

FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

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

Winter Season 2016-17 | October 2016 – January 2017 at the Finborough Theatre

The first full professional London production in over 40 years

MAGNIFICENCE

by Howard Brenton.

Directed by Josh Roche. Designed by Philip Lindley. Lighting by Joe Price.

Presented by Fat Git Theatre in association with Neil McPherson for the Finborough Theatre.

Cast: Will Bliss. Tyson Douglas. Tim Faulkner. Joel Gillman. Daisy Hughes. Hayward B Morse. Chris Porter.
Eva-Jane Willis.

*"I loathe us, I loathe our stupid puerile view of the World ... That WE have only to do it,
that WE have only to go puff, and the monster buildings will go splat..."*

The first professional London production in over 40 years of **Magnificence**, the seminal 1973 play by revered British dramatist **Howard Brenton**, runs at the Finborough Theatre for a strictly limited four week season from Tuesday, 25 October 2016 (**Press Nights: Thursday, 27 October and Friday, 28 October 2016 at 7.30pm**).

London, 1973. Poverty, homelessness, rising inequality, unemployment, industrial disputes. Five young activists squat a disused building and try to make a stand against it all.

Fired up by left-wing idealism but short on pragmatism, they discover that the revolution may be a long time coming, and when the protest leads to tragedy, some of them are driven to more violent methods. Meanwhile, on the banks of the Cam, a dying Tory grandee performs his last political act.

Both epic and intimate, **Magnificence** takes us from the grubby barracks of the revolutionary struggle, to the heart of centre-right Tory politicking, creating a panoramic vision of Britain at a pivotal moment in history. Many of its themes remain burning issues today – police brutality, drug abuse, shallow politicians, a social housing crisis, and whether violence can ever be justified for political ends. **Magnificence** showcases the humane, political voice which has made Howard Brenton such a remarkable force in British theatre.

"It's very exciting that a company of young people, who weren't born when I wrote it, are so passionate about reviving my 1973 play MAGNIFICENCE at the Finborough Theatre. When it was written there was an ugly debate on the left: was the 'direct action' of urban terrorist groups like the Baader Meinhof gang in Germany and the Red Brigades in Italy justified? I wrote the play to clear my head of this political psychodrama. It came out as a tragic-comedy, near to farce at times. But it could be called 'a tragedy of waste'. Maybe the young, angry, confused writer I was then hit on a truth: idealism can turn to hatred and destroy the best of us". – Howard Brenton

Magnificence originally premiered at the Royal Court Theatre in June 1973, directed by Max Stafford-Clark, and with a cast including Pete Postlethwaite, Kenneth Cranham, Michael Kitchen and Robert Eddison.

The run will be accompanied by the **FINBOROUGHFORUM**, a series of informal post-show discussions and debates, on Wednesday evenings: **26 October, 2, 9 and 16 November**. All events are free to ticketholders for that evening's performance of the play. **FINBOROUGHFORUM** events will all be Twitter friendly with live tweets from @FinboroughForum. Using the hashtag #finfor, the speakers will also answer questions posed on Twitter so everyone can be included, no matter where they are in the world. The events will feature a Q&A session with Howard Brenton, discussions with academics on the political parallels between the early 70s and today, and panel talks with present-day activists campaigning on similar themes.

Playwright **Howard Brenton** is one of the UK's most respected dramatists. His acclaimed past plays include *The*

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Press Information

Romans In Britain, Bloody Poetry, Weapons of Happiness, Pravda with David Hare, and more recently *In Extremis, Anne Boleyn* and *Doctor Scroggy's War* for Shakespeare's Globe, *Paul and Never So Good* for the National Theatre, and *55 Days, The Arrest of Ai Weiwei, Drawing the Line* and *Lawrence After Arabia* at Hampstead Theatre. He also wrote fourteen episodes of BBC spy drama *Spooks*.

