

SIMON BEAUFOY'S

THE FULL MONTY



DIRECTED BY HANNAH SAYER

SIX ORDINARY BLOKES... ONE EXTRAORDINARY IDEA – CAN IT BE DONE?

£2.00 | SEASON 2026-2027

FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the new season and this production of *The Full Monty*. The film is very well known, but the play possibly less so. However, you'll be pleased to find that it contains the same characters and the same challenges facing them, even though that part of modern history seems a bit distant now. And you know the ending...



There are other treats in store for you throughout the coming season, both in the main auditorium and the Studio. I've only room to mention a few. Next month we have *The Father* by Florian Zeller which was made into a film with Anthony Hopkins, and Steve Thompson is bringing Carol Churchill's *Blue Heart* to the Studio, comprising two short plays designed to intrigue and entertain you, Lou Wallace then gives us a play that is a modern twist on the Brontë sisters that was a hit at the National, and John Masefield's magical *The Box of Delights* is our Christmas production. The only other play I'll mention now is *The Shark is Broken*, a wonderful play about the making of the film *Jaws*. That's in February, so if you haven't yet booked tickets for these shows, I encourage you to do so.

Back to *The Full Monty*, be prepared to buckle up as they unbuckle!

A stylized, handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Ian".

Ian Major
Chairman

FROM THE DIRECTOR

When I first approached Clive (our Artistic Director) about *The Full Monty* many moons ago, I said it's because I wanted to do 'the set' – he misinterpreted this and thought I meant the set design for *Monty*, which is amusing considering I'm about as artistically qualified in that field as a gibbon. I clarified that 'the set' I meant was the set of infamous 'nude / risqué' plays inspired by their original films... I am of course talking about *Calendar Girls*,



which I directed in 2023, and now *The Full Monty*. Both films / plays are famous for nudity, yet in reality it's such a small part of the story.

In directing *Monty*, I've found so much humanity in the play – the realistic plight of jobless steelworkers in the 90s, and the effect on their families, their mental health, and the entire community around them. Working with my incredibly talented (and large) cast and crew on this heartwarming play has been a true delight. Everyone has worked so very hard to pull this off, and put up with my final decisions, which are inevitably STC (subject to change)... I'd particularly like to thank my six wonderful 'strippers', who have put a huge amount of trust in me and have been magnificent.

I hope you enjoy the play as much as I've enjoyed directing it, and please do cheer the boys on at the end – they're going 'full monty', after all...

Hannah

About the Author

Simon Beaufoy was born in Keighley, Yorkshire, in December 1966 and his 1997 film *The Full Monty* was his first major success, for which he earned an Oscar nomination for Best Original Screenplay. He went on to win the 2009 Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay for *Slumdog Millionaire* as well as winning a Golden Globe and a BAFTA award. Other notable works include *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*, *127 Hours* and *The Darkest Light*.

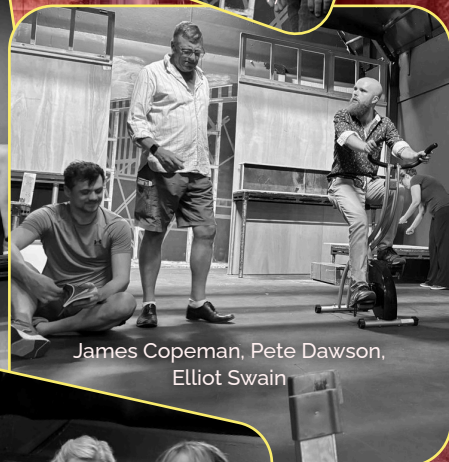
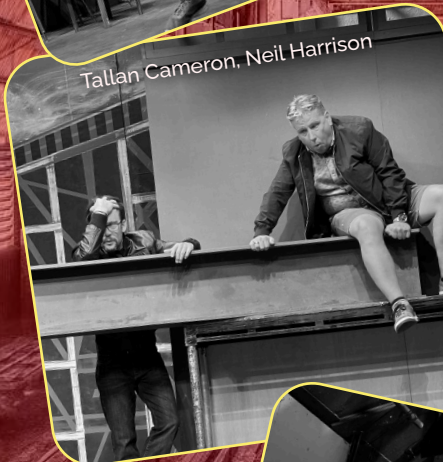
A Background of Trouble

