

COMING UP AT THE BARN



10TH – 18TH NOVEMBER AT 8PM
A play about growing up with food!

Nigel Slater is the author and presenter of nine TV series and is the food columnist of *The Observer*. His memoir, *Toast*, the story of a boy's hunger, was filmed – and this stage version succeeds in capturing the same intoxicating, engrossing pleasure of food turned into mouth-watering poetry. Food is deeply traditional, disastrous and funny – and woven into every part of Nigel's life.

15TH – 23RD DECEMBER AT 8PM

This December, Christmas cheer goes on holiday.

This Christmas, *Grimm Tales* takes centre-stage as a chilling and macabre theatrical production, offering a captivating alternative to the traditional pantomime. Inspired by the dark and enchanting tales of the Brothers Grimm, this haunting adaptation weaves together twisted narratives, eerie settings and spine-tingling characters to transport audiences to a world of frightful wonder, suspense and unease. Brace yourself for a night of dark enchantment unlike anything you've seen before...



18TH – 27TH JANUARY 2024 AT 8PM
An unmissable theatrical event.

A magnificent two-play epic, adapted from Tolstoy's novel and first staged by Shared Experience at the National Theatre in 1996. Painted on a vast canvas of locations, characters and experiences, Helen Edmundson's stirring adaptation is an intricate saga of families, love and friendship, set against a backdrop of war – Napoleon's invasion of Russia. This new adaptation breathes vivid life into one of the greatest novels of all time.



KING CHARLES III

BY MIKE BARTLETT
DIRECTED BY CLIFF FRANCIS

*Following the death of the Queen,
how should a new King rule?*

 BARN THEATRE

£1.50 | 2023 - 2024

WWW.BARNTHEATRE.CO.UK

FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the new season at the Barn Theatre, and this performance of Mike Bartlett's play *King Charles III*. Yet again, Clive Weatherley, Cliff Francis and the directors have put together a season of plays that combine well-known favourites with those that you may not know as well, but which should give you plenty to think about as well as enjoy.

King Charles III was seen as slightly subversive when it was written, with the playwright daring to forecast a future life for the man yet to be King, and who would ascend the throne after most people's retirement age. Now Charles has been King for a year, we can see and enjoy the similarities and differences compared with real life. In many ways, we have to congratulate Mike Bartlett for his foresight, not least in the choice of controversy at the heart of the play, which is still relevant.

As with all plays at the Barn, cast members are outnumbered by the teams of people needed to put on a show. This is heightened by the fact that during rehearsals and the run for this show, three other plays are rehearsing or performing, two others have auditioned, and the building is being used by outside hires and for Club social events. Juggling these logistics is not easy! My heartfelt thanks to all the volunteers who make this possible.

Finally, during the summer we carried out a number of improvements to the theatre, many of which are unseen but necessary to maintain the fabric of this old building, and some that you will notice, such as improving the lighting in the Studio and the bar. I hope you enjoy the show, and feel inspired to come back to your local community theatre.



Ian Major
Chair



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Good evening, and welcome to our production of Mike Bartlett's fabulous play *King Charles III*.

At the time the play was first produced, our late Queen was very much alive, but the real King Charles III has had a quietly successful first year's reign.

This play is set in an 'alternative universe' version of England. It's very much in the style of a modern-day Shakespearean tragedy. No attempt has been made to impersonate any of the actual royals depicted.

It was written in 2013 at the time of the *News of the World* phone hacking scandal. The play is essentially, to me, an exploration of the price of a free press: a need highlighted today by world events, but topical again to the Royals with Prince Harry's recent appearances at the High Court. It also considers the role of the monarchy in 21st-century Britain.



Enjoy the show.



Cliff Francis
Director

We wish to extend our huge thanks and appreciation to our local business supporters.

