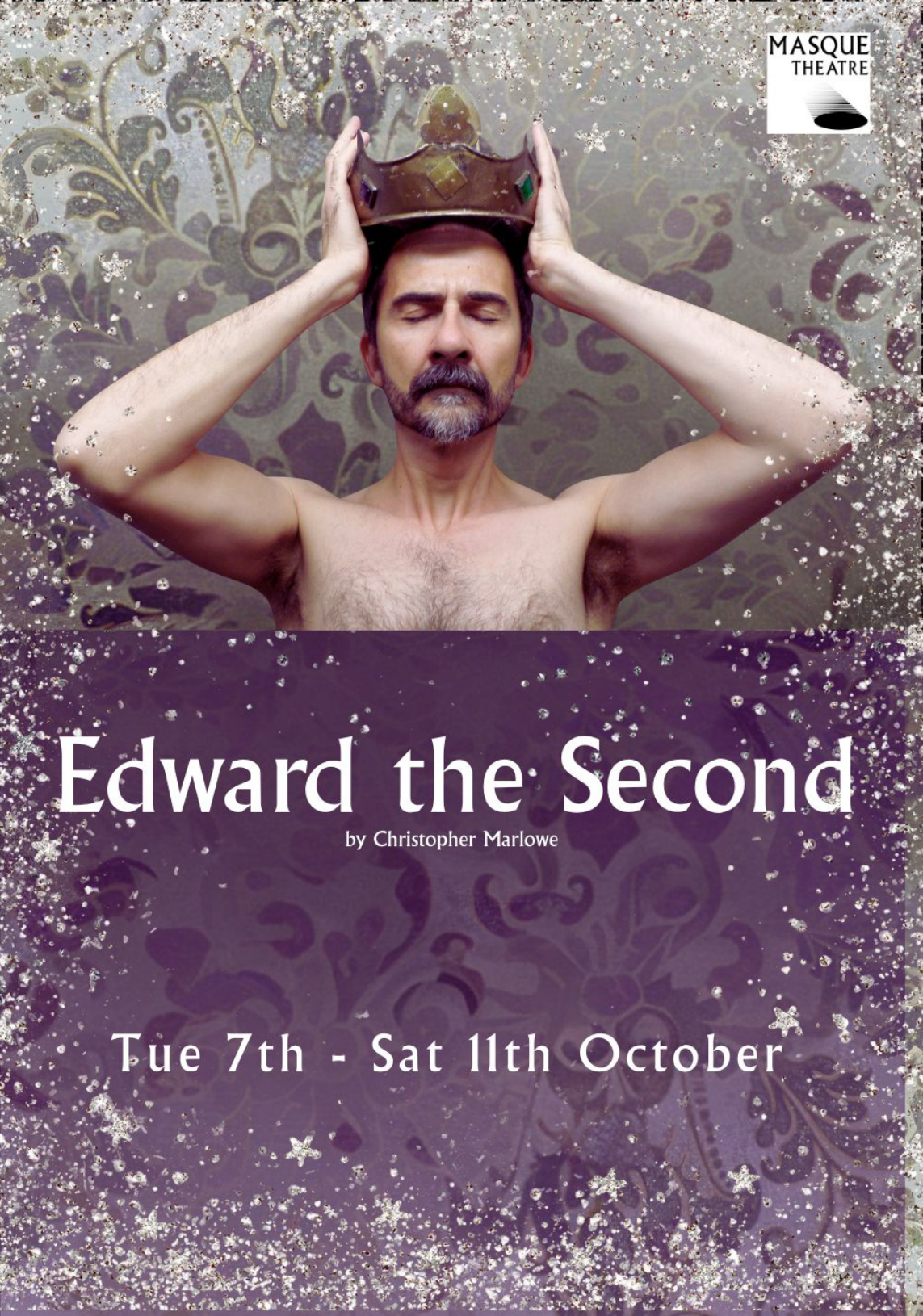




# Edward the Second

by Christopher Marlowe

Tue 7th - Sat 11th October

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE:

The preface page of the book printed in 1598—five years after Christopher “Kit” Marlowe’s death—rather boldly gives the plot away: The Troublesome Reign and the Lamentable Death of Edward the Second, King of England, with the Tragical Fall of Proud Mortimer, and also the Life and Death of Piers Gaveston, the Great Earl of Cornwall, and Mighty Favourite of the King.

