

# LOVE STORY OF THE CENTURY by Märta Tikkanen

Adapted for the stage by Clare Venables

Performed by Gillian Hanna  
& Mary McCusker  
Directed by Debbie Shewell  
Set and Costume design Moggie Douglas  
Lighting Design Tina MacHugh  
Original Music Joanna MacGregor  
Stage Management Lizz Poulter  
& Greta Millington  
Poster Design Jo Angell  
For Monstrous Regiment Rose Sharp  
& Carin Mistry  
Press Representatives Taylors.

The performance runs for approximately 1¼ hours  
with no interval.

If I could have been  
everything you wished me  
to be  
your mother  
who loves you and forgives you  
and understands you and approves of you who  
admires you endlessly  
and punishes you when you're bad  
and makes your decisions  
and puts everything right for you  
whom you can blame when the world  
isn't what you want it to be  
who is eternal and everlasting  
and who is always there  
and stays awake and waits and worries about you  
and no one else but you —  
then nothing would have been different  
anyway

MÄRTA TIKKANEN was born in Helsinki in 1935. After receiving her Masters Degree at the University of Helsinki she worked as a journalist, as a teacher and as head of the Swedish-speaking Adult Education Academy in Helsinki. She now writes full-time.

In 1963 she married the writer Henrik Tikkanen. His most well known novel is *Snob's Island* (Chatto and

Windus). He died in 1984. Märta's first novel, *Nu immoron*, was published in 1970, but her first critical success followed with two subsequent books in 1974 and 1976. The latter of these, *MANRAPE* (Virago 1977), explores the experience of rape from a woman's point of view. It was the first of her books to be translated into several languages. It was also adapted for film and shown in numerous countries. It was broadcast by the BBC in August 1980.

Major critical success came with a book of long narrative verse — *LOVE STORY OF THE CENTURY* (published by Capra Press in 1984). The first dramatized version of the book was staged in Germany and the United States. Monstrous Regiment are presenting the British Premiere in a new adaptation.

Her novel *LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD* (1986) has also been adapted for the stage. It was produced in Finland in 1988 where it received great critical acclaim. Märta's most recent work is *THE GREAT CATCHER OF FISH*.

Her work has been translated into French, Dutch, Estonian, Norwegian, Danish and Japanese. Märta works from a small studio in Helsinki and is much in demand for interviews and lectures.

DEBBIE SHEWELL co-founded Little Women Theatre Company before spending two years at the Bristol Old Vic where her productions included Shelley's *THE CENCI* (transferred to the Almeida Theatre), Louise Page's *SALONIKA* and *MISS JULIE*. Whilst an associate director at The Bush she directed Lucy Gannon's *RAPING THE GOLD*. Other work includes *ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD* (Oxford Stage Co.), *'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE* (Stockholm), *LONG TIME GONE* (Salisbury Playhouse and Lyric Hammersmith), and several productions at RADA including *THE TEMPEST* and *VOTES FOR WOMEN*. In March Debbie will be directing *MORE THAN ONE ANTOINETTE*, which she wrote for Monstrous Regiment.

CLARE VENABLES: Clare took a first class honours degree in Drama from Manchester University, since when she has acted and directed in regional theatres all over the country. She has been the artistic director of the Theatre Royal, Lincoln; the Library and Forum Theatres, Manchester; and the Theatre Royal, Stratford East. As a freelance she has also directed in Canada, America, Australia, and India. She took up her present post, as Artistic Director of the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, in 1981. This is Clare's second production with Monstrous Regiment. She directed *BEATRICE* for the company in 1989.

MOGGIE DOUGLAS designs for both theatre and

dance. Recent credits include: *RENT PARTY* and *FATTY* (Theatre Royal Stratford East); *NOISES OFF* (Leicester Haymarket); *THE QUEUE* (English New Dance Theatre); *CROSSING WATER* (Still Standing Dance Theatre Company); *MATHEMATICAL PARK* (ICA); *VICTORIA MARKS* (The Place and New York); *NEW MIDLANDS DANCE* (The Place); and, as assistant designer for the RSC, Sadlers Wells, Opera North and Theatre de Complicité.

TINA MacHUGH has designed the lighting for many dance companies, including (at the Place Theatre) Images, Arc Dance Company, Academy of Indian Dance and DV8. She has also designed lighting for *DANCING AND SHOUTING* for Second Stride, *KALEDA MAIA* for Adventures in Motion Pictures, *ABSALOM* for Prare and *THE ALETTA COLLINS COLLECTION*. Work for LCDT includes *STAND BY YOUR MAN*, *SHIFT*, *DOPPELGÄNGER* and *ORFEO*. Her theatre work includes *A HERO'S WELCOME* for Women's Playhouse Trust, *BLOOD* at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, *ABINGDON SQUARE* for Shared Experience Theatre at Soho Poly, *TALK OF THE STEAMIE* at Greenwich Theatre and *POOR BEAST IN THE RAIN* at the Bush Theatre.

