

Melvyn Bragg's KING LEAR IN NEW YORK

A NEW
ADAPTATION
FOR THE
HOSTRY
FESTIVAL
2016

Directed & Produced by
STASH KIRKBRIDE

Executive Producer
PETER BARROW

Lighting Design **TIM TRACEY**
Set Design **MATT REEVE**
Original music **MARK REUTER**
Soundscape **CHRIS BOND**



REBECCA CHAPMAN

PETER BARROW

REBECCA ALDRID

NINA TAYLOR

LOUIS HILYER

In this special Shakespeare anniversary year, the Hostry Festival proudly presents Melvyn Bragg's **KING LEAR IN NEW YORK**, a play especially re-written and adapted for the festival by this internationally renowned presenter, broadcaster, author and playwright.

Running Time: 90 minutes approx. No Interval.
[Please note, the script contains occasional strong language]

Supported by:





Stash Kirkbride
with Sabrina Poole,
Assistant Director

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Director's Note

In 2010 Peter Barrow and I set up **The PBSK Partnership**, in order to stage two plays he knew I had always wanted to produce whilst in London as an actor/producer. We decided to find a space that offered “all new possibilities” and as **Her Majesty the Queen** had just opened the Hostry building at Norwich Cathedral we approached the **Dean and Chapter**. Our first year saw us produce a highly successful play, our second year we became a festival of events, and the rest, 6 years on as they say is history. The Hostry Festival has now become a fixture on the cultural landscape of Norfolk, engaging with well over 100 volunteers each year. People such as **Louis Hilyer** whose credits include the RSC and National Theatre choose to perform with us; as well as working actors in Norfolk who have been doing so simply for the love of it for many years. Our job as producers, is to set the scene and the standards of work to make it a comfortable fit for all involved. The standards of work from the get go are high, and our ethos remains simple – “How good can we make it?” We offer an elevated experience for actors, writers, directors, designers, technicians and students, to flourish and enjoy real job satisfaction.

Working with writers such as Melvyn Bragg is precisely what we're also about.

We met Melvyn in early 2016 and straight away we all agreed to stage his play. With a real leap of faith on his part he entrusted us with presenting a whole newly updated one act, 90 minute adaptation of his work. 2016 would see the festival produce his only play, well over 20 years-on since the original version I first saw at the Chichester Festival. So, here we are tonight, ready to share with you the results of our wonderfully satisfying working relationship with this internationally recognised author, presenter and playwright.

King Lear In New York is a great piece of storytelling, offering real theatricality, and reality, for those portraying Melvyn's characters. We care about what happens to the people in this play. And I can safely say you will be moved to laughter and to tears perhaps, and above all else you will be entertained. It is a brilliantly observed piece of writing, affording its actors the chance to shine, and as the director of this production I am more than proud of each and every member of our cast and crew.

It is already one of the highlights of our festival's history so far. Thank you for being here. Enjoy the acting, with a capital A! The original music and soundscape, the lighting and set design, and this heavenly building that seems to relish us turning it into a performance space, creating '**The Autumn Festival Of Norfolk**' each year.

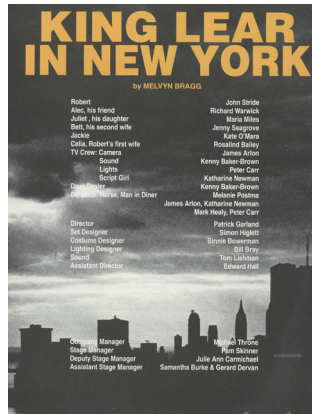
No need to say any more about the play, it will speak for itself now. Enjoy it all.

Stash Kirkbride
Director/Producer:
Artistic Director of the Hostry Festival
info@hostryfestival.org

PS. Any comments, reviews and thoughts on the production – we'd love to hear from you.



Melvyn Bragg



Cast list from the original production



Original production photograph – Jenny Seagrove (left) and Kate O'Mara (right) – Photo by John Timbers

A foreword from Melvyn Bragg

I think I got to know about 'King Lear' and Richard Burton at near enough the same time. Just after the mid 50's I was reading 'King Lear' again and again because it was one of the set books for my A Levels, and also because I just couldn't believe how he did it! At the same time, Richard Burton was beginning to emerge. He came from a mining family, the 13th of 14 children (my Grandfather, who worked the coal mines which ran under the sea, came from a family of 16 children). Somehow Burton had rocketed to national lustre as a very great actor (though he had no formal training) and soon afterwards he became an international film star and celebrity, and doomed tragic hero.

