



The Storm Whale

A Little Angel Theatre production

Based on the bestselling books by Benji Davies

19 November – 30 Jan 2022

Based on *The Storm Whale* and *The Storm Whale in Winter* by Benji Davies

Written and directed by Matt Aston

Designed by Lydia Denno

Lighting designed by Jason Salvin

Composer / Musical Director Julian Butler

Choreographed by Hayley Del Harrison

Puppet direction by Sue Dacre

Puppets made by Keith Frederick

Performed by Géhane Strehler, Julian Hoult and Nix Wood

Stage Managed by Verity Clayton

The Christmas run of *The Storm Whale* at Little Angel Theatre is dedicated to the memory of our Lighting Designer and dear friend Jason Salvin (1972 – 2020).



BENJI DAVIES – Author

Benji Davies is an illustrator, author and animation director. Benji studied animation at university where he learnt how to tell stories with pictures, from short films and music videos to title sequences and picture books. In his work, he aims to capture how it feels to be a child.

His first self-penned picture book *The Storm Whale* won the inaugural Oscar's Book Prize and was Dutch Picture Book Of The Year 2017. His second, *Grandad's Island*, won the children's book category of the AOI World Illustration Awards and was crowned Children's Book of the Year at the Sainsbury's Children's Book Awards. Both books have since been adapted for the stage. He is the illustrator of Nosy Crow's internationally bestselling board book series, *Bizzy Bear*. He has given talks for and proudly supports the work of CLPE, The Children's Bookshow, Pathways, SCBWI, Artillery and The Guardian amongst many others, and makes regular appearances at literary festivals and bookshops around the UK and beyond.

MATT ASTON – Adaptor/Director

Matt is a freelance director and Artistic Director of his company – Engine House.

Credits include:

Touched by Stephen Lowe, *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg* by Peter Nichols; *Diary of a Football Nobody* (Premiere) by William Ivory for Nottingham Playhouse; *Bomber's Moon* (Premiere) by William Ivory for the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry and Nottingham Lakeside Arts (plus West End transfer to Trafalgar Studios); *Grandad's Island* (Premiere) by Benji Davies (also adapted by Matt) – for Engine House and York Theatre Royal – National Tour in 2018 and 2019; *The Storm Whale* by Benji Davies (also adapted by Matt) for Engine House and York Theatre Royal; and many more.

Through lockdown Matt produced and curated two outdoor 'Park Bench Theatre' seasons in York. As part of the Summer 2020 season in Rowntree Park he directed *First Love* by Samuel Beckett, co-wrote and directed *Teddy Bears' Picnic* and wrote the premiere of *Every Time A Bell Rings*. This year he directed the premiere of *The Park Keeper* by Mike Kenny as part of the park's 100th Anniversary celebrations.

Matt received the Writers' Guild of Great Britain Award for the Encouragement of New Writing for his work on Lakeside's Production of Stephen Lowe's *Smile*.

LYDIA DENNO – Designer

Lydia is a visual artist. She studied Theatre Design at Nottingham Trent University. She began her career as assistant designer on the award-winning *Railway Children* (National Railway Museum and King's Cross Theatre), and has gone on to develop an interdisciplinary practice which encompasses theatre, installation, illustration and even walking. She has worked for theatres such as York Theatre Royal, Nottingham Playhouse, The Lowry, Soho Theatre and Wembley Arena, as well as heritage sites around the UK and galleries internationally. Lydia's design work has been awarded an Eastern Eye Award and recently 'gained laurels' having been selected for the Tribeca Film Festival.

JASON SALVIN & ALASTAIR FOX – Lighting Designer

This show was originally lit by Jason Salvin in 2019 for the run at York Theatre Royal.

Jason started his career at City Varieties Music Hall, Leeds before working for Leeds Grand Theatre, Opera North and Northern Ballet. After three years Lecturing in Performance Management at Bretton Hall, University of Leeds he started Production Light & Sound Ltd. Jason's recent Lighting Design work had included *Rock 'n' Roll Pantomimes* at the City Varieties and *Stafford Gatehouse*. As well as shows with *Wrongsemble* and *Engine House*.

Since Jason's death in Nov 2020, the Lighting Design has been continued by Alastair Fox.

Alastair trained at Leeds City College before joining Production Light & Sound on an Apprenticeship. Since completing this, Alastair has lit various show including *The Snow Queen* & *Not So Ugly Sisters* for *Wrongsemble*.

JULIAN BUTLER – Composer/Music Director

Julian has written music and lyrics for lots of shows for young people, including *The Paper Dolls*, *The Everywhere Bear* (Polka Theatre/Little Angel), the *Charlie and Lola* live shows, *Sarah and Duck*, *Twirlywoos* (CBBC/MEI Productions), *The Night Before Christmas* (Polka Theatre/Royal and Derngate), and *Grandad's Island* (Engine House/York Theatre Royal). He studied music at Liverpool University, and acting at LAMDA.

KEITH FREDERICK – Puppet Maker

Keith has been designing and making puppets and their costumes, professionally, since 2008. In this time, he has worked on several shows for the Little Angel Theatre. It would be fair to say that, since the age of 5, puppetry has always been and always will be his favourite language... and one which continues to teach him something new every day.

