

## Visiting Mr Green - Director's Notes.

When I was handed a copy of this play I knew nothing about it. I'd never heard of the play or the author. The title didn't seem particularly exciting or inspiring, so when I sat down to read it, my expectations weren't high. As I was unaware of any performances, I assumed that it wasn't popular and would therefore be possibly boring, or else difficult to understand. How wrong could I be! After the first few pages I knew that I was experiencing something very special; a play that speaks to everyone.

I couldn't put the play down; it was making me laugh; it was drawing me in to the situation these two men found themselves in and the very different, yet in some ways, strangely similar worlds they inhabited, and I desperately wanted to know what the next page would bring. As I continued to read and to listen to the voices - one old, grumpy guy talking with one young, angry guy I knew I really wanted to direct this play. And when I found that I was not only reading and laughing, but also reading and crying, as well as enjoying a growing feeling of warmth and happiness in the company of Mr Green and Ross Gardiner, I knew I wanted to share this play with as many people as possible. As it turns out, I have since found out that the play is very popular (for details go to [www.visitingmrgreen.com](http://www.visitingmrgreen.com)).

A play with only two characters can present difficulties; certainly for the actors, often for the director and sometimes for the audience. It's important to find two people who will be able to work closely together and relate to each other, both on and off stage. After a lengthy reading and audition process, for which I must thank and congratulate the many talented and committed company members, both young and not so young who took part in this process, I found two men who could do just that, Keith Railton and Chris Firth.

I must, of course, leave you to judge for yourselves, but for me, after many enjoyable weeks of preparation and rehearsal, they have brought this play to vibrant life, by becoming Mr Green and Ross Gardiner. I hope their thoughtful, intelligent, funny and moving portrayals of two very real people will bring you as much pleasure as they have to me.

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Our next production:



Gypsy

8th - 15th December 2012

Book by Arthur Laurents. Music by Jule Styne.

Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim.

Gypsy is the ultimate story of a very ambitious stage mother and her daughters. Join Rose, June and Louise in their trip across the United States during the 1920's, when vaudeville was dying and see the emergence of the world-famous burlesque artist, Gypsy Rose Lee.

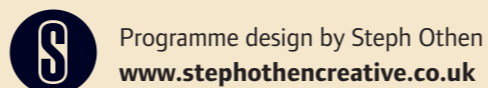
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No photography or videoing allowed.  
The Criterion is a non-smoking theatre.



**"A touching comedy about two men who are thrown together, yet are generations apart".**

A photograph of a brown trench coat and a grey flat cap hanging on a wooden coat rack against a green patterned wallpaper.

# Visiting Mr Green

**by Jeff Baron**

# Programme



Chris has had various roles at the Criterion over the last 20 years or so, following his breakout performance in the critically acclaimed production of *Babes in the Wood* in 1988. He has successfully made the transition from freakishly annoying child upstart, to incredibly annoying teenage upstart, and finally through to a self-righteous molly coddled adult. During which time he's also been in some plays. Following this production, he is set to start at the prestigious "John Sergeant Dance School" in London, famed for developing some of the best improvised dancers in the public sector industry.

# Visiting Mr Green

by Jeff Baron



Keith first joined the Criterion in 1965. His most recent appearances have been as Henry Ormonroyd in *When We Are Married*, Jagers in *Great Expectations*, Ronald in *Absurd Person Singular*, Richard in *The Seafarer* and Arvide in *Guys and Dolls*. He has also directed *Treasure Island*, *Oh! What a Lovely War*, *Brassed Off*, *The Graduate* and *The Herbal Bed*. Keith is currently Artistic Director of the Criterion.

**Setting:** New York, modern times

**One interval**

**Cast**

Mr Green                      Keith Railton  
Ross Gardiner                Chris Firth

**Director**

Annie Woodward

**Production**

Prompt                         Emma Withers  
Sound                          Dave Cornish  
Lighting Design             Karl Stafford  
Lighting Operation        Sarah Zujans  
SM                                Becky Cribdon  
Props                            Lesley Rahilly, Stella Gabriel  
                                      Susan Schweitzer  
Wardrobe                     Pam Coleman, Maureen Liggins,  
                                      Candy Waddell,  
                                      Sara Farmanfarmai  
Set design                     Doug Griffiths  
Set build                        Doug Griffiths, John Griffiths,  
                                      Pete Bagley, Mike Tooley  
Set paint                        Judy Talbot, Pete Bagley,  
                                      Louise Bagley, Paul Chokran  
Voice coaching              Susan Schweitzer  
Special thanks                Robin Stokoe

