

Grist To The Mill  
Presents

# The Unknown Soldier



**After the guns there is the silence...**



FringeGuru

Edinburgh Festivals Magazine

ThreeWeeks

The Stage

The Scotsman

British Theatre Guide



**A new play from award  
nominated writer Ross Ericson**

Any enquiries, questions on shows and interests in booking, please contact:

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# The Unknown Soldier

*After the guns there is the silence...*

*Jack stayed on when the guns fell silent, to search the battlefields for the boys that could not go home - for the dead and the missing, for both enemy and friend – and amongst the rusty wire and unexploded bombs Jack is looking for something – looking for someone. He has a promise to keep and a debt to repay, and now there is this strange request from the generals.*

**The Unknown Soldier** is a moving, often humorous, but above all thought provoking new theatre piece by the award nominated writer Ross Ericson. It looks at the First World War from a new perspective, through the eyes of a man who has survived the carnage but who finds it hard to return home. It is a story of betrayal, of the deep friendship that can only be found between those who fight and die together, and of a world that has changed for ever.

Ericson uses his military experience to give this play an authentic voice. He brings to it his usual attention to detail and even includes some family stories, making this a very personal piece. It is as gritty and as moving as 'Casualties', for which he was nominated for an Off West End Award, and shows a writer true to his form.



**The Unknown Soldier** sold out at Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2016 and received excellent reviews from critics. It was also shortlisted for the Brighton Fringe Award for Excellence in 2015. The show has been touring since 2015



# Press Reviews



*'If you don't ever want to see another WW1 play, then you want to see *\*this\**. Superb!'*

– **FringeGuru**



*'An unmissable and thought-provoking play that has so much relevance in today's society'*

– **Edinburgh Festivals Magazine**



*'Powered by a magnificent solo performance from Ross Ericson'*

– **ThreeWeeks**



*'An original perspective on a story we think we all know, and offer a reminiscence that... is poignant and thought-provoking'*

– **The Independent**



*'It's not about glory or futility, it's about the loyalty forged between friends'*

– **The Scotsman**



*'Strong writing, an original approach and a sensitive performance bring fresh power to a reminder of the horrors of war.'*

– **The Stage**



*'Filled with far more nuance and originality than most Great War plays'*

– **British Theatre Guide**



*'This is well worth a watch, whether you enjoy war plays or not'*

– **Edinburgh Guide**



*'Strongly recommend this play to everyone... it is guaranteed to make you laugh but will also bring a tear to your eye – a great tribute to the unknown soldiers'*

– **Young Perspective**



*'Authentic, Informative and Powerful'*

– **FringeReview**

## Edinburgh Fringe Audience Review

*'A Masterpiece of a show' – John Rodie*

*'Brilliant script and acting' – Gordon Prince*

*'I have seen about 15 shows and this is my favourite. Great writing...'* – Bob Henderson

*'I loved the way the story unfolded about the events after the war which no-one normally thinks about. Performance and action - spellbinding to transport you there. An excellent performance'* – Andy Stobbie

*'Thoughtful. Great Balance of sorrow & levity. Perfect... Thank you.'* – Jennifer Murrey

*'I cannot recommend this highly enough: a stupendous performance... it is moving and powerful but finds space for some touches of dark humour. Definitely a five star performance.'* – Christine McDerment

*'Very powerful, well presented, well-acted and poignant'* – Andy Lyall

*'Superb acting, great costume, 5 star sounds... [Ericson] owns the stage beautifully.'* – Udit Banerjee

*'A brilliant and powerful portrayal of comradeship and life on the frontline. I was holding back the tears as the story which was brought to life so vividly took the audience through the horrors of the First World War. Brilliant!'* – Terry Sopp

*'A first class play that tackled the horrors of the Great War in an original way. Very poignant and sad with a lovely twist in the story.'* – Kevin Jones

*'Simple set but provided splendidly for a poignant performance, expertly executed and extremely thought-provoking.'* – Stephen Allen



