

BIRDSONG LIVE PRODUCTIONS CIC
PROUDLY PRESENTS



WORLD PREMIERE
Souvenir Programme
TO COMMEMORATE
THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE BLITZ

NEW BRITISH MUSICAL BY
TONY BRADLEY & REBECCA MYERS

DIRECTED BY JODIE MARSHALL

SUPPORTED BY
ARUP ENGINEERING (LIVERPOOL)
LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY • IRENE PRESTWICH TRUST
GARSTON URBAN VILLAGE HALL

The
EPSTEIN
THEATRE

TUE 29 NOV - SAT 3 DEC 2016

PERFORMANCES 7:30PM | MATINEE 2:30 PM (WED, THU & SAT)
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Welcome

We owe an immense debt to the people who lived through and fought in the Second World War, on the home front as well as at the front line. And, strangely, although the passage of time means that few of them continue here with us, the debt we feel as a nation remains undiminished.

Now, we are very good friends and allies with the great grandchildren of those whom we fought against. And, yet, the spectre of tyranny still stalks many parts of the world. Prejudice and intolerance persists across Europe. Refugees from other wars are increasingly requiring our help. So, we should never forget what was won in the 2WW.

But, Liverpool can't stay down in the dumps for long. There's a comic wanting to escape from every hard place; a bevvy to be had; a lorra laughs; there's life and love and it's all on the streets and down by the Pier Head.

Liverpool was never cowed by the dark days of The Blitz, which we commemorate, 75 years on. Things changed for loads of Scouse kids as a result of the War. Not least for all those "birds" who worked in the munitions factories, like the one at Kirkby.

Lots of Liver birds soared because of what they went through and overcame – my mum and Rebecca's grandma included. So, tonight's show tells the story of four of those birds on one unforgettable and, for some, tragic night, in November, 1940. After the parachute bomb fell on the Ernest Brown Junior Instructional Centre on Durning Road, Edge Hill, Winston Churchill described what Liverpool went through that night, as "the worst single (civilian) incident of the War".

But, the Scouse people bounced back. Most of the birds continued to fly into their future. Yet, the legacy of November 29th, 1940 endures. And to the 180 or so women, children and men who lost their lives in the Durning Road Air Raid Shelter, we pay our respects. We will remember them.

We hope you enjoy our show - the comedy, the tragedy, the burlesque glamour and the ordinary heartache. All these things were part of life in Liverpool then. And, they're all still parts of our lives 75 years later.

They weren't so very different to us. But, their time shaped the freedoms we enjoy. We need to protect them, remember the people and never give up singing our song, with all the other Liver birds and la's. "There's a lot to do, to get people through. And it starts with people like me and you. There's a lot to do!"

Tony Bradley, Writer & Producer,



LIVER
Birdsong

BIRDSONG LIVE PRODUCTIONS CIC
presents

LIVER *Birdsong*

The Liverpool Blitz Musical

NEW BRITISH MUSICAL BY TONY BRADLEY AND REBECCA MYERS



WORLD PREMIERE PRODUCTION TO COMMEMORATE
THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BLITZ

Scenes and Songs *The Show*

Overture

Act One:

Kirkby Munitions Factory

*It's Liverpool (Nearly
Christmas, 1940)*

We can do it!

Land of Hope & Glory!
(trad)

Daisy Belle Parody

Dynamite

Rannerdale Knotts

The Liverpool Waterfront

Come on, gals!

Kirkby Munitions Factory

*'Vacuation sounds real
neat!*

Liver birds soar

Act Two:

The Caveman Club

So long, it's gold!

Streets nearby/ Close to Durning
Road Air Raid Shelter

It's too late

Intermezzo

Basement, Durning Road
Air Raid Shelter

Johnny Todd (trad)

All in or all out!

Act Three:

Ruins of the Durning Road Shelter

Moving between death and life

Have you seen my ma?

Rannerdale Knotts (reprise)

Street close to Caveman Club

Someone has got to pay

Ruins of the Durning Road Shelter

There's a lot to do (sequence)

Land of Hope & Glory (trad, reprise)

Various locations

It's Liverpool (Liver birds departing)

Liverpool dockside

Why do swallows fly in September?



LIVER
Birdsong

Finding a Brighter Hope

“Hope is not a virtue such as love, truthfulness or patience. These virtues are measured by their practical effects on the world and on people. The absence of hope makes the future bleak and feeds pessimism: the presence of Hope opens up the future and energises life and action. Hope is measured by time”.

I wrote those words as the post-script to a book telling the story of Liverpool Hope University. In the intervening seven years we have seen our University rise to become recognised as one of the leading centres of Higher Education in the UK and the top University in NW England for teaching and student satisfaction and fourth for research intensity. These are remarkable achievements. But, they could not have been built on anything other than a foundation of Hope.