Director **Josh Roche** is the Artistic Director of Fat Git Theatre. In 2016 he has been Directing and Assistant Directing at the Royal Shakespeare Company, directing the opening of *The World Shakespeare Congress* and working in collaboration with the Southbank Sinfonia on *Shakespeare in Music*. He has worked on Gregory Doran's *Death of a Salesman* and *Shakespeare Live*, Maria Aberg's *Doctor Faustus* and Polly Findlay's *The Alchemist*. He's also assisted John Dove at Shakespeare's Globe (*Doctor Scroggy's War, Farinelli and the King*), Steve Marmion at Soho Theatre (*Utopia, The Boy Who Fell into a Book*), with English Touring Theatre (*Eternal Love*) and with Joe Murphy (*Blink, Taming of the Shrew*). For Fat Git Theatre, he has directed *A Third* (Finborough Theatre), *Winky* (Soho Theatre and Underbelly at the Edinburgh Festival), *Encounter* (Theatre503), (*i feel fine*) (New Diorama Theatre and Vault Festival), *Uninvited* (New Diorama Theatre and Bedlam Theatre at the Edinburgh Festival) and *Gaia: New Approaches* as the culmination of Fat Git's residency at the University of Warwick. Other direction includes *The Cafe* a site-specific play at The Coffee Works Project in association with Old Red Lion Theatre. He also works as a dramaturg and literary consultant for Sonia Friedman Productions.

The cast is:

Will Bliss | Will

Trained at London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.

Theatre includes *Doctor Faustus, Don Quixote* and *The Alchemist* (Royal Shakespeare Company), *Money, Medea* and *Tropicana* (Shunt Theatre Company), *Double Think* (Edinburgh Festival), *Darker The Night* and *Roast* (Hen and Chickens Theatre), *Pool Hall at the End of the Earth* (Theatre503), and *Honorias and Mammon* and *Unfortunate Mother* (The Owle Schreame Theatre Company).

Film includes *Cold Calling, Art Is...* and *Godard and Others*.

Television includes *Lucky Man, Mr Sloane, EastEnders, Jo, Utopia, Holby City, Dave Shakespeare, White Heat, Oh My God* and *Misfits*.

Tyson Douglas | Cliff

Theatre includes *Timon of Athens* (National Theatre), *La Boheme* (Soho Theatre), *Bouncers* (Leicester Square Theatre), *Stitched Up* (Theatre Royal Stratford East), *Lost In Mozart* and *Sweet Charity* (Edinburgh Festival), *The Winning Crowd* (Lost Theatre) and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *Saint Joan* (Workhouse Theatre).

Film includes *D Is For Detroit*.

Television includes *Doctors* and *Holby City*.

Radio includes *A Small Town Murder*.

Tim Faulkner | Constable/Alice

Productions at the Finborough Theatre include *Sommer 14*.

Theatre includes *The Mousetrap* (St Martin's Theatre), *The Guardsman* (Albery Theatre), *Dangerous Corner* (Ambassadors Theatre), *Inspiration Gala Performance* (London Palladium), *One Moment in Time* (Her Majesty's Theatre), *Collision* (Hackney Empire), *Three Women* (King's Head Theatre), *The Dorchester* (Jermyn Street Theatre), *Above All Courage* (New End Theatre, Hampstead) *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Romeo and Juliet* (Stafford Festival Shakespeare), *Emilia Galotti* (Trilogy Theatre Company), *Lock Up Your Daughters* (Belgrade Theatre, Coventry), *Outside Edge* (Churchill Theatre, Bromley), *Boston Story* and *Charley's Aunt* (The Mill at Sonning), *First Impressions* (Theatre Royal Margate) and *The Dream Time* (Edinburgh Festival).

Television includes *Much Ado About Nothing, Messiah, Inspector Morse, Rumpole of The Bailey, Howards Way, Casualty, Doctors, My Hero, The Fourth Arm, Allo Allo, Stalkey and Co* and *Old Men at The Zoo*.

Joel Gillman | Jed

Theatre includes *A Life Of Galileo* (Royal Shakespeare Company), *Chicken Soup With Barley* (Royal Court Theatre), *Saved* (Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith) and *The Way Of The World* (Crucible Theatre, Sheffield).

