



The National Theatre of Scotland and the Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh present the world premiere of

27

A new play by Abi Morgan, directed by Vicky Featherstone.

With set and costumes designs by Merle Hensel, lighting design by Natasha Chivers and sound design and music composed by Nick Powell.

The National Theatre of Scotland and the Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh are delighted to reunite, following on from their success earlier this year with *Dunsinane*, to present the world premiere of **27** by award-winning writer, Abi Morgan, directed by Vicky Featherstone, with Maureen Beattie and Nicholas Le Prevost in leading roles. **27** runs at the Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh from 21 October to 12 November, with a press performance on Wednesday 26 October at 7.45pm.

The full cast is: Maureen Beattie (Sister Ursula Mary), Emma Hartley-Miller, (Audrey Marie Hague), Finn den Hertog (Dr. Sam Parker), Molly Innes (Sister Ruth Augustine), Libby King (Dr Helen Jarvis), Colette O'Neil (Sister Miriam Masden), Nicholas Le Prevost (Dr. Richard Garfield) and Benny Young (Dr Jonathan Lees).

'My greatest fear in this world is to be left, the last nun standing, remote in hand, shouting quiz answers at the TV screen.'

Abi Morgan's new play - drawing on research contained within the book and study *Ageing with Grace* by David Snowden is an extraordinary examination of a lifestyle in decline, but one whose dignity and faith could hold the key to the issues of our times – our ageing population and the decline of our minds. **27** is an important and human play about loneliness, ageing, science and the loss of our sense of self.

Dr Richard Garfield has given Ursula a difficult choice. She is the mother superior in waiting of a convent that has been given the opportunity to take part in his revolutionary scientific study. This American study would require that the Nuns donate their brains after death to potentially unlock the mysteries of Alzheimer's and dementia. Ursula must weigh up the value of preserving her faith, versus embracing science.

The study is agreed and Richard and his team come to the convent every year to test the Nuns who are willing to take part. This union will change their lives forever. For Ursula, with the impending pressure of taking over the ailing convent, the study brings more challenges than she could ever have imagined and rocks her faith and her hitherto cloistered existence to its core.

Abi Morgan writes for theatre, film and TV. Her most recent theatre works include writing for Rupert Gould's *Decade* and *The Great Game* (Tricycle Theatre). Other theatre works includes *Skinned* and *Sleeping Around* (Paines Plough); *Tiny Dynamite* (Traverse); *Tender* (Hampstead); *Splendour* (a Fringe First Award-winner at the Edinburgh Festival in 2000); and *Fugue* (National Theatre). Her television work includes *My Fragile Heart*; *Murder*; *Sex Traffic* (Channel 4); *Tsunami – The Aftermath*; *White Girl* and *Royal Wedding*. Her new series for Kudos and the BBC called *The Hour* has just aired on BBC One. Her film writing credits include *Brick Lane*, an adaptation of Monica Ali's bestseller and; most recently; *Shame* directed by Steve McQueen. She also has a number of films in development including *The Invisible Woman* (BBC); *Suffragettes* (Film Four; Focus and Ruby Films); *Little Mermaid* (Working Title); and her script *Iron Lady*; for DJ Films and Pathe is currently in post-production.

Vicky Featherstone is the Artistic Director of the National Theatre of Scotland. Productions for the Company include: *The Wheel* by Zinnie Harris; *Wall of Death: A Way of Life* (co-directed with Stephen Skrynka); *The Miracle Man*; *Empty*; *Long Gone Lonesome*; *Cockroach* (a co-production with the Traverse Theatre); *365* (a co-production with the Edinburgh International Festival); *Mary Stuart* (a co-production

with the Citizens and Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh) and she co-directed *The Wolves In The Walls*. She has previously worked with Abi Morgan, directing Abi's plays, *Splendour* and *Tiny Dynamite*. Previously Vicky was Artistic Director of new writing company Paines Plough Theatre Company. Her Awards include seven Fringe Firsts, TMA Best Director, Manchester Evening News Best Director, two Herald Angels and an Amnesty International Freedom Expression Award. Vicky has also worked in television as drama executive for the BBC, Granada TV and Central TV. She created several original drama series; including *Where the Heart is* and *Silent Witness*. Vicky is a trustee of the Royal Conservatoire Scotland and Glasgow Science Centre.

