

MICHAEL PATRICK LUNNEY
DIRECTING CV

“Prescription: Murder” by Richard Levinson and William Link
No.1 National Tour 2010/2011
Cast included: Dirk Benedict, Patrick Ryecart, Karen Drury

“Columbo fits the stage well in Michael Lunney's top-notch mix of suspense and farce. FOUR STARS” The Times

“FIVE STARS. Benedict manages to fully inhabit the role and make you believe he really is Columbo. With a fine supporting cast, this show by Middle Ground Theatre Company is a real class act.” Evening Telegraph

“It's going to be hard to beat the new stage version of Columbo ...Michael Lunney's direction captures the thrilling day time murder mystery element” The Metro

“FOUR STARS. Benedict is a charming Columbo. With cigar in hand, he perfectly treads the fine line between portraying a character we all love and bringing the freshness of live performance to the part. Director Michael Lunney's light touch accentuates the humour, with just the right mix of caricature to keep it all tongue-in-cheek.” Manchester Evening News

“Frankie & Johnny in the Clair de Lune” by Terrence McNally
No.1 National Tour 2010
Cast included: Kelly McGillis, Rolf Saxon

“Beautifully crafted...McGillis plays to perfection Frankie, a failed actress who considers herself a simple person. Saxon's utterly convincing Johnny is an ex-con who keeps a complete works of Shakespeare in his locker” The Stage

“It is a reflection of the quality of the acting and the painstakingly authentic set that I felt that I had gone back in time to the late 1980's... deeply moving and funny at the same time” BBC

“Exceptional performances from both McGillis and Saxon... If music be the food of love, then Middle Ground's tour of Frankie & Johnny has consumed Debussy's haunting movement and produced an engaging, witty play that's performances will have you laughing and crying throughout.”
Whatsonstage

“Billy Liar” by Keith Waterhouse and Willis Hall
No.1 National Tour 2009
Cast included: Helen Fraser, Dicken Ashworth, Lauren Drummond, Victoria Hawkins, Holly Quin-Ankrah, Nathan Hannan, Chris Hannon

“The magic of this performance made me tearful with laughter and emotion. This really is one not to be missed.” BBC

“The quality is apparent from the curtain up... a thoroughly entertaining production.”
Lancashire Post

"Superb... both funny and poignant... the talented cast do a fantastic job" Evening Star

"The Importance of Being Earnest" by Oscar Wilde

No.1 National Tour 2007/2008

Cast included: Tony Britton, Tom Butcher, Zoie Kennedy, Corrinne Wicks, Jim Alexander

"Still delights audiences, especially in Michael Lunney's classic production. Lunney's directorial skill ensures that from the opening even the most familiar lines, in the mouths of his actors, evoke hearty laughter. Treat yourselves." Somerset County Gazette

"One of the most refreshing and entertaining presentations I have seen. The cast's delivery is a joy. With beautiful music and sets which each received a round of applause, this is a stylish production". Windsor Express

"Middle Ground's extremely handsome production has a simple charm to it that makes it easy to warm to and I enjoyed it considerably more than the current "big" West End version. This Earnest has its heart in the right place and seems to want to remain faithful to the Wilde spirit." Theatreworld Internet Magazine

"Tunes of Glory" by James Kennaway

No.1 National Tour 2006/2007

Cast included: Patrick Ryecart, Stuart McGugan, Richard Walsh, Rupert Baker, Alex Hardy

A Daily Telegraph Theatre Critic's Choice

A Guardian Theatre Critic's Choice

"Lunney's production grips throughout; his barracks design is ingenious... A Triumph" Charles Spencer, Daily Telegraph

"Quality drama of the highest order... absorbing and immensely satisfying... Michael Lunney has done a superlative job in creating a fabulous, visually impressive piece of theatre which exploits the talents of its 15-strong cast to the full. Theatre does not get much better than this: state-of-the art projection techniques, subtle lighting and seamless transitions combine to create an absorbing work" South Wales Evening Post

"Michael Lunney's dramatisation was the finest piece of theatre I have ever seen at this venue... all the grace, dignity and heroism of a Shakespearean tragedy" Somerset County Gazette

"Dial M For Murder" by Frederick Knott

No.1 National Tour 2004/05 & 2007

Cast included: Steven Pinder, James MacPherson, Faye Tozer, Richard Walsh, Tom Butcher, Joy Brook, Richard Grieve

"Lunney's take on the play subverts the expected and gives us, instead, a much

more complex theatrical experience. It's the classic thriller from the post-Stoppard perspective! But unlike Stoppard's parody - and Inspector Hubbard is emphatically not Inspector Hound - it remains respectful and, although it subverts the genre, it leaves Knott's play untarnished. In fact, it's hard to imagine how else one can play a classic thriller such as this one today and make it more than a period piece... Good performances from everyone in the cast contributed to a very enjoyable evening's theatre." The British Theatre Guide

"Hitchcock himself would have been proud of this modern adaptation" The Northern Echo

*"Some classic thrillers just won't lie down and disappear. Michael Lunney, whose Middle Ground Theatre Company has matured remarkably over the past few years, has gone whole-heartedly for the authentic approach. ****"* The Western Mail

"The Holly and the Ivy" by Wynyard Browne

No.1 National Tours 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004 & 2008/09

Casts have included: Tony Britton, Barry Foster, Dermot Walsh, Brian Cant, Lee Warburton, Joy Brook, Neil Clark and Harriett Keevil_

