



ITICKET

Tim Firth's
**Sheila's
Island**

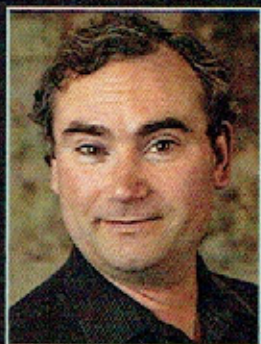
Directed by Kathy Gent
A comedy in thick fog



16th - 30th Nov 2024

School Rd, Belmont

**ROSE
CENTRE**



WELCOME

from Stephen Hood
PRESIDENT OF COMPANY THEATRE

Thanks for coming along to see *Sheila's Island*, the third play of Company Theatre's 2024 season at the Rose Centre – preceded in May by the inspiring Suzy Sampson-directed *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* and in August by poignant Kiwi play *Home Land* directed by Sian Davis. Our 2025 season kicks off in late March with Ray Cooney's *Out of Order* in which a UK Government Minister's less-than-honest private dealings get confounded by his thickening web of tall tales and a murderous sash window – directed with much mirth by Reg Williams.

Sheila's Island is the all-female rebirth of our 2021 production *Neville's Island*, also written by award-winning Tim Firth and directed by Kathy Gent – with this earlier run cut painfully short by *The Virus That Must Not Be Named*. Stranded in the unfamiliar alien landscape of the great outdoors, four corporate warriors have the opportunity to rise to this challenge. Whether or not they meet this KPI is as contentious as some of the ways in which people who manage others' actions and attitudes end up behaving themselves when the chips are down. Both strength and weakness arise in unexpected places when these four very different women must work together to survive: Whether they like it or not.

What has been inspiring to see is the way in which our awesome cast – supported by Kathy and her crew who also meet their awesomeness KPI – bring this black comedy to you with all the laughter and weight it deserves.



THE CAST

Sheila	Lauren McLay
Denise	Katie Fullard
Julie	Trudy Price
Fay	Marissa Willson

SCENES

ACT ONE

Scene One	Friday 4th November, 11:55am
Scene Two	4½ hours later
Scene Three	Dusk
Scene Four	Night

ACT TWO

Scene One	Saturday 5th November, daybreak
Scene Two	One hour later
Scene Three	Immediately following
Scene Four	15 minutes later
Scene Five	Shortly after sunset
Scene Six	Two hours later
Scene Seven	Night
Scene Eight	Immediately following
Scene Nine	Immediately following

*There will be **ONE INTERVAL**
of 15 minutes. Refreshments,
Ice Creams, and a variety of drinks will be
available*



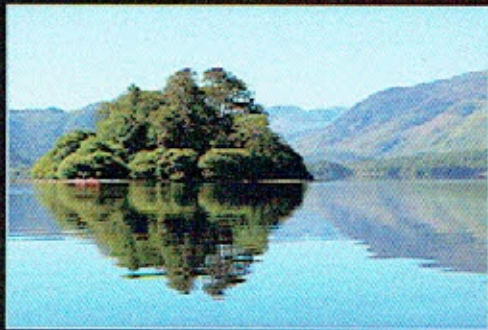
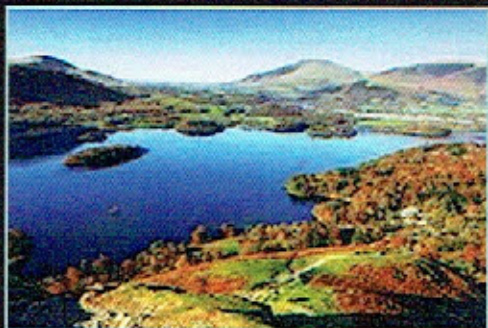
THE SCENE

Rampsholme Island, Derwentwater, The Lake District

'All is very much as God intended'

The Lake District is England's largest National Park. It includes its highest mountain, Scafell Pike; deepest lake, Wastwater - and thriving communities like Keswick and Bowness. The Lake District attracts more than 8.3 million visitors a year and has the wettest inhabited place in England in Seathwaite, with an annual rainfall of 3552mm. Bassenthwaite is the only official lake, all the others are considered 'meres' or waters.

