



www.southdevonplayers.com
southdevonplayers@gmail.com

Secretary: Miss Laura Jury BA(hons), MEd
Tel 07855 090589
southdevonplayers@gmail.com

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release – 30/ 08/ 2020

...PRESS RELEASE START...

Internationally award-winning Brixham theatre company announce an autumn “virtual season” of plays with an international team of actors and writers bringing local creatives and international Broadway/ TV names together in a series of theatre created and performed online.

The South Devon Players Theatre & Film Company, remain active through the Covid crisis, creating virtual theatre productions, as well as planning for the future.

This “virtual autumn season” is a response to the Covid19 restrictions on performing traditional venue-based theatre. While the Players will return to normal theatre performance as soon as practicable and safe for both cast and crew, in line with the current government guidance, they feel it very important to keep working and creating in the interim.

For the time being therefore, the Players have moved into cyberspace, with actors and crew joining us on screen from their home studios, in the UK, USA, and Ireland, rehearsing and performing online, where audiences all over the world can access the performance, and the cast & crew can earn equal shares of whatever is made from the online performances ticket sales (every penny goes to the actors and crew).

For our online season, we have teamed up with three new writers; Ashley Griffin, Germaine Shames, and Rachel O'Neill

Broadcasts of the plays will be ticketed events, via a link to a hidden area of our .com website, provided to ticket buyers at the time of ticket purchase. Tickets will be sold via our website box office, linked to our ticketsource account. <https://www.southdevonplayers.com/box-office.html>

The first play, due at the beginning of October, This show features a transatlantic cast, featuring: Ryan Clardy (*Trial*); Ashley Griffin (*Hamlet*, *The Greatest Showman*); Jordan Lage (CBS'S *Madam Secretary*, HBO's *Boardwalk Empire*); Meredith Patterson* (42nd Street (Peggy Sawyer, Broadway, ABC's Boston Legal) and Peter Lewis (CBBC's *WolfBlood*,) . The play explores the power and importance of storytelling, *Snow* (a new play by US writer Ashley Griffin, creator of the pop culture phenomenon *Forever Deadward*, and the first person ever nominated for a major award for both playing and directing *Hamlet*,) follows three disparate storylines that all revolve around the fairy tale *Snow White*. Utilizing a structure similar to *Cloud Atlas* and *The Hours*, six actors playing multiple roles tell the stories of the Grimm Brothers (who originally collected and published the classic fairy tale), the Campbells (a Victorian theatrical family whose lives begin to mirror *Snow White*), and modern day Astrid (a young woman who, after her abusive mother puts her in a coma, must decide whether or not to wake up). Incorporating aspects of *American Gods*, and classic storytelling techniques a la *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Snow* is a dark and moving play that mines our storytelling traditions both in style and subject matter. SNOW received three NYITA nominations and was performed off Broadway in

NYC and developed at Playwrights Horizons.

The second play, due at the end of October, is *The Lost Girl* by Germaine Shames, based on the eponymous novel by D.H. Lawrence.

Alvina Houghton, the headstrong daughter of a widowed Midlands draper, comes of age just as her father's business is failing. In a desperate attempt to regain his fortune and secure his daughter's proper place in society, James Houghton buys a theatre. Among the travelling performers he employs is Ciccio, a sensual Italian who immediately captures Alvina's attention. A celebration of freedom, however fleeting, and a testament to the power of the imagination to transform even the most mundane life. The script has been vetted by international D.H. Lawrence scholar, Catherine Brown. Jessica Levinson Young, Artistic Director of Untold Theatre, writes, "I absolutely loved this script for *The Lost Girl*. It has incredible pace and the dialogue simply leaps off the page!" . The script won Starlight Theater's 2019-20 Playwriting Award . Another of Germaine's D.H. Lawrence adaptations, *THE VIRGIN* and the *GYPSY*, received a reading at the 2018 Festival of New American Theatre.

Then comes *Sir Walter's Women*, a play written by Rachel O'Neill, for 2Time Theatre in Winchester. This is a one-act drama that reimagines the life of the charismatic poet, pirate and son of Devon, Sir Walter Raleigh. The play looks at his relationships with the two most important women in his life; one domestic with his wife Bess Throckmorton, and the other political as he manoeuvres his status as a favourite of Elizabeth I to satisfy his political ambitions. His great error is marrying Bess in secret, to the great and lasting displeasure of the Queen. The play ends with Sir Walter's incarceration, trial and execution. Rachel's plays, *Tilly* and *The Spitfires* and *The Fasting Girl* have had rehearsed readings at the Nuffield Theatre, Southampton and her most recent work, *Eager for the Air* was shortlisted by the RAF for an audio drama marking the Battle of Britain.

And finally – William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* . A project by some of our team members, this adaptation of the full, original text, creative challenge exploring 'further developing on the idea of creating digital performance and new techniques of expressing characters, with the roles being split between two actors. Through painstaking character development, innovative performance, video editing, and use of online media tools, this production is going to be one which presents a traditional comedy, in a very new, modern way.

As is widely known, the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown, caused postponement and cancellation of live shows for several months, for every theatre in the UK. During lockdown, the South Devon Players decided to resist the trend of companies closing, and the Players decided to create online performances, in which the actors come together to perform online from the safety of their own homes. This in itself has not been easy, as many people in the team, have had to learn new technology & software, and find ways to make it work on household electronics, with the cast and crew working from their lockdown locations mainly in south Devon but also sheltering in place spread across the UK, as well as the Republic of Ireland, and the USA. .

The South Devon Players Theatre and Film Company, are developing a proud tradition of creating world-class historical and classical dramas. In 2019, their production of *Macbeth*, was booked for a second tour and won an international theatre award in New York for its professionalism and creativity. Laura Jury, the director of that production of *Macbeth*, & many of the Player's shows, and founder of the theatre company, has returned to lead this new project. Laura has also recently been selected to appear in an online Shakespeare project by the Globe Theatre. With lockdown, the Players have been using the internet to perform and livestream digital theatre from Brixham, around the world to global audiences

The South Devon Players were founded in the winter of 2005-6, on the proceeds of a carboot sale, to create professional opportunities for local actors, and has flourished ever since; previously winning national and regional arts awards, including the national Epic Award 2017 for England, a national arts award celebrating creativity and innovation in grassroots arts. Based in Brixham, the Players primarily specialise in researched historical theatre productions and old "Classics".

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION OR FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

www.southdevonplayers.com

Facebook & Twitter: @sdevonplayers

Instagram: @sdevonplayers1

email: southdevonplayers@gmail.com

---PRESS RELEASE END----

PRESS RELEASE SENT BY

Miss Laura Jury

07855 090589

southdevonplayers@gmail.com

ATTCHMENTS

-Promotional images for each play (titled by the play)

-headshot of Laura Jury, company owner and founder.