



# LOVESONG

by Abi Morgan

directed by  
Kirsty Elmer

**NVT**  
NEW  
VENTURE  
THEATRE


Bedford Place,  
Brighton BN1 2PT

**PERFORMANCES:**

Fri 20th - Sat 28th July 2018 - 7.45 pm  
Matinee Sun 22nd - 2.30pm  
(No Sun/Mon eves)

**ONLINE BOOKING:** [www.newventure.org.uk/tickets](http://www.newventure.org.uk/tickets)

**BOX OFFICE INFORMATION:** 01273 746118

 @nvt\_brighton

An Amateur Production in association with Independent Talent Group, Ltd.

**THEATRE** ◀  
**NEW WRITING** ◀  
**CLASSES** ◀  
**LICENSED BAR** ◀

**50p**

# LOVESONG

*'Time is linear. When we die. I think we die. But until we do...I want that time to be with you.'*

'Lovesong' is the moving story of one couple, told from two different points in their lives – as young lovers in their 20s and as worldly companions looking back on their relationship. Their past and present selves collide in this beautiful tale of togetherness. All relationships have their ups and downs; the optimism of youth becomes the wisdom of experience. Love is a leap of faith.

Originally staged at the Drum Theatre in Plymouth in 2011, this play was a collaboration between Abi Morgan and Frantic Assembly theatre company, which was well-received by theatre critics and audiences. Abi Morgan, is an accomplished stage and screen writer, most famously known for writing 'The Hour', 'The Iron Lady' and, most recently, the TV legal drama 'The Split'.

It's been a wonderful rehearsal process whilst directing this play. It's been a departure for me in both style and scale: working intimately with such a small cast has been a privilege. There's been many an emotional moment and tears from both cast and crew. It's that kind of play. The writing is so beautiful: haunting and resonant yet without over-sentimentality or mawkishness. That's Abi Morgan's talent and it has been our task to recreate this beauty, this story, for our audiences. I am blessed to have found such a lovely, talented and open cast to work with. As the older couple, Billy and Maggie, I have been fortunate in casting Michael Bulman and Nikki Dunsford. Michael is a relative newcomer to the NVT, last seen as Dada in 'Our Lady of Sligo' and Nikki has been in many productions here over the years. As the younger William and Margaret, I have also been thrilled to cast Bertie Purchase, most recently seen in The Messiah, and NVT newcomer Sally Lord, who have not just had to create their passionate and feisty relationship, but also suggest imperceptible links through time to their older selves. The very nature of the play has demanded an honesty and vulnerability within the rehearsal process and I thank them all for their trust and bravery.

My design team and crew have also been invaluable in the creative process, enabling us to tell the moving story of this couple through time. I'm grateful for their great support, dedication and creativity.

I'm very proud of what we've achieved together- something we'll not forget in a hurry. I hope that you, as our audience, will feel the same.

Kirsty Elmer  
Director

## CAST

Margaret :	Sally Lord
William :	Robert Purchase
Maggie :	Nikki Dunsford
Billy :	Michael Bulman

## PRODUCTION TEAM

Director :	Kirsty Elmer
Production Manager :	Uli Schilling
Stage Manager :	Pauline Rospigliosi
Assistant Stage Manager :	Rachel Mills
Stage Manager :	Karla del Valle Garcia
Costume Design:	Kirsty Elmer
Set Design :	Kirsty Elmer
Set Construction :	Tim Harbridge, Simon Glazier, George Walter
Set Painting :	Kirsty Elmer, Uli Schilling, Tim Harbridge, Delphine du Barry, Pauline Rospigliosi, Rachel Mills, Max Videaux, Steve Coulson
Lighting Design :	Steve Coulson
Lighting Operation :	Steve Coulson, Max Videaux, Uli Schilling
Sound Design :	Kirsty Elmer
Original Music :	Adam Hewitt <a href="http://adamhears.com">http://adamhears.com</a>
Sound Operation :	Adam Hewitt, Erica Fletcher
Props :	Kirsty Elmer, Pauline Rospigliosi, Rachel Mills
Projections & Video Trailers:	Raf Parrsie <a href="https://rafaelparrsie.wordpress.com/">https://rafaelparrsie.wordpress.com/</a>
Poster & Programme :	Tamsin and Strat Mastoris
Photography :	Lucy Ward, Miles Davis, Raf Parrsie
Publicity & Marketing :	Emmie Spencer, Uli Schilling
Health & Safety :	Ian Black

*Please note that the furniture on set is available for purchase after the production, please enquire.*

Many thanks :

Steven Adams, Margaret Skeet, Miles Davies, Scott Roberts, Jo Ashley, Helen Carrey, Ian Black and as always to Jazz Bowden and the Front of House Team, Chris Stubbs and Box Office Team without whom no show would ever go on.