Other Credits include: Red Earth Theatre, Birmingham Stage, The Polka Theatre, Nickelodeon, Baby Cow productions, 'Nice Fish' by Mark Rylance, RSC & LAT, LAT & Kneehigh, Nexus productions for the BCC, Middle Earth Productions USA, Daryl Worby Studios and Oily Cart, to name a few.

SUE DACRE – Puppet Direction

Sue has worked extensively in Theatre, Film and TV, credits include Labyrinth and Little Shop of horrors. She also enjoyed performing on the Little Angel Stage in a number of productions such as Peach child and Sleeping Beauty. Sue taught at Central School of Speech Drama for a number of years, and has also had the privilege of mentoring a number of young and very talented puppeteers. She is currently employed as an 'outside eye' for String Theatre's new Marionette Production, 'A Water Journey'. Sue has thoroughly enjoyed working on Storm Whale, and hopes that you enjoy the show.

HAYLEY DEL HARRISON – Choreographer & Movement Director

Throughout her career, Hayley's roles have included Dance Captain/Supervisor, Assistant Choreographer, Choreographer, Movement Director and Assistant Director. Hayley is also the Founder/Artistic Director of DEL Dance Theatre, a dance company creating educational dance theatre for family audiences.

Credits: CBeebies Presents The Night Before Christmas, CBeebies Presents Romeo and Juliet, (BBC); Cinderella, (York Theatre Royal); Travelling Pantomime, (York Theatre Royal); A View from the Bridge, (York Theatre Royal/Royal & Derngate); In Fog and Falling Snow, (Pilot Theatre/National Railway Museum/York Theatre Royal); One Touch of Venus, (Opera North/Leeds Grand Theatre/Sadler's Wells); Into the Woods, (Royal Opera House); My Fair Lady, (Theatre Royal Drury Lane); The Phantom of the Opera, (UK Tour/Hamburg/Stuttgart); Mikado, Eugene Onegin, Nixon in China, (English National Opera/London Coliseum); The Snowman, (Peacock Theatre); Swan Lake/Coppélia, (London City Ballet/Sadler's Wells Theatre).



VERITY CLAYTON – Stage Manager

Verity has worked in theatres across the UK and abroad – mooring her narrowboat nearby when possible! Her credits include: *The Snail and the Whale* (Tall Stories – West End and Sydney Opera House); *Alice and the Little Prince* (Pleasance, Edinburgh and Lyric Hammersmith); *There’s a Rang Tan in my Bedroom*, *The Journey Home*, *The Singing Mermaid* and *WOW! Said the Owl* (Little Angel); *Under the Rainbow* (Polka); *Recycled Rubbish* (Theatre Rites); *More Important Things* (Half Moon).

JULIAN HOULT – playing Dad

Trained: Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, First Class Honours Degree (Acting)
Credits: Original cast of *Soho cinders* (Soho Theatre); World Arena Tour of *Jesus Christ Superstar* (U.K. and Australia); *Alice in Wonderland* at the Cockpit Theatre; *Beadle Bamford* in *Sweeney Todd* (Mercury Theatre/Derby Theatre); *Jew of Malta/ Loves Sacrifice/Volpone* (RSC); *Herod and Antipater/The Massacre at Paris* (Read not Dead at The Globe); *Beauty and the Beast* (Lawrence Batley Theatre); *Sondheim BBC Proms* (Royal Albert Hall); *Little Shop Of Horrors* (Regents Open Air) *The Storm Whale* (York Theatre Royal); *Black Snow* (Moscow Arts Theatre).

GÉHANE STREHLER – Playing Flo

Géhane Strehler has performed at notable theatres such as The National Theatre, Theatre Royal Haymarket, Barbican, Bristol Old Vic, Watford Palace Theatre, Nuffield Southampton Theatre, York Theatre Royal, Wales Millennium Centre and Birmingham Rep.

She has appeared in many family shows: *“Cinderella”*, *“Beauty & The Beast”*, *“Alice In Wonderland”*, *“The Snow Queen”* and *“Sleeping Beauty”* for The Unicorn Theatre, Polka Theatre, Pegasus Theatre and Creation Theatre.

Géhane appeared as Mrs. Forrester in Benedict Cumberbatch’s *“The Child In Time”* BBC Television Movie, Dana Gellar in BBC’s *“EastEnders”* and Breshna in the BBC radio play *“Love Is Not New In Our Country”*.

NIX WOOD – playing Noi

Nix trained at the Curious School of Puppetry. Recent theatre credits include: *‘The Dong with a Luminous Nose’* (Cubic Feet/ Monstro); *‘The Hatchling’* (Trigger), *‘RAT’* (The Rat Affair) ; *‘The Adventures of Curious Ganz’* (Silent Tide/Little Angel); *‘Prince Charming’* (Perth Theatre/Little Angel); *‘Angelo’*, *‘The Pixie and the Pudding’* and *‘Wow Said The Owl’* (Little Angel Theatre); and *‘Red Riding Hood’* (Horse+Bamboo).

Screen credits include: Lulu in *‘Monty & Co’* (Pipkins Productions on CBeebies) & *‘Princess and Peppernose’* (a short film by Joe Wright/RSA)



THE STORM WHALE

WORDSEARCH

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WHALE
 FRIEND
 FISH
 CAT
 SANDWICH
 FAMILY
 RAIN
 TREASURE
 BOAT
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 STORM
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Box Office 020 7226 1787

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