

**Cumbernauld Theatre
Company Presents**

CUMBERNAULD AT
THEATRE LANTERNHOUSE

Bold Girls

**Written by Rona Munro
Directed by Michael Duke**

**24 September -
1 October 2022**



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I'm not sure that even Rona Munro herself could have envisaged the success and longevity of *Bold Girls* when it premiered in Cumbernauld Theatre in 1991.

The play was commissioned by 7:84, a company celebrated for their ground-breaking artistic work, their belief in new writing, their fearless engagement with the political issues of the day and their commitment to reaching audiences the length and breadth of Scotland with spectacular tours which took in the biggest and smallest stages and venues Scotland had to offer.

Since that first production of *Bold Girls*, the Scottish theatre landscape has changed. 7:84 has sadly gone. Producing houses, theatre companies and freelance artists have faced waves of funding cuts as we deal with the impacts of recession, austerity, Brexit and the Covid pandemic. More positively, Scotland now has its own Parliament and its own National Theatre. Despite the economic challenges, Scotland's new and established playwrights continue to produce work of exceptional quality, and the theatre landscape has been invigorated by a host of emerging artists and companies. For Cumbernauld Theatre the biggest change has been the opening of the new theatre at Lanternhouse. We are delighted to bring *Bold Girls* home here - for new audiences as well as those who have been attending since the first production.

Bold Girls is set at a time when change seemed all but impossible. The conflict in the north of Ireland had been raging for over twenty years. The ceasefires and the Good Friday Agreement were still years ahead. In West Belfast the helicopter surveillance, police raids and brutal imprisonment that forms the backdrop of *Bold Girls* were a constant. But Rona Munro has said of the play that 'I don't think the battles that women fight, or the daily struggles they have in much of Belfast, are particularly different from those in any other area with bad housing or high unemployment'. Perhaps it is that universality of theme - as well as Rona's ability to capture the humour as well as the horrors of West Belfast - that have helped make this play a modern classic, still fiercely relevant thirty years after its opening.

Michael Duke
Director



Ever since its debut performance in Cumbernauld in 1991, the popularity of Rona Munro's *Bold Girls* has snowballed, becoming a central piece of Scottish theatre. Cumbernauld Theatre Trust was reaching its third decade living in a row of eighteenth-century cottages and the venue had become the regular home for the works of well-known figures from the world of theatre and music who were renowned for developing distinctly political works. These artists included the legendary 7:84 company who, under the direction of Lynne Parker, first staged *Bold Girls* at the Cottage Theatre.

Set in West Belfast during the Troubles in 1991, *Bold Girls* follows Marie, Cassie, and Nora - determined to get on with their lives despite the bombs, the soldiers, and their husbands being either locked away or killed. That is, until a mysterious young woman turns up on Marie's doorstep, disrupting their girls' night out and bringing devastating revelations that threaten to leave their friendships changed forever. Rona Munro spent time in West Belfast delivering drama workshops and researching for the play, originally commissioned as a broader focus on women's experiences in Ireland over centuries. It was during the writer's time in Belfast that she became acutely aware of these women's day-to-day lives and the effect the Troubles was having on them, choosing to instead focus the work on their lived experiences.

Touring Scotland that same year, *Bold Girls* also appeared at London's Hampstead Theatre with a cast including Imelda Staunton and Catherine Cusack. Munro won the Evening Standard's Most Promising Playwright Award and the Susan Smith Blackburn Award, and the play eventually became part of the Scottish school curriculum. In later years *Bold Girls* was staged throughout Scotland, London, Melbourne and USA (Sacramento and Los Angeles). It returned to its original home in Cumbernauld in a 1999 production at Cumbernauld Theatre directed by then-Artistic Director Simon Sharkey. The play was more recently performed in 2018 at the Citizens Theatre, Glasgow, led by Richard Baron.

Sharply funny, moving, yet never shying from the harsh realities of life during the Troubles, *Bold Girls* is a celebration of women's strength under siege.

