

**May-June 2011 GALA SEASON for the EXUBERANT TRUST,
in partnership with BALLET IN SMALL SPACES:**

SEBASTIAN'S COMMEDIA

IN MEMORIAM: SEBASTIAN GRAHAM-JONES (1947-2004)

a ballet created by **Susie Crow**, set to **Robin Holloway's** Serenade in C
in a double bill with

INSIDE OUT

choreographed by **Susie Crow**, set to **Alan Bush's** 24 Preludes for Piano

These performances are part of an exciting programme of music, dance and visual arts events supported by the National Lottery through Grants for the Arts

Monday 16th May to Saturday 28th May

The North Wall, Oxford - GALLERY EXHIBITION

www.thenorthwall.com

Drawing the Dance, Dancing the Image.

This **Oxford ArtWeeks** exhibition, curated by Cassandra Isaacson and Clare Bassett, will highlight the evolution of Claude Harrison's Commedia-like fantasy paintings and young designer Ellen Stewart's designs for the ballets. Drawing Dance is an ongoing collaboration between established Oxfordshire artists and Ballet in Small Spaces. Thanks to Tobias Harrison for loan of paintings from Claude Harrison's collection.



Wednesday 18th May, 2.00pm & 7.30pm: matinee and evening performance at The Castle, Wellingborough. **Ballet in Small Spaces world premiere**

Double bill: Inside Out & Sebastian's Commedia

Choreographer - Susie Crow; Design & costumes - Ellen Stewart; Lighting design - Guy Hoare.
Pianist for Inside Out: Peter Jacobs. Exuberant Players for Commedia led by Guy Button.

www.thecastle.org.uk

Friday 20th May, 1.00pm: Exuberant Players lunchtime concert

St Margaret's Church, St Margaret's Road, Oxford

Guy Button's Exuberant Players will play Schubert's Octet and Robin Holloway's Serenade in C, **both** pieces scored for string quartet, double bass, clarinet, horn and bassoon.

www.stmargaretsoxford.org

Friday 20th May, 7.30pm at The North Wall, Oxford

Double bill: Inside Out & Sebastian's Commedia

www.thenorthwall.com

Saturday 21st May, 2.00pm at The North Wall, Oxford: **Gala Matinée - Exuberant Trust Showcase & Sebastian's Commedia**

Recent young award-winners perform for an audience of well-wishers, followed by a special performance of the commissioned ballet. The performance will be followed by a reception in the Gallery.

www.thenorthwall.com

RESERVE TICKETS AT: www.exuberant-trust.org.uk

Saturday 21st May, 7.30pm at The North Wall, Oxford

Double bill: Inside Out & Sebastian's Commedia

www.thenorthwall.com

The EXUBERANT TRUST's Gala season continues with further performances and workshops by BALLET IN SMALL SPACES and The Exuberant Players:

Sunday 22nd May, 4pm:

Music at the Limes, Standlake

Garden party with Guy Button's quartet playing period instruments in The Pavilion, in aid of the Exuberant Trust

Tuesday 24th May:

Drawing Dance taught workshop for students and adults in Oxford.

For more information please contact Cassandra Isaacson: k.isaacson@btinternet.com

Tuesday 31st May, 7.45pm: at The Theatre, Chipping Norton

Performance: Harlequin Dances - a compilation of music and dance including Commedia, a 'taster' programme suitable for families and young people.

www.chippingnortontheatre.co.uk

Thursday 2nd June, 7.30pm: at Cornerstone Arts Centre, Didcot

Performance: Harlequin Dances - a compilation of music and dance including Commedia, a 'taster' programme suitable for families and young people.

www.cornerstone-arts.org

Please note that all other performances are to be booked and paid for online through the venue websites.



More **Exuberant workshops** for children and young people are in the pipeline, subject to fund-raising. Run by music therapists, our young-but-experienced musicians, designer and costume-maker, and dancers, the workshop programme, coinciding with **Oxfordshire ArtWeeks**, is a golden opportunity to share the exuberance of this project with children of all abilities, across the county.

If you would like to make a donation to support the productions, the artists or workshops, please send a cheque made out to **The Exuberant Trust (Commedia Project)** And we will send you a Gift Aid form.

For more information and updates please contact us at exuberant.trust@ntlworld.com or drsusie123@aol.com

Susie Graham-Jones
for the Exuberant Trustees

Oxford, April 2011

www.exuberant-trust.org.uk
www.balletinsmallspaces.co.uk
www.flashofsplendourarts.com

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE COMMEDIA PROJECT



Sebastian Graham-Jones was a theatre and TV and film director. One of his successes was the collaboration with Bill Bryden at the Cottesloe at the National Theatre (under the overall direction of Peter Hall) which led to the '**promenade theatre**' genre (Lark Rise to Candleford; The Mysteries; The Big Picnic).

In promenade productions, the audience were literally swept up into the action as the drama unfolded.

Sebastian's life and work were celebrated in April 2005 at the Players' Theatre in London. At that event and afterwards, there was talk about Sebastian's idea for a choreographed work using characters & images from **Claude Harrison's** fantasy paintings, with their allusions to the Commedia dell'Arte, to be set to

Robin Holloway's haunting, quizzical Serenade in C (1979) for string quartet, double bass, clarinet, horn and bassoon.

Sebastian had talked about this project with his brother Felix and his father Michael Graham-Jones, who had commissioned early works by both Claude Harrison (family portrait, 1954) and Robin Holloway (Fantasy- pieces on the Liederkreis of Schumann, 1971). These glimpses were tantalizing, and the Graham-Jones family and the **Exuberant**

Trustees have since been exploring ways of realising **Sebastian's Commedia Project**.

Both artist and composer were consulted early on, and were utterly supportive. We eventually discovered a choreographer with the vision and experience to make it all happen.

Susie Crow, of Oxford's Ballet in Small Spaces, says 'I envisage a work for 6 young professional dancers, chosen for individuality and expressive abilities as well as technical skills. The 30-minute performance will be made in the spirit of a painterly conversation piece; the successive short movements of Holloway's Serenade will generate a series of deliberately ambiguous vignettes - drawing on traditional Commedia scenarios as well as incidents in Sebastian's own life.'

www.balletinsmallspaces.co.uk

Young designer **Ellen Stewart** will draw inspiration from **Claude Harrison's** paintings for both costuming and setting. This may include painted landscapes on hanging cloths or banners, and will also pay homage to Sebastian's interest in more flexible settings and his pioneering work in promenade theatre.



Claude Harrison died in November 2009, but his son Tobias Harrison, also a painter, shares our vision of the Commedia Project as a celebration of the creative mind; a tribute to Claude Harrison as well as to Sebastian Graham-Jones.