

Welcome to:



Taboo Theatre Company and Colder Than Here



Craig White - Director and Stage Manager of Colder Than Here

Craig White left his home village of Marnhull to train as a professional actor at *Rose Bruford College of Speech and Drama* between 1983-86. He then however took another career path, working for over 20 years in the media sector, rising to senior management in the *Daily Mail* organisation, and finally moved back to his native Dorset in 1998 as Executive Producer of *Channel One West* - a cable news channel based in Bristol. He joined *SNADS* in 2005 which re-awakened his passion for the theatre to the extent that in July 2008 he left the corporate world to concentrate on his first love as a professional actor/director. For more information go to www.spotlight.com and enter his viewing pin number 2791-3499-8957 for full details.

Robert Cowley - Alec

Robert discovered drama at school – his performance as Desdemona in *Othello* was well reviewed in *The Times*. At Cambridge University he was much involved in 'experimental' theatre, including open air touring in Cornwall and playing the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Amateur drama in Sturminster Newton over more than 30 years has included major and minor roles of all sorts, including Norman in two of the 'Norman Conquests', and 'Bitter Sanctuary' in which he played husband to his future wife, Linda – as he now does in 'Colder Than Here'. He has written and directed numerous pantomimes – the last two together with Linda. Folk dancing for more than ten years ranged from Morris dancing at pubs, to appearing at international festivals. He has been an occasional film extra, including helping to teach the lead actors the dances in the most recent TV 'Mayor of Casterbridge'. Robert was first involved with 'Colder Than Here' as assistant stage manager and joined the cast at short notice before the Glastonbury performances.



Linda Cowley — Myra

Linda's love of drama began at Primary School and she has been involved in amateur theatre ever since. She has taken the female lead in many plays, both serious and comedic, including pantomimes which involved acting, dancing and singing. Her experience on stage led to her directing several successful plays by Ayckbourn and Godber. She has appeared in TV advertisements and played the part of the third witch in a Bournemouth University film of 'Macbeth'. She also appeared in an award-winning community film 'Dark Waters'. Her experience in an acclaimed folk dance team, which appeared in international festivals, led to teaching and dancing with the stars of the TV film 'The Mayor of Casterbridge'. She has played the part of Myra in 'Colder Than Here' for Taboo since 2006, including a performance at Glastonbury Abbey when the author Laura Wade was in attendance.

Annie Henschel - Jenna

Annie's love of stage performance started with dancing lessons at the tender age of two going on to perform at the *Theatre Royal Drury Lane* at the grand age of four as the colour red in a dance piece called *Over the Rainbow*. This love of dance, classical ballet in particular led her to train for 7 years at *The Legat School of Russian Ballet* in West Sussex from the age of 11. After a professional career in modern dance in theatres around the world she settled back in her home town of Sturminster Newton and took up amateur acting relatively recently. She has acted in a number of plays with small and leading parts, performed and choreographed for numerous pantomimes and cabaret shows, co-written and performed in *Radio Daze*, a satirical mock radio show and most recently directed *The Great Big Fabulous Dance For Life Show* a charity dance extravaganza in aid of *The Weldmar Hospice Trust*. Annie has played the part of Jenna in 'Colder Than Here' from the beginning in 2006.



Helen Peat (previously Dodd) - Harriet

Helen's first foray into acting was about 20 years ago when she appeared in an "Old Time Music Hall" show to raise funds for her village playground. Bitten by the acting bug she joined a recently formed local drama group and since then has never looked back. She has appeared in a variety of productions for other groups ranging from Pantomime through comedy to farce and serious drama. She continues to enjoy appearing on stage and honing her theatrical skills.

Tim Lacey - Lighting & sound

Woolly Mammoth Productions
Unsung hero, transporting and setting up all this creatively used equipment



Bill Peat - Assistant to the Director

Bill previously played the part of Alec.



Judith Pidgeon - Producer of Colder Than Here

Judith, teacher and co-founder of The Martinsey Isle Trust, with its Art of Dying (and Living) Project, and of Transitus; Trustee of the Natural Death Centre; Member of the NHS National Council of Palliative Care 'Dying Matters - Let's Talk about it' Coalition, is passionate about releasing the fear about death and opening dialogue around green burial choice.





Taboo Theatre Company



Taboo Theatre Company is a voluntary collective of experienced and talented actors who, under the skilful direction of Craig White, have dedicated much of their time over the past three years to reading, analysing, rehearsing, performing and reassessing their interpretation of *Colder Than Here*, a play by the young and innovative playwright Laura Wade.

First performed for the professional stage in London and off-Broadway, *Colder Than Here* is now in amateur production by **Taboo Theatre Company** - an exciting new company created especially for *The Martinsey Isle Trust* to present this play. The idea being to take the taboo out of death. **Taboo Theatre Company** members now intend also to increase their repertoire into other taboo subjects, while continuing to perform *Colder Than Here*.



This play has been touring nationally, as part of the Trust's *The Art of Dying - What Makes a Good Death* project. Thus, **Taboo** has played in hospices, a prison, to young adults, to academics and professionals involved in end-of-life care and to the general public, as part of the Trust's awareness programme. In March 2010 they are taking the play to Grimsby Town Hall as part of the NHS National Council of Palliative Care – *Dying Matters*, of which *The Martinsey Isle Trust* is a member. This play is particularly relevant at present with controversy surrounding assisted dying, funeral pyres, green and end-of-life issues which are more and more in the media spotlight see www.martinsey.org.uk/transitus for the Transitus Festival.

