

Panic Theatre presents

PENTIMENTO

by Denise Stephenson



Roisin left her home and her country at seventeen, the war came and she **never went back**. Now the past has become her present. Memories slip out of her grasp, faces she knew and loved have become strangers and all she wants is to be able to **dance again**.

*A loving and humorous
tribute to her mother
and all those women
who refuse to shut up.*

Written and performed by **Denise Stephenson**.
Dramaturg and director **Clemence Viel**.





Stephenson's performance, directed by Clemence Viel, is so compelling you will struggle to hold back the tears... an intensely moving show...

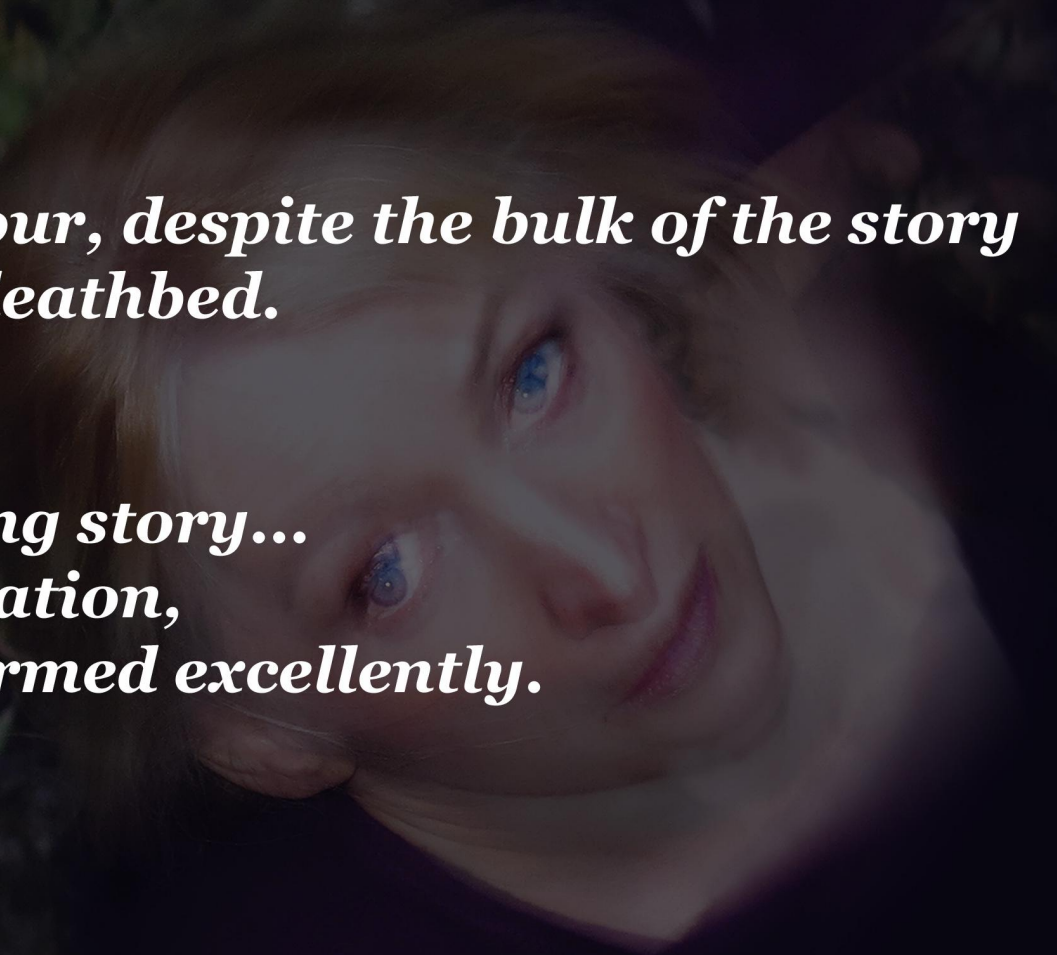
The Stage

..a surprising amount of humour, despite the bulk of the story taking place on her mother's deathbed.

Broadway Baby

ultimately moving and uplifting story... well-told and compelling narration, this show is written and performed excellently.

Three Weeks



Audience reactions:

“Moving powerful eloquent tribute to an Irish Warrior Mother, Denise Stephenson captures the loss, the humour, the threads that gather and bind us together in a one woman show worth seeing and reflecting on afterwards.”

“I really liked the show! Poetically and beautifully performed and directed!”

“Denise Stephenson's show #pentimento is definitely worth a watch: such an intimate, endearing, account of her own mother's last days. It's funny, elegant and honest.”

“Beautiful, close to the bone”



'Like silt deposited on the cogs of a finely tuned machine after the seawater of a tsunami recedes, our experiences, and those of our forebears, are never gone, even if they have been forgotten.'

Dan Hurley

About the play

'The genesis of *Pentimento* came from my mum who died two years at the age of 89. She suffered from dementia at the end and had no short term memory, but memories from her childhood in Ireland and young life as a nurse in London during the war were still vibrant. She left Ireland as a girl of 17 and had never returned until a few years ago when we took her to a family celebration. This trip provoked host of new memories for her and after she died I was drawn to make a piece of theatre about her.

