



NO BALL  
GAMES

MID  
SUMMER

a play with songs by

David Greig  
Gordon McIntyre

PROGRAMME

  
www.criteriontheatre.co.uk

# YOU AND CRI



It's always a pleasure to welcome you to the Criterion and I'm certain you're going to very much enjoy this production of *Midsummer*.

This is the directoral debut for Pete Gillam, and given that the first rehearsal took place in February 2020, it may be the longest rehearsal period in the history of the theatre! But not even a global pandemic and a two year wait has dampened Pete's enthusiasm for this show and I'm sure that you'll feel exactly the same.



It's been a busy couple of months for the production crews after the unfortunate postponement of *Mary Stuart* from its intended run in May. We're very pleased that it is only a postponement and it will make it to the stage in September. Once again, it highlights the team ethic that exists within the theatre, with everyone pulling together to ensure the very best outcome. With the rest of the 2022 season now firmly in place, with *The Haunting* and *Alice* to come in the autumn, it promises to be an exciting time to be involved.

Each show comes with their own particular artistic challenges, whether its in sound and lighting, finding suitable props and wardrobe or creating and painting the sets. If you're inspired to get involved, or just learn how these things come together, we'd love to welcome you along. The Theatre Members nights are a good way to do this, or just drop us an email to [secretary@critteriontheatre.co.uk](mailto:secretary@critteriontheatre.co.uk)

And of course, if you're keen to be involved on the stage, details of auditions are listed via the website for upcoming plays.

We hope you have a super night, enjoy the show, and we hope to see you again very soon.

# DIRECTOR'S NOTES

I'd been a fan of Gordon McIntyre, songwriter, and lead singer of the band Ballboy, for over twenty years. When I discovered, four years ago that *Midsummer*, this "play with songs" existed I knew it would be a dream-come-true to direct it.

The play, co-written with playwright David Greig, fuses storytelling and song to produce a theatre experience unlike anything I've seen before. He describes it as a "reverse musical" saying it should be down to earth, acoustic, with just two people and no great big sets and locations, to be real and raw. Gordon McIntyre describes it as a "non-musical" in that the songs in a typical musical move the story forward and in contrast the songs in *Midsummer* are epiphanies where the characters find themselves and share their inner thoughts.

I've been lucky enough to chat with Gordon recently over a few emails and he was kind enough to give us access to the sound design they used in the original production. We've been able to weave two or three of these into our production. I also asked him about the flexible nature of the script, where the designation of lines to each performer is entirely up to the director and Gordon said: "David had a strong feeling about this. I think it's about that overall feeling that each could tell the other's story - the lines can be fought for, the way couples telling these stories often do and he took this a stage further into the actual script itself."

I knew that if I had a chance of doing this wonderful play any justice, I'd need two very special people. Not only did they each need the ability to voice a host of side characters, play instruments and sing live on stage but they also had to portray a very real central character we could believe in.

I've been so lucky that Nicol and Chris agreed to take up this colossal challenge. They've put their hearts and souls into working on this production with me. They've created a Bob and Helena that are beautiful, flawed, and large as life, conjuring laughter and tears both each other and us, the audience.

We've been supported by a fantastic team of set builders, painters, prop builders, lighting, sound, and costume designers. Special thanks to Judy Talbot, Mandy Sutton, Simon Sharpe and Alan Fenn who've gone the extra mile to make real my initial concept for the set design.

I really hope you enjoy our production of *Midsummer*. Don't ask me why I thought an 8-metre-wide illustrated pop-up book would be a good idea - I'm not sure I've got a good enough answer ...

Pete Gillam

For all the latest updates from the theatre, check out the website

[www.criteriontheatre.co.uk](http://www.criteriontheatre.co.uk)



**Helena - Nicol Cortese**

Nicol is very happy to be back on stage after a 4 year break due to emergency surgery, resulting in a permanent stoma.

When not playing mother to a son and a dog, Nicol spends her time marketing and playing music at a host of celebratory events.

She enjoys hiking in the Malverns, testing her wits with complicated jigsaws and “works hard and plays hard” when Paloma the Stoma allows!



**Bob - Chris Firth**

Chris first rehearsed part of this play in what seemed like 2006. Two *actual* *Midsummers* have passed in the interim, so it’s great to finally be able to perform it.

He has recently embraced middle age and enjoys cryptic crosswords that he doesn’t understand.

Chris has also recently found a joy for gardening. He can often be heard telling his son to ‘stay off the grass’ and asking “is this a weed?” of pretty much anything green in a flowerbed.



