

specially commissioned by the Faraday Institute



The Faraday Institute
for Science and Religion

Spring Tour 2011 Promotional Pack

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Let Newton Be!

Isaac Newton... heretic, alchemist, genius

Let Newton Be! brings the complex and controversial character and iconic figure of Sir Isaac Newton to life: a devout, difficult, obsessive man who sought and found God in universal laws of light and motion. **Let Newton Be!** explores the life and thought of a genius whose scientific theories still provide the foundations for our understanding of the Universe today.

Theatrical and entertaining as well as informative for both specialist and general audiences, the play uses three actors, video and clever stage design to offer a different way to see the world of science. Award-winning playwright Craig Baxter's play shows the clash between scientific discovery and religious fanaticism, using only Newton's word and those of his contemporaries to tell a story of obsession and possession.

The compelling narrative shows Newton in many different lights. Theatrically simple and powerful, three incarnations of Newton battle with each other for their place in history.

... the young boy measuring the speed of wind.

... the isolated Cambridge scholar, practising alchemy in the secrecy of his darkened room.

... the autocrat of British Science, ruling the Royal Society with an iron fist.

Above all, here is Newton as a human being – unique, comical, driven & vulnerable.

Can theatre be a platform for science? In the hands of Baxter and Menagerie Theatre – yes, spectacularly yes... Baxter creates a unified Newton who will awe and move modern audiences.

Science, vol 326, 13.11.09

*Menagerie produces some of the best new writing outside of London – Lyn Gardner, **The Guardian***

Extraordinarily powerful...theatrically excellent...superb theatre

Paul Taylor, **The Independent** on The Retreating World

Produced by Menagerie Theatre Company

Written by Craig Baxter

Directed by Patrick Morris

Set designed by Isaam Kourbaj

Audience Profile

- Suitable for both specialist science and general audiences
- People with an interest in science, theology, history & mathematics
- Theatre studies students post-16: creating original theatre is a key part of the A-level Theatre Studies syllabus
- Age 15+ years

Box Office Information Sheet

Let Newton Be!

To what address do we forward weekly sales/financial figures?

Please send info to office@menagerie.uk.com

Who is presenting it?

Menagerie Theatre, the foremost producer of new theatre writing in the east of England.
The play was specially commissioned by the Faraday Institute of Cambridge University.

What is it about?

Let Newton Be! brings the complex and controversial character of Sir Isaac Newton to life, exploring the life and thought of a genius whose scientific theories still provide the foundations for our understanding of the Universe today.

Theatrical and entertaining as well as informative for both specialist and general audiences, the play uses three actors, video and clever stage design to offer a different way to see the world of science. **Newton** shows the clash between scientific discovery and religious fanaticism, a story of obsession and possession.

Who wrote it?

Let Newton Be! is written by Craig Baxter. Craig trained as a scientist before becoming a playwright and his work includes original plays, adaptations, radio plays and TV scripts. He won an international prize for the best new play about science & technology in 2010 for *The Altruists*.

List of names of the creative team

Patrick Morris	Director
Issam Kourbaj	Designer

Does the show contain any strobe lighting, loud noises, smoking or similar effects?

Not currently. We will confirm this once rehearsals have started in February.

Does the event contain swearing or nudity?

No.

Who might like it?

Regular theatre audiences and first-time visitors
Student groups – Science/History/English: GCSE, A-level, undergraduate
Groups working on creating-theatre projects

Age range?

No age restriction, but suggest 15+.

What is the running time, including interval arrangements?

80 minutes without an interval

Creative Team

Craig Baxter: Playwright

Craig studied Zoology at Sheffield University and Playwriting at Birmingham University. His stage plays include *St James and the Tattoo Man*, *Taking Liberties*, *The Ministry of Pleasure*, *The Animals*, *Hard Sell*, *Big Bang*, *Relics* and *Spearcarriers*. He has adapted two of his plays for BBC Radio 4: *The Thrill of the Chaste* and *Monogamy*. He dramatised the correspondence between Darwin and Asa Gray on stage for the Darwin Correspondence Project (*Re:Design*) and those of Charles and Emma Darwin for the BBC World Service (*Like Confessing a Murder*)

Patrick Morris: Director

Patrick is co-founder and Associate Artistic Director of Menagerie, for whom he has directed premieres of Naomi Wallace's *The Retreating World* and *Between This Breath and You*, Claire Macdonald's *Correspondence* and *Four For Jericho* by Richard Fredman. He also directed the opera, *Abraham*, music and libretto by Andrew Lovett. Performing work in the USA and UK includes *Henry VI* at New York's Public Theatre, *Counting the Ways* directed by Joseph Chaikin, *Springtime*, *Oscar and Bertha* and *Drowning* directed by Maria Irene Fornes, and numerous productions with Menagerie including *Out of Your Knowledge/Clare's Walk*, *Frobisher's Gold* and *Hard Sell*.