"Charming Example of classic theatrical values... beautifully structured... Middle Ground play it beautifully, developing the tension and heartbreak, a talented cast... superb" The Birmingham Post

"Middle Ground's impressive production of this richly narrative piece captures the period beautifully, with its finely detailed set and terrific character acting" Birmingham Express And Star

"The excellent Middle Ground brings to life the drama of a family teetering on the edge of a precipice. A wonderfully performed production" The Stage

"Brief Encounter" by Noel Coward

No.1 National Tour 2003

Cast included: Karen Drury, Richard Walsh, Nick Wilton, Lynette McMorrough_
Manchester Evening News Theatre Awards Winner 2003_

"Cast brings warmth to a classic weepie... Middle Ground's production benefits from excellent direction by Michael Lunney" Dorset Daily Echo

"Presenting a stage version of a very famous film can be a risky business, especially one as revered as Brief Encounter, but Middle Ground carries it off triumphantly"
County Gazette

"Nationally acclaimed Middle Ground are presenting and I was lucky enough to be there on the opening night... Director Michael Lunney brings out the texture of the piece which is as brilliant as Alison Gorton's design" Southport What's On

"Flare Path" by Terrence Rattigan

No.1 National Tour 2002

Cast included: Colin Baker, Rupert Baker, Jackie Lye, Daniel Brown_

The Times Theatre Critic's Choice

“Rattigan is still on target. Michael Lunney’s closely observed production initially seems to have transported the audience into a time warp, however the potency of the period detail is ultimately absorbed into a plot of such personal rawness that it resonates through the decades... it creates an intricately heart-rending portrait”
London Evening Standard

“Torn between two lovers in a tragic wartime tale... this production perfectly captures Rattigan’s interplay of comedy and tragedy... excellent acting, costumes and the aircraft sounds overhead combine in a marvellous evocation of the period”
Cambridge Evening News

“Play still has power to stir emotions. It is a strength of Michael Lunney’s production that characters who might come over as stereotypes make an emotional connection with us and we care about them” Daily Echo

“Present Laughter” by Noel Coward
No.1 National Tour 2001

Cast included: Richard Walsh, Anne Charleston, Brian Cant

“Coward’s laughter is a real class act, it’s yet another outstanding touring production by Middle Ground... the director and cast perfectly capture the era... never fails to amuse” Kentish Times

“Middle Ground’s production saw the auditorium packed and chortling from start to finish... the cast oozed life into Coward’s script” Worcester Evening News

“Still thrumming with the presence of Noel Coward, this production by Middle Ground must be this weeks bargain. It is a three hour classic feast produced just as Coward perceived it... a thoroughbred comedy with an impeccable pedigree” Worthing Argus

“Guess Who’s Coming To Dinner?” by William Rose (Adapted for the stage by Michael Lunney and Ali Gorton)
No.1 National Tour 2001

Cast included: George Sewell, Patrick Robinson, Dermot Walsh, Joan Hooley, Willie Jonah

The Guardian Theatre Critic’s Choice

“Still powerful on stage... boasts a fine cast, the production is both fresh and engaging thanks to director Michael Lunney” Eastbourne Herald

“Absorbing exploration of bigotry and prejudice... the warmth and care with which this production has been put together makes the piece ever more watchable” South Wales Evening Post

“A fine display of pride and prejudice... well produced, directed and executed... the cast fits together like a finely tuned clock and turns out a highly entertaining performance” Coventry Evening Telegraph

“An Ideal Husband” by Oscar Wilde

No.1 National Tour 2000_s24-

Cast included: Richard Walsh, Dermot Walsh, Brian Cant, Marcus Gilbert, Jean Rogers, Louise English

“A triumph for director Michael Lunney” Worthing Evening Argus

“No such thing as perfection, but close!” Shetland Times

“Under Michael Lunney’s sharp direction, this production paints a vivid picture of an artificial, elevated and hilarious comedy of manners... it is a ‘must see’” The Sentinel

“Dangerous Corner” by J.B.Priestley

No.1 National Tour 1999

Cast included: Lewis Collins, Lynette McMorrough, Melanie Barker

“As a director Lunney keeps the narrative at a pace which enables us to absorb and appreciate the nuances of the characters all driven by the charisma of the late cad Martin... a classic still fighting its corner especially with the subtle touch of this thoroughly modern company” Worthing Evening Argus

“Danger lurking in every corner... a cleverly crafted piece of theatre and this Middle Ground production directed by Michael Lunney plays it straight and does it proud... an absorbing, entertaining night out” Daily Echo

“A classic tale, excellent cast, full house... this is the stuff of theatre and Middle Ground’s production fulfilled all three requirements... a fascinating evening”
Somerset County Gazette

“Spring And Port Wine” by Bill Naughton

No.1 National Tour 1998

Cast included: Glyn Owen, Nick Cochrane, Samantha Power

Manchester Evening News Theatre Awards Winner 1998_

“A slice of English Life that has improved with age - this is an excellent production, the whole cast does the play proud... a real gem with moments of pure brilliance”
Brighton Argus

“This production is a very decent one all round, honest and entertaining, it certainly hit the spot with last night’s appreciative audience” Manchester Evening News

“A fine vintage indeed, brought brilliantly to life by Middle Ground” North East Evening Mail

“An Inspector Calls” by JB Priestley

1995 Scottish Tour including Highlands and Islands

“This is Michael Lunney’s debut as a director and he is certainly one to look out for in the future” North East Evening Mail