

PRESS RELEASE

18th December 2013

Fourth Monkey Theatre Company presents:

Marlowe450

A season of performances including a rare work staged in the crypt of the world famous Canterbury cathedral to celebrate the 450th anniversary of Christopher Marlowe's birth

The Marlowe Theatre, 12th to 28th March 2014

PRESS NIGHTS: *Faustus*, Thursday 13th March, 8pm

The Massacre At Paris, Wednesday 19th March, 8pm

The Jew of Malta, Thursday 27th March, 8pm

Marlowe's greatest works are returning to the theatre named after him in the town of his birth with three new versions of his works, two of which are rarely staged with one held in the atmospheric crypt. The English dramatist, poet, translator and spy, whose alleged death or mysterious disappearance aged only 29 is still shrouded in ambiguity, was baptised in Canterbury on 26th February 1564, 450 years ago.

The season from Fourth Monkey Theatre Company starts with *Faustus*, directed by Ailin Conant, arguably Marlowe's most famous play. A cast of 14 tell the story of the man who sells his soul to the devil in exchange for wealth and power. *The Massacre At Paris*, directed by Andy Dawson and Paul Allain, will feature Fourth Monkey's full company of 24 actors and be staged in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral. The play is considered Marlowe's most dangerous work, based around the St Bartholomew's Day massacre which saw the systematic murder and execution of thousands of Protestants, instigated by the French royalty and Catholic nobles. Finally, *The Jew of Malta*, credited with being the play that inspired Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, features a cast of 10 and follows a Maltese Jew's bloody vengeance on a city that has left him destitute (directed by Justin Audibert).

Each show's opening night will be preceded by an associated talk at an historic Canterbury venue. Speakers include: writer **Charles Nicholl** (*The Reckoning: The Murder of Christopher Marlowe*, winner of the Crime Writer's Association 'Gold Dagger' Award for Non-Fiction and the James Tait Black Memorial Prize, and *The Lodger: Shakespeare on Silver Street*); novelist **Louis de Bernières** (*Captain Corelli's Mandolin*) together with TV & radio presenter, newsreader, actress, and author **Jan Leeming**; and novelist, poet and scholar **Ros Barber** (*The Marlowe Papers*, winner of the Desmond Elliott Prize, joint Author's Club Best First Novel Award, and Calvin & Rose G Hoffmann Prize).

Steven Green, the Artistic Director of Fourth Monkey, said "I am genuinely excited about Marlowe450. To be delivering a season of Marlowe's work in repertory in association with the Marlowe Theatre and Society is an honour and a privilege on the anniversary of his birth. We hope this new season of Marlowe re-imagined, also enables us to reach the young theatre goers of today and thus hopefully the Marlowe society members and appreciators of tomorrow. Too often in Shakespeare's shadow, the man and the work deserves a stage of his own and in our own little way we are delighted to be offering him one."

George Metcalfe, chairman of the Marlowe Society, said: "We are particularly delighted to have been privileged "to adopt" the dynamic Fourth Monkey Theatre group to help us celebrate Christopher Marlowe's 450th anniversary. At least we know he was the genuine author of at least six groundbreaking, magnificent plays and the greatest playwright of his generation. We are confident that the brilliant young Fourth Monkey actors will add a new dynamism in encouraging the next generation to be equally fascinated by our extraordinary young genius."

Fourth Monkey Theatre Company is known for its large scale physical theatre productions and its training courses for actors, a leading alternative to conservatoire training. Their recent productions include site specific shows *Project Colony* and *Paradise Lost* (2013) at Trinity Buoy Wharf, and three productions at Edinburgh Fringe 2013: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Sans Salome*, and *The Peculiar Tale of Pablo Picasso and the Mona Lisa*.

