



# **FRANKENSTEIN: THE YEAR WITHOUT A SUMMER**

by Helen Davis

## **MARKETING PACK**

29<sup>th</sup> June 2010

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## MARKETING CONTACTS

**Producer:**

**Dorset Corset Theatre Company**

**Fiona Davis, Helen Watts**

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**Production Manager:**

**Ed Burnside**

[ed@dorsetcorset.co.uk](mailto:ed@dorsetcorset.co.uk)

**Address:**

**The Old Dairy at Paynes Place**

**New Road**

**Shaftesbury**

**Dorset**

**SP7 8QL**

**t: 01747 861348**

[www.dorsetcorset.co.uk](http://www.dorsetcorset.co.uk)

## ABOUT THE SHOW

Dorset Corset Theatre Company present

### **FRANKENSTEIN: THE YEAR WITHOUT A SUMMER**

In association with:

Bridport Arts Centre,

The Arc Theatre, Trowbridge,

Arts University College Bournemouth

Written by Helen Davis

#### Credits

Performed by	Natalie Farmer
	William Kenning
	Gary Trainor
Director	Helen Watts
Original Music	Eamonn O'Dwyer
Choreographer	Ben Redfern
Designer	Johanna Muessig
Lighting designer	Ed Burnside
Sound designer	Jamsheed Master
Producer	Fiona Davis

In May 1816 Mary and Percy Shelley travelled to Lake Geneva to stay with the infamous Lord Byron. It was here; late at night by candlelight that Mary discussed her fascination of the medical experiments of the 18th century, specifically the ability of animating dead matter and the horrors of restoring a corpse to life. Prompted by her imagination, Byron forms a challenge... for Mary to create a supernatural story entirely of her own.

Inspired by reality and driven by fiction the three of them unfold Mary's tale creating one of the greatest stories of all time.

## ABOUT THE COMPANY

Dorset Corset Theatre Company was founded in 2006 by Helen Watts, Fiona Davis and Ed Burnside, with a desire to tell stories in an engaging and exciting way; to breathe new life into classics. They have gained a reputation over the last 4 years for producing high quality and lively adaptations of literary classics in their own unique style, with their productions of *Persuasion*, *Far From The Madding Crowd*, *Northanger Abbey* and *Under The Greenwood Tree*.

The company is from Dorset and is keen to challenge the London/south east centric nature of the theatre world and establish a North Dorset based professional company with the local community as its focus, filling the distinct gap in theatre provision in the area. The company is excited by the intrinsic power of live performance and is keen to stimulate and challenge audiences by making the theatre experience available and on show, fusing strong elements of physical theatre and live music throughout and is strongly influenced by its surroundings: the breathtaking rural landscape of the Blackmore Vale and the south west beyond.

Each year Dorset Corset Theatre Company provide an opportunity for at least one graduating professional to join the company as a stepping stone into the profession. This year, the company is working with Arts University College Bournemouth and graduates from their Costume with Performance Design Course.

This year's production of *Frankenstein: The Year Without a Summer* was made possible by support and funding from Arts Council England (South West), West Dorset District Council, The Fenton Arts Trust, Bournemouth Libraries, Activate, ArtsLink, Artsreach, The Arc Theatre, Trowbridge and Bridport Arts Centre.

Press quotes about the company's previous work:

*"Spirited wassailing, barn dances round the cider press and an inspired script that retains much of the wonderful Wessex dialect make this Dorset Corset production a rare gem."*

*"feel-good comedy of the first order - a theatrical toddy to warm the spirit through the autumn months."* **The Stage**

*"The script written by Helen Davis stays faithful to its Dorset roots and helps create the essence of the novel in this excellent dramatised version of a sprawling tale of country life that Hardy drew with such pinpoint accuracy."* **Dorset Echo**

*"Dorset Corset's vibrant adaptation manages to convey the personal emotions, the social climate and the wild landscape of Hardy's original, with a clever use of traditional song, some finely judged knockabout comedy and terrific performances by all five versatile actors."* **Blackmore Vale Magazine**

*"...multi talented cast... inventive choreography... remarkable adaptation"*

**The Henley Standard**

## **BOX OFFICE INFORMATION**

### **TARGET AUDIENCE**

- Regular Dorset Corset Theatre Company supporters
- Mary Shelley fans, especially at The Shelley Theatre, Boscombe
- Bookshops and book clubs
- Regular theatregoers
- Teenage audiences – A level syllabus AQA English set text
- Actor-Musician and new writing theatre audiences
- Horror fans

### **The Company**

Dorset Corset Theatre Company

#### **Who are Dorset Corset Theatre Company?**

Dorset Corset Theatre Company are based in rural North Dorset and specialize in creating fast paced imaginative work inspired by classic literature, with strong elements of live music and physical theatre.