Issam Kourbaj: Set Designer

Issam Kourbaj trained in fine art, architecture and theatre design in Damascus, Leningrad and London. He has been Artist in Residence at Christ's College since 1998 and was recently elected a Bye-Fellow of the College. He has exhibited quite widely, and his work has been acquired by the British Museum. For the last few years he has drawn inspiration from the world of science; for Cambridge University's 800th anniversary, he designed the set for a play about our greatest physicist, "Let Newton Be!", and a contemporary dance piece called "Light Matters" presented in the University Senate House. Last year as a contribution to the Centenary Celebrations, his Cambridge Palimpsest, a puzzle box linking time and archaeology, was published through the Cambridge University Press.

Technical information

Show running times

The show runs at approximately 80 minutes, plus an interval of 15 or 20 minutes.

Stage area needed

6m square minimum

Lighting & Sound

We will send final details of this no later than 2 weeks before the first performance at the venue. If you need it earlier, please do let us know.

Smoking

There is no smoking in this production.

Dressing Rooms

There are 3 actors (2m, 1f): a minimum of 2 dressing rooms needed (plus room for Stage Manager where possible)

Get-in

We ask for a 2-man all day call for venue technical staff for the get-in.

Get-out

TBC We ask for a 2-man 1-hour call for venue technical staff for the get-in. This will be confirmed no later than 4 weeks before the first performance at the venue.

Producers

Menagerie Theatre

Emma Butler Smith, Cassandra Bradnack
Eastern Court, 182-190 Newmarket Road
Cambridge, CB5 8HE
01223 322111
emma@menagerie.uk.com
cassie@menagerie.uk.com

Company & Production Information

Touring Party

There are 5 members of the touring team:

3 actors (2m, 1f)
1 Company Stage Manager
Director

Menagerie Theatre Company

Menagerie Theatre Company specialise in new writing for the theatre. They are based in Cambridge and tour widely as well as curating and producing HOTBED, the Cambridge New Writing Theatre Festival. Menagerie works with artists at all levels from first-time writers to nationally recognised playwrights, as well as an outstanding ensemble of designers, actors and producers. Over the past ten years the company has focused on establishing a unique space where we can discover new artists and produce quality new work, as well as operating as a regional resource for individuals and organisations.

Menagerie produces some of the best new writing outside of London – Lyn Gardner, **The Guardian**

Extraordinarily powerful...theatrically excellent...superb theatre Paul Taylor, **The Independent**

Artistic Director: Paul Bourne
Associate Artistic Director: Patrick Morris
Producer: Emma Butler Smith
Project Co-ordinator: Cassandra Bradnack

Eastern Court, 182-190 Newmarket Road
Cambridge, CB5 8HE
01223 322111
cassie@menagerie.uk.com

The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion

The Faraday Institute commissioned Menagerie to write and produce **Let Newton Be!** The Institute is an interdisciplinary research enterprise that encourages engagement with a wide diversity of opinions concerning interactions between science and religion, Based at St Edmunds College, Cambridge the Institute engages in academic research and the public understanding of science and religion.

Brochure copy

Short version (100 words)

Let Newton Be!

Isaac Newton... heretic, alchemist, genius

Let Newton Be! brings the complex and controversial character and iconic figure of Sir Isaac Newton to life: a devout, difficult, obsessive man who sought and found God in universal laws of light and motion. **Let Newton Be!** explores the life and thought of a genius whose scientific theories still provide the foundations for our understanding of the Universe today.

Theatrical and entertaining as well as informative for both specialist and general audiences, the play uses three actors, video and clever stage design to offer a different way to see the world of Newton.

Suitable for ages 15+.

Longer version (197 words)

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Theatrically compelling, simple and powerful, three incarnations of Newton battle with each other for their place in history:

... the young boy measuring the speed of wind.

... the isolated Cambridge scholar, practising alchemy in the secrecy of his darkened room.

... the autocrat of British Science, ruling the Royal Society with an iron fist.

Above all, here is Newton as a human being – unique, comical, driven & vulnerable.

Let Newton Be! shows the clash between scientific discovery and religious fanaticism, using only Newton's word and those of his contemporaries to tell a story of obsession and possession.

Suitable for ages 15+.

