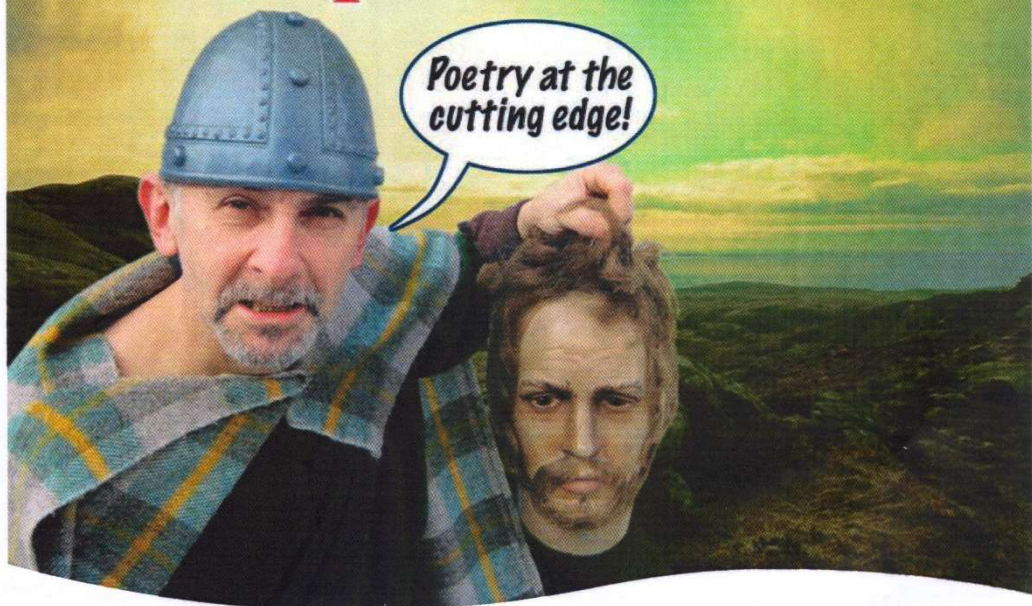




JORVIK
Viking Festival

and **NORTH COUNTRY** theatre present

Egil Skallagrimson Keeps His Head



**Murder, mayhem and mirth
in a Jorvik episode from
10th century Egil's Saga**

Egil Skallagrimson Keeps His Head

Adapted from episodes of the 10th Century Egil's Saga

by Nobby Dimon

THE COMPANY

Susan Jinks Simon Kirk

Thomas Frere Nobby Dimon

Kari Smestad Karoline Nylund

Set design & construction ~ Malcolm Wood

Support ~ Jacquie Wood, Gillian Howells & Lindsay Trenholme

The Icelandic Sagas paint a picture of a well-established Viking culture across modern Nordic countries and the British Isles. They are often the only written source of social and political history in the Early Middle Ages. But they blur the lines between mythic and imaginary character and historical events. It is however the beauty and power of the poetry for which they are most prized.

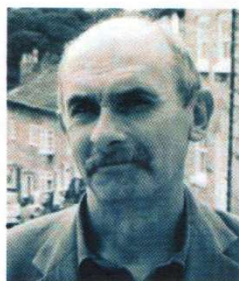
Many years ago North Country Theatre created and performed a piece of street theatre for the Jorvik Viking Festival and then in 2010 were commissioned to perform a more substantial piece. Egil's saga was chosen as it mentions Jorvik and Erik Bloodaxe, the Viking king of the city.

Poetry in Old Norse, with its peculiar punchiness and kennings*, is hard to render into modern English, but we have tried to capture some of the flavour – the distant echo of the Viking bard reciting his poetry in the fire-lit hall – whilst lightly sprinkling the story with a little modern humour.

**highly stylised metaphors for well-known ideas or objects
e.g. whale road = the sea, raven's feast = dead on battlefield*

Nobby Dimon

Has been the Artistic Director of North Country Theatre since it was founded in 1996. He has been writer adapter as well as director of most of the company's output since then, including acclaimed adaptations of J. L. Carr's *A Month in the Country*, Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, Conan Doyle's *The Lost World*, D. H. Lawrence's *The Rocking Horse Winner*, as well as writing the large scale community play for Richmondshire *Last Dance of a Dalesman*, which moved its audience from gales of laughter to tears and back again. His adaptation with Simon Corble of Buchan's *The 39 Steps* inspired the West End Production that received an Olivier Award as BEST NEW COMEDY in February 2007. Described as "uproariously funny... strikingly inventive" in the Guardian, as well as the Critics' Choice it also won the People's Choice Award and the Broadway production won a couple of Tony Awards.



