Bafta Winner Stephen Merchant Makes West End And Theatrical Debut Alongside Steffan Rhodri in the Mentalists

Related Sectors:

Entertainment & Arts ::

Scan Me:

Thursday 26 February, 2015

- **RICHARD BEAN, AWARD WINNING WRITER OF *ONE MAN, TWO GUVNORS* AND *GREAT BRITAIN*, HAS WEST END PREMIERE FOR COMIC TWO HANDER *THE MENTALISTS***
- **BAFTA WINNER STEPHEN MERCHANT MAKES THEATRICAL AND WEST END DEBUT ALONGSIDE STEFFAN RHODRI**
- **PRODUCTION WILL PLAY AT WYNDHAM'S THEATRE FOR A STRICTLY LIMITED SEASON FROM FRIDAY 3 JULY TO SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER**
-
- **TICKETS GO ON GENERAL SALE FROM FRIDAY 27 FEBRUARY**
- **IMAGES AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD HERE (USERNAME: The Mentalists | PASSWORD: wyndham)**

BAFTA Award-winning writer, comedian and actor **Stephen Merchant** will make his West End debut in a new production of **Richard Bean's** comic two-hander***The Mentalists***. **Steffan Rhodri** will join Merchant in a return to the West End when the production, directed by ***Abbey Wright***, runs for a strictly limited season at the Wyndham's Theatre from Friday 3rd Julyto 26th September. Tickets go on sale on Friday 27th February.

*Holed up in a faceless Finsbury Park hotel room Ted (**Stephen Merchant**), and Morrie (**Steffan Rhodri**) are forced to confront the darker side of their unique relationship. Things unravel as the pressure mounts in this hilarious and touching tale of friendship and utopian visions gone awry.*

Well-known for his collaborations with Ricky Gervais, including popular television shows *The Office*, *Extras, Life's Too Short* and *An Idiot Abroad*, **Stephen Merchant** recently starred in Dan Mazer's hit British comedy film *I Give It A Year*alongside Rose Byrne and Rafe Spall. Merchant wrote, directed and performed*Hello Ladies*, an international stand-up comedy tour which he went on to re-create as a television series for HBO including HBO special *Hello Ladies - The Movie*. In a career that has seen Merchant accept four BAFTA awards, four British Comedy Awards, a Golden Globe Award and an Emmy Award for his television work, ***The Mentalists*** will mark both his theatrical and West End debut.

Steffan Rhodri was last seen in the West End in Laura Wade's *Posh* and Alan Ayckborn's *Absent Friends*, both in 2012. On television, Rhodri became a household name portraying Dave Coaches in *Gavin & Stacey* for three years between 2007 and 2010. More recent television credits include *Under Milk Wood*for the BBC and Channel 4's *Cucumber*.

Since writing ***The Mentalists***, originally part of the Transformation season in 2002 at the National Theatre, **Richard Bean** has gone on to score West End successes with *One Man, Two Guvnors* and *Great Britain*, both directed by Nicholas Hytner. Most recently, Bean wrote the book for *Made In Dagenham*, which premiered at the Adelphi Theatre in 2014, starring Gemma Arterton and directed by Rupert Goold.

Stephen Merchant says: *"I'm going to be in a West End play. A hilarious, darkly poignant Richard Bean play no less. Come and see me and Steffan Rhodri doing proper acting in The Mentalists this summer."*

Richard Bean says: *"The central concerns of the play are even more relevant in an election year than when I wrote it. Factors like the perceived decline of social values & how this can result in the rise of fringe parties and a very personal view of politics fascinate me; but the real humour of the piece comes from Ted & Morrie's friendship, their reliance on each other & how they deal with their frustrations as working men battling against the world."*

*Directed by **Abbey Wright**, **The Mentalists*** will feature Scenic Design by**Richard Kent**, Lighting Design by **David Plater**, and Casting by **Anne Vosser.**

The Mentalists is produced by **Old Vic Productions**, **Smith & Brant Theatricals** and **Steven Harris** in association with **Jimmy Jewell Ltd**.

For further information please contact Lewis Jenkins /lewis@thecornershoppr.com or Francesca Hoare /francesca@thecornershoppr.com or telephone 0207 831 7657

Listings and notes for Editors:

THEATRE: Wyndham's Theatre, Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0DA
WEBSITE: www.TheMentalistsThePlay.com
BOX OFFICE: 0844 482 5120
TWITTER: @MentalistsPlay
FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/TheMentalistsPlay
DATES: 3 July – 26 September 2015
Monday – Saturday 7.45pm
Wednesday and Saturday 3pm
Monday 13 July PRESS NIGHT at 7pm
TICKETS: Preview Prices* (£10 off all prices) from 3 – 16 July
£49.50, £39.50 & £9.50
Standard Prices* from 17 July – 26 September
£59.50, £49.50 & £19.50
*All ticket prices include a £1 theatre restoration levy and a £2 booking fee

BIOGRAPHIES:

STEPHEN MERCHANT (Ted)
BAFTA, Golden Globe and Emmy Award winner Stephen Merchant began his career as a stand-up comedian, before becoming co-writer, co-director and performer in the hit series *The Office*.