In this wonderful show, written by one of our teaching staff (Tony Bradley), with his daughter (Rebecca Myers), we discover something of the meaning of finding hope in the midst of the darkness that was the Liverpool Blitz of 1940-41, which Liver Birdsong commemorates, 75 years on. Whilst time may have dulled the memory of the events portrayed in the show it hasn't dented the meaning of hope, as the gateway to a fulfilled life.

There is in the ancient myth of the tiny winged creature of Elpis (Hope) - remaining as the comfort to Pandora, after she has opened the box of sin and curses – a message of intense resonance for Liverpool, which is more reflective of the Christian and other spiritual traditions. Our two cathedrals stand at either end of Hope Street. The great spiritual leadership of Bishop David Shepherd and Archbishop Derek Warlock, in the 1980s, did a great deal to break down the dividing walls between Protestants and Catholics in our city. They developed a centre of learning, now called Liverpool Hope University. And, today, those divisions are almost invisible.

There was, through the Liverpool Blitz, for an earlier generation, a spirit of Hope shining, like a candle in the darkness of wartime, which illuminated Liverpool and its people, for the entire nation. We aren't going to ruin part of the climax of the show – no spoiler-alert here! But, some of the events of the night of Nov 28-29th, 1940 – which have been historically recorded – indicate the truth within the myth, that hope never leaves, no matter how much evil is released on the earth.

The world we live in and of 24 hours rolling news is full of dangers, curses, evils and fragility that may not directly impinge on our lives every day, but are never far from our homes. We think of the tragedy and brutality of the violence in the cities of Aleppo, Syria and Mosul, Iraq, as only two such humanitarian catastrophes. But, no matter what we are facing, as we leave the theatre, there is always, without fail, hope waiting to be found. And where better to discover it than on the streets of our great city of Liverpool.

Professor Gerald J Pillay

Vice-Chancellor & Rector, Liverpool Hope University



¹ Ken Pye (with Ian McKenna), 2009, *A Brighter Hope – The story of Liverpool Hope University*. Liverpool: Hope University Press.

² Sunday Times Good University Guide, 2016

Christmas 1940

1940 was the first full year of the Second World War. By the end of that year, at least 24,000 British civilians had died as a result of the Blitzkrieg, with more than 450 being killed in Liverpool alone, especially during the Durning Road bombing and the Christmas Blitz. For most, Christmas 1940 was a frugal affair, with festivities celebrated in the air raid shelters.

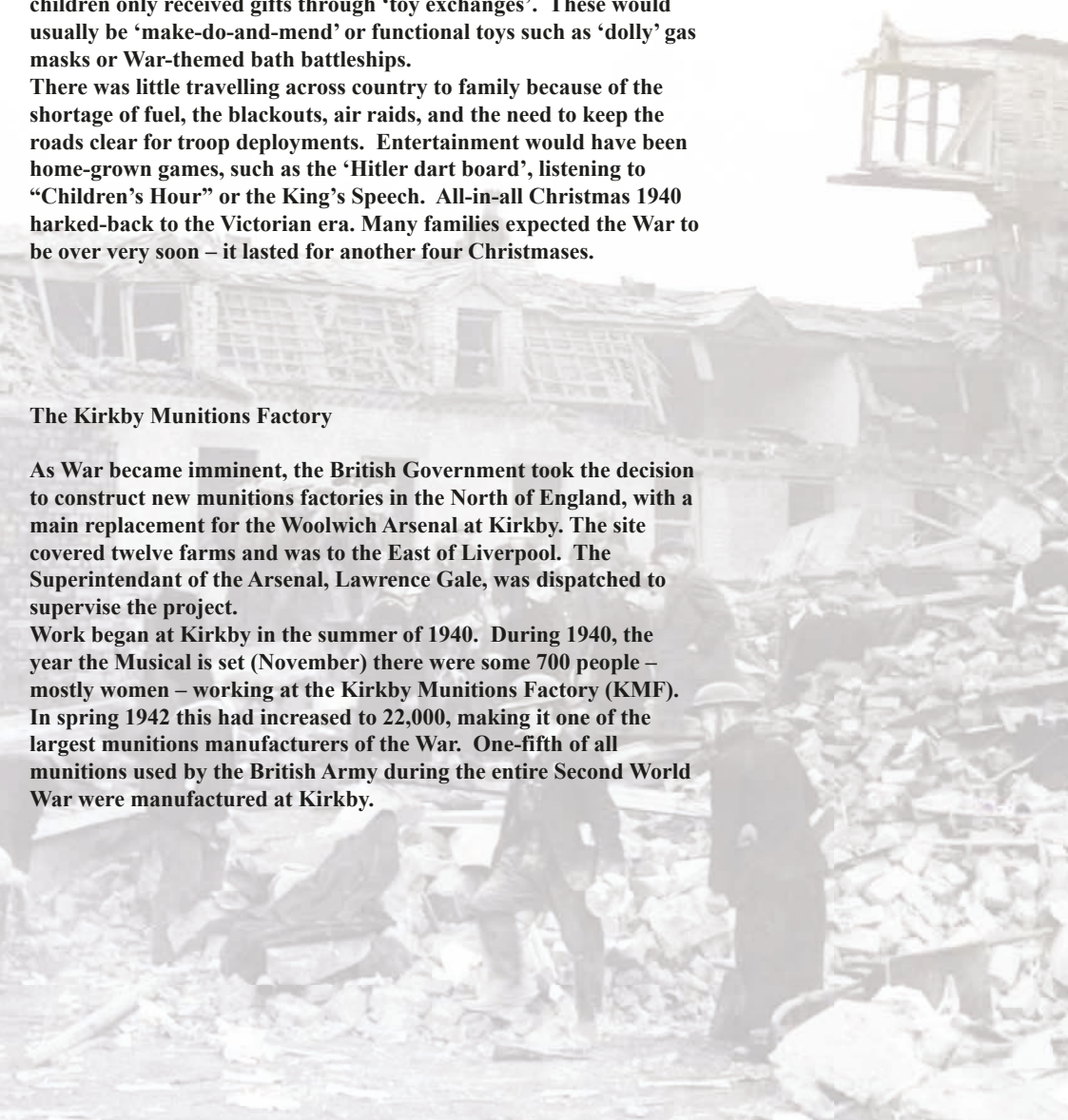
Meat rations didn't even stretch to a modest chicken, whilst home grown vegetables and conserves graced the tables, with hand-coloured streamers for decoration. Presents were in short supply, so households were encouraged to give to the War effort. Many children only received gifts through 'toy exchanges'. These would usually be 'make-do-and-mend' or functional toys such as 'dolly' gas masks or War-themed bath battleships.