Cast Biogs:

Maureen Beattie is making a welcome return to the Lyceum after appearing in John Byrne's *The Cherry Orchard* in 2010. She also appeared recently in *Ghosts* at the Citizen's Theatre. Her acting credits include *The History Plays; Richard III* and *The Lion; The Witch and the Wardrobe* (Royal Shakespeare Company); Liz Lochhead's *Medea* (Edinburgh Festival Fringe); *The Skin of Our Teeth* (Young Vic Theatre); and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Royal National Theatre). Her TV work includes *Twelfth Night* (Channel 4); *The Bill* and *Casualty*.

Nicholas Le Prevost is known to many through his extensive stage and screen work. In 2010 he was in *My Fair Lady* at Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris and *The Critic/The Real Inspector Hound* at Chichester Festival Theatre. Previous theatre work includes *Bedroom Farce; Uncle Vanya* and *Where There's A Will*; directed by Peter Hall; *The Philadelphia Story* (The Old Vic); *The Wild Duck* (Donmar Warehouse); *Much Ado About Nothing* (Royal Shakespeare Company) and *Blood* (Royal Court Theatre). He is also known for his roles in films including the 2011 film *Run For Your Wife* as well as classic British films *Bright Young Things; Shakespeare in Love* and *Land Girls*. His television credits include *Cranford; Doc Martin; Margaret; Midsomer Murder; Wild at Heart; Silent Witness* and *Poirot*.

Colette O'Neil has worked extensively in theatre including: *Women Of Lockerbie; The Power of Darkness; Clowns* (Orange Tree Theatre); *The People Next Door; Progress to the Park; Hamlet* (Theatre Royal Stratford East); *Close of Play; Equus* (National Theatre); *The Histories; The Wars of the Roses* (Royal Shakespeare Company); *The Big Picture* (Dundee Rep/RSA); *Gay Landscape; A Pagan Place* (Royal Court); *The Playboy of the Western World* (Citizens Theatre, Glasgow) and *The Cherry Orchard* (Nottingham Playhouse). She also appeared in the National Theatre of Scotland and The Donmar's production of *Be Near Me*. Her television and film work includes *Monarch of the Glen; Bad Girls; ;Taggart; Hamish Macbeth; Peak Practice; Casualty; Coronation Street; Doctor Finlay; Dr Who; Morecambe and Wise; Starting Over* and *Wild Flowers*.

Libby King is a member of the multi-award winning theatre company The TEAM who have just won the Edinburgh International Festival Fringe Prize 2011 after the huge success of their show *Mission Drift* at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2011. Other TEAM shows Libby has devised and performed in include the National Theatre of Scotland co-production of *Architecting* in 2008. Libby also won Best Female Performance at the Dublin Fringe Festival 2007 for the role of Sarah Springer in the TEAM's *Particularly in the Heartland*.

Benny Young's previous work for the National Theatre of Scotland includes *Be Near Me* (with Donmar); *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (with Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh/Citizens, Glasgow) and *The Wheel* (Traverse Theatre). Other theatre credits include *The Grapes of Wrath* (Chichester); *The Tobacco Merchant's Lawyer* (Tron/Traverse); *Six Acts of Love; The Drawer Boy* (Tron); *Night Time* (Traverse); *Hughie* (Arches); *The Crucible; A View from the Bridge; Hobson's Choice* (The Touring Consortium); *The Iceman Cometh* (Old Vic) and seasons with the National Theatre; London, the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Lyceum. Television and film work includes *Scottish Killers; Waking The Dead: Sins of The Father; Spooks; Talk to Me; Taggart; Coronation Street; Boon; Playing the Field; The Funny Man; The Bill; Between The Lines; Doctor Finlay; Chariots of Fire; Out of Africa* and *White Nights*.

Molly Innes was recently seen in the Lyceum's Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2011 show *Wondrous Flitting* directed by Mark Thomson, Artistic Director of the Lyceum. Other Lyceum work has included *Age of Arousal* with Stellar Quines and *Faust Parts One and Two*. Molly has also worked with National Theatre of Scotland

in *Rupture* by Davey Anderson. Other stage work has included *The Slab Boys Trilogy* at Traverse and *Plasticine* at Royal Court Theatre. TV and film work includes *Rebus*; *Taggart*; *Afterlife* and *Ratcatcher*.

