

Coming
2-9 October

'Of Mice and Men'
by
John Steinbeck

Directed by
Tim McQuillen-
Wright

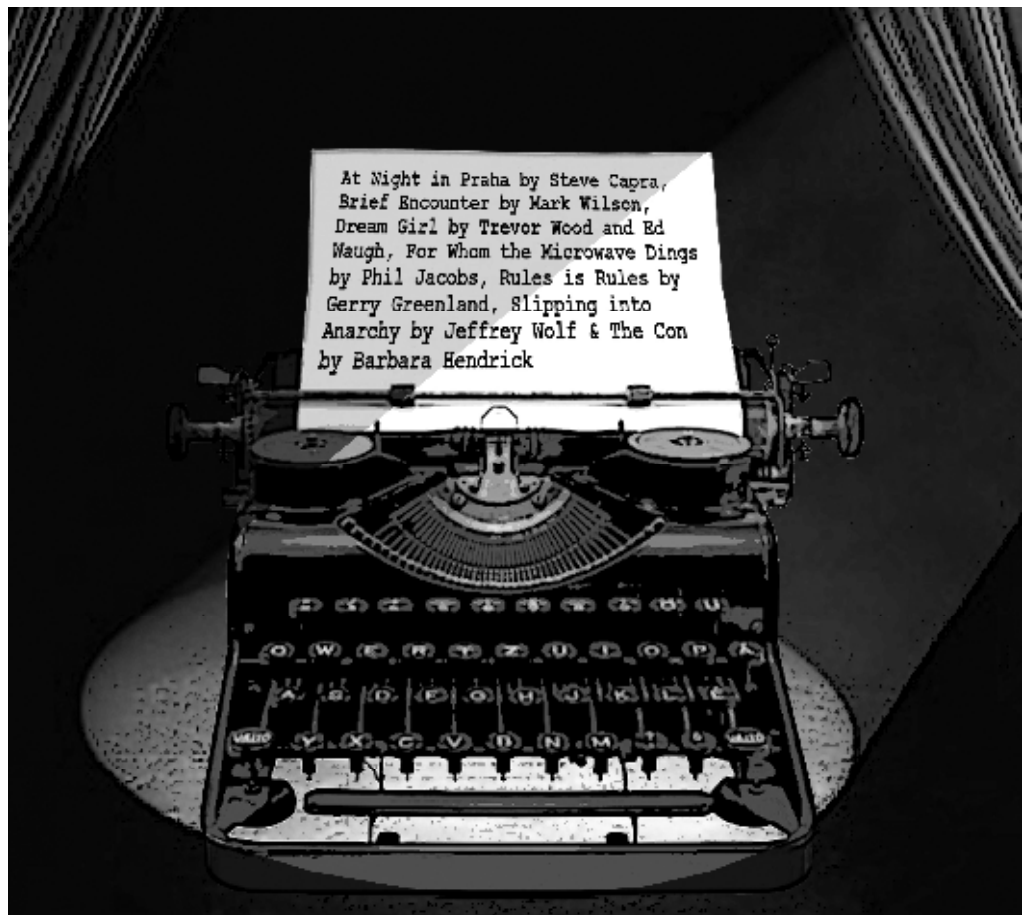
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NEW VENTURE
T H E A T R E

THEATRE
NEW WRITING
CLASSES

10 Minute Play Competition

10-17 July 2010



Over the past few months writers around the world have been submitting new and original 10-minute plays. Over 260 were received from all over the UK, America, Australia and many other countries. From these plays seven have been selected. These plays will now be produced and staged each night at the New Venture Theatre as our July production - 10 to 17 July.

But, our audiences have a part to play as well. Over the week of this production the audiences will be asked to vote for their favourite play. On the last night we will announce the overall winner, chosen by the vote of the audiences throughout the week. A great chance to see seven very different new short plays and say which you felt was the best.

The plays are:

DREAM GIRL by Trevor Wood and Ed Waugh - Directed by Steve Coulson

Dave is a lonely man who pretends to have a perfect girlfriend, except she is inflatable. But what does she feel about Dave? We find out when she comes to life.

RULES IS RULES by Gerry Greenland - Directed by Ken Potter

Freddie is unsure about carrying through a job. As they await their mark he asks Stan if there could be an exception, but is there an underlying reason for his questions?

Continued on page 2

THE CON by Barbara Hendrick -
Directed by Arwen Matthews

A Furniture dealer tries to persuade an elderly lady to part with the contents of her home for well under its real value. If she accepts, could she still have the last laugh?

BRIEF ENCOUNTER by Mark Wilson -
Directed by Andrew Allen

The man is having an affair and his wife has found out. He is late meeting his girlfriend at the cinema. What will happen to the affair?

