

NVT
Newsletter
MARCH/APRIL
2008

FESTIVAL MONTH
PRODUCTIONS

'Mojo'
3-17 May
&
'Intimate Encounters'
21-26 May

Box Office (24hr)
01273 746118
Other enquiries
01273 808353

NEW VENTURE
T H E A T R E

Bedford Place
Brighton BN1 2PT
Info@newventure.org.uk
www.newventure.org.uk

'HEDDA GABLER'

by Henrik Ibsen

Directed by Helen Caton

26th March to 5th April

"Theatre is a living, breathing, hopefully incredibly dangerous, often offensive and exhilarating, life affirming, place to spend one's time, both as an actor and as an audience member." Cate Blanchett (Blanchett played Hedda in

Returned pregnant from her honeymoon with adoring husband George Tesman, Hedda awakes into the cold reality of a mundane existence throttled by the tight clench of refusal. Having chosen security over passion Hedda's life becomes intolerably suffocating as the system into which she has married expects of her that which she is unwilling to deliver, namely her opening. Drowning in her own sense of *something missing* and living a life devoid of purpose or meaning, Hedda begins to systematically destroy the hopes and dreams of those around her with devastating consequences.

Hedda Gabler is an idealist and as an idealist nothing will ever come up to her expectations, she finds reality very difficult. Nothing will ever be right, always something more, and from that there is infinite suffering. The ego says, I believe in this (light) because I really feel this (dark). Hedda has such a dense shadow that the light she gives off must be blinding.

From one perspective Hedda Gabler is a ruth-

less, hard and abrasive woman capable of manipulating everyone in her life. George Bernard Shaw described her as having "no conscience, no conviction... mean,



Vickie Jarvis is Hedda

envious, insolent, cruel, in protest against others happiness." Others have perceived her as a bold heroine justifiably and instinctively fighting the constraints of the 19th Century society which bind her wild spirit.

In taking on Ibsen's classic I was clear that I didn't want to approach her as an evil villain and nor was I interested in praising her as a feminist heroine. I simply wanted to explore the humanity within her, indeed within all of the characters. For in theatre as in life once the judgment - good or

bad - is taken out of a situation all that remains is aspects of humanity. A hall of mirrors!

In respect of Norwegian theatre Henrik Ibsen can undoubtedly be considered a diamond of unrivalled value and this play in particular has increased in value since the time it was first written and performed in 1890. Viewed through a modern filter Ibsen's classic explores the deep imbalance which arises when a woman closes her heart to love and chooses a life bent by fear. This production of Hedda Gabler describes the haunting shape of a woman's closure.

I am delighted to be directing a brave and talented cast of generous and committed actors some of whom you will recognise and some you won't! We have a fabulous production and design team busying away as I write. I trust that the alchemy that is theatre will continue to work its magic on this production and that you will join us from March 26th to April 5th for this extended run of Ibsen's jewel Hedda Gabler.

This production has no swearing and no scenes of an overt sexual nature.

Helen Caton, Director

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NVT 2008-2009

Artistic vision

"The Learning Company is a vision of what might be possible. It is not brought about simply by training individuals; it can only happen as a result of learning at the whole organization level. A Learning Company is an organization that facilitates the learning of all its members and continuously transforms itself." Pedler

The emerging vision for the New Venture Theatre 2008-2009 is one which is firmly rooted in the context of learning and development. The intention is to support new and existing talent by drawing on the experience and knowledge of those whose appetite for excellence has revealed itself time and time again.

Artistic Programme

The core programme will consist of approximately 9 productions. Members will soon be invited to submit their proposals for next season (Sept 2008 – July 2009). Details of how to submit a production will be available in the next newsletter. We ask members to consider not only their artistic vision for the piece but also the various technical and production needs pertaining to the piece.

Actor & Director Training

We will be creating a programme for training actors and directors, set and lighting designers as well as technical training. By developing emerging talent in a strategic way across all aspects of the theatre we hope to develop a strong body of theatre makers for the future.

Entertainments Events

These events will have close links with the acting and directors' classes and will provide a safe and supporting platform for actors and directors to show their work and hone their skills. The evening events will offer an opportunity for the community as a whole to come together and - as an added bonus - they will form an integral part of our fundraising activities.

NVT Naked

NVT Naked will take the shape of a series of scheduled directed performance evenings which will enable artists, singer song-writers, (acoustic only), stand up, sketches, new writing, etc to develop and hone their acts. We will be working with people who have the basis of an act which they wish to develop to its fullest potential. The projects will entail mentoring.