In truth, Mortimer receives more attention here than Gaveston, though the real cause of the barons’ revolt lay in Edward’s devotion to his favourite. To them, Edward appeared less interested in ruling the realm than in his personal attachment to Gaveston. They saw him as a weak king and recognised that they could strengthen their own positions by wresting control. Even Edward’s queen, Isabella, was eventually persuaded to join their cause.

Yet the play is far more complex than a simple tale of Edward being deposed. At its heart, it explores his longing for companionship and love, and the vulnerability that comes with it. His son, the future Edward III, is drawn into this web too, used as a pawn in the ruthless game of power.

I first encountered the play while studying for my A levels in 1965 at Coleg Harlech in Wales, where I had the good fortune to see a brilliant production at the Birmingham Rep (as it was then). Later, in the 1970s, I taught it at A level myself to a group of rather bemused pupils in Peckham. I always thought it was a play worth directing, and Holy Sepulchre strikes me as the perfect venue for staging it in the round. (Masque, of course, have already performed Marlowe’s Dr Faustus there.) The play’s structure—its swift, sharp scenes—together with its historical depth, sit beautifully within the arches and atmosphere of the church.

## **ROB KENDALL - Director & Earl of Leicester**



Rob is a Life Member of Masque Theatre and has been involved with the group for over 30 yrs. and has either appeared in or directed over 40 productions. His claim to fame is a 15 sec. slot on Dr Who (rear view) and also appearing in The War of the Worlds at London O2 arena. He is an Associate Member of the Drama Board.

# CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE 1564 - 1593

## Marlowe's Edward the Second

Edward Plantagenet the Second inherited a more than stable realm from his father Edward I (Hammer of the Scots - see Braveheart) but seems to have no talent or inclination for governing. His total reliance on personal favourites infuriated the barons and quickly became the battle ground of power.

Marlowe's play uses the real events of the time to create this historical chronicle, cramming a 15 year period into a play of 5 Acts which looks at Edward's passions for his friends as well as the desire to stay King at any cost including giving his wife, Queen Isabella, short shrift when it didn't suit his 'desires'.

It is quite easy for a modern audience to see his foibles and side with the barons at one point and then have sympathy for Edward on the other. Marlowe's life was equally as turbulent. He was born in Canterbury to a middle class family and quickly found his way to London. He was Shakespeare's contemporary and is generally thought to have worked with Shakespeare on 'Titus Andronicus' and 'Henry VI'. He was also known to be a bit of a ruffian when time called, and at one time a spy for Walsingham and being sent to Flanders to deduce what Catholic support there might threaten Elizabeth's throne. But while back in London in 1593, while working on 'Dido Queen of Carthage', he became involved in a brawl in a tavern in Deptford, on the Thames. The result of which was him being stabbed above the right eye to a depth of one inch and subsequently met his demise, and was quickly buried the next day. Thankfully by then we had 'Edward the Second', and his better known 'Doctor Faustus' and 'Tamburlaine the Great' (a version of which was the opening production of the National Theatre on the Southbank).

Needless to say he is remembered as a playwright and some would argue that his characters don't have the all-embracing humanity that Shakespeare put into his plays. I'd argue he has a flavour and daring of his own and often as a later author borrowed shamelessly, Edward's 'Gallop apace, bright Phoebus, through the sky'...becomes Juliet's 'Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds, Toward Phoebus' lodging'... OK Shakespeare improves on the original - but that was what Marlowe was - a great original!

