

Educating Rita transcript

[At the top left of the image a Durham County Council logo, followed by the text 'Educating Rita' and a Gala logo are displayed. All are visible throughout the video.]

[All the interviews take place in front of an empty set with bookcases and a desk.]

[Text on screen: Rebecca Frecknell, Director.]

[Head and shoulder video interview of Rebecca standing and looking from the left towards the camera.]

[A series of images, set in a lecture room and with the cast from Educating Rita, are displayed as Rebecca talks. One shows the director directing the cast, another shows Rita laughing with Frank stood with his back to camera.]

[Rebecca Frecknell]

Obviously, it's an iconic seventies and eighties world really, from when the play was written and then obviously the famous Julie Walters film, and we've relocated it to Durham University and Rita's from the North East. And, I think, it was great that Willy Russell gave us permission to do that because it's the first time that it's not been set in Liverpool.

[Text on screen: Jess Johnson, Rita]

[Head and shoulder video interview of Jess standing and looking from the left towards the camera.]

[Jess Johnson]

She's a working class lass and it's about a... it's a bit of soul searching for her, so through education. So, she goes to Frank, who's the tutor on her open university course and she finds more than education.

[Text on screen: Patrick Driver, Frank]

[Head and shoulder video interview of Patrick standing and looking from the right towards the camera.]

[Patrick Driver]

It's a beautiful theatre for a start and it's lovely set and it looks beautiful. It's very... its a classic show done really, yeah, with a view to highlighting the comedy. So I think it would appeal to pretty much anybody, because it's funny but it's also got a serious side to it which everyone can relate to, I think, because it's about a relationship fundamentally and we all have those.

[Jess Johnson]

[A series of images of Jess and Patrick in their roles as Rita and Frank. In one Rita is pointing and has a frown on her face and in another Rita and Frank are talking.]

I mean I remember the film, obviously, everybody does, its Julie Walters. Big shoes to fill, but I always said that I wasn't going to try and fill them, it's trying to put your own mark on it which is so difficult because its, well, its Julie Walters. Yeah, so I'm a bit in awe of it to be honest, with you, it's a classic. It's a British classic, from my generation as well. It's a beautiful piece, you know, it's about giving a woman a voice and that's a lot to do with the work that I still do now.

[Patrick Driver]

[A series of images of Jess and Patrick in their roles as Rita and Frank. One of Rita sitting, laughing and passing a book. The other of Frank sat at a desk drinking water from a glass.]

The fact that its set now [emphasis] rather than when it as written in the seventies I think is interesting because the issues that he was writing about, the struggles of working class people to get an education, are still current. I think it's not been done before where Rita is not Liverpudlian, so I think to have her from Newcastle I think the accent works beautifully and it's actually quite hard to imagine it done in a Liverpool accent now.

[Rebecca Frecknell]

[A series of images of Jess and Patrick in their roles as Rita and Frank. In one Rita and Frank are talking and in the other Rita is laughing with Frank who has both arms folded.]

It's a brilliantly accessible play I think because there'll be a world of people that will know it from the film and from the original... and from the Michael Caine and Julie Walters interpretation of it and I think those people that come will find something new and interesting in this world. And then if people who have never seen it and don't know the play come, its witty and its fast paced, and you really get to spend time with these two characters and build a relationship with them as they build a relationship with each other. And I think the arc of the play and the journey of those characters from where they start to where they end up is really, really, human and really kind of emotional. So I hope that it appeals to lots of different people and especially people that are from here, because our Rita is born and bred and I think there's something interesting in that as well.

[An image of the advertisement of the play. A Gala Theatre Production Educating Rita by Willy Russell. Gala Theatre Durham Tuesday 4 to Saturday 8 April, 7.30pm (+2.30pm

Thursday and Saturday) Tickets £12 to £15. Gala Box Office 03000 266 600. Book Online:
www.galadurham.co.uk Durham County Council logo.]

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