**Director** Peter Gillam  
**Stage Manager** Alan Fenn  
Paul Forey (Assistant)

**Wardrobe** Anne-marie Greene Deb Elves  
Pam Coleman

**Props** Sally Patalong Erica Young  
Bill Young

**Prompt** Helen Williams

**Set Paint** Judy Talbot Paul Chokran  
Pam Coleman Emma Padfield  
Verity Gillam-Greene Paul Tate  
Linda Gregory

**Set Designer** Mandy Sutton

**Set Build** Terry Rahilly Simon Sharpe  
Michael Waterson Frances Dixon  
Chris Hernon Paul Tate

**Sound Designer** Becky Bartlett

**Lighting Designer** Paul Harrison

**Lighting** Karl Stafford

**Design** Pete Gillam

**Trailer/  
Photography** Steve Brown

# EARLSDON FESTIVAL



The Earlsdon Festival returned in May 2022 following a three year hiatus due to the pandemic, and the Criterion were delighted to be involved again in the community celebrations.

The theatre car park was a throng of activity throughout the day, with a number of stalls including arts and crafts, books, and Keith Railton's ever popular Hosta plants. They were accompanied by delicious offerings from the the coffee morning team and the Criterion's popular pork batch stall, bolstered this year by a vegan burrito option.

Once the bar opened up around midday, so did the action in the car park with entertainment provided throughout the afternoon by the Theatre's own drama group, other community arts groups and a selection of musical performers.

And whilst it wasn't exactly ice cream weather, the fact that it remained dry meant smiles all around and ensured an enjoyable day for all involved; and provided some much needed funds for the theatre's finances!



Having accidentally entered *Queers* into the National Drama Festival, at the Albany Theatre last year and managing to bring home a trophy (for the excellent performance from the excellent Georgia Kelly), we thought this year we'd go the traditional route, now Covid restrictions allowed it, by entering a local drama festival firstly and seeing how we get on. Lighthorne Festival of One Act Plays has been running since 2013, but the Criterion hasn't taken part previously. This year we entered 2 performances - Act 2 of *The Gift*, the run of which was cut short due to Covid last year and a brand new production of *Closer to God* by Anna Jordan.

I picked *Closer to God* because it had just 2 cast members, one small setting, minimal tech, costume and props as this was going to be something we would need to fit in between the existing season and also fit into any space we might want to perform it. Despite the minimal production requirements the piece is still hard hitting and uncompromising.

The festival itself ran over 4 nights with 11 different plays performed. There was a whole range of offerings, including original pieces. The adjudication process was daunting, constructive and fair, with detailed comments coming within minutes of the final performance each night.

In the end it was a tight run thing and we were up against strong competition. *The Gift* came in second, earning a place in the national finals in July. *Closer to God* came a commendable 4th, scoring an "excellent" score and positive comments from the adjudicator. I do hope that Criterion audiences will get a chance to see it at some point. It deserves a wider audience.

Finally I would strongly recommend popping down to the Albany to watch some of the other offerings at the National Drama Festival. If the standard of the best of Lighthorne is anything to go by it will be worth it. The winning play at Lighthorne - *Every Brilliant Thing* - was absolutely amazing and I would encourage anyone interested in fantastic theatre to go and see it. It is an aspirational production and a very worthy winner. A strong home crowd for *The Gift* would also be welcomed

**Gennie Holmes**

# ELEVATE Festival

A fundraising festival commemorating the 50th anniversary of  
**Coventry Haven**  
 Women's Aid

**Saturday 16th July**  
**5pm- late**

**ACE AMBROSE BAR PANDORA**  
**PARADISE OF THE TITANS**  
**TAYLOR-LOUISE WORLD SONG**  
 MORE TBA.

Food & bar, craft stalls, prize draws

  
**Earlsdon, CV5 6EF**  
 Tickets: £10 advanced / £12 on the door

Charity No: 1074897 Company No: 3662353  
 www.coventryhaven.co.uk

The Elevate Festival celebrates the 50th Anniversary of Coventry Haven Women's Aid at The Criterion Theatre with a line up of incredible acts, food & craft stalls, and prize draws.

The event is helping to raise funds for the charity as they continue their work supporting women and children across the city with Coventry Haven Women's Aid. There will be food and craft stalls in the car park and prize draws.

Tickets are £10 advance from the Criterion Box Office and £12 on the door. The theatre bar will be open and tickets will allow entry to the main auditorium.

