



[Mother Courage and Her Children](#) by Bertolt Brecht

Produced by The [Library Theatre](#) at [The Lowry](#)

To be reviewed by [Dave Porter](#) February 2013

Translated by Tony Kushner, Directed by Chris Honer, and Music by Greg Palmer.

Bertolt Brecht's stirring Mother Courage and Her Children opens the 2013 season of productions from Manchester's Library Theatre Company, at The Lowry in Salford on Friday 22 February 2013.

The version of Brecht's classic script the Library is presenting has been translated by Tony Kushner. Nominated for an Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay for Lincoln, he is best known in theatrical circles for his 1993 Pulitzer Prize-winning play Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes, which the Library Theatre Company presented in 1999.

Directed by Chris Honer, the company's Artistic Director, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, which features a score specially written by composer Greg Palmer, runs until Saturday 9 March.

Set during the bloody Thirty Years' War which ravaged mainland Europe between 1618-1648, Brecht's astonishing tale of war and the moral dilemmas it places on its participants features one of the classic roles in the theatrical canon in *Mother Courage*. An innovative entrepreneur of the battlefield, Mother Courage is unswerving in her determination and need to make a profit from the dirty business of war in order to protect her three children.

With its rich combination of mordant humour, witty narrative, dramatic incident, and music and songs, Brecht's great story of war and the business of war is as clear-eyed, as relevant, and as provocative, as it ever was.

Taking on the role of Mother Courage is the award-winning Eve Polycarpou, whose work on stage is well known to Manchester audiences from leading roles at the Royal Exchange in Euripides' *The Bacchae* (2009) and *Palace of the End* (2010). She is also an established singer, with concert appearances at many jazz clubs in London.

Her three children - Eilif, Swiss Cheese, and Katrin - are played by Rob Compton, Kenny Thompson, and Amelia Donkor, seen in summer 2012 in the Library Theatre Company's acclaimed production of Jackie Kay's *Manchester Lines*; Anthony Hunt, who appeared in the Library Theatre Company's last Brecht production, *The Good Soul of Szechuan*, in autumn 2009, plays a number of military roles.

After appearing in *The Daughter-in-Law* in spring 2012, for which she has been nominated in the Manchester Theatre Awards, Wigan-born Natalie Grady, who was a member of the award-winning National Theatre cast of *Rafta Rafta*, returns to the Library Theatre Company as camp prostitute Yvette; Paul Barnhill, seen recently in the Library's hugely acclaimed production of *Arabian Nights*, also a Manchester Theatre Awards nominee, is the Cook; Susannah van den Berg, who appeared in the Newbury Watermill Theatre's 2009 TMA Award-winning production of *Spend Spend Spend!*, plays a number of roles in the ensemble, and Johnson Willis plays the chaplain.

Finally, music director Greg Palmer also plays a number of parts in the ensemble, while two Manchester School of Theatre students, Alex Bennett and Ben Boskovic, take on supporting roles in the ensemble.

Please note there is strong language and smoking on stage in *Mother Courage and Her Children*.

Dates: Friday 22 February - Saturday 9 March 2013.

Venue: The Lowry, Pier 8, Salford Quays, Salford M50 3AZ.

Box office: 0843 208 6010.

Web: www.thelowry.com

Performances: Monday-Saturday 7.15pm; matinees Thursday 28 February 2.30pm, Thursday 7 March 2pm; Saturdays 2 and 9 March 2.30pm.

Play-Day - go behind the scenes in a morning workshop to learn all about how the production gets on stage: Thursday 7 March £3, workshop starts at 10.30am; pre-show talk with director Chris Honer Saturday 9 March 1.30pm.

Tickets: Monday £12; Tuesday-Thursday evenings, Thursday and Saturday matinees £15, £13 (concessions £13, £11); Friday/Saturday evenings £19.50, £17.50. Under-26s tickets Mondays £10 (subject to availability).

Schools' and college groups can buy tickets at £11 each, plus one free teacher's ticket for every 10 purchased (not Fri/Sat evenings). Other general group bookings of 10 or more receive the concessionary rate, plus one free ticket for every 10 purchased (Mon-Thu), or buy 10 full-price tickets and get the 11th free (Fri/Sat performances).

Access performances: Audio-Described Tuesday 5 March 7.15pm (pre-show touch-tour 6.15pm); Captioned Wednesday 6 March 7.15pm; British Sign-Language Friday 8 March 7.15pm.

Box office www.librarytheatre.com or 0843 208 6010.