

FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

VIBRANT **NEW WRITING** | UNIQUE **REDISCOVERIES**

Summer Season – May to August 2016

The London Premiere

A SUBJECT OF SCANDAL AND CONCERN

by John Osborne.

Directed by Jimmy Walters.

Designed by Philip Lindley. Lighting by Simon Gethin Thomas. Music by Piers Sherwood Roberts. Choreography by Ste Clough. Presented by Proud Haddock in association with Neil McPherson for the Finborough Theatre.

Cast: Ralph Birtwell. Doron Davidson. Edmund Digby-Jones. Caroline Moroney. Jamie Muscato. Richard Shanks.

"I have injured no man's reputation, taken no man's property, attacked no man's person, violated no oath, taught no immorality. I was asked a question and answered it openly."

In a production commissioned by the Finborough Theatre, the London premiere – and the first production in over 40 years – of John Osborne's ***A Subject Of Scandal And Concern*** will run at the Finborough Theatre, playing nine Sunday and Monday evenings and Tuesday matinees from Sunday, 22 May 2016 (**Press Night: Monday, 23 May 2016 at 7.30pm**)

Cheltenham, 1842. George Jacob Holyoake is a poor young teacher, making his way from Birmingham to Bristol to visit a friend who has been imprisoned for publishing a journal that criticises the establishment. When he makes a stop in Cheltenham to address a lecture, his words and his overwhelming commitment to speaking the truth will change his life forever.

Arrested and tried for blasphemy, and separated from his starving wife and child, Holyoake is faced with the choice of conforming to the establishment or staying true to his beliefs during in a time of injustice and intolerance.

Based on the true story of the last man to stand trial for blasphemy in England, ***A Subject Of Scandal And Concern*** was originally written for television in 1960 starring Richard Burton and Rachel Roberts, and directed by Tony Richardson, and was first seen onstage in Nottingham in the early 1960s. This production marks the first theatrical staging of the play in over 40 years and its long overdue London premiere.

Playwright **John Osborne** was born in Fulham in 1929. His best known works include *Look Back in Anger* (celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2016), *The Entertainer*, *Luther*, *Inadmissible Evidence*, *West of Suez*, *A Sense of Detachment*, *Watch It Come Down*, *A Patriot For Me* and *The Hotel In Amsterdam*, his screenplay for the film *Tom Jones* which won him an Oscar, and his autobiographies *A Better Class of Person* and *Almost A Gentleman*. Osborne died in 1994.

Director **Jimmy Walters'** previous productions include *A Naughty Night With Noël Coward* (Old Red Lion Theatre), *Julius Caesar* (Saatchi Gallery and Chelsea Theatre), *Improbable Fiction* (Courtyard Theatre), *Hamlet* (United Arab Emirates Tour and Network Theatre), *I the Jury* (Hen and Chickens Theatre), *Breaded Butler* (Troubadour) and *Dear Ray* (Edinburgh Festival). Assistant Direction includes Young Shakespeare Company tours of *Twelfth Night* and *Romeo and Juliet* (Bloomsbury Theatre), *Othello* (Riverside Studios) and *Knock Yourself Out* (Courtyard Theatre).

The cast is:

Ralph Birtwell | Bubbb/Mason/Erskine/Jailer

Trained at London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.

Theatre includes *Macbeth* (National Tour for Tara Arts), *The Man of Mode*, *Market Boy* and *The Royal Hunt of the Sun* (National Theatre), *Aladdin* and *Sleeping Beauty* (Theatre Royal Stratford East), *East Is East* (Haymarket Theatre,

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Press Information

Leicester), *Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves* (The Theatre, Chipping Norton), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Macbeth* (English Shakespeare Company), *Richard III*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Relapse* (Royal Shakespeare Company), *Call Me Madam* (Union Theatre), *Aspire* (Aspire Dome, Qatar), *The Far Pavilions* (Shaftsbury Theatre), *Bombay Dreams* (Apollo Victoria Theatre), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (National Tour), and *I Was Looking at the Ceiling and Then I Saw the Sky* (Southwark Playhouse).

Film includes: *East Is East* and *Shooting Stars*.

Television includes *Coronation Street*, *Law and Order: UK*, *Harley Street*, *Crisis Command*, *Doctors*, *The Vice*, *Blood Strangers*, *The Cops*, *Clocking Off* and *Tales From Pleasure Beach*.

Workshop includes *Bombay Dreams*, *Free World* and *Bend It Like Beckham*.

Edmund Digby-Jones | Brother In Law/Pinching/Clerk/Chaplain

Trained at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School.

Theatre includes *Generation Y* (Hen and Chickens Theatre), *The Sunset Five* (Greenwich Theatre, Hull Truck, and Pleasance London), *The Daily Plays* (Pleasance London), *A Haunting* (Southwark Playhouse), *The Conquering Hero* (The Tobacco Factory, Bristol), *Love to Love to Love You* (VAULT Festival), *Play/ Date* (Theatre Delicatessen), *Being As I Am* (King's Head Theatre), *The Miser* (Watermill Theatre, Newbury), *Sandwich Man* (Etcetera Theatre), *Hamlet* (National Tour), *Disco Pigs* (Tristan Bates Theatre), and *Phaedra's Love* (National Student Drama Festival).

Film includes *Nevermore*, *Turn Me Online*, *Independence Day*, *No Win No Fee*, *Man Alive* and *No Smoking*.

Television includes *A Song for Jenny*, *Life in Squares*, *Outlander*, *Doctors* and *The Best of Men*.

