

PROTEUS

P R E S E N T S



A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The idea for this show began in 2005 when, quite by chance, I saw a retrospective of Lee Miller's work at the National Portrait Gallery. I fell instantly in love with her incredible photographs, the tenacity and sheer force of nature of the woman, and was incredulous that this was the first I knew of her. Over the years, the way I approached her, and her story, changed with every subsequent encounter; seeing an exhibition in Edinburgh focussing on her friendship with Picasso, I was struck by the contradictions of this feminist being close friends with a well-documented misogynist. After the #MeToo movement gave women a long overdue platform to confront predatory behaviour in the men around them, I began to be aware of how often the women in these men's circles were criticised or dragged into the subsequent controversy. The sheer disappointment many of us have felt when we have discovered the uncomfortable truth about a hero – or sadly – someone we know. From there, the ideas contained in this show began to take shape through a long period of R&D with many talented people I was lucky enough to bring together!

Indestructible became a dryly funny and caustic contemporary tale about the machinations of what it means to be a female Artist, whilst also asking serious and vital questions about cancel culture and accountability; it is a show we want the audience to discuss, and argue about, long after they have seen it.

Proteus has a long history of working with visual Artists; we have a gallery space and host affordable studios for over a dozen visual artists in the centre of Basingstoke where we are based. This show is dedicated to all the visual Artists who have worked with us, and to female Artists rendered largely invisible compared to their male counterparts, Artists such as Ana Mendiata, Carrie Mae Weems, Madame Yevonde and Bobby Baker. We have worked with multi-disciplinary artist Paula Varjack throughout the whole process of creating the show, in particular on the digital aspects that extend the world of Catherine Shaw (the central character in the play) into a virtual space that audiences can explore pre or post show.

Mary Swan, January 2024

CAST



MARY ROSE – CATHERINE

Mary trained at The Poor School. Theatre includes: What About Samuel? (Brighton Festival & Arts Theatre, London), Frankenstein (Proteus Theatre Company), Romeo and Juliet (Pilot Theatre), Dracula (Proteus Theatre Company), The Seagull (Royal Court & Broadway), Bullet Shaped Heart (Greenwich Theatre), Kane (Theatre 503), Beauty and the Beast and The Wedding Present (both for Proteus Theatre Company), Thin Toes (Hampstead Theatre), The Cut (The Old Vic with St Mungo's), Macbeth (New Wolsey, Ipswich), A Place at the Table (Pleasance), A Midsummer Night's Dream (Salisbury Playhouse), Fortune's Fool (Chichester Festival Theatre) and Tess of the d'Urbervilles (Watermill Theatre).



DANNY CHARLES – CHRISTIAN

Danny trained at The Academy of Live and Recorded Arts. His theatre credits include: Stripy Tales Bolton Octagon, Macbeth Proteus, Basingstoke, No Worries Polka Theatre, Nervous Break-down Croydon Warehouse, Sleeping Beauty Hoxton Hall and Dead Man's production of the highly acclaimed cross dressing Cowboy musical Yee Haw. He has worked with Proteus in several previous productions which include, The Little Mermaid, The Arabian Nights and as Scrooge in A Christmas Carol. More recently he has been writing and producing his own work and was commissioned by Proteus to write a piece around homelessness called Talk to me.



PAUL HUNTLEY-THOMAS – ROBIN

Paul graduated from De Montfort University in 1994 with a degree in Performing Arts. Since then, he has toured nationally and internationally with a variety of theatre companies. He has also appeared in films and on television, most recently in Secret Invasion for Disney/Marvel and as Colonel Maurice Buckmaster in Lost Women Spies. He has worked with Proteus on a number of different productions, including writing and performing a one-man show called Mad, Bad and Dangerous to Know based on the life of Lord Byron and also a ghost storytelling show Haunting Tales. He has appeared in part in Great Yarmouth playing Gaston in Beauty and the Beast, and at Diss as an Ugly Sister in Cinderella.



OLIVIA EGBUNIKE – JULIA RODRIGUEZ

Olivia trained at Laine Theatre Arts and the University of Chichester graduating with a BA (Hons) in Performing Arts. Since then, she has worked in education, appeared and in film/tv productions and worked with various theatre companies, most recently playing the role of the Little Mermaid at Hoxton Hall, London. Olivia is currently working with Scratchbuilt Theatre Company (CIC) writing a new immersive production for young children, which will include puppetry, music and dance.

