

Theatre preview: *Glory on Earth* – The Lyceum



Knox, Knox. Who's There? The Reformation of Scotland and the fiery proselytiser's tempestuous relationship with the doomed, game of thrones dabbler, Mary Queen of Scots – that's who. With the Papal orthodoxies being rent asunder, Martin Luther allegedly hammering his RE homework to the church door in Wittenberg whilst Henry VIII plays trashed monastery *Salvage Hunters* and terminal *Wife Swap*.

Fasten your girdles- it is going to be a *Horrible Histories* (c) bumpy night big time. Anticipate a *Divine Right* old affairs of State. Authentic locations within arrow shot. Meanwhile, down at Fotheringhay Castle, crypto-spymaster, Sir Francis Walsingham, has an axe to grind.

The Royal Lyceum Theatre Company's presentation of *Glory on Earth* is not only a world premiere by multi award-winning Scottish playwright Linda McLean, commissioned for the theatre's 2017/18 Season, but it also marks Artistic Director, David Greig, in his Lyceum directorial debut. With composition by Michael John McCarthy, *Glory on Earth* will be a play with music performed by the cast, many of whom are actor musicians.

With initial inspiration taken from four meetings recorded in Knox' *History of the Reformation*, the play follows the arrival of Mary and her ladies in waiting – all also named Mary – in Edinburgh, her relationship with leader of the Reformation in Scotland, John Knox, and the events that led to her legendary execution.

Taking its inspiration primarily from four meetings between

Mary and Knox, recorded in Knox's History of the Reformation, the play inventively charts the fatal dance between a charming young queen and an uncompromising old zealot as they battle for the hearts and souls of the people of Scotland. *Glory on Earth* is a new commission written by multi-award winning Scottish playwright Linda McLean, whose work is characterised by poetry, mystery, and great emotional depth.

"Whom shall I believe? And who shall be judge?"

Tuesday, 19th August, 1561, 9am. Through the fog a ship arrives in Leith docks, Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots steps ashore. She is 19 and on her young shoulders rests the hopes of the Catholic establishment of Europe. The Nation that receives her has just outlawed her church and its practices. Its leader is the radical cleric and protestant reformer, John Knox. Both believe themselves ordained by God. Both believe themselves beloved by their people. Both were exiled and returned home... but only one can make Scotland their own.

[Glory on Earth](#) is on at The Lyceum from 20 May – 10 June 2017.

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