

THE SINGING MERMAID

A Little Angel Theatre and Royal & Derngate, Northampton co-
production, in association with Watershed Productions

Adapted from the book by Julia Donaldson and Lydia Monks
23 November – 26th January

CREDITS

Adapted by Barb Jungr and Samantha Lane
Music and Lyrics by Barb Jungr
Originally directed by Samantha Lane
Associate Directed by Oliver Hymans
Set & Costume designed by Laura McEwen
Puppets Designed by Lyndie Wright
Lighting Design by Sherry Coenen

Performed by Sam Dutton, Ruth Calkin and Louise Mellor
Stage Managed by Alex Hobbs

This play is based on the original book *The Singing Mermaid* | Text copyright © Julia Donaldson 2012 |
Illustrations copyright © Lydia Monks 2012 Published by Macmillan Children's Books
Published by Macmillan Children's Books



Who we are

Little Angel Theatre

Fuelling the imagination through the magic and wonder of puppetry

Little Angel Theatre (LAT) has used puppetry to create and share inspiring stories since opening its doors in 1961; igniting the imaginations of the youngest minds. The theatre's success has been built upon a spirit of artistic innovation. We are committed to pushing the boundaries of what puppetry can be, whilst preserving its heritage.

Not only do we produce our own shows for children and young people, which play in-house and tour nationally and internationally, we also welcome puppetry companies from around the UK and overseas to perform on our stages.

Alongside our work on stage, our creative learning department delivers imaginative education and participatory activities in our venues, in schools and in community settings.

LAT aims to fuel the imagination through the magic and wonder of puppetry. It does this on stage, on screen, in schools, in the community and through training and professional development.

Royal & Derngate, Northampton

Royal & Derngate, Northampton, is the main venue for arts and entertainment in Northamptonshire. As one of the major producing venues in the country, it won Regional Theatre of the Year in The Stage Awards 2011, was nominated again for the same award in 2016 and for Theatre of the Year in 2022, and was named "Outstanding Regional Theatre" by Michael Billington in Country Life in 2021. Its production of The Worst Witch (one of many recent London transfers) won the 2020 Olivier Award for Best Family Show. Recent highlights include Our Lady of Kibeho (nominated for the 2020 Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre), Ralph Fiennes' world premiere stage adaptation of T.S. Eliot's Four Quartets and the new musical Gin Craze!, named one of the highlights of 2021 in The Guardian, WhatsOnStage and The Stage.

Watershed Productions

Watershed Productions is an independent theatre production company which takes great theatre for children and their families to theatres across the UK and beyond. Highlights of our past work include Charlie and Lola's Best Bestest Play, Charlie and Lola's Extremely New Play, Horrid Henry – Live and Horrid!, Michael Rosen's Chocolate Cake, Winnie the Witch, Charlotte's Web – the Musical! and stage version of several books by Jacqueline Wilson: Double Act, Midnight, Bad Girls and The Suitcase Kid.

"This was simply the best production for children I've ever had the fortune to take my kids to see." Western Mail on Horrid Henry – Live and Horrid!

"a veritable model of theatre for young people." Manchester Evening News on Bad Girls

"This is the kind of production that gives children's theatre a good name" West Midlands Express & Star on Double Act

"Long may theatre companies weave this kind of magic on stage." Northern Echo on Charlotte's Web





Credits



JULIA DONALDSON - Author

Julia Donaldson is the author of some of the world's best-loved children's books, including modern classics 'The Gruffalo' and 'The Gruffalo's Child', which together have sold over 17 million copies worldwide, and the hugely successful 'What the Ladybird Heard' adventures. Julia also writes fiction, including the Princess Mirror-Belle books illustrated by Lydia Monks, as well as poems, plays and songs – and her brilliant live shows are always in demand. She was Children's Laureate 2011-13 and has been honoured with a CBE for Services to Literature. Julia and her husband Malcolm divide their time between West Sussex and Edinburgh.

LYDIA MONKS - Illustrator

Lydia Monks is one of the most original and bestselling picture book artists working today. Lydia illustrates several bestselling series including the What the Ladybird Heard adventures and Princess Mirror-Belle, written by Julia Donaldson. Her distinctive use of colour and collage has won her critical acclaim and several awards, including the Royal Mail Scottish Children's Book Award, the Stockport Children's Book Award and multiple nominations for the Kate Greenaway Medal. Mouse's Big Day, written and illustrated by Lydia, is the first book in her Twit Twoo School series. Lydia lives in Sheffield.