AT NIGHT IN PRAHA by Steve Capra -
Directed by Leanne McKenzie

Set in 1940. Felice comes to Milena in need of papers for an elderly couple to flee the country. Melina could access these through unofficial means. Then she realises a mutual friend in Kafka and the meeting takes a new direction.

FOR WHOM THE MICROWAVE DINGS by Phil Jacobs -
Directed by Martin Hoskins

Thomas is trying to drown himself when Gerald comes along. His knowledge of regulations thwarts Thomas in his aims.

SLIPPING INTO ANARCHY by Jeffrey Wolf -
Directed by Colin Elmer

The outside world is reeling from hurricane Katrina; but Kip and his wife, Victoria, sit down to their morning coffee...

A bit of theatre at home

Many of us have loads of memories related to NVT and in many of those the Main Theatre, and I am certain the beautiful and cosy old seating plays a part or two.

Now is your chance to revive those memories and take a seat home! As part of our fundraising we are selling some of the old chairs from the Main Theatre for £25. Of course you can get a number of seats as a row to get a 'real' theatre feel. Or surprise a friend!

Come and have a look on Saturday 24 July 11 am-1 pm or Sunday 25 July 2pm-5pm and find your seat!

The seats will need to be picked up and assembled.

If you are interested, please get in touch with Ian Black or Ulrike Schilling.

Box Office Manager - Vacancy Filled

As you may remember a couple of newsletters ago I asked for there was anyone interested in taking over as Box Office Manager. The request worked and we have, not only a new Box Office Manager, but a new member as well. Natasha Borg is taking over the Box Office role from now and we all wish her well in this role, especially with all the interesting changes that are taking place in this area.

Natasha is looking for anyone interested in running Box Office for a performance here and there to contact her and join the team. So long as you know the basics of how to use a computer it's an interesting way to meet members and other audience members. Please contact Natasha for more details -

natasha.borg@newventure.org.uk

Next NVT newsletter - September

Final copy date: Monday 23 August

Printer: Thursday 2 September
(Editor away from 3 Sept.)

Stuffing & posting:
Thursday 16 September

Notes on next season from our Artistic Director

Artistic Development

After a successful Festival and a sell out of "A View from the Bridge" we are looking forward to an evening of new writing with our 10 minute play competition. 7 exciting plays are staged and the audience has the possibility to vote each night for their favourite!

In preparation for the next season we will be holding read-throughs and workshops over the summer and autumn for several of the new plays, in order to develop them. Check your newsletter, announcements at the theatre and online for dates and more information.

We are organising various workshops for actors, script based work, directors, backstage and technical areas as well as different events like we had last season.

Some dates for your diary:

Saturday 11 September

The season will kick off with a Social and I am still looking for acts to contribute to a cabaret style evening. If you would like to be part and present your talents and skills, please get in touch with me.

Saturday the 18 September

James Newton will lead a workshop for actors based on "Actioning" and breaking down a variety of scripts.

Saturday 9 October

We will have a "Movement for Actors" workshop on the 9th lead by Paul Smith, in which we will explore presence, posture and natural movement.

This will be followed by a comedy night and we are preparing another poetry evening and a short story evening, dates tbc.

Saturday 18 December

Just before Christmas, we will have another Social and any contribution is welcome. We are hoping to have another Fundraising event, ideally an auction, to progress the upstairs development.

As usual you will find more information in the upcoming newsletters, in the brochure and online.

Ulrike

Artistic Director

Julie Jepson

Friday July 23 8pm
at the NVT



Julie Jepson is an arresting and animated comedic presence. She mixes bubbly, conversation and wonderfully pithy stage patter with an array of comic voices whilst persuasively guiding the audience through her curious world view with a disarming charm.

Incorporating stories from Julie's adventures and observations of life in Brighton, the West Country and her native Rotherham in South Yorkshire, 'Being Julie Jepson' promises to be a fast paced, unpredictable hour of mirth and merriment.

'Intelligent stand up that is instantly engaging. Truly fabulous' BBC

'Exceptional. 5 stars' The Latest Magazine, Brighton

'Refreshing, animated and very funny. Julie Jepson is a rising star. See her now!' Chris Holliday, BBC Radio Manchester

'A natural' Chortle

From the Dark Comes Light

Over the summer 'dark' period we are hoping to undertake a number of refurbishment projects. Some you will see and some will be less obvious, but we anticipate they will add to the overall experience of our productions.

I realise this may sound a little 'cloak and dagger' and hopefully not 'smoke and mirrors'. But the lack of detail is because we are still waiting to receive some quotes and then we can work out the best use of the budget we have agreed for this summer. We are concentrating on the ground floor as was the wish of the members at the AGM last October.

Look out for the September newsletter when we will tell you what has been done over the summer. But if you are in the theatre during August for any workshops etc, please be aware that some areas may be closed off for safety reasons.