#### **The Press on Dorset Corset Theatre Company's previous work**

*"This Dorset Corset production is a rare gem."* **The Stage**

*"The script written by Helen Davis is an excellent dramatised version..."* **Dorset Echo**

*"Dorset Corset's vibrant adaptation has terrific performances by all... versatile actors."*

**Blackmore Vale Magazine**

*"multi talented cast...inventive choreography...remarkable adaptation"* **Henley Standard**

## **THE STORY**

In May 1816 Mary and Percy Shelley travelled to Lake Geneva to stay with the infamous Lord Byron. It was here; late at night by candlelight that Mary discussed her fascination of the medical experiments of the 18th century, specifically the ability of animating dead matter and the horrors of restoring a corpse to life. Prompted by her fascination, Byron forms a challenge... for Mary to create a supernatural story entirely of her own.

The show is a new piece of work that is woven around the birth of the story of *Frankenstein*. Inspired by reality and driven by fiction the three of them unfold Mary's chilling, gothic tale.

### **The Performers**

Experienced and highly skilled actor musicians, Natalie Farmer, William Kenning and Gary Trainor play a range of characters.

### **Recommended Age**

Brave 12 year olds upwards

### **Performance Length**

2 hours with a 20 minute interval (interval lengths may vary - contact venue for more information)

### **Schools**

Year 10 upwards but particularly good for A level students as *Frankenstein* is on the AQA English syllabus.

A free Education Pack is available from the website from August.

**For more information please contact Helen Watts, Ed Burnside or Fiona Davis**

**01747 861348**

**[helen@dorsetcorset.co.uk](mailto:helen@dorsetcorset.co.uk)**

**[ed@dorsetcorset.co.uk](mailto:ed@dorsetcorset.co.uk)**

**[fiona@dorsetcorset.co.uk](mailto:fiona@dorsetcorset.co.uk)**

## SAMPLE DIRECT MAIL LETTER

Dear xxx

*This Dorset Corset production is a rare gem*

The Stage on Dorset Corset Theatre Company's last show

Over the last 5 years Dorset Corset Theatre Company have gained a fantastic reputation for producing scintillating work inspired by classical literature.

This year thanks to the support of Arts Council South West, the company has commissioned Helen Davis, one of Dorset Corset's Co-Artistic Directors to write a new piece of work, inspired by the summer that Mary Shelley, Shelley and Byron spent together in Italy. The chilling tale weaves fact with fiction and the birth of Mary Shelley's spine tingling gothic masterpiece, *Frankenstein*.

FRANKENSTEIN: THE YEAR WITHOUT A SUMMER is performed by a fantastic cast of 3 highly skilled actor-musicians, who collectively have performed in the West End, and toured nationally and internationally. With a totally brand new score composed by Eamonn O'Dwyer (currently appearing as The Songman in *War Horse* in the West End), the show promises Dorset Corset's unique style, combining live music, outstanding classical acting and strong elements of physical theatre.

Make sure you don't miss what promises to be a truly memorable evening.

Tickets are xxxxxxxx (concessions £ xx off) for the performance on xxx

Call the Box Office now on  
xxxx or book online at www. Etc

## DIRECT MAIL LETTER TO DRAMA/ENGLISH TEACHERS

Dear Head of English/Drama

### FRANKENSTEIN : THE YEAR WITHOUT A SUMMER

Following their widely acclaimed productions of *Persuasion*, *Far From The Madding Crowd*, *Northanger Abbey* and *Under the Greenwood Tree*, all highly popular with school groups Dorset Corset Theatre Company now brings you its brand new production inspired by Mary Shelley's gothic masterpiece **FRANKENSTEIN: THE YEAR WITHOUT A SUMMER** to xxxvvenuexxxx on xxdatex.

