

NORTH COUNTRY theatre

THE GIFT OF STONES

BY JIM CRACE

ADAPTED FOR
THE STAGE AND
DIRECTED BY
NOBBY DIMON

PROGRAMME £2

*"Salute the liars
- they can make
the real world
disappear and
a fresh world
take its place"*

Friends of
NORTH COUNTRY
theatre

Angels of
the North
Country



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

North Country Theatre is a professional theatre company based in the beautiful market town of Richmond in North Yorkshire. Under the direction of its Artistic Director Nobby Dimon it has created many original new plays along with exciting adaptations of classic novels since it began in 1996. It has a special understanding of the nature of touring to a rural area as well as educational and site specific drama. It is committed to giving exciting, entertaining and intelligent theatre to audiences whose access to live theatre is limited by geography or who

simply enjoy sharing the experience of live theatre in their local community.

We would like to express our gratitude to the local promoters, the majority of whom are unpaid, whose hard work allows us to visit their venues. We'd also like to thank our Angels who by committing to regular giving have not only endorsed our work but kept the company on the road for another three years at least. To find out more download the brochure from www.northcountrytheatre.com or ring 01748 825362.

» Andy Thursfield is proud to have designed North Country Theatre's publicity material since 2000. He donated the time spent designing this programme in support of the company.
Andy Thursfield | Graphic Designer | 01748 829507



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What You Will

Can you believe it? 2016 will be North Country Theatre's 20th anniversary!

To celebrate we'd like to do something special, something the company has never done before, but which it can't do without your help.

We're planning to do a North Country Shakespeare and to invite actors who have worked with the company over the last 20 years to come together to do a short outdoor run of Shakespeare's best comedy *Twelfth Night* or *What You Will*.

We're planning seven performances in Richmondshire at the end of June and beginning of July plus an extra one in Shropshire where we have an enthusiastic audience who have booked us from the early days.

However, employing ten actors (and Shep) is way beyond our usual budget/means, so we will need substantial extra sponsorship.

CAN YOU HELP US CREATE AN UNFORGETTABLE 20th ANNIVERSARY SHOW?

A 100 club of £100 sponsors would put us well on the way – and there are other options too!

- ◆ For £100 you will receive one complimentary ticket and programme plus an acknowledgement in programme
- ◆ Donate £500 and you will get five complimentary tickets and a programme acknowledgement *PLUS* Your Name or Company written into the script!
- ◆ A donation of £1000 gets you five complimentary tickets, an advert in the programme for an organisation of your choice *PLUS* a walk on part [for one night only] for you or a nominated person
- ◆ And then of course if you want to see Shep – that's £5000...

Behind The Gift of Stones

This year's production received financial support not just from North Country's Friends and Angels but also two small awards from Arts Council England through the Grants for the Arts scheme.

The first grant funded a two week development period in May when Nobby Dimon had the time to research and explore ideas for *The Gift of Stones* along with three actors, without the pressure of an imminent deadline.

One exciting part of this process was a weekend in Norfolk where they spent a day with John Lord, a flint knapper and expert in the Neolithic. They found it fascinating to watch and listen as John shaped fine tools and arrowheads from rough flint cores, and then they tried to work the material themselves under his tuition. It was a really great experience. John also makes prehistoric flutes from hollowed out elder and he has given us some eerie music he recorded to use in the production. The actors also went over to Grimes Graves near Thetford to visit the only Neolithic flint mine open to visitors in Britain. Managed by English Heritage this grassy lunar landscape of 400 pits are flint mines dug over 5,000 years ago.



Here you can see Mark, Nobby and Vivienne looking into one of the passages that radiated out from the deep pit. This was a rich source of black flint. Tools made from this particular flint have been found at Neolithic sites across Europe which shows that there was international trade taking place all those thousands of years ago!

Jim Crace

“A writer of hallucinatory skill” John Updike

Jim Crace is the author of 13 novels and books of stories as well as many essays and journalism, and has won many literary prizes. This year he was awarded the prestigious (and valuable) international Impac award, and he has been short listed twice for the Booker Prize, most recently in 2013 for *Harvest*. *The Gift of Stones* (1988) was his second published book.