There was little travelling across country to family because of the shortage of fuel, the blackouts, air raids, and the need to keep the roads clear for troop deployments. Entertainment would have been home-grown games, such as the 'Hitler dart board', listening to "Children's Hour" or the King's Speech. All-in-all Christmas 1940 harked-back to the Victorian era. Many families expected the War to be over very soon – it lasted for another four Christmases.

The Kirkby Munitions Factory

As War became imminent, the British Government took the decision to construct new munitions factories in the North of England, with a main replacement for the Woolwich Arsenal at Kirkby. The site covered twelve farms and was to the East of Liverpool. The Superintendent of the Arsenal, Lawrence Gale, was dispatched to supervise the project.

Work began at Kirkby in the summer of 1940. During 1940, the year the Musical is set (November) there were some 700 people – mostly women – working at the Kirkby Munitions Factory (KMF). In spring 1942 this had increased to 22,000, making it one of the largest munitions manufacturers of the War. One-fifth of all munitions used by the British Army during the entire Second World War were manufactured at Kirkby.



The Liverpool Blitz

On Saturday night, May 1941 Liverpool burned at the height of the Blitz. Al Capleton tells of his experiences that night. "...it took us about 3 hours to get to Renshaw Street and there, before us was the devastation. Lewis's was a black shell and still smouldering... high up on top of a wall was a flag-pole, on that flag-pole was a tatty Union Jack fluttering in the hot breeze!".

The Luftwaffe air raids brought utter destruction through whole swathes of the city and the surrounding housing. Black smoke billowed up from scores of bomb craters. The Anglican Cathedral, the Victoria Monument and the Liver Buildings, escaped the bombs virtually unscathed, with less fortunate buildings, such as Blacklers, being totally destroyed.

People said German bombers spared the Three Graces, as they acted as landmark beacons for them to identify the docks. Hundreds of people lost their lives during the Liverpool Blitz – more than 4000 in the city throughout the War. Entire families were taken or left decimated. However, the indomitable spirit of the Scousers shone through and Liverpool, though badly hurt, remained unbowed as the heartbeat port for the Atlantic convoy's war effort.

The Durning Road Bombing

The air raid shelter deep below the Ernest Brown Junior Instructional Centre in Durning Road was regarded as one of the safest, close to Liverpool's city centre.

That was why the trams were stopped nearby, in Edge Lane, when the air raid sirens sounded, on the night of November 28th, 1940. If people leaving the waterfront and Pier Head were to be kept beyond harm, inside the training centre's shelter was a better place than most others.

More than 300 people entered the building and trooped down into the shelter, below its sizeable boiler, one storey above. Just before 2am, on the 29th, the Ernest Brown Centre received a direct hit from a parachute bomb. The building imploded. The boiler was breached and scalding water rained down onto the throng who were trapped below.

It is estimated that more than 180 women, children and men died. 166 of the dead were identified. A great many more received horrific burns and other injuries.

Only about 30 people managed to escape death or serious injury that night, at Durning Road.

