

# OUR FATHERS

BY BABAKAS

WARWICK ARTS CENTRE STUDIO  
TUE 12TH & WED 13TH JUNE 7PM  
£5 (£4)  
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What would you do if you were asked to be a father in an email? If your Dad thought dance school turned you gay? If you'd never seen the man behind the mask? A daring leap across oceans and decades, led by three performers whose far-away fathers might just make an appearance.

Our Fathers takes inspiration from stand-up comedy, contemporary dance, video installation and The Sopranos to create a moving, unforgiving tribute to fathers everywhere who tried to do their best.

[babakas.org](http://babakas.org)

## PANEL EVENTS

Following each performance the CHM will host a panel discussion considering fatherhood in the past and present. A number of expert speakers, along with Dr Laura King as chair, will consider themes emerging from the performance relating to fatherhood and the family in historical and contemporary perspective. The audience will be invited to share their views and ask questions of the performers and panel speakers. An exhibition of fathers' poetry will accompany these performances.

### Panel 1 - 12th June: Father Figures Through Time

This panel will examine how ideas about fatherhood have changed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It will consider the ways in which traditional gender stereotypes developed over many decades still persist today. Do traditional notions of manliness prevent men from showing their emotions? Do we inevitably react against or copy our fathers' behaviour and attitudes?

#### Speakers\*:

Dr Julia Griggs, National Centre for Social Research, a social policy researcher who has just completed a Leverhulme Trust-funded project exploring generational change in fathering behaviours.

Craig Hodgson, Founder of Dadzclub, an organisation which supports fathers of all ages and provides a space in which men can discuss issues of parenting.

Professor Pat Thane, King's College London, an eminent historian of the family and family policy in twentieth-century Britain.

Bert Roman, Babakas, performer in 'Our Fathers'

### Panel 2 - 13th June: Thoroughly Modern Dads?

This panel will examine new ways in which fathers interact with their children, through pregnancy, childbirth and infancy. It will consider the rise of stay-at-home dads, the possibilities of homosexual fathers parenting and the new technologies surrounding birth. In what ways do men now engage more with their babies in pregnancy? How can men both support their partners and develop a close early relationship with their children?

#### Speakers\*:

Dean Beaumont, Founder of DaddyNatal, an organisation of male antenatal educators providing classes and support for expectant dads.

Dr Alan Dolan, University of Warwick, sociologist of contemporary British fatherhood, masculinity and men's health.

Catherine Kanter, an actor and mother, currently writing about the experience of parenting as a team of three, with actor Charlie Condou and his partner Cam. Columns about their family life, 'The Three of Us', appear weekly in the Guardian newspaper.

Ben Wakeling, a journalist and father, author of advice literature for fathers and contributor to a poetry collection published as part of the 'Hiding in the Pub to Cutting the Cord?' project.

Mike Tweddle - performer and co-director of 'Our Fathers'.

\*Disclaimer - the attendance of panellists is subject to their availability, and this programme may therefore be subject to change.

'Hiding in the Pub to Cutting the Cord?' is a major research and public engagement project currently being conducted by Dr Laura King at the Centre for the History of Medicine (CHM), University of Warwick and supported by the Wellcome Trust. This project analyses the changing nature of fatherhood in the past and present, and involves a number of events and activities, such as poetry workshops, festival exhibitions and a conference on parenting.

The CHM is a lively, inter-disciplinary community of scholars and students, committed to teaching and research in the area of the history of medicine and public health and its social and cultural context. We aspire to reach beyond academic life and engage with the local community and the public at large with medical, scientific and social concerns in the past and present, and to do so in creative and innovative ways - find out more about CHM's engagement work. [www.go.warwick.ac.uk/chm/outreach](http://www.go.warwick.ac.uk/chm/outreach)

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