



Bournemouth Little Theatre News



Issue Number 18 (6th Combined)

1999/2000 Season

12 November 1999

**Bournemouth Little Theatre Club presents
for six evenings, Monday to Saturday
6 to 11 December 1999, at 7.45 pm**

**PLUS Saturday Matinée
11 December, at 2.30 pm**

at Jameson Road



The Wildly Funny Comedy

Don't Dress for Dinner

By Marc Camoletti

Adapted by Robin Hawdon

Directed by Tony Orman

PICTURE a stylishly converted French farmhouse, some way from Paris, where Bernard is hoping to entertain his chic Parisian mistress, Suzanne, for the weekend. He has arranged for a cordon bleu cook, Suzette, to come from an agency to furnish the gourmet delights, and he is in the process of packing his wife, Jacqueline, off to her mother. He has even invited along his best friend Robert as a suitable alibi. It's foolproof, what could go wrong ... ?

Well, supposing Robert turns up without knowing why he's been invited? Say, Robert and Jacqueline are secret lovers? Or how about the cook being mistaken for the mistress, and the mistress who can't cook? Mix all these ingredients and you have the perfect recipe for an evening of hilarious confusion, as Bernard and Robert improvise at breakneck speed.

This laugh-a-minute (no, laugh-a-second) show will definitely put you in the right festive mood to kick off your Christmas and Millennium celebrations!

Don't Dress For Dinner

Seriously talented comedians



Alan Jarvis



Angela Whyatt



Andrew Whyatt



Michelle Newton



Penelope Goddard



Jack Snell

“I had heard of *Don't Dress For Dinner*,” says its present director, Tony Orman, “but I had never read it or seen it. I had found critiques saying it was simply the funniest play the reviewers had ever seen. But it was only when I read it with a view to directing it for BLTC that I realised just how funny it is. It played two years in Paris under the title *Pyjamas Pour Six*. I myself am not an expert in the nuances of the French language, but I think you get the idea! Of course, Marc Camoletti is famous as the author of the world-wide comedy hit *Boeing Boeing*, so the show has a great pedigree. The English version opened in London in 1991, and was a great success, and has only recently been released for amateur production.

And Robin Hawdon's adaptation doesn't sound particularly French. The jokes and the humour could be from anywhere in Surrey. The only un-English thing about such a modern show is the relative lack of bad language. The morals, however, are distinctly, well, *French*. Or at least as amoral as we have come to expect from the country that gave us the term “French farce”.

But the greatest thing about the play is that, every time you think to yourself, ‘Oh, I can see where the author is taking us next,’ he just doesn't. He surprises you all the time, he takes you somewhere you never thought of, and you start laughing again. This kind of comedy is tough work for the actors, but I'm particularly fortunate in having the services in this production of one of the strongest casts one could imagine.”



Tony Orman

Extra!
By popular demand
'Don't Dress For Dinner'
Saturday 11 December
Matinée
at 2.30 pm

England's Theatrical Master Builder

Tony Orman takes a look at The Royal National Theatre's Trevor Nunn

TELL any theatrical director that a video can be made of his show and he will tell you that they're not worth doing, because they look amateurish. But if you are Trevor Nunn, former supremo at the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), now Director of the Royal National Theatre, (RNT) your whims can be indulged. Thus, his 1998 revival production at the RNT of *Oklahoma* has been filmed onstage, under his own direction, as a TV movie, and has already been aired on Sky Premier in September this year. This is not his first venture into film. Several of his stage productions have been so translated. His TV film of *Antony and Cleopatra* received a BAFTA award, and his *Nicholas Nickleby* got an Emmy. In the theatre, the latter show won five Tony awards on Broadway. Mind you, he directed *Les Miserables*, which took a whopping eight Tony awards, and has the distinction of being the most performed musical in the world.

This is a man who has the Midas touch when it comes to directing successful shows. In 1992 six of his shows were running in the West End, and he is revered on Broadway for having had four hit shows running at the same time.

Born in 1940, he first came to public notice directing plays for the Marlowe Society, when he was a student at Cambridge University. After a spell as a trainee at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, he joined the RSC in 1965. He succeeded Peter Hall as the RSC's youngest ever artistic director in 1968. In 1978

he became Chief Executive and joint artistic director with Terry Hands at the RSC, which helped him to take some time away from the company to direct in commercial theatre, where, in 1981, he staged the musical *Cats*, and in 1984 *Starlight Express*.

