



Bournemouth
Little Theatre News



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We Present

for six nights

From Monday to Saturday

April 19th to 24th 2004

at 7.45 pm

A Time Play

Dangerous Corner

by J B Priestley

Directed

by

Dan Brian

For more about the play and booking details see page 2

Dangerous Corner

The Performers



Amy Todd



Geoff Whipp



Pat Richardson



Andrew Whyatt



Lin Denning



Paul Mole



Angela Whyatt

The Play

When J B Priestley's Time Drama *Dangerous Corner* was revived in London's West End in 2001, the poster boldly announced it as "A THRILLER OF SEX, SECRETS AND LIES". We think the play is all of that, although the bounds of good taste are observed at all times.

As the play opens we are introduced to three couples and their novelist friend at the home counties country retreat of Robert and Freda Caplan, where they are all enjoying

cocktails. Apart from the novelist, they are all involved in running a publishing house.

At first, the conversation is light, brittle and urbane. As Priestley intended, you might be watching a comedy of the period. But when somebody picks up a musical cigarette box, its appearance unleashes dark memories, leading on to revelations relating to the hidden past of the three couples which totally destroy their carefully

arranged and apparently happy lives.

But Priestley introduces an element of mystery completely absent from crime dramas. Priestley divides time in two; showing us what happened and what might have happened. Brilliant in its effect this masterstroke displays life's infinite possibilities — the lives we lead and the lives we might have led.

Don't tell your friends how it ends!

The Director



Dan Brian

WE ARE VERY PLEASED that Dan Brian, the artistic leader of ImpAct Theatre, has now joined the Club, and has agreed to direct a play for us.

After graduating from drama school, Dan gained experience at various repertory companies, including Stratford East under Joan Littlewood., interspersed with radio and television work.

He appeared in a variety of late 70's TV shows, including *The Sweeney*, *The Expert*, *Churchill's People* and some historical dramas. He believes he still holds the

record for the number of English Kings played on TV. (Five). He moved into directing as a guest director at Sheringham Rep., subsequently being invited to become Artistic Director. He worked as a repertory director until joining Newpalm Productions (a national commercial touring company) as staff director, directing commercial repertory seasons and touring shows. He left full-time involvement in theatre when his family was young. Since then he has done occasional theatre and TV work and is now writing.

JOHN BOYNTON PRIESTLEY, (1894-1984), the world famous English author and playwright, has been well served by the Bournemouth Little Theatre: his comedy *When We Are Married*, and his Time Play *Time And The Conways*, have both been performed by us in recent times.

Dangerous Corner (1932) was Priestley's first play, written he said, to prove to himself that he could produce a theatre piece as well as the very successful novels such as *The Good Companions* and *Angel Pavement* which already stood to his credit. Astonishingly, he wrote the play in only one week.

He went on to become one of our most prolific writers; indeed in 1927 alone he had published no fewer than five books. Throughout his career he published 39 plays, 20 novels and dozens of essays, novellas, criticism, talks, and sketches.

Additionally, during and after World War II, he extended his audience to many appearances on radio.

The Playwright



J B Priestley

Advanced ticket bookings

Our mailing address for all ticket bookings is: **BLTC Box Office, 54 Wentworth Avenue, Bournemouth, BH5 2EG**

Tickets £7.50 (with concessions) Members £2

1. **WRITE** enclosing cheque and S.A.E. to BLTC Box Office (address above)
OR

2. **PHONE** to book by calling Sue **ONLY between 7.30 pm and 9.00 pm** on her home phone number **01202 424640**

EITHER Monday 5 April to Thursday 8 April

OR Tuesday 13 April to Friday 16 April

Box Office closed Good Friday, 9 April and Easter Monday, 12 April

Tickets booked and paid for, and a S.A.E. supplied, will be issued two weeks before the show in the order in which the booking forms were received. If you have **any problems** after receiving your tickets, **phone Sue between the dates and times set out in 2 above**. During the run of the show, telephone enquiries should be made direct to the theatre on 01202 513361 **between 7.00 - 7.45 p.m only**. Also during the run of the show, the Box Office is open at the theatre for callers in person. **At all other times bookings must be made by post or by telephone as set out above.**

A final plea — if you have booked tickets and know that you, or one of your party, will not be able to attend the performance, please let Box Office know as soon as possible. Thank you.

