

minack

STONES IN HIS POCKETS

A PLAY BY MARIE JONES



PROGRAMME

The Minack Theatre Trust CIO
 Porthcurno, Penzance
 Cornwall, TR19 6JU

Information & Tickets:
 +44 (0) 1736 810 181

INFO@MINACK.COM

MINACK.COM

Welcome to the Minack for our 2020 production of Marie Jones' award-winning play *Stones in His Pockets*.

— ZOË CURNOW *Producer*

Having played *Stones in His Pockets* in 2019 to over 5,000 people and to great reviews, when we went into lockdown and started thinking about productions that we might be able to stage in a financially viable way to reduced audiences, this seemed an obvious choice.

I would like to thank the whole team for their incredible flexibility in remounting this production. If you had said to me in February that we would be rehearsing a play over zoom, I would have had no idea at all what you were talking about! Hannah, Millie, Marian, Ben and Stephen have been phenomenal at grabbing moments together from around the country to rehearse. Ben and Stephen have also agreed to form a bubble together with Stephen's family so they can act together without needing to keep 2 metres apart.

We have also had to make other changes – we simply couldn't reinstate the whole of Philip's set (see page 8 for images of the original) as we need to sit some of you on the flat stage floor in order to maximise the audience size with social distancing. Philip has been brilliant at working with us to recreate the feel of the original production only using the circle.

Finally, it is really important that we help you, our audience, maintain social distancing at all times. Therefore, while there will be a few minutes between act 1 and act 2 for Ben and Stephen to take a breather, we ask that you don't all move around at this point, instead, please sit and enjoy some music from Ben Sutcliffe. If at any other point you need to move from your seat then please do – this is a relaxed performance and Ben and Stephen really don't mind!

A 'DSM's diary... rehearsals *from* *August 2019*

— VERONIQUE HADDELEY *Deputy Stage Manager*

It is always an honour to be asked to work on a show and when the director Hannah Chissick asked me to do this earlier in the year I was delighted, I had never been to the Minack before and I truly hadn't realised what an extraordinary place it was and the impact it would have.

The very first day of rehearsals is initially a "Meet and Greet" formality, everyone who is involved in the production sit in a circle and introduce themselves and say what their role within the piece is. It could be a company of forty or, as in our case a two hander, but regardless of the size it's invariably a rather formal hour. Once music, set/costume and lighting have been discussed everyone else leaves to go back to work and we are left in the magnificent rehearsal room overlooking the vast ocean.

Now the process starts. Hannah asks the actors to read through the play, it will be an astonishing feat for two people to characterise thirteen different roles and the process of discovery needs to be meticulous.

On day two of rehearsals Hannah asks the actors to begin work on the play from the top, they each dig into every nuance, character by character, every pattern of punctuation and the sheer quiddity of the piece. It's understandably a slow and creative process and the day is soon gone.

Over the next days, Hannah's assistant Millie and I help research the colloquialisms which can vary hugely depending on which character is being analysed. I'm trying to collate a props list as we work through and also the actual logistics of how we get a particular

prop into situ. It sounds simple, but the actors will change character at lightning speed so we need to try and make this a fluid exchange in the knowledge that the actors do not leave the stage. I'm marking out my script in scrupulous detail and noting where the actors move on the stage and when. It's an easy grid system but essential once we get to the on-stage technical rehearsal with lights and music. That seems a long way away but it really isn't, there is a lot of work to do but it's a happy experience and Hannah makes everything possible and inspires calm and creativity. We look out to sea for the magical and elusive dolphins.

We'll be rehearsing in Hythe for the next two weeks and then return to the Minack for the performances, I can't wait to get back.



Cast & Production Credits

CHARLIE

Stephen Cavanagh

JAKE

Ben Kernow

WRITTEN BY

Marie Jones

DIRECTOR

Hannah Chissick

DESIGNER

Philip Witcomb

COMPOSER & VIOLINIST

Ben Sutcliffe

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Simon Hutchings

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Millie Brolly

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Simon Hutchings

DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER

Marian Haynes

LIGHTING & SOUND OPERATOR

Rory Lock

SET BUILDING

Lynn Batten

LIGHTING HIRE

SLX

COSTUMES

Marion Harrison

PRODUCER

Zoë Curnow

MARKETING

Vanessa Jackson

ARTWORK & GRAPHIC DESIGN

Matt Travis

PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHY

Mike Newman & Lynn Batten

Thank You to

- All the staff at the Minack
- Sarah Welsh, Jackie Wardle and Mick and Sandra Wilby at the Cable Station Inn for accommodation
- The Logan Rock Inn



Translating Set Design into Reality *from August 2019*

— SIMON HUTCHINGS *Production Manager*

As production manager one of my primary roles is to bring to life the vision of the set designer.

