



Bournemouth Little Theatre News



1998/99 Season

Members' Edition (Issue #12)

Thursday, 21 January 1999

Jack Snell Presents

Two One-act Plays

Monday – Saturday
15 –20 February 1999
At Bournemouth Little Theatre Club
Jameson Road, Winton, Bournemouth

Two One-act Plays

Booking details over-page

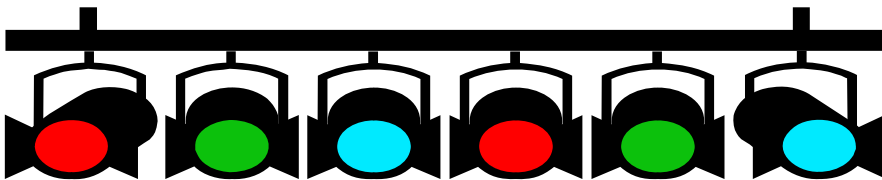
Home Free

By Landford Wilson

AND

"Will the Real Jesus Christ Please Stand Up!"

By Malcolm Marmorstein



"Home Free" is a drama about a brother and sister, aged about 26 and 25, who share a one-room apartment. *He* is agoraphobic and *she* is six months pregnant. The true depth of their relationship is revealed in the course of the action.

"Will the Real Jesus Christ Please Stand Up!" is a diverting comedy showing what happens when a theatrical director auditions five struggling actors, each of whom aspires to play the role of Jesus Christ in a forthcoming production.

Our plays both aspire to be presented not only at BLTC but also subsequently at three separate drama festivals.

Jack Snell brings to both of these plays the same gifts of strong direction and inspirational leadership which led to the Club receiving the 1998 Daily Echo Curtain Call 'Best Drama' Award for Jack's production of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.



Come Free



Brother and sister in real life, Tim Garton (left) and Amanda Garton (right), are lending their considerable individual talents to this serious investigation into the overly-close relationship of a fictional brother and sister. Amanda starred in our recent thriller *Nightmare*, and Tim directed his own play *Soirée*, earlier this season. These exciting young players combine to give us this uniquely intuitive 'family' interpretation of a tortured sibling relation-



Amanda and Tim in serious rehearsal

Will the Real Jesus Christ Please Stand Up!



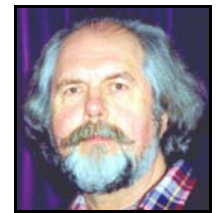
Neil West (left) comes fresh from his recent success in *Nightmare* to act as the somewhat camp personal assistant of Derek Hyder (right). Derek, the unchallenged doyen of BLTC's many performers stars this time out as the frustrated director of a new play about Jesus Christ. The play itself has absolutely nothing to say about religion in general or Christianity in particular, but is a well-observed observation and commentary on what can go wrong in any audition for any play. Professional performers will recognise much of the text as being from life, and the rest of us will just double up laughing at the spectacle of the 'Audition From Hell/Heaven'. The aspiring



Gareth Bux-



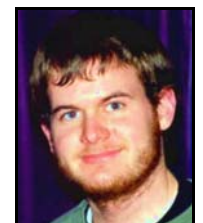
Derek and Neil review their motley crew



Steve



Mike O'Grady



Matthew Mee-



Paul Bride-

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 1 February to Friday 5 February
on her home number **424640** **OR**
3. **BOX OFFICE OPENS** Monday 8 February to Friday 12 February, **between 7.30 p.m. and 9.00 p.m.**
for personal callers **OR** by telephone on **513361**

What to do for a follow-up

Please put Friday, 26 March 1999 at 7.30 pm in your diaries. For that is the time and date when the play choosing sub-committee meets at the Club to receive submissions from aspiring directors who would like to be considered for the 1999/2000 season. Remember, we are not a clique or a closed shop. In the current season we have four new directors who have never mounted a major production in Bournemouth before. If you have a show that you really fancy putting on, you don't have to wait until March. Please contact either

Andrew Whyatt on 624221 or Tony Orman on 554291 right away to indicate your interest.