We will also be reviewing the new ticketing system, so your views would be appreciated. We have had three productions under the new system now and a few members have given us their comments, but it would be great to hear what you think of it, strong views or not, for or against, ways we could improve it; just let us know.

Ian Black

On Behalf of the Committee.

Fancy being on stage?

I am looking for a variety of acts for our Social at the beginning of 2010/2011 Season.

If you would like to contribute and be part of a cabaret style evening - anything goes: dance, sketches, music, monologues, stand up, whatever takes your fancy - get in touch with:

ulrike.schilling@newventure.org.uk

'A View From The Bridge'

reviewed by **Barrie Jerram**

Every so often a production comes along that stuns and takes your breath away. This production was one of them – the direction and the acting oozed quality.

The play centres on Eddie Carbone, a New York long-shoreman, who together with his wife Beatrice, has raised his orphaned niece Catherine. He finds it impossible to accept that she is no longer his "baby" and reacts to their relationship being threatened by her blossoming into womanhood. His obsession is unhealthy, leading to jealousy with the arrival of a young illegal immigrant, Rodolpho.

Although written in 1955 Arthur Miller's play felt fresh, retaining its power as a tremendous piece of dramatic theatre. Like Greek tragedy there was an air of inevitability to the unfolding events and the play's climatic and tragic ending. The similarity continued with the use of a Chorus – in this case a lawyer acting as the narrator. Jerry Lyne in this role was extremely convincing – his delivery and movements evoking a lifetime's courtroom experience. It was as though he was addressing a jury and not

just the audience.

The play is a skilful observation of relationships providing actors with challenging roles that were fully met throughout.

Bill Arundel's Eddie was spot on – a raging bull unable to acknowledge the reason behind his jealousy is his incestuous feelings for his niece. His watchful eyes were constantly conveying his obsession. As his neglected wife, Tessa Pointing gave a performance full of passion and heartbreak, torn between loyalty and abhorrence.

Catherine was played by Hannah Brain with a trusting innocence and sweetness that was replaced by a feisty defiance when Eddie does not agree to her marriage. What a part for an acting debut and her performance promised much for the future.

Jeff Smith and Nick Heanen played the two immigrant brothers, Marco and Rodolpho. Smith impressed with an understated performance – all still and quietness until he erupts towards the end of the play whilst Heanen was the opposite. A bubbly portrayal that was full of life

and hope, with an endearing softness in his wooing of Catherine. One tiny cavil though. Why, in a production that strove for realism to the extent that the pasta was eaten on stage, could he not be persuaded to dye his hair in order to live up to Rodolpho's nickname of "Blondie"?

Realism, the keynote of this production, was achieved through Mark Wilson's first rate direction and the excellent set design. Three acting areas were intermingled with the audience creating the effect that you forgot a play was being performed. You were made to feel that you were part of the family.

It is a sign of Wilson's reputation for quality productions that experienced NVT actors such as Ben Pritchard and Mark Green, along with others, were content to have walk-on parts. Their contributions, no matter how small, demonstrated the importance of every actor to the success of a faultless production.

Congratulations to all concerned with this outstanding production.

Barrie Jerram

Dear New Venture Theatre,

Several years ago my wife and I attended a performance of 'A View From The Bridge' at the National Theatre with Michael Gambon playing Eddie. It was magnificent.

Yesterday afternoon we attended your performance of 'A View From The Bridge' with Bill Arundel playing Eddie. It, too, was magnificent.

Congratulations to each and every single member of the company. It was a tremendously exciting, moving, action packed piece of theatre.

Well done! Good luck with all your future productions.

Una and David Aldridge

A read-through of “The Well” this Saturday afternoon 10 July

In preparation for one for our productions next season, we will have a read-through of "The Well" by Jonathan Brown at the NVT on Saturday 10th July 1-4pm. If you are interested, would like to read, get involved or just listen and give feedback, please do come along or get in touch with Jonathan - mail@jonathan-brown.co.uk.

Looking forward to seeing you there

Ulrike

Artistic Director

The Well

Still a work-in-progress, this is a fictional account of the digging of the Woodingdean Well, reputedly the world's deepest hand-dug well (at 1300 ft (ish)).

