

■ The diary is published in the JEP on Mondays and Thursdays

Two Jersey Opera House Studio, Wednesday 20 March to Saturday 23 March, 7.30pm

THE first ever play from local theatre company Feisty Goat will be making its debut in the Jersey Opera House Studio next month.

Titled *Two*, the production is a two-hander performed by Terry Butler and Feisty Goat founder Rhona Richards and is an adaptation of playwright Jim Cartwright's acclaimed stage play.

'I set up Feisty Goat as a way of bringing together actors and directors interested in producing small-scale, stripped-down productions of classic and contemporary plays,' says Rhona. 'Our slogan is "Small Company. Big Ideas".'

Here, the former barrister turned actress discusses Cartwright's 'poetic and lyrical' dialogue, her favourite theatre productions and the appeal of goats...

What can Islanders expect from *Two* at the Jersey Opera House Studio?

'*Two* takes place over one evening and follows the comings and goings of the regulars in a Northern pub. At its centre are a bickering landlord and landlady and the hidden tragedy that has destroyed their relationship. However, the play is also very funny, and hopefully the audience will leave having enjoyed an evening of entertaining and thought-provoking theatre.'

What do you think makes Jim Cartwright's work so enjoyable?

'I read Cartwright's play *Road* while at university and was struck by the way he mixed hard-hitting storylines with irreverent humour. His characters are instantly recognisable but never stereotypical and, although his language is poetic and lyrical, his writing is never pretentious. His plays will often deal with people who are down on their luck, but they're never maudlin or depressing. There is always hope that things will change for the better.'

'Also, Cartwright's work is a gift to actors. In *Two*, Terry Butler and I play 13 different characters between



■ Terry Butler and Feisty Goat's founder, Rhona Richards, will play 13 different characters between them in their production of Jim Cartwright's comedy

opportunity to see a lot of musical theatre in Jersey but not so many straight plays. It would be nice if Feisty Goat could do something to redress that balance.'

Feisty Goat is a very memorable name. Where did it come from?

'Well, "feisty" because I like to think we're a spirited bunch, and "goat" because goats are strong, resilient and adaptable. So, together they pretty much sum up the characteristics you need to work in theatre. Other than that, I just like goats.'

What future productions do you have planned?

'We have a wish-list that includes Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, Chekhov's *The Seagull*, Dennis Potter's *Blue Remembered Hills* and *Contractions* by Mike Bartlett. I'm on the lookout for anyone with good ideas, so feel free to get in touch.'

What is the finest theatre production you have ever seen?

'I was lucky to see both parts of *Angels in America* last year at The National. I thought Andrew Garfield and Nathan Lane were superb. Another outstanding performance was Fiona Shaw as *Medea* – she was terrifying and awe-inspiring in equal measure. Perhaps the production that left the greatest impression, however, was *Good* at the Donmar Warehouse in London, which is a play that questions how a "good" doctor can passively acquiesce to Hitler's agenda.'

Finally, if you could stage a Feisty Goat production in any venue or location in the world, where would it be?

'Oh, definitely the Donmar Warehouse. It's an intimate theatre that really draws the audience into a production. Alternatively, we'd happily consider the West End or Broadway.'

● For more information about *Two*, or to book tickets, visit jerseyoperahouse.co.uk. To find out more about Feisty Goat, visit feistygoattheatre.com.

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Rhona Richards

us. It's a huge challenge but a fabulous opportunity to use different physicality and accents. Our director, Niki Butler, performed professionally in street theatre and circus, and also lectures in non-verbal communication and movement, and so she's the ideal person to help bring Cartwright's colourful characters to life.'

What will set Feisty Goat apart from other local theatre companies?

'The membership of Feisty Goat is fluid. We work as a co-operative, and the only criterion for joining is having proven experience in the performing arts. I've always been a great fan of the "let's do the play right here" mentality and, hopefully, Feisty Goat will bring together like-minded people with interesting ideas. We have the

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