Doron Davidson | Narrator/Maitland/Lefroy/Jones/Bartram

Trained at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School.

Theatre includes *Romeo and Juliet* (Holy Trinity Church, London), *Execution of Justice* (Southwark Playhouse), *The Comedy of Errors* and *Richard II* (The Tobacco Factory, Bristol) and *Hedda Gabler* (Riverside Studios).

Film includes *Woman in Gold* and *World War Z*.

Television includes *Call The Midwife*, *Catastrophe* and *The Honourable Woman*.

Caroline Moroney | Mrs Holyoake

Trained at Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

Theatre whilst training includes *The Rover*, *Love(Sic)*, *As You like it*, *New Labour*, *Women of Twilight*, *Measure For Measure*, *Stasiland*, *The Busie Body*, *The Changeling*, *King Lear*, *Medea*, *August Osage County* and *Chicken Soup With Barley* (RADA).

Rehearsed Readings include *Julius Caesar* and *Twelfth Night*.

Jamie Muscato | Mr Holyoake

Theatre includes *Stay Awake Jake* (VAULT Festival), *Bend It Like Beckham* (Phoenix Theatre), *Sweeney Todd* (Welsh National Opera), *House of Mirrors and Hearts* (Arcola Theatre), *Dogfight* (Southwark Playhouse), *The Light Princess* (National Theatre), *Rock of Ages* (Shaftsbury Theatre), *Love Story* (Chichester Festival Theatre and Duchess Theatre), *Les Misérables* (International Tour), *Spring Awakening* (Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith) and *Lift* (Trafalgar Studios).

Film includes *Les Misérables*, *The Euphoria of Drowning* and *Wild Oats*.

Television includes *Cilla*, *Mega Bytes Café* and *My Parents Are Aliens*.

Rehearsed Readings include *Remote* and *Drama Baby* (National Theatre Studio) and *The Writing of Snoo Wilson* (National Theatre Platforms).

Workshops includes *Bend It Like Beckham*, *Blitz*, *Falklands*, *But I'm A Cheerleader The Musical* and *X*.

Richard Shanks | Chairman/Magistrate/Cooper/Alexander

Trained at Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Theatre includes *One Man Two Guvnors*, *The Revenger's Tragedy* and *Major Barbara* (National Theatre), *Spider Lady* (Soho Theatre), *The Poetry of Dan Brown* (The Roundhouse), *The Arden Project* (The Old Vic), *None But Friends* (Rose Theatre, Kingston), *The Spanish Tragedy* (Arcola Theatre), *Almost Near* (National Theatre Studio) and *Playtime* (Hampstead Theatre).

Film includes *Pride*, *Pusher*, *Last Night*, *The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus* and *Inseparable*.

Television includes *The Royals*, *The Last Hours of Laura K*, *Inspector George Gently*, *The Borgias*, *EastEnders*, *Holby City*, *The Bill* and *The Message*.

The press on A Subject of Scandal and Concern

"An exceptionally good play" Maurice Richardson, *The Observer*

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The press on playwright John Osborne

"John Osborne liberated theatrical language" Michael Billington, *The Guardian*

"The man who turned anger into art" *BBC*

"John Osborne spoke out in a vein of ebullient, free-wheeling rancour that betokened the arrival of something new in the theatre – a sophisticated, articulate lower-class." Kenneth Tynan, *Tynan Right And Left*

"Osborne...changed the course of British theatre and earned him a reputation as one of the most forceful voices among a new generation of rebellious post-war dramatists" *The New York Times*

"John Osborne famously kick-started the theatrical trend for 'Angry Young Men' and drama that put society's discontents at centre-stage." *BFI Screen Online*

"*A Subject of Scandal and Concern* and *Luther*, emerged out of the author's anti-nuclear activism and his anger regarding the role of Britain's political leaders in the escalation of Cold-War tensions that led to the Berlin Crisis of 1961." Jonathan Bolton

The press on director Jimmy Walters

"Jimmy Walters has kept Coward's concept at the core of his production" ★★★★★ *The Upcoming*

"Both plays...allowed the audience to be transported back to a bygone era." ★★★★★ *Musical Theatre Musings*

"Jimmy Walters' direction is spot on" ★★★★★ *LondonTheatre1*

Director Jimmy Walters has brought to life two works of Noël Coward. You'll feel as if you've been pulled back to the 1920's." ★★★★★ *GAY UK*

"This evening of two of Noel Coward's one-act plays cannot be faulted." *The Stage*

"The evening is really an homage to the genius of Noël Coward and the passion of the cast and creative team for the writing is unmistakable" *LGBTQ Arts and Culture*

"Director Jimmy Walters has developed an infectiously funny double bill, which says something honest about love and marriage." *The Culture Trip*

"A thoroughly absorbing evening in the theatre with high professional values across the board" *British Theatre Guide*

"Full marks to Jimmy Walters" *Camden Review*

PRESS NIGHT: MONDAY, 23 MAY 2016 AT 7.30PM

PHOTOCALL: MONDAY, 23 MAY 2016 AT 5.00PM-5.30PM

Finborough Theatre, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED

Box Office 0844 847 1652 Book online at www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk

Sundays, Mondays and Tuesdays, 22, 23, 24, 29, 30, 31 May, 5, 6, 7 June 2016

Sunday and Monday evenings at 7.30pm. Tuesday matinees at 2.00pm.

Tickets £18, £16 concessions.

Performance Length: 70 minutes.

For more information, interviews and images, please contact

Neil McPherson on e-mail admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk or **07977 173135**

Download press releases and images at <http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk/press-resources.php>

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