

PROOF: DIRECTOR'S NOTES

This time last year I was embarking on my main house directorial debut in Mindgame, and having enjoyed the experience of that immensely, I was keen to have another go. However finding the right play was a crucial part of the problem of that 'difficult second album syndrome'. When after months of fairly fruitless searching, Proof was given to me, it just felt right and I have been thrilled to have had the opportunity to bring it to life on stage. There are a lot of reasons why I was attracted to the play.

Firstly, it is extremely well written - David Auburn's play has no waste in the writing; the dialogue feels real; the plot developments are timed beautifully; and the characters are wonderfully constructed, each of them with multiple and contradictory layers which offer exciting challenges for actors. Secondly, it is set in the world of academia, about which I know a little, being part of that world myself, albeit in a completely different discipline and a different country. But most of all I loved the play because of its story, in equal measure simple and compelling, and with which I think everyone will be able to find a connection.

Essentially this is a story about a family and what happens in the aftermath of bereavement. It is about the relationships between fathers and daughters and the often complicated bonds between sisters. It is about what comes together to make these relationships rife with expectations, compromises, risks, and disappointments. The story is timeless and easily crosses geographical boundaries - it is set in Chicago, but could be around the corner. David Auburn's skill lies in the clever overlaying of this more everyday scenario with a mystery, and a mathematical mystery at that. Proof illustrates the difficulty of ever really proving the relationships that exist between two things, mathematical or otherwise.

The production has been immensely enjoyable, starting with the early discussions over the set and the bringing to life of my vision of a stripped down 'essence of porch', which provides a perfect canvas for the wonderful lighting. This has also been an opportunity to further indulge my love of sound and music within plays. In all this, I could not have asked for a better or more supportive crew in all technical and backstage areas. I have also been lucky to work with a talented cast of actors, and can only thank them all for their hard work, commitment and creative brilliance. It is a pleasure to welcome Jo Higbee for her first production here and I hope that she will become a regular face at the Cri. Finally I need to thank Stella my right hand woman as stage manager and the sterling support of Jordan as Assistant Director, whose eye for detail, his artistic insight and his shared enthusiasm for mining a script, have proved invaluable throughout the whole process.

As a final note, I would like to point out an important Criterion anniversary in 2015. As many of you will remember, in 2011 we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the opening of the building of the Criterion Theatre. However the actual company, the Criterion Players, is older and indeed about this time in January 1955, they put on their first production Meet A Body, directed by our President Geoff Bennett. As I anticipate the opening night of my play exactly 60 years later, I feel the weight of all that history and importantly, the debt of gratitude we owe to those founding members, without whom we would not have the Criterion family that we so love. Do look out for further information about the 60th anniversary over the next few months.

Anne-marie Greene

Criterion Lottery Fund and Draw

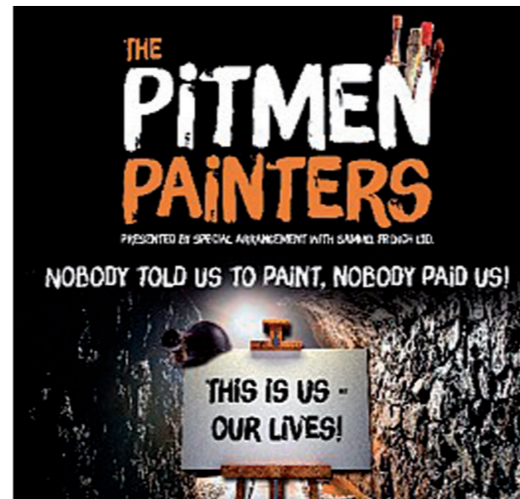
Funds for the theatre are raised through our Lottery Fund.

Please consider buying a number (or more than one) for the small sum of £5 per number per month. Please contact Mike Tooley on 024 7667 3789 or mike_tooley@hotmail.com for details.

Remember... you've got to be in it to win it!



Our next production:



The Pitmen Painters
March 21st to 28th 2015

A play by Lee Hall, directed by Pete Bagley

In 1934, a group of Ashington miners and a dental mechanic hired a professor from Newcastle University to teach an Art Appreciation evening class. Unable to understand each other, they embarked on one of the most unusual experiments in British art as the pitmen learned to become painters. Within a few years the most avant-garde artists became their friends, their work was taken for prestigious collections and they were celebrated throughout the British art world; but every day they worked, as before, down the mine.

