

Next Month

'The Rise and
Fall of Little
Voice'

By Jim Cartwright
Directed by Pat Boxall
31 March - 7 April

Box Office (24hr)
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01273 808353

NEW VENTURE
T H E A T R E

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'The Permanent Way'

By David Hare
Directed by Kirsty Elmer
18-25 February 2012



'I never believed in corruption before. I'm not talking about greased palms, or bribes. I'm talking about the idea of corruption, it being in everyone's interest - the politicians, Railtrack, Jarvis - to do nothing.'

Originally staged at the National Theatre in 2003 and directed by Max Stafford-Clark, the play was written and constructed by David Hare, following a series of interviews, conducted by actors, with real people involved in rail privatisation and the resulting train crashes. A powerful piece of verbatim theatre, it forms a collage of first-hand accounts, from survivors and the bereaved to Government ministers, combining to voice a compelling story of mismanagement.

I knew that one day I wanted to direct this play. It had lingered at the back of my mind since first discovering it a couple of years



Photo by Strat Mastoris

Left of Centre - Sheelagh Baker, Tobias Clay, Janet Hewlett Davies, Nik Hedges, Lyn Snowdon

Centre - Arabella Gibbins

Right of Centre - Warren Saunders, John Tolputt, Deborah Mead, Carl Boardman

ago, but I knew it wasn't going to be easy to stage. It was partly that challenge that was enticing. I have not seen the original production, but recently had the privilege of meeting Max Stafford-Clark to discuss his directorial approaches and processes and

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'Altered Egos'

By Bernadette Cremin
Directed by Mark Hewitt (LLL Productions)
1-3 March 2012



Photo © Robin James, 2011

Altered Egos is a one-woman show written and performed by award winning poet/performer Bernadette Cremin

Six taut monologues reveal the lives of six troubled women 'surviving in the margins'. Vulnerable characters - "undaunted in the face of everything life throws at them" - defined by love, loss, sex and mental and physical illness.

Previewed as work-in-progress at Brighton Fringe 2010, the show received a runner up Latest Award for Best Literature Performance.

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'The Permanent Way'

Continued from page 1

my own intentions for the play. It reaffirmed that what had really compelled me to direct this play were the people's stories and the desire to do them justice. This has also become of vital importance to the cast.

I have been blessed with a talented ensemble cast who have brought these characters to life. The rehearsal process has been a wonderful explorative journey, both intellectually and physically; I admire the cast's adventurousness, risk-taking and fantastic team spirit. There have been many, many laughs and a few tears as we have connected with the characters' stories and the shameful truth behind rail privatisation.

Design is central to the production, with set, sound, light and multi-media powerfully uniting to complement and comment on the actors' storytelling. I am hugely grateful to the design team for their creative and crucial input.

The play's relevance still resonates today with privatisation back on the Government agenda; whether it is the NHS bill, Academies or cutting the corners of Health and Safety. And as the recent prosecution of Network Rail, following the Grayrigg crash in 2007, has revealed, it will be corporate negligence not individual error that will be punished.

Despite the play's focus on train crashes and those affected by the 'balkanisation' of British Rail, it is funny and moving as well as political. It will be a thought-provoking experience, making us consider the real consequences of cost-cutting and the fervent pursuit of profit.

Please note - there is some strong language in this production.

Kirsty Elmer



'Altered Egos'

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www.bernadettecremin.co.uk /
www.leweslivelit.co.uk

Relating to this production a sound workshop will be offered, for more details and to book a space visit <http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/newventuretheatre>

£350 PRIZE MONEY TO BE WON! Sussex Playwrights' Club Playwriting Competition

Members of NVT may be interested in the annual **Sussex Playwrights' Club Playwriting Competition** (open to all), which is currently for a new 90-minute stage play with no more than six characters, on the theme of Past, Present and/or Future, and offering prize money of **£200, £100 and £50** plus a reading at a future SPC meeting. The entry fee is **£7**, the closing date is **July 31st** and plays must be entered anonymously. **Full details of the regulations and where to send the scripts** are given on the SPC website, www.sussexplaywrights.com

Since the 1960s, The Sussex Playwrights' Club has met once a month on a Sunday evening at NVT to read new plays by members, followed by a discussion intended to provide helpful feedback for the writer. NVT members are very welcome to join - the annual subscription is £12. (Should you wish to attend one of the sessions as a guest, the fee is £2.) The Club has recently made a £500 donation to the NVT's refurbishment fund and is once

again involved with the judging of the NVT/SPC Ten Minute Play Competition, wanting to build even closer links between us in future. Dates and details of our future meetings are on the SPC website.

Entirely separate from the SPC's sessions or activities, **Giles Cole** (a Committee member) has recently enjoyed critical success with **THE ART OF CONCEALMENT**, his two-act Brighton Fringe play about Terence Rattigan, which was staged in January at the Jermy Street Theatre, London. **The Independent** gave it 4 stars and said it was a 'richly insightful and deeply entertaining bio-drama'; **The Evening Standard** said 'there's deep pathos as we watch the older Rattigan tormented by his visions'; the **Daily Telegraph** called it 'excellent' and gave it 4 stars as did the **Daily Mail**, with 5 stars from the **Sunday Telegraph**. If you haven't seen Giles's play, keep an eye out for a future production!

