

## The New Victory Theater Presents Cahoots NI in association with The Lyric Theatre, Belfast



Inspired by the true story of Herbert Levin,  
“The Magician of the Holocaust”

**U.S. Premiere April 28 – May 11**

**New York, NY (March 21, 2017)** -- *Nivelli's War*, inspired by the true story of “The Magician of the Holocaust” is a brand new play about an unlikely friendship forged in the aftermath of World War II. Following its three-week run at the Lyric Theatre in Belfast, *Nivelli's War* will make its U.S. and Off-Broadway Premiere at The New Victory Theater from April 28 to May 11, 2017.

*Nivelli's War* is inspired by the true story of Herbert Levin and Werner Reich. Levin, who had reversed the spelling of his name to create the more exotic name of “Nivelli,” was a professional magician when he was captured and imprisoned in the concentration camps of World War II. There, he was summoned day and night by Nazi soldiers to “appear and do magic,” and, in this way, escaped the gas chambers. Werner Reich, his young bunkmate, remembers learning a simple card trick from fellow prisoner A1676. Both survived the war and eventually migrated to the U.S. Levin resumed his career and became famous as “The Great Nivelli” and Reich pursued a lifelong interest in magic. Many years later, upon reading Levin’s obituary, Reich learned that his friend was none other than “The Great Nivelli.”

“Yes, Herbert Levin started something in me without any real intention, however, that first explained trick had a huge impact on my life,” says Mr. Reich, who is alive today and lives on Long Island.

Brought to the stage by Cahoots NI, Northern Ireland’s premier children’s theater company, in association with The Lyric Theatre, Belfast, *Nivelli's War* tells the fictional story of Ernst. A young boy evacuated from Frankfurt, Germany, he finds himself alone with no idea how to return home at the end of the war. When all seems lost, a mysterious stranger who knows the

true value of magic comes to his aid. As they travel together through a war-torn world, these two survivors become each other's ally, protector and confidant.

"I was inspired from the moment I heard the story of Herbert Levin. This tale of a man using all of his power to fight for survival took my breath away," says director Paul Bosco Mc Eneaney, founder and artistic director of Cahoots NI. Mc Eneaney commissioned the award-winning playwright Charles Way (*Alice in the News*, National Theatre; *Red Red Shoes*, Unicorn Theatre), who created ***Nivelli's War***, which made its world premiere at The Market Place Theatre, Armagh, in 2014. The original cast included Sam Clemmett (*Harry Potter and The Cursed Child*) as Ernst, Dan Gordon ("My Mother and Other Strangers," BBC) as The Great Nivelli and Bob Kelly (*The Poor Mouth*) as Mr. H. That year, *Nivelli's War* toured throughout Ireland, including a run at the Belfast Children's Festival. This year the production returns to the stage, appearing at the Lyric Theatre in Belfast (March 2-19) before making its U.S. debut and Off-Broadway premiere at The New Victory Theater.

***Nivelli's War*** features Jack Archer as Ernst, Maggie Cronin and Emma Deegan alongside original cast members, Dan Gordon, Bob Kelly, Michael Lavery, Charlotte McCurry and Faolan Morgan. The creative team includes Garth McConaghie (Original Music/Sound Designer), Sabine Dargent (Set & Costume Designer), Sinead McKenna (Lighting Designer) and Muirne Bloomer (Choreographer).

#### **Public Performance Schedule: April 28 to May 7**

Friday, April 28 at 7pm

Saturday, April 29 at 2pm / 7pm

Sunday, April 30 at 12pm / 5pm\*

Saturday, May 6 at 2pm / 7pm

Sunday, May 7 at 12pm\*\* / 5pm

\*audio-described performance

\*\*sign-interpreted performance

***Nivelli's War*** has a running time of 65 minutes with no intermission, and is recommended for everyone ages 8 and up.

***Nivelli's War*** is supported, in part, by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Learn more about ***Nivelli's War*** on the [New Victory Website](http://NewVictory.org) at NewVictory.org

#### **Ticket Information**

Tickets for ***Nivelli's War*** at The New Victory Theater (209 West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street) are \$16-\$38 based on seat locations. For New Victory Members, tickets are \$10-\$25 based on seat locations. All tickets are available online (NewVictory.org) and by telephone (646.223.3010). The New Victory Theater box office (209 West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street) is open Sunday & Monday from 11am-5pm and Tuesday through Saturday from 12pm-7pm.

Theatergoers who buy tickets for three or more New Victory shows qualify for free Membership benefits, including locked-in discount ticket prices, free unlimited exchanges (up to 48 hours in advance) and access to a first-look purchase period for newly added performances.

### **About Cahoots NI**

Based in Belfast, Cahoots NI Theatre Company is Northern Ireland's leading professional children's theater company. Founded by Paul Bosco Mc Eaney and Zoe Seaton in 2011, Cahoots NI combines traditional theater with magic and illusion to give Cahoots NI its distinctive performance style. The company creates inspiring theater for children using physical theater, contemporary circus, digital technology and special effects which, when combined with illusion and live music, deliver an experience that is magical and memorable.

### **About The New Victory Theater**

The New Victory Theater brings kids to the arts and the arts to kids as New York City's premier theater devoted to the highest quality performing arts for kids and families. Serving the city in all its diversity, The New Victory Theater on 42nd Street presents theater, dance, circus, opera and music from around the world at affordable ticket prices. In addition to its public performances, the New Vic is also the largest provider of live performance to NYC school kids, serving 40,000 students in grades PreK-12 from more than 200 schools, after school programs and day camps each year. The New Victory Theater's contributions to the cultural landscape of the city have been honored by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities with the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award, a national Arts Education Award from Americans for the Arts and a Drama Desk Award for "providing enchanting, sophisticated children's theater that appeals to the child in all of us, and for nurturing a love of theater in young people."

### **About The New 42nd Street**

Founded in 1990, The New 42nd Street is an independent nonprofit organization charged with the continuous cultural revival of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenues. Committed to the transformational power of the arts, The New 42nd Street builds on the foundation of seven historic theaters to make extraordinary performing arts and cultural engagement part of everyone's life. The New 42nd Street fulfills this purpose by ensuring the ongoing vibrancy of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street's historic theaters; maintaining and fully using the New 42nd Street Studios and The Duke on 42nd Street to support performing artists in the creation of their work; and through The New Victory Theater, New York's premier theater for kids and families.

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