



-PRESS RELEASE-

Let Newton Be!
By Craig Baxter

On 20th October 2009, *Let Newton Be!*, a play by Craig Baxter, received its first performance by the Menagerie Theatre Company in the Winstanley Lecture Theatre, Trinity College, Cambridge. This performance was exclusively for members of the College and special guests. Prof Stephen Hawking, recently retired Lucasian Chair of Mathematics, gave a witty introductory speech in honour of the former chair holder, Sir Isaac Newton.

Newton expert, Prof. Robert Iliffe, Director of the Newton Project based at the University of Sussex led a discussion about the dramatisation with the audience at the end of the performance.

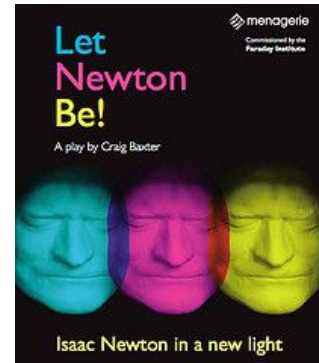
Let Newton Be! is a unique play that brings the complex and controversial character of Sir Isaac Newton to life, using his own words and those of his contemporaries. It is a verbatim play, the script drawn entirely from the written words of Newton and his contemporaries – letters, notes, published and unpublished works.

The play is a compelling narrative showing Newton in many different lights, science and religion drawn together in one complex personality: as the young boy measuring the speed of wind; the isolated Cambridge scholar, practising alchemy in the secrecy of his darkened room; and the autocrat of British Science, ruling the Royal Society with an iron fist. Perhaps for the first time, we see Newton as a human being – brilliant, comical, driven and vulnerable.

“..a gripping new play about Isaac Newton by Craig Baxter... provides an absorbing insight into the troubled relationship between science and theology at the Enlightenment”
John Cornwell, The Tablet

Menagerie Theatre Company, based in Cambridge, specialise in new writing for the theatre. *Let Newton Be!* is their second commission from Cambridge University organisations and follows the success of *Re:Design*, a dramatic adaptation of the correspondence between US botanist Asa Gray and Charles Darwin. **Let Newton Be!** is directed by Patrick Morris, Associate Artistic Director of Menagerie and designed by Issam Kourbaj, Artist in Residence, Christ’s College, Cambridge.

Commissioned by The Faraday Institute as part of **Cambridge University’s** 800th anniversary celebrations, with funding from the Cambridge 800th Anniversary fund and the John Templeton Foundation, the play was performed to four audiences, including members and non-members of the University of Cambridge. A tour throughout the UK and US is planned for 2010.



Stephen Hawking introduces the play.