Television includes *The Living And The Dead, Frankenstein Chronicles, Ripper Street, Silent Witness, Walter, Casualty, The Mimic, Being Human* and *Garrow's Law*.

Daisy Hughes | Mary

Theatre includes *Doctor Scroggy's War* (Shakespeare's Globe), *Eternal Love* (Shakespeare's Globe and National Tour), *Gallathea* (Shakespeare's Globe At The Wilderness Festival), *Richard III* (Royal Shakespeare Company), *Swimming* (Soho Theatre), *Playing With Grown Ups* (Theatre503 and 59E59 Theaters, New York) and *The Illusion* (Southwark Playhouse).

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Film includes *The Merciless Beauty*, *The Price Of Death*, *Kids In Love* and *Home At Last*.

Television includes *Doctors*.

Hayward B Morse | Babs/Old Man

Productions at the Finborough Theatre include *Eden's Empire*, *Weapons of Happiness* and *So Great A Crime*.

Trained at Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

Theatre includes *84 Charing Cross Road* (Arts Theatre, Cambridge), *Bar Mitvah Boy* and *School for Wives* (Upstairs at the Gatehouse), *Barking In Essex* (Wyndham's Theatre), *Barefoot In The Park* (Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford), *An Ideal Husband* (English Theatre of Frankfurt), *The Caretaker*, *London Suite* and *Relatively Speaking* (English Theatre of Hamburg), *Deathtrap* (Ashcroft Theatre, Croydon), *Travels With My Aunt* (Birmingham Rep), *The Rocky Horror Show* (King's Road Theatre), *The Canterbury Tales* (Phoenix Theatre), *What The Butler Saw* (Queen's Theatre) and the Broadway production of *Butley* (Morosco Theater, New York) for which he received a Tony award nomination.

Film includes *Agency* and *Death Wish 3*.

Television includes *The Secret Files*, *James May's Man Lab* and *Footballers' Wives*.

Audio work includes *The Theban Plays*, *The Discourses of Epictetus*, *The Life of the Buddha* and over 100 audiobooks for the Royal National Institute For Blind People.

Chris Porter | Slaughter/Lenin

Productions at the Finborough Theatre include *Martine*.

Trained at London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.

Theatre includes *Romeo and Juliet* (Kenneth Branagh Theatre Company, Garrick Theatre), *The Winter's Tale* and *The Maid's Tragedy* (Shakespeare's Globe), *The Winter's Tale*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Wind in the Willows*, *Henry V*, *Twelfth Night*, *Othello*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Guildford Shakespeare Company), *Round and Round the Garden* (The Mill at Sonning), *What the Dickens* (Drum Theatre, Plymouth), *Friend or Foe* (Mercury Theatre, Colchester), *The Hypochondriac* (Liverpool Playhouse), *Victory* and *The Art of Success* (Arcola Theatre), *Hard Times* (Compass Theatre, Ickenham), *Onyos the Wild* (Theatre503 and Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh), *Tartuffe* (Watermill Theatre, Newbury), *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* (Globe Theatre, Warsaw), *Angels Among The Trees* (Nottingham Playhouse), *The Legend of King Arthur* and *Bartleby* (Red Shift Theatre Company), *Saints Day* and *The Road to Ruin* (Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond) and *The Dwarfs*, *The Local Stigmatic* and *Lakeboat* (Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, and Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh).

Film includes *The Winslow Boy*.

Television includes *Bad Girls*, *Footballers' Wives*, *The Bill*, *Nail Bomber* and *The Genius of Mozart*.

Radio includes *The Wild Asses Skin* and *Heart Transplant*.

Eva-Jane Willis | Veronica

Trained at Drama Centre London.

Theatre includes *Perfect Match* (Palace Theatre, Watford), *We Really Should Do Something* (Bush Theatre), *Long Story Short* (Pleasance London and Charing Cross Theatre), *Next Door* and *Bruises* (Tabard Theatre) and *The 3rd Sector* and *En Folkefiende* (Pleasance London).

Film includes *Chick Lit*, *Le Medre* and *Only Child*.

