

FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

VIBRANT **NEW WRITING** | UNIQUE **REDISCOVERIES**

October 2019-January 2020 season

The first London production in 75 years

THE WIND OF HEAVEN

by Emlyn Williams.

Directed by Will Maynard.

Presented by Weighed In Productions in association with Neil McPherson for the Finborough Theatre.

“Is something coming to us that for two thousand years
the tear-stained blood-sick world has been waiting for?”

The first London production in nearly 75 years of Welsh playwright Emlyn Williams’ **The Wind of Heaven** opens at the Finborough Theatre for a four-week Christmas season on Tuesday, 26 November 2019 (**Press Nights: Thursday, 28 November 2019 and Friday, 29 November 2019 at 7.30pm**).

Rural Wales in the 1850s, in the immediate aftermath of the Crimean War.

Dilys Parry lives in Blestin, a mountain village which has no children and worships no god since a disaster snatched away all its youth.

Inconsolable since her husband was killed in the war, Dilys is gradually re-awakened to life when a prophet-like child working in her household is called by God to serve the world on an extraordinary new mission.

And when a flashy showman from Birmingham arrives in the village, intent on exploiting the boy for financial gain, he too suddenly finds his life completely transformed by his conversion to the child’s message.

In the shadow of vast social inequalities and a mismanaged war, one small community rediscovers its lost faith, with startling consequences for the village, and the world beyond...

A parable about healing divisions after a national trauma, *The Wind of Heaven* was first produced in the West End in April 1945, just three weeks before the end of the Second World War in Europe, starring Emlyn Williams himself, Diana Wynyard and Megs Jenkins. It now receives its first London production in nearly 75 years at the Finborough Theatre, well known for its recent rediscoveries of Emlyn Williams’ work including the multi-award-winning *Accolade*.

Playwright **Emlyn Williams** (1905-1987), dubbed “the Welsh Noël Coward”, was one of the most successful actor-dramatists of the 1930s and 1940s. His greatest works, *Night Must Fall* and *The Corn Is Green*, were made into films starring Albert Finney, Bette Davis and Katharine Hepburn, and remain much revived. Williams’ plays have twice been rediscovered by the Finborough Theatre – *The Druid’s Rest* in 2009, and Blanche McIntyre’s multi-award-winning production of *Accolade* in 2011, which subsequently transferred to St James Theatre. Williams was a pioneering LGBTQ+ figure, and his remarkable life began in a working-class family in North Wales, where he spoke no English until the age of eight and could barely read or write. Coincidentally, he lived much of his adult life in Dovehouse Street, a short walk from the Finborough Theatre.

Director **Will Maynard**’s work includes *Open* (VAULT 2019), *Head-Rot Holiday* (Hope Theatre), *Tiger* (VAULT 2018), *Finding Mr Hart* (Blackburn Exchange, for the University of London) and *Blavatsky’s Tower* (Barons Court Theatre). Shorter plays include *Classical Studies* (Arcola Theatre), *Crocodile* (Old Red Lion), *Sunflower* (Bunker Theatre) and *Gold Star* (Hen and Chickens Theatre). Assistant Direction includes *Bloody Poetry* (Jermyn Street Theatre) and *Mary Rose* (Brockley Jack Theatre).

The press on Emlyn Williams’ *Accolade* at the Finborough Theatre

“*Accolade* already classifies as one of the defining rediscoveries of this theatrical year.” Matt Wolf, *The New York Times*

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www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk Artistic Director Neil McPherson

Press Information

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"In Earl's Court, the Finborough Theatre has struck gold. There's no other word for this overlooked treasure by Emyln Williams." Lloyd Evans, The Spectator

"The reviewers' cliché 'Neglected plays are usually neglected for a good reason' carries the implicit qualifier '... except when the Finborough stages them'. The more obscure revivals presented by this little studio theatre are almost always worthwhile, often impressive and sometimes revelatory. With Emyln Williams' 1950 drama, here receiving its first revival, we are well into revelation." Ian Shuttleworth, Financial Times

The press on director Will Maynard's previous work

"Meticulous and sensitive direction." ActDrop on Head-Rot Holiday

"Director Will Maynard... uses the intimate space of the Barons Court Theatre to superb effect embracing its claustrophobic nature...it's a real treat to find this sparkling black comedy so beautifully revived." The Stage on Blavatsky's Tower

"Slender writing and an equally tight direction...triumphant." BroadwayWorld UK on Open

PRESS NIGHTS: THURSDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2019 AND FRIDAY, 29 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 7.30PM

PHOTOCALL: TUESDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 1.00PM–1.30PM

Finborough Theatre, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED

Book online at www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk

No booking fees on online, personal or postal bookings

Box Office 01223 357851. (Calls are free. There is a 5% booking fee.) Lines are open Monday-Saturday 10.00am-6.00pm.

Tuesday, 26 November – Saturday, 21 December 2019

Tuesday to Saturday evenings at 7.30pm. Saturday and Sunday matinees at 3.00pm.

Prices until 8 December 2019 – Tickets £18, £16 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £16 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £18 all seats. Previews (26 and 27 November) £14 all seats.

£10 tickets for Under 30s for performances from Tuesday to Sunday of the first week when booked online only.

£14 tickets for residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea on Saturday, 30 November 2019 at 7.30pm when booked online only.

Prices from 10 December 2019 – Tickets £20, £18 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £18 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £20 all seats.

Performance Length: Approximately two hours with one interval of fifteen minutes.

For more information, interviews and images, please contact

Neil McPherson on e-mail press@finboroughtheatre.co.uk or **07977 173135**

Download press releases and images at <http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk/press-resources.php>

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www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk Artistic Director Neil McPherson

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