All at sea: cruises are show biz

.... says Tony Orman



*Happy
New Year
Madeira
style*



*And its
hoots toots
the noo
P & O
style*

AT AGE 68, AND HAVING LIVED and worked in more tourist traps than you've had hot dinners, I suggested to Deb (*much* younger) that we should undertake the unthinkable — a *cruise*. Neither of us had ever done this; so, as they say, it seemed a good idea at the time. Accordingly we booked for P & O's Christmas and New Year cruise on the good ship *Adonia*: 2,100 passengers, 845 crew: HUGE! 18 days on the ocean heading to the tropics. What could be better?

As this is a theatrical newsletter, I thought I'd give you our thoughts on the entertainment offered on a cruise liner. My God, where do I start? Aside from the traditional deckboard games such as shuffleboard on the promenade deck, you could be learning line dancing, joining a bridge competition, listening to lectures on World War II, playing indoor bowls, learning handicrafts, or shopping till you drop. I say nothing of booze bars, restaurants and coffee bars or even an imitation of McDonalds.

Our vessel had two theatres, each with an auditorium the width of the ship. The *Limelight Theatre* was set up as a regular theatre with all the lighting and sound equipment available to man, and a seating capacity around 400. The *Spotlights Theatre* was more set up for light concerts. There was even a concert pianist who managed to skate over the keys of the Steinway grand piano, but whose general enthusiasm brought to mind the words "bypass" and "charisma". This room also boasted full lighting and sound equipment. The main difference was the booze bar at the rear and the seating which was mainly swivel chairs with little tables next to them.

Limelight was where we saw shows with singers, dancers, costumes and all the excitement of the *London Palladium*. Well, that was the idea: but under whatever name the shows and the groups were promoted, there seemed to be a sameness and a blandness about them which eventually induced sleep. And of the dancers it would be a

kindness to say that their execution of the extremely basic choreography was a little thrown off by the movement of the ship.

The *Spotlights'* busiest evening was, naturally enough, on New Year's Eve, when the entertainers, who were directed by Scotsman Ian Fraser, the extremely hardworking Entertainments Director on board, threw themselves into tartans and then served up every Scottish song ever written. This show was so popular that we had to use ingenuity to get seated. Many could not find room at all. To our mind, the best entertainer on the ship was Bruce Morrison, who could sing well and had a grace and charm well above the average.

However, the best entertainment of all was provided not by the ship but by the city of Funchal, Madeira. Our vessel was tied up close in to the city and facing the promenade along the sea front. Above the promenade, the city, ablaze with lights reached up the steep mountain side. Citizens holding private parties were lighting

rockets and fireworks of all kinds. By midnight, the harbour had filled with vessels large and small, including six cruise liners. Then, on the stroke of midnight, we were totally surprised by the immediate start of a fireworks display all along the front and up through the city which had all the immediacy of Montgomery's artillery barrage commencing the battle of El Alamein. It only lasted 10 minutes, short for a fireworks display, but all those who saw it declared it to be beyond anything they had ever experienced before. It was like a ballet in fireworks, huge rockets all bursting at once and in line, with smaller arrays of different rockets below them. We then realised that the display somehow ran round to the seaward side of the ship and that we were surrounded by this perfectly timed marvel.

It was all downhill from then on as we sailed out at midnight thirty to face three days sailing towards winter and Southampton. For us the trip had all the charm of a luxury first class private hospital.

The way we were

Tony Orman read through *Dangerous Corner* for the Play Selection Subcommittee, in the 1933 acting edition (price 2 shillings and 6 pence) published by Samuel French & Co. The play was great but the advertisement by the publishers was a real eye opener.

PATRONS MAY NOT REALISE THAT WE amateur actors rely on French's acting editions for the majority of our plays. I found a copy of their edition in our Green Room Bar. But it was not the text of the play, it was French's promo on the inside front cover that really got my attention.

