

# ◆ Little Theatre News ◆

Bournemouth (Issue #9)

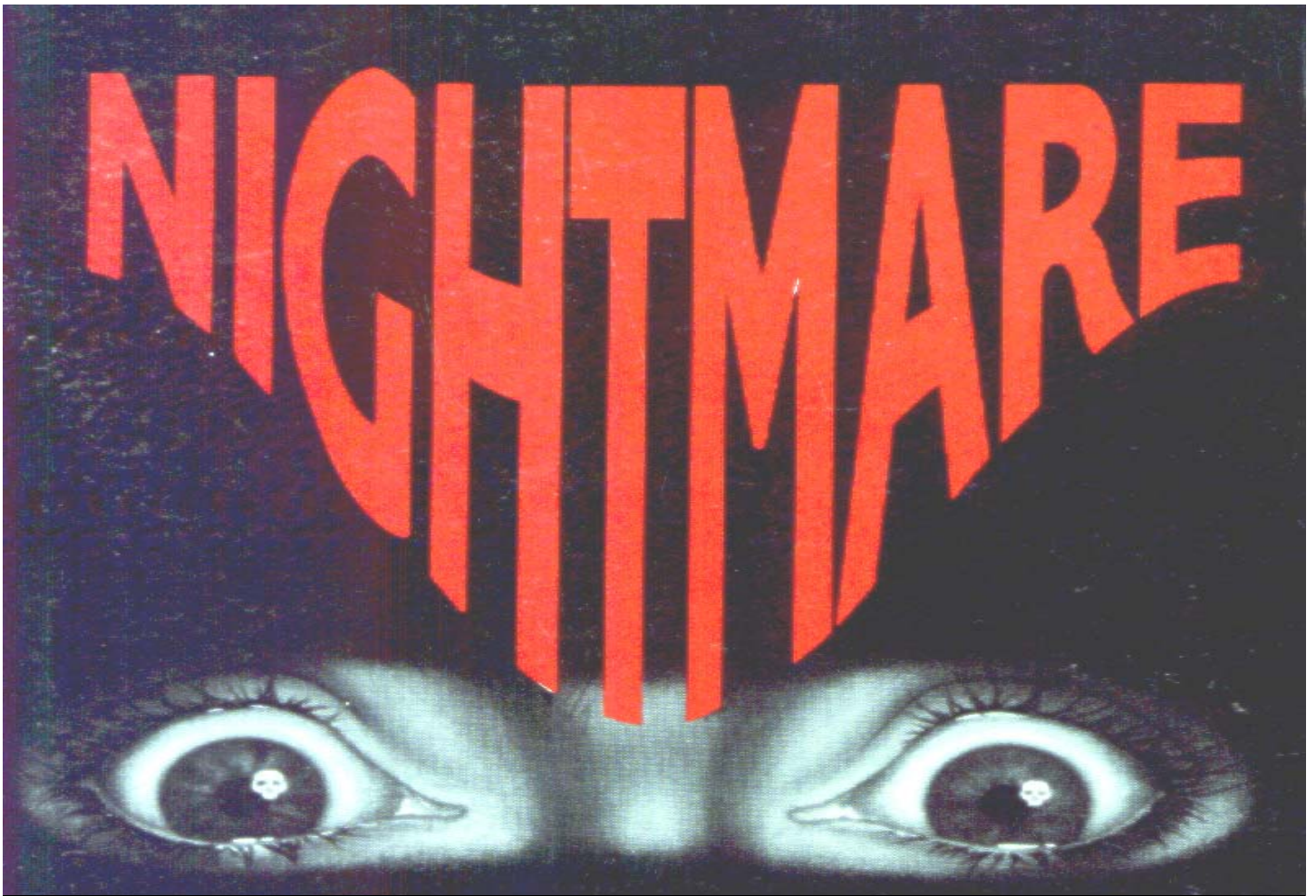
Playgoers' Edition

Friday, 21 August 1998

Welcome to our new season  
And to our  
***HORROR THRILLER***

Monday – Saturday  
14 – 19 September 1998 At Bournemouth Little Theatre Club  
Jameson Road, Winton, Bournemouth

Booking details over-page



**The Fright of Your Life!**

*If you like this play, please tell your friends;  
But pray don't tell them how it ends.*

# NIGHTMARE

“The Fright of Your Life”

## The Performers are



*Penelope Goddard*



*Neil West*



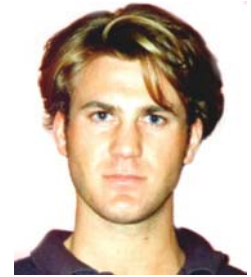
*Amanda Garton*



*Derek Hyder*



*Mary Adams*



*Freddy Merchant*

### “What’s it about?”

Newly weds Frank and Jenny Gilman rent a new apartment in a converted chapel in the small village of Milbury to live happily ever after. Their wedded bliss is short-lived due to a series of bizarre and terrifying incidents which inexplicably occur after returning from their honeymoon.

