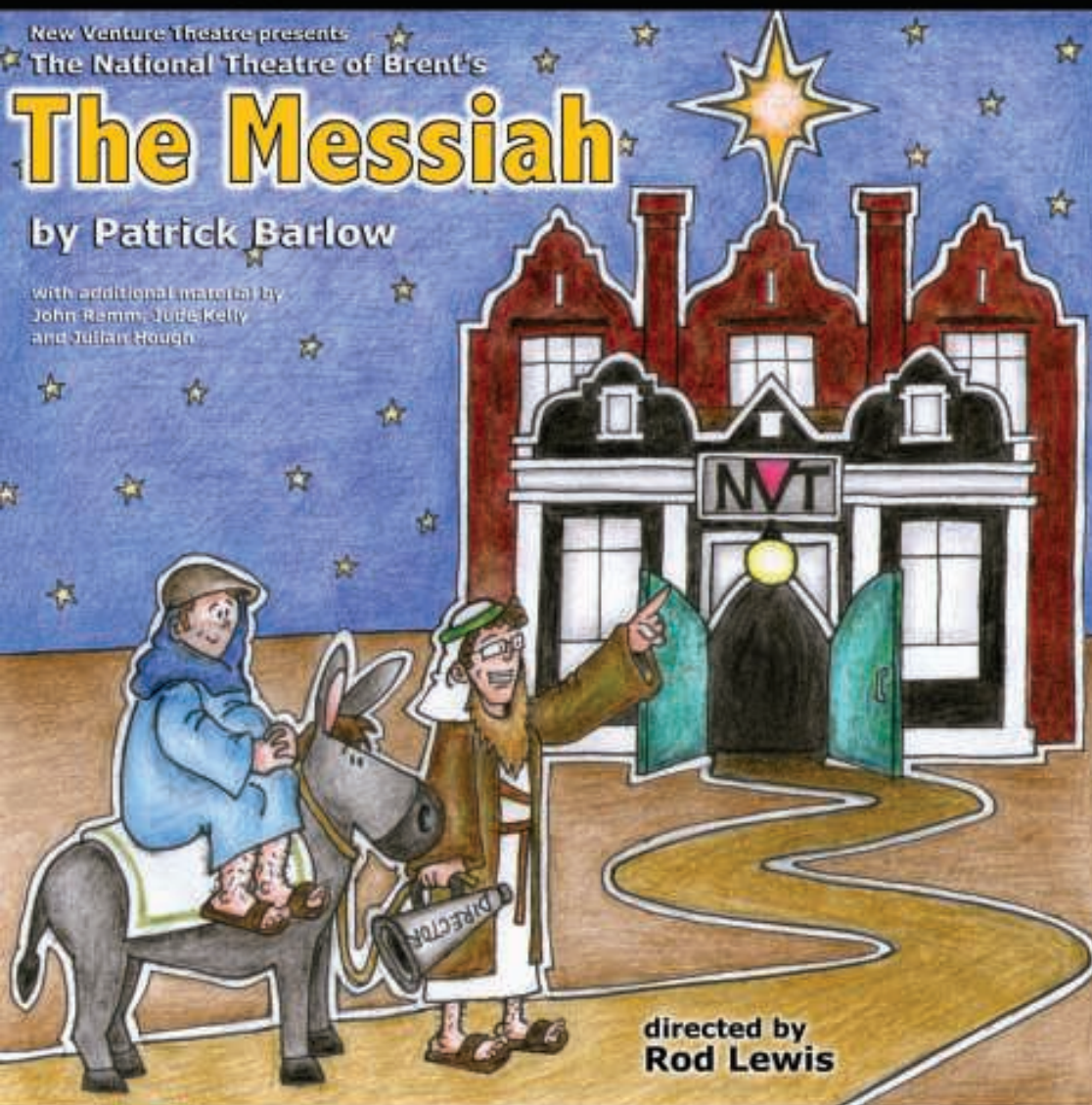


New Venture Theatre presents  
The National Theatre of Brent's

# The Messiah

by Patrick Barlow

with additional material by  
John Remm, Jude Kelly  
and Julian Hough



directed by  
**Rod Lewis**

**NVT**

**NEW  
VENTURE  
THEATRE**


Bedford Place,  
Brighton BN1 2PT

PERFORMANCES:

Thu 7th - Sat 16th December 2017 - 7.45 pm  
Matinee Sun 10th & Sat 16th - 2.30pm  
(No Sun/Mon eves)

ONLINE BOOKING: [www.newventure.org.uk/tickets](http://www.newventure.org.uk/tickets)

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# The Messiah

Desmond Olivier Dingle, introduces himself as the Artistic Director and Chief Executive of the National Theatre of Brent, as well as being the Author, Designer and Director of his production of 'The Messiah' - he's really sort of 'Auteur' actually ... and Master Thespian! Anyway, the fortunate public, are about to witness his Grand Vision! Namely, the enactment of the entire Christmas story - with Joseph, Mary, the Archangel Gabriel, Herod, God and many, many others - all to be played by his sublimely talented self and his company of one - his not so talented sidekick, the helpful (but not always) and willing (but not always) Raymond. All to be accompanied by spasmodic bursts of Handel's 'Messiah' by the rather uncontrollable and wayward guest star, Mrs Flowers - Opera Singer. The result is an inspired satire that sends up theatre's epic pretensions and yet can still evoke the momentous.

