

Press Release  
September 2013

## ***Couldn't Care Less*** **Scottish Tour 2013.**

**Dark physical comedy confronts hidden epidemic of unpaid caring**



**Couldn't Care Less** is a new collaboration from **Strange Theatre** (*Goddess, Mother, à la carte*) and **Plutôt la Vie** (*By the Seat of Your Pants, A Clean Sweep, First You're Born*) that explores the loss of identity experienced through dementia and the sacrifices made by family members who give up their lives to care for their loved ones.

**Couldn't Care Less**, conceived by performer **Liz Strange**, is a dark, funny and sharp portrayal of caring. It was devised by a company of Scottish theatre makers, including Edinburgh based playwright **Morna Pearson** (*The Artist Man and the Mother Woman, Distracted*), performer **Hilde McKenna** and director **Tim Licata**, with music by Daniel Kass, design by Alice Wilson and choreography by Malcolm Shields. This exciting new work blends physical theatre, dance and dark humour with a story all too familiar with a large proportion of UK society.

**Couldn't Care Less** is a physical and darkly humorous look at what it is to be a carer in the UK today. The collaboration blends Plutôt la Vie's expertise in physical theatre and clowning on stage with Strange Theatre's original idea. This is a highly visual but deeply personal new work.

Daughter Lilly (Liz Strange) and mother Elspeth (Hilde McKenna) are forced back together long after Lilly has grown up and left home. Just as Lilly is starting to achieve success in her career, her mother starts to show signs of Alzheimer's. As Elspeth comes and goes – from her past as a dancer, a lover, a single-mother of small children, to a constantly changing present – her daughter's flying visits from city life become permanent. The reluctant carer and her endlessly (often unwittingly) dismissive mother embark on a journey of frustration, humour, and ultimately love as Lilly learns to dance with the person who is and the person who was her mother.

**Couldn't Care Less** as piece of storytelling, implicitly explores many of the issues of day-to-day unpaid caring. Each audience member will find their own personal reference. Scotland has well over half a million carers, 65% of whom are women (Source: Engender, 2013 – [www.engender.org.uk](http://www.engender.org.uk) ). Elspeth, the solo female carer for her two children, sees her daughter Lilly put her own career on hold to become her sole carer. Currently 101 million people require care, but a report from Alzheimer's Disease International warns the figure will rise to 277 million by 2050. As such, this play is a timely response to a day-to-day concern for many. What is the feminist response to the dominance of women in caring roles? Are social norms preventing some family roles from evolving? Where does one turn for help? Can one avoid becoming a burden as part of a huge, ageing population?

Couldn't Care Less will be livestreamed online on Saturday 18 October, 8pm GMT so those that cannot attend the show can experience it. This initiative has been specifically designed so that carers who are unable to leave the house can attend the performance, and is also available to anyone, anywhere in the world to view for free.

Ends.

For further information, images and interview requests please contact Miriam (StoryTelling PR) on 07825642225 [miriamattwood@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:miriamattwood@hotmail.co.uk) Press are invited to RSVP to the press performance on Thursday 17 October 2013 at the Traverse Theare, Edinburgh.

For further info, including information on the live stream on 18 October, please visit our [production blog](#). There is also a chatroom and after show discussion.

Couldn't Care Less is created by Liz Strange, Tim Licata, Hilde McKenna & Morna Pearson, with Alice Wilson, Malcolm Shields and Danny Krass.

### Notes to Editors.

News for Caring UK

[The Scotsman](#) – Policy should make time for carers

[Woman's Hour](#) – Looking after children and parents, why is it still a majority women's role.

[BBC News](#) - Elderly care needs 'set to treble' by 2050

**Strange Theatre** is fast gaining a reputation for creating professional, original theatre with social relevance. The company is committed to tackling issues that affect vulnerable or marginalised groups through producing high quality theatre and film projects that raise awareness, promote debate and bring people together. [www.strangetheatre.co.uk](http://www.strangetheatre.co.uk)

**Plutôt La Vie** is a Scottish touring theatre company producing imaginative, entertaining and visually driven performances.

Driven by the unique collaboration of Tim Licata and Ian Cameron, Plutôt La Vie has delighted audiences throughout Scotland with *A Clean* ("*innovative theatre that defies classification*"-The Sunday Times) *By the Seat of Your Pants* ("*...sequence after sequence of inspired comedy and a profound playfulness...*" *The Scotsman*) and *First You're Born*, co-production with the Byre Theatre ("*...Top of Form – a white-knuckle roller coaster ride into the surreal ...a superbly structured and sensitive piece of theatre*" *The Stage*). The company has developed a reputation for refreshing and irreverent theatre the quality of which is recognised by Creative Scotland, press and audiences alike. *A Clean Sweep* and *By the Seat of Your Pants* have toured throughout Scotland as well as in England, Portugal, the United States, Singapore and Malaysia.