A battle of wits ensues as each day unfolds new information which leads them to fight for their lives in a home where only the dead can sleep.

### “What’s a nightmare?”

**Nightmare** (ˈnart,mea) n. 1. A terrifying or deeply distressing dream. 2.a. an event or condition resembling a terrifying dream. B. (*as modifier*); a nightmare drive. 3. A thing that is feared. 4. (formerly) an evil spirit supposed to suffocate sleeping people. C13 (meaning incubus; C16; bad dream); from Night + OE *mare*, *maere* evil spirit.

Collins Concise Dictionary

Don Gent, the director of *Nightmare*, first appeared for BLTC in our last play, *Grand National Night*, where he played the police sergeant, who was a little smarter than the chief detective! Don is a former Army major who has had experience in BBC broadcasting, professional acting and directing both in this country and abroad. After five years as Administrator of Nottingham Playhouse, he was Financial Controller and Administrator of Plymouth Theatre Royal. From 1989 to 1996 he was at Poole Arts Centre as Finance Director and most recently as acting Director. We are grateful that he has offered to direct *Nightmare*, which was a play that impressed him when it first played at Poole in 1992. He says, “I was in charge of the theatre, but this play terrified me when I first saw it. This kind of drama used to be called ‘Grand-Guignol’. The difference is that *Nightmare* is 1990s modern. I think people like to be frightened, just a little bit, especially when they are surrounded by a full house in a theatre.”

Well, we all want full houses, and we think Don’s show certainly fills the bill!



### ADVANCE TICKET BOOKINGS (price £6, with concessions)

1. **WRITE** enclosing cheque and S.A.E. to  
Box Office, BLTC, 11 Jameson Road, Bournemouth BH9 2QD **OR**
2. **CONTACT SUE** at home **ONLY** between 7.30 p.m. and 9.00 p.m. Monday 31 August to Friday 4 September  
on her home number **424640** **OR**
3. **BOX OFFICE OPENS AT THE THEATRE:** Monday 7 September to Friday 11 September between 7.30 p.m. and 9.00 p.m.

At the start of a brand-new season, we can all have our opinions and our dreams. We know that last season was a blast. We improved our auditorium with new seating. That was crucial to our success, because it made so many of us more enthusiastic. We improved our publicity, both towards the outside world, and also towards ourselves and our playgoers. Don't forget that when you get your newsletter, a playgoers newsletter is also sent out to about 650 homes, to our faithful customers, whose names and addresses are just as faithfully collected and tabulated by Hugh

Norris. This actor, playwright and director also stands out there in the cold of winter and the heat of summer to do this unenviable chore. I suppose, like this newsletter, you thought that it was done by "THEM". That it must be simple to do. Well, it isn't. It is time-consuming and arduous. Like cleaning the floors. This may not be dramatic work, but it all goes to the greater good.

Last year we had one of the best seasons ever. We had great directors, superb performances and wonderful backstage support. We had the new seating. And our audiences supported us in a way we have not seen for a decade. Even the reviews have been better!

But without the support and continued enthusiasm of you, the members, it will all go for nothing. Last year's missionary zeal must not be succeeded by a season of apathy.

Remember, this Club, BLTC, is not a clique. The Committee certainly contains those most active in the Club's affairs.

But if you want to be a part of all of this, then

- ⇒ Audition for shows
- ⇒ Attend the AGM
- ⇒ Attend the Studio
- ⇒ Pay your subs (NOW!)
- ⇒ See the shows
- ⇒ Offer your services

God knows, if even I can get on the Committee, by co-option, then surely *anyone* can!

And for the avoidance of doubt, the Des Moines trip is open to anyone who wants to go.

*Tony Oema*

Editor

## "All the world's a stage"

A profile of Don Gent, the Director of 'Nightmare'

The world really has been Don Gent's stage. Our newest director has, in fact, theatrical credentials which stretch as far as a Gurkha recruiting depot in Nepal, two years in Gibraltar, three years in Nairobi, three years in Singapore, and a stint in Rhine-dahlen in Germany, where he was invited to perform both by the Army and the RAF!

It was in Germany that he received the review he would most like to have written of himself: "Don Gent always appears to be ideally cast in whatever part he plays."

