



COMPANY THEATRE PRESENTS

# NEVILLE'S ISLAND

*A Comedy in Thick Fog*

WRITTEN BY TIM FIRTH & DIRECTED BY KATHY GENT



14-28 AUGUST 2021





## WELCOME

*from Stephen Hood*

PRESIDENT OF COMPANY THEATRE

Following on from Company Theatre's atmospheric and successful May production of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Neville's Island* follows the misadventures of four unfortunate middle aged businessmen who aren't even lucky enough to get shipwrecked on a tropical island, instead being stranded on a cold, inhospitable island in England's Lake District – with winter just around the corner – after a corporate team-building exercise goes awry. Bereft of any skills required for survival outside the office, and keeping in mind tales such as William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* – in which castaway boys end up turning on each other (the fact we're dealing with grown men here doesn't seem to make much difference) – we're very glad that *Neville's Island*, while having its serious moments later on, can be very comfortably categorised as a top notch black comedy: Penned by Tim Firth, who also brought us *Calendar Girls*, and brought to life on stage by a stellar cast and crew.

After Kathy Gent has finished directing this mock social experiment, from November 13th to 27th Kate Birch will be bringing you Yasmina Reza's *God of Carnage*: It would be great to see you there! This year, Company Theatre's also bringing you monthly play readings in our upstairs club rooms at the Rose Centre – for more details please keep an eye on our Facebook Page ([facebook.com/CompanyTheatreNZ](https://facebook.com/CompanyTheatreNZ)), website ([companytheatre.co.nz/index.php/company-news](http://companytheatre.co.nz/index.php/company-news)), and email newsletter ([sign up at companytheatre.co.nz/index.php/mailling-list](http://companytheatre.co.nz/index.php/mailling-list)).



Rehearsals get underway for *Neville's Island*

## THE CAST

Neville	James Carrick
Gordon	Duncan Preston
Angus	John Palmer
Roy	Kristof Haines

## SCENES

### ACT ONE

Scene One	Friday 4th November, 11:55am
Scene Two	4 ½ hours later
Scene Three	Dusk
Scene Four	Dusk
Scene Five	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

## 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.



Derwentwater

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.



Rampsholme Island

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 NEVILLE'S ISLAND



*Neville's Island* was Tim Firth's first major work; commissioned for the Stephen Joseph Theatre by Alan Ayckbourn in 1992, it was revived in Nottingham in 1994 and subsequently transferred to the West End proving popular with audiences and critics alike. It was nominated for the Olivier and Evening Standard Awards for Best Comedy 1992.

The play is a tempting choice for amateurs; wickedly funny but also a genuine drama, it has four well-defined and meaty character roles, numerous special effects and some highly unusual props making it challenging for both the cast and crew. I would like to acknowledge the work of Victoria Gancheva, Sherry Berg, Tamsin Robinson and Matt Rust - all relative newcomers to **Company Theatre** - who have worked tirelessly to create a design that fully supports the murky, misty, eerie, hostile island environment on Rampsholme Island, the very island that was used to film *Lord of the Flies*.

Having directed *Calendar Girls* and *Steel Magnolias*, both plays taking a group of women through their journey at a time of tragedy, it has been interesting to focus on how a group of men collaborate and compete in what they see as a race for survival in a potentially life-threatening situation. We have had many, many laughs and some robust discussions in an atmosphere of supportive camaraderie. I trust you will enjoy their antics and their dilemmas.

This is the fifteenth play that Kathy has directed for Company Theatre, with themes amongst all of her productions being ones of comedy, camaraderie and collaboration. Previous box office successes have included *Steel Magnolias*, *Ladies Day*, *One Man Two Guvvners*, *Fawlty Towers*, *Calendar Girls*, *Brassed Off* and *'Allo 'Allo*. 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

### JAMES CARRICK

#### Neville

A natural entertainer with years of experience in stand-up comedy and as an accomplished guitarist, James has been involved in theatre since 2016. He has played villains, drunks and general buffoons. None of this has been a challenge so far and he has been rewarded with leading roles in *Humble Boy* (Torbay Theatre), *Off the Hook* and *Move Over Mrs Markham* (Phoenix Theatre) and *One Man Two Guvnors* and *Ladies Day* for Company Theatre. He says that *Neville's Island* is most certainly the funniest thing he's been involved in; "it's a fantastic cast and crew in a theatre that I consider home."



