

MEDIA RELEASE

THE
COURT
THEATRE

DATE

For immediate release

[Les Liaisons Dangereuses](#)

Written by: Christopher Hampton

Based on the novel by: Pierre Choderlos de Laclos

Dates: 22 June – 20 July

Location: The Court Theatre's mainstage

Show Sponsor: Newstalk ZB

Short show description:

Les Liaisons Dangereuses is a play about scandal, deception and decadence. In 18th Century France, our scheming aristocrats have nothing to do but seduce conquests and ruin reputations in an extravagant play that promises sumptuous costumes and a sensational night out at the theatre.

FROM FOOTMAN TO DIRECTOR: ROSS GUMBLEY REVIVES CLASSIC FRENCH PLAY

IN-BRIEF:

32 years after his first involvement with *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, The Court Theatre's Artistic Director Ross Gumbley is back in the rehearsal room, directing the play that marked his first professional acting debut!

"It was great to read it again and go 'you know, the time's right to bring this back'."

Set just before the French Revolution in the late 18th Century, this classic story follows a group of aristocrats who are scandalous, devious and dangerously bored.

Alongside all the drama, audiences can expect sumptuous costumes and striking wigs from this extravagant production.

"This will be the poster play for our costume department this season," Gumbley says.

With nothing to do but toy with each other's emotions for fun, the delightfully debauched Marquise de Merteuil (Eilish Moran) and Vicomte de Valmont (Fergus Inder) plot together to ruin the reputations of two virtuous women. Their scheming hits a snag, however, when Valmont begins to feel true feelings for one of his targets.

Gumbley has gathered a ten-strong cast for the production, including Eilish Moran, Fergus Inder, Amy Straker, Ailis Oliver-Kerby, Daniel Watterson, Hillary Moulder, Yvonne Martin, Kathleen Burns, Gregory Cooper and Ben Freeth.

"This play suggests that you better find purpose and meaning in your life, because if you don't, the devil finds work for idle hands..." Gumbley says.

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The Court Theatre

PO Box 268

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Les Liaisons Dangereuses runs at The Court Theatre from 22 June – 20 July.

IN-DEPTH:

32 years after his first involvement with *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, The Court Theatre's Artistic Director Ross Gumbley is back in the rehearsal room, directing the play that marked his first professional acting debut!

"I was in The Court's 1987 production of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*," Gumbley says. "It was a very special production for me - it was my first contract as a professional actor! I look back on the play very fondly and can't believe it was so long ago."

Gumbley, whose recent direction credits include *Mum's Choir* and *The Biggest*, originally played the comic role of Azolan, one of the main character's footmen.

"What remains with me is that it's always been an incredibly special play personally, so it was great to read it again and go 'you know, the time's right to bring this back'."

Christopher Hampton's adaptation of Pierre Choderlos de Laclos' scandalous French novel was first staged in 1985, with its success leading to constant revivals and a film adaptation which won three Academy Awards.

Set just before the French Revolution in the late 18th Century, this classic story follows a group of aristocrats who are scandalous, devious and dangerously bored.

"The play has currency, because what people want hasn't changed. Even though manners have changed, what we want at our core hasn't. This play is about a society which has lost its sense of meaning and purpose and suggests that you better find that purpose and meaning yourself, because if you don't, the devil finds work for idle hands..."

With nothing to do but toy with each other's emotions for fun, the delightfully debauched Marquise de Merteuil and Vicomte de Valmont plot together to ruin the reputations of two virtuous women. Their scheming hits a snag, however, when Valmont begins to feel true feelings for one of his targets.

Alongside all the drama, tragedy and dark comedy, audiences can expect sumptuous costumes and striking wigs from this extravagant production.

"This will be the poster play for our costume department this season," Gumbley says.

For his production, Gumbley has gathered a ten-strong cast that includes Eilish Moran (*Chicago; Mum's Choir*) and Fergus Inder (*In the Next Room, or the vibrator play; Jesus Christ Superstar*) as the two leads.

Amy Straker, Ailis Oliver-Kerby, Daniel Watterson, Hillary Moulder, Yvonne Martin, Kathleen Burns, Gregory Cooper and Ben Freeth are joining them to play the characters who become their pawns.

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Speaking about her infamous character, Moran says, “Merteuil is a gift for an actor. She’s intelligent, deceitful, witty and cruel. A lot of the time she’s lying on stage, but for me it’s about working out the times – and they are few – when Merteuil’s true self appears.”

“She is certainly one of the most interesting characters I have played. Who knows, it is early days in the rehearsal room... she may end up being a psychopath after all! Come and find out!”

Les Liaisons Dangereuses runs at The Court Theatre from 22 June – 20 July.

Cast



Marquise de Merteuil
[Eilish Moran](#)



Vicomte de Valmont
[Fergus Inder](#)



Madame de Tourvel
[Amy Straker](#)



Madame de Rosemonde
[Yvonne Martin](#)



Madame de Volanges
[Hillary Moulder](#)



Cécile de Volanges
[Ailis Oliver-Kerby](#)



Chevalier Danceny
[Daniel Watterson](#)



Émilie
[Kathleen Burns](#)

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Azolan
[Gregory Cooper](#)



Major-domo
[Ben Freeth](#)

Creatives

Director	Ross Gumbley
Sound Composer/Designer	Matt Short
Costume Co-Designer	Pam Jones
Costume Co-Designer	Pauline Laws
Set Designer	Mark McEntyre
Lighting Designer	Giles Tanner
Wig Designer	Sarah Greenwood Buchanan
Props Designer	Julian Southgate
Stage Manager	Jo Bunce
Assistant Stage Manager	Ella Egan

Ticket Prices

Adult	\$55 - \$63
Senior (65+)	\$48 - \$56
Child (under 18)	\$26 - \$30
Group (6+)	\$48 - \$53
Supporter	\$46 - \$54
30 Below (limited numbers)	\$30

Show Times

- Monday & Thursday 6:30pm
- Tue/Wed/Fri/Sa 7:30pm
- Forum 6:30pm Monday 24 June
- Matinee 2:00pm Saturday 13 July

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Bookings: phone 03 963 0870 or visit www.courttheatre.org.nz

Images can be found at The Court Theatre's [Media Centre](#)

For more information or to arrange an interview please contact:

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