

Giving Into Light

a lyrical journey
into the heart & spirit of Mexico



photography by Joseph

*Samuels**

Written & Performed by Alison Wearing

author of *Honeymoon in Purdah* – an Iranian journey

Directed by Stuart Cox

"There's not a wrong note in this production. Alison is a masterful storyteller...*Giving Into Light* is a magical, musical expression of love."

Theatre in London.ca

www.alisonwearing.com

** all photos available for download and/or publication. Please see website:*

SYNOPSIS

Giving Into Light is a one-woman extravaganza, a dazzling journey into the myth and magic of Mexico. This lyrical, comic monologue by author Alison Wearing is by turns an evocative and uproarious travelogue, a poetic/musical feast, a spoken-word tour-de-force and a moving portrait of surrender.

Giving Into Light tells the story of a woman experiencing what she calls ‘post-partum illumination’ following the birth of her first child. Her attempts to understand this heightened perception of the world (contrasted with her hilariously-rendered experiences of sleep-deprivation and fluorescent-lit church basement playgroups) lead her on an intuition-inspired journey to a village in the mountains of central Mexico. Her one-month trip develops into a five-year stay, time replete with bustling markets, festivals, dance, extraordinary friendships and unexpected gifts of insight and wisdom.

This is a woman’s search for light in a seemingly dark world – a riveting, evocative and ultimately transformative journey of love, acceptance and grace.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

The stage production of *Giving Into Light* began with a desire to do ‘more than the standard book reading’ for the presentation of her forthcoming book by the same title.

“I always had the idea that I wanted to dance the book,” she explains. “Throughout the writing, I had a vision of bringing the book to life: acting it out, singing it, dancing the music of the words.”

While completing the manuscript of *Giving Into Light* (a travel memoir set in Mexico), Alison began working with musicians, dancers, a sound engineer and the Mexican actor/dancer/choreographer Athenea Baker. Then, together with Stuart Cox, an English Shakespearean actor/director living in central Mexico, she adapted and assembled the one-woman performance piece.

The monologue had its debut in Mexico in April 2009. Since then, Alison has been performing to exuberant audiences and reviews in theatre festivals in Canada.

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REVIEWS

“Written and performed by Alison Wearing, this show is storytelling at its best. Wearing is a word-perfect, engaging vision who paints with her body and her voice. Stringing together her life experiences like vibrant beads, the audience sees what she sees, smells what she smells and feels what she feels. If you’ve ever taken the road less travelled or wanted to, you will be fascinated with Wearing’s approach to life. Come and celebrate.”

VIEW Magazine

“There's not a wrong note in this production. Alison is a masterful storyteller with a firm handle on the many different characters she invokes...And she's got a lovely singing voice that she uses to great effect, both live and recorded. *Giving Into Light* is a magical, musical expression of love.” *Theatre in London.ca*

“I’m still in shock. I’ve seen lots of Fringe shows in my time, but I’ve never seen performances to equal the powerful works that are currently setting fire to local Hamilton Fringe stages... Wearing’s lovely play *Giving Into Light* is a lyrical encounter with what it means to be connected with the fever of life... In this play about embracing life and letting go of the superficial, Wearing is a superb catalyst to unlocking our own visceral feelings.”

Hamilton Spectator

"This show is **wonderful**, a one-woman odyssey with something for everyone. Alison Wearing makes us laugh, makes us think and makes us question our values as she sings, moves, speaks prose, dialogue and shares poetic imagery, all while taking us on her journey of physical, spiritual and emotional growth... Difficult to put into words, beautiful to behold."

livefringe

“[Wearing] is an accomplished writer and it shows in the almost poetic and certainly lyrical descriptive prose of her monologue cum travelogue. Her method of describing life, philosophy and environment is as mentally perceptible as a travel video. She is spell-binding...” *Ontario Arts Review*

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“Wearing is a gifted performer without a hint of artifice and the moments she relives for us are there again for us all. When she arrives at her place of peace and acceptance, we are there also. A very unexpected delight.”

RaisetheHammer.org

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BIOGRAPHIES**ALISON WEARING (Playwright/Actor)**

Born and raised in Peterborough, Ontario, Alison Wearing now divides her time between Ontario and Mexico. Her love of travel began during university, when formal studies took her to France and Germany, and informal investigations led her through the former Yugoslavia, Egypt and Israel. Extensive travels and residencies have taken her from the Amazon regions of Ecuador and Peru to Czechoslovakia (where she taught English to members of Vaclav Havel's first post-revolutionary government), through the former Soviet Union, Siberia, Mongolia, northwestern China and Thailand.

Her 1995 travels through the Middle East resulted in the internationally acclaimed and nationally bestselling memoir, *Honeymoon in Purdah – an Iranian journey* (Vintage Canada). Alison's writing has been awarded a National Magazine Award Gold Medal, a Western Canada Magazine Award 1st Prize, has been a finalist for the Journey Prize, and has appeared in the *Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, *Queen's Quarterly*, *BorderCrossings*, *Geist*, *Canadian Forum*, *enRoute*, *ascent* and *Shambhala Sun* magazines, as well as in the *Dropped Threads*, *AWOL*, and *Journey Prize* anthologies.

For the last decade, much of Alison's energy has been devoted to music and dance. She appears on the cds *Hole in the Sky* and *Rites of Passage* with world/folk musician Jarmo Jalava and participated in the North American tour of the latter cd, playing concerts in Mexico, Canada and the United States.

In addition to classical dance training, Alison has studied at the School of the Toronto Dance Theatre, with Afro-Cuban dancer Marisol Lambert, and privately with Mexican actor/dancer/choreographer Athenea Baker. Alison has practiced yoga for more than twenty years and leads dance, yoga & meditation workshops in Mexico and Canada.

While she has performed in other theatrical productions (Peterborough Theatre Guild, Showplace Theatre, 4th Line Theatre), *Giving Into Light* marks Alison's debut as a playwright and monologue performer.

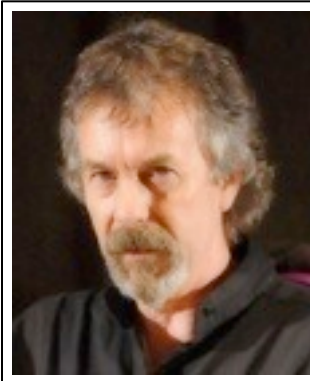
Her book of the same title will be published in 2010.

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**STUART COX (Director)**

Stuart Cox has been a professional actor and theatre director for 40 years, in the first instance across the full spectrum of British theatre - from repertory, experimental and touring to London's West End and opera. He has worked internationally, including in Poland, Ireland, Iceland, India, Pakistan, the USA and Mexico. Pride of place goes to directing a personal trilogy of productions of the Celtic story of Tristan & Iseult: in Wales with and for Cardiff's Indian

Immigrant community; in the village of Borunda in the desert of Rajasthan, India; and in the state of Hidalgo, Mexico, each time adapting performances to integrate with the local cultural traditions using text, songs, dance and music.

He has performed a series of one man shows - *The Fever* by Wallace Shawn (England), *Stargazer - tales of Ancient India* (Mexico & the USA), *Quetzalcoatl - A Tale of Gods & Monsters* (Mexico, England and the USA), *Edmund Kean*, the life of the great classical actor (Mexico) and his own adaptation for solo performance of Shakespeare's *Richard II* (Mexico).

Living in Mexico for the last 11 years, Stuart is the director of the Anglo Mexican Foundation's Shakespeare Performance Project and is the founder and Artistic Director of Celebrating Cultures, a performing arts company dedicated to working with cultural diversity.

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Alison Wearing in Giving Into Light

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