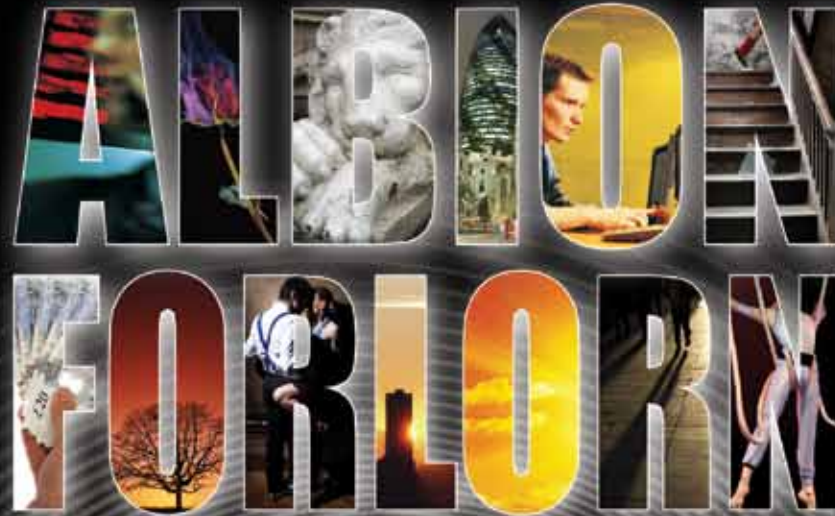


ENGLISH **CABARET** with c theatre

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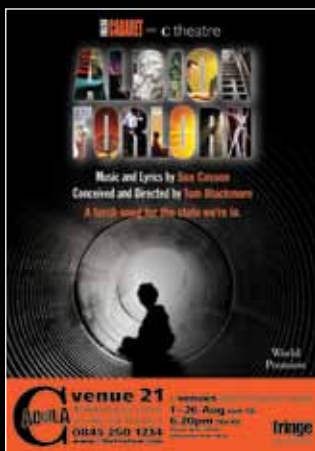
**ALBION
FORLORN**

Music and Lyrics by **Sue Casson**
Conceived and Directed by **Tom Blackmore**

A torch song for the state we're in.

World
Premiere

Aquila C venue 21
1-26 August (not 13) 6.20pm



A TORCH SONG FOR THE STATE WE'RE IN

Albion Forlorn satirically charts the progress of a young boy as he encounters the fractured dreams, disillusionment and twisted mores of a disjointed twenty-first century Britain.

Tom Blackmore's vision of a modern wasteland where the dispossessed cling to the rites and songs of a bankrupt me-generation is vividly illustrated by Sue Casson's powerful melodies and razor-sharp lyrics. The follies and lost ideals of a society more broken than our politicians understand are skewered one-by-one in this scorching yet tender rhapsody on a disconnected present and an uncertain future.

Albion Forlorn tells its story and reveals its ideas in cabaret. In the grand tradition of sagas of the ancient past, which were punctuated by song, through to Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill and latterly Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop, this production weaves music and narrative together to challenge, stimulate and shock.

ENGLISH CABARET

English Cabaret, the production company behind Albion Forlorn, was formed by Blackmore and Casson with a mission to bring ideas to life through story and song. Over the past twelve months, English Cabaret have been touring their successful production of *The Happy Prince*, which started at last year's Edinburgh Fringe, in association with C, and has since had runs at London's Bridewell Theatre and in Dublin. Tom Blackmore's intimate film history of freedom, *Under an English Heaven*, is close to completion, and also in the pipeline for the coming year is a new film, *Digital Manners*, and a revisiting of *Two Tigers*, Sue Casson's musical exploration of the life of Katherine Mansfield.

c theatre

C theatre is the in-house theatre company at C venues at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. C theatre's signature show, *Shakespeare for Breakfast*, has seen brand new editions at Edinburgh every year since 1992. C theatre also brings productions from the UK and around the world to Edinburgh and produces theatre in Edinburgh and further afield. C theatre's productions have transferred and toured to London, North America, Poland and Singapore.





