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SHOTGUN PLAYERS
PRESENTS

The Events

Written by **David Greig**
Music by **John Browne**
Directed by **Susannah Martin**

Berkeley - After a horrific event, we always ask "why?" In the aftermath of a tragedy, one survivor searches herself and the world for unfathomable rationales. If we are able to understand, can we move forward and even prevent future tragedies? With a delicate balance of humor, pathos and the power of a live choir, *The Events* explores the strength of our humanity when confronted by cruelty. *The Events* begins previews on **May 4th**, opens on **Thursday, May 11th**, and runs through **June 4, 2017** at **The Ashby Stage**.

"I don't want to understand what happened to me, I know what happened to me. I want to understand what happened to him," says Claire at the outset of the play. She's the central figure in David Greig's powerful meditation on trauma, a woman of faith and the leader of a community choir. Claire is the survivor of something horrific: a young man she barely knows turns a gun on proclaimed "foreigners" in order to leave his mark on the world. While the catalyzing event of this play occurs before the first scene, the impact reverberates through the piece with powerful ricochet. Claire searches to understand *why*. What made the shooter – "The Boy" – perpetrate this act? What, and who, shaped him?

Director Susannah Martin finds inspiration in the unique live musical element at play onstage in the show: "A crucial element is that it features **a different community choir on stage during each performance**. They are Claire's choir. But they also act as her conscience, the Greek Chorus, and, most importantly, the community in which we live; the community that comes together each night in a shared space to talk, to wonder, to rage, to grieve, to commune and, of course, *to sing*."

"I'm incredibly drawn to stories of people who are pushed to their extremes" says Shotgun's Artistic Director Patrick Dooley, "because that's where the truths of the human experience can be revealed. For a theatre company that often talks about how it's trying to reimagine what it means to be a community theater, *The Events* offers the incredible challenge - and opportunity - that we must recruit and engage so many choirs. Yes, this is incredibly difficult - but what a blessing to get to introduce so many wonderful artists to our theater. What an opportunity to introduce our audience to all these artists!"

Playwright David Greig wrote *The Events* as a response to the horrific mass shooting in Norway on July 22, 2011. Anders Behring Breivik set off a car-bomb outside a government building in Oslo, and then proceeded to the Workers Youth League (AUF) summer camp on the island of Utøya, killing 77 people and injuring 319. Greig became obsessed, much like his lead character Claire, in trying to understand the Right-wing extremist who joined the multicultural choir, and then destroyed it.

David Greig was born in Edinburgh in 1969. He spent much of his childhood in Jos, Nigeria during the 1970's where his father worked in the construction industry. In 1980 his family return to live in Edinburgh where he went to school. Greig studied drama at Bristol University and is now a well-known playwright and director. He has been commissioned by the Royal Court, the National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company and is currently Dramaturg of the National Theater of Scotland. In 2015 Greig became Artistic Director of the celebrated Royal Lyceum Theatre in Edinburgh. Described in the *Daily Telegraph* as 'one of the most interesting and adventurous British dramatists of his generation', he is also one of Britain's most prolific modern playwrights. But Greig's work is as notable for its variety as its volume. His work is particularly interested in questions of globalization and internationalization and more precisely, how they impact at the local level.

The Events features Set and Prop Design by **Angrette McCloskey**, Music Direction by **Lisa Quoresimo**, Costume Design by **Alice Ruiz**, Sound Design by **Jake Rodriguez**, Choreography by **Shaunna Vella**, Light Design by **Wolfgang Wachalovsky**

The cast of *The Events* features **Julia McNeal*** and **Caleb Cabrera**.

(*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers.)

The Events features a different live local choir each performance night. Among the many choirs collaborating with Shotgun are:

May 4: South Berkeley Chorus

May 5: UC Berkeley Choral Ensembles

May 6: Caz Family Chorus

May 7: SF Choral Society

May 11: Gallimaufry Chamber Chorus

May 13: SF Bach Choir

May 14: SF Choral Society

May 18: SF University High School

May 20: Conspiracy of Venus

May 21: Rockridge Chorale

May 24: Berkeley Community Chorus and Orchestra

May 25 1pm: Variety Pack!

May 26: Sacred and Profane

May 27: Albany High School

May 28: UC Berkeley Alumni Chorus

CALENDAR LISTING

WHAT: After a horrific event, we always ask "why?" In the aftermath of a tragedy, one survivor searches herself and the world for unfathomable rationales. If we are able to understand, can we move forward and even prevent future tragedies? With a delicate balance of humor, pathos and the power of a live choir, *The Events* explores the strength of our humanity when confronted by cruelty.

Features a different choir every night!

WHEN: Wednesday – Sunday, May 4 – June 4, 2017.

WHERE: The Ashby Stage, 1901 Ashby Avenue, Berkeley

TICKET PRICES: Pay What You Can Previews. Regular tickets \$25 - \$40. Advance reservations strongly advised – shows will sell out!

For more information go to www.shotgunplayers.org or call 510.841.6500