

Director's Notes

I had only seen one or two episodes of the television series "Only When I Laugh" in the early 80's, and could only vaguely recall it. However it does seem I was in the minority, and it that it was received very well at the time. When I read the stage play it was without the memory of Peter Bowles and James Bolam in the leading roles, or indeed Richard Wilson playing the surgeon.

Having been in hospital myself several times over the last ten years, (not in Men's surgical) the humour in Eric Chappell's writing really struck a chord. The last time I was in for five days and wrote a journal. I knew there was a play in there somewhere.

This production has been a bit of a 'roller coaster'. I was aware that we would not be able to get on stage for awhile due to the refurbishment of the stage, wardrobe department, and replacement roof, but had not really realized the enormity of the project.

We have rehearsed in a room in Pete Gillam's house, a variety of rooms in the Methodist church hall, and the bar. It has been quite an experience observing the three lead actors (especially Pete Bagley) balancing precariously on tables, chairs and stools in these various rehearsal areas. Not once did any of the cast complain. They just got on with it. "What troopers."

The rehearsals have been amazing, with a lot of laughter, but massive commitment and team work.

"It Can Damage Your Health" is 'warm-hearted, perceptive and hilarious.' You the audience will, I hope, enjoy the production. I am sure for some of you it will hold particular memories of the NHS, probably not all good.

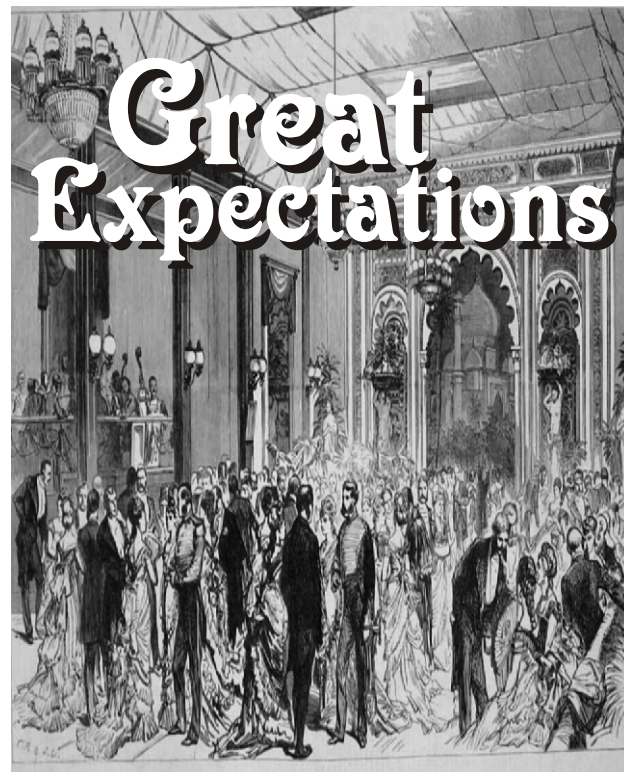
Doreen Belton

September 2009

www.criteriontheatre.co.uk

Criterion Theatre

Our next production



by **Charles Dickens**
adapted by **James Maxwell**

17th to 24th Oct 2009

OR BOX OFFICE (Direct)
ER 024 7667 5175
ON This is a notice to members

This is one of Dickens's most fascinating and disturbing novels, telling how a terrifying encounter with an escaped convict forever changes the life of the orphaned Pip. Turning his back on his humble beginnings as blacksmith's apprentice, he strives to better himself and become a gentleman, unaware of the hidden dangers that await him. In this adaptation written especially for the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester a cast of unforgettable characters are brought to life.

RJ Production photography by
Richard Johnson
079 0450 6280

The Criterion is a non-smoking theatre.



by **Eric Chappell**

Programme

Produced by arrangement with Samuel French Limited



Pete Bagley (Ray Higgins)

Pete has been a member of the theatre for 40 years in October and in that time has occupied most jobs (how well is a different matter). He has directed shows as diverse as: "Henry V", "Burning Issues", "Christmas Carol", "Old Herbaceous" and "Beauty and the Beast". Performed in plays such as "And then there were None", "Arsenic and Old Lace", "Brassed Off", "Donkey's Years" and many more. He is now looking forward to selling the ice cream during the interval!



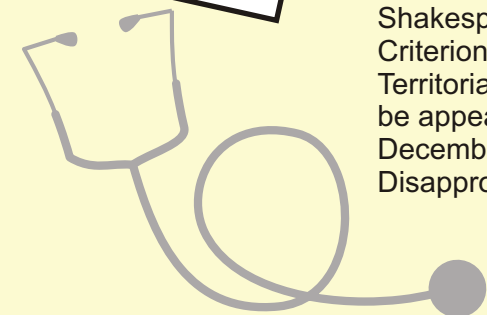
Pete Gillam (Charlie Palmer)

Pete was originally drawn to the Criterion primarily for its real ale. In 2006 he made his tentative stage debut alongside Pete Bagley as a mysterious, moustached aristocrat in Daisy Pulls It Off. Since then he has enjoyed playing a number of roles including a sandal-wearing bore (An Evening with Gary Lineker), a killer on death row (Laramie Project), a boy in pyjamas (Tom's Midnight Garden) and an American college jock (The Shape of Things). It Can Damage Your Health sees Pete reunited with both Mr Bagley and another moustache.

