

“There is an excellent balance that our director, David Leveaux, has achieved between the notion of what classical theatre should be: ‘classy’ and naturalistic emotion of the more colloquial or contemporary theatre,” said Cumpsty. “Our Electra has that big, powerful emotion within a formal frame.”

Cumpsty is no stranger to the classical stage. He spent several years working “pretty consistently” with the New York Shakespeare Festival in a variety of roles and was also in Timon of Athens on Broadway. He has also been on Broadway in 1776, Racing Demon, The Heiress, Translations, La Bete and Artist Descending a Staircase.

Although he is best known for his stage work, Cumpsty took some time off from the stage for the small screen in 1991-1992, appearing in a variety of television movies, series episodes and miniseries. His film work includes, Fatal Instinct, The Associate and The Ice Storm and on television he has been seen as a series regular on L.A. Law, and as a recurring character on Star Trek: Voyager.

And although he found steady work and success in Hollywood he felt quickly drawn back to the stage.

“I missed the theatre schedule when I was there, because it is enormously satisfying. It is also such a different way to act. On television, I am allowed to be infinitely more private, more intimate and more subtle and I do love that – it is really challenging and exciting,” said Cumpsty. “But I miss the arc of building a performance. Playing through forges a direct relationship for me and it gives continuity to a performance.”

Cumpsty, Electra’s success notwithstanding, said he was content with his career and the direction it was recently taking.

“I am really fortunate to be working in New York theatre. I like the feeling that I have that I am now a fixture amongst a group of working actors,” said Cumpsty. “I love that and it is something that I will continue to aspire to.”

And after Electra closes it’s Broadway run? What is in the cards for Cumpsty?

“I don’t really know. Things come along that excite me and that I am happy when I get to dig into them. But I would like to do one of the ‘big and scary’ roles: Richard III, MacBeth, Hamlet.”

But for now, Cumpsty said, he is content to concentrate on what is left of Electra.

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