Trevor Harvey
Joint Chair, SPC

Wizzle and Mince (definition: sexual allure)

Jim Cartwright's work is full of wonderful neologisms and we are offering you the opportunity to come perfectly equipped for our production of **The Rise and Fall of Little Voice** with an inspiring evening of video, acted excerpts, readings and discussion on Friday March 16th.

We will be joined for the evening by Sussex University expert Dr Bill McEvoy as we take a closer look at Cartwright's remarkable use of language, the power of memory, and the enduring literary significance of The North. In addition, all proceeds from the evening will go towards the Main Theatre restoration fund.

This is an opportunity not to be missed - limited tickets are available online now!

Ollie Donovan

To print or not to print, that is the question



Some of you have suggested that we could save money and keep up with progress by ceasing printing the monthly NVT newsletter, and instead, distributing it by email at no cost.

What do YOU think?

Please take a minute to tick your answer to the question:

Which would you prefer:

**Continue printing
the Newsletter**

or

**Distribute the Newsletter
by mail**

Tick
one

You can email nvtnewsletter@gmail.com saying "prefer printed newsletter" or "prefer emailed newsletter", or post your answer on this page to *Newsletter, New Venture Theatre, Bedford Place BN1 2PT*.

Charles Gilson, Newsletter Editor

Thoughts from a South Hall Chair

During the past month a number of changes have happened at the NVT; and some people think it's just same old, same old. . . .

You will be aware from last month's newsletter that we have been running a survey of all members to engage you in how you see the NVT developing in the coming months and years. I hope to give you some feedback on that next month.

Since the AGM in October we have had two people step down from their officer roles - is there something in the water? Linda Potter who has been our membership secretary for a number of years has decided it is time for a change. In recognition of the work she has put into this and other roles the committee agreed to offer Linda Life Membership.

We also appointed Scott Sheridan to the post of Fundraiser. Unfortunately, for personal reasons he has had to resign from this position. However, from the members meet in December a new member has joined and subsequently agreed to take on the role of Fundraising Coordinator. We welcome Judy Milton into the role and if anyone has fundraising idea or wants to get involved in particular projects please contact Judy.

On the subject of fundraising, some members may remember Anne Poupard who was an active member a number of years ago. Sadly Anne died some months ago and we have recently been advised that she left the NVT a legacy of £10,000, for which we are extremely grateful. We are looking for a way to use this money effectively in the theatre, in a form that will also be a fitting memorial to her memory.

Bye for now.

Ian

March 2012 newsletter

Copy deadline:	Monday 27 February
Printing:	Thursday 8 March
Stuffing & posting:	Saturday 17 March
Opening night:	Saturday 31 March

'Kvetch'

Directed by Steven O'Shea

Reviewed by Barry Hewlett-Davies

Vaudeville Punch and Judy

I sat through most of Kvetch with a great big grin on my face. And now I feel horribly guilty because almost everything you see and hear is appalling. It's one of those awful dreams where you say dreadful things to very important people – like your wife, your mother-in-law, your best friend and your company's best customer.

Berkoff's idea is so simple, you wonder nobody thought of it before.

Using a freeze-frame cinema technique, he stops the action every few moments for the actors to let us know what they are aching to say. And do. And then they go on and do it. And say it. With such grossness and violence, it is all appallingly funny.

The line "Let guilt go fuck itself" comes up several times as a hopeful catharsis and that seems to

work most of the time. Until the big surprise turns up, that is.

If your Yiddish is as shaky as mine, "kvetch" is anxiety carried to the ultimate where vast inescapable guilt usurps everything.

The kvetcher-in-chief is Frank, head of the household. Here, he is Andrew Allen, managing to look remarkably like Jim Carrey and with all his comic timing and clown face. The scene early on when he murders his mother-in-law by shooting, strangling, blowing up by high explosive and, apparently, decapitation, is one of the funniest things I've seen in ages.

Janice Jones, his stupid failure of a wife (so Frank believes) is compliant and belligerent by turns. Alistair Lock, Frank's suicidedly uncertain friend, shares some great comic moments with her at the supper party. In an amazing turnaround in the plot, he also turns

out to be unexpectedly accommodating in quite another direction. The play has even darker moments, believe it or not. They are still hilarious.

Liz Stapleton is mother-in-law, landed with some pretty disgusting table manners, poor soul, and dealing with them brilliantly. Cullann Smyth, the smart-ass businessman, is not quite the smooth operator he presents. No surprise there, then.

Steven O'Shea directs and finds the right idiom and pace from the start. He works with the aggression of a vaudeville Punch and Judy show and that's exactly what's needed.

The big surprise turns out to be that it doesn't work when you tell guilt to eff-off.

It makes you feel guilty.

COMING SOON

Friday 16 March

Wizzle and Mince

An inspiring evening of video, rehearsed readings, lecture and discussion - featuring local academic experts - as we take a closer look at Jim Cartwright and his work.

