

**The National Theatre of Scotland presents**

***Ferry Tales***

by **Isobel McArthur**

Directed by **Lu Kemp,** music and lyrics by **Josie Duncan,** design and costumes by **Alison Brown,** sound design by **Danny Krass**

Cast is **MJ Deans, John Pfumojena,** and **David Rankine**

**Celebrating Scotland’s Year of Coasts and Waters 2020, with the support of Caledonian MacBrayne & their ferries.**

**On CalMac ferry routes Wemyss Bay to Rothesay, Oban to Craignure, and Ullapool to Stornoway from 07 to 24 April 2020**

**Opening press performance on 08 April at 3pm- sailing from Wemyss Bay to Rothesay**

***Ferry Tales*** celebrates the waters surrounding Scotland’s western isles and the voyages over them made by thousands of locals, workers and visitors each year.

With the help of local communities and world class artists, ***Ferry Tales*** will bring an enchanting musical tale, told using English, Gaelic, and BSL (British Sign Language), to three of Scotland’s major ferry routes: Wemyss Bay to Rothesay, Oban to Craignure, and Ullapool to Stornoway.

Written by **Isobel McArthur** and directed by **Lu Kemp**, and featuring songs by Scottish folk singer **Josie Duncan**, ***Ferry Tales*** will draw inspiration from real community stories and experiences to create the short, immersive tales, told through storytelling and song by a three-strong ensemble of talented performers.

**Isobel McArthur** is an acclaimed performer and playwright, whose recent work has included the stage hit *Pride & Prejudice (Sort Of),* currently touring the UK, and *Daphne Oram’s Wonderful World of Sound*. **Lu Kemp** is currently the Artistic Director at Perth Theatre, where recent directing credits include *Aladdin*, *Knives in Hens*, *Richard III*, and *Kes*. **Josie Duncan** is a young folk singer originally from the Isle of Lewis, known for her songs in Gaelic, Scots, and English, and who in 2017 was awarded BBC Radio 2's Young Folk Award.

The cast for ***Ferry Tales*** is **MJ Deans**, **John Pfumojena**, and **David Rankine**. MJ Deans is a Glasgow-based actor and Gaelic speaker, who has previously starred in National Theatre of Scotland productions *Rocket Post* and *Uisge Beatha gu Leòr/Whisky Galore*. John Pfumojena is an actor and singer whose recent work has included appearing in the titular role in the National Theatre’s 2017 adaptation of *Peter Pan*, as well as critically-acclaimed Young Vic production *The Jungle*, which transferred to London’s West End in 2018. He has previously worked with the National Theatre of Scotland on the 2016 tour of *I Am Thomas*, a co-production with Told By An Idiot. David Rankine is an Aberdeen-born actor whose recent work has included *Aladdin* (Eden Court/ Imagine Theatre), *HOWL[ing]* (The Arches/ Traverse Theatre); *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Bard in the Botanics). ***Ferry Tales*** marks his debut with National Theatre of Scotland.

Upon the ferries audiences will find a world all its own, a ‘journey time’ where all bets are off and anything can happen. A world within worlds where, in amongst the red plastic chairs and bolted-down tables, they can discover pop-up performances and chance encounters with magical characters, each designed to delight old and young alike.

At the end of the voyage they will be welcomed and immersed in inspiring local tales, where the ordinary becomes fantastical and the truth is funnier than fiction. Fusing magical music, words and song, the beautiful, bespoke stories featured in ***Ferry Tales*** will find meaning in the mundane and romance in everyday life, reflecting the warm heart of Scotland’s coastal communities.

***Ferry Tales*** will open on the Wemyss Bay to Rothesay route from 07 to 11 April, with three performances on different sailings per day. The following week it will arrive on the Oban to Craignure ferries from 14 - 18 April, with performances twice a day (three performances on 15 and 17 April). Finally, *Ferry Tales* will arrive on the Stornoway to Ullapool return route from 21 - 25 April, with one performance per day alternating between sailings leaving from Ullapool and Stornoway.