Notes on the production

Albion Forlorn is drawn from over 20 years of performing cabaret and revue. Some of the pieces were first performed in earlier works such as the post Thatcher reflection *Requiem* and the unfinished *Persephone* both of which feature the poems of Simon Rae. Songs have also been taken from *Tutankhamun - All Wrapped Up* which tells the story of Howard Carter's extraordinary discovery and explores the personal implications of such a life-defining event.

Albion Forlorn also borrows from Sue Casson's extensive catalogue of stand-alone observational songs dealing with the recurring themes of lost dreams, thwarted expectations and dispossession. The individual songs have been chosen by show creator, Tom Blackmore, for their shared themes and have often gained new resonance by being placed in a different context. The overall piece is woven together into a coherent whole by some brand new compositions and a narrative that explores the ways in which many aspects of English life today have become broken and disjointed.

Whilst the messages of the show are often deeply serious, there is plenty of humour and wit along the way, and a wide variety of musical styles from searing ballads to jaunty jazz, swing and pop. As Sue Casson says, if there's depression on offer, it's definitely of the toe-tapping variety.



Aquila C venue 21
1-26 August (not 13) 6.20pm

Biographies



Lily Blackmore

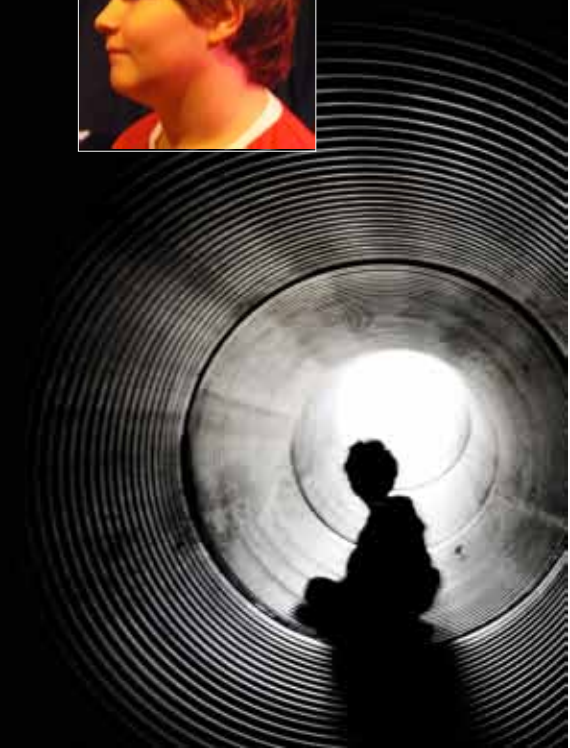
Lily is in her fourth year of leading the Southwark Cathedral Girls Choir as Launderer Chanter. With them she has twice sung choral evensong for BBC Radio 3 and was part of the televised Easter Eucharist, on BBC 1. She has sung for the Queen, and last Christmas sang at the Royal Albert Hall with John Rutter.

Lily's flute playing can also be heard alongside Casson on her most recent CD, *Beachcomber*. She made her stage debut playing Mo in Blackmore's *Making History*, at Sevenoaks Stag and at the Old Fire Station in Oxford. In the recent production of *The Happy Prince* Lily played the part of Pandora as well as playing the flute. She has also appeared in *Under an English Heaven*.

Robert Blackmore

Robert has a big passion for performing, and introduced a cabaret in the Great hall of Chiddingstone Castle when he was just five, singing parts of *The Happy Prince* for the first time in a concert there a few years later. In the recent production of *The Happy Prince* Robert took on the central part of the sparrow.

Robert sang the solo for Casson's setting of Rupert Brooke's *The Soldier* as part of the soundtrack for *Under an English Heaven*, and also appeared in *Making History* at the Old Fire Station Oxford. Two years ago, he popped up on BBC London News at Kew gardens with Louise Preston talking about trees.