The play deals with a mother dying of cancer and how she helps her dysfunctional family to cope with their forthcoming loss and separation by the choices and responsibility she takes - which include looking for a green burial. *The Sunday Times* journalist John Peter wrote of the original London production: **'Laura Wade's play is a ... masterpiece, a jewel, dark but translucent. It is a play of love, death and grief that is hardest to bear, because it begins before the loved one dies... this moving, funny, brave and beautiful play.'**

Taboo Theatre Company brings this same quality to its performances.



Hospice staff are finding it extremely useful as a teaching aid and their comments include:

- * Fantastic play - great interpretation and very realistic
- * To watch the play was so powerful and an amazing way to get across the impact before someone dies, how much grieving affects families.
- * The play was very powerful — an opportunity to see interaction of family members, needs of different people and their way of trying to express them. Thank you to the theatre company.
- * Taboo Theatre — excellent performance and so so true to life.

- * 'Colder than Here' was very useful to reinforce different ideas of people's reaction and changes in behavior. Brilliant play, thought provoking.
- * Very good performance, so very close to how things are when a patient wants to remain at home. Well done to all concerned.
- * Fabulous play, very very moving. Certainly made me think about how different people behave and react at such a difficult time.
- * The visual impact of the play was a very powerful learning tool.
- * I thought the play was brilliant, I really don't know how it could be improved.
- * This play has such great affect I think it really makes you realise that watching your loved ones in this situation is so hard and coping with everyday life at the same time, there is no right or wrong way to do this.
- * Loved the theatre company, very professional
- * The theatre company production was very good and highlighted many of the challenges of bereavement support.
- * The play was very powerful and demonstrated how different people grieve differently and the pressures that are present.

It is comments such as this which so often come from the optional post-production discussion which follows the play. A family, unable to relate to one another fully or to express emotion – things which are so much a part of life as well as death - add to the fascination of this play. It is not just about death and dying, but very much about living and also about moving on.

Judith wishes to give her heartfelt thanks for the dedication of the actors and production team; their courage in taking on such a subject in the first instance, when she first approached them with the idea; the enormous fun she has had working with this fabulous group of people; and the laughter and tears in every rehearsal as she watches such fine productions. Without Taboo none of this would have been possible.

To book the play as part of an educational programme please contact Judith at:
Email: pidgeonhouse@btinternet.com Tel: 01258 475125

To book the play otherwise, or for other Taboo Theatre work, please call Craig on:
Email: cgaigandrewwhite@googlemail.com and/or tel: 07814 876254

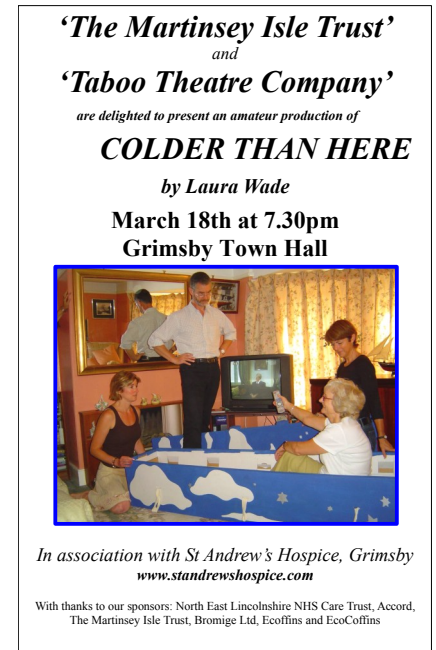
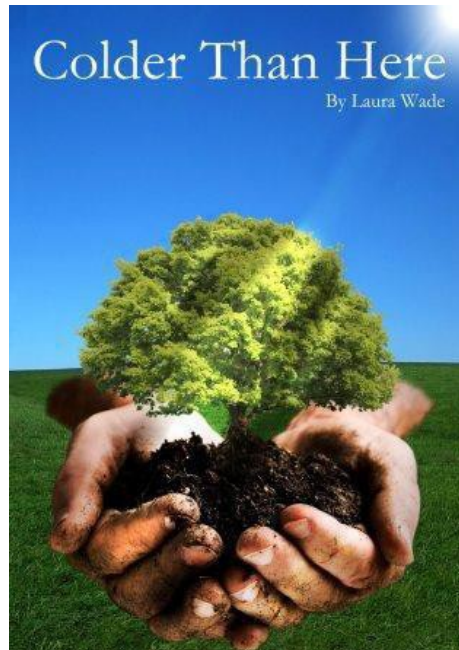
Links to:

The Martinsey Isle Trust: www.martinsey.org.uk

SNADS: www.snads.biz

The Natural Death Centre: www.naturaldeath.org.uk

National Council of Palliative Care *Dying Matters* coalition: www.dyingmatters.org



Acknowledgements to local Humanist Celebrants

List of venues past, present:

Gold Hill Farm, Child Okeford, Dorset; Springhead Centre, Fontmell Magna, Dorset; SNADS YOUTH, Sturminster Newton, Dorset; The Transitus Festival; Green Options Awareness Days at Glastonbury Abbey, Somerset and The Exchange, Sturminster Newton, Dorset; St Mark's Church, Bath to coincide with Death Dying and Disposal International Conference 8; Durham University, as part of Death Dying and Disposal International Conference 9; Swedenborg House, London; Bristol Memorial Woodlands; filmed extracts - Venice International Arts Festival; plus independent hospices and a prison - in Somerset and Dorset.

and future:

More hospice performances and prison again and elsewhere; Grimsby Town Hall in association with St Andrew's Hospice as part of Dying Matters, the NHS National Council of Palliative Care Coalition Awareness Week; Humanist's group; and hopefully more hospices and prisons plus hospitals and youth groups, schools or colleges and army barracks, subject to funding.

If you can help us with funding ideas please tell us. Thank you