“Amongst the many attributes that human beings have, which aren't possessed by other animals – such as making fire, dressing ourselves in clothes, laughter, all of those things we have – amongst those many things which distinguishes us as human beings is telling stories, the ability to reinvent the past and imagine the future and turn it into stories.” Jim Crace



Originally from North London Jim lives in Birmingham. His daughter is an actor, which may be one reason why he was open to the idea of a small scale theatre company adapting his novel about the origins of storytelling.

His other work includes:

- *Continent* (seven stories) (1986) • *The Gift of Stones* (1988) • *Arcadia* (1992) • *Signals of Distress* (1994) • *The Slow Digestions of the Night* (short stories) (1995) • *Quarantine* (1997) • *Being Dead* (1999) • *The Devil's Larder* (64 short pieces) (2001) • *Six* (2003) (published in the US as *Genesis*) • *The Pesthouse* (2007) • *On Heat* (2008) • *All that Follows* (2010) • *Harvest* (2013)

Director's Note

The Gift of Stones appealed to me because it is about the origins of storytelling and by extension the origins of theatre, because its language has a poetry which is not found often in contemporary fiction and because its remote setting is both strange yet recognisable. “The past is another country, they do things differently there”, but Crace reminds us that even our remote ancestors share intellect and feelings with us.

I have a personal reason for being drawn to this book. The central character loses his right arm as a boy and struggles to be much use in his flint-knapping community until he discovers his gift is not stones but storytelling. I have limited use of my right arm and leg because of cerebral palsy but like the character I have found a role in life as an entertainer, a storyteller.

This is only the second time North Country has adapted the work of a living author, (some may remember we adapted Ian McEwan's TV play *The Imitation Game* in 2005), but we have plundered the work of some of the best, Austen, Kipling, Defoe, Conan Doyle, Lorca, J L Carr, and we are proud to add Jim Crace to that list.

Why adapted existing material? Well we are in good company doing so. Shakespeare himself mostly adapted plots and characters from other authors, poets, and chroniclers and did so I think because his talent was in the dramatic arts, the public presentation and sharing of a story rather than its private communication. We are trying to make not a replica of an existing thing but a new thing which opens up the story in a different way.

Nobby Dimon

Copies of Jim Crace's book *The Gift of Stones* are available after the show price £9. Supplied by Castle Hill Bookshop, Richmond, who also have copies of his other books.

Call in or ring 01748 824243 or order online at www.castlehillbookshop.co.uk for next day delivery. Castle Hill Bookshop have just celebrated 40 years of excellent local service. Shop local, shop ethically and keep the richness and diversity of your local market place

THE GIFT OF STONES

BY JIM CRACE

Adapted for the stage and scripted by Nobby Dimon

CAST

Daughter/Doe	Vivienne Garnett
Father (when older)	Nobby Dimon
Father (when younger)	Mark Cronfield
Leaf/Villager/Horseman/Farmer	Martin Dower
Horseman/Cousin	Edward Darling
Digital backdrop design	Andy Thursfield
Costume	Alice Lawson
Lighting design	Tony Wilcock
Music/sfx	Dave Harris, John Lord
Rehearsal stage management	Lindsay Trenholme
Director	Nobby Dimon
Company Administrator	Colin Bailey
Fundraiser/PR	Gillian Howells



THERE WILL BE AN INTERVAL, DURATION TO BE ANNOUNCED

We are grateful to the many Angels of the North Country and the Friends of North Country Theatre for their continuing sponsorship which keeps us on the road.

Also Richmond Town Council, the Elm House Trust, G W Cadbury Trust, Richmond Fairtrade Group, the Upper Wensleydale Newsletter, thecitysecret, John Blenkiron & Sons, Dawn Clarkson & Associates, Yorkshire Country Holidays and Cllr Clive World the Mayor of Richmond.