Saturday 31 March-Saturday 7 April

The Rise and Fall of Little Voice

By Jim Cartwright

Directed by Pat Boxall

Wonderfully funny, incredibly moving play tells the story of a shy, reclusive girl named Little Voice who stays locked in her bedroom perfecting astonishing impersonations of famous vocalists.

Saturday 5 May-Saturday 19 May

A Streetcar Named Desire

By Tennessee Williams

Directed by Mark Williams

Set in America's deep South, Tennessee Williams' classic tale tells a story of the struggle for human survival set against the corrosive forces of jealousy and despair.

Saturday 16 June-Saturday 23 June

Medea

By Euripides

Directed by Andrew Allen

Bits and Bobs from our Artistic Director

FINAL REMINDER!!!

Proposals for 65th season!

I am calling all directors to submit their proposals for next season as the deadline is fast approaching!

Proposal forms can be requested by email to

ulrike.schilling

@newventure.org.uk and the proposal deadline is 18 February 2012.

If you would like to have a chat about a play or production, just email me and we can arrange a meeting.

I look forward to hearing from you

Ulrike

Acting Class

6, 13, 20 and 27 February

Creative Play & Devised Theatre — Sarah Davies and Ulrike Schilling

Come and celebrate your inner child. Through play, games, some basic clowning techniques we'll open up our imaginations and ability to play like no one is watching in a safe, supportive and fun-filled environment. Explore the unknown, not taking oneself seriously, develop confidence and humour to cheer up dreary Monday nights in February. Beat the recession with laughter.

STANISLAVSKI - A Practical Approach

5, 12, 19 and 26 March

Steven O'Shea

Constantin Stanislavski's status as the pre-eminent authority in the realm of drama teaching is unassail-

able. However Stanislavski was not just an academic theorist ruminating on various abstract theories concerning the nature of performing. In addition to teaching and directing he was first and foremost an actor.

This is reflected in his writings concerning the approach to performing a role through an understanding of how to effectively analyse the action of a scene.

A straight-forward practical approach designed to fire the performer's individual and creative imagination.

Use of Sound in Theatre — workshop

Saturday 18 February
11am - 4pm

Theatre maker and director of live literature shows, Mark Hewitt, presents a one day workshop exploring the use of recorded sound and text. The session will be practical, and explorative and will allow participants to experiment with creating sound material that can be quickly manipulated on a laptop and used within the context of a production. The day is open to technicians, actors, directors, designers and writers who can all have an opportunity to contribute to the working process. The day will feature extracts from a new work in progress, *Altered Egos* by writer Bernadette Cremin, to show how simple techniques can be applied to great effect.

Bring written or found text, unusual music and sound effects, recordings, your own voice and your creativity. If you have any digital recording equipment feel free to bring it along.

Limited places available,

please book online

www.ticketsource.co.uk/newventuretheatre

Free for Members

An Actor's Journey - 6 week course — James Newton

19, 26 February, 4, 11, 18 and 25 March
Sundays 7pm-9:30pm

Using a very simple and effective process of units, objectives and actions we will create some powerful, truthful drama which will culminate in a performance at the NVT on Saturday 14 April 2012.

Over a period of 6 weeks we will break down the script into units and establish clear objectives and actions for the characters in the play. This is the same rehearsal process you will find up and down the country at professional theatres such as The Royal Court, Manchester Royal Exchange and the RSC.

Our work will be a series of scenes from a variety of playwrights and everyone taking part will be expected to perform on the date of the show.

The classes will be undertaken by James Newton (*All My Sons*, *Breaking The Code*, *American Buffalo* at NVT). James trained at The Royal Scottish Academy of Music & Drama and worked as an actor in TV, film and theatre for over 10 years. He now works as a full time director and writer.

Costs: £35 Members

Limited spaces available, please book online ***www.ticketsource.co.uk/newventuretheatre***

Audition M E D E A 16-23 June

Just a reminder that the MEDEA auditions are on Thursday 16 and Friday 17 February at 7pm and Sunday 19 February at 6pm at NVT. The detailed audition notice is available online ***http://www.newventure.org.uk/auditionitem.asp?id=40***

If you have any questions or want to book in for an audition, please email Andrew on ***limerence@uk2.net***

Letter to the Editor



Dear Editor,

A Good Way to Spend a Saturday Morning

At 11 am on a recent Saturday morning I joined a small group at the theatre to collate the NVT January newsletter and audition notices. I had volunteered to help Ian and Uli and it turned out to be a fun morning. There were 6 of us, given individual tasks and as well as stuffing the envelopes there was lively conversation. Coffee and chocolate biscuits were in good supply and the whole task was finished in 1½ hours.

If you can spare a bit of time on one of the Saturday mornings to help with this not very arduous task I am sure Ian would be delighted to hear from you. I can't guarantee there will always be chocolate biscuits though!

Next stuffing morning will be Saturday 17 March at NVT.

Anne Gilson

Our sponsors

Our sponsorship deal is £250 for a year's advertising on our website and in our brochure, newsletter and show programmes, plus 2 free tickets for each production in that year.

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