All performances are completely free for Calmac passengers with a valid ticket for that sailing, and [full times for each sailing and performance can be found on the National Theatre of Scotland website](https://www.nationaltheatrescotland.com/production/ferry-tales/).

Local residents in all three areas will also have the chance to be a part of the production’s community cast, withcommunity engagement sessions and rehearsals taking place in Rothesay, Tobermory, and Stornoway, allowing people the opportunity to come along, share their stories, and get involved. These evening community sessions will run for seven weeks in each location, and will be led by both a musician and drama practitioner: In Rothesay, Ross Brown and Leonie Gasson; in Mull, Caitlin Mulgrew and Andi Stevens, and in Stornoway Ross Brown and Laura Cameron Lewis.

***Ferry Tales*** *sees* the National Theatre of Scotland staging its first site-specific project of 2020. In recent years the Company has specialised in staging work in unique and unusual locations; Previous years have included plays performed in a Glasgow office block (*Interference*), a converted lorry on the streets of Paisley (*Do’s and Don’ts*), on an Aberdeen beach (*Rewind Perspective*), and within a specially constructed maze in a Glasgow meadow (*The Reason I Jump*).

***Ferry Tales*** forms part of Scotland’s Year of Coasts and Waters 2020, a year-long programme of events, activities and ideas all shining a spotlight on the impact our waters have had on Scotland, from the formation of beautiful natural features to the creation of our national drink – whisky.

**Listings Information**

**Wemyss Bay to Rothesay**

**Dates**: 07 to 11 April

**Times**: Sailings at 10:05 (arr. 10.40), 12noon (arr. 12.35pm), 15.05 (arr. 15.40)- Tuesday to Friday

And sailings 10am (arr. 10.35), 11.30 (arr. 12.05), and 15.00 (arr. 15.35) on Saturday

**Oban to Craignure**

**Dates**: 14 to 18 April

**Times**: 09.50 (arr. 10.40), and 15:55 (16.45) – Tuesday to Friday

Sailings 12.20 (arr. 13.10)- Wednesday and Friday only

And sailings 09.05 (arr. 10.40), and 15.55 (arr. 16.45)- Saturday

**Ullapool to Stornoway**

**Dates**: 21 to 25 April

**Times**: 10.30 (arr. 13.00)- Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday

And Stornoway to Ullapool: 14:00 (arr. 16.30)- Wednesday and Friday

**Full information on sailings** [**can be found here**](https://www.nationaltheatrescotland.com/app/uploads/2020/02/FerryTales_timetable_web_6-701x1024.jpg)

**To book on these crossings please visit** [**calmac.co.uk**](calmac.co.uk)

**Community rehearsals information**

**Rothesay**

**Dates**: Mon 17 Feb to Mon 30 Mar, 9-7pm

**Venue**: Bank of Ideas, 17 High Street, Rothesay, Isle of Bute

Rothesay community rehearsals led by musician Ross Brown and drama practitioner Leonie Gasson

**Tobermory**

**Dates**: Mon 24 Feb to Mon 6 Apr, 9-7pm

**Venue**: Mull Theatre, Druimfin, Tobermory, Isle Of Mull PA75 6QB.

Tobermory community rehearsals led by musician Caitlin Mulgrew and local drama practitioner Andi Stevens

**Stornoway**

**Dates**: Thu 05 Mar to Thu 16 Apr, 9-7pm

**Venue**: Martin’s Memorial Hall, 11 Francis Street, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis HS1 2

Stornoway community rehearsals led by musician Ross Brown and local drama practitioner Laura Cameron Lewis

For more information on community rehearsals and how to join, please visit [nationaltheatrescotland.com/production/ferry-tales](https://www.nationaltheatrescotland.com/production/ferry-tales/) or email [ferrytales@nationaltheatrescotland.com](mailto:ferrytales@nationaltheatrescotland.com)

**NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND PRESS OFFICE CONTACTS:**

**Joe Blythe – Media & Communications Officer** – [joe.blythe@nationaltheatrescotland.com](mailto:joe.blythe@nationaltheatrescotland.com)