The Full Monty drew upon the popularity of the American dance troupe The Chippendales to inspire the play. The troupe provided much-needed and welcome entertainment to working-class communities which already had a strong culture of females socialising. The male strippers' huge popularity peaked in the late 1980s and early 1990s and gave rise to near-hysterical and frenzied responses from audiences. British male stripper groups then began to form, not least as a result of communities being in sore need of some light relief from the reality of surviving their financially devastated lives.

Sheffield's steel industry was of international renown from the 18th century but by 1988, when this play is set, Margaret Thatcher's policies of deregulation and privatisation were at their peak. Her government was to privatise water, gas, telecoms, railways, coal and steel. This was initially met with fierce resistance from Trade Unions and led to numerous strikes including the steel workers' strike in 1980 and the coal miners' strike in 1984 following the announcement of 20 pits being closed. In December 1987 the government announced that the British Steel Corporation was to become, by December the following year, British Steel plc.

By 1988 Sheffield's once-dominant steel industry was in severe decline due to the mine closures (which supplied anthracite as fuel), growing competition from imports and technological change, and the lack of investment in new technologies. Although specialist steel production continued, automation led to large-scale unemployment. It's estimated that 80% of steel workers had lost their jobs by this time, shattering whole communities and leading to many male workers suffering from a loss of self-esteem and masculine purpose as they struggled with their changing roles in society.

Rehearsal Photos



CAST

GAZ	Tallan Cameron
DAVE	Neil Harrison
HORSE	Paul Russell
GERALD	Pete Dawson
GUY	James Copeman
LOMPER	Elliot Swain
NATHAN	Charlie Evans
JEAN	Stephanie Cotter
MANDY	Becky Done
LINDA	Laura Eddy
SHARON	Jessica Russell
BEE, JOBCENTRE EMPLOYEE	Kathy Taylor
ANNIE, SOCIAL WORKER	Jan Palmer Sayer
BARRY, INTERVIEWER 1, MAN 2	Tony Coccozza
ALAN, ALF	Keith MacDougall
TERRY, INTERVIEWER 2, MAN 1 POLICEMAN 1, UNEMPLOYED MAN	Barry Shergold
BRIAN, REG, INTERVIEWER 3, POLICEMAN 2	Mark Skrebels

Special thanks to Adam Bailey for his assistance with the stage effects.

CREATIVE TEAM

DIRECTOR	Hannah Sayer
PRODUCTION MANAGER	Jacqueline Clayton
ASSISTANT PRODUCTION MANAGER	Mel Dixon
STAGE MANAGER	Sharon Francis
DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER.....	Derek Palmer
SET DESIGN	Christine Neal
SET BUILDING.....	Ian Bage, Bob Cameron, Dave Fairhurst Ian Major, John Sear, John Sparrow Nigel Rive, Nigel Ward
SET PAINTTING	Hannah Cobb, Colin Hickey Xanthe Laing, Christine Neal, Zafirah Sathar
LIGHTING	Tristan Cameron
SOUND DESIGN	James Rowles
SOUND OPERATORS	David House, Stephen Kahn
PROPS	Sheila Grimmant, Georgie Palmer
WARDROBE	Tiffany Breeze, Yvonne Bartlett, Nicola Harrison
DRESSERS	Abi Dear, Gillian Hall, Catherine Lambe Suzie Major, Liz Wainwright
CHOREOGRAPHY	Jess King
CHAPERONES	Jacqueline Clayton, Linda Miles, Georgie Palmer
VOCAL COACH.....	David Thompson
REHEARSAL PROMPT	Annie Woolmington
PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHY	Simon Wallace
PRESS RELATIONS	Alun David
POSTER & PROGRAMME.....	John Cook, Mel Dixon, Ian Major Simon Wallace, Clive Weatherley

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Some Personal Reflections

I spent many weeks of my childhood up north with my cousins through the 1980s and 1990s. My family are from Doncaster, roughly 30 miles from Sheffield. Like most families there, they were tied to the coal mines, in the same way the Sheffield steel industry was. I had relatives who worked at the coal face, in the offices, paying the wages, and even running the chippie outside the pit gate.

