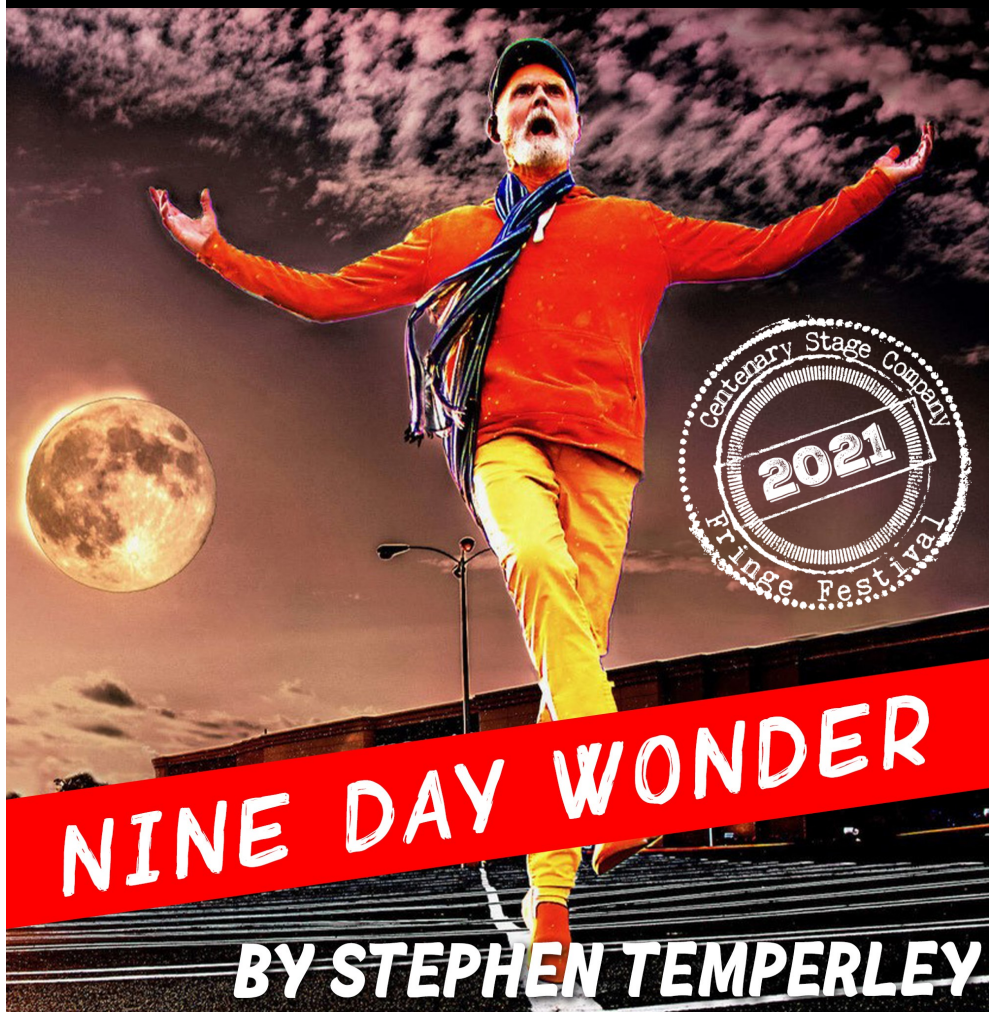


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**CENTENARY STAGE COMPANY PRESENTS:**



# NINE DAY WONDER

**BY STEPHEN TEMPERLEY**

## October 14-17

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# NINE DAY WONDER

**Written by and Starring:**

**Stephen Temperley**

## Cast

William Grant ..... Stephen Temperley

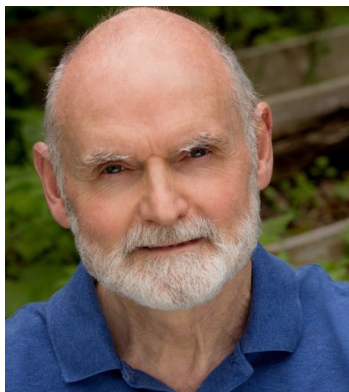
Will Kemp ..... Stephen Temperley



## A Note from Stephen Temperley:

When William Grant, a contemporary man, is faced with a moment of ultimate crisis, he seems to split in two; himself and Will Kemp, Shakespeare's famous fool. In 1599, though no one is quite sure why—there are various theories—Kemp undertook his famous dance, jiggling his way from London to Norwich, a hundred and twenty-five miles distant, his nine day wonder. In present-day Will's imagination, history is turned upside-down as Kemp refuses to leave the stage quietly, instead insisting, hoping, he can make Shakespeare change his mind and beg him to return, so he can be again be the star he once was. Forced to fight his way through Kemp's egomania, jokes, dances, bad puns, bragging, and foolery, Will must come to terms with his own ambition and the limits of his life, balancing what has been achieved with what he failed to accomplish.

## STEPHEN TEMPERLEY



has worked as an actor in both the US and UK for a period spanning more than fifty years. In London's West End he appeared in the musicals *Happy End* and *Very Good Eddie*, as well as many plays in repertory companies, TV appearances for the BBC and ITV, and a mini-series for Granada. In the US he appeared on Broadway in the original company of the award-winning musical *Crazy For You*, off-Broadway at the Public Theater in *Up Against It* and—his first professional job at the age of seventeen—*1 and 2 Henry IV* for Shakespeare in the Park. He has appeared in many plays

at many resident theaters; a favorite role was Scrooge for four years at the McCarter in Princeton. As a playwright, he has been produced on and off-Broadway with *Souvenir: A Fantasia on the Life of Florence Foster Jenkins*, which went on to become one of the most produced plays in the US as well as receiving important productions in Berlin, Paris, Copenhagen (where it was part of the Danish Royal Opera's season). In 1997, his comedy *Dance With Me* was produced here at the Centenary Stage Co. Other plays include *Money/Mercy* (HBO New Writers); *The Pilgrim Papers* (Berkshire Theatre Festival); workshops of *Kind Masters*, and the musical *That Kind of Woman* for Dodger Theatricals. *Songbook*, his most recent play, was given two showcase presentations at the York Theater under the direction of his long-time collaborator, the Tony-Award winning director Vivian Matalon. His adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* will be seen again this year at the CSC under the direction of Carl Wallnau, who has also directed *Nine Day Wonder*. He has recently completed a novel based on *Songbook*. News and updates of this and other projects will appear on his website at [stephentemperley.com](http://stephentemperley.com), where he blogs at *Five Good Springs*.

## ABOUT WILL KEMP:



William Kempe (c. 1560–c. 1603), commonly referred to as Will Kemp, was an English actor and dancer specialising in comic roles and best known for having been one of the original players in early dramas by William Shakespeare. Roles associated with his name may include the great comic creation, Bottom, and his contemporaries considered him the successor to the great clown of the previous generation, Richard Tarlton.

Kempe's success and influence was such that in December 1598 he was one of a core of five actor-shareholders in the Lord Chamberlain's Men alongside Shakespeare

and Richard Burbage, but in a short time (possibly after a disagreement among the members of the troupe) he parted company with the group. Despite his fame as a performer and subsequent intent to continue his career, he appears to have died unregarded and in poverty circa 1603.



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