

# THE GREAT DIVORCE

BY CS LEWIS

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DIRECTED BY RICHARD WOODHOUSE | PRODUCED BY ALEXANDRA CHAMBERS |  
ADAPTATION BY ROSLYN HICKS

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# WELCOME

What you're about to see tonight has in one sense been 70 years in the making. C.S. Lewis, who you most likely know as the writer of the Narnia books, wrote *The Great Divorce* in the 1940s. He had become a Christian in the late 1920s calling himself "perhaps, that night, the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England" (from his book "Surprised by Joy").

C.S. Lewis was a master at portraying biblical and spiritual concepts in imaginative, creative and thought-provoking ways. In *The Great Divorce* he takes on the concepts of heaven and hell. But, there are no pearly gates or fire and brimstone. There are just typical humans each with their own obstacles that prevent them from experiencing true joy, instead keeping them trapped in their own internal, isolated hell.

Resolved Church, Newtown, has chosen to present this story to you tonight because we believe that everyone, no matter what our spiritual background, longs for true joy. We also believe that everyone can have it.

If you are interested to discuss some of the ideas raised tonight, please join us after the show for a Q&A with the cast or talk to one of the cast over a drink. There are also many churches in the area that would love to have you visit them and engage further in discussing these concepts. One such church that we would love to recommend to you is Anchor Church, which meets here at the Factory Theatre on Sundays at 10:00am. You may also wish to read more of C.S. Lewis' works for yourself. You can find his complete works on Kindle at a bargain price!

Thanks for coming and enjoy the show

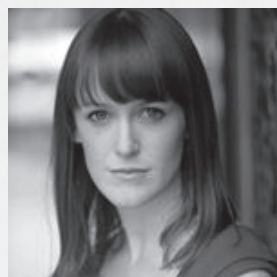
# CAST & CREW



**PETER DAVID ALLISON**  
PROUD MAN, GEORGE



**ALEXANDRA CHAMBERS**  
PUPPETEER



**HANNAH FORSYTH**  
POSTMODERNIST,  
SARAH SMITH & OTHERS



**ROSLYN HICKS**  
INTELLIGENT WOMAN,  
SHAMEFUL WOMAN &  
OTHERS



**JESSICA KELLY**  
DREAMER, CYNIC & OTHERS



**SHANE MILLWARD**  
LEN, TRAGEDIAN &  
OTHERS



**ISAAC REEFMAN**  
LEWIS



**RICHARD WOODHOUSE**  
DIRECTOR

# SPECIAL THANKS

**Hans Kristensen**

for the original idea for this production and  
all his support

**Chrystal Kyriacou**

for all her marketing and publicity efforts

**Holly Kamarudin**

for her amazing graphic design work

**The C.S. Lewis Foundation**

for allowing us to bring this incredible work  
to the stage

**The Factory Theatre staff**

for the venue

**Leone Sharp**

for lending costumes

**David Forsyth**

for helping us find fake grass

**C.S. Lewis**

for writing such a wonderful book

Last but definitely not least,  
**to God**, who made us with creativity  
do produce things like this show, and  
who offers us infinite happiness, which  
we can step out into at any moment.

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## A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Without giving too much away, the premise of *The Great Divorce* is this: a bus load of people take a trip to Paradise, only it doesn't seem like Paradise quite yet. They all have something they refuse to let go of that prevents them from enjoying Heaven. For one it's his pride, another her self-importance, one his self-pity and another her vanity. These sound like very petty reasons to reject the ultimate happiness of Heaven and plunge yourself into your own personal hell, and yet who's to say we're any different?

Fifteen years before he wrote *The Great Divorce*, C.S. Lewis had converted to Christianity after talking with friends J.R.R. Tolkien and Hugo Dyson, and it is his faith that drives the plot and themes of this story. Lewis' vision of Paradise is an explicitly Christian one, and it is one that I share, which is what initially drew me to this project, but that doesn't mean that I haven't been profoundly challenged.

In fact, directing *The Great Divorce* has been one of the most challenging experiences of my life, in many more ways than one. It's been professionally challenging - as a first-time director I've been finding my feet and figuring out how to translate the skills I've learned through acting into directing this wonderful cast. It's been logistically challenging - our relatively short preparation period has seen me running between work and the rehearsal room for weeks. But most of all, it's been personally challenging - Lewis' fascinating book (expertly adapted by Roslyn Hicks) has forced me to examine myself like no other script I've ever read. I believe that my time working on this show has illuminated the ugliest parts of myself. I see a little bit of myself in all of these characters. I see myself in the proud man, the self-important woman, the man wrapped up in his self-pity, and I am challenged to think of the Paradise I believe awaits me and change for the better.

I believe that all good stories are the ones that challenge their audience, and I hope your fellow passengers on this bus challenge you as much as they have me.

- RICHARD WOODHOUSE