### **Sally Lord (*Margaret*)**

Sally's passion for acting was first ignited at The Theatre Royal Bath's Young People's Theatre. Her favourite roles include Adelaide 'Guys and Dolls', Helena 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', Viv 'The House on Hellmouth Hill', Gregor Samsa 'Metamorphosis', Rumpelstiltskin 'The Grimm's Tales', Titania 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and Lily St Regis 'Annie'.

During her teens, Sally travelled to San Francisco to study with The American Conservatory Theatre where she was part of the workshopping and performing of the brilliant newly written plays 'War Daddy' by Jim Grimsley and 'Broken Hallelujah' by Sharman Macdonald. Sally's professional debut was as Princess Perlipatt in 'The Nutcracker' at The Theatre Royal Bath.

Whilst training at Birmingham School of Acting, Sally applied her Theatre skills towards raising awareness of Homelessness, Foster Care, HIV and Dementia. She enjoyed working alongside The Play House Theatre Company, Birmingham to promote Historic Preservation.

During her studies, Sally attended a performance of 'Lovesong' and was so moved by the play that she bought the manuscript. She couldn't believe it when she saw that the NVT was holding auditions for the play and feels extremely privileged to be involved in sharing the beautiful story.



### **Robert Purchase (*William*)**

Bertie writes about video games by day, and acts by night. Since joining the New Venture Theatre in 2015, he has been in a number of shows. Most recently he was Desmond Olivier Dingle in the raucous but also searingly beautiful Christmas production of The National Theatre of Brent's 'The Messiah'.

Before then, Bertie was Hal in 'Proof' (June 2017), Jock in 'Dick Barton and the Tango of Terror' (Christmas 2016), Ian in 'Holes' (October 2016), Inspector Pissani in 'The Accidental Death of an Anarchist' (June 2016), the Blind Fiddler in How Many Miles to Babylon (April 2016), and Scrooge's cheerful nephew Fred in A Christmas Carol (Christmas 2015). He has been in a few short plays too.

Bertie is honoured to be helping bring Lovesong to life. It's a touching exploration of powerful themes near and familiar to us all, and he's learned a lot from a generous cast and imaginative director along the way.

## Nikki Dunsford (*Maggie*)

Nikki began her training at the Royal Ballet School when she was eleven and graduated when she was 18, performing in Frederick Ashton's 'Façade' at the Royal Opera House. She was a professional dancer for 15 years, performing with the Mannheim Ballet Company and The Australian Ballet Company. Ballets include 'Giselle', 'Coppelia', 'Romeo and Juliet', 'Spartacus' and in London's West End shows include 'Showboat', 'Evita' and 'Queen Daniela' with Danny La Rue. She also appeared in 3 episodes of 'Dr. Who', was a motorbike stunt artist for 'Lady Nancy Astor' in the BBC television adaptation and was a magician's assistant for 'The Great Kovari' on BBC 2.

Nikki's acting roles to date include Mrs Higgins in 'My Fair Lady' at The Theatre Royal and two appearances at the Minack Theatre, Cornwall as Lady Capulet in 'Romeo and Juliet' and Clarice in 'Frankenstein'. Other roles include Else in 'Festen', Mrs Kay in 'Our Day Out', Mrs Eryllyn in 'Lady Windermere's Fan', The Duchess in 'The Revengers Tragedy', Dorothy in 'Glorious', Miss Gibson in 'Daisy Pulls it Off' and a Narrator in 'Under Milk Wood'. In May she appeared in the Brighton Festival playing Mrs Stevens in 'Charles III', Mike Bartlett acclaimed play directed by Claire Skinner. This will be Nikki's fourth production with NVT. Previous roles include Chorus in 'Women of Troy', Judith Bliss in 'Hayfever' and Grace Winslow in 'The Winslow Boy'.



## Michael Bulman (*Billy*)

Michael originally embarked on a career as a scientist. However, when a research fellowship at the University of Manitoba unexpectedly fell through in 1969, he got the distinct impression that The Fates were trying to tell him something. He went to London and began having singing lessons, continuing his studies at the Royal Academy of Music (where a fellow student was the 16 year-old Simon Rattle!) and subsequently in Italy with Bruno Sutti in Mantua.



