

MEDIA RELEASE



2 July 2020

For immediate release

[Up Close & Personal with Ali Harper & Tom Rainey](#)

Dates: 5 – 8 August 2020

Location: The Court Theatre's foyer

Short show description:

What happens when musical theatre actress Ali Harper and jazzman Tom Rainey join forces? Come and find out! In this special cabaret production, you'll be served dinner and entertainment in equal measure as Ali and Tom open their extensive songbooks to create a show that promises to be a musical feast for the heart and soul.



GETTING UP CLOSE & PERSONAL WITH TWO OF CHRISTCHURCH'S BELOVED MUSICAL STARS

The Court Theatre is thrilled to be reopening its doors and showcasing a special cabaret season with Christchurch's very own Ali Harper (*Songs for Nobodies*; *A Doris Day Special*; *Legendary Divas*) and jazzman Tom Rainey (ONZM).

The virtuoso duo will open their extensive songbooks with a show that promises to be a musical feast for the heart and soul.

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The Court Theatre

PO Box 268

Christchurch 8140

New Zealand

Email: admin@courtheatre.org.nz

www.courtheatre.org.nz

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"I have called the show *Up Close & Personal* so people know exactly what to expect," Harper says. "There is no hiding behind wigs, elaborate costumes or a script; it's just me and my friend Tom Rainey enjoying music together, telling stories and sharing a night at one of my favourite theatres."

The show will be performed in the tradition of a New York cabaret club, with audiences seated in The Court Theatre's revamped foyer, where they can enjoy pizza, platters and drinks during the show.

Talking about the intimate nature of *Up Close & Personal*, Harper says "I love the art of cabaret. I have done several cabaret shows in New York and I find it exciting and so liberating performing as if the audience is in my living room."

Harper and Rainey, who regularly works with the CSO and NZSO, were due to embark on a New Zealand tour with Burt Bacharach tribute concert *The Look of Love* when COVID-19 derailed their plans. Now rescheduled for September, the pair jumped at the chance to come together at The Court Theatre this August.

Talking about what audiences can expect, Harper says, "We'll be performing quite a varied selection of musical styles. We are, after all, drawing from our own individual repertoire and creating new treatments of well-loved songs. Tom has worked with stars like Cher and The Beach Boys and I have portrayed stars such as Judy Garland, Doris Day and Edith Piaf - so it's going to make for quite a musical feast!"

Up Close & Personal with Ali Harper & Tom Rainey runs at The Court Theatre from 5 – 8 August.

Ticket Prices

Adult	\$45
Senior	\$42
Subscribers/Supporters	\$40

Show Times

Wednesday 5 August	6:30pm
Thursday 6 August	6:30pm
Friday 7 August	7:30pm
Saturday 8 August	7:30pm

Bookings: visit courtheatre.org.nz or call 0800 333 100

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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Ali Harper

Award-winning Entertainer Ali Harper is a graduate of Toi Whakaari: The New Zealand Drama School. With her career spanning over 25 years, Ali has starred in numerous musicals and plays throughout New Zealand. Highlights include *Blood Brothers*, *Mamma Mia*, *Legally Blonde*, *My Fair Lady*, *Mary Poppins*, *The Sound of Music*, *Guys and Dolls*, *South Pacific*, *A Shortcut to Happiness*, *Side by Side by Sondheim*, *Jacques Brel is alive and well and living in Paris*, *Calendar Girls*, *Jerry's Girls*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and *Tell Me on a Sunday*.

NZ Tours include The Court Theatre production of the one woman show *Songs for Nobodies* where Ali was awarded 'Best One Woman Show' at New York's United Solo Festival on 42nd Street in 2018.

Other New Zealand Tours include *Chess*, *Evita*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *Oklahoma* and the one-woman play *Bombshells*, where Ali was awarded 'Best Actress' in New York in 2014 and 'Chapman Tripp Best Actress' in Wellington in 2008.

Ali has performed her cabaret show in *A Down Under Diva!* in New York's prolific cabaret venues; Don't Tell Mama in 2018 and at The Metropolitan Room in 2013 and 2014.

Ali's production company Ali-Cat Productions produces and tours her solo shows; *The Look of Love*, *Songs for Nobodies*, *A Doris Day Special*, *Legendary Divas* and *A Down-Under Diva!* and she also enjoys time abroad as a Guest Entertainer on Cruise ships and is in demand as an MC. Her other business Cultivate Joy specialises in coaching singing and acting as well as freelancing as a yoga teacher.

Television credits include *Hope and Wire*, *The Strip*, *Market Forces* and resident singer for 4 years on TV One's *Dancing with the Stars* as well as Morning Radio Host on Wellington's Classic Hits.

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Last year Ali wrote a song *Release Our Love* after the Christchurch Mosque shootings as a tribute to the families affected.

Ali's six albums are *The Look of Love*, *A Doris Day Special*, *Legendary Divas*, *Naughty and Nice*, *Songs for Everybody* and *Something So Right*.

www.aliharper.com



Tom Rainey

As an instrumentalist, arranger, composer, producer, and conductor, Tom maintains an active profile in the New Zealand Performing Arts scene.

As an instrumentalist on keys and bass, he has performed with a huge variety of artists in many musical styles, including Georgie Fame, John Dankworth, Lee Konitz, James Morrison, Nat Adderly, Harry Secombe, Ronnie Corbett, Max Bygraves, Petula Clark, Renée Geyer, Kamahl, Bic Runga and Hayley Westenra.

He has played as support for Cher, Art Garfunkel, Julio Iglesias, the Beach Boys and David Gates, and is a regular contributor to many NZ music festivals and has played on more than 40 albums. Tom has been MD for Irish singer Mary Coughlan for various New Zealand and Australian tours, including performances in the Sydney Opera House.

As one of New Zealand's leading arrangers, his credits include more than 130 orchestrations for artists such as Malcolm McNeill, Tim Beveridge, Judd Arthur, Ali Harper, Hayley Westenra, Whirimako Black, Madeleine Pierard, Bic Runga and Russell Watson. His arrangements have been performed by all the NZ regional orchestras, the NZSO, the Australian Pops Orchestra, the Liverpool Philharmonic and London's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, including performances in Europe, Asia, Australia and the US, including Carnegie Hall. A particular interest in mixing popular styles with orchestra has seen him initiate, arrange and produce collaborations with Renée Geyer, Midge Marsden, Bic Runga, Julia Deans, Anika Moa and Goldenhorse. 2003's "Bic Runga – live with the Christchurch Symphony" was nominated for the New Zealand music awards, and in 2005 he arranged (with Neil Finn) for Bic's album "Birds" and for feature concerts by Dave Dobbyn and Greg Johnson.

Other work includes the critically acclaimed tour and recording of Salmonella Dub's "Feel the Seasons Change" with the NZSO. As conductor and arranger, highlights include Kiwi Jazz with the Christchurch Symphony in (2009), Christchurch Symphony Orchestra's Kiwi Soul (2011), James Morrison performing Duke Ellington's Harlem Suite (2012), LA Mitchell and Friends (2013), and a Canterbury Christmas (2015 and 2017).

Recent projects include Shapeshifter's opening concert in the Christchurch Town Hall (2019), conducting and arranging for the 2020 UK album releases by singers Aled Jones and Russell Watson (BMG), arrangements for the NZSO at Nelson Opera in the Park for Tami Neilson and Jason Kerrison, and Ali Harper's show and album of the music of Burt Bacharach – *The Look of Love*.

This year Tom was given the New Zealand Order of Merit.

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