# CAST



## **DANIEL BURROWS - King Edward the Second**

Daniel's recent theatre credits include Lord Gray in "The Haunting" (The Playhouse Theatre), King Leontes in "The Winter's Tale" and Oberon in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (Masque Theatre), Captain Lombard in "And Then There Were None" (Wellingborough Technical Players).



## **HARI TURNER - Prince Edward, later Edward III**

Hari has been in several Masque shows, having previously played Sebastian in 'Twelfth Night', Lavinia in 'Titus Andronicus', and Jo in 'Little Women'.



## **BEVERLEY WEBSTER- Queen Isabella**

Beverley trained at Drama Studio London. Since joining Masque in 2014 for "Troilus & Cressida" she's performed with various local theatre companies in and around Northampton. After 'poor Isabella' her next role will be a complete contrast; 'Mother Christmas' in Santa's grotto in Bedfordshire.



## **BRADY JOLLY - Kent, King Edward's brother**

Brady is an actor based in Northampton. He has played roles previously when at college/university such as Peter Quince in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and Algernon Moncrieff in "The Importance of Being Earnest".



## **RIK E DEAN - Gaveston, favourite to the King**

Rik is thrilled to join a project exploring themes of love, betrayal, and a powerless King. Drawn to the courageous retelling of a key figure in British and LGBTQ+ history, This poignant play becomes ever more important, portraying lengths people are willing to go to fight for/destroy love.

# Cast



## **MARTIN McCREADIE- Robert de Baldock**

Some of Martins fondest memories are of working alongside Robert Kendall and Masque on plays like 'Mother Courage' and 'Trainspotting' way back in the 07/08 seasons and so to come in at short notice and help Rob by filling Baldock hasfelt like a lovely homecoming of sorts.



## **MICHAELA CLEMENT-HAYES- Margaret de Clare & Gurney**

Michaela's worked the circuit a lot recently, playing a deranged Tudor queen and a desperate mother for Masque, haunting the stage in 'A Christmas Carol' and 'Blithe Spirit', and even doing make-up in The Revlon Girl. No wonder she's not finished her second novel...



## **HOLLY HUGHES-ROWLANDS- Levune, James & Rice Ap Howell**

Holly has recently appeared as Viola in Shakespeare's 'Twelfth Night' and Carol/Claire in 'Road' earlier this year. When she is not acting, Holly can be found with a harp, guitar, or banjo performing as a folk singer-songwriter.



## **CHRIS STOBART- Archbishop of Canterbury**

Chris' previous appearances at Holy Sepulchre include 'The Duchess of Malfi', 'Treasure Island', 'David Copperfield', 'Little Women' and 'Shadowlands'. He will also be appearing in 'Cinderella' at St Alban the Martyr in February.



## **BEN KNIGHT- Bishop of Coventry, Earl Arundel & Abbot**

Ben's been in the amateur drama scene for many years. He joined The Playhouse or Theatre Guild as it was then, to play Nicholas Randolph in the 1989 production of Dodie Smith's 'Dear Octopus'. He was also very involved with the move from Clare Street, establishing Christchurch Hall as the new base.

# Edward the

## CAST

|                                                |                        |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| KING EDWARD II -----                           | Daniel Burrows         |
| PRINCE EDWARD, his son, later Edward III ----- | Hari Turner            |
| QUEEN ISABELLA-----                            | Beverley Webster       |
| KENT, King Edward's brother-----               | Brady Jolly            |
| GAVESTON, favourite to the King-----           | Rik E Dean             |
| LORD MORTIMER-----                             | Graham Breeze          |
| EARL of WARWICK / SIR JOHN OF HAINAULT-----    | Jem Clack              |
| EARL of LANCASTER / LORD BERKLEY-----          | Kevin Pinks            |
| EARL of PEMBROKE / BISHOP of WINCHESTER/----   | Martin Williams        |
| CHAMPION                                       |                        |
| HUGH SPENCER / MATREVIS-----                   | Greg Dolman            |
| ROBERT De BALDOCK-----                         | Martin McCreadie       |
| MARGARET DE CLARE / GURNEY-----                | Michaela Clement-Hayes |
| LEVUNE / RICE AP HOWELL / JAMES-----           | Holly Hughes-Rowlands  |
| ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY-----                  | Chris Stobart          |
| BISHOP of COVENTRY / EARL of ARUNDEL / -----   | Ben Knight             |
| ABBOT                                          |                        |
| LIGHTBORN / HEARALD-----                       | Tony Janney            |
| EARL of LEICESTER-----                         | Rob Kendall            |