Biographies (cont)

Rebecca Morton



Rebecca has been singing and dancing for the last decade in and around Edinburgh. She trained first at Dunedin Dance Academy and now dances at *Dance For All*, performing in various shows including Prestonfield Hotel's *A Taste of Scotland* with various musicals thrown in along the way. Currently, she sings with The Mary Erskine School choir and at occasional church events so *Albion Forlorn* is an exciting step out of her comfort zone. Having lived in Edinburgh her whole life she is excited to be part of the Fringe at last!

Sarah Morton

Sarah has recently graduated in Social Anthropology and Art History from the University of St Andrews, but much of her time has been spent dancing rather than pursuing academic study. Her dance training has primarily focused on tap, jazz and highland styles with some occasional ballet and contemporary and she spent much of her childhood performing and competing.



While at university she took on dancing roles in student musical productions, including *Reefer Madness*, *My Fair Lady* and *Children of Eden*, before moving behind the scenes. In the last couple of years she has taught a highland dance class and sat as vice-president/secretary of her university dance society. She has just come from working on the choreography for St Andrews Opera's June production of Handel's *Acis and Galatea*.

Inspiration for the dance and movement in *Albion Forlorn* was taken from such diverse sources as Bob Fosse's musical revue style and modern military formations recreated here on a smaller scale

Chris Littleboy

Chris Littleboy, a pianist in his final year of study at London's Kings College, has since his earliest memories been addicted to the piano – a trait referred to by his colleagues as "pianovitis". His eclectic influences range from Prokofiev to Peterson, from Bublé to Berezovsky and his style fuses jazz and classical.

Who is Chris? What is Chris? Why is Chris? Such questions are impossible to answer. Chris straddles divides - between jazz and classical piano, between naivety and wisdom, between rooted family life and intrepid travelling and between cynicism and boundless enthusiasm. Fifty words cannot do his complex personality justice.



Biographies (cont)



Sue Casson – writer and performer

Casson is a songwriter, singer and actor. A graduate in English from St Hugh's College Oxford, she began singing her songs on BBC radio whilst still a student, on *Pen to Paper* and *Pick of the Week*, which led to commissions from BBC Schools radio and local TV. On leaving she joined the BBC spending time as a producer of World Service arts programmes, *Book Choice* and *Meridian*, but found the lure of performing too strong. Using her place in the final of the Vivian Ellis Prize for writers of the musical stage as a springboard to leave, her career since has been a tapestry of writing, performing, acting, voice-over and teaching.

Radio credits include appearances on *Stop the Week*, *Pick of the Week*, *Word of Mouth* (R4), *Cocktails with Kit & The Widow*, (R3) and several sessions for *Night Ride* (R2)

TV composing credits for Children's BBC - *Melvin & Maureen's Music-a-grams*, *Millie's Models* and *Superbods*.

Cabaret with The Brannick Academy – 2 CDs based on their stage shows - *Elegantly Wasted* and *Tutankhamun All Wrapped Up*.

Edinburgh fringe credits - *Two Tigers* (1988), *Requiem* (1996) songs for Simon Rae's adaptation of *The Life & Times of President Ubu* (2006) and his children's shows - *The Pirate*, *The Potato and the Camel*, *not forgetting the parrot*, (2007) and *The Pirate and The Potato... in Space*. (2008) *Cabaret After Midnight with Premier Cru* (1989) with poet Simon Rae and Willie Rushton (1991 and 1992)

Casson has written a choral adaptation and setting of Rupert Brooke's war sonnets for girls choir as a soundtrack to *Under an English Heaven*, Tom Blackmore's intimate history of the Nuremberg trials. At last year's festival, her show *The Happy Prince* met with great critical success and was performed subsequently at the Bridewell in London and in Dublin.



Biographies (cont)



Tom Blackmore - writer and director

Tom has been developing new work for the theatre for 20 years, adapting and directing new work by writers such as Frank Cottrell-Boyce, Jean Findlay, Simon Rae, and Sue Casson.