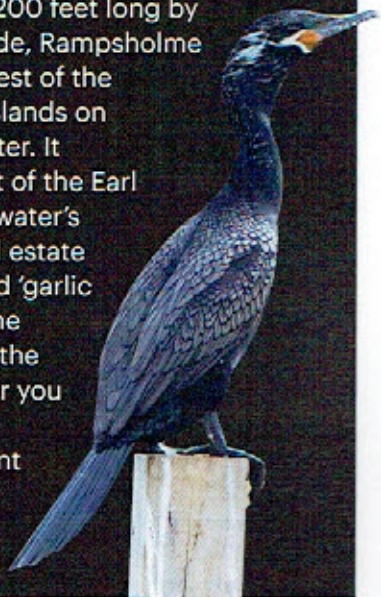
An inspiration to many including Wordsworth and John Ruskin, the Lake District is currently engaged on a project to get recognition as a World Heritage Site. Derwentwater is one of the principal bodies of water in the Lake District and lies immediately South of the town of Keswick. It is approximately 3 miles long, 1 mile wide and 72 feet deep. A regular passenger launch (without a disco) operates on the lake taking passengers between various landing stages.



At roughly 200 feet long by 100 feet wide, Rampsholme is the smallest of the four main islands on Derwentwater. It formed part of the Earl of Derwentwater's confiscated estate and is called 'garlic island' by the

locals due to the

abundance of wild garlic. At certain times of the year you can smell the garlic as you go past the island on the boat trips around Derwentwater. It is also a cormorant roost throughout the year as well as being home to mergansers, goosanders and oyster-catchers among many other birds.



THOUGHTS ON THE PLAY

from *Kathy Gent*

DIRECTOR OF SHEILA'S ISLAND

It was tragic when our production of *Neville's Island* was cut back to only three performances in August 2021 as covid took us into lockdown, and even more tragic when our attempt to re-stage the play in November 2021 was thwarted at the 11th hour by lockdown on the day of our dress rehearsal.

So I was delighted to discover fortuitously in 2022 that Tim Firth had just written a female version and thrilled to find four brilliant actresses keen to take on the challenging and complex roles of Sheila, Denise, Julie and Fay.



Tim Firth said, "I think at twenty-something I wouldn't have believed that women could do to other women what men did to other men on that island. The intervening years have disabused me of this ridiculous and patronising assumption. The weaponry may be different, but the reasons for combat are fundamental human frailties, insecurities and defensive mechanisms, common to us all regardless of sex."

As a training manager for a major corporate in the UK, part of my role was organising Outdoor Team-Building Events for executives at Brathay Hall in the Lake District and I recall that though most participants relished the opportunity, there were certainly a few for whom a weekend spent with their peers in a strange and competitive environment was unsettling and tortuous. The most beautiful scenery, but often the ugliest of team dynamics. So *Sheila's Island* certainly brings back memories!

The journey to performance with such a dedicated cast and crew has been the greatest fun, the laughs have been endless and rehearsals have been a joy; I trust you are entertained by your visit to Rampsholme Island.

This is the seventeenth play that Kathy has directed for Company Theatre, with themes amongst all of her productions being ones of comedy, camaraderie and collaboration. Previous successes have included *Steel Magnolias*, *Ladies' Day*, *One Man Two Guvnors*, *Fawlty Towers*, *Calendar Girls*, *Brassed Off*, *'Allo 'Allo!*, and *Thrill of Love*. Kathy absolutely loves directing comedies, especially plays with strong characters and just a touch of melancholy. Before arriving in New Zealand and more specifically in Devonport, she directed revues, plays, pantomimes and musicals for companies in Sheffield, Leicester, Portsmouth and London with all-time favourites being *Cabaret* and *Stepping Out* (at Wimbledon Theatre).

MEET THE CAST



LAUREN MCLAY

Sheila

Lauren is an Auckland Based actor. This will be her first time appearing on Company Theatre's stage. Some of Lauren's past work includes:
Theatre: *The Hand That Locks the Holding Pen* (Fringe Festival), *Cherish* (Theatreworks), *The Welkin* (Pumphouse Theatre), *Sham* (Theatreworks)
Sit on It (Auckland Theatre Company)

Screen: *Shortland Street* (TVNZ) *I AM* series (TVNZ) *Birthday* (Someday Six series)

Lauren works for Outward Bound NZ as the Events Coordinator & Donor Care specialist as a part of the fundraising team. She looks forward to bringing such a strong, kind and compassionate Sheila to life on the stage and would like to thank Chloe and the cast and crew for all the support and love during this process. AND anyone who donates towards Outward Bound NZ. Lauren is represented by Talent Banque.



KATIE FULLARD

Denise

Katie is an actress originally from the UK. Since moving to New Zealand, she has been part of the screen and theatre scene. She is lucky enough to be one of the co-founders of Soulz Collective. On screen you can see her in the likes of *Moments*, *The American Dream*, *Blind Bitter Happiness*, *Fraught* and *Second Chance*. She has performed in plays and theatre such as *The Girl on the Train*, *The Welkin*, *Fleshies*, and *Beautiful Thing*. This is Katie's second Company Theatre piece after appearing in *Ladies' Day* in 2017, and she is extremely excited to be a part of this great team. Katie is looking forward to playing Denise, an independent, fiery woman who speaks her mind and cuts deep. I'd run for cover if she gets angry.