SAMANTHA LANE -

Co-Adaptor & Original Director

Samantha Lane began her tenure as Artistic Director at Little Angel Theatre in 2015. She was formerly Director of Projects at the Almeida Theatre where she made theatre for, by and with young people aged 14-25; and Education Manager at the Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch, where she created numerous Theatre-in-Education shows for primary and secondary schools, as well as directing community plays with casts of 60+ people. During her time at LAT, she has commissioned and programmed over 150 shows, and adapted/directed over 10 of these.

BARB JUNGR - Co-Adaptor & Composer

Barb Jungr is an award winning international performer, recording artist, composer and lyricist. Her work in children's and family theatre as lyricist, composer, co-writer and co-adaptor for Little Angel Theatre includes the 2023 Olivier nominated *The Smartest Giant in Town*, *There May Be A Castle*, *The Singing Mermaid*, *The Pixie and the Pudding*, *The Fabulous Flutterbys*, and *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. She co-wrote the script and was composer for *Mother Christmas* (Little Angel short film and Dare (Polka)). Other work as composer and lyricist includes *Chocolate Cake*, *How to Hide a Lion* and *Jack V Giant* (Polka Theatre); and lyricist/writer *Liverpool Birds Flying Home* (Royal Court Theatre, Liverpool); lyricist *Jungle Book* (Birmingham Stage Company) and *Soho Songs* (Crazy Coqs, London) and for the song cycle *Mabel Stark Tiger Tamer*.



Creative Team

OLIVER HYMANS - Associate Director

Oliver Hymans is an award-winning puppetry artist and director. He has worked internationally across four continents, directing and designing puppetry in theatre, opera, film and music video. Oliver's puppets have appeared at London's Tate Modern, Arcola Theatre, Royal Albert Hall, The National Gallery, Camden Roundhouse and The Institute of Contemporary Arts. His shows have been described as being "visually dazzling... funny and beautiful...poetic and precise" (The Guardian), with "dazzling technical flourishes" (The Stage). Design Credits include: *The Instrumentals*, *A Christmas Carol in the Painted Hall*, *The Legend of the Jazz Penguin* (for Goblin Theatre); *Rosie Robins and the Christmas Post*, *Prince Charming*, *The Wishing Tree* (Little Angel Theatre); and many more. Oliver is currently Associate Director at Little Angel Theatre and a 2021 QEST Scholar specialising in traditional marionette carving; in 2023 he was a finalist for Woodworker of the Year in recognition of his successful work to get marionettes added to the Red List of Endangered Crafts.

SHERRY COENEN - Lighting Designer

Sherry has been lighting shows in the US and UK since graduating with a BFA in Lighting Design from the University of Miami. Shows for Little Angel Theatre include: *Scruff*, *There May Be A Castle*, *The Singing Mermaid*, *WOW! It's Night-time*, *Prince Charming*, *The Flying Bath*, *The Bed*, *The Pixie and the Pudding*, *I Want My Hat Back Trilogy*. Other shows include: *Operation Mincemeat* (New Diorama Theatre) *KOI nominated 2019*; *Frankenstein* (Battersea Arts Centre) *KOI winner 2019*.

LAURA MCEWAN - Designer

Laura McEwen has been designing for theatre for more than twenty years. She has a specialism in designing for young audiences and had worked for national and international companies including the Royal Shakespeare Company, English National Opera, Unicorn Theatre, Polka Theatre and Little Angel Theatre. Her work has toured worldwide across Asia and as far as Sydney Opera House. Most recently she worked alongside theatre architects Foster Wilson in designing the interior of the new Polka Theatre in London, a venue dedicated exclusively to work for young audiences. Laura has had her designs for theatre exhibited at the Victoria and Albert Museum and her work as an artist exhibited at the Royal Academy, London.

LYNDIE WRIGHT - Puppet Designer

In 1961 Lyndie and John Wright founded Little Angel Theatre. Lyndie was responsible for designing Little Angel Theatre shows as well as making puppets and performing in the productions of the first 40 years. She retired from Little Angel Theatre in 2002, but continues to design and make puppets for theatres including not just Little Angel Theatre, but also the RSC, National Theatre, Shakespeare's Globe, Opera North, Opera Circus, Tamasha, Puppet Players – Munich, Polka Theatre, TheatreRites and Kneehigh. Most recently she has made puppets for *The Little Matchgirl* (Shakespeare's Globe) and *Tin Drum* (Kneehigh).



