



TUESDAY 6th OCTOBER 2015

PRESS RELEASE

Gillian Tan and Blackwinged Creatives announce

PIAF by Pam Gems

Reviving Édith Piaf's Story on the Centenary of her Birth

From the streets of Paris to Carnegie Hall, an extraordinary rise to fame. A whirlwind of success and tragedy. A life without regrets.

On the centenary of Édith Piaf's birth, her unique voice and incredible story return to the London stage with Pam Gems' *PIAF*. Jari Laakso directs a heartfelt new version at the Bridewell Theatre, of the beloved French icon's turbulent journey from destitute street singer to global phenomenon.

Few people have glimpsed the darkness and pain under the glitter of Piaf's stardom. A tumultuous life of addiction, lovers, and deaths, held together by a burning passion for the stage, the story of the "Little Sparrow" gives us a searing account of the power and poison of fame.

Information

Previews: Wednesday 28th October 7.30pm, Thursday 29th October 2.30pm & 7.30pm

Press Night: 30th October 2015

Dates: 30 October - 14 November

Times: Monday to Saturday 7.30pm, Saturday Matinee 2.30pm, no Sunday performances.

Venue: Bridewell Theatre
Bride Lane, Fleet Street, EC4Y 8EQ,
Telephone: 020 7353 3331
Website: www.sbf.org.uk

Ticket Prices: £15, £12.50 concessions, £10 previews

Website: www.piaf.blackwingedcreatives.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/PiafLondon

Twitter: www.twitter.com/PiafLondon #PIAF100

Quotes

The London transfer of *PIAF* follows its sold-out run at the Brighton Fringe.

"Pitch-perfect... sensitive and nuanced performances" (*A Younger Theatre*).

"Perfectly captures the fragility and isolation... I defy anyone not to get shivers down their spine during the final song" (*The Argus*).

This revival of *PIAF* has been brought to life by a diverse collective of emerging artists, all inspired by the music and life of Edith Piaf.

"Piaf was the music of my childhood. My grandparents listened to her songs, and of course I sang along. It was only later that I found out about the incredible story of the girl and woman behind these timeless songs. Her drive to sing, to overcome any obstacles, is a testament to music's power to inspire and heal us in moments of happiness and sadness." (Jari Laakso, Director).

"Someone like Piaf only happens once in history." (Ng Choon Ping, co-founder of PINGNG Productions).

PIAF Credits

Written by Pam Gems
PIAF © Pam Gems 1979

Director Jari Laakso
Musical Director Isaac McCullough
Movement Director Katya Bourviski
Designer Philippa Batt
Lighting Designer Chris Randall
Assistant Director Natalie Wong
Assistant Musical Director Max Gallagher

Édith Piaf Cameron Leigh
Toine Samantha Spurgin
Marlene Dietrich Valerie Cutko
Male Ensemble Kit Smith, Max Gallagher, Maxime Yelle

Produced by Gillian Tan in association with Blackwinged Creatives
Originally Produced by PINGNG Productions at the Brighton Fringe

Note to Editors

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Facebook www.facebook.com/PiafLondon

Twitter www.twitter.com/PiafLondon #PIAF100

Biographies

Jari Laakso

Jari Laakso, born in Finland, trained at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. His main interests lie in musical theatre and plays, working on new writing and re-discovering old classics. Jari has just completed his postgraduate in Musical Theatre Writing at Goldsmiths College.

Credits include: *PIAF* (Brighton Fringe Festival - director); *Tempest* (London Theatre Workshop - dramaturge); *Suicides and Small Talk* (Lost Theatre & Old Red Lion Theatre – director); *Ah Wilderness!* (London Theatre Workshop - dramaturge); *Consumed* (UK Tour - assistant director); *Sports Play* (UK Tour & Soho Theatre - assistant director).

www.jarilaakso.com @laaksojari

Isaac McCullough

Trained at Chetham's School of Music, Manchester and Royal College of Music, London. Musical Direction includes *Zanna, Don't* (Landor Theatre); *Lost Boy* (Finborough / Charing Cross); *From Up Here* (Tristan Bates Theatre). As Assistant/Associate Musical Director: European Premiere of *Dessa Rose* (Trafalgar Studios); *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (Greenwich Theatre); *The Other School* (St James Theatre & GSA); *Into the Woods* (All Saints Church, Hove). Isaac teaches singing at Sylvia Young's Theatre School and is an Associate Tutor at Guildford School of Acting.

Cameron Leigh

Cameron trained at Italia Conti and The Royal Ballet School.

Theatre credits include: *The White Feather* (Union Theatre/Arion Productions); playing The Queen in *Fables and Fairytales* (The Spa Bridlington); the title role of Charlotte in *Charlotte's Web* (Gordon Craig Theatre); Ruth's Mother in the acclaimed *Dessa Rose* (Trafalgar Studios); Adelaide Adams in *Calamity Jane* (Shaftesbury Theatre/UK Tour); creating the roles of Lola & Salome in *Imagine This* (New London Theatre); Jemima & Victoria in *Cats* (New London Theatre/Cameron Mackintosh); Roxie



Hart in *Chicago* (Adelphi and Cambridge Theatres West End plus UK, European & Hong Kong Tours); Alternate Narrator in *Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (New London Theatre/UK Tour); Estella & understudying Anita in *West Side Story* (No. 1 UK Tour); Alice in *Wimbledon* (Fortune Theatre); *Viva la Diva* (Arena/UK Tour) and Featured Singer for *Katherine Jenkins Believe Tour*. Cameron has also appeared in numerous pantomimes including *Aladdin* (Theatre Royal, Windsor). She also performed on the Cast Recording of *Imagine This*. Screen credits include: *Hide* (Channel 4); *The Western Frontiers* (Sky Television); the *Viva La Diva* DVD; Katherine Jenkins' *Believe Tour* DVD, Royal Variety Show and Children in Need.

Gillian Tan

Gillian is a producer of theatre and new technology projects, and is the co-founder of Director/Designer/Producer collective, PINGNG Productions. Her producing credits include: Co-Producer for the world premiere of *Crocodiles* at The Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester; Associate Producer for *DRUNK* by the McOnie Company, Producer for *PIAF* at the Brighton Fringe www.gilliantan.com @gillyweet

Blackwinged Creatives

Blackwinged Creatives, founded in 2014 and based in London, is a young and dynamic practice in arts management and producing. We have been working with artists who cross boundaries of culture, geography and creative disciplines, in the UK and internationally. www.blackwingedcreatives.com @BlackwingedC

The Bridewell Theatre

The Bridewell Theatre opened in 1994, breathing new life and purpose into a long derelict Victorian swimming pool. The theatre is now run as a Receiving House, allowing Professional, Amateur, Schools and Colleges, a central London, Off West End venue to present their productions. Additionally, since 2005, we are home to Lunchbox Theatre, a bite sized slot where local City workers can bring their own food and drink and enjoy a forty five minute theatrical performance, For further details on forthcoming productions see www.sbf.org.uk or call 020 7353 3331.

END TO ALL