

NEWS RELEASE

Monday 24 April 2023

Embargoed until 00:01 on Tuesday 25 April 2023

Tally's Blood to tour again after twenty-year hiatus

Twenty years after it was last seen in full-scale production, The Gaiety Ayr, Perth Theatre and Cumbernauld Theatre Company are combining to present a brand-new tour of Ann Marie Di Mambro's modern Scottish classic *Tally's Blood*.

Directed by Ken Alexander, who also directed the 2003 production, *Tally's Blood* will open in Perth Theatre from Thursday 21 until Saturday 30 September 2023 before touring to Beacon Arts Centre, Greenock; Cumbernauld Theatre at Lanternhouse; Eastwood Park Theatre, Giffnock; Macrobert Arts Centre, Stirling and Theatre Royal, Dumfries, concluding its run at The Gaiety from Wednesday 1 until Friday 3 November.

There is hardly a town or city in Scotland that doesn't have its own Italian café, chippy or ice-cream parlour. And it's in one of these much-loved establishments that the story of *Tally's Blood* starts...

Lucia can wrap her aunt and uncle around her little finger, cry to order, and she doesn't like going to school. She likes Hughie though, so much so that they seal their friendship with a secret ceremony in the storeroom of her family's 'Tally' shop – aided by an illicit bottle of 'ginger'.

Auntie Rosinella loves Lucia like all the children she never had, but will anyone – particularly a 'Scotch' boy – ever be good enough for the girl she loves 'best in the whole wide world'?

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As their childhood camaraderie blossoms into romance, Lucia and Hughie face more challenges than their countries taking opposing sides in the Second World War.

Told with heart and humour, *Tally's Blood* follows the lives of an Italian immigrant family in Scotland, from the 1930s through to the 1950s, in a sweeping tale of poverty, passion and prejudice that travels from the west of Scotland to the sun-baked Italian countryside.

First performed at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh in 1990, *Tally's Blood* is a Set Text for National 5 English.

Welcoming the new tour, announced on Italian Liberation Day - 25 April 2023 - Ann Marie Di Mambro said:

"Of all the pieces I've written in the last 30+ years *Tally's Blood* is closest to my heart. It delves into my own Scottish-Italian heritage and the stories I was told growing up. I'm very excited at the prospect of a tour marking the 20th anniversary of the last production and I'm delighted that Ken Alexander is returning to direct it once again."

Ken Alexander said:

"I have been keen to revisit the play for some time as it has become something of a Scottish classic, known by people across the country but infrequently produced.

It is a piece that, although set between the 1930s and 1950s, has a lot of contemporary resonances - particularly those around multiculturalism and the immigrant experience, and contemporary issues that make us question what brings us together and what pushes us apart in society. However, the thing that appeals to me most is the huge heart that is contained in Ann Marie Di Mambro's play - drawn very closely from her own family experience as Italian

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immigrants that settled in Scotland. Her storytelling is full of warmth, nostalgia and affection without ever being overly sentimental. Audiences can expect a rattling good story, laughter, tears and a good night out!”

Jeremy Wyatt, Chief Executive of The Gaiety said:

“*Tally’s Blood* is about a key part of Scotland’s history, and the strong bond between Scotland and Italy. And it’s also about the immigrant experience so it’s about Scotland’s present too. On top of that it’s funny, with a dash of romance. No wonder it has a special place in the hearts of so many people I speak to.”

Fraser Morrison, Creative Producer at Cumbernauld Theatre said:

“At Cumbernauld Theatre we recognise the strengths of working in partnership and are delighted to join forces with Perth Theatre and Ayr Gaiety. This powerful and poignant play immediately captured our attention as it explores key themes that are not only relevant to our modern society today, but also resonate deeply with us as a Scottish community. We are confident that this story will strike a chord with our local audience who appreciate stories rooted in truth and authenticity, and who value the power of connection. Furthermore, this collaboration provides a unique opportunity for school groups to engage with our Creative Learning programme alongside this work, and for the general public to enjoy a modern Scottish classic. We look forward to embarking on this exciting journey with our partners and sharing *Tally’s Blood* with audiences across Scotland.”

Nick Williams, Chief Executive of Perth Theatre and Concert Hall said:

“We’re delighted to be working in partnership with our friends at The Gaiety and Cumbernauld Theatre Company to bring *Tally’s Blood* to the stage again. Twenty years since it last toured, I’m

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sure that Ken Alexander’s new production will provoke warm memories from its many fans and resonate with a new generation of young theatre lovers who are just discovering this poignant love story with its enduring themes and relatable characters.”

Tickets for *Tally’s Blood* will go on sale this summer, with further information and cast announcement to follow.

Notes to editors

The Gaiety, Ayr, Perth Theatre and Cumbernauld Theatre Company present
Tally’s Blood

Written by Ann Marie Di Mambro

Directed by Ken Alexander

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This new production marks 20 years since the last professional tour of *Tally's Blood*, which was also directed by Ken Alexander in 2003.