BOX OFFICE
024 7667 4719

If you have any comments about your experience at The Criterion Theatre, please email us at comments@critteriontheatre.co.uk

ABC PRINT

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

www.criteriontheatre.co.uk

**Because we don't have a
choice about what we inherit...**



PROOF

is presented by special arrangement
with SAMUEL FRENCH, LTD

by David Auburn

Programme

**Lucy Hayton**

This is Lucy's ninth appearance on the Criterion stage over the last 13 years, most recently playing Ruth in *The Thrill of Love*. Other roles have included Louise in *'Gypsy'*, Lady Rochford in *'Anne Boleyn'* and Judith in *'Foxfinder'*. She has also tried her hand as an Assistant Director and Stage Manager and has helped out behind the scenes and behind the bar. Lucy has a degree in Theatre Arts from Goldsmiths which left her with no understanding of mathematics but a love for making theatre.

**Graham Underhill**

Graham has been a member of the Criterion for two years and has enjoyed the varied roles he has been asked to play. Although not a clerical role this time there is a certain theme in the parts he has played. The character of Robert is extremely interesting and gives an insight into genius and its consequences.

Being born and bred in Coventry Graham finds working at the Criterion a joy and he hopes you enjoy the play.

**Jo Higbee**

This is Jo's first show with the Criterion and she is very thankful to this wonderful cast and production team for being so welcoming. It has been quite a few years since she's acted and she's thrilled and terrified to be back on stage. A longtime theatre acolyte, her background is originally in theatre design and production, she holds a BA in acting and MAs in performance studies/theatre history, and she has spent the last three years as the director of a children's theatre company in Warwick. When she isn't at rehearsal, she's either working at her day job in online community management, playing with her dog, practicing with her dance team, or planning her impending wedding.

**Alexander Mushore**

Alexander first appeared on the Criterion stage as Sub Lieutenant Espoir in *'My Three Angels'* and has since worked on the box office and assisted with sound operating. More recently, he competed as a finalist on *Monologue Slam* (Birmingham Rep), played William Shakespeare in *'Oh Puck!* (Lighthorne Village), and performed as Creon in *'Oedipus Rex'* (Birmingham School of Acting). Alexander has had a brilliant time working on *'Proof'* with all the cast and crew. He has found playing Hal a delightful challenge and the process of getting to know him an absolute pleasure. In the day to day, Alexander works as the Behavioural Science Lab Manager at Warwick University

PROOF

by David Auburn

Director**Anne-marie Greene****Assistant Director** **Jordan Jackson****CAST****Catherine****Lucy Hayton****Robert****Graham Underhill****Hal****Alexander Mushore****Claire****Jo Higbee****CREW**

Stage Manager: Stella-maria Gabriel

Prompt: Maggie Parkes

Lighting Design: Paul Harrison

Set Design: Simon Sharpe

Sound Design: Paul Forey

Wardrobe: Genevieve Holmes, Debra Relton-Elves

Props: Sara Farmanfarmai

Set Build: Jess Cornwall, Lisa Cornwall, Terry Cornwall, James Hamilton-Harding, Lucy Hayton, Pete Meredith, Chris Hernon, Lukasz Nowacki, Terry Rahilly, Kevin Woods, Judy Talbot, Doreen Belton, Pam Coleman

Set Paint: Alan Fenn, Karl Stafford, Simon Sharpe

Lighting Operation: Alan Fenn, Karl Stafford, Simon Sharpe

Sound Operation: Dave Cornish

Programme Design: Steph Stradling www.othencreative.co.uk

Music Acknowledgments

'Under the Ivy' and 'Pi' by Kate Bush; 'Parallels' by Eels; 'Feel Good Inc' by Gorillaz; 'Sex on Fire' by Kings of Leon; Various excerpts from 'The Last of Us' by Gustavo Santaolalla; 'Hal's Band': original music by Paul Forey.

The action takes place on the back porch of a house in contemporary Chicago.