“
... absorbing, often
funny ... exhilarating.
– Sunday Telegraph
”

“
It was the product
of a lot of whiskey,
a lot of laughs and
a score of stories
... I don't think the
battles women
fight, or the daily
struggles they have
in much of Belfast,
are particularly
different from those
in any other area
with bad housing or
high unemployment
– except that guns
make a difference to
everything. But this
isn't a story about
guns. It's the story of
four bold women.
- RONA MUNRO
”

Cast and Creative Team

Nora Pauline Goldsmith
Marie Julie Martis
Cassie Leigh Lothian
Dierdre Katya Searle

Writer Rona Munro
Director Michael Duke
Set, Lighting and Costume Design Kai Fischer
Sound Designer Adam Tucker

Production Manager Dave Shea
Technical Manager Matt Nevans
Stage Manager Jillian Walls / Christine Moffat
Assistant Stage Manager Claire Semple-Gallacher
Technical Stage Manager Chris Ferrie
Wardrobe Supervisor Sophie Malcolm

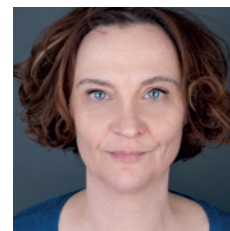
Producer Amanda Glover
Executive Producer Kate Nelson



Meet the Bold Girls

Pauline Goldsmith **Nora**

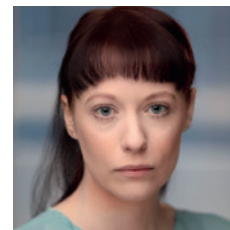
Pauline hails from Belfast and lives in Glasgow. She creates her own comedy shows, including *Bright Colours Only*, which she toured internationally in a hearse. Pauline is a double nominee of The Stage Best Actress Award, which she won for Samuel Beckett's *Not I*. Most recent theatre credits include *Muster Station: Leith* at the Edinburgh International Festival (Grid Iron), *Hang* (Tron Theatre), *Interiors* (*Vanishing Point*), the Olivier Award winning *Baby Reindeer*, *The House* (American Absurdum), and *Eidolon* (Beverley Hood). She is a creative associate of *Vanishing Point Theatre*.



Julie Martis

Marie

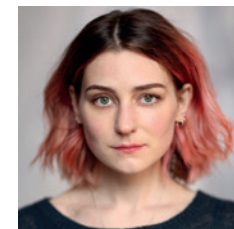
Julie is an actor from Glasgow. Recent theatre credits include *Retribution Day*, (Blueberry Goose Theatre), *Bright Azzurro Sea* (Lumenis Theatre), and *Henry IV Part 1 - The Show Must Go Online*. Screen credits include *Till The Violets Come* (Mothcatcher Films), and the highly acclaimed short film *A Boy's Life*.



Leigh Lothian **Cassie**

Leigh is originally from Scotland and trained at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts.

Theatre Credits Include:
Collet in The Da Vinci Code (UK Tour), Ruth Connors/Buckley
The Lovely Bones (Birmingham Rep/UK Tour), Alternate Carole King
Beautiful: The Carole King Musical



(Aldwych Theatre/UK Tour), Jennie Liddell *Chariots of Fire* (Gielgud Theatre), Kate Monster/Lucy Avenue Q (Gatehouse Theatre), Kate Mair *The Flowers O'Edinburgh* (Finborough Theatre), Mabel *Selkie* (Southwark Playhouse), *The Beautiful Game* (Union Theatre) and *Old Goat Song* (Lion and Unicorn Theatre).

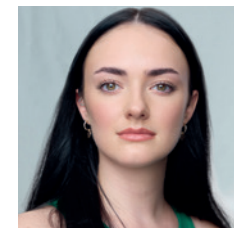
Workshops Include: *Our Ladies of Perpetual Succour* (National Theatre of Scotland/Royal Court), *Lager Ladies* (National Theatre of Scotland), *Being Groucho* (Theatre Royal, Drury Lane).

TV and Film Include: Chorus Girl in *Nolly* (ITV).

Katya Searle

Dierdre

Katya is a recent graduate from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland where she studied on the BA Acting programme. During Katya's time training, she has performed in *Macbeth*, *Parliament Square* and *Takin' Over the Asylum*. She is thrilled to be joining the cast of *Bold Girls* in her professional debut.



