

**PRESS RELEASE**

For immediate release

Produced by Pitlochry Festival Theatre, presented in association with An Tobar and Mull Theatre.

**SHIRLEY VALENTINE**

**By Willy Russell**

**Directed by Elizabeth Newman**

**Designed by Emily James**

**Lighting by Jeanine Byrne**

**Performed by Sally Reid**

**Dates:**

13-29 October at Pitlochry Festival Theatre

1-4 November – Isles of Mull and Iona

**Press performances:**

**Wed 19 October at 2pm & 7pm**

**Saturday 22 October at 2pm**

**Sally Reid to star in Pitlochry Festival Theatre revival of Shirley Valentine**

Pitlochry Festival Theatre is set to open its Autumn season with television and stage actor **Sally Reid** (*Scot Squad*, BBC Scotland) starring in a brand-new revival of the much-loved award-winning comedy *Shirley Valentine*, Willy Russell's (*Blood Brothers* and *Educating Rita*) heart-warming story about a middle-aged, working-class Liverpool housewife whose life is transformed after a holiday in Greece.

Presented in association with An Tobar and Mull Theatre and directed by Pitlochry Festival Theatre's Artistic Director **Elizabeth Newman**, *Shirley Valentine* will run from 13-29 October and then tour to the Isles of Mull and Iona from 1-4 November.

Shirley's a middle-aged Liverpool housewife, who finds herself talking to the wall while she prepares her husband's 'egg 'n' chips,' wondering what happened to her life.

She compares scenes in her current life with what she used to be like and feels she is stagnating and in a rut. But when her best friend wins an all-expenses-paid vacation to Greece for two, she leaves the drudgery of cooking dinner for her husband behind her, packs her bags and heads for the sun. The note on the kitchen table reads 'Gone to Greece, back in two weeks.' Shirley begins to see the world, and herself, in a different light.

*Shirley Valentine* received its world stage première in Liverpool in 1986 before the play opened in the West End two years later, with Pauline Collins playing the title

## An Tobar and Mull Theatre

role, directed by Simon Callow, winning two awards at the prestigious Olivier awards. A year later the play transferred to Broadway in 1989 with Collins in the title role.

The same year, *Shirley Valentine* was made into a film and earned Collins a BAFTA Award and a nomination for the 1990 Oscars. The play became an overnight classic, with its contrast between the dull atmosphere of suburbia and the glittering glamour of Greece, which captured the imagination of a whole generation of theatre goers and cinema fans.

In the title role of Shirley will be star of screen and stage **Sally Reid**. Best known for playing PC Sarah Fletcher in the hit BBC Scotland comedy series *Scot Squad*. Sally's other television credits include *Annika* (UKTV), *River City* (BBC Scotland), *Karen Pirie* (ITV) and *Rab C. Nesbitt* (BBC Scotland). On stage Sally's extensive theatre credits in Scotland include *The James Plays* (National Theatre of Scotland), *Rhinoceros* (Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh) and *Time and the Conways* (Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh and Dundee Rep) for which Sally was nominated Best Actress at the Theatre Management Awards in 2013.

### **Sally Reid** said:

*"As a Perthshire lass, I am super excited to be working at Pitlochry Festival Theatre. And to be working on such a wonderful script with such fantastic characters and depth of story is a real thrill."*

*Shirley Valentine* is directed by Pitlochry Festival Theatre's Artistic Director **Elizabeth Newman**, designed by **Emily James** (*Adam*, National Theatre of Scotland) and with lighting by Jeanine Byrne (*Under Another Sky*, Pitlochry Festival Theatre).

### Director **Elizabeth Newman** said:

*"I have loved Shirley Valentine for many years. I remember watching the film when I was 17 and then reading the play, which really did change my life. I felt like, I not only knew this woman, but I understood her desire to really live life to the full. Willy Russell's play is careful, powerful, and funny and it keeps speaking to people in lots of different ways so I can't wait to share it in Pitlochry this autumn."*

*Shirley, like many of us, is faced with difficult decisions and the truthful way Russell draws her reality makes you laugh and moves you to tears. I am thrilled to be making this piece of theatre with such a fantastic team of women too. I've long admired Sally's work and I am very excited for audiences to experience her playing this iconic role at Pitlochry Festival Theatre and also in Mull and Iona. It's the first time we've collaborated with An Tobar and Mull Theatre and I'm hoping it's going to be the first of many collaborations with Rebecca and the Team."*

**Rebecca Atkinson-Lord**, Chief Executive & Artistic Director of An Tobar and Mull Theatre added:

*"We're looking forward to working with the brilliant team at PFT to bring a little bit of Greek sunshine to the Isle of Mull this winter"*

*Shirley Valentine* runs from 13-29 October and then tours the Isles of Mull and Iona from 1-4 November. Tickets are available from the Box Office on **01796 484626** or online at [pitlochryfestivaltheatre.com](http://pitlochryfestivaltheatre.com)

-Ends-

**For all press interviews and review tickets please contact Duncan Clarke  
PR: T 07880893750 or E [duncanclarkepr@gmail.com](mailto:duncanclarkepr@gmail.com)**

## NOTES TO EDITORS

**Press performances:** Wed 19 October at 2pm & 7pm and Saturday 22 October at 2pm

### Listings

13-29 October

Pitlochry Festival Theatre

7pm – 13 – 15, 19-22, 26-29

2pm – 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29

**Ticket prices:** From £16

**Box Office and group bookings:** 01796 484626

**email** [boxoffice@pitlochryfestivaltheatre.com](mailto:boxoffice@pitlochryfestivaltheatre.com)

**Website:** [www.pitlochryfestivaltheatre.com](http://www.pitlochryfestivaltheatre.com)

**Address:** Pitlochry Festival Theatre, Port-Na-Craig, Pitlochry, Perthshire PH16 5DR

### Isle of Mull and Iona Tour

1 November at 7.30pm - Mull Theatre

2 November at 7.30pm – Dervaig Village Hall

3 November at 7.30pm – Bunessan Village Hall

4 November at 7.30pm – Iona Village Hall

Tickets available through <https://www.antobarandmulltheatre.co.uk/>

### Willy Russell – Playwright

As well as *Educating Rita* and *Shirley Valentine*, both of which were made into major award-winning feature films; playwright, lyricist and composer **Willy Russell** is the author of the long running West End hit *Blood Brothers*. His other work includes *John Paul George Ringo...& Bert*, *Stags and Hens*, *One for the Road*, and *Breezblock Park*. His writing for television includes *Our Day Out* and *One Summer*. Russell's plays have been performed in many countries across the globe, winning countless awards as well as academic honours.

### **Pitlochry Festival Theatre. A Theatre for Everyone. A Theatre for a Lifetime.**

For over 70 years, we have been Highland Perthshire's artistic heart and soul, sitting perched on the edge of the River Tummel and looking out to Ben-y-Vrackie.

Established in 1951 as The Theatre in a Tent, Pitlochry Festival Theatre offers a

theatrical experience unique in Scotland - a summer season performed in repertory,



PITLOCHRY  
FESTIVAL  
THEATRE

## **An Tobar and Mull Theatre**

allowing audiences to enjoy six different productions in six days, all performed by a resident company of actors. Now attracting over 100,000 visitors each year, we are not just a venue - we are also famous for producing large-scale plays and musicals that delight theatregoers of all ages.

As part of our mission to create, nurture and inspire, we encourage interactive creativity through our programme of festivals, workshops and other events for young people, families, writers, and professional creatives.