

# TOUR PACK

# METTLE

**A NEW PLAY TO COMMEMORATE THOSE WHO SERVED ON  
THE ATLANTIC CONVOYS**

**WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY NICHOLAS COLLETT**



November 1942.

HMS Vanessa is detached from Convoy HX213 to join Convoy SC107.

The convoy is attacked by a wolfpack of U-boats - over 4 days they sink 15 ships.

It is the heaviest loss of ships from any trans-Atlantic convoy through the winter of 1942-43...

Gordon Collett is 19, from Sheffield - the city of steel. Determined to join the fight against the advancing forces of fascism, he volunteers for the Royal Navy in February 1940. He serves on HMS Vanessa and in November 1942 they are sent to escort Convoy SC107...

I know this because I am his son - and I'm going to tell you his story.

DIRECTED BY GAVIN ROBERTSON

METTLE is a true story.

It is a celebration of a man and his wartime service on one of the most infamous Atlantic convoys of World War Two.

It is also an observation of a past generation who, although quietly wrestling with their demons, remained silent about their service for many years.

From his childhood in Sheffield in the 1960's, through to the present day, award-winning solo performer Nicholas Collett ("Spitfire Solo", "Nelson – The Sailor's Story", "Your Bard") takes us on an epic journey, retracing his father's steps, from Liverpool to the USA and back, via Sierra Leone and Nova Scotia, reliving the utter terror of U-boat attacks, the storm-tossed ocean, along with the lighter moments of serving aboard a wartime destroyer – including a close encounter with Glenn Miller – in a captivating and physical solo performance.

A tale of love and loss, both moving and funny, above all life-affirming and a paean to those we miss most.

With support from the Daparian Foundation and the V&W Destroyers Association

## **RUNNING TIME**

Act 1 40 mins

Act 2 35 mins

## **TECHNICAL**

Simple lighting. Sound operated from laptop.

Get in 3 hours

Get out 60 minutes

**DEAL - BY NEGOTIATION**

## PREVIOUS WORK:

“YOUR BARD”



“Superbly performed” - Broadway World

“Unmissable theatre” Tulpa Magazine (Adelaide)

“THE GHOST OF A SMILE”

“OUTSTANDING – Top quality! Written by the greatest storyteller of his day, delivered by one of the most accomplished thespians of ours”



Get Your Coats On – Edinburgh 2023

“NELSON”



“Compelling” - Kansas City Star

“SPITFIRE SOLO”



“Hugely entertaining” - Adelaide Theatre Guide

“Pure gold – this masterpiece of theatre” - Broadway World

### Nicholas Collett:

Is an award-winning actor, director, writer and producer. Most recently he has co-written and directed the new American folk musical “Prejudice and Pride” which has recently been placed #2 show off-Broadway in New York at 59E59 and was voted #1 show at Edinburgh Fringe in 2022 by the Sinners Review.

His theatre work includes “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” and “The Winter’s Tale” at the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Barbican and Bombur in “The Hobbit” at the Queen’s Theatre in London. He has appeared in over 40 productions in repertory across the UK. Co-founder of Third Party who toured classics worldwide from 1994 to 2014 giving over 1000 performances and won a Peter Brook Award in 2010 for “Dr. Faustus”. His solo shows “Spitfire Solo”, “Nelson, The Sailors’ Story” and “Your Bard” have toured the UK, USA and Australia. In 2016 he won the British Arrows Best Actor Award for his performance in the Currys/PC World commercial “Laptop” with Jeff Goldblum. In 2018 he won a Special Performance Award at the World Duo Festival in Seoul, for his role as Counsellor in Theatre Hooam’s “Black and White Tea Room”. In 2022 he won the Dark Chat Best Supporting Actor Award for his role as Yorick in “Waiting For Hamlet”. In 2023 he won Best Theatre Award at Adelaide Fringe for his performance as Jo in “Appraisal”

### Gavin Robertson:

Gavin Robertson comes from a physical theatre background (Lecoq, Lindsay Kemp, Gaulier) creating and performing his own work for national and international touring. He has a diverse portfolio of productions including ‘*Bond*’, ‘*Crusoe*’, ‘*Spittoon*’, ‘*The Three Musketeers*’, ‘*The Six-Sided Man*’, ‘*Fantastical Voyage*’, ‘*Escape From The Planet of The Day That Time Forgot!*’ and many others, infamously, ‘*Thunderbirds F.A.B.*’ which played in London's West End on six separate occasions. Each of his productions has toured internationally including several tours to Japan, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Singapore, Tunisia, Senegal and Morocco, as well as Hong Kong, Lebanon, Turkey, Oman, Brazil, Chile, Taiwan, Costa Rica, Bosnia, Russia and various other European countries.