

Brief audience feedback/discussion recorded by Charlie Davison (volunteer) immediately after:-

SEARCH PARTY: MY SON & HEIR

Colchester Arts Centre, 18th February 2015

Charlie:- *What did you think?*

Audience member (female 1):- *I think it was very thought-provoking And I thought it was very, very good - really enjoyed it!*

Charlie:- *If it was thought-provoking - in a nutshell -... What thoughts?*

Audience member (female 1):- *Umm... How we bully our children, to make them perform for people.....err.. how we nag our husbands..how our husbands are disappointed in us as mothers.. umm*

Charlie:- *They are quite dark - the things you're saying!*

Audience member (female 1):- *(Laughs)Yeah... yeah (generalized laughter) .. yeah, um, there's lots of different messages going on in there. And I hope that they are wise enough for their age, if they have a small son,... to, umm - Us who have come through it and who have got older children can't give our knowledge to him... and they seem like they are really tapping into it already - But that's talking about when you only have one child.. But when you add in the sibling dynamics...*

Charlie:- *It sounds to me as if you're talking from experience. Did you recognize things in the show?*

Audience member (female 1) and her friends who are listening:- *(amid laughter) Oh...Yes, yes. ..yeah - really!(generalized laughter)*

Audience member (female 1):- *I think it would be interesting for you to gather the thoughts of people who were at that stage with just one child - or indeed, with three small children, say, who have got sibling bonds..... as opposed to (she gestures to herself and friends) ... actually, we're all "maturer ladies", just starting into the grandparent phase...*

Charlie:-	<i>First of all ... what did you think?</i>
Audience member (female 2):-	<i>I thought it was really good! I thought it was hilarious actually... It really made me laugh! (she laughs - a lot)... So, so funny - and so, so true! (more laughter)</i>
Charlie :-	<i>So.. it made you laugh - but we were just hearing a minute ago that it was kind of dark!?! (laughter)</i>
Audience member (female 2):-	<i>(laughter) But it's always like that isn't it? I mean when you get the darker moments - That's what makes it so much fun as well isn't it?, yeah..</i>
Charlie:-	<i>What about if it was ... well there's a word, and I'll chuck it out there, - "political" - is it a political piece, do you think?</i>
Audience member (female 2):-	<i>I wouldn't say immensely so no. No. I mean... when you say "political" - do you mean against the royal family?</i>
Charlie:-	<i>Well, yeah - because it had those themes in it, didn't it?</i>
Audience member (female 2):-	<i>That they are just the everyday life themes aren't they? I mean every parent has those themes - I mean, well I'm saying that, maybe not me personally, but most parents kind of think - "oh.. I want my daughter to marry a prince" - it was more that kind of political... but no more than just ordinary everyday life is political... so...</i>
Charlie:-	<i>Yeah, yeah, um... we heard a minute ago that it was thought-provoking... err.. what sorts of thoughts?</i>
Audience member (female 2):-	<i>(laughs) Reminiscing thoughts!! As well as... I think... yeah it is that - you know, You've got so much hope in your children... and each other.. and... (emotional) really and truly,, it is a... (pause.. and then brightening up).. And I thought about the mess as well, actually!! (laughs).. (we are still sitting next to the performance space and she gestures at the white carpet covered with toys, clothes and peas) - it brings it all back!! (laughs) But it was really, really good and there's also the bit that I thought was really.....err, you know... when he's saying "My son's not</i>

	<i>going to be this and my son's not going to be that" ...And it's, you know, like you say, no-one knows how anyone's going to ... you know, everyone is someone's son...</i>
Charlie:-	<i>That was moving that, wasn't it?</i>
Audience member (female 2):-	<i>It was <u>very</u> moving.</i>
Charlie:-	<i>Yeah.. I must admit that what it made me think of was - Fred West... he was someone's son.</i>
Audience member (female 2):-	<i>Yeah! That's exactly what we were saying! ... everyone is someone's son.</i>
Charlie:-	<i>Yeah and there's not going to be anyone thinking "Oh.. I hope he grows up and murders people and buries them under the patio"... well presumably there's no-one saying that...</i>
Audience member (female 2):-	<i>No.. no... It's a gamble, isn't it? I think they were just showing that the whole thing, it's all a big gamble, the relationship.. bringing up children, it's all a big.. I mean you never know what's gonna happen in the end. But I'm glad that we all still think that and we all still have babies and go "they're gonna be this and they're gonna be that" (laughter).. or else you'd never - would you? (laughter)</i>
Charlie:-	<i>You've got to stay eternally optimistic!</i>
Audience member (female 2):-	<i>(laughter) yeah you wouldn't have them would you? If you had those thoughts.</i>
Charlie:-	<i>The only bit that I thought was when the political message became a "capital P", was at that very end address - because she says "We can't leave you anything".. And she was kind of going through a list of things that the royal family might get left, like a title or land - And then she says but we can't leave you anything.</i>
Audience member (female 2):-	<i>Yeah, but then she says what they could leave him. Which is all the other things maybe. Which is maybe the royal family can't have. You know - the being silly, the running around, the freedom. So it wasn't really, you know, <u>that's</u> the better way and <u>this</u> isn't - It's like we've all got our better things, of each. The royal family have got their plusses, and so have we!</i>