We'd also like to thank people who support the company throughout the year along with those who have helped with this production: Simon Kirk, Nicola Moxey, John Lord, Will Lord, Ray Davies at Garden House Pottery, Richmond YMCA, Dales Countryside Museum, Castle Hill Books Richmond, Andy Thursfield, Richmondshire District Council, Carillion, John Ward, Wendy Patch, Gilly's Trade Supplies, Richmond Company of Fellmongers, Amy Brannigan, Caroline Woodroffe, Jenny & Tony Power, Mike Nicholls, Faye Doorbar, Amanda Cook, Geoff Wall, Tim Kendall, Judith Brickwood, Donald & Nina Cline, Wilma Burniston, Liz Floyd, Mike Potter, Julian Farrand, Brenda Hale.

Alice Lawson *Costume*

Alice trained in costume making in Leicester, apprenticing in traditional bespoke tailoring before moving to New Zealand for a change of scenery. Swapping suiting and tweeds for fake fur and foam with a mascot making company. Now back home in Richmond, she runs a business making whatever people want, and dabbling in costume whenever the opportunity arises. Contact 0774 2922384.

Dave Harris *Sound*

Dave has written music for theatre, television and film, is an award-winning songwriter and also a session musician. Previous work for North Country Theatre includes music direction and arrangement for *The Passion Plays*, *Last Dance of a Dalesman*, and *Blame it on Bartle!*, composing and recording the soundtrack for *2001 Space Idiocy*, *Moll Flanders*, *The Prisoner of Zenda*, the tenth anniversary production of *The 39 Steps*, *The Rocking Horse Winner*, *The Lighthouse on Shivering Sands* and *A Month in the Country*.

Tony Wilcock *Lighting*

Tony is currently the Production Manager at The Georgian Theatre Royal but has worked for many national touring companies across the UK and worldwide including Northern Broadsides and Jean Anne Ryan Worldwide Productions. He worked on North Country Theatre's productions of *The Lost World*, *Blame it on Bartle!* and *A Month in the Country* and looks forward to working with them once again on *The Gift of Stones*.

Lindsay Trenholme *Rehearsal stage management*

Lindsay spent 20 years working in production for BBC television, ranging from being a runner on *I, Claudius* to Assistant Floor Manager on *Blackadder's Christmas Carol* and *The Hour of the Pig* with Colin Firth. Returned home to Yorkshire as a Stage Manager for several years with *Emmerdale* and *Heartbeat*, and first joined North Country Theatre rehearsals in 2011 for *The Rocking Horse Winner*.

Nobby Dimon

Has been the Artistic Director of North Country Theatre since it was founded in 1996, writing, adapting as well as directing most of the



company's output. 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, took the both Critics' and People's Choice Awards plus a couple of Tonys on Broadway. His adaptation of DH Lawrence's *The Rocking Horse Winner*, received rave reviews locally, regionally and nationally.

He has also directed for Cleveland Theatre Company, Harrogate Theatre, Durham Theatre Company, Charivari and Snap Theatre.

Wedding in Wensleydale, *The Rocking Horse Winner*, and most recently as Birkin in *A Month in the Country*. He lives in Bishopdale with his wife and children.



Martin Dower

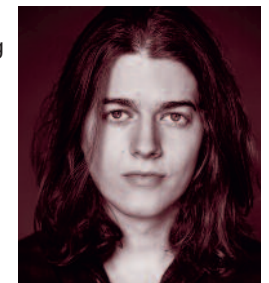
A resident of Thwaite, Martin trained at Dartington College of Arts and then worked throughout the 70's in Theatre-in-Education and rural community theatre. An Arts Development officer in Oxfordshire for nine years, he also ran a wholefood shop! In 1995 he returned to his native dales, first working for North Country Theatre as a



stage manager on *Home on the Range*, and performing in the plays *Meantime* (John Harrison), *The Passion Plays* (John the Baptist), *A Month in the Country* (Reverend Keach), *Moby Dick* (Captain Ahab), *Last Dance of a Dalesman* (Dan Ottershaw), *The 2nd Shepherd's Play* (Gib, the 2nd Shepherd) and *Blame it on Bartle!* (Pastor Collins).