Afterwards, Prime Minister Winston Churchill described the Durning Road Bombing as "the single worst (civilian) incident of the War". Even so, this represents an awful chapter in the city's wartime history that is unknown to many Liverpool people. The memorial plaque to those who died in this tragedy is, now, housed at Kensington Primary School in Brae Street, close by Durning Road and the former bomb-site.

Cast

(in order of main appearance)

Maggs Williams - Kate McHenry
Daisy Mae Beech - Katie Burke
Carla Evans - Sophie Gaudie
"Cockney" Lil Ford - Rachel Jones
Hal Brandon - Corey Rumble
Chad Tyler - Tom Sentia
"Red Ted" Forsythe - Michael Bailey
Lawrence Gale - Miles Walker
Ira Jones - Chloe Fay
Mrs Williams - Mia Molloy
Contemporary Dancer - Natalie

Evacuees

Naina Randev	Jessica Parker	Caitlyn Dignam
Amelia Regan	Grace Mullen	Emily McQuillan
Lewis Potsig	Mia Hughes	Grace McDonald
Sam Ryan	Lily Grace	Darcey Grady
Lola Lawson	India Wilde	Mia Holland
Emily Prenga	Scarlett Wilde	Lauren Bewley
Abigail Patrick	Jack Jones	George Brereton

Production Credits

Director: Jodie Marshall
Producer: Tony Bradley
Musical Director/ Arranger: Alan Moore
Orchestration: Rebecca Myers
Choreographer/ Dance Captain: Natalie Dignam
Stage Management Lead/ Deputy Stage Manager – Sam Cheadle
Set Design: Alfie Heywood
Set Design Engineering: David Almond & Caroline Nurse (Arup UK)
Set Animation: Alex 'Spider' Hewitt
Lighting Design: Oliver Bush
Costume Design/ Wardrobe Supervision: Stephanie O'Hara
Musical Band Members: Drum - Dan Kirkham, Double Bass - Luke Moore, Cello - Robert Williams, Violin - Lara Simpson, Woodwind - Helen Goldsmith
Wardrobe Assistant: Julia Devoda
Costume Hire: North-West Costumes Ltd.
Lighting Technician: Kelvin Lloyd
Sound Technician: Jordan Hewitt
Hair & Make-Up: Courtesy of Herberts Salon and Liverpool Community College
Technical Assistant: Alister Harding
Marketing Company: Bill Elms Associates (BEA)

General Manager (The Epstein): Rebekah Pichilingi
Marketing Manager (The Epstein): Josh Rowe
Marketing Supervisor: Michelle Rushton (BEA)
Box Office Manager (The Epstein): Heidi Birchall
Ticketing Co-ordinator (The Epstein): Anthony Cunningham
Set Construction by Scafftech Ltd.
1st Assistant Stage Manager: Amie Du-Buisson-Spargo
2nd Assistant Stage Manager: Dominique Daly
Theatrical Programme Design/ Advertising Sales: Kim Du-Buisson
Assistant Deputy Stage Manager: Sian Gardiner
Rehearsals space: Courtesy, Paul Daly & Garston Urban Village Hall/ Rebekah Pichilingi & The Epstein Theatre
Auditions space: Courtesy, Maxine Ellis & Liverpool Theatre School
Production Assistant: Taylor Brierley
Stage Management Assistants: Lawrence Noble, Max Lynch and Jade Rumney (courtesy West Cheshire College)



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The Cast



Katie McHenry trained at East 15 Acting School and completed a Diploma in Musical Theatre at the Stella Mann College. Credits in training include: Mona Strangely in Best Little Whorehouse in Texas (St Albans Arena), Personals Musical Theatre Review, Cabaret Bananas in The House of Blue Leaves (The Corbett Theatre). Professional Theatre credits include: Polly Baker in Crazy for You, Lily St Regis in Annie and Jekyll and Hyde (Southport Little Theatre), Holly in The Wedding Singer and The Wild Party (Bridewell Theatre, London), Lead Vocalist in Magic of The Orient (Tatton Park, Cheshire). Kate is employed as Lead Vocalist for both P&O and Costa Cruises, performing daily and travelling all over the World. Kate is delighted to be making her debut at the beautiful Epstein Theatre in Liver Birdsong.



Katie Burke trained in Professional Musical Theatre, with a full scholarship, at Liverpool Theatre School. Professional Theatre credits include: Jane in Stalking the Beatles (Unity Theatre), Mrs White in Norwegian Wood (Gladstone Theatre), Trixie Belholme in Presterton Hall (Unity Theatre) and performing as a Show Girl in The Ken Dodd Happiness Show (The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Hall & The Floral Pavilion, New Brighton). Katie is delighted to be playing Daisy in this exciting new musical.



Sophie Gaudie trained in Professional Musical Theatre, with a dance and drama award, at Liverpool Theatre School. Professional Theatre credits include: Fairy Snowflake in Snow white (Doncaster Civic), Older Eva in Her Benny (St Helens theatre Royal), Leia Dawkins in Loserville (Capstone Theatre) and performing as a dancer in The Ken Dodd Happiness Show (The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Hall & The Floral Pavilion, New Brighton). Sophie is thrilled to be playing the part of Carla in this exciting new musical right here in her own city.