### KRISTOF HAINES

#### Roy

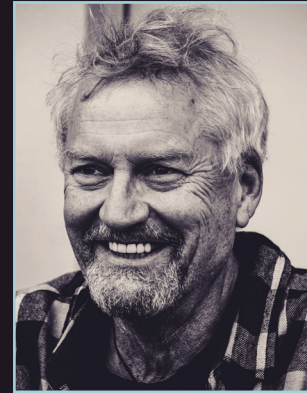
Kristof has been turning up in Company Theatre shows since 2012, and shows no sign of stopping any time soon. He met Kathy, Duncan, James and John all through different Rose Centre shows over the years - this is one of his favourite performance spaces in Auckland. In the last few years, Kristof has also discovered the joys and pains of directing, and has been lucky enough to direct two shows for Company: Irish tragicomedy *Stones in His Pockets*, and the twice rescheduled pandemic-proof *Peninsula*. While a short break from the stage is on the cards after *Neville's Island* closes, he's already hatching theatre plans for 2022 and beyond.



### JOHN PALMER

#### Angus

John was last seen on stage at The Rose Centre in 2010's *Tom, Dick and Harry*, but was commonly sighted there in the 2 decades previous to that. Recent outings have been *The Revival*, *An Inspector Calls*, *Lady Susan*, and *Tomb with a View* (Dolphin Theatre) and *The Graduate*, *I Hate Hamlet*, *The Dining Room*, and *Nude with Violin* (Ellerslie Theatre). He's been wanting to do another play with Company for some time, and hopes you'll agree this production of Neville's Island makes any wait worthwhile!



### DUNCAN PRESTON

#### Gordon

Duncan moved to New Zealand from Manchester, England in 2018. He has played Nick Bottom and Malvolio in Shoreside's *Shakespeare in the Park* productions of *A Midsummer's Nights Dream* and *Twelfth Night*. At The Rose Centre he has played the roles of Henry in *The Lion in Winter*, Michal Katurian in *The Pillowman* and most recently the dual roles of Gordon Macintosh and Pug the Dog in *Peninsula*. A school teacher by trade, he is looking forward to the role of Gordon and is relishing the opportunity to finally use his native Mancunian accent in a piece of New Zealand produced theatre!



# CREW FOR NEVILLE'S ISLAND

Director	Kathy Gent
Production Manager	Stephen Hood
Stage Managers	Phillippa Hibbs
Assistant Stage Manager	Marissa Willson
Set Design	Victoria Gancheva
Set Construction Manager	Sherry Berg
Set Construction	Caroline Parker, Victoria Gancheva, Tamsin Robinson, Brett Marshall, Jim Smethurst, Stephen Hood, Alastair Fletcher, Tony Sandy, Scott Thomas, Kristof Haines, James Carrick
Backstage Crew	Sherry Berg
Costume Design	Tamsin Robinson
Wardrobe Assistant	Kate Finlay
Lighting Design	Scott Thomas
Sound Design	Matt Rust
Props	Sarah Dettwiler
Lighting & Sound Operator	Stephen Hood
Advertising	Kathy Gent
Social Media	Stephen Hood, Victoria Silvey
Front of House Manager	Lesley Hawkey
Bar Manager	Alastair Fletcher
Photography	Kathryn Nobbs
Graphic Design	Hayley Atkins
Fight Director	Alexander Holloway
Voice-Overs	Julie Collis, Carl Drake