'We love and laugh and hope and fear and dance and play... This is the stuff of life.' **Ann Marie Di Mambro**

Opening at Perth Theatre from Thu 21 – Sat 30 Sep 2023, then touring to:

Beacon Arts Centre, Greenock: Thu 5 Oct

Cumbernauld Theatre at Lanternhouse: Tue 10 – Sat 14 Oct

Eastwood Park Theatre, Giffnock: Mon 23 + Tue 24 Oct

Macrobert Arts Centre, Stirling: Wed 25 – Fri 27 Oct

Theatre Royal, Dumfries: Mon 30 + Tue 31 Oct

The Gaiety, Ayr: Wed 1 – Fri 3 Nov

The Gaiety has been an iconic part of Ayr Town Centre since 1902. During this time, it's survived fires, world wars, threatened demolitions, and most recently, a global pandemic; overcoming the odds time and time again to bring a vibrant theatre programme to Ayrshire. We aim to ensure that in every season, you'll find something for everyone on our stage.

The Gaiety is so much more than just a theatre, however. We're committed to ensuring that everyone in Ayrshire has access to the performing arts. Our creative engagement programme offers real opportunities to take part in theatre to those who might otherwise never get the chance – from youth theatre to summer drama school, writing groups to art exhibitions,

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workshops and projects in writing, directing, performing, stage management and much, much more. Our Gaiety On Tour programme meanwhile, brings live theatre to local venues across rural Ayrshire. We also use both our touring, and our main and studio stages, to platform local and emerging performers. Our community is at the heart of everything we do.

Cumbernauld Theatre Trust is a performing arts charity that produces and presents professional theatre, music, dance and comedy experiences for a community of 50,000 Cumbernauld residents and 100,000 North Lanarkshire population. Established in 1963, Cumbernauld Theatre is the only professional independent arts organisation in Cumbernauld and North Lanarkshire and serves a vital social, cultural and economic purpose in a community that is economically disadvantaged, with widespread material poverty and deprivation, low academic attainment and poor-quality built environment.

As an established, professional producing theatre, we are both community-led and community conscious with activity that responds to the needs of the local community, yet we deliver outputs that achieve national and international recognition.

We aim for our work to have relevance and resonate with our audiences and participants to achieve deep and lasting impact and change. This work is informed by place, by the opportunities our new arts centre provides and by a desire to deliver affordable access to culture for everyone at all life-stages. Cumbernauld Theatre Trust is a key part of the infrastructure of Scotland's performing arts and is a Regularly Funded Organisation (RFO) within the Creative Scotland portfolio. We receive investment in support of our work from a range of sources including Creative Scotland and North Lanarkshire Council, Weston Culture Fund and Scottish Government's Empowering Communities Programme – Investing in Communities Fund.

Cumbernauld Theatre Trust is also supported by Screen Scotland, Equity Charitable Trust, Foyle Foundation, The Levensat Trust, The Trades House of Glasgow Commonweal Fund, Land Trust,



THE GAIETY

**CUMBERNAULD
THEATRE** **AT
LANTERHOUSE**

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Robert Barr's Charitable Trust, Hugh Fraser Foundation, The Robertson Trust and Patersons Quarries, our Friends, and donors.

Lanternhouse is a privately-owned property built through Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) investment jointly operated by North Lanarkshire Council (NLC) and Cumbernauld Theatre Trust. The construction of Lanternhouse was financed via the SFT-managed hub community infrastructure programme for local authorities in support of the Scottish Government's National Infrastructure Mission to drive inclusive economic growth and build resilient places.

Cumbernauld Theatre Trust Ltd is a Registered Company limited by guarantee No. SC066490, Scottish Charity OSCR Registered No. SC005050. Registered Office: Cumbernauld Theatre Trust, Lanternhouse, South Kildrum Ring Road, Cumbernauld, North Lanarkshire, G67 2UF

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Perth Theatre and Concert Hall have been central to local cultural life for over 120 years. We create life affirming, shared experiences in the performing arts that ignite the imagination and make living more meaningful. Our world-class venues, award-winning programming and inclusive learning and engagement projects play an essential role in stimulating positive wellbeing within the communities we serve, benefitting the local economy and raising the profile of the area. Located within 90-minutes' drivetime of 90% of Scotland's population, we are a lynchpin in the country's arts infrastructure, and we are recognised as a sector leader, influencer, and innovator.

Perth Theatre and Concert Hall is the trading name of Horsecross Arts Ltd, the charitable organisation that runs both venues. Horsecross Arts is supported by Creative Scotland, Perth &

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Kinross Council and The Gannochy Trust. Find us at www.perththeatreandconcerthall.com, on Twitter @perthTCH, and Instagram and Facebook @PerthTheatreAndConcertHall.

Creative Scotland is the public body that supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all parts of Scotland distributing funding provided by the Scottish Government and The National Lottery. Further information at creativescotland.com. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). Learn more about the value of art and creativity in Scotland and join in at www.ourcreativevoice.scot

The Gannochy Trust was established for charitable and public purposes by philanthropist and businessman A K Bell in 1937. A K Bell's belief that "after you have a roof over your head and your bread and butter" you should look to invest any surplus for the benefit of your native town, has matured into a lasting legacy that has improved the quality of life of many thousands of people, not only in Perth but all over Scotland.

Over the past five years, the Trust has disbursed over £15m in grants which included a grant of £3m towards the redevelopment of Perth Theatre and grants to many community led groups across Perth and Kinross.



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL



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THE GAIETY

**CUMBERNAULD AT
THEATRE LANTERHOUSE**

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