

Brother Wolf presents



BROTHER WOLF is proud to present [*A Lesson from Auschwitz*](#), returning to the stage in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Written, produced and directed by award-winning actor/writer/producer, [James Hyland](#), and performed by [Michael Shon](#) and James Hyland, this unique theatrical production explores how and why the Nazis did what they did, shedding light on the mentality of the perpetrators and the disturbing reality of life in a death camp. In 1941, Rudolf Höss, Commandant of Auschwitz, assembled his SS personnel in a secret meeting with the express purpose of introducing a new method for exterminating Europe's Jews: Zyklon B, a deadly poison gas. Every soldier in attendance was sworn to secrecy, and no one questioned its usage. No one except a lone Jewish prisoner, forced to participate and humiliated throughout; the very prisoner upon which this "lesson" would be demonstrated. Described by Plays To See as "a majestic statement of the power of theatre", *A Lesson from Auschwitz* is just one in a long line of Brother Wolf's groundbreaking stage productions including [*A Christmas Carol – As told by Jacob Marley \(deceased\)*](#), the "definitive telling of A Christmas Carol" (Redditch Standard), winner of Best Performer in Theatre (Fringe Report Awards 2012); [*Fagin's Last Hour*](#), "powerful and highly accomplished" (The Stage), recognized by The Queen for its part in Dickensian Scholarship; [*Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*](#), "magnificently intense, riveting theatre" (The York Press), winner of Best Male Act (Solo Fest 2013); and [*The Mad Hatter's Tea Party*](#), "entertaining, fun and full of laughs" (British Theatre Journal). By 2012, The Courier described Brother Wolf's critically acclaimed productions as "truly astonishing... unforgettable theatre at its best".

Watch the trailer for **A Lesson from Auschwitz** here: <https://youtu.be/UBVHLD5StZ4>

Praise for **A Lesson from Auschwitz**:

"as as piece of theatre it excels in practically every single way... an exceptional piece of work and a vital reminder that something like this can never be allowed to happen again."

Rating: ★★★★★

~Sophie Adnitt, BritishTheatre.com

"MAGNIFICENT... a powerfully realised drama that finds new angles on these events where so many have trod before... the most powerful refutation there could be of Holocaust denial... a majestic statement of the power of theatre"

Rating: ★★★★★

~Tim Hochstrasser, Plays To See

"Both Michael Shon and James Hyland are simply brilliant in their respective roles and deserve the highest of applause for these powerful performances... I honestly believe this was one of the most powerful and most important pieces of theatre I've ever seen... This production is the perfect way to remember and to honour those who tragically lost their lives."

~Chloe Fry, Centre Stage

"this production should be seen by all - especially in the light of recent events."

~Carolin Kopplin, UK Theatre Network

"James Hyland who plays "Höss" (as well as writing, directing and producing the piece) is superb as the sadistic commandant whilst giving us glimpses of the madness of the man... it's important that plays like this are seen by as many people as possible"

~Alan Fitter, London Theatre 1

"Michael Shon gives a powerful performance as Könisberg, a man who has been worn down by life in Auschwitz but who still retains his dignity... This is an incredibly powerful piece by Brother Wolf."

~Loitering in the Theatre

"An outstanding performance by Brother Wolf... an extremely powerful and thought provoking show. Long will it be remembered."