## THANKS TO

A special thank you to the volunteers who look after front of house. Thank you to our major sponsors **Harcourts Devonport** and **Rowley Funerals**. Thank you to **The Rose Centre**, **Devonport Dry Cleaning**, **The Claystore Devonport**, **Auckland Music Theatre**, **Torbay Theatre** and **North Harbour Concrete**



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



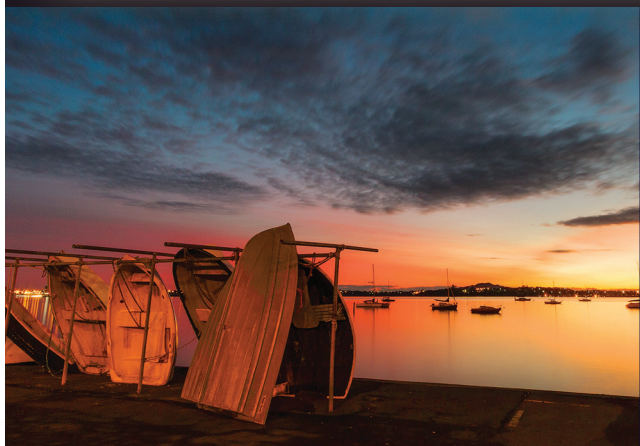
# COMMUNITY CLAYSTORE WORKSHOP

Located at 127 Lake Road, The Claystore is a community workshop run on a voluntary basis by retired tradies who assist the Devonport community with guidance in everything from furniture making to car maintenance.

The workshop is well equipped for both wood and metal workings and is available to anyone who is interested from Monday-Saturday mornings, with only a small koha to cover costs asked in return. Contact (09) 445 8786 for more info!



Pictured: Brett Marshall of The Claystore creating scenery for Company Theatre



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## MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT

*Tim Firth*

WRITER OF NEVILLE'S ISLAND



Firth was born in Frodsham, England. He spent much of his time at school writing songs and it was only a few weeks before going to Cambridge to read English that he attended an Arvon Foundation course in West Yorkshire. This was run by Willy Russell and whilst on it, Firth had to write dialogue. He wrote about the only thing he knew - two sixteen-year-olds trying to write a song. Another course participant optioned it for his production company and Firth decided to become a writer. His first plays at this time were all directed by Sam Mendes.

On leaving Cambridge, he wrote and composed music for the award winning Radio Four series *And Now In Colour* but was soon invited to meet Alan Ayckbourn in Scarborough and commissioned to write a play for the studio at the Stephen Joseph Theatre. His one-act play *A Man Of Letters* was a success and led to the commissioning of a full-length play from Ayckbourn, *Neville's Island*, which later transferred to the West End, has been seen in translation all round the world and has been in almost continuous production since its premiere. It was revived in the West End in 2013 at the Duke of York's Theatre.

Along with his father, Gordon Firth, he created the TV series *Roger and the Rotten Trolls*, running for four series and winning a BAFTA. The spin off series *Ripley and Scuff* also won a BAFTA, and more recently the Radio Times voted the original series one of the 50 Greatest Children's TV Shows of All Time.

His play *Calendar Girls*, adapted by Firth from his own film (and produced by Company Theatre in 2013) found favour with audiences across the UK during its 2008/09 tour, and in the process broke the all time British box office record for a play and also continued to sell out during its West End residency. In 2010, the hit comedy embarked on a UK country wide tour and has since been produced worldwide.

In March 2010, Firth was awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters, honoris causa by the University of Chester.

# NEXT WITH COMPANY THEATRE

Our upcoming show November 13-27 2021

See [companytheatre.co.nz](http://companytheatre.co.nz) for details



# GO D *of* CARNAGE

*A comedy of manners... without the manners.*

Company Theatre's third show of 2021 - directed by Kate Birch - will be *God of Carnage* by Yasmina Reza: In which parents' attempts at a civilised discussion following a playground injury become increasingly childish and eventually devolve into chaos.

*This will be on stage from 13th to 27th November!*

# Harcourts Cooper & Co

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Diana & Ian

Diana Murray  
Ian Cunliffe

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