

Next Month

'Kvetch'

By Stephen Berkoff

Directed by  
Stephen O'Shea

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

# 'Talking Dog'

Devised by Daisy Dog Productions

Directed by Sarah Davies

10-17 December



Photo by Nick Schaefer

Back - Mark Green, L-R Frank Leon, Leanne Mackenzie

## 'What will survive of us is love.' Philip Larkin

Talking Dog is the journey of Eddy the dog who travels through his local woods to seek out Crow, the Angel of Death. Eddy's doggie sense informs him that his beloved owner, Mrs Wilson is soon to die. Having been her loyal companion for many years, he wants to be allowed to make the final journey with her.

Along the way Eddy recalls memories of those humans he has loved and lost, such as Mr Wilson and Marty their son, and of significant dogs he has known, in preparation to answer Crow's question. He is familiar with the myth of Brindle the Original Dog and knows that upon meeting Crow, he must answer its questions successfully. Only then will he stand a chance of succeeding in his wishes.

The audience will travel with Eddy through the forest and witness his memories onstage. In a world where only the animals can talk, the human characters are silent in full face mask. Dogs in the memories are played by puppets.

## The process

Talking Dog began with a general idea about exploring the memories of an elderly person swiftly followed by the title based on a joke a friend had told me. Not a great deal to go on! However I had a method and a way of collectively devising I wanted to put to the test.

From the outset it has been an exercise in faith in the work and each other, beginning as we did with just a title and a group of willing and brave performers. Initially I taught them the rudiments of full face mask usage exploring situations and actions they could perform in mask, some characters developed; two of which feature in the final piece.

Most performers rely heavily on facial expressions, gaze and voice; all these elements are removed with full-faced mask alongside much of one's sight. I guess that is why it is known to the French as the ultimate actor's medium, i.e. super challenging, but with fabulous outcomes focusing one on body language and rhythm.

*Continued on page 3, column 2*

# News and notes from our Artistic Director, Uli Schilling

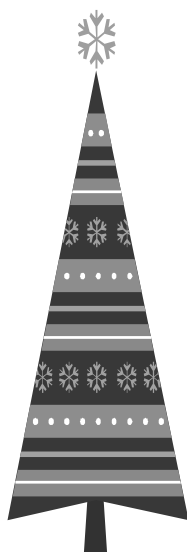
## Come and be merry!

---

On Sunday 18 December from 6 pm we are having our yearly Christmas Social! This year it is packed with some great entertainment, jolly fundraising and plenty of lovely people at the bar!

You might even get some amazing Christmas presents in the raffle or festive ideas for presents for loved ones.

Escape the pre Christmas stress and relax at the NVT!



## Acting Class

---

**21, 28 November,  
5 and 12 December**

**How to act with extraordinary skill, confidence and verve**

**Mark Wilson**

**9. 16. 23. 30 January**

**Light And Shade:  
Misery and Laughter on the stage**

**Andrew Allen**

## Calling all directors!

---

Even though the season 64 is still young, I am looking already for proposals for our 65th season.

As usual, anything goes and I am happy to discuss plays, projects and ideas with you.

If you are new to directing or have not a lot of directing experience at NVT, why not propose a one act or short play or even a rehearsed reading to get you started? There are many opportunities to present work within the season without working on a scheduled 1 week production. Proposal forms can be requested by email to **ulrike.schilling@newventure.org.uk** and the proposal deadline is 18th February 2012.

I look forward to hearing from you.

## Commemorative Book

---

As we approach sixty-five years of the New Venture Theatre, we are looking to compile a commemorative book celebrating the history of the group.

With that in mind, we are asking members past and present – and those who are still in contact with members long gone – for their memories and anecdotes from years gone by.

Who or what can we not possibly afford to leave out? In the first instance, please email Andrew Allen on **limerence@uk2.net**.

# NVT 65

## Some quotes from the Little Theatre Guild newsletter

---

"It is interesting to win an award for best comedy, as I thought I was writing a tragedy"

**Yasmina Reza,**  
*on accepting her award for Art*

"My father still reads the dictionary every day. He says that your life depends on your power to master words."

**Arthur Scargill** in 1981

"Bad weather is bad for the theatre.

Very good weather is bad for the theatre.

Before holidays, people are saving up. After holidays, they have no money left.

In times of national mourning people do not feel like theatre-going.

In times of national rejoicing the

Government provides great provisions free of tax.

There are only two really good days for the theatre - Christmas Day and Good Friday, on each of which the theatres are shut."

**Sir Alan Herbert**



The story which eventually arose is the result of weeks of playing imaginative games, creating invented landscapes, improvising, dressing up, the performers' responses to questioning, research tasks including interviewing dog owners, dance workshops, theatre trips, sharing and much laughter. It has been a truly inclusive project resulting in this collectively devised piece; a process not for the faint hearted and thankfully I've been blessed by a fabulous team – a daring cast, a wonderfully creative crew and a massively supportive entourage from within the NVT and beyond – all of which plays into the mix and hopefully will provide you with a magical evening of storytelling which may tug a little at your heart strings.