Talks & Master Class Events

A series of talks and master-classes on various aspects of theatre craft and industry related topics. Arts professionals and arts organisations will be invited to share their knowledge and experience with our members. We hope to cover things such as; casting, directing, stage craft, professional photographs, CV's, and stage

presence. As a part of this series we will be inviting longstanding members to share their unique experience of the theatre with us.

Our aim is to create a powerful season of performance and knowledge sharing events thus providing the maximum number of opportunities to participate. We look forward to the energy, commitment and imagination of all those who step forward to co-create a magical 2008-2009 season.

Watch this space for details of how to get involved with projects.

See you there!

Helen Caton – Artistic Director



To: The Box Office Manager, NVT, Bedford Place, Brighton BN1 2PT

Please reserve for me _____ tickets for **HEDDA GABLER**

Weds. 26 March - Sat. 5 April at 7.45 pm Matinee Sunday 30 March 2.30 pm

(No performance Monday) Tickets: £7 (Friends £6.50) except Thurs. : £5 and last Fri. & Sat. £9 (£8 Friends)

DATE: _____

NAME: _____ Membership no. _____

ADDRESS _____ PHONE: _____

Frankie says laugh

reviewed by Barrie Jerram

The first of three nights under the banner of Comedy@Bedford Place had the theme of improvised comedy, a difficult and dangerous art form. In the wrong hands it can prove to be disastrous and fall horribly flat.

Therefore it is pleasing to report that this bold attempt was a success albeit a qualified one.

The first half took its cue from television's "Whose Line Is It Anyway?" enabling the talented quartet of actors to enact scenes and provide ad lib jokes from situations/lines suggested by the audience. The results were hilarious.

All the actors, in turn, took on the role of Frankie, the chairman who announced each round and handed out the suggested information. Each did so by giving their Frankie a different persona, - an American dumb blonde; a loud, brash and over enthusiastic master of ceremonies; God's gift to women, men or animals and El Bandido, a lively creation from Paul Wilson complete with roving false moustache.

Rounds played included the incorporation of a given line within

a suggested scenario; a party hostess having to guess the unspoken quirk of her guests, characters from a Film Noir being played in various other film styles.

There was quick fire wit in the game where they dived in to boxes containing props and hats and came up with superb one-liners. Music played its part in the evening's proceedings. Lyrics had to be made up for a Hoedown and to fit differing song types on the nominated subject of Cheesy Feet!

The format changed after the interval when the cast, in the role of a quiz show panel and with the aid of audience participation, poked fun at game shows. The Price is Right; Blankety Blank and Family Fortunes were some of the targets.

However this segment, lacking tightness, came across as ragged with humour merely amusing as opposed to the belly aching laughter achieved before the interval. This may have been due to the actors having to interact with volunteers from the audience instead of with each other.

They moved away from the comfort zone of knowing each other's humorous way of thinking and into the unknown and unpredictable reactions of the volunteers.

Newcomer to the NVT, Janna Fox provided the female perspective to the proceedings with comedic skills that had a frenetic edge to them. One looks forward eagerly to seeing her again in May.

There were many fine comic creations from Darren Cockrill who also provided the musical accompaniment with his guitar.

In contrast to the serious dramatic skill that he showed in American Buffalo, Ben Pritchard displayed his considerable talent for making people laugh. He has that ability to generate humour effortlessly with just a facial expression or slight body movement.

He was matched in his zaniness by Paul Wilson whose performance had echoes of the lunacy of Spike Milligan.

All four are to be commended for providing an entertaining evening full of wit, a touch of vulgarity and plenty of camp fun. Also they must be praised for their bravery in taking on the challenge of improvised comedy.

Did you hear that? Have you seen this?

Sound and lighting workshop Monday 14th April 2008

I am sure you have! And this is due to our amazing sound and light team allowing us to be seen and heard on stage!

If you would like to have a look behind the scenes and see how sound and light are working their magic and even have a go at sound and light operation, then do come to our workshop, where

experienced members of the NVT will introduce you to the basics of sound and lighting operation, explain the NVT equipment and show you some of their magic.