TRUDY PRICE

Julie

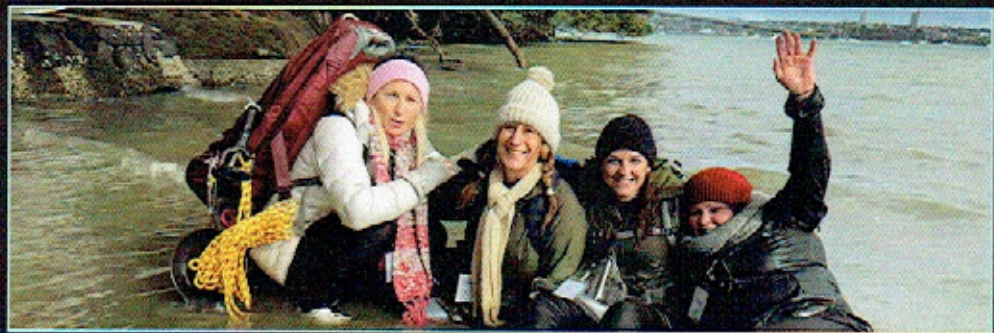
Trudy is thrilled to embark on the exhilarating adventure that is *Sheila's Island*. This marks her second appearance with Company Theatre, following her recent role in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*. 2023 highlights include playing Monica Wells in *Rehearsal for Murder* with Dolphin Theatre and Belinda Blair in *Noises Off* with Papakura Theatre Company, where she was honoured with an ACTT award for Best Performer in a Supporting Role in a Comedy. Trudy admires her character Julie's constant optimism and over-preparation, even if she's daft at times and doesn't quite grasp

what's going on around her. She'd like to express her gratitude to the incredible women working alongside her (and behind the scenes!); it has truly been a joy. Trudy also thanks Darrin, Lola, and Jude for their love and support.

MARISSA WILLSON

Fay

Marissa returned to acting six years ago after a 30-year hiatus, has never looked back and loves being involved in a team of like-minded and talented people in Community Theatre. She cut her teeth with Shoreside Theatre and Theatreworks playing the Constable of France in *Henry V*, A French Maid in *Death on the Nile*, a Witch in *Macbeth* and Marley's ghost in Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. In 2021 she was in *Speaking with Tongues* for Theatreworks which won best Drama at the ACTT Awards. Her appearances with Company Theatre include Veronica Novak in *God of Carnage* for which she was nominated for Outstanding Leading Actress by NAPTA, *Jerusalem*, the hilarious *Rumours* and most recently *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*. To be in *Sheila's Island* is an acting highlight for Marissa as it is a challenging role in an equally challenging play, but it has also been an incredibly rewarding experience. She is looking forward to bringing Fay to life and is hoping that Fay makes you laugh and cry and feel a little happier for having known her, but possibly a little disturbed!



CREW FOR SHEILA'S ISLAND

Director	Kathy Gent
Production /Stage Manager	Vettinia Ross
Assistant Stage Managers	Lucas Laurent, Raine Gilchrist
Set Design	Victoria Gancheva
Set Construction Manager	Sherry Berg
Set Construction/Painting	Caroline Parker, Victoria Gancheva, Anne Rimmer, Tony Sandy, Stephen Hood, Scott Thomas, Andrew Park, Raine Gilchrist, Forouzan Jalali, Suzy Sampson, Kate Finlay, Sian Davis, Kathy Gent
Costume Design	Victoria Beynon
Costume Assistant/Dresser	Kate Finlay
Props	Vettinia Ross, Sarah Dettwiler
Lighting Design	Scott Thomas
Sound Design	Matt Rust, Kathy Gent
Lighting and Sound Operators	Scott Thomas, Stephen Hood
Advertising	Kathy Gent
Social Media	Stephen Hood, Suzy Sampson
Programme	Sherry Berg
Poster Design	Trudy Price
Website	Sherry Ede
Photography	Kathryn Nobbs , Suzy Sampson
Dialect Coach	Michelle Male
Fight Director	Matt Smith
Voice Overs	Julie Collis, Duncan Preston
Front of House Manager	Lesley Hawkey
Bar Manager	Alastair Fletcher



FOUR
MANAGERS
A-MANAGING



DENISE PRENTICE
Age 45 Lives in Waterside Apartments
Single, Likes holidays in Majorca,
Obsessed with interior design
Production Manager