Last year's show was lauded by *The Stage* : "*This Dorset Corset production is a rare gem.*" Dorset Corset Theatre Company has built up a reputation for its fast paced exciting adaptations, fusing strong elements of physical theatre, the finest quality classical acting, storytelling and live music throughout.

This year thanks to the support of Arts Council South West, the company has commissioned Helen Davis, one of Dorset Corset's Co-Artistic Directors to write this new piece of work, inspired by the summer that Mary Shelley, Percy Shelley and Lord Byron spent together in Italy. The chilling tale weaves fact with fiction and the birth of Mary Shelley's spine tingling gothic masterpiece, *Frankenstein*.

The story of the novel is told by three highly skilled actor-musicians with varied experience in the West End, and on tour nationally and internationally who will be playing an original score composed by Eamonn O'Dwyer (currently playing *The Songman* in the National Theatre's highly acclaimed production of *War Horse* in the West End)

**FRANKENSTEIN: THE YEAR WITHOUT A SUMMER** is suitable for GCSE, A/S and A2 level students. Recommended age 12+. *Frankenstein* is on the AQA syllabus (English Language and Literature 2).

### SPECIAL RATES FOR SCHOOL GROUPS

Groups of xx + best available seats just £xx

Ring the Box Office now on xxxx xxxx xxxx

A free Education pack will be available to download from the website [www.dorsetcorset.co.uk](http://www.dorsetcorset.co.uk) from Mid August

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Dorset Corset Theatre Company**

presents

the **World Premiere** and **UK tour** of

### **FRANKENSTEIN: THE YEAR WITHOUT A SUMMER**

Written and Directed by **Helen Davis**

Inspired by the book by **Mary Shelley**

Original Music by **Eamonn O'Dwyer**

Performed by **Natalie Farmer, William Kenning and Gary Trainor**

Choreographed by **Ben Redfern**

Designed by **Johanna Muessig** / Lighting by **Ed Burnside**

Sound Design by **Jamsheed Master**

**UK Tour: Tuesday 5th October 2010 to Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

#### **THE SHOW**

Following their widely acclaimed productions of *Persuasion*, *Far From The Madding Crowd*, *Northanger Abbey* and *Under the Greenwood Tree* Dorset Corset Theatre Company now brings you its brand new work inspired by Mary Shelley's gothic masterpiece **FRANKENSTEIN: THE YEAR WITHOUT A SUMMER**.

In May 1816 Mary and Percy Shelley travelled to Lake Geneva to stay with the infamous Lord Byron. It was here; late at night by candlelight that Mary discussed her fascination of the medical experiments of the 18th century, specifically the ability of animating dead matter and the horrors of restoring a corpse to life. Prompted by her imagination, Byron forms a challenge... for Mary to create a supernatural story entirely of her own.

Inspired by reality and driven by fiction the three of them unfold Mary's tale creating one of the greatest stories of all time.

The production is touring the south this autumn (dates below), taking in old and new audiences alike, including being the inaugural production at the Shelley Theatre

at Shelley Manor in Boscombe, Mary Shelley's own private theatre and also at Arts Depot in Finchley - the first time the company has performed in London.

## **THE COMPANY**

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Each year Dorset Corset Theatre Company provide an opportunity for at least one graduate to join the company as a stepping stone into the profession. This year, the company is working with Arts University College Bournemouth and graduates from their Costume with Performance Design Course.

This year's production of *Frankenstein: The Year Without a Summer* was made possible by support and funding from Arts Council England (South West), West Dorset District Council, The Fenton Arts Trust, Bournemouth Libraries, Activate, ArtsLink and Artsreach.

### **Helen Davis - Writer/ Director**

Training: Italia Conti Academy of Performing Arts

Helen is co-artistic director of The Dorset Corset Theatre Company and has written and co-directed *Persuasion*, *Far From The Madding Crowd*, *Northanger Abbey* and *Under The Greenwood Tree* for them. Earlier this year her first original play *Forsaken* was produced by The Particular Theatre Company and ran for three weeks at The Hourglass in Exeter.

Helen has worked as an actor-musician touring to over 100 theatres, including Liverpool Empire, Hackney Empire, The New Theatre (Oxford), and The Swan at Stratford Upon Avon. Theatre credits include; *Titania and Juliet* (Shakespeare Festival, Baracura Gardens in Japan 2008), *Bathsheba* (*Far From the Madding Crowd* - DCTC) and *Trombone/Little Bo Peep* in the UK tour, *The Wheels on the Bus*. Film credits include; *Emma* (Miramax), *Billy Elliot* (Working Title), *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (LWT) *Blunt* (Bullet Films) and *Mary Poppins* in China (LSOP).