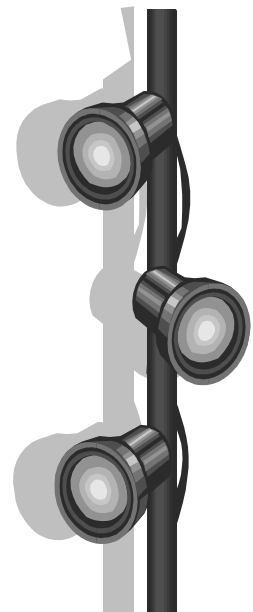
The workshop is on Monday the 14th April 2008 at 19:15 and numbers are limited.

To secure a place, please contact Clover via email at

clover.tucker
@newventure.org.uk or leave a message for her in the theatre. Please book early to avoid disappointment.

We are still looking for some help with lighting for the remaining performances this season and this could be your chance to get involved!

Ulrike Schilling
Production Manager



Letters to the editor

Dear Charles,

From a recent NVT audition notice:

"Intimate Encounters is an Art Treatment offered as an interactive installation performance that explores the concept of intimacy. Within supported encounters each person is treated to an individually tailored intimate performance, inviting the individual to reflect on this experience and redefine ideas of intimacy."

Will somebody translate this into everyday understandable English, please?

Barry Hewlett-Davies

To the Editor,

From the opening moments of the play to its inevitable tragic conclusion, NVT's production of 'Strangers' was a joy to watch. Stunningly evocative through its clever use of lighting and wonderfully thought out costumes, it was gripping and thought-provoking in a way great theatre should be.

The set was as revelation in its simplicity as an architect's blueprint contrasting beautifully with the use of colour in the costumes. These evoked a simpler age where things were easier to understand. The clever use of different ties meant each suit had subtle influences over the characters and their words. The women were shown 'maturing' as the play progressed again through the use of style and colour, for example, Mrs. Haines' final scene the use of a signature early fifties hat showed the passage of time as well as her maturing into a young married woman which was totally different from the stunning red suit worn in her carefree days as a mistress in the first act.

The acting was faultless and the direction must have been painstakingly good for every single part including the minor ones were well rounded and believable.

I nearly wept at the culmination of Act II, having had no sympathy for the protagonist at first. The whole play absorbed me into a gripping and thrilling conclusion that meant I had a totally great night out.

Thanks you cast and crew.

Bev Wells

Acting classes

A big thanks to Uli for 2008's first block of acting classes. Exploring visual and physical theatre, the classes were a huge success, with turnout at an all-time high.

The classes were a really interesting and useful exploration of how the body relates to the the-



atrical space, and an illuminating illustration of how text is just one component in the making of a piece of theatre.

A great start to the year, and a signal that Uli's production at the NVT in May, Intimate Encounters, will be one to catch.

Rob Forsyth

Calling all volunteers! 'NVT archive' needs your help

The theatre's archiving project will take place this season. This promises to be a fun and valuable activity - chronicling our highs and lows, great memories and stories, the glorious triumphs and unmitigated disasters.

We need your help!

Volunteers are needed to further develop the project's vision, drive it forward, and help deliver what should be great entertainment and a wonderful end to the season. It promises

to be social and creative, involving helping to design the production, and liaising with membership.

Exhibitions, audiovisual aids, performances, online content . . . all this offers an excellent opportunity to create an innovative and inventive exploration of the NVT and its glorious past!

Get in touch with Helen if you're interested.

Newventuread

ROOM TO RENT

Lovely big room in penthouse flat to rent. En-suite shower room, use of south-facing balcony; all mod cons and lift; secure parking space; very close to Hove Park; ideal for a single mature professional. £425 pcm inclusive. Call Denny Vans Agnew 01273 321564 for details

The Theatre Booty

Saturday 29th March 10am-2pm



Our very own Charity Shop

All proceeds to NVT Theatre funds

Free tea/coffee * Raffle * Fab Food * Bar

Take a break from your shopping and come and browse
ps. don't forget your wallet
(cash or cheques accepted - sorry no credit cards...)

or why not run a stall yourself?
for details contact Mike Stubbs on 07990 514949

Note: Anything you don't sell must be taken away on the day
so no rubbish please...

Poster designed by Andrew Brown

Fundraising progress

We're now over the £7,000 mark with more to come.

Do join us to have some fun at Theatre Booty on Saturday 29th March - there'll be something for everybody!

And, please adopt a brick for £5. You can have more than one!

A week in Provence

We've sold the week in the Provence house, and £200 has been added to club funds.

Many thanks to Gerry McCrudden for his generosity.