Rachel Jones trained in Musical Theatre, for 3 years, at Liverpool Theatre School. Training credits include: John Bishop's Sunshine Tour and Ken Dodd's Happiness Show. Professional Theatre credits include: various pantomime roles and as a Lead Singer/ Dancer with Carnival Cruise Lines. TV Credits include: Waterloo Road (SHED Productions/ BBC) and Football Focus (BBC Productions). She has travelled extensively in the US and Caribbean. Liver Birdsong is Rachel's first, full professional musical outside college. She is so grateful to be working with such an amazing cast and creative team.



Corey Rumble trained in Musical Theatre for his BTEC and Professional Diploma in Musical Theatre at Liverpool Theatre School. Training credits include: Francis Weir in Loserville, Bert Healey in Annie, The Wizard in Wiz, and Ensemble parts in Love & Information (by Carol Churchill), The Witches of Eastwick and Evita. Corey is thrilled to be appearing as Hal in Liver Birdsong, which is his first professional production since graduating in Summer, 2016.



Miles Walker trained in Musical Theatre at Liverpool Theatre School. Training credits include: Lucas Lloyd in Loserville, Ken Dodd's Happiness Tour and Ensemble parts in Carol Churchill's Love & Information. This is Miles' first professional production since graduating in Summer, 2016. He is thrilled to be a part of a cast that includes so many of his former LTS colleagues.

Tom Sentia trained at Priestley College, Warrington, studying Musical Theatre, Dance and History, before securing a DADA Award to study at Liverpool Theatre School, where he graduated with Distinction. Training credits include: FrankNfurter in The Rocky Horror Show, Seymour in The Little Shop of Horrors and the Lead Role of Michael Dork in Loserville. Tom has been a Dancer/ Dance Captain for Ken Dodd's Happiness Show (The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Hall & The Floral Pavilion, New Brighton). Tom is ecstatic to be part of this very talented company for Liver Birdsong.



Michael Bailey trained in Musical Theatre at Liverpool Theatre School. Theatre credits include: Siderfella (The Dancehouse), Dance Proms (Royal Albert Hall/BBC Promenade Concerts), Ken Dodd's Happiness Show (The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Hall). Professional Theatre credits include: Divorce Me Darling (Chameleon Theatre), The Pirates Of Penzance (Buxton Opera House), The Gondoliers (Buxton Opera House), The Boyfriend (Albert Hall Theatre), Salad Days (Buxton Pavilion Arts Centre/Harrogate Theatre), The Wizard Of Oz (Middleton Arena/The Brindley), The Secret Garden (Speke Hall), Aladdin (UK Tour), Revive: The Ultimate Michael Jackson Tribute (UK Tour), The Magic Of Pinocchio (The Dancehouse), Costa Neo-Romantica (Costa Crociere Productions), Hansel & Gretel's Christmas Adventure, Jack & Jill's Rhyme Time, Goldilocks & The Three Bears, Little Red & Grandma (North West Tour & Theatre By The Lake, Keswick), Aladdin (The Brindley), You, Me and Us (North West Tour) and Tangled Web (North West Tour). TV and Screen credits include: Pleasureland (Kudos Productions/Channel 4), Kill List: The Musical (Kate Herron), Ministry of Future (Visual Collectives), Kill Kane (North Bank Entertainment, 4 Digital Media) and Accidental Warlock (Fright Wig Productions).



Chloe Fay completed her professional training at The Italia Conti School, graduating in 2013, with a Diploma in Performing Arts. Professional Theatre credits include: Dancer/ soloist in Ou La La! (Victoria Hall, Stoke), Princess Mitzy in Dick Whittington (Touring Pantomime) and Maid Marion in Robin Hood (Touring Pantomime). TV and Screen credits include; Jenny Andrews in A Dance Away (Manchester), Featured Artist for Feel Unique (TV campaign) and Featured Artist in online idents for Co-operative Insurance.



Mia Molloy trained at Dolphin Dance Studios as a child, being cast as a Juvenile Dancer, winning many competitions. Willy Russell cast her, aged 14, in the original production of Our Day Out – The Musical. She trained at Liverpool Theatre School, under a full scholarship, graduating in Professional Musical Theatre, with Distinction. Professional Theatre credits include: Amy Chandler in Our Day Out – The Musical (Royal Court Theatre, Premiere and Come-back seasons), Hatty Keane in the JLS Goodbye Tour (Various arenas), Wildabeast in Jack Whitehall's Getting Around Tour (Liverpool Echo Arena), Senior Dancer/ Snow White (cover) in Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs (The Floral Pavilion Theatre, New Brighton), Dancer/ Show Girl in Ken Dodd's Happiness Show (The Floral Pavilion Theatre, New Brighton and The Southport Theatre), Mel Trent/ Assistant Choreographer in Presterton Hall (The Unity Theatre). TV and Screen credits include: Hollyoaks (Lime Pictures), Waterloo Road (SHED Productions/ BBC), Football Girl in Learning to Walk (Ricky Tomlinson). Mia is thrilled to be part of the cast for Liver Birdsong and wishes everyone a successful run in this wonderful new musical.