Pennine
Spring



DENISE PRENTICE
Production Manager

STAFF

Pennine
Spring



SHEILA WILLIAMS
Marketing Manager

STAFF

SHEILA WILLIAMS
Age 40, Lives in Pendlebury, Husband Graham,
Two daughters Rosie & Sophie
Likes reading, and six one nights
Marketing Manager

Pennine
Spring



FAY WITHERS
Finance Manager

FAY WITHERS
Age 53, Lives in Rivington
near Manchester. Single
Likes bird-watching and Jesus
Finance Manager

Pennine
Spring



JULIE JONES
HR Manager

JULIE JONES

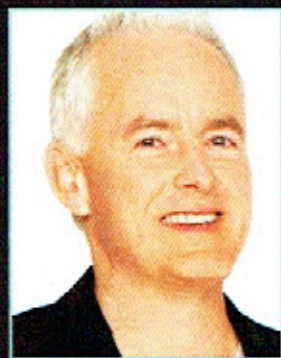
Age 46, Lives in a mock Tudor house in Worsley,
Husband Angus, No children, Two fur babies.
Likes trains and the Dining
Human Resources Manager

MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT

Tim Firth

WRITER OF SHEILA'S ISLAND

Tim was born and has lived his entire life in the North West of the UK. He was educated at Appleton Hall School in Warrington then at King's College, Cambridge where he set up a theatre company with Sam Mendes and wrote for the Footlights comedy team, with whom he later created the award-winning radio series *And in Colour* on Radio 4.



Tim's theatre credits include *This is My Family* (Sheffield Crucible, UK Theatre Award Best New Musical), *Neville's Island* (Nottingham Playhouse and West End, Evening Standard & Olivier nomination, MEN Award), *The Safari Party* (Stephen Joseph, Scarborough and Hampstead), the musical *Our House* (West End, Olivier Award Best Musical), *The Flint Street Nativity* (Liverpool Playhouse) and *Sign of the Times* (UK tour and West End). His play *Calendar Girls* (Chichester Festival Theatre, West End) broke all British records for a professional and amateur play, was nominated for an Olivier and won the Whatsonstage Best Comedy Award. *Calendar Girls The Musical*, co-written with Gary Barlow, opened at Leeds Opera house and transferred to the Phoenix Theatre in the West End, winning a Whatsonstage Award and an Olivier nomination, and his musical *The Band* (Manchester Opera House, West End) won the MEN best Musical award. Tim's latest musical *Now is Good* opened at Chester Storyhouse and was nominated for the 2022 UK Theatre Award. 2022 also saw Tim collaborate with Gary Barlow on the show *A Different Stage* (Duke Of York's Theatre).

Tim's film credits include *Blackball*, *Calendar Girls* (British Comedy Award), *Kinky Boots* (Best International Film, Florida FF) and *The Wedding Video*. Recent work for television includes the Playhouse drama *Timeless*. His other TV credits include *Money For Nothing* (Writer's Guild Award), *Cruise Of The Gods*, *The Flint Street Nativity*, *Preston Front* (Writer's Guild Award, British Comedy Award, RTS Award, BAFTA nomination), His children's comedy series *The Rottentrolls* won a BAFTA and was recently voted by Radio Times one of the top fifty children's shows of all time.

In March 2010 Tim was awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters, honoris causa by The University Of Chester.



Outward Bound NZ: 62 years of life-changing impact

Outward Bound is a registered charity, specialising in helping people realise their full potential through outdoor challenge and adventure. Imagine the difference you could make by helping future generations of young Kiwi build resilience, confidence, and leadership skills that will stay with them for life. By donating to *Outward Bound* you're giving rangatahi the chance to discover their potential and change their future. Please give generously in the collection box in the foyer or scan the QR code to make a donation.



In the words of one young course participant:

"Thank you for giving me the chance to create memories, friendships and a better me."



Scan QR code to
make a donation



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THANKS TO

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Thank you to our major sponsors Ian Cunliffe of Bayleys Devonport and DILS Funerals.
Acknowledgements to The Rose Centre, The Claystore Devonport,
Chloe Rigg, Torbay Theatre, Devonport Dry Cleaning, Flooring Xtra.

NEXT WITH COMPANY THEATRE

Our upcoming show: 28 March- 12 April 2024



RAY COONEY'S OUT OF ORDER



Directed by Reg Williams

When Richard Willey, a government junior minister, plans to spend the evening with Jane Worthington, one of the opposition's typists, things go disastrously and riotously wrong in this hugely successful comedy, 1991 winner of the Olivier Award for Best Comedy.

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our community.**

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Ian Cunliffe

027 227 9322

ian.cunliffe@bayleys.co.nz

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