Edward Darling

Edward began acting around three years ago with a lead role in *Lorca's Blood Wedding*. Then spent time training in screen technique at Manchester's ActUpNorth and learning "on the job" on both stage and screen. He recently finished filming a lead in *Period Short*, *Emmott & Rowland*, set in the plague village of Eyam in 1666. This is his first theatre tour and he's excited to be working with everyone on *The Gift Of Stones*.



Vivienne Garnett


This is Vivienne's seventh tour with North Country Theatre; previous shows have included *The Imitation Game*, *Make the Sheepstealer*, *Prisoner of Zenda*, *Home on the Range* and *The Lighthouse on Shivering Sands*.

Since graduating from Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts in 2004 she has also performed at Frinton Summer Season in Essex, Gasworks and Chapel Off Chapel in Melbourne and she has done commercials for Sky, Virgin, Sony and the Co-op. Last month she returned to Australia and filmed *Absent Minded*, due to be released next year. Vivienne is originally from North Yorkshire and is now based in London.


Mark Cronfield

The Gift of Stones is Mark's eleventh production for North Country Theatre, including *Blood*

Be an Angel, Become a Friend



Since 2012 North Country Theatre has been able to continue touring thanks to the investment of hundreds of Angels and Friends, whose donations help replace regular Arts Council England funding. Many Angels have committed to making an annual contribution of £100 though we have Cherubs and Archangels too. If you would like to help keep North Country on the road please fill in the form below or ring Gillian Howells on 01748 825362.



I / we would like to become an Angel investing £ each month / quarter / year and have set up a standing order starting from ___ / ___ / ___ for at least years (e.g. £9 a month for 3 years)

I / we would like to make a donation of £

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE EMAIL

I have used electronic banking I enclose a cheque made payable to North Country Theatre

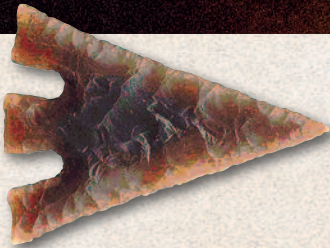
Our bank details for setting up your standing order and for electronic banking:

Yorkshire Bank, 1 Market Place, Richmond DL10 4HX

Sort code: 05 - 07 - 12 Account no: 39492035 Account name: North Country Theatre

I / We would like to join the Friends of North Country Theatre [annual subscription is £25 per household - we will send your details on to the Friends Membership Secretary]

THE GIFT OF STONES



The village of flint knappers is safe, self satisfied, and inward looking, but a stray arrow, an amputation, and a wild woman from the salt sea marshes bring murder, mystery and cataclysmic change.

Jim Crace's award-winning historical novel is brought to the stage by the company whose brilliant adaptations have ranged from the hilarious *The 39 Steps* to the deeply moving *A Month in the Country*.

COMING NEXT

North Country does Shakespeare in the summer [if we can get enough sponsors] see inside for more details. There may be a small revival of *Egil Skallagrimsson Keeps His Head* in spring and in the autumn we are creating a new play based on Rudyard Kipling's supernatural tale of rural folklore, urban myth and obsessional love, *The Wish House*.

If you enjoyed this performance please tell your friends they can see it at the following venues:

SEPTEMBER

Wed 30 Richmond Georgian Theatre Royal DL10 4DW 01748 825252 www.georgiantheatreroyal.co.uk

OCTOBER

Thu 1 Richmond Georgian Theatre Royal DL10 4DW 01748 825252 www.georgiantheatreroyal.co.uk

Fri 2 Sawley Village Hall HG4 3EQ 01765 620250

Sat 3 Barton upon Humber, The Ropewalk DN18 5JT 01652 660380 www.the-ropewalk.co.uk

Tue 6 West Burton Village Hall DL8 4JY 01969 663373

Wed 7 Bowness, The Old Laundry Theatre LA23 3BX 08445 040604 www.oldlaundrytheatre.co.uk