Television includes *Humans*, *Uncle* and *Maigret Sets a Trap*.

Awards include First Prize Laurence Olivier Bursary Award.

The press on the original production of Magnificence

"Arguably [Brenton's] first real masterpiece" Andrew Dickson, The Guardian

"A wonderful piece of theatre; annexing whole new chunks of modern life and presenting them in a style at once truthful and magnified." Irving Wardle, The Times on the original production.

The press on playwright Howard Brenton's recent plays

"A quiet, but highly topical, masterpiece" ★★★★★ Four Stars, The Telegraph on *Lawrence After Arabia*

"Howard Brenton's fine new play...Brenton's fizzing gift for language...hits you in the heart" ★★★★★ Four Stars, The Guardian on *Doctor Scroggy's War*

"Crams an amazing amount into 25 scenes of cool clarity...has considerable topical resonance" ★★★★★ Four Stars, The Guardian on *Drawing the Line*

"A very good play – moving, scary, gripping, inventive and at times laugh-out-loud funny" ★★★★★ Four Stars, The Telegraph on *The Arrest of Ai Weiwei*

"Cracking... this informative, funny play is formidably well written" ★★★★★ Four Stars, Daily Mail on *Anne Boleyn*

"In the past few years, without any fanfare...Howard Brenton has not only made a comeback, but also become the chief chronicler of the nation's past. ...compellingly complex...the language of the play shines like burnished gold" ★★★★★ Four Stars, The Arts Desk on *55 Days*

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The press on director Josh Roche's past productions for Fat Git Theatre

"An exciting company, asking fascinating questions" Catherine Love, Exeunt

"A provocative, challenging look at the limits of open relationships" ★★★★★ Four Stars, The Stage on *A Third*

"Laura Jacqmin's risqué and rueful comedy has a voyeuristic intimacy and is genuinely funny" The Guardian on *A Third*

"Fat Git Theatre Company, have found a very human way of looking at an intractable problem, and of doing so with a charm that makes these unspeakably big and terrifying issues feel relevant to the small, quiet realities of all our lives."

★★★★★ Four Stars, Exeunt on (*i feel fine*)

"The story vibrates with the kind of quiet humanity that warms the best of Daniel Kitson or Alan Bennett. Director Josh Roche displays a strong sense of timing and confident understatement." ★★★★★ Four Stars, Exeunt on *Winky*

"Josh Roche's direction [is] stylish, inventive and remarkably assured." ★★★★★ Four Stars, A Younger Theatre on *Specie*

PRESS NIGHTS: THURSDAY, 27 OCTOBER 2016 AND FRIDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2016 AT 7.30PM

PHOTOCALL: TUESDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2016 AT 1.30PM–2.00PM

Finborough Theatre, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED

Box Office 0844 847 1652 Book online at www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk

Tuesday, 25 October – Saturday, 19 November 2016

Tuesday to Saturday evenings at 7.30pm. Sunday matinees at 3.00pm. Saturday matinees at 3.00pm (from 5 November 2016).

Prices until 6 November 2016 – Tickets £16, £14 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £14 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £16 all seats. Previews (25 and 26 October) £12 all seats.

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

£12 tickets for residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea on Saturday, 29 October 2016 when booked online only.

Prices from 8 November 2016 – Tickets £18, £16 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £16 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £18 all seats.

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

And

FINBOROUGHFORUM post show discussions

Wednesdays, 26 October, 2, 9 and 16 November 2016

Free to ticketholders for that evening's performance of the play.

For more information, interviews and images, please contact

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

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

Nothing Really Matters Magnificence Extended Remix Magnificence, Tiesto, Becky Hill Universal Music, a division of Universal International Music BV. \$1.29. 7. Remember Extended Mix Magnificence Axtone Records. \$1.29. 8. Out Of My Mind Original Mix Steff Da Campo, Magnificence Axtone Records. Magnificence @ Mainstage, Top 101 Producers Celebration, 1001Tracklists Live. Zinderlong (80.7k). 13 days.Â Magnificence - Musical Freedom Radio Residency October. sndvl (58.5k). 1 month.