Following the success of *The Office*, further collaborations with Ricky Gervais include Stephen as a co-writer, co-director, and co-star of the acclaimed *Extras* for BBC and HBO, and co-host of *The Ricky Gervais Show* in its radio, podcast, audiobook, and television show forms. *The Ricky Gervais Show* in radio form won a bronze Sony Award.

He has since gone on to write and star in a number of film and television projects that include: *An Idiot Abroad* (Sky), *Life's Too Short* (BBC), *I Give it a Year*(Working Title Films), *Hall Pass* (Warner Bros.), *Hot Fuzz* (Big Talk), *Modern Family* (20th Century Fox Television/ABC).

Most recently he has created, written and starred in his own series for HBO, *Hello Ladies* including HBO special *Hello Ladies – The Movie* released in 2014.

STEFFAN RHODRI (Morrie)
Steffan is about to open Rufus Norris' inaugural season at The National Theatre, appearing in *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire* which is directed by Artistic Associate, Lyndsey Tuner.

Steffan is most well-known for his portrayal of Dave Coaches in the BAFTA award winning BBC hit comedy *Gavin & Stacey*. His film credits include Reg Cattermole in*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* and the BAFTA nominated *Submarine*. 2015 will see him appear in hotly-tipped new drama *Cucumber* for Channel 4, the BBC movie *The Hollow Crown - Henry V1*, directed by Dominic Cooke and *Hinterland* (BBC).

His impressive West End credits include the transfer of Laura Wade's hit *Posh* at the Duke of Yorks, Jeremy Herrin's production of *Absent Friends* at the Harold Pinter, *Clybourne Park* at the Royal Court, Mike Lee's Olivier nominated *Abigail's Party*, *A Mad World My Masters* directed by Sean Foleyand *Candide* directed by Lyndsey Turner for the RSC.

Substantial television credits include *Stella* (Sky Atlantic), *A Touch Of Cloth* (Sky 1), *Father Brown* (BBC) and *Wire in the Blood* (BBC).

RICHARD BEAN (Playwright)
Richard Bean's most recent work includes *Made in Dagenham* (West End), *Great Britain* (the NT and West End) and *Pitcairn* (The Globe and Chichester Festival Theatre). His smash hit play *One Man, Two Guvnors* continues to tour nationally and internationally following its run at The Haymarket in London's West End and on Broadway. In 2011 Richard became the first writer to win the Evening Standard Award for Best Play for two plays, *The Heretic* and *One Man, Two Guvnors*. He was also awarded the 2011 Critics' Circle Award for Best Play and the 2012 Whatsonstage.com Award for Best New Comedy, both for *One Man, Two Guvnors*. The New York production of *One Man, Two Guvnors* was awarded the 2012 Outer Critics' Circle Award for Outstanding New Broadway Play.

ABBEY WRIGHT (Director)
Recent productions include: *The Father* (Trafalgar Studios), *Ghosts* (New Vic), *The Glass Supper* (Hampstead), *Mrs Lowry and Son* (Trafalgar Studios), *Dublin Carol*(Donmar Warehouse at Trafalgar Studios) *Foxfinder* (Gothenburg English Studio Theatre) Rose (Pleasance Forth) and The Song of Deborah (The Lowry)

Abbey was Staff Director to Danny Boyle on *Frankenstein* at The National Theatre 2010/11. Prior to this, Abbey was Resident Assistant Director at The Donmar Warehouse for 18 months from 2008-09, during which time she worked with such notable directors as Michael Grandage, Alan Rickman, Jeremy Herrin, Peter Gill, Sean Holmes, Peter Gill, Jamie Lloyd and John Tiffany.

RICHARD KENT (Designer)
Richard Kent's recent work includes *Handbagged* (The Vaudeville), *The Merchant of Venice* (Singapore Rep), *The Mysteries* (Sheffield Crucible, directed by Daniel Evans) and *The L Train* (Hoxton Hall, directed by Sam Yates/Ruth Wilson). Richard designed Michael Grandage's final show, *Richard II* at The Donmar Warehouse.

Company Contact:

_

Pressat Wire

E. support[@]pressat.co.uk

View Online

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.wire.pressat.co.uk