# Show Package Information

<b>The Unknown Soldier</b>	
Genre:	Drama, solo show
Themes:	WW1, remembrance, friendship, comradeship
Availability:	Touring 2018 – please ask for dates
Running time:	1 hr
Post-show Discussion:	15-20min Available
Suitable for:	Adults, 12+ but under 12 welcome at parental discretion
Insurance:	Full public liability cover
Marketing:	Press and marketing pack, A3 and A4 posters, DL flyers will be provided
<b>Price Options:</b>	
Box Office split:	70%/30% in company's favour (with guarantee)
Buy-in:	£750 for 1 performance; negotiable for 2 or more performances (e.g. matinee & evening)
<b>Technical Requirements</b>	
Min performance area:	3m x 2m
Layout:	Theatre: thrust, traverse etc.
Set:	Flexible, depending on venue/space, will include free-standing props: folding camp bed, 2 folding chairs, tin trunk and stove
Lighting:	A General wash, a Practical (stove light), a spotlight (CS), red atmosphere/wash for war scene + a green light (like a flare) to be brought up manually, Morning light, blackouts etc.
Sound:	Sound on laptop, just need minijack connection into desk. Depending on space, might need a floor mic at the front to balance cast projection with sound from amps.
Blackout needed:	Yes
Get in & set up:	3 hr
Get out:	45min
Company:	1 actor & 1 stage manager/show operator
Parking:	1 car
Hospitality:	If available – for two people



# Company Members



Actor & Playwright: Ross Ericson

Ross has been acting since the mid 1990s and has appeared in productions of Othello, Teachers, Macbeth, A Man for All Seasons, and The Little Shop of Horrors and, more recently, as Lennie in Of Mice and Men (Lighthouse, Poole), a Corner man/Bailiff in Sucker Punch (Royal Court, London), Ben in The Dumb Waiter (The Mill Theatre, Guildford), Number 4 in Fewer Emergencies (The Print Room, London), Pembroke/Austria in King John (Union Theatre, London), Ned in Parlour Song (Cockpit Theatre, London), Jake in 27 Wagons Full of Cotton (Riverside Studios, London) and The Stage Manager in Our Town (Apollo Theatre Company, Touring).

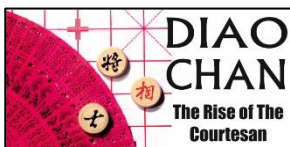
Among his writing credits are a stage adaptation of Henry Fielding's Tom Jones – which has been optioned by LA Theatre Works in California – Punchline, Life, The Autumn of Han and the critically acclaimed, and OffWestend Awards nominated, Casualties, which is published by Methuen Drama.



Producer & Show Operator: Michelle Yim

Michelle is a British-East-Asian actor/producer and has worked on small and medium sized productions for Grist to the Mill that culminated with the premier of the critically acclaimed 'Casualties' in Park Theatre's opening season. She is also one of the founders of **Red Dragonfly Productions**, which strives to bring stories from the East and Far East to a British and European audience. Working in collaboration with Grist to the Mill Productions, the team has started on a three year programme to bring three classic Chinese stories to the British stage. The first production 'The Autumn of Han' 2014-2015 and 'DiaoChan: The Rise of a Courtesan' 2015-2016 toured all over the UK.

[www.reddragonflyproductions.co.uk](http://www.reddragonflyproductions.co.uk)



*'Beautifully realised, captivating piece of theatre.'*

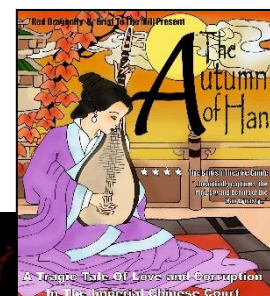
★★★★★ LondonTheatre1 on *DiaoChan: The Rise of the Courtesan*

*'An exquisite little piece of theatre, a respectful bow to the era with an aura of authenticity and intrigue.'*

★★★★★ Everything Theatre on *DiaoChan: The Rise of the Courtesan*

*'A wonderful experience to explore the culture and traditions of ancient China through their own mythology, in a manner that will appeal to everyone.'*

★★★★★ British Theatre Guide on *The Autumn of Han*





**Grist to the Mill** was founded in 2012 with a specific aim to bring new writing to the world's stages. Resident writer **Ross Ericson** has had noted success with his critically acclaimed adaptation of Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* and his play *Casualties*, which was nominated for Best New Play at the OffWestend Awards and published by Methuen. Grist also co-produced *The Autumn of Han* and *DiaoChan* with Red Dragonfly. 5 stars *The Unknown Soldier* **sold-out** it's run at Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2016 and is also published by Methuen Bloomsbury.

[www.gristtheatre.co.uk](http://www.gristtheatre.co.uk)



'If you don't ever want to see another WW1 play, then you want to see *\*this\**. Superb!'