Operatic appearances include Benjamin Britten's 'Death in Venice' (Covent Garden and Aldeburgh), Purcell's 'Fairy Queen' (Aldeburgh and Florence), 'HMS Pinafore', 'Yeoman of the Guard' and Offenbach's 'La Pêrichole' (all for BBC2 television). In London's West End Michael was seen in Stephen Sondheim's 'Sweeney Todd' and 'A Little Night Music', and also played Monsieur André in 'Phantom of the Opera'.

Michael met his wife Liz when they were on a 3-month Arts Council tour of the UK. It was a thoroughly democratic affair. One night Michael would appear as Eisenstein in 'Die Fledermaus' while Liz sang in the chorus, and the next evening saw Liz singing the Countess in 'Figaro' while Michael played a peasant. It proved a good recipe for a happy marriage. Always know when to let your partner take centre stage!

Michael started acting at the age of 70, appearing with Lewes Little Theatre as Henry Drummond in 'Inherit the Wind', Charles Macklin in 'Mr Foote's Other Leg', Leonato in 'Much Ado About Nothing' and 'Julius Caesar'. For NVT he played Dada in 'Our Lady of Sligo' earlier this year.

## Kirsty Elmer - Director

Kirsty is a director, actor and teacher, who has been a member of NVT since 2001, appearing in many productions, including 'Dinner', 'Strangers on a Train', 'Festen' and 'All My Sons'. Over the years, she has also designed costumes and styled hair for a number of productions, in addition to leading some acting classes. For the NVT, she has directed and designed 'Five Kinds of Silence' (2009), 'The Permanent Way' (2011), 'Decade' (2014) and 'Love and Information' (2016).



*Photo by Raf Parrsie*

## COMING SOON

5 - 13 OCTOBER 2018

(THEATRE UPSTAIRS)

**HAPPY NOW**

**BY LUCINDA COXON**

**directed by Claire Lewis**

Have you ever thought ..... is this it?  
Is this all there is?

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Blisteringly truthful and wonderfully funny, *Happy Now?* is a wise and darkly comic take on contemporary life and how to survive it.

## COMING NEXT

2 - 10 NOVEMBER 2018

(STUDIO THEATRE)

**ORPHANS**

**BY DENNIS KELLY**

**directed by Charly Sommers**

30 NOV - 8 DEC 2018

(THEATRE UPSTAIRS)

**BE MY BABY**

**BY AMANDA WHITTINGTON**

**directed by Jerry Lyne**



*Photo by Raf Parrsie*

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## Supporting NVT

We are a membership club, founded in 1947. We perform established plays, both classical and contemporary, and are a showcase for new writing. If you are interested in joining us, please pick up a membership form in the foyer. In 1983, NVT bought the freehold of this listed Victorian building which needs constant investment to maintain its integrity. To keep NVT going, we need your financial support, either to add to our regular sponsors (annual package £250) or you can be a Cherub for a fiver, an Angel for £100, Archangel for £500 or an Archangel Gabriel for £1,000. Please look out for the leaflets in the Theatre. As an Angel you will be listed on the Role of Honour in the Theatre.

If you are interested, please email [fundraising@newventure.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@newventure.org.uk) for more information.

## Contacting the NVT

For ticket information only, call the Box Office - 01273 746118. To book tickets or for other information check our website at [www.newventure.org.uk](http://www.newventure.org.uk). All other enquiries 01273 808353

## NVYT - Youth Theatre

NVYT welcomes all young people (11-17) with a passion for or an interest in theatre. Fridays 4.30-6.30pm.

## NVT Acting Class

Monday evenings at 7.30pm for all levels of acting skills. It will cost you just £5 per session (£2.50 for NVT members) First visit is FREE!

## Become a Sponsor

£250: Advertise in our brochure, on the website, in each programme and our newsletter for one year. Plus two free tickets per show. Contact [fundraising@newventure.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@newventure.org.uk) for details. Or why not become an Angel, Archangel or even Archangel Gabriel to help us support the current and future improvements to our theatre. For further information please contact the Angels Coordinator Gerry McCrudden: [gerrymccrudden@hotmail.com](mailto:gerrymccrudden@hotmail.com).

## Membership

Company membership - £15 a year. Full participation, discount on tickets & newsletter. Student/Unwaged - £10 a year. As above... *Proof of status is required.*