

Casting announced for the world premiere of 'Old Fools'



Lara Genovese @ Naiad Photography

Casting is announced for the world premiere of **Old Fools** by Tristan Bernays, a surprising, touching and often humorous tale about a couple, one of whom is living with Alzheimer's, and their enduring efforts to hold their relationship together through the years.

Bernays' first play to be staged in London since the storming success of *Boudica*, starring Gina McKee, at Shakespeare's Globe in 2017, **Old Fools** is the story of Tom and Viv, their love and the life they've shared together - from first spark to dying light. But not necessarily in that order,

It will get its world premiere, directed by Sharon Burrell, at Southwark Playhouse from Wednesday 14 March - Saturday 7 April.

Press night is Thursday 15 March at 8.00pm.

Mark Arends (Tom) played the title role in *Hamlet*, receiving a commendation in the Ian Charleson Awards, directed by Kelly Hunter at Trafalgar Studios. He has appeared at the National Theatre (*A Dream Play*, *The UN Inspector*, *The Cat in the Hat*, the Beast in *Beauty and the Beast*), The Royal Shakespeare Company (*Two Gentlemen of Verona*), The Royal Court (*Early Bird*) and Almeida (Winston Smith, in *1984* and *Marianne Dreams*).

Frances Grey (Viv) recently played Hermione in *The Winter's Tale* (Lyceum Theatre). For the National Theatre of Scotland she was in *Reveal: Somersaults* and *Caledonia*. She was in Alan Ayckbourn's *Neighbourhood Watch* (Tricycle) and *Dear Uncle* (UK tour and New York), *Relocated* (Royal Court Theatre) and *Platonov* (Almeida). On TV she was DS Kate Beauchamp in all three series of *Messiah*. She will next be seen as Lydia Gould in BBC1's adaptation of Agatha Christie's *Ordeal By Innocence*.

Tristan Bernays said: "My grandpa had Alzheimer's and my biggest fear about growing old is the same may happen to me. We all know someone who's been affected by Alzheimer's or another form of dementia. Maybe it will happen to us one day. I wrote *Old Fools* to confront this fear head on - yes, it's a play about the disease, but more importantly it's about the people behind the disease. How we cope when someone we love disappears little by little. How we must never forget the wonderful person they once were - even if they are not there any more."

Tristan Bernays' 1950s musical *Teddy* also premiered at Southwark Playhouse and won Best New Musical at the Off West End Awards 2016.

Movement Director - Lucie Pankhurst, Lighting Designer - Peter Small, Sound Designer/Composer - Christopher James Ash, Casting Director - Sophie Parrott.

Produced by To The Moon and Making Productions.

Tristan Bernays (Writer)

Tristan Bernays is an award-winning writer and performer.

His work has been performed at Shakespeare's Globe, Soho Theatre, Southwark Playhouse, Bush Theatre, National Theatre Studio and Round House.

Boudica was performed at Shakespeare's Globe in September 2017 as part of Emma Rice's "Summer of Love" season, with Gina McKee in the title role.

"A play that...holds the stage with confidence....Bernays drives the story forward with great skill"

4* The Guardian

"Packed with sword fights and exuberant filth"

4* Evening Standard

"A thrilling, challenging and thoroughly disturbing examination of one of Britain's bloodiest patriots"

4* WhatsOnStage

His one-man show *The Bread & The Beer* received rave reviews at Edinburgh Festival 2013.

He adapted *Frankenstein* for The Watermill Theatre, and it transferred to Wiltons' Music Hall.

He performed in his own brand new play *Testament* at VAULT Festival 2017, where it won the Show Of The Week, and there are plans to transfer the show in 2018.

He was a member of the Bush Theatre's Emerging Writers Group.

Sharon Burrell (Director)

Sharon trained as a theatre director at CityLit under the tutelage of award-winning playwright and director Simon Bowen. In 2014 she was selected for Springboard, a training programme run by the Young Vic's Directors Network. Participating directors included Natalie Abrahami, Mike Longhurst, Ian Rickson, John Tiffany, Lyndsey Turner and Theatre O. Other practical experience includes workshopping with Frantic Assembly.

As a producer she trained with Stage One and founded To The Moon in 2012.

Sharon's directing work includes *Claustrophobia* by Jason Hewitt at the Hope Theatre and Edinburgh Fringe Festival ("a master of minimalist stagecraft" - The Scotsman); *The Helen Project* (WOW Festival, Southbank Centre); *The Merchant of Venice* (Goodmann Productions, Courtyard Theatre) which received praise for featuring a female Shylock. She has directed several shorts at venues including Park Theatre, St James Studio, Southwark Playhouse and Arcola Theatre. She has also assistant directed on *A Christmas Carol* and *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* at the John Lyon Theatre. She was one of the devisers of To The Moon's first production, *Silent Shakespeare*, as well as producer.