"SCENERY" it was headed. then, prissily,

"With a view to obviate, as far as is possible, the great difficulty amateurs experience in obtaining scenery, we have endeavoured to cope with the situation by providing STRONG LITHOGRAPHED PAPER which can be easily mount-

ed on canvas or calico (as canvas is so expensive at present), and then framed on woodwork.

"As all amateurs will have discovered, the expense of hiring or buying painted canvas scenery is very considerable, but by printing large quantities we can sell outright at a rate comparing favourably with that usually charged for the HIRE of painted canvas scenery.

"The primary object we have had in view has been to provide scenery which, by easy adjustment and additional sheets of lithographed paper, can be made to fit any reasonable size of stage.

"Any questions on the subject of our scenery will be gladly and promptly answered, and if the particulars of your stage — the height, the width and depth, together with the position in which you require the doors, fireplace or windows — are forwarded, we will submit to you an estimate of the cost, either for the paper alone, or mounted on calico.

"The framework of wood can be constructed by any local carpenter or can be supplied by us. We shall be pleased to quote prices upon receiving details.

"WE DO NOT SEND SCENERY ON HIRE."

Well, today BLTC's scenery is basically recycled standard sized flats, originally mostly made by the Club and then painted and repainted by us so frequently that the paint is



Crew photo on the set of This Happy Brood, designed by director Hugh Norris: the fake piano had previously been used in Hugh's version of Waters of the Moon. Cost of set? About ten quid.

often thicker than the canvas.

But don't think our club was so different from other clubs in the old days. The difference was that with up to 1,500 members at the height of our fame, we were lordly enough to be able to employ (for real money) a proper carpenter.

Sic transit gloria mundi.

Bits and pieces

by
David Weinberg

The following is suggested for those of us who live with stress. Don't ask me how, but it does seem to work. Just in case you've had a rough day, here is a stress management technique. The technique known as visualization is in all psychological texts. The funny thing is that visualization really works:

1. Picture yourself near a stream.
2. Birds are softly chirping in the cool mountain air.
3. No one but you knows your secret place.
4. You are in total seclusion from the hectic place called "the world".
5. The soothing sound of a gentle waterfall fills the air with a cascade of serenity.
6. The water is crystal clear.
7. You can easily make out the face of the person you're holding underwater.
8. See! You're smiling already.

Once more unto the breach

So many times BLTC has resurrected "The Studio" — a concept where training and rehearsal are linked to production of works by BLTC students. Charismatic actor and director **David Weeks** has now made an offer we cannot refuse.

DAVID WEEKS, A FORMER CHAIRMAN of BLTC with professional TV experience, has announced that he intends to re-start the BLTC Studio in the upcoming 2004-2005 season. If the "Studio" means little to readers, it is because whenever we have opened it, the Studio has not survived long under its operators.

The Studio has always been a concept that those who took part in its activities could learn new skills in a more tutorial atmosphere than is possible during rehearsals of a regular production.

You didn't have to be young and uneducated in the ways of the theatre to participate, but it did give hope (and help) to the newcomer to am dram that he or she would receive

an educational uplift. It was educational as well as practical. The hope was also that younger newcomers would attend.

All the details of the new scheme will appear in later editions, but for the time being it is good to note that David will be directing as a foretaste the Drama *The Clearing* by Helen Edmundson in July. Details of the auditions are on this page. The presentation is in addition to our advertised programme for this season.



David Weeks

Brownsea Open Air Theatre

EVERY YEAR WE SAY THE SAME THING: don't blame us if you book too late to see one of the summer's major regional events.

This is not an advertisement. BOAT sells out every year. The reason we tell you is because BLTC was essentially the founder of Shakespeare on Brownsea Island in 1964, when *The Tempest* was presented for one evening, and later repeated twice by popular demand.

So if you want to see Shakespeare's comedy *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, directed by Curtain Call Award winner Jo Puttick, write to
The Box Office Manager,
Dept. HB, BOAT,
PO Box 338,
Poole, BH17 7ZT
with an S.A.E. plus your cheque (no cash, please) for £15 per ticket.

The performance dates are on roughly alternate days from July 21 to August 6, 2004.