Charlie:-	<i>Oh, right.. OK..</i>
Audience member (female 2):-	<i>Cause she went on, didn't she? Saying "We can give you cuddles and we can do this and we can.." so ...</i>
Charlie:-	<i>I see what you mean - it hadn't occurred to me that she was giving a list of all the things the royal family <u>aren't</u> going to get...</i>
Audience member (female 2):-	<i><u>Aren't</u> going to get - yeah. There's pros and cons.. you know - necessarily. We get the "pirates" and running round doing this and that - but they can't. Maybe she's saying that they could be photographed - I don't know. I saw that as a positive thing.</i>

Charlie:- *First impressions - What did you think?... it finished about ten minutes ago...*

Audience member
(male 1):- *yeah - it was very very... sure... I feel it encapsulated, like, a lot of themes - a lot of struggles, like, in modern family society - it was really very... it encapsulated so much .. so many issues that, like, everybody can understand. Even us (he gestures to him and his friend - who is male 2 below) as, err.. young adults who.. that's all in our future, like having children, raising families - those fears were in the play..*

Audience member
(male 2):- *It was like a ... of so many, like, expectations that we might have. And the way they.- God.. there's so many, so many things. The fact that everything was pink but everything was about a boy, I don't know, it just kind of, like, throws you off a bit. And the pointedness with which they say each others names - and stare at each other. And the delivery of their words. And how at the start it's like really lighthearted - it's hilarious, like really, really funny! And then suddenly it, like, turns. And you can see us all sitting around. And then they're both talking about how he might turn out as different kinds of people and character types. And everyone might wince kind of, at every sort of like fifth character description, because, they are talking about THEM! Talking about people! Um, and*

*you think "oh god - it's a bit too real!!"
Oh man - yeah!*

Charlie *Then one turns up in the list which is "he's not going to be the kind of person who murders people and buries them under the patio!"*

Audience member (male 2) *Yeah - it suddenly goes to, like, UN sanctions! (laughter)... Wow... Is this like... did they do this at Edinburgh?*

Charlie *I don't know... I think maybe they did.*

Audience member (male 1):- *Yeah, I think it is.*

Charlie *So, have you guys got children yourselves?*

Audience member (male 2):- *No I'm only 21!*

Audience member (male 1) *And I'm 22*

Charlie *And have you got friends who are going that way? Or do you know people with children?*

Audience member (male 2) *No not so much. But, but we've been to dinner parties where people get up and they're making toasts and they're just rambling on - and really just talking to their partner! I mean really embarrassing. And we've been there! (Laughter)!*

Audience member (male 1) *And you're always hearing about the life your parents had before you were born. They always mention how it changes. And then the feeding thing, you know, that you were there for but you weren't actually there for, if you see what I mean!*

Charlie: *Do you remember being fed and like doing "helicopters" like that?*

Audience member (male 2) *Don't actually remember. But remember seeing it plenty of times being done on younger family members... (laughter)*

Charlie: *Someone down there said "thought-provoking". And I immediately said "what thoughts?" So - off the top of your head, just immediately, what thoughts was it for you if it was thought-provoking?*

Audience member (male 2) *The thing for me... The most crystallized thing that I will be taking away. Is like it felt like an indictment of like modern*

masculinity and what it might mean. How it's sort of becoming redundant - and thinking about it a bit more. Thinking about what it means - like what its value is? 'Cos as a man growing up, and you're seeing all these different things.. And you're thinking kind of "what is it that I'm doing?"

Charlie

On the masculinity front - that was a hell of a cocktail... that he was doing, wasn't it? I mean, we heard about all the stuff like how he is a sensitive lover and all the masculine, macho ... and then he's got the pink bunny ears and the dress and... the Hoover...

Audience member
(male 1)

yeah! definitely! I mean, visually - the visual metaphors ramming everything home. I mean the light changing, and the absurdity! And then you've got like Peppa Pig!! (laughter) It was great!

Audience member
(male 2)

Like.. everybody - no matter where they were, how old they were, or whether they come from. There were parts of it that really hit home - and that were really close to home - that they could really, really engage with... so... great!