At the time of going to press we have 104 members, of whom 21 said on their membership application forms that they would like to direct plays: so don't be shy. If you have a burning desire to put on a particular show then now is the time to step forward.

We would like to put on a balanced programme next season, but we can only put on shows that you actually *want* to direct. Therefore, the more people who express a desire, the more chance we will have to submit to the full committee a decent



"They also serve who only stand and wait ..." Eunie Hawkins (above) not only acts in plays. She also performs nobly behind the bar. Angela Whyatt would love to see *all of us* helping out in similar fashion during the run of each show. Phone Angela on 624221 to volunteer for front of house duties for the next show.

Marie Bamber

With great regret we note the death, recently announced, of Marie Bamber. Members will see her name on a number of old playbills at the Club. She and her husband the late Bernard Bamber were both prominent members of the Club from the 1950s until the closing of the Palace Court Theatre in 1970. Marie was noted for her performances of dominating and regal characters, and both she and Bernard also sang with Bournemouth Gilbert and Sullivan Society. Marie also directed, and appeared on Brownsea in Shakespeare. She did much work with St Peters Players, ultimately becoming that club's chairman.



"A Bridge Too Short"

Hugh Norris shares his thoughts and wisdom with us to create a wonderful new competition for BLTC members to enter!

Every year on Brownsea Island, the current director of the Brownsea Open Air Theatre ("BOAT") production is obliged to abridge the text of William Shakespeare (recently voted England's Man of the Millennium – for those of you new to the subject). This is because performances have to end by 10.15 pm to enable the ferries to get the audiences back to the mainland before 11.00 pm, at which time Poole Quay is rolled up for the night, and the Dolphin Centre is magically turned back into a pumpkin. Thus in 1995 Jo Puttick was obliged to cut about one-third of the text of *Richard III*, which surprisingly left the plot just as incomprehensible as the uncut original.

I was minded of this when I subsequently caught a performance by a group of three American actors calling themselves the "RSC". No, not the Stratford crowd. The initials here stood for "Reduced Shakespeare Company". They offered a rendering of the complete works of Shakespeare – including the sonnets – in exactly ninety minutes. As you may imagine, quite a lot got cut in the process, and the show was an absolute hoot.

This in turn reminded me of the Daily Telegraph competition of a few years ago, where a prize was offered for the best mini-novel consisting of exactly 50 words (no more, no less) but excluding the title. That too provided some hilarious moments for the readers.

So now lads and lasses, get to work on the latest BLTC competition. Your mission, should you accept it, is as follows: Reduce any Shakespeare play of your choice into exactly fifty words of dialogue, excluding the title and the names of the characters. You must follow the plot, and you may only use lines taken from the play.

For the best answer, BLTC is offering the winner two free seats at the next BLTC production.

And below, to urge you on, I set out an example which I prepared earlier:

Julius Caesar, abridged

Second Citizen We make holiday to see Caesar.

Soothsayer Beware the Ides of March!

Brutus I do fear the people choose Caesar for their king.

Caesar The Ides of March are come.

Soothsayer Ay Caesar, but not gone.

Caesar Et tu, Brute? Then fall, Caesar!

Antony Friends, Romans and Countrymen, lend me your ears. This was a man!

This article will self-destruct in five seconds!

Aide memoire

This paper is forever asking actors for their CVs. For those of us who can't remember today's date let alone what we did last year, we present below an honours list of shows we have mounted since 1986. It is a list to be proud of.

1986/87

On Golden Pond, Lear, Breath of Spring, Someone Waiting, and a Studio entertainment.

1987/88

The Hollow Crown, Something to Hide, Equus, Suburbs of Babylon, and Old Herbageous.

1988/89

Cause Célèbre, Seasons Greetings, Pack of Lies, Danger-Memory, Key for Two, and Stags and Others (Studio).