Performers and Stage Management



SAMUEL DUTTON - Performer

Sam trained at The Arts Educational London Drama School. **Theatre includes:** *The Singing Mermaid*, *The Pixie and the Pudding*, *Me...*, *The Further Adventures of The Owl and The Pussycat*, *Fantastic Mr Fox* (Little Angel Theatre); *Miss Julie*, *Black Comedy* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *Citizen Puppet* (Blind Summit); *Mojo* (Theatre-Rites/New Victory Theater, New York); *The Tempest* (Dundee Rep); *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Love's Labour's Lost* (RSC); *Melody Loses Her Mojo* (Liverpool Playhouse); *Meat* (Bush Theatre); *Engi*, *Tröll*, *Tomten* (Handbendi Brúðuleikhús); *Rinaldo* (Glyndebourne); *Peter Pan* (Royal Lyceum Edinburgh); *Robin Hood*, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* (Chipping Norton Theatre); *The Night Pirates* (Theatre Hullabaloo); *The Selfish Giant*, *Pinocchio* (Norwich Puppet Theatre/Centro Cultural de Belem, Lisbon); *The Chess Player* (Yvonne Arnaud Theatre); *Peter and the Wolf*, *The Crystal Slipper* (The Puppeteers' Company)

Film and TV includes: *This England* (Sky Atlantic), *The Current War* (The Weinstein Company), *Hamlet* (BBC/RSC) **Awards include:** Best Puppetry - Polish Association of Theatre, Film, Radio and Television Artists; Fringe First - Edinburgh.

RUTH CALKIN - Performer

Ruth has worked extensively at Little Angel over many years, beginning with *The Mouse Queen* back in 2005 and most recently as Gomo in *Prince Charming* earlier this year. She is chuffed to bits to be returning to *The Singing Mermaid*.

Other LAT productions include: *The Smartest Giant in Town* (Fiery Light, West End); the award-nominated solo performer show *The Bed*; *There May Be a Castle*; *The Very Old Man with Enormous Wings* (Little Angel/Kneehigh) and *The Tempest* (Little Angel/RSC).

Ruth performed Toodloo in *Twirlywoos Live* (MEI), was original cast (then puppetry director) for *In The Night Garden Live* and has worked with other renowned companies such as Oily Cart and Theatre-Rites. TV includes Puppetry Development Lead for CBeebies' *Moon & Me*.

LOUISE MELLOR - Performer

Louise previously performed in *The Singing Mermaid*, UK tour. She is delighted to be back on the show, this time as Annie, making her debut here at the Little Angel Theatre. She trained at the Curious School of Puppetry, and in Physical Theatre at the Accademia dell'Arte in Italy. Louise has performed in numerous children's and family theatre productions, touring both nationally and internationally. Previous credits include *Firebird* (Bamboozle Theatre); *The Magic Beanstalk* (Light Theatre/Eden Project); *Lily & the Heron*, *Ikura & the Mud Giant*, *Beyond the Teapot* (Goofus Theatre); *Finding Joy*, *The Best Thing* (Vamos Theatre). She toured various fairytales such as *Alice in Wonderland*, *Robin Hood* and *Peter Pan* to schools around Italy, and as a storyteller worked with Whispering Wood Folk on *The Boy Who Grew Wings* and *Pass it On*. Louise has also worked in Bangladesh and Greece with Clowns Without Borders.

ALEX HOBBS - Stage Manager

Alex is a graduate from Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Stage Manager credits include: *The Snow Queen* (Polka Theatre); *Lungs* (Bridge Theatre Brussels); *All the Little Lights* (Offie award winning production as part of Camden Fringe at Tristan Bates Theatre); *Pride in London* event (Pride in London); *Estella* tour (Theatre6); *Capital Orchestra with the Lydian Collective* (Cadogan Hall). Deputy Stage Manager Credits include: *Charlie Cook's Favourite Book UK Tour* (Little Angel Theatre); *Would You Bet Against Us?* (Told By An Idiot); *Bloody Difficult Women* (Cahoots Theatre Company); *Sane and Sound* (as part of Grimbeborn Festival at Arcola Theatre); *The Rover* (British American Drama Academy). Assistant Stage Manager credits include: *Mother Goose* (Hackney Empire); *Charlie and Stan* (Told By An Idiot); *Ghostbusters: The Gates of Gozer* (Secret Cinema); *Faith* (Royal Shakespeare Company and Coventry City of Culture co-production); *Spellz* tour (Tag Live). Outside of theatre Alex has also produced the art show mind-forg'd manacles which was a group art show inspired by the life and works of William Blake at Filet Space.

Write a letter to Mermaid

& send it to info@littleangeltheatre.com or to a member of our team at the theatre.