Nunn can be regarded without too much challenge as the best all-round director currently working in British theatre. His range of productions at the RSC was unequalled for its richness and variety - Shakespeare's 'Roman' plays in 1972, a musical version of *The Comedy of Errors*, and the studio *Macbeth*, both in 1976, and his Edwardian *All's Well That Ends Well*, in 1981.

In 1980 he collaborated with John Caird, David Edgar and the RSC to bring together *Nicholas Nickleby* in two substantial evenings, presenting a vivid picture of Charles Dickens's London.

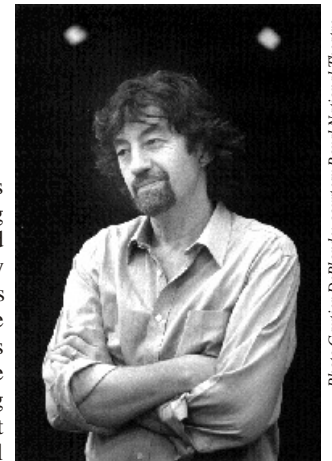
Possessing a fine eye for scenic pictures on the stage, a sound instinct for style and historical appropriateness, he has rivalled American directors at staging musicals. Under his guidance the RSC became a world-renowned company. He handed over to his co-director Terry Hands in 1986, but remained prolific as a freelance, for instance with *Othello* and the musical *Aspects of Love*, both in 1989.

Nunn was poached by the RNT to be its Director in October 1997 in succession to, first Laurence Olivier, and later Peter Hall. He moved immediately to restore the artistic balance of the RNT, which some said had lost its way, with productions of plays by Tennessee Williams, Harold Pinter and, of course, Shakespeare.

He says that, having long admired Stanley Kubrick's masterpiece *2001*, he finds it hard to be contemplating that date, not as a fictional one, but as a real date for which he must

plan productions. He is bringing in a revival of a cycle of Medieval Mystery Plays, to celebrate the birth of Christ 2,000 years ago. Ted Hughes' version of Aeschylus' *The Oresteia* will come to the Cottesloe. New writing will be emphasised at the Lyttelton, with plays such as *Battle Royal* by Nick Stafford, dealing with the notoriously turbulent marriage of George, Prince of Wales, and *Remember This*, Stephen Poliakoff's scary enquiry into our contemporary technological dependence. There are plays for children at Christmas, and in the new year, Fiona Shaw will produce Shaw's *Widowers Houses*.

And his personal life? Well, his first wife was the great actress Janet Suzman, and he is now very happily married to the calmly beautiful and eternally youthful Imogen Stubbs. Alas, lack of space means we can only sketch the outlines of the career and ongoing work of a theatrical genius. Go to London, and see his productions, or those he promotes: you won't be the loser.



Trevor Nunn, in reflective mood during a rehearsal

Photo Gaucier DeBlondie, courtesy Royal National Theatre

What the Chairman said

As promised, here's a summary of Andrew Whyatt's address to the Annual General Meeting

"THE last year has been successful in financial terms, although perhaps the standard of productions did vary somewhat from previous years. However, we have put "bums on seats" and had full houses on several occasions, and had to turn people away. So we must be doing *something* right!

"The season began with *Nightmare*, which played extremely well, and was thoroughly enjoyed by all who saw it, even if they did laugh occasionally in the wrong places. The BT play, *Ladies Who Lunch*, was financially sound due to the sponsorship from British Telecom, but the play itself was not really of the quality that we like to perform. If we take part again, we will make sure we see the *whole* play before committing ourselves.

"*My Fat Friend* was a delightful piece, ideal for Christmas, and was very well received indeed. It played to virtually full houses all week, and the audiences loved it. The two one-act plays, *Will the Real Jesus Christ Please Stand Up* and *Home Free*, which together formed the February production, played extremely well. Our audiences enjoyed the change, and were very complimentary. Both plays went into festivals, where again they were very well received, particularly *Home Free*, which went

as far as the English Area Finals at Redditch. Amanda and Tim Garton are both to be congratulated on a superb effort, which gained in strength as it progressed, reflecting not only *their* hard work, but the harder work of the director, Jack Snell.

"*An Evening With Gary Lineker*, a modern comedy, brought in a new audience, whilst a few regulars stayed away; but despite a few teething problems, it was a successful show. It was good to see some younger people on stage. Our Noël Coward Centenary offering of *Relative Values* was very well received indeed. It played to full houses, made money, and someone remarked that it was better than going to London and paying £30 a seat!