Tel: +44 (0)227 9497 M: +44 (0)7500 258 404

**Emma Schad – Head of Communications** – [emma.schad@nationaltheatrescotland.com](mailto:emma.schad@nationaltheatrescotland.com) Tel: +44 (0)227 9016 M: +44 (0)7930 308018

**Press Images:** [**images available via dropbox**](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/gkad30x3himsom4/AADoH0eHmQzo3rr4bzB184vwa?dl=0)

**Cast Biogs**

**MJ Deans** trained at New College Lanarkshire (formerly Motherwell College). Previous work with National Theatre of Scotland includes: *Rocket Post,* and *Uisge Beatha gu Leòr/Whisky Galore.* Other theatre credits include: *Aladdin* (SLLC), *Captain Cora!, Ceilidh* (Theatre gu Leòr), *InValid Voices* (Army @ Summerhall), *Angus Weaver of Grass* (Horse & Bamboo), *Henry V* (Bard in the Botanics). TV credits include: *Million Dollar American Princesses* (Finestripe Productions), Series 1 and 2 of *FUNC* (The Woven Thread/BBC Alba). *FUNC* recently won best comedy at the Royal Television Awards Scotland.

**John Pfumojena** trained with Chickenshed Theatre (London) and Arts Lab (Zimbabwe). His theatre credits include *The Jungle* (Young Vic/Sonia Friedman productions/Playhouse Theatre & Good Chance Theatre/St Ann’s Warehouse NYC & San Francisco Curran Theatre); *No One Is An Island* (Tangle International); *Bent* (National Theatre); *Twelfth Night* (Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre); *Peter Pan* (National Theatre/Bristol Old Vic/Troubador); *Workshop Negative* (Tangle International); *I Am Thomas* (National Theatre of Scotland/Told By an Idiot); *Beasty Baby* (Theatre-Rites/Polka Theatre); *Now You See Me* (Immediate Theatre); *NGUVA* (Simba Dans Ensemble, Norway); *Water Bread and Salt, Dream Nation* (Tangle International Company); *The Maids, Oedipus* (Developing Artists UK/ Zimbabwe tour); *Riots, Globaleyes* (Chickenshed); *Also by Mail* (The Hat Factory); *Can’t Talk About This* (Tumbuka Dance Company, Zimbabwe); *Shift* (Dance Trust Zimbabwe); *Diary of a Madman* (Spear Theatre, Zimbabwe), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Reps Theatre, Zimbabwe); *GPA, Loupe* (Imidlalo Productions/tour); *The Coup, Waiting for Constitution* and *Wedding Night* (Theatre in the Park/tour). He is also composer and musical director for *Tangle’s Volpone*, touring this year. In 2019, he was awarded Broadway World’s Regional Award for ‘Best Featured Actor in a Play’ in *The Jungle*. His film work includes *Playing Warriors*.

**David Rankine** is an Aberdeen-born actor based in Glasgow. He graduated in 2009 from the Liverpool Institue for Performing Arts with a B.A. (hons) in Acting and the L.I.P.A. prize for Acting Ensemble Theatre credits include: *Aladdin* (Eden Court/ Imagine Theatre), *HOWL[ing]* (The Arches/ Traverse Theatre); *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Bard in the Botanics); *Macbeth The Remix* (Findhorn Bay Arts Festival); *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (RSC Dell Season); *A Million Miles Away* (Frozen Charlotte Productions); *Romeo and Julie*t (Lodestar Theatre Company); and the UK tour of *Over The Rainbow: The Eva Cassidy Story.*

**Artist biogs**

**Isobel McArthur** is a performer and playwright based in Glasgow. Her writing for theatre includes one-woman multi-media comedy *How to Sing it* (Tron Theatre), *Daphne Oram’s Wonderful World of Sound* (Blood of the Young/Scottish Tour), *A Christmas Carol* (Pitlochry Festival Theatre) and the acclaimed *Pride & Prejudice\* (\*sort of)* which is currently touring the UK. As an actor, Isobel has worked with The Lyceum Theatre, The Citizens Theatre, Summerhall, Tramway and The National Theatre of Scotland, amongst others.