Sainsbury's

 **The Howard Centre**
Welwyn Garden City Shopping

CAST

THE KING..... Ian Major
CAMILLA..... Barbara Holgate-Stuckey
WILLIAM..... Tallan Cameron
KATE..... Stephanie Cotter
HARRY..... Joshua Holloway
JESS..... Lauren Ryan
EVANS..... Jim Markey
STEVENS..... Devi Smart
REISS..... Sarah Gennoe
DIANA'S GHOST, SARAH, TV PRODUCER..... Hannah Humbles
NICK, SIR MICHAEL, BUTLER, TERRY..... Dave House
SIR GORDON, CLIVE, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
PAUL, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY..... David Bailey
SERVANT, NEWSPAPER SELLER..... Sharon Francis
COOTSY..... Alfie Hart
SPENCER..... Ollie Cheng



CREATIVE TEAM

PRODUCTION MANAGER..... Jacqueline Clayton
STAGE MANAGER..... Sharon Francis
DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER..... Stephen Kahn
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER..... Dave House, Ollie Cheng
SET DESIGN..... Christine Neal
SET CONSTRUCTION..... Ian Bage, Bob Cameron
Lexi Chan, Roger Eames, David Fairhurst
Robert Gill, Stephen Kahn, Ian Major, Christine Neal
Matthew Neal, Nigel Rive, John Sear
Eddie Washington
SET PAINTING..... Christine Neal, Rosemary Bianchi
Colin Hickey
LIGHTING..... Nick Mogg, Clifton Hoyle
SOUND & MUSIC..... James Rowles
PROPS..... Kris Moore, Peter Moore, Sheila Grimmant
WARDROBE..... Yvonne Bartlett, Sarah Haverson
VIDEO & FILM..... Andy Barker
REHEARSAL PROMPT..... Stephanie Dunn
POSTER & PROGRAMMES..... John Cook, Clive Weatherley

The play is set in 2014 and moves between St George's Chapel, Windsor; a Mayfair nightclub, rooms in Buckingham Palace, Kensington Palace, Palace of Westminster, 10 Downing Street, a street in the West End and Westminster Abbey.

The show runs for approximately 2 hours 30 minutes including a 20-minute interval.

THE MONARCHY

IMAGE AND REALITY

For many of us, King Charles has grown up alongside us, always present in the background, but not really in the front of our mind. Like many people in public life, we see small cameos of his life that the media find newsworthy, but which don't necessarily reflect the real person or his views. He's kept hidden from us, partly by the Palace officials who wish to control events and present what they consider to be the most positive version.

Events during Charles's life demonstrate this, and make us wonder how much of what we see is the result of behind-the-scenes conversations between the media and officials of 'The Firm'.

The death of Diana, the gradual introduction of Camilla, and the management, if that's the correct term, of Harry's departure from royal duties are presented to us by people who have a stake in maintaining a relationship between the press and the Royal Family. Let's face it, none of the 'royal insiders' have an interest in simply presenting facts, or saying they don't know what's happening. They naturally want their income streams to continue.

As for us, we know in our hearts that a monarchy really doesn't make much sense in the modern world, but the outpouring of love and affection for the Queen after she died shows that our hearts rule our heads. This is possibly because the monarchy is one constant in a changing Britain and a changing world. We may have lost an empire, but we still love the pageantry that went with it.

In the play, Mike Bartlett has William saying that the Crown has the greatest influence by standing still and always being there, and resisting the temptation to "act and speak, and lead, and always move". Social media hates that. With nothing to say or nothing to report, people make things

up, or present their assumptions or interpretations as fact. These views are then retweeted, commented on, and become tomorrow's headlines. Who would be a royal, when simply having a quiet day with nothing worth noting, is transformed into the latest 'Royal Sensation'?

Mike Bartlett's play presents what might go on behind the scenes, with a glimpse of the private individuals behind the public figures, or at least a version of them. In the end, we'll never know who they really are, or not at least in our lifetimes. Future historians may have access to files currently classified, or kept from public view. In the meantime, let's just enjoy the version presented on stage, and recognise that sometimes we don't always need to know everything about everyone. Let's keep some mystery and magic.

IAN MAJOR

THE RED LION WOOLMER GREEN

With grateful thanks to Jackie Castle and her staff for the use of her pub/restaurant to film one of the scenes for *King Charles III*.



In the heart of the village, The Red Lion pride themselves in looking after those in their community and the surrounding areas. It's their commitment to offering superb hospitality and fresh home-cooked food that keeps their patrons coming back time and time again.

You'll find a dog-friendly, family pub with a fantastic play area for your little ones and of course, the warmest of welcomes.

Please support The Red Lion if you can.