Production credits

Written by Craig Baxter

Directed by Patrick Morris

Produced by Menagerie Theatre

[Menagerie logo]

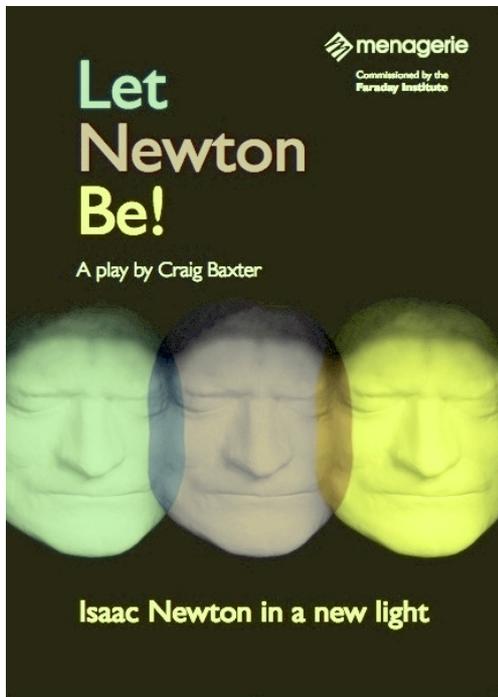
[Faraday Institute logo]

We do understand that you do not always have enough room for logos etc in your brochure and print, but we do ask you to include them wherever possible.

Images & crediting

Photographs

Below are sample images; please let us know if you need a higher resolution.



[Menagerie logo]



[Faraday Institute logo]

Suggestions for print distribution

- Book shops
- Post Offices
- Tourist information centres
- Cinemas/arts centres
- Libraries
- Museums
- Cafés/pubs/hotels/restaurants
- Schools/colleges
- Gift shops
- U3A
- Raffles & competitions in local newspapers/radio also raise awareness

Accompanying optional events

If you would like to expand the work we do with your audiences/community, we'd be happy to discuss your requirements with you before our visit.

We can design & run workshops or talks to your specifications or you could talk to us about either of the sessions listed below:

Post-show Discussion

An informal after-show session with performers & production staff about the show, its preparation and background.

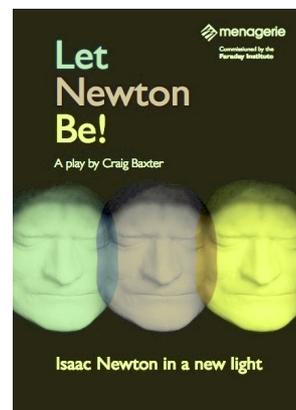
Pre-show talk

A short 20-30 minute piece where Director, Patrick Morris, talks about the development of LET NEWTON BE!, its content and the style of the show.

PRESS RELEASE



The Faraday Institute
for Science and Religion



Let Newton Be!

by Craig Baxter

Isaac Newton... heretic, alchemist, genius

In spring 2011 Menagerie Theatre Company's play LET NEWTON BE! will begin a tour of the UK and the US.

Let Newton Be! brings the complex and controversial character of Sir Isaac Newton to life: a devout, difficult, obsessive man who sought and found God in universal laws of light and motion. Theatrical, entertaining and informative, the play gives a different way to see the world of Newton. It explores the life and thought of a genius whose scientific theories still provide the foundations for our understanding of the Universe today.

Newton is well-known as an iconic figure, but as a man, he remains a mystery to many. Award-winning playwright **Craig Baxter** shows how Newton's religious worldview was intimately involved in the process of discovery. The play uses only Newton's word and those of his contemporaries to tell the story of his passionate pursuit to understand the universe. **Let Newton Be!** is a verbatim play, with a script drawn entirely from letters, notes, published and unpublished works.

The show is directed by **Patrick Morris** (Associate Artistic Director of Menagerie) and uses three actors – all playing the part of Newton – with video and clever stage design by **Issam Kourbaj** (Artist in Residence at Christ's College, Cambridge) to bring Newton alive for a 21st century audience. **Let Newton Be!** is accessible for both specialist and general (16+) audiences.

Trained as a scientist himself, playwright **Craig Baxter** weaves a compelling narrative to show Newton in many different lights. Theatrically simple and powerful, three incarnations of Newton battle with each other for their place in history.

Let Newton Be! was commissioned by **The Faraday Institute at the University of Cambridge**, after seeing Menagerie's play *Re:Design* about Charles Darwin which was commissioned by the Darwin Correspondence Project in 2008.