Katya was a finalist in the BBC's Carlton Hobbs competition. She also received the Charles Brooke Memorial Prize for speaking in Scots.



Rona Munro *Writer*

Rona Munro has written extensively for stage, radio, film and television including the recent adaptations of *My Name is Lucy Barton* for the Bridge Theatre London and Manhattan Theatre Company on Broadway, New York, and *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* for Neil Laidlaw Productions. She wrote the award winning trilogy *The James Plays* for the National Theatre of Scotland, The National Theatre of Great Britain and the Edinburgh International Festival. *James IV*, *The Queen Of The Fight* a Raw Material, Capital Theatres production is currently on tour in Scotland and *MARY* is in production at Hampstead Theatre in London.

Other credits include award winning plays *Iron* for the Traverse Theatre and Royal Court London. *The Maiden Stone* for Hampstead Theatre, *Little Eagles* and *The Indian Boy* for the Royal Shakespeare Company, and *Bold Girls* for 7:84 Theatre Scotland. Film and TV work includes *Oranges And Sunshine* directed by Jim Loach and starring Emily Watson and Hugo Weaving, the Ken Loach film *Ladybird*, which won a Silver Bear at the Berlin

Festival, *Aimee & Jaguar* a Silver Bear winner and Golden Globe nomination, and BAFTA nominated *Bumping the Odds* for the BBC. She has also written many other single plays for TV and contributed to series such as *Doctor Who*.



Michael Duke *Director*

Michael Duke was born and educated in Banbridge, Co Down. He has worked in professional theatre for over thirty years, dividing his career between long term commitments to theatre organisations and freelance project work as a director, playwright, dramaturg and community arts worker, in Ireland and Scotland, England, Denmark and the United States.

He was Associate Director of Dundee Rep Theatre between 1992 and 1998 and later Artistic Director of Tinderbox Theatre Company in Belfast from 2003 until 2015.

His directing spans existing, new and devised plays as well as dance theatre and community based projects. His writing includes sole authored plays alongside many scripts created through devising processes, often created with international ensembles.

We would also like to thank everyone who has helped make this production possible: Jim Browning, Paula Connolly, Cue Props, The Ettrick Bar (Old Kilpatrick), Bill Gallacher, Merlin and Rhonda, North Lanarkshire Council staff, Pretty Scenic, Samuel Semple-Gallacher, Stirling Savage, Tenement Curtains and Laura Walshe (Tron Theatre).

Kai Fischer

Set, Lighting and Costume Design

Design credits include set and lighting for *The Ballad of Johnny Longstaff* (Northern Stage), *Fewer Emergencies*, *Heer Ranjha* (Ankur), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Beggar's Opera*, *Wondrous Flitting* (Lyceum Edinburgh), *Gaslight* (Perth Theatre, also directed), as well as set and costume for *Tracks of the Winter Bear* (Traverse Edinburgh). Recent lighting design credits include *Red Ellen* (Northern Stage), *Life is a Dream* (Lyceum Edinburgh, Winner of the Critics Award for Theatre in Scotland for Best Design, 2022), *Twelfth Night*, *The Hour We Knew Nothing of Each Other*, *Cockpit*, *The Mystery of Irma Vep* and *Woyzeck* (Lyceum Edinburgh). Own projects include *Last Dream (On Earth)* (with National Theatre of Scotland and Tron Theatre Glasgow) as well as the performance and installation project *Entartet* (with Vanishing Point and CCA Glasgow).

Adam Tucker

Sound Designer

Adam Tucker is a Sound Designer and composer and has worked internationally as a Sound Engineer. As an inhouse member of the Cumbernauld Theatre team he has previously been Sound Designer for *Robin Hood* and *The Mystery Machine* by Eve Nicol and undertaken the role of Sound Engineer for *Crocodile Rock* by Andy McGregor. Prior to his time with Cumbernauld Theatre Adam has designed sound for the 2019 tour of the acclaimed *Billy and Tim 2*. Adam is looking forward to continuing working on the Cumbernauld Theatre programme.

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