THERE IS ONE INTERVAL OF 15 MINUTES.

REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE IN THE CHURCH NORTH AISLE

# ne Second

## CREATIVES & PRODUCTION

|                            |                                       |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| DIRECTOR-----              | Rob Kendall                           |
| STAGE MANAGER-----         | Clare Brittain                        |
| LIGHTING DESIGN-----       | Richard Walker                        |
| LIGHTING & SOUND-----      | Phil Welsh                            |
| PROPERTIES & SET-----      | Rob Kendall                           |
| COSTUMES-----              | Pam Mann, Rob Kendall, Clare Brittain |
| CONTINUITY-----            | Patricia Coleman                      |
| POSTER DESIGN-----         | Meryl Couper                          |
| PROGRAMME-----             | Meryl Couper                          |
| TRANSPORT-----             | Robert Vaughan, Masque Members        |
| AUDITORIUM-----            | Mark Mortimer, Rob Kendall, Ian Allan |
| BOOKING MANAGER-----       | Liz Allan                             |
| BOX OFFICE-----            | Sue Howes                             |
| HOSPITALITY MANAGER-----   | Maggie Holland                        |
| HOLY SEPULCHRE LIASON----- | Rob Kendall                           |
| SAFETY OFFICER-----        | Masque Members                        |
| REFRESHMENTS-----          | Masque Members                        |

## THANK YOU...

Masque Theatre would like to thank the Holy Sepulchre Church for their continued support and help with this production.

# Cast



## **GRAHAM BREEZE- Lord Mortimer**

Graham has been in several productions for Masque including Sir Toby Belch "Twelfth Night", Mr Bald/Brian "Road", and previously "The Winter's Tale", "When We Are Married", "The Christmas Spirit", "A Midsummer Night's Dream", "Our Country's Good", "David Copperfield", and "Richard III".



## **JEM CLACK- Earl Warwick & Sir John of Hainault**

Jem first appeared on the amateur stage in the late 1980's as Verges in Masque's 'Much Ado About Nothing'. Since then he has been in many shows in many groups. His most recent roles being Lord Melchett in 'Blackadder' and Jerry in 'Road'.



## **KEVIN PINKS- Earl Lancaster & Lord Berkley**

Kevin is now very happily retired from the Royal Mail after 33 years and is relishing the chance to play Lancaster in 'Edward II'.



## **MARTIN WILLIAMS- Earl Pembroke, Champion & Bishop of Winchester**

Martin has been involved in amateur dramatics in Northampton for many years. He's performed for Masque, The Playhouse, White Cobra and Moulton Players. He recently played Titus Andronicus and Scullery in 'Road'.



## **GREG DOLMAN- Hugh Spencer & Matrevis**

Greg joined Masque only last year! He has appeared in 'Titus Andronicus', 'Shadowlands' and last seen in 'Road' playing foul-mouthed character 'Skin Lad' along with Brink, Barry and Blowpipe!

# CAST



## TONY JANNEY - Lightborn & Herald

Tony has a long association with amateur theatre in Northampton and has appeared in productions with Masque, The Playhouse and Moulton Theatre. His last outing with the Masque was as the doctor in 'Shadowlands' and is looking forward to his less benign role in 'Edward II'.