I wanted to write a novel set at the turn of the 19th and 20th century, and thought that the Richard Burton story would be a good template for it. Word got out through my publisher, and reached Richard's widow, Sally Burton, who called me to say that she had three tea chests full of Burton's notebooks. She had never had the heart to go through them and would I like a look?

I went to Burton's house in Switzerland, thinking I would be there for a day trip... and stayed three days going through these addictive and compelling notebooks. They were literary, they were social comment, they were gossip, they were intermingled with responses from Elizabeth Taylor, they were marvellous; they totally destroyed the idea that I could write a novel! Sally asked me if I would write his biography and I agreed on two conditions. One – that there was no editorial interference from her whatsoever, and two – that the publishers must pay for the copyright of his notebooks because the price was way out of my league. Both those were settled and I got on with it.

It's very odd that I never met Richard Burton. In 60's BBC television there was a well-established Tafia – a group of Welsh men who were dominant; most of all Huw Wheldon, for whom I worked with on 'Monitor'. They all knew Burton, but somehow I never bumped into him.

Even more curious, I was asked to write a film on Malcolm Lowry's shimmering novel 'Under The Volcano' which was to star Richard Burton. We never met while I was writing the script because he was busy on another project on another continent – or it may have been another planet. And then he could not make the Director's deadline because of other commitments and most reluctantly, his poetic Welsh persuasiveness not being enough on this occasion, the caravan moved on without him.

But I'm glad I never met him. Had I done so, that meeting would have figured disproportionately in the book. As it was, I rowed across his family and friends, both professional and private, and most especially his teacher, Philip, and got a huge amount of good material.

One of the tensions in his later life was between his English friends who thought he should stay in London and become the next Olivier and do all the Great parts, and run the National Theatre because that was Art. Or he could be a commercial Philistine and renounce Art (those were the days of undisguised cultural snobbery) and prostitute himself on celluloid. One upshot was he never did 'King Lear' which he wanted to do.

For reasons which I can't now remember, I thought I would like to try and write about someone like Burton taking on 'King Lear' at a tipping point in his life. When these two professional strands and a most complex and distressing family drama were intertwined, I thought I had the basis for a play.

I wasn't commissioned to write it. I sent it off to Patrick Garland who ran the Chichester Theatre, and whom I've known when we worked together on 'Monitor'. He put it on. We had the singular misfortune to have a fine actor playing the main part who was also, it turned out, sadly, one way and another pretty disruptive.

Anyway, it got done. Some good reviews. Some not. And it did not transfer to London.

Frankly I'd more or less forgotten about it until Stash Kirkbride met me in Norwich after I'd spoken at the UEA on my latest novel. He was tremendously enthusiastic about the play and full of ideas about it, and more or less steam-rolled me into doing it with him. When I read it again a few times, I thought it was too long and too repetitive, lacked the really clear line and was in need of care and attention. So I cut it down to 90 minutes (without interval). I've seen several such productions in London recently and I thought they worked very well.

Stash was extremely encouraging and we ding-donged about the final script. His and Peter Barrow's remarks are always detailed and helpful and usually taken up by me. His excitement has rubbed off and I can't wait to see it.

It is in many ways a new play. I have cut out completely one of the main characters in the first version. I have transformed another of the chief characters. I've reworked a lot of the dialogue. I wish this had been a version I'd sent to Patrick Garland at the Chichester Theatre!

Melvyn Bragg



The
**HOSTRY
FESTIVAL**

Stash Kirkbride & Peter Barrow present, a PBSK Partnership production,
in association with Vivien Green, and The Norfolk Community Foundation

Melvyn Braggs' KING LEAR IN NEW YORK

A new One Act adaptation for the Hostry Festival 2016

Running Time: 90 minutes approx. No Interval.

The play is set sometime in the late 1980's, in New York city.

