

RSC Associate Artist Greg Hicks to star in gripping one man drama at The Theatre Chipping Norton

Star of ‘King Lear’, ‘Julius Caesar’ and ‘The Tempest’ to feature in a new, intensely atmospheric production of THE KREUTZER SONATA by Leo Tolstoy, adapted by Nancy Harris, directed by John Terry

Limited Run: 18th September – 26th September

THE KREUTZER SONATA, based on Leo Tolstoy’s novella and adapted by Irish playwright, Nancy Harris, is an intense, gripping and moving piece of theatre, packed with love, lust, jealousy and murder. Renowned RSC actor, Greg Hicks stars in this gripping one-man show about death, desire and Beethoven.

Confined within a lonely train carriage this subtle, emotionally complex thriller explores the mind of a man driven mad by jealousy, a disintegrated marriage and the overwhelming power of Beethoven's music. He recounts the moment when he watched his wife, a pianist, perform the famous *Kreutzer Sonata* with another man, and became convinced that the breathless passion of the performance could only mean that they were having an affair.

Text and music intertwine and Hicks' performance is complimented beautifully by the exceptional talents of two musicians, Hannah Watson (piano) and Justin Wilman (violin) as Beethoven's Sonata resonates throughout the play. Famously daunting and dramatic as a piece of music, *The Kreutzer Sonata* was declared unplayable by the violinist for whom it was dedicated. Musical Director Harry Sever brings not only the power of the Beethoven Sonata to the production, but atmospheric, newly composed music that echoes and rethinks the original.

First published in 1889, Tolstoy’s novella was promptly censored by both Russian and American authorities, terrified of its portrayal of the jealousies and fragility of modern marriages. Harris adapted Tolstoy’s first-person narrative in 2009 for the stage and saw successful runs at The Gate Theatre, London in 2009 (revived in 2012) before transferring to New York in 2012.

Director John Terry says : “It is an extraordinary opportunity to bring the genius of Tolstoy and Beethoven together in one room, alongside the crisp modern dialogue of a fine playwright, the talents of an extraordinary group of musicians and an actor of truly national standing. This play touches the listener with truth and delicious humour, and has the power to make you shiver like a cold wind blowing through a key-hole. When I first read it, I couldn’t put it down, and sat in my car, late for a meeting, utterly unaware of the world around me. I think – I hope – this is the experience the audience will have. Only more so!”

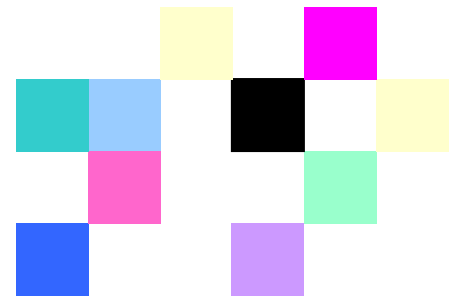
***The Kreutzer Sonata* opens for a limited run on Friday 18th September and runs until Saturday 26th September – only at The Theatre Chipping Norton. Tickets are £15 adults, £13 concessions and available directly from the Box Office on 01608 642350 or online at www.chippingnortontheatre.com**

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THE THEATRE CHIPPING NORTON

2 Spring Street | Chipping Norton | Oxfordshire OX7 5NL

PRESS RELEASE



NOTES TO EDITORS

Performance Schedule:

Friday 18th - Saturday 19th September, 7.45pm, Tuesday 22nd - Saturday 26th September, 7.45pm.

Matinee: Saturday 26th September, 2.30pm.

Press performance: Saturday 19th September, 7.45pm

Marketing Copy

A man boards a train alone: the confined space of the carriage and the movement of the train triggers potent memories. Soon he is confessing to a terrible crime, one for which he holds Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata responsible. With thrilling intensity, delicious humour and musical echoes of the master, the story unfolds. Leo Tolstoy's novella became instantly notorious on its publication, and was banned in both Russia and America. Tolstoy hoped one day to see it performed with live music. In this adaptation by acclaimed playwright Nancy Harris, one actor and two musicians come together to bring the story to vivid life on the stage.

Booking Information

Box Office: 01608 642350 (Monday-Saturday 10am-6pm, Sunday 10am-2pm)

Online: www.chippingnortontheatre.com

The Theatre, 2 Spring Street, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, OX7 5NL

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Greg Hicks – Actor

Greg completed theatrical training at Rose Bruford College and has been a member of The Royal Shakespeare Company since 1976. He was nominated for a 2004 Laurence Olivier Theatre Award in the category Best Actor of 2003 for his performance in Coriolanus at the Old Vic and was awarded the 2003 Critics' Circle Theatre Awards (Drama) for Best Shakespearian Performance in the same role. Theatre work includes: The Tempest, All's Well That Ends Well, Hamlet, Little Eagles, The Winter's Tale, Julius Caesar, King Lear, Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet (all RSC); Coriolanus, Merry Wives of Windsor (Old Vic/ RSC); Clarion, In Blood-Bacchae, Enemy of the People (Arcola Theatre); Tamburlaine the Great (Old Vic/ Barbican). The Cherry Orchard, The Duchess Of Malfi, Coriolanus, Oresteia, Lorenzaccio, Bacchai, Oedipus, Absolute Hell, Salome (National Theatre); Enrico 4, Private Lives, Design for Living, 1953, Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here (Glasgow Citizens); Don Quixote (Leeds Playhouse); Waiting for Godot, Seagull, The Homecoming, Tantalus (Peter Hall Company/Old Vic). Film: Snow White & The Huntsman (2012). TV: Son of God (2014), The Bible (2013).