## REHEARSAL PHOTOS:



## THE MAN I LOVE

For Marlowe, the relationship between Edward and Gaveston is central to Edward II, and it was as striking in his own time as it remains today—even within the framework of a historical drama. In British theatre, this theme feels more at home in the twentieth century, though it certainly has earlier echoes in performance traditions.

Shakespeare, of course, played with gender and disguise—think of *Twelfth Night*—not least because women were not permitted to perform on stage. Later, nineteenth-century pantomime established its own conventions, with thigh-slapping Principal Boys played by women and Ugly Sisters played by men. Yet it was not until the 1970s in the UK that openly gay relationships began to be represented on stage in any straightforward way.

There were, however, important forerunners. Shelagh Delaney's *A Taste of Honey* (1959) includes Geoff, a young gay character, while American theatre brought bolder explorations—Mart Crowley's *The Boys in the Band* portrayed openly gay characters enjoying their lives, and Kevin Elyot's *My Night with Reg* (1994) explored a group of gay friends bound together by love, loss, and friendship. These plays sought to resist stereotype, just as Caryl Churchill did in *Top Girls* (1982), which explored the complexities of female relationships. Earlier novels had approached similar themes, often under greater constraint: Radclyffe Hall's once-banned *The Well of Loneliness* (1928) and E.M. Forster's *Maurice* (published only posthumously in 1971) both dared to present same-sex love with seriousness and compassion. Even mainstream works hinted at such themes: in *Spartacus* (1960), there is a famous, tender exchange between master (Laurence Olivier) and slave (Tony Curtis).

Masque Theatre has always over the years tried to explore complicated work, especially if there is a theme that might in its day be uncomfortable, and perhaps still is to some. Productions such as Joe Orton's *Crimes of Passion* (1993), which included 'The Ruffian on the Stair', and Hugh Whitmore's 'Breaking the Code' (the story of Alan Turing, recently revived at the R&D), tackled social and moral challenges head-on. Wendy Kesselman's *My Sister in 'This House'* (1996), based on the true story of two sisters who were both lovers and murderers, was another daring choice, as was Orton's 'Entertaining Mr Sloane', with its bisexual protagonist.

Later, Martin Sherman's *Bent* (2004) powerfully depicted the love and resilience of gay men imprisoned in Nazi concentration camps. While our 2021 production of Jean Genet's *The Maids* revisited the same real-life case that inspired *My Sister in This House*.

All of this brings me back to Edward II and Marlowe's portrayal of the King's love for Gaveston. Written in the sixteenth century, it was daring then, and it retains its boldness even now.

## LGBTQ+

Should you need to make any local contacts these might be helpful:



For young people up to 25 years  
[info@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk](mailto:info@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk)  
01604 634385



[www.meetup.com-northampton-lgbt-social-support](http://www.meetup.com-northampton-lgbt-social-support)

Masque values our audience's feedback.



Use the QR code to fill in a short survey form!

# Forthcoming Shows

## The Old Curiosity Shop

by Charles Dickens   Adapted & Directed by Maggie Holland

Step into a world of mystery, heartbreak, and unforgettable characters.

Follow young Nell and her grandfather on a perilous journey through Victorian England, fleeing danger after their lives are thrown into disarray and destitution, due to the machinations of an evil moneylender. A timeless tale of resilience, tragedy and the enduring power of hope.

**Tue 9th - Sat 13th December, 7.30pm**

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, 1 Church Lane, Northampton NN1 3NL

## Habeas Corpus

Written by Alan Bennett   Directed by Clare Brittain

A riotous comedy of lust, lies, and lechery, Habeas Corpus is a fast-paced farce set in 1960s Brighton. When a doctor's dull life is upended by a cast of eccentrics character, chaos ensues. Expect mistaken identities, dropped trousers, and sharp wit in this amusing satire of middle-class morals and human desire. A hilarious theatrical romp not to be missed!

**Tue 17th - Sat 21st February, 7.30pm**

Christchurch Hall, 3 Christchurch Road, Abington, NN1 5LL