[Please note, the script contains occasional strong language]

Cast

LOUIS HILYER

Robert, a magnificent actor

REBECCA CHAPMAN

Jackie, TV Journalist, a personality

PETER BARROW

Alec, Robert's brother, an actor

REBECCA ALDRED

Robert's second wife, an agent

NINA TAYLOR

Juliet (Julie) Robert's daughter
by first wife

WILL HARVEY

Chris, TV Crew, Floor Manager

SABRINA POOLE

Lesley TV Crew, Sound

ABIGAIL BURREL

TV, Camerawoman

TAWA GROOMBRIGE

Drug Dealer

ANDY BENNETT

Drug Dealer

SEAMUS WALSH

Drug Dealer

STEPHEN GOYMER

Harry

Production team

STASH KIRKBRIDE –

Director/ Producer

PETER BARROW – Executive Producer

SABRINA POOLE –

Assistant Director/ASM

HAMILTON WILSON –

Assistant Producer

MIKE KING – Associate Producer

MATT REEVE – Set Designer

MARK REUTER – Original Music

CHRIS BOND – Original Soundscape

TIM TRACEY – Lighting and

Production Manager

ELEANOR HICKS –

Production Assistant

SCOTT MEACOCK –

Front Of House Manager

ZOE JONES –

Head Of Festival Volunteers

CATHARINE LANGAN –

Assistant Volunteers Coordinator

MATT DARTFORD –

Production Photography

RICHARD NOBES –

Head of Graphic Design

REBECCA HOUSTON –

Desire Marketing

KATY WENT –

Festival Website Management

SHEILA GARRET –

Festival Administrator

THANK YOU S

Vivien Green and Lesley Catton.
Graham Tuttle and the Norfolk
Community Foundation.
The Norwich Town Close Trust.
The Paul Bassham Trust.
Dick Palmer and the TEN Group.
Kirsty von Malaisé and
Norwich High School for Girls.
Richard Nobes, Director of Marketing
and Communications at Norwich High
School for Girls.
Corrienne Peasgood, Jon Holland,
Brian Brewer, Hannah Newson,
Tara Mayall, Louise Stone and all
at City College Norwich.
The John Jarrold Trust.
Booja-Booja.
The Norse Group.
Emma Knights and all at
the Eastern Daily Press.
Robert Setchell and all at Mustard TV.
Nanette Aldous and
all at BBC Radio Norfolk.
Jo Edye and all at Crude Apache.
Tom Carver. Jesse Kirkbride.
Tracey Catchpole. Chris Bealey.
Sarah, Madeleine and Matthew Young.
Voluntary Norfolk.
Amanda Harrold, Maddermarket Theatre.
Hassanah Wilson and all at
Subud Norwich.

The Dean & Chapter of Norwich Cathedral
and all their volunteers and staff.
Gareth and staff at The Refectory.

And our grateful thanks to all our
Hostry Festival Volunteers for their
wonderful support.



Cast biographies



LOUIS HILYER – Robert

Louis has appeared in a large number of professional shows including: 'Waste' and 'An Inspector Calls' at The National Theatre, 'King Lear', 'Macbeth', 'The Taming Of The Shrew', and 'Les Liaisons Dangereuses' with The RSC, 'The Tempest' and 'Richard II' at The Old Vic, 'The Changing Room' with The Royal Court, and 'Farewell To The Theatre' at The Hampstead Theatre.

He has also worked on film and TV with credits including: 'Troy', 'Sky Captain And The World Of Tomorrow', 'Tina and Bobby', 'Downton Abbey', 'Lewis', 'Absolutely Fabulous', 'Minder' and 'The Catherine Tate Show'.



PETER BARROW – Alec

Peter Barrow is the Hostry Festival's Executive Producer and co-founder. Since 2010 he's appeared as a 97 year old poet, a sheriff and a villain in 2011, a dead Shakespearian jester in 2012, a doomed Scandinavian doctor in 2013, a 1675 cuckold in a big wig in 2014, a priest who converts Gustav Mahler to Catholicism in 2015, and this year as a Big Star's brother in NYC. By way of comic relief, he's also appeared at The Maddermarket Theatre as a German doctor in Agatha Christie, a litigious Massachusetts farmer in Arthur Miller, and Noel Coward's butler. Oh yes, and a defrocked priest at Dragon Hall with Crude Apache. Working with his creative partner Stash Kirkbride, The PBSK Partnership has initiated and

commissioned The Norfolk Arts Awards, Total Ensemble Theatre Company, Paint Out Norwich, A Norfolk Home Companion, Never Too Late! as well as original opera with Lisa Cassidy. Their work together continues to encourage and supply the county with platforms of opportunity for actors, writers, directors, designers, graduates, artists, dancers, and volunteers. Peter is delighted to have worked closely with Melvyn Bragg and Stash Kirkbride to have returned this powerful play back into the spotlight. And who knows where the production may be seen next?, London, Paris... New York perhaps.