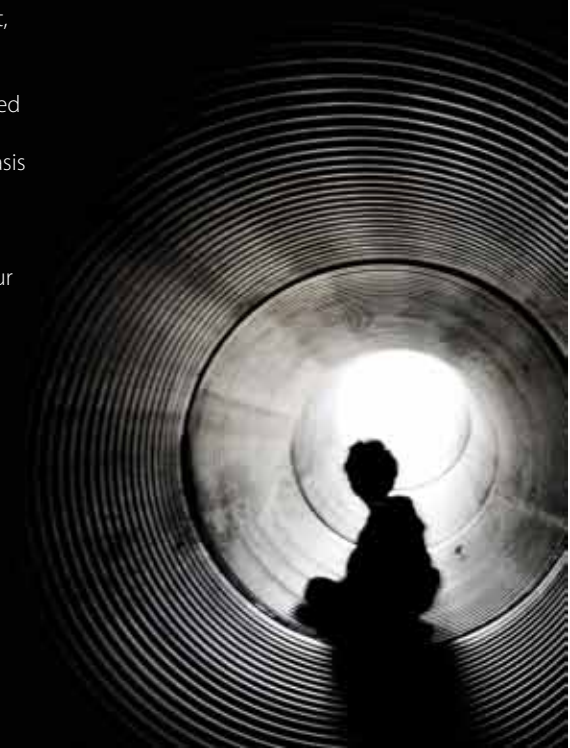
He produced his first play at Edinburgh, by Robert Farrar, whilst at Winchester College, and has produced and directed at the fringe many times since. Credits include *Two Tigers* (Pleasance), *Call me Susan* (Traverse), Jean Findlay's first solo play with the Grassmarket Project, Casson and Rae's *Requiem* (Café Royal), and Simon Rae's adaptation of *The Life & Times of President Ubu* (Venue 45). He also directed English Cabaret's recent critical hit, *The Happy Prince* taking it to London and Dublin after its Edinburgh run.

Away from Edinburgh, he has directed two further Rae plays, *A Quiet Night In* (Finboro) and *The Pill Box*, as well as the original *Southwark Mysteries* in Southwark Cathedral.

Tom has also had a long association with the cabaret of Casson and The Brannick Academy, conceiving, writing and directing their cabaret shows from *After Midnight with Premier Cru* to their most recent, *Tutankhamun All Wrapped Up*, inspired by his experiences in the Valley of the Kings with the Armana Royal Tombs Project, which he also explores in his film *Last Call for Nefertiti*.

His own first play, *Making History*, an intimate history of the Nuremberg Trials, based on recovered letters exchanged between chief British prosecutor David Maxwell Fyfe and his wife in 1946, was premiered in Britain to critical acclaim, and is the basis for his latest film exploring the evolvement of human rights following the trials, *Under an English Heaven*.

As well as his own films, Blackmore creates films that employ melody and humour to challenge, provoke and teach.



Reviews of past English Cabaret productions

'There is an Englishness to the music of Casson, not a Britishness. Traditional in the truest sense'

MusicalTalk.co.uk

Requiem

'A gloriously imaginative, compulsively witty musical evocation of the ills of contemporary Britain, it uses a traditional requiem format to explore the plight of those cold-shouldered by modern society'

Big Issue

The Happy Prince

'The Happy Prince is theatre with a heart. Replete with thought-provoking parallels to the sufferings wrought by present-day austerity'

AYoungerTheatre.com

'That rare thing - a well-written new musical....Casson's harmonies could give Andrew Lloyd Webber a run for his money'

Stage

'An enchanting musical – it makes a fine evening'

Financial Times

'Nothing could outshine the warmth, charm and sensitivity of this beautifully simple musical'

Dublin Gay Theatre

Last Call for Nefertiti

'Bold and inventive (with) a creative brio which is very infectious... Very original work.'

(BBC 4)

For more information, photos and musical highlights from the show go to www.englishcabaret.co.uk

