

## OLIVIER AWARD-WINNING SHOW

E. Nesbit's

### THE RAILWAY CHILDREN

Steams into Watermans Arts Centre, Brentford this Easter Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> March.

This Easter Monday (28<sup>th</sup> March, 4pm), Watermans Arts Centre will screen *The Railway Children (2016)*, a film of York Theatre Royal's Olivier award-winning production performed in summer 2015 at the National Railway Museum, Yorkshire. Tickets are on sale now.

The film captures **Mike Kenny** and **Damian Cruden's** imaginative stage adaptation of **E. Nesbit's** cherished novel on its return to its Yorkshire roots, and features the original locomotive from the much-loved original 1970 film.

*The Railway Children* follows the story of Roberta (Bobbie), Peter and Phyllis, three sheltered siblings who suffer a huge upheaval when their father, who works for the Foreign Office, is taken away from their London home and (falsely) imprisoned. The children and their mother, now penniless, are forced to move from London to rural Yorkshire near a railway line. The story deals with themes of justice, the importance of family and the kindness of strangers.

"It's phenomenally contemporary when you read it," says writer Mike Kenny, who first adapted *The Railway Children* for York Theatre Royal in 2008. "It has the wrongful arrest, the selling of state secrets. There's a mother taking the children a long way away, and not communicating with them about it. The children end up building relationships with people they'd normally never have met, so there's an interesting class tension there."

Filmed with seven cameras by an expert team, who navigate the unique staging including moving platforms, props and rail carts, the film captures every moment of the fast-paced production.

The film of *The Railway Children* is directed by International Emmy award-winning **Ross MacGibbon**, whose recent stage-to-screen adaptations have included Matthew Bourne's *Swan Lake*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* with David Suchet and Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* from The Globe Theatre. **Martin Barrass** (*Emmerdale*, *The Bill*, *Heartbeat*) gives a standout performance as Albert Perks.

York Theatre Royal's stage production of *The Railway Children* was directed by award-winning Artistic Director of York Theatre Royal **Damian Cruden** (*The York Mystery Plays 2012*, *Brassed Off*, *The Wind in The Willows*). It was first performed at National Railway Museum in 2008 and toured the world to huge critical acclaim, and is now returning home to a purpose-built theatre.

Ross MacGibbon comments: "This captivating production, steeped in nostalgia, is filled with moments of despair, joy, kindness and hope. I think audiences of all ages will respond to its family drama, timeless characters and their individual stories."

The film is produced by **Anne Beresford** and **Debbie Gray** (Genesis Pictures), who both produced *Maxine Peake as HAMLET* and *Peter Grimes on Aldeburgh Beach*, both shown in UK cinemas and on British television. Debbie Gray had major success in 2014 with the BAFTA-nominated film *Northern Soul*, which reached number ten at the UK box office and number one in the DVD chart. Anne Beresford is known for her work in music and arts as well as on feature films including *Mouth to Mouth* starring Ellen Page.

The Railway Children production received investment from Screen Yorkshire through the Yorkshire Content Fund. The film is distributed by Genesis Pictures working with Munro Films and will open in 400 cinemas in the UK and Ireland on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

For tickets please visit <https://www.watermans.org.uk/events/the-railway-children-pg/>

To see the trailer, go to [www.railwaychildrenfilm.com/trailer](http://www.railwaychildrenfilm.com/trailer)

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For more information about the screening at Watermans Arts Centre, please contact:

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