

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde – at Leith Theatre

The National Theatre of Scotland has announced a range of work, some of it postponed from last year and some new.

This will be the year that culture comes to life again if the NTS have anything to do with it, and they begin with a really innovative take on an old story at Leith Theatre at the end of February where they are staging *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.

This is a thrilling new hybrid version of Robert Louis Stevenson's classic story, conceived and directed by Hope Dickson Leach, adapted from the original novella and relocated from London to Edinburgh.

The production is presented by the National Theatre of Scotland and Selkie Productions in association with Screen Scotland and Sky Arts, and is a unique new retelling which uses innovative theatrical and cinematic techniques to create a live filmic and theatrical experience. Entering a live filmset built within the atmospheric setting of Edinburgh's historic Leith Theatre, audiences will witness the simultaneous creation and screening in this one-off experience.

Following the final performance on 27 February 2022, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* will be livestreamed to selected Scottish cinemas. The show will then be screened 'as

live' during the week of 28 February in UK cinemas. The footage captured during the performances will subsequently be edited into a full feature film, which will be broadcast on Sky Arts in 2023.

This will be the first livestream film, created and set in Scotland, to be seen by audiences in Scottish cinemas. Theatrical rights have been acquired by leading film distributor Cosmic Cat, who will be streaming the performance into cinemas across Scotland and the UK.



PHOTO Laurence Winram

A cast featuring leading Scottish stage and screen talent has been assembled for this unique project. BAFTA Scotland award winning Scottish actor **Lorn Macdonald** takes on the role of Utterson. Lorn won the Best Actor Scottish BAFTA award for his portrayal of Spanner in the film *Beats*. His roles on TV include *Bridgerton*, *Deadwater Fell* and *Shetland*. He has also recently been noted as one of the top 25 theatremakers to look out for in 2022 by The Stage. Dr Jekyll is performed by Scottish actor **Henry Pettigrew**. Henry's screen roles include *The Danish Girl* as well as TV series *The Crown* and *Guilt*. He has appeared in previous National Theatre of Scotland productions *Midsummer*, *Black Watch* and *Beautiful Burnout*. They are both joined by Scottish stage and TV stalwart **David Hayman** who is playing the role of Sir Danvers Carew. David is a well know actor and director with recent

film credits including *In Like Flynn* and *Our Ladies*. **Peter Singh** (Lanyon) has a prolific career on stage and screen, with recent film roles including *Cruella* and on TV, *The Capture I and II* (BBC) and *Hard Cell* (Netflix).

Alison Peebles (Poole) is an award-winning Scottish actor, writer and director. Her film work includes *Where Do We Go From Here* and *Seven Lucky Gods* and her TV work spans CBeebies hit *Molly and Mack* and *River City*. **Tam Dean Burn** (Councillor Begg) is a well known Scottish actor whose recent screen work includes *Annika*, *Victim* and *Trust Me*. **Ali Watt** (Inspector Hay) has most recently been seen on television in Irvine Welsh's *Crime* and onstage at Pitlochry Festival Theatre in several productions including *About Love*. **Scott Miller's** (Tennant) most recent credits include feature film *The Road Dance* and the tour of *Warhorse* and *The Wife of Willesden* at the Kiln Theatre, London, **Caroline Deyga** (Mabel) has most recently been seen on stage in *The Importance of Being Earnest* and with the National Theatre in *Peter Gynt*. She appeared in *Our Ladies of Perpetual Succour* for the National Theatre of Scotland.

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde by Hope Dickson Leach and Vlad Butucea, returns to Edinburgh-born writer Robert Louis Stevenson's original story which was published in 1886. This gripping new adaptation has been developed with theatre dramaturg Rosie Kellagher. The drama follows Gabriel Utterson as he enters a world of dark duplicity to uncover the identity of the mysterious Mr Hyde and the hold he has over Utterson's old friend Dr Jekyll.

In this version, Utterson's journey is set against the background and backdrop of Victorian Edinburgh, where the wealth of the breweries is contrasted with the poverty of the Cowgate Vaults, exposing an underbelly of dark truths and corruption. Concerned by his good friend Dr Henry Jekyll's recent behaviour, Gabriel Utterson is driven to uncover the identity of the mysterious and dangerous Mr. Hyde, to whom

Jekyll is enthralled. Whilst on this search for the truth, Utterson finds himself seduced by the society of Edinburgh's rich and powerful, but beneath the glossy façade lies a grim and brutal reality. This is a Jekyll and Hyde reworked for a contemporary audience with the themes of power, class and masculinity brought to the fore.

Embracing the duality of the storyline and the period authenticity, the film will be shot in black and white. Both the film and live event will feature new electronic music by DJ and music producer Hudson Mohawke, acclaimed for his genre-smashing" creative approach.

Hope Dickson Leach is an award-winning film maker, based in Edinburgh, whose debut film, *The Levelling* won her a Scottish BAFTA and the inaugural IWC Filmmaker Bursary Award in association with the BFI. This is her second project with the Company, she also co-conceived and directed *Ghost Light* with National Theatre of Scotland in association with Selkie Productions. This project reunites her with Vlad Butucea, (one of the writers for the National Theatre of Scotland's *Interference* project) and contributing writer on *Ghost Light*.

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde will offer audiences the opportunity to experience a film being created around them, gaining insight into the theatre and filmmaking process. Audience members will wear headsets while watching the drama unfold live on a large screen in the auditorium.

A gothic tale of double lives and inner demons, the storyline is mirrored not only in the hybrid format of the production but in the audience experience at the venue, where they will be able to enjoy bespoke cocktails from the Jekyll and Hyde theatre bars.

Leith Theatre is a legendary music venue, performance space and community resource in the heart of Leith, which was a gift

from the City of Edinburgh in the 1920s. Its main auditorium has played host to sporting events, the Edinburgh International Festival and iconic artists and bands. Currently closed to the public, audiences will have exclusive access to the main auditorium during the theatrical film event, and the venue's historic backstage maze of rooms and hallways will be transformed into film set location scenes of Victorian Edinburgh. The venue was brought back to life by Hidden Door and recently has been used by charity Empty Kitchens, Full Hearts who have produced more than one million meals for those who need them in the kitchen next door since the beginning of the pandemic.

The very first film version of Stevenson's novel is believed to be a 16-minute-long silent horror film of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* made in 1908, based on a stage play. Since then, there have been over 123 films made, from animation to satire to horror, with versions filmed across the world.

Screen Scotland's support is funded through the Scottish Government and The National Lottery.

Live at Leith Theatre:

Dates: 25 to 27 February 2022 at 7pm

Booking Information: www.nationaltheatrescotland.com



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