The team have sought advice from specialist dementia nurses and carers during the development of the play to attempt to dramatise the reality of caring for someone living with dementia— special thanks to Peter Lerpiniere, specialist nurse in the psychiatry of old age.

#### Cast

Lilly - Liz Strange  
Elspeth - Hilde McKenna

#### Production

Director - Tim Licata  
Producer - Callum Smith  
Script by - Morna Pearson  
Music - Daniel Kass  
Design - Alice Wilson  
Choreography - Malcom Shields  
Stage Manager – Roxy Smith  
Creative Assistant – Melanie Jordan

This tour of Couldn't Care Less is part of the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival, and Luminare: Scotland's Creative Ageing Festival; and is supported by Creative Scotland and Age Scotland.

[www.luminareScotland.org](http://www.luminareScotland.org)

[www.mhfestival.com/](http://www.mhfestival.com/)

#### TOUR INFO/LISTINGS

Fri 11 Oct 7:30pm

Sat 12 Oct 2pm

**North Edinburgh Arts Centre** 15a Pennywell Court, Edinburgh EH4 4TZ

£8 (full price), £5 (Concessions), £3 (NEA Good Neighbours)

Box Office: 0131 315 2151 / [admin@northedinburgharts.co.uk](mailto:admin@northedinburgharts.co.uk) / [www.northedinburgharts.co.uk](http://www.northedinburgharts.co.uk)

Tues 15 - Wed 16 Oct 8pm

**East Kilbride Arts Centre** 51 Old Coach Road, East Kilbride, Glasgow G74 4DU

Tickets: £7

Booking: 01355 261 000 / [www.slboxoffice.co.uk](http://www.slboxoffice.co.uk)

Thurs 17 – Sat 19 Oct 8pm (Fri 2.30pm)

**Traverse Theatre** 10 Cambridge Street, Edinburgh EH1 2ED

£15.50 (full price), £12.50 (concession), £8 (Disabled/Unemployed)

Booking: 0131 228 1404 / [www.traverse.co.uk](http://www.traverse.co.uk)

Monday 28th October 2pm

**Platform** 1000 Westerhouse Road, Glasgow G34 9JW

£8.50 (Full Price) / £4.50 (Concession) / £3.50 (Local Links)

Booking: 0141 276 9696 (Opt. 1)

Monday 21st October 7pm

**Buckie Community High School Auditorium**

West Cathcart Street, Buckie AB56 1QB

FREE, booking required

Booking: Quarriers - Nuala Lindsay - 01343 556031 [Nuala.lindsay@quarriers.org.uk](mailto:Nuala.lindsay@quarriers.org.uk)  
[www.morayfeelgoodfestival.co.uk](http://www.morayfeelgoodfestival.co.uk)

Tuesday 22nd October 2pm

**Elgin Town Hall** 1 Trinity Place, Elgin IV30 1UL

FREE, booking required.

Booking: Quarriers - Nuala Lindsay 01343 556031 [Nuala.lindsay@quarriers.org.uk](mailto:Nuala.lindsay@quarriers.org.uk)

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

Wednesday 23rd October 4.30pm

**Spectrum Centre** 1 Margaret Street, Inverness IV1 1LS

Free, booking required.

Booking: [info@highlandmhfestival.com](mailto:info@highlandmhfestival.com)

Thursday 24th October 2pm

**Corran Halls** Studio Theatre, 54 Corran Esplanade, Oban, Argyll PA34 4AB

Free, booking required.

Booking: 01631 567 333

Saturday 26th October 6.30pm

**Lochgelly Centre** Bank Street, Lochgelly KY5 9RD

£5 / Free for Luminare Festival participants.

Booking: [www.onfife.com](http://www.onfife.com)

Tuesday 29th October 2pm

**Ardishaig Public Hall** Chalmers St. PA30 8EY

£5 / Free for over 65s and those in receipt of housing benefit.

Booking: 01546 606 808

Wednesday 30th October 2pm

**Dunoon Grammar School** Ardenslate Road, Kirn, Dunoon PA23 8LU

**Free** - No booking required

Thursday 31st October 7.30pm

**Eastwood Park Theatre** Rouken Glen Road, Giffnock, Glasgow G46 6UG

£13 (Full Price) / £11 (Concession) / £9 (Students)

Booking: 0141 577 4956 / [www.eastwoodparktheatre.co.uk](http://www.eastwoodparktheatre.co.uk)

Saturday 2nd November 2pm

**Hermitage Academy** Cardross Road, Helensburgh G84

Free, booking required.

Booking: [alison@argyllvoluntaryaction.org.uk](mailto:alison@argyllvoluntaryaction.org.uk)

Tickets available from Argyll Voluntary Action, Helensburgh and Lomond Carers SCIO and the Dementia Resource Centre