Jack's a Steiner, he digs and lines "the Warren" in Woodingdean. The conditions are foul, and paid men and cheap workhouse labour are used to dig it. In his free time, Jack sometimes watches the streetwalkers by the Clocktower in Town. He is trying to discover something of who he is, being the orphaned son of a whore, Betsy, who was found dead (drowned under the Chain Pier) when he was but 4 yrs old. Jack grew up, therefore, in the Brighton Dyke Road workhouse, and now finds himself digging for water to supply the new workhouse to be built at the top of Elm Grove. The irony does not escape him. He notices one streetwalker, Bella, partly as she is beautiful, and partly as her behaviour matches that he remembers his mother once exhibiting, namely "working" the upper echelons of the

town's social strata. They meet, and it soon transpires that his own misgivings about the order to "keep digging" from the Guardians of the town may be justified. On voicing his misgivings, Jack finds himself in growing danger from those, who oversee the project and don't wish to be questioned. We meet shady henchmen, bankers and middlemen. Jack has also, in the past, been apprentice to Mark Tap, the intuitive mentor/master who walks the length of the country restoring Britain's sacred wells and springs, which have been desecrated, poisoned, bricked up by institutions jealous of the old practices that compete for their ministry. We hear of ancient ways, underground practices and inhabitants that underpin and pre-date our known, mainstream, institutionalised / religious world.

As we become aware that Betsy's death was not accidental, and that Jack and Bella are in more danger than just that that their "professions" habitually attract, the play culminates in a violent clash between the forces of materialism and greed and those of Nature, love and spiritual reality.

Players:

I think the piece would work for about 8 players but this is not set. Ages and genders are not as important as your willingness to play anything and everything, to commit to rehearsals and workshops, (that will start in early Autumn (we have a LOT to do!)) and to be able to be physical, intimate, and able to listen to the ensemble! Fitness will also be an advantage, as there will be strong physicality, even some mild acrobatics. You also need to be willing to be playing the protagonist's best lines one moment through to being a silent gaping fish head in a boy's pocket the next. Gender boundaries will be blurred also.

Any players who can commit to rehearse during weekdays during the day, (and possibly into late nights) will be welcome, as we have a lot to do! Players who can use their voices for sounds and song also welcome.

Moving your actors around!

John Davies, a self-confessed "grumpy old man" contributed the following piece to a recent issue of Barn News, the Newsletter for Barn Theatre, Welwyn.

"It's terribly static, John", says (let's imagine) one of the backstage crew in a worried tone. Be warned: I'll strangle the next person who says that to me. It's usually the sort of remark made by someone whose only notion of directing consists of the idiotic belief that it's all about keeping the actors moving around. The results of this strange obsession are to be seen in too many amateur productions: you see actors continually shifting around in an aimless manner, and every time they do so you can hear in your head the director saying "This scene's a bit static, Fred - when the 'phone rings can you move down right of Elsie and give your next line from there?" And poor old Fred quietly does as he's told, not wanting to delay the rehearsal any more than he has to, and the result is like some weird tuneless square dance executed by creaking wooden ro-

bots, none of it with the slightest resemblance to anything that ever happens in the real world.

In the real world, I should point out to those not familiar with it, people often stay in one place for hours on end. This feature of real life can be made seriously comic, as for example in *The Royle Family*; or it can be grippingly dramatic, as in any number of theatrical court scenes, from *Cause Célèbre* to *Indecent Exposure*.

Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* has two characters in dustbins, another seated throughout in a chair, and only the fourth able to move at all. Beckett wrote at least three other plays in which all the actors are immobile throughout. And then there's Alan Bennett, whose TV series *Talking Heads* was inspired entirely by his desire to debunk the idea that a visually static play is inherently uninteresting.

And in the real world, when people do move it's nearly always because they're going to do something - to straighten a mirror, for example, or plump a cushion, or pour themselves a drink. If you

really do need to liven up a scene a bit, that kind of movement, especially if done while the actor is saying the line, and is saying the line, and is a bit distracted by the action from the line itself, will not only bring extra interest to the scene, it will make it look and sound more like real life (And let me dispose of another bit of theatrical folklore, that you should move before saying the line, or move after saying it, I can never remember which: either way it's nonsense, things are much more interesting when the actor is doing more than one thing at the same time.)

At times, let's face it. Even good plays can be a bit boring, perhaps because they should have been cut before performance, perhaps because the plot requires the author to get some vital but uninteresting bit of information across to the audience. In such cases, it's a pound to a penny that in rehearsal some idiot will say: "It's a bit static, isn't it?" The director's answer should always be a howl of derision, accompanied by a cuff to the offender's head. But try to restrain yourself from strangling them, the Barn's insurance company can't afford too much of that.

Letters

Dear Editor or indeed NVT committee or whomsoever this concerns.

I just read the first page of the latest (June) Newsletter and as a joining member I see that this closing season's NVT Awards are coming up for voting.

At the risk of seeming to be hoping to be "up there" next year, I wanted to note that as the new season will be including plenty of new writing, it seems it would be a good idea to include a new category for next year's awards, namely....Best New Writing!! This is especially close to my heart as, as an award-greedy theatre maker, my planned somewhat minimalist production will not have a look-in in many of the categories, such as costume, set, sound, and so will be hoping to make up for it in other areas. Just a thought (hope!). Looking forward to joining your ranks and marching to the new order and regulations, left, right!

Jonathan Brown.
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01273 479821

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