@fourthmonkeyTC | #Marlowe450 | www.fourthmonkey.co.uk | www.marlowetheatre.com | www.marlowe-society.org

Listings information

The Marlowe Theatre, The Friars, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2AS

12th – 28th March 2014

£12 (£10 friends, £11 conc), 3 shows for the price of 2 | marlowetheatre.com | 01227 787787

Faustus, Marlowe Studio

The Massacre At Paris, Canterbury Cathedral Crypt

The Jew Of Malta, Marlowe Studio

Weds 12th – Fri 14th 8pm | Thurs 13th 2pm

Tues 18th 8pm | Weds 19th 2pm & 8pm

Weds 26th – Fri 28th 8pm | Thurs 27th 2pm

Notes to Editors

Andy Dawson is a director and theatre practitioner with a particular interest in engaging new and non-traditional audiences, young people and the community with classic work. He studied English at Somerville College, Oxford University and trained at Central School of Speech and Drama. He started work as a professional actor touring Europe and America and performing in the West End and London Theatre before focusing on his work as a director and facilitator with young people. He is currently engaged at The Marlowe Theatre with Danny Lipman and has worked as Young People's Programme Director at the Theatre Royal Plymouth. He has produced and directed for The Drum Theatre, including *Henry IVth Part One* in association with Frantic Assembly, and was performance director for the Secret Cinema between 2009 and 2011, staging *Blade Runner* and *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* amongst others. He has directed on numerous new writing projects including as lead director on 2010 Almeida New Writing Festival, various projects for Plymouth Theatre, and runs his own Voice Café project in London, providing a different outlet for writers across different mediums to have their work performed and seen. He has written original work which has been performed for the Drum, Theatre Royal and Secret Cinema, and is currently engaged in directing *The Innocents*, an immersive theatre project for the National Youth Film Festival at the Barbican with his company CINELIVE in partnership the BFI. As well as directing *The Massacre at Paris* for at the Marlowe, he is workshopping, devising and writing a large scale community project for an original piece of work entitled *The Garden of England* for performance at the Marlowe Theatre next spring.

Paul Allain is Professor of Theatre and Performance at University of Kent.

Justin Audibert is a freelance theatre director who has worked with Told By An Idiot on several projects since first assisting Paul Hunter and Hayley Carmichael on *Casanova* in 2007. He directed the companion piece to *And the Horse You Rode In On* entitled *Serious Follies* for the company at both West Yorkshire Playhouse and the Brighton Festival, and also recently directed the companion residencies for *My Perfect Mind* at Liverpool Unity, Salisbury Playhouse and the Young Vic. Recent directing credits include *Wrong 'Un* by Boff Whalley (Red Ladder), *Gruesome Playground Injuries* by Rajiv Joseph (Gate Theatre), *The Tempest* (RSC Shakespeare in a Suitcase), *Front* by Vickie Donoghue (Rada Festival), *Future Regrets* by Roz Wylie (live theatre / RSC), *Armley the Musical* by Boff Whalley (Interplay) and *Company Along the Mile* by Tom Bidwell (WYP / Arcola). As an assistant director he has worked with Greg Doran, Lucy Bailey, David Farr, Rachel Kavanaugh and Sarah Esdaile amongst others. He is an Artistic Associate of HighTide Theatre Festival and has directed at numerous drama schools including Drama Centre, GSA and ArtsEd, and has worked for the Royal Shakespeare Company as an Education Associate Practitioner in the UK, the United States and Brazil. In 2012 he was the Acting Coach for the finalists of BBC 2's *Shakespeare Off By Heart*. He has been Resident Director at the National Theatre Studio, and was the recipient of the 2012 Leverhulme Award for Emerging Directors. Justin trained on the Birkbeck MFA in Theatre Directing.

Ailin Conant is an American-born director who has been based in London since 2004. She has worked previously with Fourth Monkey directing *Paradise Lost* (Trinity Buoy Wharf). She is the founding artistic director of Theatre Témoin. Recently with Témoin she directed *Nineveh* (Riverside Studios) and *The Fantasist* (tour). She has also directed *Jukai*, *Nobody's Home*, *Ni Ibya Buri Wese*, *Hozwa Mwana W'u Rwanda*, and *Tachzor Shalem* with Témoin. She has also worked independently as a freelance director for Clown Me In (Mexico), Satellite Théâtre (Quebec), and Wayward Spaniel (UK). Ailin was a 2010 JMK Young Directors Award Finalist, and in 2011 she was awarded the Mary Elvira Stevens Travelling Fellowship to support a year of creative projects with ex-soldiers and ex-combatants in Lebanon, Israel, Lebanon, and Kashmir.