The miners' strike hit them all hard. After the strikes things didn't improve and, one by one, the pits were closed. The steel works and other local industries followed them. My aunt's marriage didn't survive long after the strikes, just like Gaz and Mandy. Their relationships are casualties of that time and place. It's easy for us to understand how they'd all feel.

The contrast between the Garden City and those former industrial cities was stark. As I look back, anywhere that looked like it could have been a factory or mine was dirty, derelict, boarded up, and surrounded by high fences and razor wire to keep the kids out. But to me, there was also something tragically beautiful about those abandoned spaces. The ghosts of that vibrant industrial age.

But, my brightest childhood memories of time spent with my grandad, nana, my aunt and cousins are of happy family moments, and a helpful, friendly community. Their neighbours would see my dad's car pull up and pop by, usually just walking straight in through the back door with a shout of "Hello, mi Luv! Its just me!" to see how the London cousins were getting on and how much we'd grown. It seemed to me that everyone in Yorkshire was my relative, everyone was Auntie This and Uncle That. Everyone was 'Ours': Our Nathan, Our Dave, Our Gerald. I think that's how they got themselves through the darkest moments. With hope of better times, love of their nearest, and the support of their family and friends.

Tallan Cameron

I lived on the northern edge of Sheffield in the 1980s and bought my first house there: I always made sure my knives and forks had been made in Sheffield. A couple of miles away lived the militant union leader Arthur Scargill, who was leading the striking miners in their bitter struggle against Margaret Thatcher. The steel industry was still

going in South Yorkshire then but it was in steep decline. A friend noticed that there was more chance of getting a job at the local sweet-makers Bassetts than in the steel works. As he put it, Sheffield was going from being a steel city to a Liquorice Allsorts city.

Keith MacDougall

Working on this production has transported me back to memories of my own hometown of Paisley, Scotland, in the late 70s and 80s, when I would have been a similar age to the character Nathan in this play. For generations, Paisley's heartbeat was industrial. Since the 19th century our town had been the world centre for thread-making and weaving – a proud legacy that gave the world the iconic 'Paisley pattern'. In more recent times, the Peugeot Talbot factory had brought an immense boom to the area, at its peak employing over 9,000 workers. Everyone knew someone who worked either at the thread mills or the car plant.

In May 1981 the car factory closed overnight, with the loss of 4,800 jobs – the largest mass redundancy in Scottish history. As the mills wound down over the next decade, thousands more workers lost their jobs.

I lived in a high building with 15 floors and nearly every floor had a family affected by these closures. I had friends whose parents (sometimes both) lost their jobs. People struggled to put food on the table and there was no extra cash available for even the most modest of school trips.

Proud people were forced onto 'the dole' and out of work for a very long period of time. I have memories of a school friend whose dad finally found work, but on the oil rigs. It was dangerous work that took him hundreds of miles away from his family. When you watch our cast navigate these hard times, know that it isn't just fiction, but the lived experience of communities from Sheffield to Paisley, and many other towns in between.

Jacqueline Clayton

Rivets for a Riveting Play

The Full Monty is set in the mid-1990s, when the once-successful steel mills of Sheffield in South Yorkshire, have shut down years ago. The Mill is deserted and the buildings and surroundings are weathering. This powerful image is the backdrop to the story, and the backdrop to this play, throughout. A play based on a film will inevitably have many locations. The debris in the plant is used and thus, on the set, is used for rapid transitions into a variety of different settings.

As part of the preparation for the set, I visited the disused steelworks in Duisburg-Nord in Germany, where the public is free to roam around the gigantic structures in these 200 hectares of 'Landschaftspark'. You can't help but be in awe of the scale of the structure, cranes and furnaces, and be intrigued by the structures and textures, the rivets and the rust. Further research on steel mills and wider architecture in Sheffield followed to look at brickwork, graffiti and northern skies.