REBECCA CHAPMAN – Jackie

A graduate with a BA Hons Performance Arts from Middlesex and a diploma in professional acting from Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, Rebecca has extensive experience in professional acting and contemporary dance, appearing in productions in London's West End and all over the country. Most recently she worked for Curious Directive in 'Spindriff' as part of the Norfolk & Norwich Festival 2016 and at the Drum, Theatre Royal, Plymouth.

She works as a freelance director and drama practitioner for several arts organisations in the Norwich area and is one of the producers that brings in the annual Hostry Festival, the county's autumn arts festival celebrating artists based in Norwich & Norfolk. Rebecca is the Artistic Director of Total Ensemble Theatre Company which she founded in 2011. Total Ensemble brings together casts made up of disabled and non-disabled performers to produce and perform entirely original devised theatre, demonstrating a rare brand of equality in performance and a heart-felt celebration of talent in its many forms.



REBECCA ALDRED – Bett

Rebecca trained at The Drama Centre, London. Earlier this year she played the parts of Mrs. Sullen in 'The Beaux' Stratagem' and Regan in 'King Lear' at the Maddermarket Theatre. She continues to combine her acting career alongside her physiotherapy work. Once again she is honoured to return to the Hostry Festival to work alongside this fabulous cast in the most magical space.



NINA TAYLOR – Julie

Nina is a local actress and singer, specialising in Vintage Jazz, Swing and Blues. She has worked on a number of student films around Norwich; most recently her first feature film 'Set Me Free', which premiered recently at The Forum and was directed by local filmmaker Kristopher Smith.

This is Nina's second appearance at the Hostry Festival, after appearing last year as Alma Mahler in 'Mahler's Conversion'. Her most recent performance was in 'King Lear' at the Maddermarket Theatre. Other credits include 'The Star Spangled Girl' by Neil Simon and 'The Ghost Train' by Arnold Ridley. She will be performing later in the year as Cinderella in 'Into the Woods'.

Cast / production team biographies



TAWA GROOMBRIDGE – Drug dealer

Tawa has worked with several local theatre companies in Norwich and is thrilled to be involved in her first Hostry Festival. Tawa will be providing a supporting role as a drug dealer in this play. *“It is lovely to be part of a festival with such a diverse group of people with all levels of experience”*. Tawa and her children are members of Total Ensemble Theatre Company this year as well.



ANDY BENNETT – Drug dealer

Andy Bennett is a poet and performer. He has performed at festivals and fringes across the country including Edinburgh Festival, and once took an anarchic puppet show to Finland for some reason. Due to a mild obsession with metre, Andy can often be found wandering around woodland, counting on his fingers. This is his first Hostry Festival.



CHRIS BOND – Original Soundscape

Chris has been recording and producing music since the 1980's. He has also been a live sound engineer for several Norwich bands and performers and is part of the technical crew for Crude Apache Theatre Co. He is currently working on albums of Progressive Rock and Electronica, soundscapes for theatre and writing for a spoken word project.



WILL HARVEY – Chris/TV Crew/Floor Manager

Will has been a regular helper at the Hostry Festival since joining Total Ensemble for the prelude to Hamlet: The Undiscovered Country in 2012; and is delighted to be joining Peter, Stash and Bec's wonderfully diverse team once more. By day, Will works as an architect designing and building low energy schools.



SEAMUS WALSH – Drug dealer

Seamus is 25 years old and graduated from De Montfort University with a degree in Drama Studies. Credits include: Cherea in 'Caligula' at Sewell Barn Theatre, Azdak in the 'Caucasian Chalk Circle', and Vladimir in 'Godot was Here'. This is the first time Seamus has worked with the Hostry Festival.



MARK REUTER – Original Music

Mark is a scientist, composer and musician based in Norwich. Previously he has written for various ensembles as part of the London Composers Forum annual concert series. Mark recently composed music for a production of Zastrozzi (Crude Apache). Mark is currently working on the score for a forthcoming production of Richard III and the second album for Norwich electronica band Army of Mice.



ABIGAIL BURRELL – TV crew

Having been out of acting for a number of years, but having maintained a strong interest in drama, an exciting opportunity arose to be involved in the Hostry Festival 2016, which she is delighted to be a part of. She works for Booja-Booja so already has a close connection to the festival and is looking forward to being a part of this great production.



STEPHEN GOYMER – Harry

Stephen has been involved with local drama productions for over 40 years, including the Maddermarket theatre, Great Hall Players, Sewell Barn theatre and Anglia Television. He has recently acted in 'Witness for the Prosecution' at the Maddermarket and is delighted and proud to be in this production as part of the Hostry Festival, which he and his wife Angela have supported in various roles since its inception.

