

consenting
adults
in public

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Wednesday 19th Oct.

Dear Walter,

Great to talk to you last night, and very exciting to be coming over to Ireland in November (I hope). This is to confirm that we're available from Wednesday November 9th to Tuesday Nov. 15th inclusive. I leave you to fix up what dates you can and where, though as I said to you I'm all in favour of doing as much as we possibly can while we're over.

Here's the information I promised you to help with publicity and bookings:

1) Accidental Birth of an Activist: Words by Eric Presland, music by Carl Davis, Jule Styne, Richard Coles, Eric Presland, Chris Kaday, Pete Saunders, Noel Coward.

Cast: Eric Presland, Norman Penny (Piano).

An autobiographical cabaret in sketch and song about growing up gay, falling in love, falling out of love, discovering the gay scene, the gay movement and gay history. Duration: 1½ hours. (Interval optional) but preferred.)

"The material covers old ground, but the laughs are new and come thick and fast....dynamic unflagging repartee... when it tours, see it." (Gay News)

"Songs and sketches that linger in the memory....bang up-to-date" (Capital Gay)

"Scintillating patter and engaging songs... this sparkling cabaret act" (New York Gay Scene)

"A continuous delight, intimate, serious and slashingly funny. As in all the best satire, nothing is held sacred while real commitment is unmistakably present" (Guardian)

"Tilts at the rigidity of conventional sexual morality....a balanced and sympathetic view...wondrous diversity" (The Scotsman)

2) Workshops: a) "Opening Up" - a workshop designed to break down the barriers that usually surround the ways gay people relate to each other. There are so few places that we can meet which don't involve either alcohol or sex. This is one of them.... Ideally I'd like either 3 hours continuous or 2 x 2hr. sessions.

b) "Life into Art". A workshop for both gays and straights which involves a little theory, but concentrates on showing through drama how a group can turn the lives of its members into theatre, using the lessons of women's and gay liberation. Time as above.

Both the above can be developed into something longer over several sessions.

3) Grand Passion: A 35-minute monologue by Eric Presland.

"We know we shouldn't feel it, but we do. We know it's not good for us, but we indulge it just the same. 'It' is jealousy, the great unmentionable for us liberated gays, and Eric Presland has dared to bring it out into the open.

"When it comes down to it, you feel rejected, resentful. Insecurities which haunt other areas of your life come shrieking and clawing to the surface, where they break through cultivated tolerance or mick indifference.

"Bracing, gut-churning stuff which I urge you to see. Generously conceived and acutely observed, Presland's writing and performance have the enviable and all-too-rare ability to make his audience work so they people the stage in the light of their own experience." (Gay News)

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"Grasps the nettle of having 'ideological soundness in the head and a chill in the gut'. While his lover is entertaining a trick in the next bedroom, Presland agonises over theory and practice. Painfully and sometimes funnily accurate." (City Limits).

I like to do this show followed by a discussion about gay relationships in general, taking it up to an hour.

I hope this gives you enough to work on. The cabaret needs a piano, 'Grand Passion' ~~nothing~~, though it benefits from having stage lights if possible and a door onstage - I usually take one off its hinges from somewhere else, then put it back afterwards.

As far as money is concerned, workshops and Grand Passion would be thrown in free, though you might feel able to charge for them if it would help cover the cabaret costs. The cabaret is as outlined in the first letter. Is that OK?

Look forward to hearing from you,

Love,



Eric Presland.

PS. Personal biography. Came out while at Oxford University in 1972. Founded first gay switchboard in Great Britain there in 1973. Worked in revue, theatre, cabaret since 1974. Nominated for Best Musical in 'Plays and Players' awards, 1974 for "Here It Comes". Won Fringe First at Edinburgh Festival, 1976 for "Sir Herbert Macraem, a Tribute." For the last 2½ years has written a regular funny column for Capital Gay, the London gay ~~mag~~ weekly. Short stories and articles published in "Cracks In The Image" and "The Age Taboo" (Both from Gay Men's Press). Record: Coming Out - ready or Not (GAYN Records). Has been writer and director for Consenting Adults In Public, London's gay theatre group, for the last three years.