Thomas Frere

Thomas has been a regular for North Country Theatre since playing Hannay in the original version of *The 39 Steps* 15 years ago. He recently appeared as Bassett in *The Rocking Horse Winner* and in many of the company's previous productions including *Moll Flanders*, *Mak the Sheepstealer*, and *The Passion Plays* as well as directing *The Man who would be King*.

Elsewhere, he has performed in rep theatres around the country including seasons at Lancaster (*Comedy of Errors*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Sleeping Beauty*); Bolton (*Christmas Carol*); West Yorkshire Playhouse (*Wind in the Willows*); York (*Tom Jones/Moll Flanders*); Southampton (*The Seduction of Anne Boleyn*); Ludlow Festival



(*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and Liverpool (*Candide*).

His knowledge of the geography of the British Isles has been vastly improved by extensive touring in shows such as *Charlie & the Chocolate Factory*, *Bittersweet*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, *The Great Gatsby* and *Return to the Forbidden Planet*.

On television Thomas has as worked for the Discovery Channel, HTV and Nickelodeon, has appeared in *The Royal* for ITV and in the horror film *The Spell*.

Susan Jinks

Susan trained at London's Mountview Theatre Academy and is now an established, Yorkshire based actress. Susan's most recent work includes the film *Babbling Fools* and playing Davina Pike in Yorkshire Television's *Emmerdale*. She has appeared in six North Country Theatre productions, including *Moll Flanders*, *Northanger Abbey* and *The Electrical Wizard of the North*.



Simon Kirk

Simon's latest appearance for North Country Theatre was in Autumn 2011 as Major Cresswell in *The Rocking Horse Winner* and before that, he appeared in *The Prisoner of Zenda*, *The Electrical Wizard of the North*, *The Man who would be King*, *The 39 Steps* and *Cartimandua*. He has toured extensively with, among others, Midsomer Actors, Heartbreak, Found Theatre and his own unnamed company performing plays he has written and directed on *Militant Suffragettes*, *The End of Slavery*, *The Roman Empire in Britain* and, most recently, *The Olympics!* Film and TV credits include *Emmerdale*, *Casualty*, *The Bill*, *Conviction*, *Mary Tudor*, *Kingdom* and a new, as yet unreleased, science fiction film.



NORWEGIAN LINK

Whenever possible North Country have offered work experience opportunities to young people from local schools but this year we have been able to extend the offer to Richmond's twin town Vinstra in Norway. Because we were working on a saga which tells of a time when Yorkshire was briefly ruled by Norwegian King Erik Bloodaxe, it seemed like a good idea to invite students from Vinstra to join us. We have been delighted to welcome Kari Smestad and Karoline Nylund to work with us. They travelled alone from Norway and less than a week after arriving in England they will be/were on stage with us in our first performance.

Kari Smestad

I come from Vinstra in Norway and I study music at the High School there. I am part of Per Gynt Theatre Group. (Our town is famous as the home of Per Gynt) I am very pleased to come to England to gain some work experience with North Country Theatre. The bad thing is we have to keep up our homework from school at the same time.

Karoline Nylund

I am from Vinstra in Norway and I study music at the High School. I am also part of the Per Gynt Theatre Group. The last performance I gave was "Dårekisten" a small part from Ibsen's Per Gynt which Kari also took part in. Whilst we are here we hope to learn about theatre and practice our English.

We are grateful to the Richmond and Vinstra Town Twinning Associations for making this visit possible, especially Ingun Bruntland, Morven Lawson and Angela Hartley who have hosted the students during their visit.

How you can keep the show on the road

Many people have asked how they can help North Country Theatre to continue to produce its much valued programme of work now that it no longer has the regular support of Arts Council England. Here are a couple of options:

Be an ANGEL

North Country Angels pledge to donate a minimum of £100 a year for the next three years. By knowing what money will be coming in, on top of the earned income, we will be able to budget sensibly and plan productions and educational work to suit. Just 400 angels could replace all our lost arts council funding.

A Host of Angels

A group of friends or colleagues, a school, a parish council, or a village hall committee can buy into the scheme as a group.

Angels will be credited on our website and in programmes (unless you prefer not) and receive our newsletters and information, and receive an annual "report" from the Artistic Director.

Join the FRIENDS of North Country Theatre

The Friends is a separate supporters organisation with an annual subscription of £25 per household. The money raised through the annual subscription, fundraising events and legacies has bought equipment, sponsored a young actor in his first job and helped to buy our new specially adapted van.

Friends enjoy newsletters, invitations to theatre related talks and special events and opening nights. Currently over 200 households are members. Look for the little lapel badges!

It is likely that the Friends will provide a contribution to the core funding of North Country in the future, as well as continuing to support specific funding requests.



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