Although the show both sends up modern theatre and offers a very funny study of an archetypal bully-and-stooge relationship - the handling of the essential story is respectful, and never at any stage blasphemous - there's almost an element of tender innocence running through it as the relationship between Desmond and Raymond evolves.

The National Theatre of Brent was conceived and created in 1979 and has become something of a legend in British Theatre for its two-man epic re-enactments of myth and history. These include 'The Charge of the Light Brigade', 'Zulu!', 'The Black Hole of Calcutta', 'Wagner's Ring', 'Massive Landmarks of the Twentieth Century' and 'The French Revolution' to name just a few! Patrick Barlow, as well as being an extremely witty writer - witness his recent version of Buchan's 'The Thirty Nine Steps' - has numerous acting credits too.

I was lucky enough in the 80's to see 'The Messiah' at the Tricycle Theatre - as well as some of their other productions - and luckier still to be able to persuade Grips Theater Berlin, where I had been working around that time, to let me direct the first German language production of the play - it proved to be a great success. When considering what might be a fun Christmas production for us at NVT - a play that would be a pleasure for everyone involved to do and for our audiences to see - Patrick Barlow's 'The Messiah' immediately sprang to mind. And what a pleasure it has been to work with such a hugely talented cast with Robert Purchase playing Desmond Olivier Dingle and Culann Smyth as Raymond and Cirū James, in fine voice, as Mrs Flowers - all backed up by a great design and backstage team.

We hope it brings you as much enjoyment as it has us.

Rod Lewis  
Director

## CAST

Desmond Olivier Dingle :	Robert Purchase
Raymond Box :	Culann Smyth
Mrs Flowers :	Cirũ James

## PRODUCTION TEAM

Director :	Rod Lewis
Production Manager/Asst Director :	Ulrike Schilling
DSM :	Erica Fletcher
Stage Manager :	Melissa Noble
ASM's :	Caroline Stephens Jo Carpenter Erica Fletcher Steve Coulson
Costume Design :	Claire Lewis
Set Design :	Michael Folkard
Set Construction :	Simon Glazier George Walter Monika Schuettbacher Ulrike Schilling Ian Black Strat Mistoris
Lighting Design :	Dan Walker
Rigging :	Dan Walker Sebastian Warrington
Lighting Operation :	Alex Epps / Steve Coulson
Sound Design & Operation :	Ian Black
Musical Director and Composer :	Michael James
Props :	Melissa Noble Simon Glazier Ben Pritchard
Poster :	Tamsin Mistoris
Programme :	Jezz Bowden
Photography :	Cast and crew
Publicity & Marketing :	Ian Black
Health & Safety	

## Many thanks to:

To Melissa for her creativity with props, merchandise and livestock, to our Breakfast Club; Jackie Jones, Richard de Costobadie, Cirũ James, Sam de Costobadie, Hermione Huxley and Erica Fletcher, to Zac @ Badgelicious for the badges, Barry Purchase, Charlie @ MBE for Christmas cards and thanks as always to Jezz Bowden and Front of House Team, Chris Stubbs and Box Office Team.



### **Robert Purchase - Desmond Olivier Dingle**

Bertie shot to fame in 1982, when he was born. A rigorous training of acting the clown laid the foundations for a starring role in his school production of 'Grease' - a performance his head teacher congratulated by saying he never realised Danny Zuko could be so camp. It encouraged Bertie to study drama at A-level but he was engulfed by the world of full-time work before he could go any further.

A brief stint at the Academy of Creative Training kept the flame alive but becoming a father changed his priorities. Yet through frankly award-winning performances of bedtime stories the fire inside grew, until in 2015 his children could contain him no more and Bertie knocked upon the New Venture Theatre door.

You might have seen him in Rod Lewis' previous NVT production of 'Accidental Death of an Anarchist', as the evil and greasy Inspector Pissani; or you might have seen him as office buffoon-turned-maniac Ian, on the sandy set of 'Holes'. Most recently Bertie was conflicted maths teacher Hal, in the wonderfully moving play 'Proof'.

Bertie thinks the world of NVT, and if he can put a smile on your face this Christmas he'll sleep a merry man.



### **Culann Smyth - Raymond Box**

Culann has been doing the acting at NVT since 2012 and appeared as George in 'Kvetch' and The Telephone Repair Man in 'The Rise and Fall of Little Voice' the same year. He had a few years off to do some evening classes and then returned in 2016 when he appeared in 'How Many Miles to Babylon' as Sergeant O'Keefe. He played The Superintendent in 'Accidental Death of an Anarchist', Max in 'The Homecoming' and Major Muldoon in 'The Real Inspector Hound'. He's thoroughly enjoying playing Raymond and is very happy to not be playing a baddie for a change.

