The Chesil Theatre, Winchester, Press Release

Saturday October 1 – 8 7.45pm Matinee Sunday October 2 2.30pm

*Educating Rita* by Willy Russell, the ever-popular comedy-drama, is the next production at the Chesil Theatre, Winchester. The play was first commissioned and performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1980, winning the Olivier Award for Best Comedy of the Year.

Rita is a feisty young married woman with hopes and dreams who believes there must be more to life than cutting hair and gossip in a salon. She enrols for a course in “Eng Lit” at the Open University, where she is assigned her tutor, Frank. He is a frustrated poet, brilliant academic and dedicated drunk who’s less than enthusiastic about taking Rita on but when these two people come together, they soon realise how much they have to teach each other. Together they both learn about life, but who teaches, and who learns? This story with shades of Pygmalion is alive with witty dialogue, at times poignant and others comic.

Gary Nicholson, a well-established actor, and a great favourite of Chesil audiences, takes on Frank. He is joined by Francesca Waters, a final year student in Musical Theatre at Winchester University, as Rita. She joined the Society this Spring and was cast in the Ayckbourn comedy, If I Were You.

They are both enjoying the challenge of developing their characters and building the relationship between this odd couple.

Director, Terry Lohr, said: “This play is a beautiful examination of the universal struggle of ambition confronting inertia; and dreams challenging disappointment with our current status.”

The play opens on Saturday October 1 with a matinee on Sunday October 2.

Tickets available from [www.chesiltheatre.org.uk](https://chesiltheatre.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=df3bdad76734601e7245f5f11&id=062bcb87a8&e=9f3b9b7af1) Price £16 (adult), £10 (students/under 18s) There’s free tea or coffee at the matinee performance.

Photographer Jon Hawkins

Editorial note

Enquiries see the website [www.chesiltheatre.org.uk](http://www.chesiltheatre.org.uk) or contact Lisbeth Rake 01962 890102 lsrake76@gmail.com