Thu 8 Torpenhow Village Hall CA7 1HT 01697 371514 Wigton Library 366150

Fri 9 Kirkby Overblow, All Saints Church HG3 1HD www.northcountrytheatre.com

Sat 10 Otley Court House LS21 3AN 01943 467466 www.otleycourthouse.org.uk

Tue 13 Edgton Village Hall SY8 7HN 01588 680302 / 672248

Wed 14 Grindleford, The Maynard S32 2HE 01433 631610

Thu 15 Ilkley Playhouse (Wharfeside Auditorium) LS29 8DW www.ilkleyliteraturefestival.org.uk

Fri 16 Barnard Castle, St. Mary's Parish Hall DL12 8NQ 01748 825288 www.northcountrytheatre.com

Sat 17 Northallerton, The Forum DL6 1LP 01609 776230 www.forumnorthallerton.org.uk

Tue 20 Thornton le Beans Village Hall DL6 3SL 01609 774458

Wed 21 Wetherby Methodist Church Hall LS22 6FG www.wetherbyfestival.co.uk

Thu 22 TBC (check website) 01748 825288 www.northcountrytheatre.com

Fri 23 Sutton on the Forest, Grey Village Hall YO61 1DP 01347 811866

Sat 24 Masham Town Hall - Matinee HG4 4DY 01765 680200 Masham Community Office

Sat 24 Masham Town Hall - Evening HG4 4DY 01765 680200 Masham Community Office

Tue 27 Scarborough, SJT - The McCarthy YO11 1JW 01723 370541 www.sjt.uk.com

Wed 28 Knayton Village Hall YO7 4AZ 01845 537457

Thu 29 Stockton on Tees, Elmwood Centre TS18 5EP 01642 688303 www.onsitebuildingtrust.org

Fri 30 Husthwaite Village Hall YO61 4PF 01347 868130

Sat 31 Pateley Bridge, Bishopside & Bewerley Memorial Hall HG3 5JS 01423 712157 / 07889 676992

NOVEMBER

Fri 6 Yarm Fellowship Hall TS15 9BU 01642 888786

Sat 7 Leyburn Methodist Hall - Matinee DL8 5AT 01748 825288 www.northcountrytheatre.com

Sat 7 Leyburn Methodist Hall - Evening DL8 5AT 01748 825288 www.northcountrytheatre.com

Tue 10 Biggar, The Corn Exchange ML12 6DH www.biggarcornexchange.org.uk

Wed 11 Carlops Village Hall EH26 9NF 07773 024024

Thu 12 Galashiels, Mac-Arts Centre TD1 1SP 01896 756852 www.macarts.scot

Fri 13 Catterick Village, Booth Memorial Hall DL10 7LD 01748 811316

Sat 14 Helmsley Arts Centre YO62 5DW 01439 771700 www.helmsleyarts.co.uk

Tue 17 Arncliffe, Amerdale Hall BD23 5QD 01756 770498 www.littondale.net

Wed 18 Kirklington Village Hall DL8 2NJ 01845 567295

Thu 19 Darley Village Memorial Hall HG3 2RP 01423 781862 / 780863

Fri 20 Newton le Willows Village Hall DL8 1SH 01677 450715

Sat 21 Hutton Rudby Village Hall TS15 0HP 01642 701586

Tue 24 Glentworth Village Hall DN21 5DF 01427 667118 / 667047

Wed 25 Hawes, Dales Countryside Museum DL8 3NT 01969 666210

Thu 26 Clifford Village Hall LS23 6HY 01937 530652 www.clifforddramagroup.org.uk

Fri 27 Bellerby Memorial Hall DL8 5QN 01969 622470

Sat 28 Hunton Village Hall DL8 1QZ 01677 450422

DECEMBER

Tue 1 Gilling West Village Hall DL10 5JG 01748 850158

Wed 2 Marton cum Grafton Village Hall YO51 9QY 01423 325179

Thu 3 Ripon Grammar School HG4 2DG 01765 602647 The Little Ripon Bookshop 606689

Fri 4 Reeth Memorial Hall DL11 6QT 01748 884759 www.reethmemorialhall.co.uk

Sat 5 Reeth Memorial Hall DL11 6QT 01748 884759 www.reethmemorialhall.co.uk

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