

# **A VISUAL GUIDE IS AVAILABLE FOR THIS PERFORMANCE.**

It is available online on the National Theatre of Scotland website and also from Box Office.

Please ask a member of staff for more information.

# **VISUAL GUIDE FOR THE CHEVIOT, THE STAG AND THE BLACK, BLACK OIL - ABERDEEN**

John Mcgrath



I am going to, The Cheviot The Stag and the Black, Black Oil at Aberdeen Arts Centre.



The show will start at 7pm, I should arrive a little earlier than this.



**Main door:** The front of Aberdeen Arts Centre looks like this. I will enter through these doors.



When I walk inside the centre I will see this area called the foyer.

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There will be NTS staff who can help with any questions about the event. It might be quite busy and noisy with other members of the audience.

I can buy tickets or pick up prepaid tickets at the reception.



**Main foyer:** I show my ticket to the ushers when I go into the auditorium. They can help me if I need to ask questions. They also sell programmes.



There is a café bar at the venue.



I can buy a drink and some food at the café bar.



**Toilet:** If I need to go to the toilet I should look for these toilet signs or ask an usher for directions.

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**Auditorium/Performance space:** The Cheviot, the Stag and The Black, Black Oil will take place here.

I will watch the performance in this room. An usher can help me find a seat. The lights will dim when the show is ready to start and the actors will come on the stage. There will be a short break between the two parts of the show called an interval. This can be a good time to have a snack or use the toilet. After the interval everyone will come back in and sit in the same seats again. The auditorium will get darker and quieter same as at the start of the show.

The performances will have a lot of different elements. There will be darkness and acting, sounds and music, people speaking into microphones, bright lights, darkness and acting. Things to know about the show:

- Some of the performances of The Cheviot have integrated BSL interpretation from Catherine King, verbal description and integrated captioning.
- It is loud.
- There is live music.
- There will be some loud bangs.
- Should you need to leave/return at any point you are free to do so.



The stage will look like this.

When everyone is ready, the actors will come out onto the stage and the play will start.

If you would like to take some time out during the play you may leave at any time and find a seat in the breakout area in the foyer until you are ready to go back in.

At the end of the show the audience will clap to show the actors that they enjoyed the show.

When the clapping has ended, the lights will get brighter.

This means the show is over.

You can now leave the theatre and exit through the foyer.

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## STORY SYNOPSIS

The Cheviot is a legendary piece of Scottish theatre that tells the story of the exploitation of Scottish lands, waters and people over the centuries.

From the highland clearances to the oil boom, this is the universal tale of how the greed of a few blights the lives of many. This production adds a generous dose of Scottish rebellion and irreverence with some live music and a riotous ceilidh.

This updated version of The Cheviot takes the story back to its roots when it first toured in the 1970s.

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## CAST

**All the actors play many characters in the show**



### STEPHEN BANGS

MC Bangs / Plays the Double Bass / Minister / Sturdy Highlander / Lord Crask / Duke of Sutherland / Aberdonian Rigger



### JO FREER

MC Josie / Second Girl / Loch / Woman / Highland Wife / Mary Macpherson / Andy McChuckemup / Crofter Wife



### CHRISTINA GORDON

MC Gordon / Plays the Cello / Clarsach / First Girl / Sheriff's Man / Harriet Beecher Stowe / Highlander 2 / Lady Phosphate



### REUBEN JOSEPH

MC R-Jo / Plays the Guitar / Percussion / Young Highlander / Old Woman / Lord Selkirk / Younger Man / Trump / Polwarth



### CALUM MACDONALD

MC Gael / Plays the Accordion / Bodhran / Old Man / Statue / Macleod / Ghillie



### ALY MACRAE

MC Fiddle / Plays the Violin / Victorian Gent / Nor-West Trader / Ballad singer / Texas Jim



### BILLY MACK

MC / Sellar / Granny / Highlander 1 / Lord Vat of Glenlivet / Whitehall / Crofter

## **VISUAL STORY**

**The company welcome the audience, sing “these are my mountains” with them and setup the story**

As the audience enter the theatre they are greeted by ushers and actors.

The Actors talk to the audience, play the cajon (drum), whistle, etc. to accompany the fiddle; the audience stamp their feet, clap, etc. to the music, if they want to. The audience members are invited to dance.

Billy welcomes the audience and introduces the company and invites the audience to sing a song.

**The scene where different responses to the cheviot from the people who lived and worked on the land are expressed**

**Strathnaver,1813. - The highland way of life is disrupted by loch and sellar, who strike a deal**

**Next scene where the struggles of the women in the cleared highland and island communities are accounted**

**Next scene where the minister preaches to his flock about the dangers of protest**

**The scene where the victories at Coigach are celebrated**

**Next scene where the expansion of capitalism into the highlands is explained and so the house of the Chisholm family is burned, with an old woman alive in it, by Patrick Sellar and his men**

**The scene where other tragic and brutal events from the Highland clearances are accounted**

**Next scene where the statue of the duke of Sutherland is erected – and torn down**

**Next scene where Harriet Beecher stowe defends her friend, the Duchess of Sutherland, and is chased away**



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Next scene where Lord Selkirk sends Highlanders to north America to colonise the land and some of the international effects of the clearances are explained



Next scene where the people of Glendale agree to collectively withhold their rent and rent strikes spread across the Highlands

Next scene where the status quo is restored in Glendale



Next scene where Lord Crask and Lady Phosphate enjoy themselves on crask's sporting estate, show off their power and threaten the audience

## **INTERVAL**

The scene where the people of Golspie refuse to sign up for the British army



Next scene where the effects of soldiering on small Highland communities are discussed

Next scene where the population figures of the Highlands are presented and discussed

Next scene where Andy McChuckemup explains his vision for the highlands and strikes a deal with lord vat



Next scene where the enforced decline of the Gaelic language is discussed

The scene where acts of protest and political progress for the people of the highlands are accounted

Next scene where the more recent landowners – the “new ruling class” – are presented to the audience

Next scene where Texas Jim introduces himself and his intentions to the audience



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Next scene where the establishment of the relationship between uk government and international oil companies is discussed

Next scene where the Aberdonian rigger accounts his working conditions

Next scene where the power of big business as private landowners during the oil boom years is discussed

The scene where Lord Polwarth is shown to be a puppet of both oil companies and Government

Next scene where the findings and cover-up of the McCrone report is discussed

Next scene where the characters of the Crofter and his wife satirise the situation in which they now find themselves

The end scene where the audience are invited to claim ownership of the words of “The Cheviot, The Stag And The Black, Black, Oil” and urged to resist

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**Feedback:**  
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Images by Tommy Ga-Ken Wan