THE CONTAGION CABARET
A quirky evening of drama and music, discussion and disease.

June 20th 2017
The Museum of the History of Science, Oxford
as part of Oxfordshire Science Festival

Sept 27th 2017
The Theatre Chipping Norton

Sept 29th 2017
The Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford
as part of European Researchers Night

-INTERVAL-

‘The Herpes Tango’ by Fascinating Aida, 1997

Extract from ‘Three Men in a Boat’ by Jerome K Jerome, 1889

Extracts from ‘A New Disease’ by Elbert Hubbard, published in Arena periodical, 1894

Extract from ‘The Crucible’ by Arthur Miller, 1953

Extract from ‘The Hot Zone: The terrifying true story of the origins of the Ebola virus’ by Richard Preston, 1995

‘Hush, hush, hush’ by Paula Cole, 1996

Plus extracts from The Guardian, The Daily Mail, The Huffington Post and a number of websites.
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The piece is a collage of drama, writings, songs and talks. Here are some of the main sources in the approximate order that you will see them.

‘I got it from Agnes’ by Tom Lehrer, 1953
‘The Microbe on the Lip’ from the periodical Fun, 1899
Extract from ‘Damaged Goods’ by Eugène Brieux, 1913
Extract from ‘Too True to be Good’ by George Bernard Shaw, 1932
‘The love-sick bacillus’, from Nine Medical Songs by Blumfeld, Ransome, Chadborn, 1895
‘Pirelli’s Miracle Elixir’ from Sweeney Todd: the Demon Barber of Fleet Street by Stephen Sondheim, 1979

THE CONTAGION CABARET

Created by Paul Ansdell, Anna Tolputt and John Terry from an idea by Professor Sally Shuttleworth
Directed by John Terry
Musical Director: Michael Jennings

Cast:
Paul Ansdell
James Charlton
Marcus D’Amico
Evie James
Anna Tolputt

Guest Researchers:
Professor John Frater
Dr Nicola Fawcett
Professor Sunetra Gupta
Dr Emilie Taylor-Brown

Script research: Professor Sally Shuttleworth,
Dr Emilie Taylor-Brown, Dr Melissa Dickson,
Professor Kirsten Shepherd-Barr.

Thanks to Robyn Haggard and the MHS, Victoria McGuinness and TORCH, The Oxford Playhouse and the team at Chipping Norton Theatre

Produced in association with The Theatre Chipping Norton www.chippingnortontheatre.com
DIRECTOR’S NOTE

Contagious diseases are, of course, no laughing matter. They have decimated families and communities for as long as families and communities have existed. This project was a chance to look at the idea of contagion from varying and contrasting perspectives – thoughtful, heartfelt, irreverent, provocative. And a chance to realise that though the names of the diseases may change, our concerns, our fears, our prejudices echo through the centuries in a remarkably consistent way. And just as a disease may be passed from neighbour to neighbour, so may ideas, spreading through groups of people in patterns that look terrifyingly similar.

It has been both exciting and sobering to explore the huge range of writing and music on the subject, and to set each piece in an angle to the next, juxtaposing and contrasting ideas across time. We hope it proves thought provoking.

John Terry, Director

FROM THE RESEARCH TEAM

Contagion Cabaret is supported by two research projects which explore the intersections of science and the arts: ‘Diseases of Modern Life: Nineteenth-Century Perspectives’ (funded by the European Research Council), and ‘Constructing Scientific Communities: Citizen Science in the 19th and 21st Centuries’ (funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council). Both projects aim to think creatively about how study of the past can help us to respond to the pressing issues of the present. For more information on the projects, see www.diseasesofmodernlife.org and www.conscicom.org

We hope you enjoy the Cabaret!

Sally Shuttleworth
Professor of English Literature
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