~Four Shires Magazine

JAMES HYLAND is Artistic Director and Founder of [Brother Wolf](#). He is also a multi award-winning stage and film actor as well as a critically acclaimed writer, producer and director. James' work has been described by the press as "immensely powerful" (The Independent), "magnificent" (Plays to See) and "highly accomplished" (The Stage). To date, he has received more than 140 outstanding reviews as well as over 300 audience testimonials for his groundbreaking performances. Following his education at the National Youth Theatre of Great Britain and Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance, he made his professional acting debut in 'The North Pole', winning the Guardian International Student Drama Award in 1996. Since then he has appeared in over 70 professional productions, working with a variety of directors including Michael Boyd, Adrian Noble and Matthew Warchus, as well as acclaimed companies such as the Royal Shakespeare Company and Brother Wolf, winning a further four awards including Best Performer in Theatre (Fringe Report Awards, 2012) for his solo performance as Marley's Ghost in 'A Christmas Carol - As told by Jacob Marley (deceased)' and a nomination for The London Theatre Award (London Awards for Art and Performance 2012) in competition with the Royal Shakespeare Company's 'Matilda The Musical'. John Park, Director of the Fringe Report Awards, said "The award celebrates the work of James Hyland, actor, and in particular his creation and delivery of 'A Christmas Carol - As told by Jacob Marley (deceased)'. It reflects his fine work as an actor in film, TV, radio and theatre in a remarkable range of productions." In the same year, further honours were bestowed by Her Majesty The Queen at Buckingham Palace in recognition of Dickensian scholarship. By 2014, 'A Christmas Carol - As told by Jacob Marley (deceased)' had been officially rated as one of "the top Christmas shows in London, Edinburgh and around the UK" (High 50 Culture). The show's unique presentation has even been discussed in best-selling books about the theatre. In 2018, during the 175th anniversary of Dickens' original novella, James performed his award-winning show at The Royal Albert Hall, selling out to capacity. The production was followed by two more award-winning one-man shows: 'Fagin's Last Hour' in 2011 and 'Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' in 2013. James serves as actor, adapter and producer on all three productions. The shows have toured extensively, breaking box office records along the way, as well as his 5-star commemorative drama 'A Lesson from Auschwitz', of which he is the writer, director, producer and co-actor (commended by The Foundation of Memory Sites Near Auschwitz-Birkenau), reviewed as "a majestic statement of the power of theatre" (Plays to See). His latest production, 'The Mad Hatter's Tea Party', sees him playing one of Lewis Carroll's most famous literary creations (on tour this year). To date, James has completed 35 UK tours through his company, Brother Wolf. Screen credits include 'We Are Monster', nominated for The Michael Powell Award for Best British Feature Film (Edinburgh Festival, 2014) and the multi award-winning music videos/short films from Kaskade and Tinie Tempah in which James plays the lead roles: 'A Little More' and 'Disappoint You', again serving as writer (and improviser) of the dialogue. His latest roles on

screen see him performing in Unstoppable Entertainment's award-winning film 'The Sound' (in which he appears opposite Joseph Mawle), selected for the exclusive HollyShorts Film Festival, the award-winning 'Lie Low' in which he plays the role of Kev, and the twelve-time award-winning film 'Transmission' in which James plays the lead role of Dr Sam, screened at more than ninety festivals worldwide including The Fisheye Film Festival, The Horrible Imaginings Film Festival and Torino Underground Cinefest for which James has received three Best Actor nominations. His performance has been reviewed as "the key to this short film's success... it is Hyland who really sells it. Enigmatic and maniacal, he lures you into comfort and just as quickly kicks the chair out from underneath you... anchored by a superb performance from James Hyland, 'Transmission' brings classic dystopian cinema to the modern era" (Screen Anarchy). To date, James has appeared in eight multi award-winning films, four in which he plays the lead.

