

Anna Christie

by Eugene O'Neill



directed by Jerry Lyne

NVT
NEW
VENTURE
THEATRE

Bedford Place,
Brighton BN1 2PT

PERFORMANCES:

Fri 10th - Sat 18th November 2017 - 7.45 pm
Matinee Sun 12th & Sat 18th - 2.30pm
(No Sun/Mon eves)

ONLINE BOOKING: www.newventure.org.uk/tickets
BOX OFFICE INFORMATION: 01273 746118

 @nvt_brighton

THEATRE ◀
NEW WRITING ◀
CLASSES ◀
LICENSED BAR ◀

50p

Anna Christie

Following Dan Walker's great success with 'Hughie' in March, we are delighted to stage Eugene O'Neill's Pulitzer Prize winning play Anna Christie.

Eugene O'Neill was born in New York City in 1888, son of a well-known actor. He spent a year at Princetown University (1906) before signing on as a seaman and travelling widely. A prolific writer, who is often considered the father of modern American drama, O'Neill was quintessentially an autobiographical playwright. The sea, bars and alcohol all played a large part of his life and work. He spent some of his early years at sea, proud of the fact that he qualified as an Able Seaman. An unsettled childhood, his mother becoming an addict after taking morphine during his birth, the death of a brother and the constant absence of his actor father greatly affecting his life and work.

Following a period in a sanatorium recovering from TB, he wrote his first play, *A Wife for Life*. In 1916 he joined the Provincetown Players who produced the first of his plays to be staged. His Broadway debut came in 1920 with *Beyond the Horizon*, which won him his first Pulitzer Prize. In 1936 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. He died on 27 November 1953, struggling to get out of bed he cried 'I knew it, I knew it! Born in a goddam hotel room and dying in a hotel room!'

Like a lot of his earlier works, Anna Christie focuses on the effect the sea and alcohol has on his characters, and typically, the play opens in a waterfront bar, Johnny the Priest, based on the downtown bar and flop house Jimmy the Priest's, where he spent time in an alcoholic haze in 1911, whilst arranging the divorce from his first wife.

A constant theme is the inevitability of the power of the sea, whatever we do, it wins. It offers freedom, but at a price. It is a convenience, allowing our characters to blame their failings on 'that ol' devil sea' as Chris Christopherson repeatedly tells us, but offers Anna a new start, who, whilst staring into the night fog says 'I feel clean, somehow, as if I had taken a bath'.

The story begins with Anna Christie being sent by her Swedish seafaring father Chris to live with cousins in Minnesota, where she is badly abused. Drifting into prostitution, she escapes and writes to her father, telling him it's time to help her. They are reconciled, but whilst on her father's barge they come across a shipwrecked sailor Mat Burke and Anna falls in love. So, dare she tell them the dark truth and risk everything?

O'Neill won his 2nd Pulitzer Prize for this play which is about love and forgiveness, charting one woman's longing to forget the dark secrets of her past and her hope for salvation.

O'Neill's first version of this play, begun in January 1919, was titled 'Chris Christopherson' and performed as 'Chris' in out-of-town try-outs. It was not a success. O'Neill revised it in 1921, radically changing the focus from Chris Christopherson to his daughter Anna, changing her from a pure woman needing to be protected into a prostitute, who finds reformation and love from life on the sea. The new version of the play, now titled Anna Christie, had its premiere on Broadway at the Vanderbilt Theatre on November 2, 1921, and ran for 177 performances before closing in April 1923. There have been many revivals including the Donmar (2011) and Triad (2014).

This has been a challenging and exciting project to work on, stretching the talent of all involved. And what a great and talented group of actors, designers, stage crew and production team we have, all working to make sure we give full justice to this powerful, atmospheric drama. We are sure you will not be disappointed.

Jerry Lyne - Director

Ulrike Schilling - Production Manager

ACT 1

Johnny-the-Priest's' saloon near the water front. New York City late afternoon

ACT 2

*The barge 'Simeon Winthrop', at anchor in the harbour of Provincetown, Mass.
Ten days later at night*

20 minute Interval.

