

For Immediate Release

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B-Roll Link for Charlie F: <https://www.hightail.com/download/eINKSXR6b0JsMHlybHNUQw>

**Direct from London's West End**

**The Canadian Premiere of**

***THE TWO WORLDS OF CHARLIE F***

**by Owen Sheers**

**Starring Wounded, Injured and Sick Ex-Service Personnel**

**Canadian CASSIDY LITTLE Plays the Title Character**

**February 25 - March 9, 2014**

**The Princess of Wales Theatre**

In January 2012, something remarkable happened at the prestigious Theatre Royal Haymarket in London, UK. After lengthy workshops with over 30 medically discharged military personnel and a professional playwright and director, a new play entitled **THE TWO WORLDS OF CHARLIE F** was unveiled at two fund-raising evenings. The audience, which was comprised of many of the UK's leading actors, theatre practitioners and seasoned theatergoers, was astonished to witness such a powerful and unforgettable examination of the cost of war. The response was so great that the show was taken to the 2012 Edinburgh Fringe Festival, where it too received standing ovations, five-star reviews, full houses and was awarded the festival's coveted Amnesty International Award for Freedom of Expression.

Now, to allow a larger audience to see this unique production and to mark the upcoming anniversary of the start of World War 1, the first modern global war, **THE TWO WORLDS OF CHARLIE F** is launching an extensive tour which kicks off with the play's North American premiere in Toronto, **February 25 - March 9, 2014** as part of the new Off-Mirvish Subscription series at the **Princess of Wales Theatre**.

**THE TWO WORLDS OF CHARLIE F** is a soldier's view of service, injury and recovery. Moving from the war in Afghanistan, through the dream world of

morphine-induced hallucinations to the physio rooms of Headley Court, the play explores the consequences of injury, both physical and psychological, and its effects on others as the soldiers fight to win the new battle for survival at home. The play is a very personal and very moving look at the effects of war on individual combatants, but it also has a huge amount of humour and humanity.

**THE TWO WORLDS OF CHARLIE F** was the idea of Alice Driver, the then Masterclass Creative Producer and now the Executive Producer of this new tour. Her initial idea was to provide a unique work placement for serving wounded, injured and sick (WIS) military personnel within a theatre company. This was the first time that the British Ministry of Defence had allowed a theatre company access to their wounded soldiers and led to workshops and interviews with the WIS service personnel from the war in Afghanistan, which, in turn, led to a play written by the award-winning poet and playwright **Owen Sheers**, being created through the partnership of The Theatre Royal Haymarket Masterclass, The Royal British Legion and Defence Recovery Capability. The production was directed by **Stephen Rayne** with the support of patron **Trevor Nunn**. The other two patrons were **Ray Winstone**, the project ambassador, and recently retired **General Sir David Richards**, Chief of Defence Staff.

A TV documentary commissioned by Alan Yentob and made by UpperCut Films looked at the process of creating and staging **THE TWO WORLDS OF CHARLIE F**. Called *Theatre of War*, it was first shown on BBC1's *Imagine...* and was nominated for The Grierson Documentary Awards.

Writer Owen Sheers is the author of two collections of poetry, *The Blue Book* and *Skirrid Hill*, a work of narrative non-fiction about Zimbabwe, *The Dust Diaries*, a novel, *Resistance*, and a novella, *White Ravens*. In 2011, he wrote the script for the National Theatre of Wales's *The Passion*, directed by and starring Michael Sheen. His verse drama *Pink Mist*, commissioned by BBC Radio 4, was published by Faber and won the Hay Medal for Poetry 2013.

The cast includes ex-servicemen and women Bombadier (Rtd) **Gareth Crabbe**, Rifleman (Rtd) **Daniel Shaw**, Marine **Cassidy Little** and Lieutenant Col (Rtd) **Stewart Hill**, with **Stephen Shaw**, **Maurilla Simpson**, **Darren Swift**, **Ashliegh Young**, **Terri Ann Bobb-Baxter**, **Tom Colley**, **Miriam Cooper**, **Tomos Eames**, **Venetia Maitland**, **Owen Oldroyd**, and **Lily Phillips**.

Of particular interest to Canadians, **Marine Cassidy Little**, who plays the title role of Marine Charlie Fowler, was born in Newfoundland and studied performance art and ballet. He then did stand-up comedy in Britain before joining the Marines (as the result of a bet). Cassidy lost his right leg in his second tour of Afghanistan.

**THE TWO WORLDS OF CHARLIE F** is directed once again by Stephen Rayne, with music by Jason Carr, design by Anthony Lambie, lighting and projection design by Will Reynolds, sound by Colin Pink and choreography by Lilly Phillips.

A new production company, **The Charlie F Project (UK) Ltd**, has been created by Garry McQuinn and Amanda Faber to produce this new tour. Garry's producing credits include the international hit shows *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, Matthew Bourne's *Swan Lake* and *Tap Dogs*. Amanda is a film and television producer, who produced the feature film of Owen Sheers's award-winning novel *Resistance*.

For the Canadian Premiere, we are proud to be partnering with **Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services** to increase awareness of both the challenges facing our ill and injured soldiers, and the **Soldier On Program**, which, through generous donations, provides valuable support to this segment of the Canadian Armed Forces Community.

## **THE TWO WORLDS OF CHARLIE F**

**February 25 - March 9, 2014**

**Performances: Tues to Sat 8 PM; matinees Wed, Sat & Sun 2 PM**

**Tickets \$19.00 (available at every performance) to \$79.00**

**Tickets available online at [www.mirvish.com](http://www.mirvish.com)**

**Or by calling Ticketking at [416-872-1212](tel:416-872-1212) or [1-800-461-3333](tel:1-800-461-3333)**

**The Princess of Wales Theatre, 300 King St. west, Toronto**

**Show official website [www.charlie-f.com](http://www.charlie-f.com)**

**B-ROLL LINK for Charlie F.**

**<https://www.hightail.com/download/eINKSXR6b0JsMHlybHNUQw>**

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## **NOTES TO EDITOR**

1. The original project brought together 30 wounded, injured and sick (WIS) service personnel under the guidance of a professional team to write a new play. Its objectives were to boost confidence, self-esteem and to give a voice to this group of individuals and provide work experience opportunities.
2. The process of creating and staging **THE TWO WORLDS OF CHARLIE F** was fully evaluated by Leeds Met University. The evaluation showed its original objectives were surpassed and for many of the individuals taking part the experience was life changing. The partnership between Royal British Legion and The Theatre Royal Haymarket Masterclass Trust was nominated for an award at The Third Sector Awards.
3. The Royal British Legion and The Theatre Royal Haymarket Masterclass Trust decided to take the play on a tour of the UK to ensure the general public had an opportunity to see this production and continue the welfare aspect of the project and work experience opportunity.
4. The Charlie F Project is providing an opportunity for the award-winning play and its key messages to be heard by more people in the 100-year anniversary of World War 1. It will provide paid employment opportunities for all the original service personnel who are now veterans.