★★★★★ **FringeGuru on *The Unknown Soldier***

'An unmissable and thought-provoking play that has so much relevance in today's society'

★★★★★ **Edinburgh Festival Mag on *The Unknown Soldier***

'Powered by a magnificent solo performance from Ross Ericson'

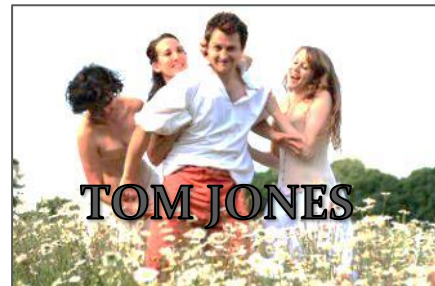
★★★★★ **ThreeWeeks on *The Unknown Soldier***

'It's not about glory or futility, it's about the loyalty forged between friends'

★★★★★ **The Scotsman on *The Unknown Soldier***

'The quality of the adaptation and the wit of the cast ensure that... it makes for a thoroughly entertaining evening'

★★★★★ **The Public Reviews on *Tom Jones***



'*Casualties* is perfectly executed... and will easily leave you reeling.'

★★★★★ **What's on Stage on *Casualties***

'A play of extremely high standard both in writing, direction and performance.'

★★★★★ **LiveTheatre.co on *Casualties***

'Wonderful piece of work... would have gladly gone back for more'

★★★★★ **One Stop Arts on *Casualties***

'Be prepared to be harrowed, to be moved to tears and to fall in love with the characters'

★★★★★ **Remotegoat on *Casualties***



**Simon Annand**  
(The Half) –  
"Contained, but  
Epic"



Casualties 2013 at Park Theatre, Photo by Simon Annand

# The Unknown Soldier Show Copy

## **40 words**

Jack stayed on when the guns fell silent, to search the battlefields for those that could not go home. A story of comradeship, betrayal and of promises both broken and kept following the carnage of WWI [www.gristtheatre.co.uk](http://www.gristtheatre.co.uk).

## **100 words**

Jack stayed on when the guns fell silent, to search the battlefields for the boys that could not go home - for the dead and the missing, for both enemy and friend. And amongst the rusty wire and unexploded bombs Jack is looking for something – looking for someone. He has a promise to keep and debt to repay, and now there is this strange request from the generals. A story of comradeship, betrayal and of promises both broken and kept following the carnage of World War One. An Edinburgh Fringe 2016 sell out show by award nominated writer of Casualties.

## **140 words**

Jack stayed on when the guns fell silent, to search the battlefields for the boys that could not go home - for the dead and the missing, for both enemy and friend. Amongst the rusty wire and unexploded bombs Jack is looking for something – looking for someone. He has a promise to keep and a debt to repay, and now there is this strange request from the generals.

The Unknown Soldier is moving, often humorous, but above all thought provoking. It looks at the First World War from a new perspective, through the eyes of a man who has survived the carnage but who finds it hard to return home. A story of comradeship, betrayal and of promises both broken and kept following the carnage of World War One. Official EdFringe 2016 sell out show by award nominated writer of Casualties.

## **Links:**

Website: <http://www.gristtheatre.co.uk/the-unknown-soldier>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/gristtothemill/>

Twitter: @gristtheatre #unknownsoldier



# The Unknown Soldier Press Release

Grist To The Mill Productions

Presents

## The Unknown Soldier

Sell-Out Hit New WW1 Play comes to XXX

The hit 2016 sell out show from Edinburgh Fringe **The Unknown Soldier** is at the **XXX Theatre**. The play has received numerous four and five star reviews and has now been published by **Bloomsbury**.

'To be honest,' confesses writer and performer **Ross Ericson**, 'I knew we had a good production but I never dreamt that we would see such critical acclaim and sell out virtually every night over 25 performances – especially at the Edinburgh Fringe where competition is so fierce.'

**The Unknown Soldier** is a thought provoking, moving, and even humorous solo piece that looks at the First World War from a new perspective, through the eyes of a man who has survived the carnage but remains, like many, to help build the great cemeteries. It is a story of the deep friendship that can only be found between those who fight together, of the betrayal felt by them at the end of the war, and of a world that has changed so much it has become unrecognisable.

Ericson uses his military experience and family stories to give this piece a truly authentic voice and, as he is performing it himself, it feels like a very real and very personal piece. It is as gritty and as moving as his play **Casualties**, for which he was nominated for an **Off West End Award**, and shows a writer true to his form.

*'If you don't ever want to see another WW1 play, then you want to see \*this\* WW1 play. Superb!'*

★★★★★FringeGuru

*'An original perspective on a story we think we all know, and offer a reminiscence that... is poignant and thought-provoking'* ★★★★★The Independent

*'It's not about glory or futility, it's about the loyalty forged between friends'*

★★★★★The Scotsman

**Web:** [www.gristtheatre.co.uk](http://www.gristtheatre.co.uk) **Twitter:** @gristtheatre **Facebook:** /gristtothemill

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### LISTING INFORMATION

**Venue:**

**Dates/Time:**

**Running Time:** 60mins

**Tickets:**

**Bookings:**

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## Contact Details

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