ACT 3

Cabin of the barge, at dock in Boston. A week later in the afternoon

ACT 4

The same. Two days later at night

Time of the play – About 1910

CAST (in order of appearance)

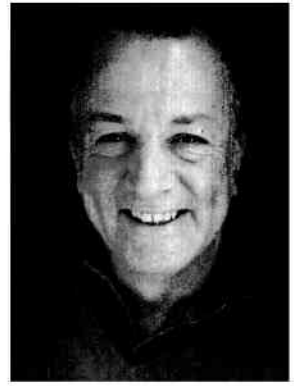
Johnny the Priest :	Martin Ryan
Chris Christopherson :	Mark Lester
Marthy :	Lyn Snowdon
Anna Christie :	Isabella McCarthy Sommerville
Mat Burke :	Chris Gates

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director :	Jerry Lyne
Production Manager/Asst Director :	Ulrike Schilling
Stage Managers :	Gabrielle Bowring Bryony Weaver Amanda Harman Michelle Harris
Costume Design :	Pat Boxall
Hair & Makeup :	Lucy Dillon
Movement Coach :	Uli Schilling
Set Design :	Adam Kincaid
Set Construction :	George Walker Simon Glazier
Set Decoration & Artwork :	Hannah Clark Melissa Noble Stage Mgmt Team
Lighting Design :	Phil Palmer
Rigging :	Seb Warrington
Lighting Operation :	Alex Epps
Sound Design & Operation :	Ian Black
Props :	Stage Management & Set Crew
Poster :	Strat & Tamsin Mastoris
Programme :	Tamsin Mastoris
Photography :	Strat & Tamsin Mastoris
Publicity & Marketing :	Anna Christie Cast, Crew and Production Team
Health & Safety	Ian Black
Technical Support Lighting	Strat Mastoris
Script Editor	Barry Purchase

Martin Ryan - Johnny the Priest

Previous stage credits include Vladimir in Wendy Wasserstein's 'Isn't it Romantic' and Il Capitano for La Commedia dell'Arte. Martin joined NVT this year and this is his first production with the company. Originally from Cork, Martin is a long standing resident of Hove. A natural raconteur, he particularly enjoys comedy improvisation and musical theatre. He has undertaken formal class work in both, as well as scene study classes at the Herbert Berghof studio in New York. Unlike his character "Johnny the Priest" he is not averse to a glass of Whiskey, Irish of course!



Mark Lester - Chris Christopherson

This is Mark's second play since returning to NVT after 20 years away. He appeared in 'The Deep Blue Sea' earlier this year, playing Sir William Collyer.

Mark trained at the Lee Strasberg Studio in London and has appeared in a variety of roles in Sussex, London and Auckland, New Zealand, playing roles as diverse as Billy in 'Billy Liar' to Michael Cassio in 'Othello'. He is delighted to once again to be working alongside the hugely talented people involved in Anna Christie.

Lyn Snowdon - Marthy

Recently Lyn has had fun playing "Mari"- the gin-swilling, rough-talking, man-eating , inappropriately-dressed mother in 'Little Voice', followed by "Maggie"-the independent, feisty daughter in 'Hobson's Choice' who chooses her man and forces him to marry her! Now Lyn is relishing the role of "Marthy" who is at home in the bar and gives men a run for their money! Who would ever have thought of choosing Lyn for these roles!





Isabella McCarthy Sommerville - Anna Christie

Isabella graduated from Royal Holloway, University of London, in 2013, with a degree in Drama and Theatre Studies. This is her second production at NVT, having appeared as Ann Welch in 'The Deep Blue Sea' in March. Her most recent theatre credits include Paula in 'Timeshare' (written & directed by Philip Ayckbourn) and Hilda in the UK tour of 'A Good Jew' (Something Underground Theatre Company). Other roles include Elizabeth in 'The Circle', Rachel in 'Inherit the Wind', Vickie in 'The Thrill of Love', Emily in 'Our Town' and Anne Page in 'The Merry Wives of Windsor'.

Chris Gates - Mat Burke

Chris is a Brighton based actor, writer and human man. He graduated from the Academy of Creative Training (ACT) in 2016, roles include Malvolio in 'Twelfth Night' at The Old Market, Alan 'The Gopher' Altoplane in 'Running Mate' at The Iris Theatre and Jasper in 'Stones' at The Rialto.