## **Cirū James - Mrs Flowers**

Cirū James was born in Kenya and from an early age she delighted in singing at the drop of a hat and at the top of her voice for hours and hours on end. It was clear to her family that here was a voice that should be heard elsewhere and so she was sent to Music College, first in London and then in New York.

After completing her vocal studies, Cirū embarked on a remarkable vocal career taking on numerous operatic roles and performing in a series of highly successful tours around the major European cities. It was here, through her extensive work on the operatic stage, that she became acquainted with Desmond Dingle and the charming Raymond Box.

Cirū also very much enjoys giving recitals on the concert platform. She has performed in celebrated concert venues around the world including at the Lincoln Centre in New York and as part of the annual Brighton Festival. It is a privilege to now be singing in 'The Messiah' with the esteemed National Theatre of Brent.

This is Cirū's first New Venture Theatre production. She would like to thank everyone on the team for making the experience so inspirational and enjoyable. Hallelujah!



## **Rod Lewis - Director**

Rod has spent most of his working life in theatre, t.v and film, earning his crust in a myriad of roles, here and abroad, as a technician, actor, director and writer. He feels he has become a sort of ancient theatre mongrel. Rod has lost count of the productions he's been involved with, they all having now merged in his mind into one, blurry kaleidoscopic mass. However, he can remember his last NVT productions, Arthur Miller's 'The Price', Sean O'Casey's 'The End of the Beginning' and Dario Fo's 'The Accidental Death of an Anarchist'. Directing Patrick Barlow's 'The Messiah', with such a fine cast and company, has once again been an absolute pleasure.

Currently NVT's Artistic Director Rod has, in The National Theatre of Brent's Desmond Olivier Dingle, at last found a role model that he will, from now on, do his best to emulate!



## Theatre Vacancies

You love our theatre. You love what we do here.  
Wouldn't it be great to get even more involved - to take a more active role ?

The following volunteer positions are currently vacant at NVT, please contact [volunteering@neweventure.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@neweventure.org.uk) for more information if you're interested in joining our team.

**Marketing and Publicity Coordinator** - is in charge of spreading the news about our Productions. They will work alongside the creative teams to generate interest and excitement about upcoming plays. They will write press releases, use social media and liaise with local radio and tv. This is an exciting opportunity to gain valuable experience within a much loved theatre and to use your literary talents in a creative environment. Much of the work can be done from home but there is office space within the theatre if you prefer to work on site. You would need to be available to attend some meetings, usually this would be in the evening or at weekends.

**Health and Safety Manager** - overseeing all aspects of Health and Safety within the theatre. They will look at activities within productions, help identify risks and work with the Production team to come up with creative ways around any problems. This role will require someone with Health & Safety experience. It would be useful to have an understanding of manual handling and risk assessment.

**Fundraising Manager** - provides the link to outside organisations who provide grants, bursaries etc. This enables the theatre to look at the larger projects for development and upgrading to keep our physical and creative environments to the highest standard possible. A knowledge of fundraising applications processes would be helpful.

**Props Manager** - oversees and maintains the NVT Props store, provides advice and props to each production, as required. Identifies when items are beyond use as well as taking in new items that become available and maintains an up to date list / database of all NVT props.

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## COMING NEXT

**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 wits.

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 SOON

**OUR LADY OF SLIGO**  
**BY SEBASTIAN BARRY**  
directed by Mark Wilson  
16TH - 24TH FEBRUARY 2018  
(STUDIO THEATRE)

From her room in a Dublin cancer ward, Mai looks back across her tempestuous life - her disastrous marriage, the loss of her child, the alcoholism and the hoped-for Ireland that lost its way in all the politics of division. She does so, however, without the least self-pity but rather with a savage quick humour, sparing no-one but the idolised Dada and the motherly Maria, both long-dead, whom she conjures from within her morphine-troubled mind. This is a fast-moving play full of humour, love and the most tender, heart-breaking pathos.

## NVT SOCIAL EVENINGS

Keep your eyes peeled on the NVT website and Facebook page for news regarding our Social Evenings. The first of 2018 will be on Friday 2nd February. Then on Saturday 3rd March we'll be having our charity fundraiser for the wonderful GLADRAGS. Followed closely by Friday 30th March, when we'll be announcing our lineup for the next season! We now also have regular bar extensions and After-show Parties on the last performance night of each of our shows. The Messiah on 16th Dec, True West on the 27th Jan, Sligo on the 24th Feb and Bad Jews on the 24th March.

Any suggestions for future social evenings, please contact [scott.roberts@newventure.org.uk](mailto:scott.roberts@newventure.org.uk)

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## 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](http://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](mailto: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: [gerrymcrudden@hotmail.com](mailto:gerrymcrudden@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.*

## 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](mailto:fundraising@newventure.org.uk) for more information.