Benjamin Keith trained in musical theatre at Liverpool Theatre School where he graduated in 2014, with Distinction. Training credits include: Mr Scoblofski in Daisy Pulls It Off (LTS Studio). Professional Theatre credits include: Thomson 'Celebration' Show Team (Peel Enterprise Cruises, Caribbean and Mediterranean), Captain Charteris in Quaker Girl (Buxton Pavillion/Harrogate Theatre), Tony in The Boy Friend (Buxton Pavillion/Harrogate Theatre), Ensemble in The Mikado (Buxton Opera House), Dr Blint in Die Flader Maus (Harrogate Theatre), Timothy's Father/Ambrose/Augustine in Salad Days (Buxton Pavillion/Harrogate Theatre), Judas/John the Baptist in Godspel (Lighthouse Theatre), and Ken Dodd's 'Happiness' Tour (opening act). In 2015 Ben became a member of Andante, performing as guest act on Celebrity ships, touring The Netherlands as one of 'The Tenors', late 2015. He has had other Andante engagements throughout 2016. This year, Benjamin has started working in another vocal group called The Mersey Boys around the North West of England.



The Team



Jodie Marshall set up A Mind Apart Theatre Company Limited in 2008 after finishing her degree in Drama at Lincoln University. She currently lives in Sheffield where she was born and bred. Much of her directing has been done within her own Theatre Company, A Mind Apart, and with community dance and theatre groups in Brazil. This has included directing Forum Theatre Pieces for a range of audiences. Jodie has a strong passion for social fairness and justice, which has helped to ignite the fire for her work both here and abroad, both in theatre and with social enterprises and cooperatives and charities.



Tony Bradley is a university lecturer in social enterprise, innovation and entrepreneurship at Liverpool Hope Business School, and has also had a lifelong involvement in media, theatre, music and the arts. He was Development Director of Forward Vision Communications, a multi-media TV production company, for 10 years and later a producer/director with Sky. Music and the arts is in Tony's lifeblood – he started as a boy chorister at Liverpool Anglican Cathedral; ran his own theatre company in Essex during the 1980s; and has written/produced for TV and stage. Liver Birdsong is Tony's first full musical theatre book and lyrics. Tony is, also, an Anglican Priest, with twenty years experience in parish ministry, as a Vicar.



Rebecca Myers graduated from the University of Hull in Music & Drama in 2012. Rebecca writes and performs regularly with NODA awards-nominated company, MADS, in South Cumbria. She specialises in music composition and music therapy. Liver Birdsong: The Liverpool Blitz Musical is Rebecca's first full musical composition. By the time of show or, even, during its run, Rebecca is likely to have given birth to twins. Sounds like the plot for 'A New Star is Born!'.



LIVER
Birdsong

Biographies



Natalie Dignam was born and raised in Liverpool. She graduated from Liverpool Theatre School with distinction achieving a National Diploma in Professional Musical Theatre. Whilst at college Natalie was awarded the Dance Award, the Drama Award and the David Needham Award for most promising performer. Natalie has studied many styles of dance including ballet, jazz, contemporary, tap, hip-hop, latin and ballroom. Natalie's credits include: Sarah Kines in *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (West End Production/UK Tour); Featured Dancer/Cover Dandini in *Cinderella* (Grande Theatre Swansea); *Sleeping Beauty* in *Sleeping Beauty* (Theatre Royal Bath); *Singer/Dancer* (Onboard P&O MV Aurora); *Dance Captain/Assistant Tour Manager* in John Bishop's *Sunshine Tour* (UK Tour); *Assistant Dance Captain/Swing/Cover Cha Cha* and *Miss Lynch* in *Grease the Musical* (West End Production/UK Tour). Natalie runs her own theatre school. Natalie Dignam Theatre School is based in Cronton, Liverpool and was opened in May 2013. The school teaches dance, singing and drama to children aged between 2 and 18. Since opening in 2013, NDTs has flourished and now has over 100 pupils. Natalie is delighted to be part of the creative team for *Liver Birdsong*. A fantastic plot with lots of new music for everybody to enjoy.



