



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this introduction to **Iphigenia in Splott**, written by **Gary Owen**, and directed for the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre by **Rachel O’Riordan**. It was originally commissioned and produced by the Sherman Theatre in Cardiff.

The audio described performance at the Lyric will be on Saturday 14 October at 7.30pm. There may be a touch tour before the performance, so please check with the Box Office on 020 8534 0310. This of course will depend on the Covid safety rules in place at that time. The performance lasts for 75 minutes with no interval. This production contains flashing lights, strong language, sexual references and includes sensitive subject matter, with themes of an adult nature.

In the programme, Rachel O’Riordan writes that *Iphigenia in Splott* is a call to arms. It presents the impact of austerity and social injustice and of the devastating impact cuts make on those who have little to lose. Iphigenia or ‘Effie’ as she is called in the play is extraordinary, yet her life could easily be seen by some as less valuable.

Stumbling down the street drunk at 11.30am Effie is the kind of girl you avoid making eye contact with. She moves with a sexy slink at first, leaning languidly against the proscenium arch or prowling about the stage. Her mood changes in an instant suddenly cold, hard and confrontational, or restless and volatile. You think you know her, but maybe you don’t know half of it. Effie’s life is a mess of drink, drugs and drama every night, and a hangover worse than death the next day – till one night gives her the chance to be something more.

Effie is a slim white woman with an athletic build and wears light grey Nike trackie bottoms, a tight-fitting grey vest top flecked with black, and white-soled black trainers. She first appears in a short, black puffa jacket – the hood pulled up. Effie pushes the

hood back to reveal her dyed blonde hair, scraped up into a high loop of whiter blonde hair. Her face is a piquant heart shape, with high cheekbones and blazing blue eyes. She is only lightly made-up, with gold hooped earrings.

When we take our seats the stage is open to us. The black floor of the stage is scattered with randomly placed white fluorescent tubes each about one and a half metres long. These are set into the floor and remain lit throughout the performance, flickering occasionally. About five metres from the front is a screen that consists of similar fluorescent tubes. These are arranged in five panels, about two and a half metres tall and a metre wide, with no space between them. When the performance begins, they all glow white. During the performance this will change from time to time: sometimes all are lit, but more often, only a section of them is lit with some remaining dark, creating a different atmosphere for the scene. Several of them seem broken, hanging down at an angle, although still attached at one end.

The stage lighting changes from a golden glow to stark white, depending on the mood.

Three metal framed upright chairs stand on the empty stage apparently randomly placed. The seats and backs are upholstered in red. From time to time, Effie slouches on one of these, her legs sprawling apart and her face set in a sullen stare, while at other times she leans forward with her knees apart, her stare confrontational.

Due to the nature of the fast-moving monologue, there may be gaps in the audio description during the show.

CAST

Effie – **Sophie Melville**

CREATIVE TEAM

Deputy Stage Manager

Beth Dixon

Stage Manager

Claire Bryan

Sound Designer

Sam Jones

Lighting Designer with Hayley Grindle

Designer

Directed by

Written by

Rachel Mortimer

Hayley Grindle

Rachel O'Riordan

Gary Owen