"I think we presented a remarkable range of theatre to a very high standard, but we are not without our problems. Where are the technical experts, without whom we cannot proceed? Every show, it seems, struggles to find people willing and able to set-build, light, paint, prompt, provide properties, stage manage, do sound. We are wearing out the few who *are* willing and able, and we shall soon reach the point where those few who do things well will say "Enough is enough," and a show will go down because of it! I don't want that to happen, and I'm sure *you* don't, but if people don't come forward, and soon, then it will.

"Apart from the actors, crew and technicians, it takes over 30 people to man a show, and we are almost at the same point there as we are with the technical side: the same 'willing horses' are there every time, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to fill the roster for each play, and there is a limit to what they can do. If you can help in any way, please volunteer now

Continued on page 4

ADVANCE TICKET BOOKINGS (price £6, with concessions)

1. WRITE enclosing cheque and S.A.E. To
Box Office, BLTC, 11 Jameson Road, Bournemouth BH 9 2QD **OR**
2. CONTACT Sue at home **ONLY between 7.30 pm and 9.00 pm** Monday 22 November
To Friday 26 November on her home number **01202 424640** **OR**
3. BOX OFFICE OPENS Monday 29 November to Friday 3 December,
between 7.30 pm and 9.00 pm. For personal callers at the Club
OR by telephone on **01202 513361**

PLEASE NOTE

Tickets for early bookings (with money) will be dispatched within two weeks before the show in the order in which the bookings were received.

David Hinton's Film Quiz

1. What bird was 'the stuff that dreams are made of'?
2. Which Jewish comedian was a member of the Rat Pack?
3. Which German born star was 'discovered' in a WW1 trench?
4. Who was waiting for Bananarama?
5. Which 'scream-queen' is now Lady Guest?
6. Who declared, "On the whole I would rather be in Philadelphia?"
7. Who concluded his Oscar winning role announcing that he was 'having a friend for dinner'?
8. In which film did Sean Connery play a virgin?
9. Who claimed to have designed Jane Russell's bra?
10. Name all six of Monty's pythons.

Answers at bottom of page

Chairman's Address: contd. from page 3

even if you have not been able to do so before, by making known your willingness to help to any of the Committee. We need people to 'meet and greet', help serve coffee and run the bar, and also to clean the theatre: many hands make light work. **YOUR THEATRE NEEDS YOU!**

Andrew went on to note the refurbishment of the ladies' and gents' cloakrooms, including the installation of equipment by the Chine Hotel, the latest example of their help over the last two years. A few committee and other members then went on to paint those areas. We also refurbished old lighting equipment and purchased new equipment. He said it had been a privilege to serve on the Committee. He continued, "I pay tribute to all of those who, without exception, do sterling work, sometimes long into the night, to make sure the Club runs as smoothly as it does. Our superb newsletter, patron scheme, budget control, and day-to-day running are managed by the Committee, but it would be all to no avail if we didn't have a Box Office Manager who runs the business beautifully and without whom we would not survive - a massive THANK YOU to Sue Hyder for doing such a magnificent job.

"Finally, a big 'thank you' to all those who have given me your support over the last year, not least of whom is my wife Angela, who not only has to listen to my moans and groans, but also manages the duty rota as well!

I look forward to another successful year both onstage and at the Box Office!"



Andrew's Decision

WITH a true sense of the dramatic, Andrew

Whyatt surprised the Committee at the first meeting after the AGM, when he announced that after nine years on the committee, he would be resigning at the end of the current season. He was quick to declare that he had every intention of remaining active in BLTC, but he felt that after so long a period in charge, much of it as Chairman, it was time to back off.

He suggested that it would be a good idea if the Committee were to elect a vice chairman for the balance of the season to shadow Andrew's job. A vice chairman would be then the natural person to assume the role

of chairman in good order.

This struck the Committee as sound practice, and the procedure was agreed.

At a subsequent meeting last week, the only nomination for the new post of vice chairman was **Don Gent**, and he was duly elected.

At the same time, the Committee welcomed a new member, **Lee Tilson**, who was co-opted by unanimous acclaim by the rest of the Committee. For the present then, Lee will assume the portfolio of development member, previously held by Don. We welcome Lee's arrival. He brings to the Committee many years' of skilled military administration, as well as the experience of amateur theatre in

of meaning in language, pause and silence.