Finn den Hertog was recently seen in *Miracle* at Oran Mor and *It's a Dead Liberty*. His stage performances include two shows with Grid Iron; *Spring Awakening* and *Ducky Does a Bronco* in 2010; *Gagarin Way*; *Ducky* and *The Wall* for Borderline Theatre and Kenny Ireland's production of *Sunset Song* for His Majesty's Theatre Aberdeen.

Emma Hartley-Miller has appeared in films including *Sket*; *Wasted*; *Touchdown* and *The Bet*. Her recent TV includes regular appearances in *Emmerdale* and *Coronation Street* and *White Heat* for the BBC.

PRESS PERFORMANCE ON WEDNESDAY 26 OCTOBER AT 7.45PM

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT ANDREW NEILSON ON 0141 227 9497/07912 549 0139
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OR MICHELLE MANGAN ON 0131 248 4822 or email: mmangan@lyceum.org.uk

LYCEUM TICKETS & PERFORMANCES:

Performances: 21 October – 12 November 2011

Evenings: Tuesday – Saturday at 7.45pm **Matinees:** 26, 29 October and 2, 5, 12 November at 2.30pm

Box Office: 0131 248 4848 **Online:** www.lyceum.org.uk/27 **Mobile:** m.lyceum.org.uk

EVENTS AND ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCES

Curtain Raiser: Friday 28 October at 6pm - Discussion with David Greig and Paul Henderson Scott - as part of the National Theatre of Scotland's Staging the Nation series

Post-show discussion with members of the cast: Tuesday 1 November , after the performance (FREE)

Matinee Discussion Group Wednesday 2 November, after matinee

Touch Tour for the visually impaired: Thursday 3 November at 6.15pm & Saturday 5 November at 1pm

Audio described performances: Thursday 3 November at 7.45pm & Saturday 5 November at 2.30pm

BSL Interpreted performance: Wednesday 9 November at 7.45pm

Captioned Performance: Saturday 12 November at 2.30pm

Tickets

Evening performances (full price): £14.50- £29/**Matinee Performances:** Wednesday and Saturday Matinees £16/**Concessions:** £2 off full price for all Tuesday – Friday shows

Under 18s: Sat Evenings £15/Tuesday – Friday evenings and Sat Matinees £10/Wednesday matinees £5

School Groups: £8 (stalls & grand circle) £7(upper circle) Matinees – all seats £7. One teacher FREE with every ten pupils.

Registered unemployed: Tuesday - Friday evenings all seats £10 Wednesday Matinees all seats £5 Tuesday - Thursday £1 Stalls tickets available on the day (max 20 per show, stalls only). ID required.

Students/ people with disabilities: Sat Evenings £15/Tues – Fri eve and Sat Mat £10/Wed matinees £5

Groups and Schools – Call 0131 248 4949

School Discounts: Wednesday matinees £5/Tuesday – Thursday evenings £8.50 (Stalls),£7.50 (Upper Circle)/Friday/Saturday evenings £15 and Saturday matinees £10/One teacher FREE with every 10 pupils

Groups discounts for 8 or more people: Evenings: Stalls/Grand Circle £5 off and Upper Circle £3 off full price tickets plus one FREE ticket for every 20 paid for/**Matinees:** £3 off full price tickets plus one FREE ticket for every 20 paid for.

NOTES TO EDITORS

The National Theatre of Scotland is supported by the Scottish Government. Since its launch in February 2006, the National Theatre of Scotland has been involved in creating over 137 productions in 125 different locations. With no building of its own, the Company takes theatre all over Scotland and beyond, working with existing and new venues and companies to create and tour theatre of the highest quality. It takes place in the great buildings of Scotland, but also in site-specific locations, airports and tower blocks, community halls and drill halls, ferries and forests. The company has performed to almost 600,000 people, across three continents.

The Royal Lyceum Theatre Company, or the Lyceum as it is fondly known, is one of Scotland's leading producing drama companies. Established in 1965 it has gained a reputation for excellence in both classical and contemporary work. It is committed to developing the country's considerable indigenous talents while presenting the best of international drama to the public. The Lyceum aims to reach a wide audience, whatever their age or experience of theatre going, and to enable them to access the richly imaginative world of drama. The Lyceum Theatre Company has worked with co-producers across the country including The Bush, London, the Citizens Theatre, Glasgow, National Theatre of Scotland, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Nottingham Playhouse, Horsecross Arts, Vanishing Point Theatre Company, Stellar Quines, Dundee Rep Theatre and Vox Motus.