1989/90

Birthday Party, Canterbury Tales, Breaking the Code, The House of Bernarda Alba, Staircase, and Our Town (Studio).

1990/91

Amadeus, No Sex Please We're British, Towards Zero, Confusions, Stage Struck, and Two Way Mirror.

1991/92

Plenty, Steel Magnolias, Deadly Nightcap, The Master Builder, Outside Edge, and An Inspector Calls.

1992/93

The Small Hours, One for the Road, And Then There Were None, All My Sons, Round and Round the Garden, and Exits and Entrances.

1993/94

Loot, The Exorcism, The Golden Pathway Annual (Studio), Twelve Angry Men, Out of Order, and Three One-act Plays (Studio).

1994/95

Time and the Conways, Dial M For Murder, Hotel Paradiso, Rope, and A Streetcar Named Desire.

1995/96

Murder By the Board, PVT Wars, Filthy Lucre, The Physicists, Sisterly Feelings, and Waltz of the Toreadors.

1996/97

Straight and Narrow, Arms and the Man, When We Are Married, A Lie of the Mind, and The Madwoman of Chaillot.

1997/98

The Sisters Rosensweig, One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest, The Killing of Sister George, A Doll's House, Relatively Speaking, Audition for a Writer/Last Tango in Little Grimley (Studio), Grand National Night, and The Donahoe Sisters/The Collection.

1998/99

Nightmare, Ladies Who Lunch, Soirée, My Fat Friend.

To be continued.

Theatre Quiz By Tony Orman

The theme is: "Ere, Missis – you can't do that there 'ere!"

1. The withdrawal of amateur rights for which play prevented performance by BLTC in the 1997/98 season?
2. The amateur rights for whose plays are largely withdrawn during 1999?
3. Which movie star on her theatrical debut was jailed in the USA for public indecency?
4. The current president of a European nation had his plays banned and spent 4 years in jail. Who and where?
5. Which Gilbert and Sullivan opera was briefly 'suspended' in 1907, and why?
6. Which National Theatre production was privately prosecuted in 1980?
7. In what year was theatre censorship abolished in the UK? What two plays having frontal nudity then followed?
8. Name two foreign leaders UK playwrights were banned from mentioning during the 1930s.
9. Describe two methods used to avoid censorship by the Lord Chamberlain prior to the abolition of censorship.
10. What play by which author was censored in the UK in 1958 for referring to the non-existence of God?

'My Fat Friend'

The December comedy, not billed as great art, clearly touched a chord with audiences. Unaudited preliminary figures indicate the show was our highest gross in four years and the profit (or surplus, as we charities call them) was our largest ever at the Jameson Road venue.

Kelly Reynolds reviewed the piece for the *Daily Echo*. She writes:

"What an absolute tonic this heart-warming comedy, superbly directed and produced by Tony Orman, turned out to be.

My Fat Friend is essentially a tale of three of life's supposed misfits – Victoria, who has a definite weight problem, and her two lodgers, gay tax inspector Henry and rejected novelist James.

Peter Vesey turns in a good performance as Tom, the man who finally inspires Vicky to lose weight and turn her life around with surprising consequences.

The extremely talented Francesca Button is a charming and delightful Vicky and David Hinton has nigh on mastered the art of the "comic stare" as funny, gentle James. For me, though, the fairy on top of this particular tree was Don Gent, gloriously camping it up as Henry, mincing to within an inch of his life, acid repartee positively dripping from his mouth, without ever crossing over into parody. A perfect antidote to the stresses of Christmas."

BT Biennial Raffle

For everyone who came to see *Ladies Who Lunch*, you may recall the raffle tickets which BLTC sold each night. The prizes, you may recall were donated respectively by each of the amateur groups who participated in the BT Biennial all over the country, and anyone could win one of the many national prizes. The gimmick was that each group got to keep whatever money it collected.

