



PUMP HOUSE THEATRE COMPANY – SHOW PROGRAMME

City Of Champions 11TH – 15TH April 2023

CAST :-

Laurie Munro	James Sheppard
Lonnie Drake	Tim Williams
Amie Drake	Katy Jane Meehan
Barbara Munro	Liz Wells
Mary Celeste	Elaine Griffin
James Hudson Phillips	Guy Peskin

CREATIVES :-

Director	Steve Brown
Assistant Director	Russ Clancy
Lighting Design	Phil Hamilton
Stage Manager	Rob Hall
Sound Design	Paul Richardson
Lighting & Sound Operation	Paul Richardson/Deborah Mannix
Props	Nicky Michaels
Prompt	Diane Seabrooke
Front of House	Richard Woolf
Photographs & Artwork	Martin Smith



Please see notes overleaf from the Playwright and Director Steve Brown

The play is set in the Guest Lodge of the house of former child actor Lonnie Drake, in Ingelwood Los Angeles

Spring 2010

There will be an interval of 20 minutes between Act and 1 Act 2

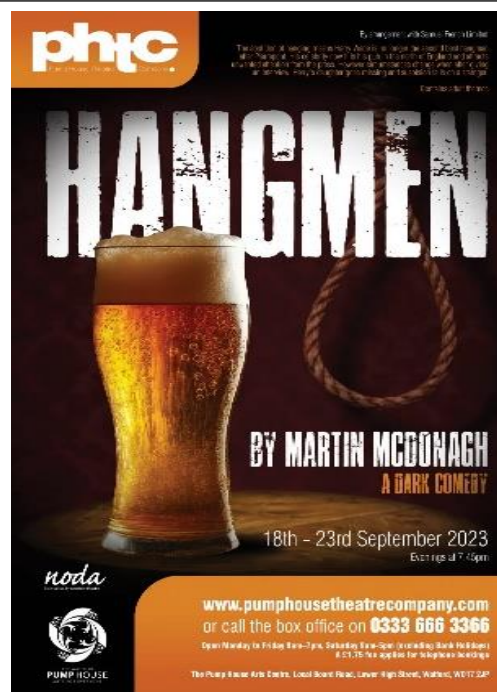
EXCITING ANNOUNCEMENT:

OUR NEXT PRODUCTION: HANGMEN by Martin McDonagh – A Dark Comedy

18th – 23rd SEPTEMBER 2023

In his small pub in Oldham, Harry is something of a local celebrity. But what's the second-best hangman in England to do on the day they've abolished hanging? Amongst the cub reporters and sycophantic pub regulars, dying to hear Harry's reaction to the news, a peculiar stranger lurks, with a very different motive for his visit.

If you would like to join or find out more about our Theatre Company, please go to our website www.pumphousetheatrecompany.com



WELCOME TO INGLEWOOD

The timeline of City of Champions

2011

I happened across an interview with Corey Feldman in which he stated that paedophilia was “Hollywood’s biggest problem”. Feldman talked about how both he and former co-star, Corey Haim, had been victims in Hollywood (Haim had died suddenly in March 2010 aged 38). I had been saddened by Haim’s untimely death but now, more than a year later, I was profoundly affected at hearing about what he had suffered as a youth. I was inspired to write an untitled fictional story about two former child stars who were mistreated in Hollywood, went off the rails as young adults and were now trying to be fully functioning adults. A difficult story but one with a positive ending. As a setting for the story, I discovered the City of Inglewood in Southwestern Los Angeles. The first two images I saw were of Randy’s Donuts, and of the town signpost that read: “Welcome to Inglewood – City of Champions”. I now had a title. I completed the first draft on 16th October.

2016

Jump to 20th March when an excerpt was performed as part of a presentation of new work. As a result of the presentation, two audience members contacted me to say that they had been inspired to get help. They had never felt that, as males, they would be believed or taken seriously. They now believed they would. I was now aware that this piece had potential to do something very positive.

2017

In July, after two workshops, the first full production of City of Champions was presented by London Theatre Workshop for a three week engagement. Critically successful, it received a nomination for Best Off-West End production in the Break A Leg awards and also nominations for the cast.

2022

I returned to the script with fresh eyes and set about the challenging task of streamlining it without losing the impact of the original production. After a positive first time experience of working with Pump House Theatre Company in April last year, I offered City of Champions to the company for production. It has been a pleasure to revisit this piece with a very talented cast and with the luxury of a longer rehearsal period and an experienced creative team.

At the time I started working on this piece in October 2011, this was not a widespread topic. For context, Jimmy Saville died two weeks after I finished the first draft; the Me Too movement didn’t exist; the scandals involving Bill Cosby, Bryan Singer, Kevin Spacey, Harvey Weinstein and many others were still in the future. Since the 2017 production, the subject has sadly remained current.

Although it is a work of fiction, it definitely owes a debt to three very inspirational people. Sheldon Kennedy, a former Canadian ice hockey star who went public in 1996 about his abuse at the hands of his former coach. Kennedy’s bravery not only brought about a successful conviction, but he inspired others to come forward. One such person was Martin Kruze, who had been abused by a paedophile ring of employees at Toronto’s Maple Leaf Gardens. His bravery was instrumental in securing multiple convictions. But, distraught at the lack of severity in the convictions, Kruze committed suicide three days after the trial. Finally, in November 2017, Andy Woodward, a former English football player, went public with his own story of abuse by a former youth coach. His bravery – like Sheldon Kennedy’s – empowered many others to come forward. This also led to the foundation of The Offside Trust, an organisation working for the safeguarding of children in sport.

Therefore, this work is respectfully dedicated to the courageous Sheldon Kennedy, the tragic Martin Kruze, the inspirational Andy Woodward and the sadly missed Corey Haim.

STEVE BROWN Writer/Director