Odd then that this exotic career should have had its beginnings in the 1950s at the Miners Welfare in the mining village of Pinxton, Derbyshire. Well, we all have to start somewhere. But he not only acted there, he became an evening institute drama tutor, and had the daunting task of adjudicating a Women's Institute One Act Play Festival. In Gibraltar he actually ran a One act play festival.

He worked with professionals in Nairobi, and managed to snare the key role of a hyena in a weekly TV show for children. He performed or directed several shows including *Lysistrata*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, and the world amateur premiere of

*Becket*.

When he was in Nepal, there were no theatre facilities so he took part in setting up a sound wire system throughout the cantonment. Don's contribution to the recruitment drive was to read over the network a weekly ghost story by Edgar Alan Poe. The Katmandu Chronicle wrote: "We don't know what he does to the enemy, but by God he frightens us!"

Don was a denizen of the Stage Club in Singapore, where he played in or assisted with plays such as *The Italian Girl*, *Murder Mistaken*, *Semi-Detached*, *The Heiress*, and *Arms and the Man*. He was also involved with musicals such as *Hans*, *The Witch and the Goblin*, as well as pantomimes. He appeared in the role of Captain Surtees Cook in *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* for TV Singapura.

Dare we be so mundane as to mention his acting career in Winchester, England? At Chesil Little Theatre he performed in (among other plays) *The Lion in Winter*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Anniversary*, *Dangerous Corner*, and *Hayfever*. At Winchester Guildhall he appeared in *The Owl and the Pussycat*,

as well as in *Lock Up Your Daughters* at the Round House Arts Theatre.

During his year in Rhinedahlen, he managed to find time to appear in *Conduct Unbecoming*, *The Man Most Likely To*, and *A Man For All Seasons*.

And, oh yes, he has also in his time helped to organise (for two seasons) the Royal Tournament at Earls Court.

From all of which career, you probably realise by now (well, we have already said so on page 2) that Don was a military man, whose hobby has been entertaining the public. On page 2 you will also note his subsequent career in theatre administration.

So when BLTC members say, "He's directing a show? But we thought he only did prompting", they can think again. Don is a Kunstmeister who has been merely resting with his book in that front seat in our little theatre. We are enormously pleased that he has now had enough rest, and that he has chosen to open his directorial score with us in putting on *Nightmare*. We believe this is an incredibly complex play to mount with our extremely limited resources. However, with the talented cast he has chosen, and his wealth of experience in the theatre, we believe members are in for an exciting and spine-



"WE ALL HAVE TO START SOMEWHERE."

## Theatre Quiz

By  
Tony Orman

1. Which Athenian playwright wrote *Wasps*, a satire on the desire to avoid jury service?
2. Who said "All the world's a stage" in which Shakespeare comedy?
3. Of what theatre is Mark Rylance the artistic director?
4. Who wrote *Grand National Night*, and in what year was it first performed?
5. This author's first play *Don Juan*, written in 1911, was first publicly performed in 1950. His second play, was *Hassan*, (1914) with incidental music by Debussy, and ballets by Fokine. Name him.
6. This Italian playwright's piece, *Non Si Paga! Non Si Paga!* Was given a brief airing by BLTC a couple of seasons ago. What was the English title of the play and what was the author's name?
7. What is 'Off-Off Broadway' and where did it start?
8. Name the play taken by BLTC to Benton Harbor, and name the author.
9. *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, was derived from the works of which Roman?
10. He wrote *The Chiltern Hundreds*, *Now Barabbas* and *The Secretary Bird*. Name him.

## Them!

Did you know that Bournemouth Little Theatre Club is haunted? Not by a poltergeist — poltergeists are nasty unfriendly destructive creatures that throw things about and cause mayhem. No, ours is quite the opposite, of a species known for obvious reasons as an "anti-geist". The special quality of anti-geists is that no one ever sees them at work.

The normal state of the Club after members have been on the premises much resembles a property after a bombing raid or a poltergeist visitation — dirty coffee cups, unwashed beer glasses and empty cans all over the place, half-full ashtrays everywhere, scraps of paper all over the floors — and, my dears, you should just look at the state of the kitchen!

The Club's anti-geist specialises in cleaning all this up; but no one ever sees it.

Once, a very long time ago, an innocent new member asked an Old Hand if the Club employed any cleaners. The Old Hand looked glassy-eyed for a moment and then dismissed the stupidity of the question with a casual, "No, it's all done by them."

So now, even if we cannot ever see the face of our friendly Club Anti-geist, at least we know its name: it is called "THEM".

Hugh Norris

## Annual General Meeting

This will be held at the Club on Saturday, 5 September, starting at 7.30 pm. Some refreshments will be served at the end of the proceedings, including one free glass of wine.