Alan Moore is a professional musical director, tutor, and composer. As a musician he enjoys performing, arranging, directing, and teaching. Alan specialised in singing technique at Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts, before later gaining a BA Hons Degree in Music at Liverpool Hope University. Working as an MD based in Liverpool, he has collaborated with all sorts of performers from across a wide range of art forms. Alan started by working with the Liverpool Empire Youth Theatre Company as the Assistant MD on productions such as *Sister Act*, *Footloose*, *Grease* and *Cats*. His MD credits now include *Bugsy Malone*, *Hairspray*, *Grease*, *Beauty & The Beast*, *Jack & The Beanstalk*, *High School Musical*, and *Cinderella*. Alan is also the Musical Director of Liverpool Harmony Club – Liverpool's stand-out male 'barbershop' chorus established in 1974. He also plays keyboards regularly in various function bands and runs his own company, Chameleon Chords.



LIVER Birdsong

Team Biographies



Alfie Heywood is a Merseyside born lad, growing up over the water in the Wirral. He recently graduated in Theatre and Performance Design from Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts achieving first class honours. Whilst studying, Alfie has designed the sets for musicals Tick Tick Boom at the Unity Theatre and Witches of Eastwick at LIPA. He also designed the set for a new play It Doesn't Matter and designed set and costumes for Crimes of the Heart. Since 2012, Alfie has been the designer for Oxford based theatre company, Sands Theatre Arts School and has designed the sets for Guys and Dolls, Summer Holiday and Copacabana. He is a prop maker, painter and set dresser for Take That, Coldplay and the BBC. He recently co-designed Frankenstein at the Everyman Studio Theatre and he will be designing the set for the Merseyside musical Down Our Street in March at the Floral Pavilion.

Oliver Bush is a Lighting Designer; he has worked around the country lighting aerial circus, musicals, dance and theatre. He trained at The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts being awarded a first class honours degree. Most recently he designed The Gin Chronicles, Julius Caesar at the Brighton Fringe festival and the UK tour of Life On Wheels by Bella Kinetica. His designs have won awards from The Association of Lighting Designers and been praised for his work. Future projects being Knock Knock, Ruby Slippers and the return of The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee later this year, and the 2017 Tour of Life On Wheels.



Stephanie O'Hara graduated from The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts with first class honour degree in Theatre and Performance Design with Liver Birdsong being her first professional project outside of university. "My inspiration for the costumes developed whilst reading the script and getting to know the characters. They each have a distinctive trait, which I wanted to exaggerate and play with. Liver Birdsong is set in 1940s wartime. But, we can still identify with these characters today. 1940s style was heavily influenced by Hollywood trends, glamour and style, depicted in movies and by the celebrities of the time. This encouraged me to play with the costumes even further and to not shy away from colour and more lavish clothes that may have considered a luxury in the war. increasingly I came to understand the real meaning behind the phrase "make do and mend". Whatever the Luftwaffe threw at our Liver birds, they weren't going to diminish our girls originality, pride in appearance or personal style.



Alex 'Spider' Hewitt is a Liverpool based video designer, technician and film maker. He studied at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts, specialising in video design. Since graduating he has contributed to many different projects, including content for installations, games and shows with Hope St Ltd, touring with Thesis theatre company, as well as contributing to projects like Rewind Fast Forward. Alex is pleased to be designing for Liver Birdsong and is glad to be able to bring many elements of local history into the show through his designs.



LIVER
Birdsong



Childhood memories of the Blitz ***- the Durning Road disaster, 29 November 1940***

One night while tucked up in my bed, I heard my Mother shout,
"put your shoes and coat on ,we cant stay here tonight"
The sirens screeching, Planes overhead, still dark and cold outside,
we ran along Durning road, to safety the College might provide,
we went into a nice warm room, the boiler room they said,
and quickly we got comfy like being snug in bed,
but once again my Mother said "come we have to go,"
we'd taken some regulars places, so she couldn't really say no,
Further down the basement, only a small place we could find,
underneath some sinks we laid, no one seemed to mind.
Then the noise was really awful, banging and screaming
I could hear, then darkness so black I couldn't see,
the taste of soot was hard to bare
Did I shout or did I cry, I really couldn't say,
but a hand came out the darkness
and said `come this is the way".
It felt like rubble under foot ,a lumpy softness too,
the strong hand kept me upright, I wish I could see who.
Then I was held so tightly and lifted up quite high
then more hands lifting higher still, then I saw the sky,
"who does this child belong to" I heard a mans voice shout,
my Mother came from somewhere and helped to get me out.
We went across to Clint Rd School, and sat down on the steps,
there were a lot of people there, some even had their pets,
no one came to talk to us , then we heard the all clear sound,
Mum said "come lets go back home ,its better than this ground".
The house was really in a mess, the windows all blown in,
but Mum said to go to bed, it really is a sin,
that I should have to go to bed with stones still in my hair,
I didn't like that place at all, we shouldn't have gone there.