Steelworks are a tough one to translate to the tiny stage of the Barn, more so since this seemingly simple set had many challenges: let's just say that the phrase 'risk assessment' was used many a time. By picking out iconic elements the set team and scenic painters managed to create something with a sense of place. And a bit of fun. Did I mention risk assessment?

Christine Neal
Set Designer



Football's Coming to the Barn

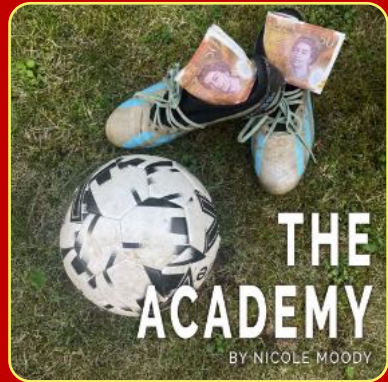
In November, we're delighted to be bringing Nicole Moody's play, *The Academy*, to the Barn Studio. We'll let Nicole describe it.

"Although I'm not a football fan myself, my husband works in the sport, so I've seen both the joy it brings and the pressures created by big dreams and the promise of big money. Rather than focusing on the action on the pitch, *The Academy* explores the lives and relationships behind the scenes – from the Chairman and CEO to the kit staff, canteen workers, Academy players and the parents who'll go to any lengths to help their children succeed.

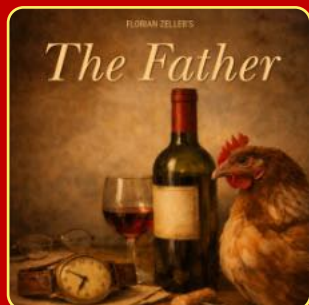
"Despite touching on darker issues facing football, the play also has plenty of humour. An ensemble cast plays multiple roles, with costume changes in full view of the audience, while familiar football anthems help drive the fast-paced action.

"*The Academy* began life as part of John Retallack's Oxford playwriting programme before being developed with professional actors and director Paul Ansdell. Since its first performances at The Old Fire Station in Oxford, it's been staged at London's Etcetera Theatre as part of the Women's Writing Festival. I'm delighted that the original cast and director are reuniting to perform *The Academy* at the Barn Theatre on 6th and 7th November. My first connection with the Barn came through its *Short and Sweet* Festival, with my short play *Loaf*, and I'm thrilled to be bringing this play to such a welcoming theatre."

Whether you're a lifelong football fan or have no interest in the game at all, we hope you'll come along and enjoy the show!



COMING UP AT THE BARN



16th - 24th October

The room is familiar. The people are not.

André is intelligent, witty, proud, and fiercely determined to maintain his independence. But something is no longer quite right. Conversations seem to repeat. Familiar faces appear strangely altered. Objects disappear. Time shifts without warning. As his grip on reality becomes increasingly uncertain, those closest to him – especially his daughter Anne – struggle to navigate a world in which memory, identity, love and truth are all becoming unstable, us a unique insight into the nightmare both characters are experiencing.

27th - 31st October

A double dose of surreal surprises.

In the first play, *Heart's Desire*, two parents nervously await the arrival of their daughter from Australia. The scene is endlessly repeated with variations both hilarious and shocking: with each ring of the doorbell, Carol Churchill pulls off a surreal surprise.

The second play, *Blue Kettle*, deals with a reunion of parents and children. Derek poses as the lost biological son of four different women: here Churchill combines experimental techniques with a startling vision of the fragility of family life.

BARN STUDIO 🐭



13th - 21st November

NOT a story about well-behaved women!

Charlotte Brontë narrates this boisterous re-telling of the Brontë story, trying to defend what appears to be a fairly rocky journey that led to her being crowned the genius of a family of precocious talent and her youngest sister, Anne (the 'underdog') being consigned to the dusty corners of literary history for over a hundred years!

This bold, funny play includes a riot of over 30 characters (in addition to the three sisters), played with frantic energy by an ensemble of five actors with around 50 costume changes. It's fast-paced, physical and lots of fun. We're a long way from the silence of the parlour in Haworth.

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