JOANNA MacGREGOR has worked extensively as a musical director and composer with such companies as Little Women, Cheek by Jowl, Half Moon and Oxford Stage Company. She has also written music for television and radio. Joanna works as a concert pianist and has toured USA, Europe, Africa and the Far East. She has recently released three records of IVES, SATIE, & BRITTEN.

GILLIAN HANNA's first professional appearance was as Mrs. Sullen in *THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM* at the Gate Theatre, Dublin. Gillian was a founder member of Monstrous Regiment. Her extensive list of productions over 15 years include "Calamity" in *CALAMITY JANE*, "Dorothy" in *GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES*, "Alice" in *VINEGAR TOM* and "Molly" in *ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES*. Recent work outside "Monsters" includes *THE HOUSE OF BERNADA ALBA* at the Lyric Hammersmith and Globe, London; Stephen Bill's award winning *CURTAINS* at the Hampstead Theatre; "Martha" in *WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?*; *LEONCE AND LENA* at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield and *ICE CREAM/HOT FUDGE* by Caryl Churchill at the Royal Court Theatre. At the Half Moon she has appeared as "Mrs Lovat" in *SWEENEY TODD*, and Dario Fo's *ELIZABETH*. She received the TIME OUT/01 FOR LONDON award for her performance in *A COMMON WOMAN* — a Monstrous Regiment/Half Moon Co-Production (1989). Her television work includes *GRANGE HILL*, *ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL*, *SWEET*

SIXTEEN, "Baby Battering" - HORIZON (BBC), THE FEAR (Euston Films) and MAKING NEWS (Thames). Gillian also translates plays from French and Italian. Her translations of Dario Fo and Franca Rame's one-woman plays are shortly to be published by Methuen. One of them was filmed for BBC's *Screen Two* starring Lynn Redgrave. She is currently finishing a translation of Marivaux' *THE COLONY* for Monstrous Regiment, which will be the third production of its 15th Anniversary Season.

**MARY McCUSKER** was born in Glasgow and trained there at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. In 1975 she was a co-founder of Monstrous Regiment. She has appeared in 12 of its productions including Caryl Churchill's *VINEGAR TOM*, David Edgar's *TEEN DREAMS*, Bryony Lavery's *CALAMITY*, and Chris Bond and Claire Luckham's *SCUM* — all commissioned by the company. She has also worked extensively in repertory with companies such as the Glasgow Citizens, Edinburgh Lyceum, Liverpool Everyman, Birmingham Rep and Bolton Octagon, and in London at the Half Moon Theatre, Drill Hall and Soho Poly. Her parts have included "Ophelia" in *HAMLET*, "Kate" in *TAMING OF THE SHREW*, "Cordelia" in Edward Bond's *LEAR*. "Luther/Ullin" in *TRIUMPH OF DEATH*, "Belinda" in *SEASONS'S GREETINGS* and "Isabella Bird/Joyce" in *TOP GIRLS*. Her recent work includes "Lady Macbeth" in *MACBETH* in Lancaster, "Mary Stuart" in *MARY STUART* at Salisbury Playhouse, "Marceline" in *THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO* in Sheffield and *BEATRICE* (solo performance) at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh. Mary was last in Scotland in November filming *DREAMING* by William McIlvanney for the BBC.

**MONSTROUS REGIMENT would like to thank:**

CHRISTER DAHL for bringing the poem to us.  
JASON WARRE — Set Builder  
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**MONSTROUS REGIMENT**  
**The Company and its work**

Monstrous Regiment was formed in 1975 by a small group of professional actors who wanted to make exciting political theatre based on women's experience; tired of seeing that experience marginalised or trivialised, we wanted to take it out of the wings and place it at the centre of the stage. Over the years we have explored a wide range of theatrical forms, and worked in many different venues. We have commissioned a large body of plays about women from such writers as Chris Bond, Caryl Churchill, David Edgar, Bryony Lavery, Claire Luckham, Rose Tremain, and Michelene Wandor.

Our next production, *MORE THAN ONE ANTOINETTE*, written and directed by Debbie Shewell, can be seen at THE YOUNG VIC STUDIO from Tues 27th March to Sat 14th April. Box Office Tel: (01) 928 6363.

The autumn will see our exciting new adaptation of *THE COLONY*, written by the French writer Marivaux in 1750. A group of people fleeing a foreign invasion of their native land find themselves on a desert island, and decide to set up a government. Fine. Until the women point out that this proposed government, like the one they left behind, does not include them. A raging battle of the sexes ensues. This perennial debate will be continued in a second act specially commissioned, and written by Robyn Archer.

For further information on these or future productions contact ROSE SHARP, Monstrous Regiment, 190, Upper Street, London. N1 1RQ. Tel: (01) 359 9842. THIS IS MONSTROUS REGIMENT'S FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY SEASON and we gratefully acknowledge sponsorship from HILTON NATIONAL. The sponsorship of Monstrous Regiment by Hilton National has been recognised by an award under the Government's Business Sponsorship Incentive scheme, which is administered by ABSA.