Our productions this summer had an added complication in that the main part of the set had to serve two very different shows. The design was created by Philip Witcomb for *Stones in His Pockets* but was also needed to work for *Orfeo*. Initial design discussions involved the directors from both shows to make sure they could work on the same stage. Philip then took the design forward for *Stones in His Pockets* whilst I, in conjunction with *Orfeo* director John Brolly, made it work for *Orfeo*.

In many producing theatres around the country there are dedicated teams of builders and painters employed to create

the various elements that make up the set, but in our case, in deepest Cornwall, we are limited on builders who understand the requirements of set building as opposed to conventional construction processes.

Logistics play a huge part with sets at the Minack. As you will have found there are a large number of steps to bring materials down to stage level and no protection from the elements once down and we start to build. Wherever possible, we will have built set elements into as large sections as we can manage to bring down the steps and carried out as much painting prior to the build as possible.

Fingers crossed for this set as I'm writing this before our build time on stage!



Cast & Production Biographies

Hannah Chissick

WHICH FILM WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE WORKED AS AN EXTRA ON?
Mamma Mia.

WHAT WAS YOUR MOST RECENT PROJECT BEFORE STONES?

The Musical, *Parade* at the Other Palace in London.

IN TWO SENTENCES, TELL US A BIT

MORE ABOUT YOUR CAREER TO DATE

I have been a director for 20 odd years, directing everything from large scale musicals to studio plays. Despite working all over the world the Minack is certainly the most beautiful theatre I have ever worked in.

Philip Witcomb

WHICH FILM WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE WORKED AS AN EXTRA ON?

Tarantino's *Once Upon A Time In Hollywood.*

WHAT WAS YOUR MOST RECENT PROJECT BEFORE STONES?

Mame at The Hope Mill Theatre in Manchester and UK Tour which was Nominated for 7 WhatsOnStage Awards.

IN TWO SENTENCES, TELL US A BIT

MORE ABOUT YOUR CAREER TO DATE

I have been a Theatre Designer for over 20 years. I started my career at the Citizen Theatre in Glasgow after studying at Central St Martins and The Slade School of Fine Art.

Ben Sutcliffe

WHICH FILM WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE WORKED AS AN EXTRA ON?
Hitchcock's *Rope.*

WHAT WAS YOUR MOST RECENT PROJECT BEFORE STONES?

Res Publica which is a touring urban-gypsy Orchestra.

IN TWO SENTENCES, TELL US A BIT MORE ABOUT YOUR CAREER TO DATE

I have worked as a composer and performer in Cornwall for 15 years. I am a virtuoso violinist for the People's String Foundation.

Marian Haynes

WHICH FILM WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE WORKED AS AN EXTRA ON?

10th Kingdom (A 7 hr 46 minute epic!)

WHAT WAS YOUR MOST RECENT PROJECT BEFORE STONES?

I was working on *Hetty Feather* which would have been at the Minack but sadly was cancelled due to Covid 19.

IN TWO SENTENCES, TELL US A BIT

MORE ABOUT YOUR CAREER TO DATE

I have been working as a Stage Manager in theatre both in the UK and further afield, and have also been making props and set for many productions.



Millie Brolly

WHICH FILM WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE WORKED AS AN EXTRA ON?
Singin in the Rain.

WHAT WAS YOUR MOST RECENT PROJECT BEFORE STONES?

Up until March I was Assistant Director on *Hetty Feather* as well as developing a new piece of theatre based on the women in the life of the poet Dylan Thomas.

IN TWO SENTENCES, TELL US A BIT MORE ABOUT YOUR CAREER TO DATE

I made my debut as a director as part of the National Theatre Connections' Festival at The Drum Theatre, Plymouth. As an actor I have performed at The Ambassadors Theatre and Southwark Playhouse with BTA and The Minack Theatre as Bobby in *The Railway Children.*



Stephen Cavanagh

WHICH FILM WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE WORKED AS AN EXTRA ON?

I would have liked to be an extra on *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. I feel I could adjust to life as a Hobbit fairly well.

WHAT WAS YOUR MOST RECENT PROJECT BEFORE STONES?

At Christmas I played the Shoemaker in *The Elves and the Shoemakers* at the Sheffield Crucible studio theatre. As theatres have been closed during the lockdown I have returned to painting. I'm very pleased to be back on stage and can't imagine a better place than the Minack.

IN TWO SENTENCES, TELL US A BIT MORE ABOUT YOUR CAREER TO DATE

In my career I have been fortunate to visit many places throughout the UK and Ireland, to work on a great variety of productions and meet many fascinating people. I have never performed in an open air theatre before, so the opportunity to perform at the Minack is a great privilege for me.



minack *theatre*

PORTHCURNO CORNWALL