MICHAEL SHON studied an MA in Acting at the Arts Education School London and continued his training with the Impulse Theatre Company 1 year program under the tutelage of Scott Williams. He was a member of the National Youth Theatre, making his professional stage debut appearing in their production of *Savages* at the Royal Court Theatre in 2006. Michael has been working with Brother Wolf since 2016, having met James Hyland whilst working together on the short film *Transmission*. Michael has since performed and toured with Brother Wolf on two projects. Firstly, in James Hyland's powerful 5-star commemorative production *A Lesson from Auschwitz*, playing the Jewish prisoner Abraham Könisberg. Having premiered at Stafford Gatehouse Theatre in 2016, the production has toured the UK extensively, garnering excellent reviews and audience testimonials in which Michael's performance was described as "magnificent" and "totally believable". In 2017 Michael worked again with Brother Wolf in collaboration with Harrogate Theatre on Kim Newman's occult thriller *Magic Circle*, playing the hippy occultist Professor Harry Cutley. The show, directed by Phil Lowe, premiered on the main stage at the Harrogate Theatre and has since toured the UK, garnering fantastic reviews and audience testimonials along the way. Michael is also a member of RSC Associate Director Aileen Gonsalves' site-specific Butterfly Theatre Company. Michael has completed two tours of Germany with the company, playing the titular role in *Macbeth* (2014) and Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* (2015), as well as Jacques in *As You Like It* (2014-15) and Mort in *California Suite Part 2* (2014) in London, Buxton and Devon. Screen credits include the political prisoner Leonard in the multi-award winning short film *Transmission* by Parallel Madness, in which Michael received a Best Actor nomination at the Torino Underground Film Festival. He also appeared as a sardonic hipster Justin in NTE Production's short comedy *Love, Hate, Date* as well as the role of Dr. Francis Grappell in the Victorian crime docudrama *Murder Maps* now available on Netflix. Commercial work includes TV and in-house idents for Barclays, Weetabix and Perkbox. Michael can be heard voicing the disgruntled animal rights campaigner Travis Jones, alongside Brendan Coyle and Lia Williams in the Audible's *Animal Instinct: Human Zoo*, written by Simon Booker.

He also has a recurring role as Tom Cunningham in Big Finish's cult *Dark Shadows*, appearing extensively in the highly successful *Bloodlust* miniseries.

Listings information

Tour Dates:

JAN 27 @ 7.30pm (Holocaust Memorial Day)

NORWICH - NORWICH PLAYHOUSE

42 - 58 St. George's Street, Norwich, NR3 1AB

01603 598 598 www.norwichplayhouse.co.uk

Proceeds will be donated to charity

MARCH 4 @ 7.30pm

TEIGNMOUTH - PAVILIONS TEIGNMOUTH

The Den Crescent, Teignmouth, TQ14 8BG

01626 249049 www.pavilionsteignmouth.org.uk

Proceeds will be donated to charity

Synopsis

In 1941, Rudolf Höss, Commandant of the Nazi concentration camp known as Auschwitz, assembled his SS personnel in a secret meeting with the express purpose of introducing a new method for exterminating Europe's Jews: Zyklon B, a deadly poison gas. Every soldier in attendance was sworn to secrecy, and no one questioned its usage. No one except a lone Jewish prisoner, forced to participate and humiliated throughout; the very prisoner upon which this "lesson" would be demonstrated. Based upon real events, 'A Lesson from Auschwitz' explores how and why the Nazis did what they did, shedding light on the mentality of the perpetrators and the disturbing reality of life in a death camp.

Recommended for: Ages 14+

This is an immersive theatre play which involves direct audience address as well as scenes of violence which some audience members may find disturbing. The age recommendation is therefore classified as 14+. This category is recommended when the material is suitable for those aged 14 and over. Works classified at this category may upset children under 14 or contain material which many parents will find unsuitable for them. In such circumstances, responsibility for allowing a child under 14 to view the work lies with the accompanying adult.

Cast and creative team:

Writer/Director/Producer: James Hyland

Actors:

Michael Shon

James Hyland

Costume Maker (for Michael Shon): Katie Males

Costume Maker (for James Hyland): ww2sale.com

Composer: Chris Warner

Lyricist: James Hyland

Vocalist: Peter Thomas

For further details please contact:

James Hyland, Artistic Director

BROTHER WOLF

mobile: +44 (0)7708 626477

email: jameshylanduk@gmail.com

website: www.brotherwolf.org.uk

Brother Wolf on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/BrotherWolfUK>

Brother Wolf on Facebook: www.facebook.com/BrotherWolfProductions