If you want to make any proposals, suggestions, or have any items for debate, please contact our worthy secretary, Hugh Norris. You can write to him care of the Club, or call him on 761400.

This is the third announcement in this newsletter, so don't say you weren't told.

## Audition

Sunday, 20 September

### 'My Fat Friend'

By Charles Laurence

On Sunday, 20 September, at 7.30 pm, Tony Orman

is holding an audition for the above play, performance dates 7-12 December. This is a wickedly funny play for four characters, written in the 1970s. **There are roles for one female and three males.** The female, Vicky, is in her 20s. Henry, who is gay and proud of it, is in his 50s, Tom (North American accent needed) is 35ish, and James is 18 and very Scottish. Appropriately, the final scene takes place on Christmas Eve, but the play is about Vicky trying to lose weight, and succeeding, in order to attract Tom. The piece is full to bursting with barbed humour. There are many *double entendres* but no smut. The roles of Henry and Vicky

## Audition

Friday, 25 September

### Two one-act plays:

'Home Free' by Landford Wilson  
And

'Will the Real Jesus Christ  
Please Stand Up?'

By Malcolm Mormanstein

On Friday, 25 September at 7.30 pm, Jack Snell

will hold auditions for the above plays. Performance dates are 15-20 February 1999.

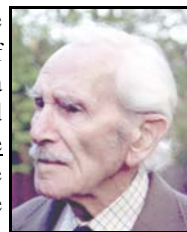
'Home Free' requires **one male and one female** both in the 23 to 27 age range. The characters are a brother and sister, a naïve couple who had once had an incestuous relationship.

'Will the Real Jesus Christ etc' requires **7 males** of varied ages and **one female**. This is a comedy written for American accents. It is about actors auditioning for the role of Jesus Christ in a play.

### Halle-loo-yah!

Even as this paper goes to press, the noo loos are being fitted into the Ladies and Gents. Unfortunately this has meant no water supplies even to make a cup of tea. But soon all will be well, and ever so fresh.

Philip Mutton the undoubted doyen of BLTC is putting on a one-man show, 'Old Herbaceous' for one night only at The Church Hall of the Church of the Trans-



figuration, Chaddersley Glen, Sandbanks. Performance date is Saturday, 3 October. Show starts at **7.00 pm**. Price £5 at door. Advanced booking by phone to Philip Mutton on **760458**. Takings go to a fund to effect church repairs. 'Old Herbaceous' is a retired head gardener of a country manor. In his greenhouse, he chats about his life to visitors to the countryside. Philip says there is a bit about everything in life in this show. The mood stretches from pathos to humour across all the other human emotions.

## Reminders

Sat. 5 September. 7.30 for 8.00 p.m. Annual General Meeting.

Sun. 20 September. 7.30 p.m. Readthrough and auditions for *My Fat Friend* directed by Tony Orman.

Mon. 14 thru Sat. 19 September. Performances of *Nightmare: The Fright of Your Life* directed by Don Gent.

Fri. 25 September. 7.30 p.m. Readthrough and auditions for Two One-act plays directed by Jack Snell.

Mon. 26 thru Sat. 31 October. Performances of *Ladies Who Lunch*.

Thurs. thru Sat. 5 – 7 November. Performances of *Soirée* written and directed by Tim Garton.

Mon. 7 thru Sat. 12 December. Performances of *My Fat Friend*.

Mon. 15 thru Sat. 20 February 1999. Performances of Two one-act plays (directed by Jack Snell).

Mon. 12 thru Sat. 17 April. Performances of *An Evening with Gary Lineker*. (Audition date to be announced).

Mon. 7 thru Sat. 12 June. Performances of play to be selected, which will then travel to Des Moines, Iowa, performing there in mid-July, 1999.

## Marriage

We are pleased to announce the marriage of Claire Hiscock to Daniel Winwood on Saturday, 1 August 1998. The ceremony took place at St Johns Church, Surrey Road, Bournemouth. BLTC offers its warmest congratulations and hopes for the happy future and prosperity of our two members.

## Answers to Quiz

1. Aristophanes. 2. Jacques in *As You Like It*. 3. The Globe Theatre, Southwark. 4. Dorothy and Campbell Christie. 1945. 5. James Eiray Flecker. 6. *Can't Pay, Won't Pay*, by Dario Fo. 7. 1960s term (USA) distinguishing professional, commercial theatre from non-commercial theatre presented in lofts and storefronts in Greenwich Village and Lower East Side, New York. 8. *The Collection* by Harold Pinter. 9. Plautus, died c. 164 BC. 10. William Douglas Home.