**Lu Kemp** is a theatre director and dramaturg with a distinctive reputation for her work in new writing, physical theatre and dance.  She has directed for the Citizens, Lyceum, National Theatre of Scotland, RSC, Artangel, and the BBC amongst others. She is an Associate Artist with the internationally renowned company Inspector Sands, for whom she created and directed *The Lounge*, *Mass Observation*, and *If That’s All There Is*. As a dance dramaturg Lu has worked for Dance Xchange, Rambert, Sadler’s Wells and The Place in the UK, and de Stilte Dance in the NL. She began her career as the Scottish Arts Council Trainee Theatre Director at TAG, Citizens Theatre, and later trained on the LEM at Lecoq, Paris, and with Anne Bogart’s SITI Company, New York. Lu is currently the Artistic Director of Perth Theatre for whom she has directed *Aladdin*, *Knives in Hens*, *Richard III*, *A Six Inch Layer of Topsoil and the Fact it Rains* and *Kes*.

**Josie Duncan** is a diverse young folk singer from the Outer Hebridean Isle of Lewis. Having been immersed in Glasgow's fast moving traditional music scene for the past few years where she studied at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Josie's crystal clear voice is equally at home in Gaelic, Scots or English. In 2017, Josie was awarded BBC Radio 2's Young Folk Award alongside guitarist Pablo Lafuente. Following the release of the duo’s debut album *The Morning Tempest*, the pair have toured extensively across the UK and beyond. Josie’s other projects include INYAL: an innovative 5-piece fusing mercurial tunes, ethereal Gaelic songs and intricate electronics; and The Dusk (Innes White, Megan Macdonald and Duncan).

**Notes for Editors**

**Caledonian MacBrayne** provides award-winning lifeline and leisure ferry services to the communities on Scotland’s west coast islands and peninsulas. Serving a network that stretches almost 200 miles from Campbelltown, Kintyre in the south, to Stornoway, Isle of Lewis in the north.  Caledonian MacBrayne operates a 33-strong fleet of ferries which serve over 50 ports and harbours, amounting to 160,000 sailings annually.   In its most recent contract year Caledonian MacBrayne carried 5.7m passengers, 1.2m cars, 82k commercial vehicles and enjoyed 99.6% contractual punctuality and 99.5% contractual reliability.

**The National Theatre of Scotland** is dedicated to playing the great stages, arts centres, village halls, schools and site-specific locations of Scotland, the UK and internationally. As well as creating ground-breaking productions and working with the most talented theatre-makers, the National Theatre of Scotland produces significant community engagement projects, innovates digitally and works constantly to develop new talent. Central to this is finding pioneering ways to reach current and new audiences and to encourage people’s full participation in the Company’s work. With no performance building of its own, the Company works with existing and new venues and companies to create and tour theatre of the highest quality. Founded in 2006, the Company, in its short life, has become a globally significant theatrical player, with an extensive repertoire of award-winning work. The National Theatre of Scotland is supported by the Scottish Government. [www.nationaltheatrescotland.com](http://www.nationaltheatrescotland.com)

**Year of Coasts and Waters 2020** Scotland’s Coasts and Waters will be showcased throughout 2020 and celebrated with a programme of activity designed to support the nation’s tourism and events sectors. The year, led by VisitScotland, will sustain and build upon the momentum of Scotland’s preceding Themed Years to spotlight, celebrate and promote opportunities to experience and enjoy Scotland’s unrivalled Coasts and Waters, encouraging responsible engagement and participation from the people of Scotland and our visitors. A year-long programme of events, activities and ideas will shine a spotlight on the impact our waters have had on Scotland, from the formation of beautiful natural features to the creation of our national drink – whisky. Following an industry consultation, the Themed Years will now take place every second year to enable more time for planning and collaboration. 2022 will celebrate the Year of Scotland’s Stories. Join the conversation using #YCW2020

 