TIM TRACEY – Production Manager

Tim Tracey is a co-director of Tin House, a community and participatory arts organisation based in Norwich that provides bespoke arts solutions for a diversity of practitioners and organisations. Tim provides technical and production management (e.g. SeaChange Arts, Holt Festival, Norwich Puppet Theatre), lighting design and installation (e.g. NPT, The Voice Project, The Neutrinos KlangHaus) and has 30 years of performance experience.



MATT REEVE – Set Designer

Matt is a graduate of BA (Hons) Theatre Dramaturgy from Bretton Hall College of the University of Leeds and MA Animation & Sound Design from the Norwich School of Art and Design. Primarily a visual artist, his professional work includes theatre design, puppetry, sculpture, animation, illustration and performance. In 2015 he received the EDP People's Choice Award for Individual Artist at the Norfolk Arts Awards.



STASH KIRKBRIDE - Director/Producer Artistic Director of the Hostry Festival & Norfolk Arts Awards.

Stash trained as an actor at The Bristol Old Vic Theatre School and has over 25 years of professional acting work in London and throughout the UK to his credit including: West End productions, National No:1 Tours with Bill Kenwright and The British Actors Theatre Company, performing at numerous Regional Theatres such as Theatre Royal Bristol, Leicester Haymarket, Westcliff, Cambridge Arts Theatre – in all he has been in over 80 plays, taking lead roles in over 30 of them.

He has initiated dozens of projects in London from 1992 to 2005.

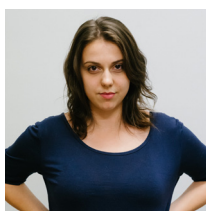
Since his return to Norfolk he has co-founded The Hostry Festival and The Norfolk Arts Awards in association with the EDP, commissioned Total Ensemble Theatre Company, Paint Out Norwich and It's Never Too Late! with Mustard TV. He is currently focussing on maturing the festival into its full and lasting potential.

His passion for discovering talent and supplying projects of merit continues to drive him forward, and with his long term creative partner Peter Barrow, he thrives on "Creating Projects In Norfolk". Always ready to meet for a creative coffee – do contact him to discuss ideas, support, interest, or in being involved in 2017's Hostry Festival. Visit www.stashkirkbride.com or email him at info@hostryfestival.org



HAMILTON WILSON – Assistant Producer

Hamilton has been associated with the Hostry Festival since the first season, providing script support and as a writer in residence making a new English language version of Ibsen's 'A Doll's House' and writing 'Starlings in the Green', a contemporary comment on the play's themes. 'Disappearing Friends', first performed as part of The Hostry Festival 2014, will be broadcast on Radio Norfolk during Dementia Awareness Week next May.



SABRINA POOLE – Assistant Director/Assistant Stage Manager/ Assistant to the artistic director/ Lesley (TV Crew)

Sabrina is a local director and actress recently returned from the Edinburgh Fringe Festival where she was the director and production manager of "The Necessity of Atheism". She works closely with Cambridge-based company Anglia Ruskin Creative with whom her productions have won awards at local drama festivals. She has also worked as a production and stage manager on a number of productions including two fringe shows. She most recently appeared on the stage as Pattie in Dennis Potter's "Brimstone and Treacle" at the Sewell Barn. This is her first Hostry festival.



ELEANOR HICKS - Assistant to the Festival

Eleanor currently studies Professional Acting at Drama Studio London. Prior to this she studied Drama and Theatre Studies at University of Kent and holds a Masters in Directing. She worked with Stash as Assistant Director on 'The Vortex' at the Maddermarket Theatre in May. She has worked to bring together the brochure as well as assist with the organisation and running of the festival. In return Stash coached her on her audition speeches, helping her to gain entry to drama school. She has enjoyed working on the festival immensely.



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**The Hostry Festival is a Not-For-Profit, Community Interest Project,
produced by the PBSK Partnership in association with The Norfolk Community Foundation**

**KING LEAR IN NEW YORK AT THE HOSTRY FESTIVAL 2016 IS DEDICATED TO
Kate O'Mara who starred in the original version at the Chichester Festival in 1992.**

For more information about our 2017 festival line up
or to stay in touch, volunteer, invest or support the Hostry Festival:
email: info@hostryfestival.org
or follow us on Twitter and facebook

Email us your feedback/reviews of this production or any other at this year's
Autumn Festival Of The Arts and your comments could be in
the Hostry Festival 2017 brochure.