In January of last year I traveled to Clonmel where she was born, to research our family history and to explore the landscape in which she grew up. After this I started to work with Clemence and the piece became much more personal. I began discovering what it felt like for my mother, a fiercely independent and driven woman, to be reduced to having to depend on others for everything from eating to dressing to the most personal care. How it felt to have a memory slip out of your grasp, a face you loved dearly become a stranger, and most of all, to no longer be able to dance. We found a parallel story was emerging, that of letting go, both for her and for me. When can we recognise that moment has come? People say it is often when our loved ones are far away as I was when she died. Then we understood that making the show was my way of letting go of her.

Denise Stephenson



The Company- Panic Theatre

Panic Theatre began in 2014 with the making of *Pentimento*. Our aim is to continue to make work around issues that can be hard to talk about and to which we can bring lightness, humour and truth. Wherever possible we will include workshops to explore these themes in the communities in which we perform.

The Team

Denise Stephenson- writer and performer

Most recently Denise played Cerimon in 'Pericles' for The Factory Theatre directed by Tim Carroll at the Willow Globe; Ruth in 'Crows on The Wire' in N. Ireland tour; National Theatre, Studio, 'From Morning To Night' R&D directed by Melly Still; for Paper Tiger at the Oval House, 'And The Crowd Wept' R&D and 'The Poppy and The Plough' R&D; Edinburgh Fringe 2011 'Stand Up and Be Counted' which she wrote and performed; Riverside Studios, 'The Wrong Tree', Caroline; Old Red Lion 'This Just In' Jane; Bridewell Theatre 'An Immaculate Misconception' Melanie; Liverpool Playhouse 'Popcorn' Farah Delamitri. In New York she was in 'Bloody Poetry', 'No End of Blame', and the 'Philanthropist' at the Manhattan Theatre Club, and performed in seasons at ART and the Huntington Theatre in Boston, St. Louis Repertory, Hudson Guild, Circle Rep. Soho Rep, West Bank Theatre and Mirror Rep in NYC.

On TV she has played main characters in *Hear the Silence*, *Bad Blood*, *Winners and Losers*, *Waterfront Beat*, *Thieftakers*, *Berlin Break*, *Piglet files*, *Nightwork* and guest roles in *My Family*, *The Bill*, *Doctors*, *Peak Practice*, *This Life*, *Second Thoughts*, *Out of The Blue*, *Saracens*, *Piglet Files*, *Touch and Go*, *Pie in the Sky*.

Film credits include Nancy in 'Kids in Love'; Mrs Carberry in 'Time After Time' directed by Julian Fellows; The Reporter in *St. Trinians 1* and *St. Trinians 2* 'Fritons Gold'; Detective Inspector Jones in 'Jean Charles'; Lyndsey in 'About a Boy'; Debbie in 'The Dead Can't Lie'; Mother in 'Life the Dream'; Nickola in 'What Rats Won't do'.

She has performed stand up Comedy on the London circuit and for *Funny Women* in Edinburgh. This is her first solo show.



Clemence Viel- Dramaturg and Director

Clemence is a writer, director, actor and drama facilitator. What interests and excites her is to create the theatre of today. Passionate about social and environmental issues, Clemence trained in physical theatre in Jacques Lecoq in Paris. Founder and artistic director of Theatre Libellule, she created her solo show 'How to Become a Woman?' last year, as well as the Forum theatre show 'Hystoria' with the Kali Collective, both exploring women's identity and status in today's society. She runs the Blue Elephant Theatre youth theatre in London as well as the Forum Theatre mental health project B scene. Recent directing includes 'The Empty Frame' at Theatre 503 in January 2015, a show about fertility issues written by a fertility psychologist. She is also a facilitator at Cardboard Citizens, whose members have experienced homelessness and/or prison.

Technical and Production Requirements

LIGHTS EFFECTS:

Warm wash
Cold wash
5 specials
Programmable board

SOUND EFFECTS:

Sound system with mini jack
[near lighting desk]

STAGE:

Any end on seating with visible floor.
Min. 4m x 2.5m Stage space.
Standard wings

GET-IN/OUT:

15 mins either side
3 hour technical rehearsal.
60 min running time.

PRODUCTION:

One chair centre stage with a small table
Detailed technical information and production rider is available on request.

Workshops/After show debates

Panic Theatre invites the audience to reflect on the themes of loss and dementia developed in the show through debates, after show talks and drama workshops.

For more information, please contact us.

Key Information

Writer/performer – Denise Stephenson

Director/dramaturg – Clemence Viel

Male recorded voices - Gerard Mc Dermott

Sound designer- John McLeod

Lighting designer- Ina Bergren

Running time – 1 hour

Age Category – 14+

The show is ideal in a small theatre/studio that holds between 50-80 people.

The show is available for touring in 2015

Contact Denise Stephenson at denisestephenson22@gmail.com you have any questions or would like to make a booking.