### **Eamonn O'Dwyer – Composer**

Trained at the Royal Academy of Music and has worked as an actor and musician in theatres all over the world. As a composer and arranger he has written and performed music for *Shakespeare in the Garden* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the Barakura Festival Theatre in Japan, *The Massacre* at the Theatre Royal in Bury St Edmunds, *A Christmas Carol* at the newly built Rose Theatre in Kingston, and been commissioned by avant garde vocal trio Juice and a *cappella* group Chiaroscuro. His song 'Funny' was recorded by former Eurovision entrant Kelli Uustani and released in the European charts in 2008. He recently collaborated on the musical arrangements for the UEFA Champions League final in Rome with Andrea Bocelli and composer Matt Clifford. Forthcoming projects include: a musical theatre piece entitled *The House of Mirrors and Hearts* for the Edinburgh Fringe 2010; an original score for *Liquorice and Smokerings*, a new play by Katie Bonna; and the soundtrack to a horror short, *Banshee*, directed by Michael Elkin. He is currently playing the pivotal role of the Songman in the National Theatre's multi-award winning *War Horse* at the New London Theatre.

### **Natalie Farmer - Performer**

Natalie trained at Rose Bruford College on the unique Actor-Musicianship course. Theatre credits include: Juliet/Mercutio/Lady Montague in *Romeo & Juliet* (Shakespeare Invigorated); Ariadne in *Voithia!* (English Touring Opera); Blue Peter in *Black Eyed Susan* (Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds); Dee/Anil in *SATB/Short Lease* (Battersea Arts Centre); Ophelia in *Unsui: Truth Seekers* (The New Players Theatre).

Musical directing/arranging credits include: *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (The Picturedrome Theatre).

Natalie also works as a composer, writer, and music teacher and plays in several bands. She has toured America, Austria, Gibraltar, and Ireland with various choral and instrumental ensembles.

Visit <http://www.myspace.com/nataliefarmermusic> and

<http://www.myspace.com/themoonbearsmusic> to hear more of her music.

### **William Kenning – Performer**

William trained at Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art

Theatre credits include: Charlie in *Bubbles* (Watermill Newbury) George in *Three Men in a Boat* (Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds, Regional & National Tour) Little John in *Robin Hood* (Qdos, Birmingham Hippodrome & Cardiff New) Jack Bates in *Our Benny* (Liverpool Empire), Bernstein/Mrs Luce/Skip-Snip in *Little Shop of Horrors* (New Wolsey, Ipswich), Charles/William in *As You Like It* (Watford Palace Theatre & Northcott Theatre, Exeter), Bhima in *Mahabharata* (Saddlers Wells & UK Tour), Big Bopper in *Buddy* (UK Tour), Henry Moreland in *The Heir at Law*, The Beast in *Beauty and The Beast* and Little John in *Robin Hood* (all for Theatre Royal Bury-St-Edmunds), Miles/Toby in Alan Ayckbourn's *A Cricket Match* (Eye Theatre, Suffolk), Bill Sikes in *Oliver!* opposite Ron Moody as 'Fagin' (Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury), Major Rizzolli in *Passion* (Bridewell Theatre), Voice Of The Plant in *Little Shop of Horrors* (Derngate Theatre, Northampton), the staged concert version

of Eric Woolfson's new musical *Poe* (Abbey Road Studios, London) and Chester Holmes in Henry Naylor's *Finding Bin Laden* (Gilded Balloon, Edinburgh Fringe Festival).

Film and Television credits include: *Leaders Wives* (BBC), *Blagger* (Endemol), *Ian Lee's Punch Drunk TV* (Endemol), *Sexism in the City* (BBC), *Outbreak* (Lion TV), *Espeak* (E4) and as James Bond for the Playstation 2 game *James Bond: Quantum of Solace*.

### **Gary Trainor – Performer**

Gary was born in Belfast; he trained on the Acting Course at The Italia Conti Academy where he gained a first class BA (Hons) Degree.