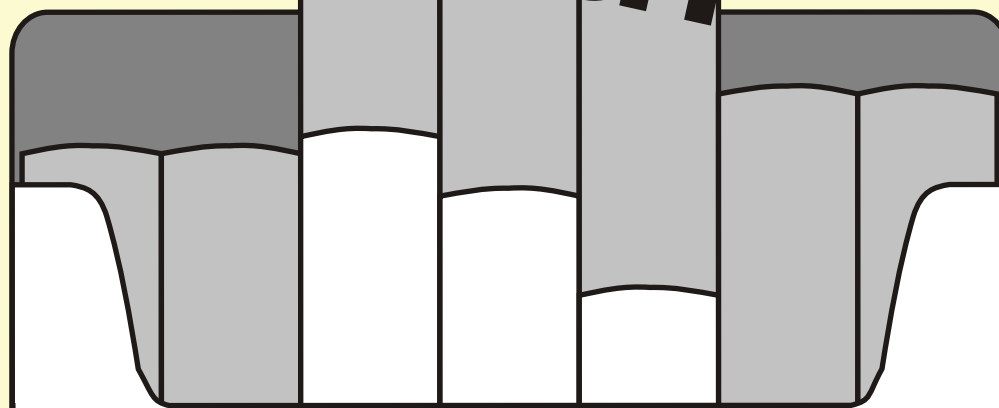


John Waters (Gary Duffin)

John joined the Criterion at 7 years old as part of the fledgling Saturday morning drama classes, picking up child roles in "Forty Years On" and "Nicholas Nickleby". He moved up to the Youth Theatre and played a more adult role in "Oh What A Lovely War" as well as choreographing the swordfights for "The Canterbury Tales" and more recently the fights for "The Complete Works of Shakespeare". He is back at the Criterion after spells at University, the Territorial Army and in Politics - he will be appearing again soon in December's "A Chorus of Disapproval"



It can damage your health



Ray Higgins
Charlie Palmer
Gary Duffin
Dr Gibbs
Christine
Ranji
Orderly/ Porter/
Patient

Pete Bagley
Pete Gillam
John Waters
Andrew Tyrer
Susie Murphy
Jit Thakor

Craig Porter

Crew
Director
Stage Manager
Set Design
Build

Doreen Belton
Olivia Holmes
Simon Sharpe
Doug Griffith, John Griffith
Mike Tooley, Tim Tooley, Ben Woodward
Paul Chokran, Paul Wilkins
Emma Fernandez, Paul Tierney

Paint

Lighting Design
Operation
Sound Design
Operation
Props
Wardrobe
Special Thanks

Ian Knight
Matt Hadlum
Dave Cornish
Matt Hadlum
Chris Jones, Sue Hadlum
Pam Coleman, Maureen Liggins, Izzie Hadlum
Laurence Silvester and Tom James for Medical Advice
Sheldon Healthcare for Hospital Supplies
Doug and John Griffith, for being there when we needed them
BMI Meriden Hospital and Bernie Creaven for medical supplies and help

Jit Thakor (Ranji)

This is Jit's debut appearance at The Criterion. He has never previously performed on stage and is excited and relishing the opportunity to become an actor, hoping to star someday in a Bollywood movie - watch out 'Slumdog Millionaire II'. He hopes to become a regular face down at The Criterion.



Andrew Tyrer (Dr Gibbs)

Andrew makes a return to the Criterion stage after an absence of nearly two years when he appeared as Carl Specter in *Holy Ghosts*. His Criterion appearances include the Doctor in *Lady in the Van*, the psychiatrist in *The Graduate* and and John Knox in *Speaking in Tongues*. Roles at other theatres in the area include Lt Kendrick in *A Few Good Men*, Praed in *Mrs Warrens Profession*, Teddy in *The Homecoming*, Charles Murdock in *The Ghost Train* and most recently Arthur Boggis in *Accrington Pals* at the Talisman Kenilworth.



Susie Murphy (Christine)

Prior to joining The Critereon (this year) Susie has not stepped on stage since 2004 with the Apollo Players, at the Apollo Theatre (another Little Guild theatre), on the Isle of Wight. There she performed in Jon Godber's *Fly me to the Moon*, Since joining The Critereon she has helped with set for the *Four Nights in Knaresborough*, and was most recently a chorus member in *Sex Drugs Rick&Noel*.



Craig Porter (orderly/porter/patient)

This is Craig's theatre stage debut. A big fan as a child of 'Only when I laugh', Craig was very keen to be a part of this production and a chance meeting with Doreen on a new member's night led to a small part in the play. It has been a lot of fun as well as an interesting learning curve.