To The Moon (Producer)

Founded by Sharon Burrell in 2012, To The Moon is the resident new writing company at The Canvas in Shoreditch. Their first full-length production, *Claustrophobia*, by internationally acclaimed playwright and novelist Jason Hewitt, debuted at the Edinburgh Fringe before transferring to the Hope Theatre. In 2017 they produced five female solo shows across London, Bristol and Edinburgh.

Making Productions (Producer)

Making Productions was created by Darren Murphy to produce bold new plays and existing work in new and exciting ways to engage and entertain our audiences. Combining newly discovered talent with experienced collaborators, partner organisations and other producers the aim is to extend the scope of creativity in the theatre. Darren is passionate about exploring relevant and current work for education and community organisations for the betterment of all. The Company is unique in its practice by championing ethnic, LGBT and female creatives.

The company is establishing a reputation for dynamic theatre and artistic excellence. Since its formation in 2014, Making Productions has produced the critically acclaimed *Shutters* (Park Theatre) followed by the hugely successful Strindberg play *The Father* (Trafalgar Studios), *Disaster! The Musical* (Charing Cross Theatre), *Bug* (Associate Producer, Found111), the universally acclaimed production of *Doubt, A Parable* starring Stella Gonet (Southwark Playhouse), the 35th anniversary production of *Coming Clean*, Kevin Elyot's first play (King's Head Theatre), *Outlaws to In-laws* - which explores through seven short stories the choices gay men have made within a social history of oppression, violence and hate (King's Head Theatre), *La Boheme* and *Strangers In Between* (Associate Producer, Trafalgar Studios) and *West End Bares* (Novello Theatre).

"Making Productions presents an evening of thought-provoking entertainment."

Jill Truman, Culture Whisper

LISTINGS INFO

To The Moon and Making Productions
present

The world premiere of
OLD FOOLS
by Tristan Bernays

Southwark Playhouse
THE LITTLE
77-85 Newington Causeway
London
SE1 6BD

Wednesday 14 March - Saturday 7 April

Press night
Thursday 15 March at 8.00pm

Monday - Saturday at 8.00pm
Tuesday & Saturday at 3.30pm

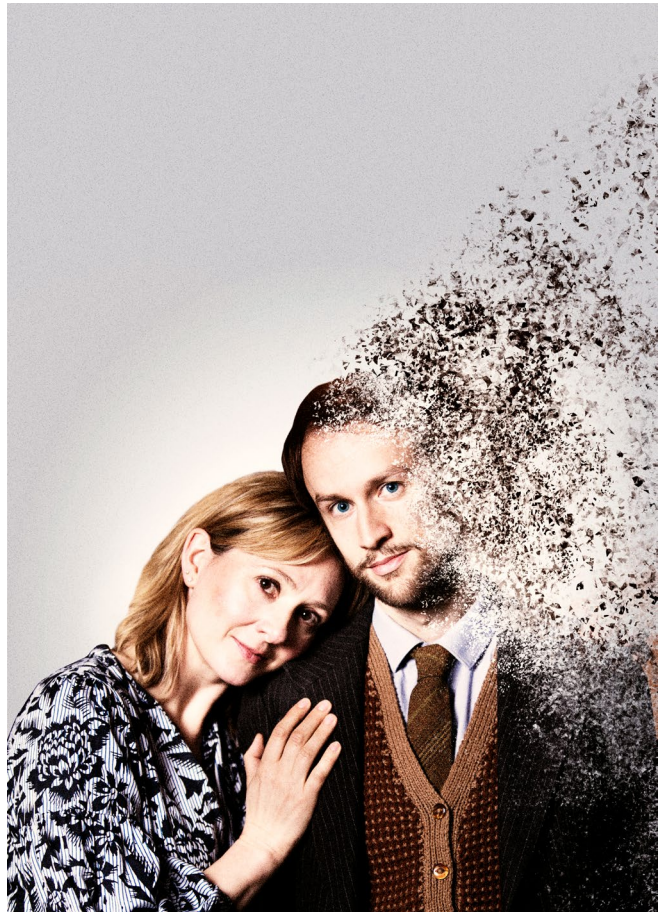
Prices:
Previews £12, Full £20, Concs £16

www.southwarkplayhouse.co.uk

Running time:
70mins (no interval)

Social Media:

Twitter Handles
@TristanBernays
@ToTheMoonUK
@Make_Prods
@swkplay



Press contact
Kevin Wilson
Kevin Wilson Public Relations
kevinwilsonpr@gmail.com
Tel: 07884 368697
www.kevinwilsonpr@gmail.com



**SOUTHWARK
PLAYHOUSE**