Recently he was chosen to be one of the actors on THE OLD VIC NEW VOICES, 24 hour play project, where 35 actors 7 writers, directors and producers, produce a piece of theatre inside 24hours, the follow up to this was a recent visit to New York's Public Theatre where he featured in *Prophesy* on the US/UK exchange -Old Vic New Voices (Dir: Gemma Fairlie)

Theatre Credits include: Ensemble and U/S HEYWOOD and RICO, *The Shawshank Redemption*, Wyndham's Theatre. CHARLIE on the 2009 National Tour of *Stones in His Pockets*, U/S and played (Dir: David Bownes) for Mark Goucher Ltd. ANDREW *The Oxford Passion* (Dir: Charlotte Conquest) for Creation Theatre Co. THE BAKER in *Into The Woods* (Dir: Sue Colgrave) The Landor Theatre. JOSH PERROTT in *Jago* (Dir: Diana Hillier) at The Pleasance Theatre Edinburgh.

For further information on Gary please contact [enquiries@cblmanagement.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cblmanagement.co.uk)

**FOR FURTHER PRESS INFORMATION AND FOR IMAGES PLEASE CONTACT:**

**DORSET CORSET THEATRE COMPANY: 01747 861348 or [info@dorsetcorset.co.uk](mailto:info@dorsetcorset.co.uk)**

## TOUR SCHEDULE

### October

- Tue 5<sup>th</sup>**      **The Arc Trowbridge World Premiere**  
Tel: 0845 299 0476
- Wed 6<sup>th</sup>**      **Bridport Arts Centre (Schools performance 12.30pm)**  
Tel: 01308 424204
- Thurs 7<sup>th</sup>**     **Bridport Arts Centre**  
Tel: 01308 424204
- Fri 8<sup>th</sup>**        **Royal Manor Theatre, Portland**  
Tel: 01305 860792
- Sat 9<sup>th</sup>**        **The Players Theatre, Thame**  
Tel: 0871 222 7232
- Tues 19<sup>th</sup>**     **The David Hall, South Petherton**  
Tel: 01460 240340
- Wed 20<sup>th</sup>**     **Strode Theatre, Street**  
Tel: 01458 442 846
- Thurs 21<sup>st</sup>**    **The Lights, Andover**  
Tel: 01264 368368
- Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>** **Mere Lecture Hall**  
TIC: 01747 861211
- Sat 23<sup>rd</sup>**      **Broadmayne Village Hall (Artsreach)**  
Tel: 01305 854205
- Tues 26<sup>th</sup>**     **The Kenton Theatre, Henley-on-Thames**  
Tel: 01491 575698
- Wed 27<sup>th</sup>**     **The Shelley Theatre, Boscombe**

**Thurs 28<sup>th</sup>**    **The Shelley Theatre, Boscombe**  
**Fri 29<sup>th</sup>**        **The Shelley Theatre, Boscombe**  
**Sat 30<sup>th</sup>**        **The Shelley Theatre, Boscombe**  
**Sun 31<sup>st</sup>**        **6PM SHOW The Digby Hall, Sherborne**  
                         TIC: 01935 815341

November

**Mon 1<sup>st</sup>**        **The Mission Theatre, Bath**  
**Tues 2<sup>nd</sup>**        **The Regent Centre, Christchurch**  
                         Tel: 01202 499199  
**Wed 3<sup>rd</sup>**        **East Bridgwater Community School (Bridgwater Arts Centre)**  
                         Tel: 01278 422700  
**Fri 5<sup>th</sup>**         **The Bike Shed, Exeter**  
**Sat 6<sup>th</sup>**         **The Bike Shed, Exeter**  
**Sun 7<sup>th</sup>**         **6PM SHOW Dorchester Corn Exchange**  
                         TIC: 01305 267992  
**Tues 9<sup>th</sup>**        **Arts Depot, London**  
                         Tel: 020 83695454  
**Wed 10<sup>th</sup>**       **The Backwell Playhouse, Backwell**  
                         Tel: 01275 392936  
**Thurs 11<sup>th</sup>**     **Ashcroft Arts Centre, Fareham**  
                         Tel: 01329 223100  
**Fri 12<sup>th</sup>**        **The Little Theatre, Torquay**  
                         Tel: 01803 299330  
**Sat 13<sup>th</sup>**        **Shaftesbury Arts Centre**  
                         Tel: 01747 854321