lion, Hacksaw Ridge, Poised, Breath, An Athlete Wrestling a Python, Blue Monday, Green River and On Hold.

Television includes The Hidden Track.

Cabaret includes You Are Absolutely Fine (or...Self Pity: The Musical!).

FINBOROUGH150. 2018 marks 150 years of the Finborough Theatre building, originally designed by prominent Victorian architect George Godwin. During the year, we have been celebrating our birthday with an anniversary selection of the best plays with links to 1868. #finborough150

The press on director Phillip James Rouse

On Inner Voices

★★★★ The Daily Review

"Rouse's production makes for Vivid Theatre." Sydney Morning Herald

On The Legend of King O'Malley

★★★★ The Age and The Brag

On A Property of The Clan

★★★★ The Brag

"Phillip Rouse's direction is what Sydney's independent scene is hungry for..." The Music Five Stars

"Intense and wonderfully acted...the direction is tight and fearsomely clear." KJTheatre diary

On The Rivers of China

★★★★ The Music and Arts Hub

On The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui

★★★★ "Fabulously grotesque." The Age

On Frankenstein

★★★★★ "An impressive, thought provoking work." The Alternative Gig Guide

"Phil Rouse's bold and imaginative direction." The Australian

PRESS NIGHT: MONDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 7.30PM

PHOTOCALL: MONDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 5.00PM-5.30PM

Finborough Theatre, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED

Book online at www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk

No booking fees on online, personal or postal bookings

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FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

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

Sundays, Mondays and Tuesdays, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25 September 2018

Sunday and Monday evenings at 7.30pm. Tuesday matinees at 2.00pm.

Tickets £18, £16 concessions.

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

For more information, interviews and images, please contact

Antonella Petrancosta on e-mail press@finboroughtheatre.co.uk or **07512 609614**

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

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