

MEDIA RELEASE

2 November 2010

The UK premiere of

Bright Star

a play written by Stuart Hoar

9 - 27 November 2010 at 7.30pm

Matinee at 4pm on Sat 20 & Sat 27 November



New Zealand playwright, *Stuart Hoar*, talks hobbits, dirty nappies and dark matter on the eve of the international premiere of his play *Bright Star*

Stuart, what led you to write *Bright Star*?

I came across Beatrice Tinsley while researching a play about Earnest Rutherford and thought her story so fascinating that I decided I would write a play about her.

Can you tell us a little bit about *Bright Star* and what it is about?

The play is about a woman with her hands in the kitchen sink and her head in the long cold death of the universe, it's also a play about a woman who has to decide which is more important to her – her children and husband or her career. A theme that hasn't really dated since the time of the play.

Beatrice Tinsley, the protagonist of the play, studied at Canterbury University where you are were Writer in Residence in 2000. Is this where your interest in Beatrice's story was first sparked?

In fact I came across her while living in Cambridge (where I lived 97-99) while researching and writing a play about Rutherford. However I did write the play while living in Christchurch where Beatrice went to University.

***Bright Star* touches on some pretty complex astronomic principles. How did you tackle the research for the play?**

I've always been fascinated by science, and it's a pleasure for me to read popular science books. In 2006 I meet Brian Tinsley who features in the play. One thing he said that pleased me very much was that I had got the science right.

What do you enjoy about writing for the theatre?

Bright Star is a good example for me of what is possible in theatre, how easily it is to move from dirty nappies to the birth of galaxies, by appealing (one hopes) to the collective imagination of a live audience. On stage in other words the nappies need not be really dirty (or real in fact) and yet embodied words might suggest dark matter and all its mysterious glory.

Who has inspired you during your career and who do you admire now?

Playwrights like Brenton, Stoppard and Churchill inspired me when I began writing and they still do.

Will you be able to make it to London for the UK premiere?

No. Only if I was somehow connected with hobbits would the NZ Government perhaps front up a fare for me.

The play is produced by Firebrand Productions and Creative Cat in association with Women into Science, Engineering and Construction with funding from the Science & Technology Facilities Council and the Royal Astronomical Society.

Listing Information

Production: Bright Star – The Play
Venue: Tabard Theatre 2 Bath Road London W4 1LW www.tabardtheatre.co.uk
Dates: 9 – 27 November 2010 (Tue-Sat)
Time: 7.30pm, with additional 4pm matinees on Sat 20 & Sat 27 November
Tickets: £14 | Conc £12 | Groups £10
Box Office: Ticketweb 08448 472264 | online www.ticketweb.co.uk