Let Newton Be! was previewed last year in Cambridge, and was reviewed in Science Magazine:
Can theatre be a platform for science? In the hands of Baxter and Menagerie Theatre – yes, spectacularly yes... Baxter creates a unified Newton who will awe and move modern audiences.
Science, vol 326, 13.11.09

From Cambridge to Cambridge

The UK tour of **Let Newton Be!** will begin at the Cambridge Science Festival on 19 March 2011. After performances at Grantham (Newton's birthplace), Colchester, York, Glasgow & the Royal Society London, the show will travel to the US and the American tour will culminate at the Cambridge Science Festival at MIT in Massachusetts 30 April – 4 May.

www.menagerietheatre.co.uk

ends#

[Note to venues: please send 'Press resources & Notes to marketers & editors' from this pack as the second page of the press release]

Press contacts/enquiries

- For more information about the artistic team and Menagerie, please contact Patrick Morris on 01223-322111 or patrick@menagerie.uk.com.
- Playwright, **Craig Baxter**, and director, **Patrick Morris**, are available for interview.
- For more information about The Faraday Institute, please contact Douglas Leckie on 01223-740929 or dl296@cam.ac.uk.
- For more information about the tour of **Let Newton Be!**, please contact Emma Butler Smith or Cassie Bradnack on 01223-322111 or emma@menagerie.uk.com/cassie@menagerie.uk.com

Notes for editors/marketers

- **Menagerie Theatre Company** specialise in new writing for the theatre. They are based in Cambridge and tour widely as well as curating and producing HOTBED, the Cambridge New Writing Theatre Festival. *Let Newton Be!* is their second commission from Cambridge University organisations and follows the success of *Re:Design*, a dramatic adaptation, also by Craig Baxter, of the correspondence between botanist Asa Gray and Charles Darwin, commissioned by the Darwin Correspondence Project. For more information: www.menagerietheatre.co.uk.
- For more information on tour dates: www.menagerietheatre.co.uk/productions/current.
- **Craig Baxter** is the winner of the 2010 STAGE award for a new play about Science (given by UC Santa Barbara). Craig studied Zoology at Sheffield University and Playwriting at Birmingham University. His stage plays include *St James and the Tattoo Man*, *Taking Liberties*, *The Ministry of Pleasure*, *The Animals*, *Hard Sell*, *Big Bang*, *Relics* and *Spearcarriers*. He has adapted two of his plays for BBC Radio 4: *The Thrill of the Chaste* and *Monogamy*. He dramatised the correspondence between Darwin and Asa Gray on stage for the Darwin Correspondence Project (*Re:Design*) and those of Charles and Emma Darwin for the BBC World Service (*Like Confessing a Murder*).
- Director, **Patrick Morris** is co-founder and Associate Artistic Director of Menagerie, for whom he has directed premieres of Naomi Wallace's *The Retreating World* and *Between This Breath and You*, Claire Macdonald's *Correspondence* and *Four For Jericho* by Richard Fredman. He trained at Exeter University before moving to the USA for nine years. Performing work in the USA and UK includes *Henry VI* at New York's Public Theatre, *Counting the Ways* directed by Joseph Chaikin, *Springtime*, *Oscar and Bertha* and *Drowning* directed by Maria Irene Fornes. He also directed the opera, *Abraham*, music and libretto by Andrew Lovett and numerous productions with Menagerie including *Out of Your Knowledge/Clare's Walk*, *Frobisher's Gold* and *Hard Sell*.
- For more information: www.menagerietheatre.co.uk/about/the-team.
- Set designer, **Issam Kourbaj**, Issam Kourbaj trained in fine art, architecture and theatre design in Damascus, Leningrad and London. He has been Artist in Residence at Christ's College since 1998. He has exhibited quite widely, and his work has been acquired by the British Museum. For the last few years he has drawn inspiration from the world of science. For more information: www.issamkourbaj.co.uk.
- **The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion** is an interdisciplinary research enterprise that encourages engagement with a wide diversity of opinions concerning interactions between science and religion, Based at St Edmunds College, Cambridge the Institute engages in academic research and the public understanding of science and religion. For more information: www.faraday-institute.org.

Example direct mail

<<title>> <<othernames>> <<surname>>
<<address1>>
<<address2>>
<<address3>>
<<address4>>
<<postcode>>

Don't miss out on a fascinating new production coming to us shortly -

Let Newton Be!

Isaac Newton...heretic, alchemist, genius

by Craig Baxter
presented by Menagerie Theatre

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Baxter creates a unified Newton who will awe & move modern audiences Rebecca Stott, **Science**

Menagerie produces some of the best new writing outside of London Lyn Gardner, **The Guardian**

Extraordinarily powerful...theatrically excellent...superb theatre Paul Taylor, **The Independent**

[Venue details]

[Performance details]

[Box Office details]

Call [box office number] or visit [website] to book your tickets

Tickets are selling fast, so early booking is recommended.

[Menagerie logo]

[Faraday Institute logo]