The tight-knit cast, which included Denise Nippard as Lulu, certainly rose to that particular challenge with unflinching dedication, holding the attention of even the most bemused (myself included) theatregoer, as they presented us with this ill-assorted bunch of eminently unlikeable characters who ultimately posed more questions than they answered.

The entire production, directed by Jack Snell, ran smoothly and without any noticeable hitches. Pinter may be an acquired taste but I can suggest no better way to try your first morsel."

Late Note

To prove that dreams can come true, our own **Jan Fox**, new drama graduate, makes her professional debut in **Peter Pan** at Poole Arts Centre from 15 December to 15 January. Her pro name is now **Olivia Fox**. Hey - you made it!

Review

Writing in the Daily Echo, **Kelly Reynolds** says of *The Birthday Party*:

"The title of this early Harold Pinter play belies its complex and sinister content.

Stanley Webber (Peter Evans), an out-of-work pianist and welcome guest in a seaside boarding house run by eccentric Meg Boles (Lin Denning) and her long-suffering husband Petey (Noel Davenport), is mysteriously threatened on his birthday by two not-so-welcome and increasingly menacing guests, McCann (Alan Colclough) and Goldberg (Alan Jarvis), who present him with a Kafkaesque indictment of unexplained crimes.

In typical 'Pinteresque' style, the strength of the play and validity of each character relies on the use of dialogue to portray the many layers

Marriage Announcement

We are very happy to record the recent marriage, on 4 September, of Club members **Sheila Biswell and James Westgate.**

The ceremony took place at **St Nicholas's Church, Corfe Mullen.**

James and Sheila say they are moving to Paglesham, Essex, but they will remain members of BLTC, and they will stay in close touch with us.

Magic carpet!

Many thanks to Playgoer **Sally Turner** for the old carpet, which she gave us in answer to our advertisement.

She has accepted two free tickets to the BLTC play of her choice

Audition

Hugh Norris announces an audition of the Comedy

Move Over Mrs Markham by Cooney and Chapman

to be held on **Wednesday, 1 March 2000 at Jameson Road at 7.30 pm**

The Director, who is always politically incorrect, says the piece calls for 4 randy men, 4 randy women, and one barmy old bat (female).

Production dates are 22 to 27 May 2000.

For further details please call **Hugh Norris on 01202 761400.**

many distant climes. And of course, he is well-known as a leading player, both for BLTC and for Brownsea Open Air Theatre.

So, to remind everyone, the Committee now consists of Chairman.....**Andrew Whyatt** Vice Chairman.....**Don Gent** Secretary.....**Hugh Norris** Treasurer.....**Noel Davenport** Publicity (External) and International.....**Derek Hyder** Wardrobe.....**Hilary Jefferys** Membership Secretary and newsletter.....**Tony Orman** Development.....**Lee Tilson**

That means we still need a stage director, especially since we have now committed to NINE productions this season!

Audition Reminder

Intimate Exchanges

(1 male and 1 female role) to be held on **Friday 14 January at 7.30 pm**; for further details call director Don Cherrett on **690952** (BOAT answering service, which will take a message for Don).

Reminder

Mon. 6 - Sat. 11 December 1999, Performances of Don't Dress For Dinner, at 7.45 pm. Fri. 14 January 2000. Audition for Intimate Exchanges at 7.30 pm.

Mon. 14 - Sat. 19 February 2000, Performances of The Three Sisters at 7.45 pm. Fri./Sat. 25/26 February 2000 Performances of Two one-act plays, at 7.45 pm Wed. 1 March 2000. Audition for Move Over Mrs Markham At 7.30 pm.

Mon. 3 - Sat. 8 April 2000, Performances of Intimate Exchanges at 7.45 pm. Mon. 22 - Sat. 27 May 2000, Performances of Move Over Mrs Markham at 7.45 pm. Mon. 26 June - Sat. 1 July 2000, Performances of Chakra at 7.45 pm. Fri./Sat. 21/22 July 2000, Performances of The Variety Show at 7.45 pm.

Answers to quiz
1. *The Maltese Falcon*.
2. Joey Bishop.
3. Rin-Tin-Tin.
4. Robert de Niro.
5. Jamie Lee Curtis.
6. W C Fields.
7. Anthony Hopkins, playing Hannibal Lecter.
8. He was Brother Baskerville in *The Name of the Rose*.
9. Howard Hughes.
10. John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Terry Jones, Graham Chapman, Eric Idle, Michael Palin.