## CRITERION FRIENDS

We are so grateful to our current Criterion Friends who continue to give us small, and larger, donations on a regular basis to help us keep going into our seventieth decade!

You can join this list - there is real power in lots of people giving us small amounts on a regular basis. And you can gift-aid your pledge too. Gifting the cost of a double gin and tonic every month will make all the difference to your local theatre!

So what are you waiting for? Contact [friends@critteriontheatre.co.uk](mailto:friends@critteriontheatre.co.uk) or visit [www.critteriontheatre.co.uk/join/friend](http://www.critteriontheatre.co.uk/join/friend) to find out more.

- Alan Porter
- John and Wendy Baxter
- Mick Forey
- Pete Gillam and Anne-marie Greene
- Ruth Miller and Bill Butler
- Chris Murly
- John and Kate Purcell
- Jane and Keith Railton
- Judy and Simon Sharpe
- Zoe and Rob Wartnaby

## BALLBOY

Tonight's show features songs written by Gordon McIntyre, the chief songwriter for the Scottish Indie band *Ballboy*.

Formed in 1997, the band has released a total of five albums (one being a compilation of EPs in 2001) up to their most recent in 2008. From their early releases, the band were popular with the DJ John Peel and recorded several sessions for his BBC Radio 1 show,

Since then, McIntyre has gone on to be involved in a number of projects, including of course, writing the music for *Midsummer*. And by day, he's the headteacher of a Primary school in Edinburgh!

There are also rumours of a Ball boy reunion later in 2022, and you can find out details on <https://ballboymusic.com/>



We Are  
**OPEN**  
 10.30am-12.30pm

SATURDAY 6TH AUG  
**COFFEE**  
**MORNING**

Criterion Theatre  
 Berkeley Rd South  
 CV5 6EF



Coffee  
 Cake  
 Community



**Need a Pitstop?**

You can now order your drink and/or ice cream before you even get to the theatre via the Criterion Bar online ordering system.

Collect it on your way into the theatre and enjoy some refreshment at your seat. You can also choose to order for either interval (or both!) during the performance too.

Please be aware that cash payments will not be available at the bar itself - CARD ONLY.

Go to <https://www.criteriontheatre.co.uk/bar> to start your order!

If you haven't used our bar ordering application on the website, it couldn't be easier.

1. Click on "Start Order" at the top.



Start Your Order

Your Name  
 Frank Ian Stein

Your Email  
 monster@gmail.com

When  
 Sat 29th Jan - a performance of: The Gift

First Act

2. Put in your details - name, email, the performance you want them for and which Act you want them for. The click "Choose from the menu"

3. Choose your required refreshments. When you've finished, Click on "Pay"

4. Enter any further requirements e.g "No ice" and enter your card details.

5. Collect your drinks from the Drinks collection point from the Foyer. They will be

If you are taking your drinks into the auditorium with you, please help our volunteers by returning your glasses to the bar. Thankyou!

# Coming Next

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**Mary Stuart**

**Saturday 3rd - 10th September 2022**

Deposed, imprisoned and powerless Mary, Queen of Scots represents everything that threatens the life and reign of Queen Elizabeth I. The two women have much in common, having been manipulated by powerful forces around them, but only one can live.

A thrilling fictional meeting is at the heart of Schiller's play in which Mary redeems her youthful crimes through an ordeal that lifts her into realms of spiritual serenity, while Elizabeth descends deeper into rage, revenge and deception. Oswald's striking adaptation in a mixture of modern prose and poetry is accessible and passionate.

"At a time when world media is obsessed with the English royals' pretty wedding frocks and resplendent pomp and ceremony, showcasing a perfectly dressed union of state, monarchy and church, Peter Oswald's new version of 18th century playwright Friedrich Schiller's Mary Stuart takes us back to a time when having influence through power, religion, loyalty and monarchy, could literally be a matter of life or death...and shows us that time hasn't changed one aspect of monarchy: that the world continues to judge by appearance, rather than reality."

(Kate Ward-Smythe, New Zealand Herald)



If you have any comments about your experience with The Criterion Theatre, please email us at: [customerexperience@criteriontheatre.co.uk](mailto:customerexperience@criteriontheatre.co.uk)

Video and/or audio recording of performance by any means whatsoever are strictly prohibited

Registered Charity 11614

We believe that it is important as an organisation that serves the people of Coventry to speak out against racial injustice and prejudice.  
**We want to be clear – Black Lives Matter.**  
We are listening, and we are learning about how we can serve our communities better together.