For further information only try the BOAT answerphone on 01202 251987.

New airport security check-in procedures USA



Comment from lonely passenger:
"Kinda puts the fun back into flying, don't it?"

Audition

David Weeks is holding an audition for the drama

The Clearing

by Helen Edmundson
preceded by a reading of the play

There will be a play reading of *The Clearing* on Wednesday 31 March 2004 at the Club at 7.30 pm.

The auditions will be held on Friday 2 April 2004 at the Club at 7.30 pm.

The play is set in Eire from the autumn of 1652 to the autumn of 1655. Helen Edmundson takes this tumultuous period in history and gently personalises her theme, centering on the developing conflict between an Englishman and his Irish wife — but showing, not only its devastating effects on one small community, but a whole nation.

Cast notes

Killaine Farrell Irish 25-35	A gentle sensitive girl. A good caring person. An innocent. The effect of aggressors' brutality has a most destructive effect on her.
Pierce Kinsellagh Irish 25-35	A strong clear thinker. A just and loyal patriot. Noble. Strong willed.
Solomon Winter English 50-65 but has lived in Eire for 30 years	A good honest man with the stuffing knocked out of him; suffering an enforced humility by a conquering aggressor, in order to protect his loved ones and home. He has lost his spirit, but manages to hold on to an inner strength.
Susaneh Winter Irish 50-65	Not so easily humbled, but loves and listens to her husband. Has great dignity but suffering is written all over her face.
Robert Preston English 28-40	A fine upright man as long as things are going OK. Privileged. Experiences great changes. Submits to immense compromises without thinking through the consequences of his actions. Reacts rather than reasons.
Madeleine Preston Irish 25-35	A strong clear thinker. Strong willed. Intelligent. Knows people well. Very superior instincts. Great compassion. Clever. Sees beyond the apparent.
Sir Charles Sturman English	An intellectual bully. Arrogant. A puritan, only safe behind his protected power. Not bright. Manipulative.
Other roles All English	Roundhead soldier — brute; Commissioner — A simple, educated man doing what he has been told to do; Sailor — coarse; Judge — says it all, an English judge.

Production dates are Monday to Saturday 12th to 17th July. If you want more information or if you would like to be considered but can't get to the audition, call David on 01202 419050

Review

LINDA KIRKMAN of the Daily Echo reviewed our February production of Three One Act Plays



THESE three plays by local playwrights proved a rather mixed bag.

Ken Thorp's *A Change For The Better* was a well-constructed piece about a mother (an excellent Virginia Harrington) who is about to emigrate to Brazil. However, it might have been even more effective if the character of daughter Claire (Tess Hutton) had been a little less angst-ridden and that of her sister Chloe (Lisa Watkinson) rather less laid back.

Les Clarke's *Cold* has already won awards in playwriting competitions, and its pedigree showed. Its slightly quirky storyline about the lengths a man will go to to prepare himself for a job interview was highly amusing and well performed by Don Cherrett (Smithers) and Mike Satchell (Hart). There was also a lovely cameo from Nicola King as a Salvation Army volunteer unwittingly caught up in the melee.

Les Clarke's *Passion Killer* was

a great disappointment. The storyline, about how 28 year old Claire's (Natalie Mills) night of passion with her boyfriend Brian (Peter Beebee) is interrupted by the entrance of her 61 year-old nymphomaniac grandmother (Denise Nippard) simply did not ring true. Neither did it help that the 'grandmother' was dressed in clothing completely at odds with her supposed character and was played in caricature fashion by someone many years too young for the role.

Reminders

Wed 31 March 2004 Play reading: *The Clearing* at the Club at 7.30 pm
Fri 2 April 2004 Auditions for *The Clearing* at the Club at 7.30 pm
Mon-Sat, 19-24 April 2004

Performances of *Dangerous Corner* at the Club at 7.45 pm

Mon-Sat, 7-12 June 2004

Performances of *Wait Until Dark* at the Club at 7.45 pm

Mon-Sat, 12-17 July 2004

Performances of *The Clearing* at the Club at 7.45 pm

The Committee

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