Hannah Watson | Piano

Hannah Watson is pianist, teacher and choir director working in London and now Norwich. She started her musical studies with Enloc Wu, attending the Royal College of Music Junior Department, and studied Modern Languages at

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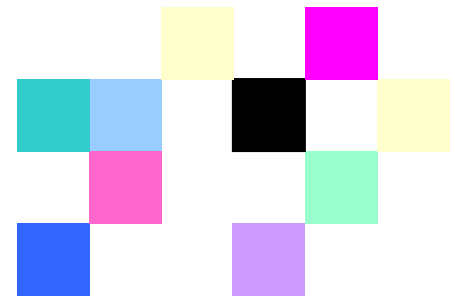
Director John Terry **General Manager** Jo Ludford
The Council for the Company P. Boyd Maunsell (Chairman), C. Aydon, G. Chadwick, H. Granger, R. Greaves, J. Grieve, C. Peake, L. Whordley-Hughes, J. Hole

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Cambridge before deciding to pursue music full-time. Highlights of the last few years have included solo, chamber and song recitals at St Martin-in-the-Fields, the Barbican, LSO St Luke's, Cardiff's St David's Hall and the Royal Festival Hall, as well music societies around the country. Upcoming concerts include a Park Lane recital with violist Luba Tunncliffe in St John Smiths Square.

Justin Wilman | Violin

Justin Wilman spent the first five years of his career with the Royal Marines Band Service. As a principal soloist on violin, saxophone and recorders he toured the world, playing in some of the most prestigious venues including the Royal Albert Hall. He was featured soloist on best selling albums for the Decca and Naxos record labels, soloist to Her Majesty the Queen on numerous occasions and violin soloist for the Edinburgh Military Tattoo 2008.

In 2011 he was headhunted by Cirque du Soleil, joining the show 'ZAiA' in Macau, China, playing violin, recorders and Irish whistle.

In 2013 Justin was appointed as violin and saxophone instructor at the Qatar Military Music Academy, a post he held for a year.

Now Justin is again based in England as a freelance performer. Seen regularly with groups such as the Worthing Symphony Orchestra, playing gypsy jazz with 'Moscow Drug Club' and acting, singing and playing folk music with 'Fine Chisel' Theatre. For more information on Justin, please visit: www.access-uk.com

John Terry | Director

John is Artistic Director of Chipping Norton Theatre. His recent critically acclaimed shows there include

Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune, The Glass Menagerie, Someone Who'll Watch Over Me, Alarms and Excursions, Toby Hulse's Around The World In 80 Days and Charlotte Keatley's *My Mother Said I Never Should*.

He has developed new plays with nationally renowned playwrights James Graham, Tom Morton-Smith and Mike Bartlett and directed work for The Orange Tree Theatre, The Arcola, The Finborough Theatre and Manchester Royal Exchange. He has worked as Associate Artist for National Youth Theatre, Staff Director for The National Theatre and Associate Director for The Finborough Theatre.

Harry Sever | Composer

After studying music at Oxford where he was awarded first class honours, he continued his training as a répétiteur at the Guildhall School of Music. As a vocal coach and accompanist, he has worked with singers from the Royal Opera House, English National Opera, and the National Opera Studio. As a composer, Harry works primarily in pop, theatre, and television. He has worked as a songwriter and arranger with various groups both in the UK and further afield. His theatre scores include *Love's Labours Lost* and *As You Like It* (Minack Theatre, Cornwall), *The Cat in the Cupboard* (Little Angel Theatre, Islington) and *My Mother Said I Never Should* (The Theatre Chipping Norton). He has also recently written for a show, *The Stalker*, on CBS.

Theatre Chipping Norton

The Theatre Chipping Norton is an art-house cinema, a gallery and a concert hall. A resource for our community and also a professional venue, we welcome over 53,000 visitors every year. In the heart of the Cotswolds, we host, co-produce and support some of the most exciting, accessible and entertaining culture in the region. Our extensive community and education programmes engage with thousands of people each year through workshops, classes and creative projects, and we develop creative work through Associate Companies, curated festivals and commissioned projects.

"A programme of distinctive artistic adventure" –The Guardian

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