Well now the draw has taken place and, guess what! BLTC has one lucky winner, Joy Taylor, who receives a box of Tiptree preserves. Our main contribution was a stay at the Chine Hotel, which was won by a Mr Davies of Wrexham. Hey – Joy, wouldn't it be fun if he was just buttering his breakfast toast at the Chine and Guess Who shows up with a wee pot of Raspberry preserve and a big smile!?

We made £386 on the tickets we sold. We will advise you all at an early date as to what we intend to spend the money on.

And thanks to all our patrons who supported live theatre by buying the raffle tickets.



Audition Relative Values

by

Noël Coward

Andrew Whyatt takes this early opportunity to announce the audition for *Relative Values*. It will be from 7.30 pm at the Club on:

Friday, 2 April 1999

This delightful light comedy by 'The Master', set in the 1950s, is the only one of his works released for performance by amateurs in this his centenary year. He was an actor, director, producer, composer, lyricist, writer and entertainer, the like of whom it would be difficult to replicate.

With five ladies roles (2 young, 3 middle-aged) and five gentlemen's roles, there is something for everyone. The Countess of Marchwood, Miranda from Hollywood, Moxie the maid with Crestwell the butler, the Countess's son Nigel, and Don Lucas from the USA, and others, all combine to make an amusing light piece to end the season.

If you would like to be considered for a role, but are unable to attend the audition, please give Andrew a call on 624221.

"Balls' Honeymoon"

With unerring feel for the refined and the sophisticated *bon mot*, playwright **Hugh Norris**, now brings to the stage the ultimate silly farce tastefully titled as above.

After his success a couple of years ago in directing his own farce *Filthy Lucre*, Hugh has now penned another, which is to be given an arranged and rehearsed reading on the Club stage at 7.45 pm on Saturday, 20 March next. He hesitates to call it a masterpiece, but suggests that it might qualify as a "mistress piece", since the whole of the second act takes place inside a brothel. No, don't get the wrong idea, it is all good clean fun (well, more or less).

The action takes place in an obscure part of the third world which has just been taken over by bloodthirsty religious maniacs who have decreed that anything that is fun is illegal – including, of course, such things as alcohol and sex. Hugh thinks it is quite funny – come and see what the cast make of it.

There will be **NO CHARGE** for admission, and as usual the bar will be open before and after the reading as well as during the half-hour interval. Members are invited to bring their guests, and their agents. **So remember:**

**Balls' Honeymoon
By Hugh Norris**

**Saturday, 20 March 1999
At Jameson Road
At 7.45 pm**

Reminders

Mon. 15 thru Sat. 20 February Performances of *Two one-act plays*, directed by Jack Snell.

Sat. 20 March. Rehearsed reading of farce, *Ball's Honeymoon*, by Hugh Norris at 7.45 pm, admission free, bar open.

Mon. 12 thru Sat. 17 April. Performances of *An Evening with Gary Lineker*, directed by David Hinton.

Mon. 7 thru Sat. 12 June. Performances of *Relative Values* by Noël Coward, directed by Andrew Whyatt. Audition date to be announced, but please phone Andrew on 624221 if you wish to be considered for a role.

First week of July. Two MORE one-act plays. Please call Jack Snell on 519994 if you wish to be considered for a role.

1. *A Delicate Balance* by Edward Albee.
2. Noël Coward's, during his centenary year.
3. Mae West in the USA 1926. The show was called *Sex* and she played a whore. 4. *Vacavac*
Havel of the Czech Republic. 5. *The Mikado*
during the state visit of the Crown Prince of Japan. 6. Bogdanov's production of *The Romans in Britain*, featuring simulated male rape. The prosecution failed. 7. Theaters Act 1968. There followed *Hair* and *Oh, Calcutta!* But the predicted deluge of immorality never really arrived. 8. Hitler and Mussolini (and much good it did us!) 9. 'Club' theatres and the music hall. 10. *Endgame* by Samuel Beckett.