CREATIVE TEAM

MARY SWAN FRSA – WRITER AND DIRECTOR

Over her tenure as Artistic Director, Mary has Directed over thirty shows, writing and adapting many of them, and has developed the company's distinctive visual style. Often working with contemporary Circus Artists, Visual Artists, Puppeteers, Film Makers and Musicians; she has created acclaimed adaptations of 'The Bloody Chamber', 'The Secret Garden', 'Dracula' and 'Frankenstein' and has commissioned writers including Brendan Murray (Missing In Action), Kefi Chadwick (Below Zero) and Tabby Lamb (the forthcoming play Michael and Roberta).

Her work has been seen the length and breadth of the UK in all sizes of venue from far flung rural Village halls to the Southbank Centre in London and The Lowry in Salford. Internationally, her production of 'The Elephant Man' created with performer and writer Saul Jaffe was selected for a residency at the Brits Off Broadway Festival in New York and her work in Kinaesthetic theatre is used in teaching at the University of Tennessee USA and was the subject of an academic study in The American Journal of Drama and Theatre Criticism. In 2017 she was invited to become a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

Her next production for Proteus will be 'Michael and Roberta' written by Tabby Lamb, the show will explore the remarkable story of the first gender affirming surgeries in the UK, carried out at Rooksdown Hospital Basingstoke in the early 1950's.

Mary Swan – Writer and Director
Sam Pine – Designer
Christopher Harrison – Projection Design and Animation
Joe Hornsby – Lighting Design
Alice Amesbury – Production Manager
Izzy Smith – Assistant Stage Manager
Paula Varjack – Digital Design & Dramaturg

Saul Jaffe – Dramaturg
Paul Wild – Original Music
Liam Hipple – Sound Design
Cassie Friend – Movement Consultant
Ben Gregory – Website Design
SJ Watkinson – Producer
Rob Thrush – Videographer



THANKS TO

Marie McCarthy, Chris McNee and the whole team at Clapham Omnibus. Ashley Christmas and Pieter Lawman for invaluable contributions at the R&D stage of the production. Jason Caffrey and the team at Creative Kin for developing and producing the podcast that accompanies the show. RedCape Theatre for lending us Cassie Friend. Kate Forde, Chloe Sylvestre, Hilary Floe and Susana Vazquez for sharing their insight and experiences of the contemporary art world. The Lee Miller Archives, and in particular Kerry Negahban, for all their help as the project evolved; find out more here: <https://www.leemiller.co.uk>. The entire Proteus family, without whom none of this would be remotely possible, and my own long-suffering family, particularly my daughters Poppy and Sophia.

ABOUT PROTEUS

We are an award-winning theatre company who believe that the audience is as important as the artist, and that to create truly dynamic and relevant theatre the audience and artist must inspire each other's imagination. Formed in 1981 and based in Basingstoke, Hampshire, we have a long history of creating quality work; producing a programme of events that serves audiences locally, nationally and, since 2009, internationally. We produce touring shows, projects, residencies, and workshops and play a key role in the provision of performance and participatory opportunities for the wider community. We regularly support and collaborate with artists to create unique performance pieces and make work both for and with diverse communities. Since April 2018 we have been an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation supporting us to create even more ambitious work.

PROTEUS TEAM

Artistic Director, Mary Swan
General Manager, Matthew Dwyer
Marketing Manager, Mary George

Marketing Assistant, Izzy Smith
Finance and Administration Assistant, Helen Palmer
Finance and Administration Assistant, Janet Sutton

If you have enjoyed what you have seen today and would like to keep up to date with our future work, please do follow on social media, tagging us #Indestructible

[facebook.com/proteustheatre](https://www.facebook.com/proteustheatre) [@proteustheatre](https://www.instagram.com/proteustheatre) [@proteustheatre](https://www.tiktok.com/@proteustheatre)



Curious to see more of Catherine Shaw's work and Indestructible, the exhibition Shaw curated of emerging and established female artists? Scan this QR code (or visit www.MOCANorth.com) to see the MOCA North gallery website featuring: an image gallery, downloadable exhibition guide, an exclusive interview between Catherine Shaw and Christian Abiola, MOCA North curator, and other content about MOCA North events and membership.

