



BEYOND *Caring*

By Christina Castling

A Queen's Hall Arts Centre & Gala Durham Co-Production

Supported by Arts Council England, *Beyond Caring* embarked on a 25 date tour throughout October & November 2023 across the North East and Cumbria. Delivering performances in 7 theatres, 14 community venues and 2 education settings, it was seen by nearly 1500 people. Through a digitally recorded version it reached national and international audiences.



Beyond Caring is a powerful new play that takes a frank, humorous and heartbreaking look at life behind the doors of a care home. Based on interviews with residents, relatives and staff, this play uncovers the reality of caring for others, looking after ourselves and getting older.

Meet Queenie, Elaine and Alex, resident, relative and carer at Cedar Point Care Home. A place where the corridors roar with laughter and ache with sadness and where outrageous antics mingle with tough conversations.

“Older people, they’re still people. Like you and me. Just a bit, well, baggier around the edges.”

For more information please visit: www.beyond-caring.co.uk



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

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Queen's Hall Arts Centre



Creative
Darlington



DARLINGTON
Borough Council



What the critics thought...

‘this is a gentle meditation on love and loss, low-key but touching and humane.’

The Guardian



‘*Beyond Caring* is a warm, well-informed examination of life in care homes ... a wonderful production’

North East Theatre Guide



‘A play set inside the care system sounds a tough watch, especially with the sobering shortcomings exposed by the Covid-19 pandemic still fresh in the mind. But actually Christina Castling’s play is anything but. Clearly she knows her subject... She writes not with indignant zeal but with a soft touch, imbuing her characters with warmth and dignity. The whole, performed with no interval, is infused with empathy and humour, dark on occasion but always gentle.’

The Northern Echo



‘This tender telling of tales from the perspective of residents, care workers and relatives struck a chord and pulled on it... the stories of residents and their families, their very humanity, was centre-stage.’

North East Bylines



‘*Beyond Caring* is a delightful, intimate, and often heartbreaking representation of life in a care home ... a vital contribution toward humanising those elderly people our political system is all-too-ready to forget about. *Beyond Caring* is undeniably written, directed, and performed, with a great deal of care.’

The Reviews Hub (4 stars)





Audience Feedback



‘Very funny, very perceptive, very moving. Just lovely.’

‘Goosebumps within the first 60 seconds and captivated throughout. Sensitive and emotive themes explored with such poignancy, humour and insight. Hits home on a deeply personal and political level. BRILLIANT.’

‘Amazing performance portraying the ups and downs of working in health and social care. Was fully absorbed throughout. Extremely powerful.’

‘One of the best plays I’ve EVER seen. Thank you so much!’

‘Brilliant! Moving! Amazing writing – beautifully understated, sensitive, bringing to life an important, too often neglected part of our world.’

‘We came 60 miles tonight to see this show and I’m so SO glad we did. What a fantastic performance, beautifully acted, poignant and so touching.’

‘Some of the most authentic performances I’ve seen in a long time. Really stunning theatre.’

‘Incredibly heartwarming and real... I saw my residents, colleagues and visitors in every character...I loved every minute.’

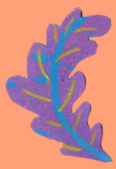
‘Lovely show. Tender, observant and authentic. Three top class performances. Tight, inventive direction. Beautiful and painful script.’

‘An exquisitely crafted piece, beautifully written & tenderly acted. Truly gifted story-telling, highlighting, through laughter & tears, the beauty, resilience & vulnerability of what it is to be human.’

‘Very clever. Better than anything I’ve seen on the BBC for a very long time.’

‘Five star performance, incredibly moving.’





Audience Feedback



‘It was so beautifully written and the interaction between the three actors (who are all outstanding!!!) was so sincere, amazing characters – so well portrayed.’

This was amazing – absolutely inspiring – so incredibly well acted and right on our doorstep.’

‘The actors brilliantly depicted a whole care homes’ worth of characters. The set was beautifully simple and effective. And the story so cleverly weaved the three main characters together, but so subtly that you hardly realised until the climax. So wonderful, so resonant, so thoughtfully done.’

‘This play brings silenced voices to the fore skilfully and powerfully. A poignant exposure of crisis in our time.’

‘Superbly acted. Brilliant perceptive script which was neither sentimental nor sanctimonious. A triumph.’

‘Politicians should all watch this and see what goes into the care of the elderly’

‘Thank you for this moving production – refreshingly honest and energetic, funny and entertaining.’

‘A must see play!’



‘Absolutely brilliant! What a beautifully told, compassionate story – at turns funny and heartbreaking, wonderfully written and perfectly cast.’

‘Excellent show, brilliant performances. A difficult subject well told with real heart, hope and truthfulness.’

‘This play brings silenced voices to the fore skilfully and powerfully. A poignant exposure of crisis in our time.’

‘An excellent and insightful depiction of life in a care home’

‘Performances were absolutely fantastic, seamlessly changing between characters. Would love to see more like this.’



Audience Feedback



‘Brilliant performances, we were in the palm of their hands. Comedy, pathos, everything. So very good.’

‘What a timely and much needed production.’

‘Wow, what a production, great acting, and so important to tell the story of care and growing older. Very poignant, touching and well written.’

‘A beautifully crafted, tender, thought provoking play about life for staff and residents in a care home All three actors were superb and I doubt there was a dry eye in the house. Highly recommend.’



‘I laughed and cried in equal measure and was so moved by the accuracy of your sympathetic portrayal of life in a care home and the pen portrait of the human character in all of its many facets. The characters were incredible – and the talent of your cast to bring them to life unreal. The staging of it had me spell-bound – I am in awe of how the seeming simplicity of the stage set enabled the depth and complexity of the characters and themes to shine. Just wow!! ... As the Covid Enquiry continues to body-slam so many emotions for so many of us, last night brought a real focus to the importance of care work – it felt like a celebration of the truly amazing individuals who care... I personally can’t thank you enough for shining a light on care homes which, in the last few years, have at times felt a very lonely place for those of us in them. It has been an absolute privilege to be able to have watched this production develop ... Thank you to you and your cast again – you have brought great joy, a sense of hope and a renewed sense of purpose.’

Dr. Clare Winter
Highly Specialist Applied Psychologist