(God was watching over us that night, all the people in that nice warm
room was scalded to death when the boilers burst, my heart still cries)

June Milligan
October 2016

Crane & Sons



EPSTEIN THEATRE TURNS BACK THE CLOCK FOR PREMIERE OF LIVERPOOL BLITZ MUSICAL

Audiences at The **Epstein Theatre** will think they've walked into a time warp when they visit the theatre at the **end of November!**

The **Hanover Street** theatre will be taking a step back in time and transforming the venue back into **Cranes Theatre** as part of a **Heritage Lottery Funded project – Celebrating the Epstein.**

The Theatre has received **£46,300.00** from the **Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)** to launch the project which focuses on the theatre's history and the central role that it played in forming the city's artistic heritage.

The Epstein has been entertaining audiences in Liverpool for **100 years**. It has had several different names since it first opened as **The Crane's Music Hall in 1913**. It soon became a space for local amateur theatre groups and went on to become **Cranes Theatre**. It then changed its name again to **The Neptune Theatre** to honour the city's sea fairing tradition and then once more in 2012 to **The Epstein Theatre** in honour of Brian Epstein, the man who made The Beatles.

Birdsong Live Productions CIC

Birdsong Live Productions was incorporated as a new Community Interest Company (CIC) in May, 2016. Community Interest Companies exist, as social enterprises, within UK law, to trade in products and services that provide a tangible benefit to local people, re-investing any surplus and profits in the interests of the community, not simply delivering a dividend to shareholders. In this respect, they are designed to benefit society not simply line the pockets of their owners.

The Regulator for CICs was pleased to accept Birdsong Live Productions as a new CIC with the following purposes:

"BLP CIC develops community theatre and arts groups, involved in community development, story-telling and social inclusion, especially in the Liverpool City Region, the North-West and Cumbria. A large number of groups and individuals will benefit from the activities of BLP, by being involved in a range of community productions, beginning with 'Liver Birdsong - The Liverpool Blitz Musical', which tells the stories of important events in Liverpool's recent history, especially the Liverpool Blitz, in the 75th commemoration year of those harrowing events. Through drama, story-telling, the arts and community engagement BLP will work with the community, especially older people, to demonstrate, remember and involve new generations in the significance of events that they've lived through and which helped to shape their lives.

Theatre, drama, musicals, video and music recordings provide important vehicles and a range of media for helping with community engagement and social cohesion. The Producer, Directors and other creative industry professionals behind BLP have decades of experience in community development, music therapy and drama-in-the community, as well as having worked as TV and multi-media Producers. As such, the work of BLP CIC will enable the proceeds of professional theatre to be used to advance future community theatre projects, which are in development."

So, while the two Directors of Birdsong Live Productions - Tony Bradley and Rebecca Myers - who wrote Liver Birdsong together, have many year's experience in the creative arts and media industries, this is their first full production with the new Community Interest Company. We would love to hear from others in the community who share our passion for community development through the arts, especially drama and music. And if you're interested in hearing more about our plans for the future and the next three productions that we have in development do contact us at:

Tony Bradley/ Rebecca Myers, Birdsong Live Productions CIC, 12 St George's Road, Millom Cumbria, LA18 5BA or ring Tony on 07546 246286. We would love to hear from you. Or visit the Facebook page for the show: <https://www.facebook.com/liverbirdsong/> and tell us what you think.

"Let's work together to build a stronger community, one song at a time".





DAISY



MAGGS





BIRDSONG LIVE PRODUCTIONS CIC PROUDLY PRESENTS

NEW BRITISH MUSICAL BY TONY BRADLEY AND REBECCA MYERS

LIVER *Birdsong*

THE LIVERPOOL BLITZ MUSICAL

WORLD PREMIERE PRODUCTION TO COMMEMORATE
THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BLITZ

DIRECTED BY JODIE MARSHALL

LIVER BIRDSONG COMBINES BROAD COMEDY, POIGNANT TRAGEDY AND THE MUSICAL STYLES OF 1940, IN A COMPELLING MIX THAT WILL HAVE YOU ROARING WITH LAUGHTER AND SEARCHING FOR YOUR HANKY.

Liver Birdsong - the brand new British musical by Tony Bradley and Rebecca Myers makes its World Premiere at the Epstein Theatre this year, in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Blitz, when Liverpool was bombed by the German Luftwaffe during World War II.

Join the Liverbirds - Maggs, Carla, Daisy Mae and Lil as they battle not only the Nazis but also their own threats, fears and jealousies. Will they overcome their troubles and find hope? Find out in this emotionally-charged and heart-warming musical, packed with 18 brand new songs, performed by a professional company of actors and accompanied by a live band.

The
EPSTEIN
THEATRE

TUE 29 NOV - SAT 3 DEC 2016

PERFORMANCES 7:30PM | MATINEE 2:30 PM (WED, THU & SAT)

EPSTEINLIVERPOOL.CO.UK | BOX OFFICE 0844 888 4411

facebook.com/liverbirdsong @liverbirdsong www.liverbirdsong.org

*Booking fee - A booking fee of 10% will be added to the face value of each ticket purchased online or via the telephone. No fees when booking in person at the Epstein Theatre box office, paying by cash.