Jerry Lyne - Director

As he would put it, he has been around the block a few times. Some of his acting roles with various Theatre Companies include: Willy Loman in 'Death of a Salesman,' Eddie Waters in 'The Comedians', Kent in 'Lear', Iago in 'Othello', Truffaldino in 'Servant of Two Masters', Henry Higgins in 'Pygmalion', Alfieri in 'A View From A Bridge', Polonius in 'Hamlet' and a best actor award for Gregory Solomon in Arthur Miller's 'The Price'. Recent plays directed at NVT: Bill McIlwraith's 'The Anniversary', Rona Munro's 'Bold Girls', David Mamet's 'Boston Marriage' Stephen Macdonald's 'Not about Heroes' and Arthur Miller's 'Broken Glass' Best Production awards for Sam Shepard's 'Fool for Love' and Rona Munro's 'Iron'.

Many thanks to:

Thanks as always to Jezz Bowden and Front of House Team, James Macauley and Box Office Team. Also to Ellen Cairns and Eleanor Gamper for help with costumes - and all the NVT people without whom this production would not be possible.

We are dedicating this Production to the memory of Richard Gamper, Life Member, Trustee and good friend who was so instrumental in the refurbishment of our Upstairs Theatre, set building and managing projects within the theatre. Much missed.

COMING SOON

TRUE WEST
BY SAM SHEPARD
directed by Steven O'Shea
18TH - 27TH JANUARY 2018
(THEATRE UPSTAIRS)

Austin, a successful screenwriter, is working on a movie project for a Hollywood producer, Saul, while house sitting for his mother who is vacationing in Alaska. When his estranged older brother Lee, a drunken petty thief, unexpectedly arrives to stay, the two engage in a lethal battle of wills.

Sam Shepard remains one of the most celebrated, prolific and important playwrights of his generation. A coruscatingly funny and violent portrayal of sibling rivalry, True West stands at the forefront of his outstanding body of work.

COMING NEXT

THE MESSIAH
BY PATRICK BARLOW
directed by Rod Lewis
8TH - 16TH DECEMBER 2017
(STUDIO THEATRE)

"Ridiculously funny yet gloriously exhilarating" wrote the Guardian about the National Theatre of Brent's efforts to enact the entire Christmas story.

Joseph, Mary, the Archangel Gabriel, Herod, God, and many, many more are all performed by the self-admiring Desmond Olivier Dingle (Artistic Director, Auteur, Master Thespian) and his entire company of one - the helpful (but not always) and willing (but not always) Raymond. All spasmodically accompanied by the wayward Mrs Flowers, opera singer.

An inspired satire that sends up theatre's epic pretensions and yet can still evoke the momentous.

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Supporting NVT

We are a membership club, founded in 1947. We perform established plays, both classical and contemporary, and are a showcase for new writing. If you are interested in joining us, please pick up a membership form in the foyer. In 1983, NVT bought the freehold of this listed Victorian building which needs constant investment to maintain its integrity. To keep NVT going, we need your financial support, either to add to our regular sponsors (annual package £250) or you can be a Cherub for a fiver, an Angel for £100, Archangel for £500 or an Archangel Gabriel for £1,000. Please look out for the leaflets in the Theatre. As an Angel you will be listed on the Role of Honour in the Theatre.

If you are interested, please email fundraising@newventure.org.uk for more information.

Contacting the NVT

For ticket information only, call the Box Office - 01273 746118. To book tickets or for other information check our website at www.newventure.org.uk. All other enquiries 01273 808353

NVYT - Youth Theatre

NVT welcomes all young people (11-17) with a passion for or an interest in theatre. Fridays 4.30-6.30pm.

NVT Acting Class

Monday evenings at 7.30pm for all levels of acting skills. It will cost you just £5 per session (£2.50 for NVT members) First visit is FREE!

Become a Sponsor

£250: Advertise in our brochure, on the website, in each programme and our newsletter for one year. Plus two free tickets per show. Contact fundraising@newventure.org.uk for details. Or why not become an Angel, Archangel or even Archangel Gabriel to help us support the current and future improvements to our theatre. For further information please contact the Angels Coordinator Gerry McCrudden: gerrymccrudden@hotmail.com.

Membership

Full (company) membership - £25 a year. Full participation, discount on tickets & newsletter. Student/Unwaged - £13 a year. As above... *Proof of status is required.*