### **The cast**

Claire Armstrong (Bold Girls, Dancing at Lughnasa), Mark Green (The Steamie, The Well), Frank Leon (Four Play – NVT 'Best Newcomer' 2010-11) and Leanne McKenzie (The Steamie, The Well) have been fabulous to work with, marvellously open to regularly going outside their comfort zones and totally dedicated. All four of them are true creatives who perform, direct and write. Everyone has contributed to this piece in a multitude of ways. The story has grown from collective responses to exercises, through our conversations and dramatic explorations. This partly explains why we say Talking Dog is devised by 'Daisy Dog Productions'. It is also to honour our four-legged friend Daisy, our mascot and attendee at rehearsals. Serendipitously she's my guest for three months whilst her owner, my brother, is away in Australia. A long-haired Jack Russell with bags of personality, waggy tail and grumpy growls, at times we've turned to her for doggie moves and other times for reassuring strokes and warmth.

The nature of a devised piece in progress means there are regularly shifts and changes, so many thanks to all who have been so flexible. With reference to that, the work bears little resemblance to the photograph included here! Anyway I must away and press on for in the words of Andrew Marvell, 'At my back I always hear/Time's winged chariot hurrying near.'

Open your hearts and join us on Eddy's final journey.

**Sarah Davies, November 2011**

## **Feedback from the Annual General Meeting**

The evening of Wednesday 2 November saw our AGM for 2011. I would like to say a large group of members turned up at the theatre to discuss issues and agree the direction of the theatre for the forthcoming year; but I cannot.

The meeting was due to start at 7:30pm, half an hour late and following a number of phone calls we managed to achieve the required quorum of 20 members. At least we didn't have to abandon the meeting and re-arrange it.

After this the meeting ran smoothly and swiftly. The proposal was carried and a review of the membership structure was agreed for review at next years AGM. Mike Stubbs, who was stepping down from the committee and his role as Fundraiser was thanked and the meeting agreed to make him a Life Members for his services. The meeting welcomed Gaelle Petit as Treasurer, who had been co-opted into this role in September. The role of Fundraiser was taken on by a new member – Scott Sheridan – who has experience in this area and we welcome him also. Thanks were extended to those members who were pivotal to the summer development work. The plans for the refurbishment of the main theatre were agreed and work will continue over the forthcoming year, thanks to money that has been raised already.

In these harsh financial times we have fared surprisingly well. Our audience numbers are excellent and our membership has remained at the same level. However, we are an organisation that has constitutional requirements; if we fail here we can also endanger our integrity too. I know AGMs are not laugh a minute fun evenings, but they are only once a year. Please come along next year and keep the theatre going and don't forget you are the NVT.

I would like to thank those who come to the meeting for their support, without who we as an organisation would be in an awkward situation constitutionally. Details of the meeting will appear in the minutes, which will be circulated with the newsletter as soon as they are available.

**Ian Black - Chairman**

## 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.



**MAIL BOXES ETC.®**

- Print & Copy
- Office Services
- Stationery
- Packing & Shipping
- Packing Materials
- Post & Parcels

Tel: 01273 70 60 20 [www.mbebrighton.co.uk](http://www.mbebrighton.co.uk)  
 Email: [print@mbebrighton.co.uk](mailto:print@mbebrighton.co.uk) [www.mbebrighton.co.uk](http://www.mbebrighton.co.uk) 91 Western Road, Brighton, BN1 2NW



**DEEPDENE SCHOOL & NURSERY**

Nursery - 6 mths to 4 yrs  
 School - 4 yrs to 11 yrs

Traditional Caring Nursery & Primary Education

**Helping children become  
 confident, competent, considerate & courteous**

195 New Church Road, Hove BN3 4ED  
[www.deepdeneschool.com](http://www.deepdeneschool.com) Tel: 01273 418984



**JAY'S GARDEN SERVICES**

PERSONAL AND HOLISTIC APPROACH  
 PRIVATE AND COMMERCIAL GARDEN MAINTENANCE  
[jayearthworks@googlemail.com](mailto:jayearthworks@googlemail.com)  
 01273 304767  
 07713 247482

Healthy Food Shopping on the Internet



**HealthySupplies.co.uk**  
 Yummy snacks & tasty ingredients  
 Telephone: 3800 0272 536

### January 2012 newsletter

(\* ) Copy deadline: **Monday 19 December**  
 Printing: **Tuesday 3 January**  
 Stuffing & posting: **Thursday 5 January**

(\* *Lengthy schedule due to Christmas holidays*)

## MANAGEMENT: Who we are and how to reach us

NAME	ROLE	EMAIL	PHONE	MOBILE
Ian Black	Chairman	<a href="mailto:ian.black@newventure.org.uk">ian.black@newventure.org.uk</a>		
Jerry Lyne	Secretary			
Ulrike Schilling	Artistic Director	<a href="mailto:ulrike.schilling@newventure.org.uk">ulrike.schilling@newventure.org.uk</a>		
Gaelle Petit	Treasurer	<a href="mailto:gaelle.petit@newventure.org.uk">gaelle.petit@newventure.org.uk</a>		
Hannah Liebeskind	NVT Production Manager	<a href="mailto:hanah.liebeskind@newventure.org.uk">hanah.liebeskind@newventure.org.uk</a>		
Chris Pugh	Technical Manager	<a href="mailto:chris.pugh@newventure.org.uk">chris.pugh@newventure.org.uk</a>		
Hugh McDowall	Marketing & Publicity	<a href="mailto:hugh.mcdowall@newventure.org.uk">hugh.mcdowall@newventure.org.uk</a>		
Dan Walker	Marketing & Publicity (web)	<a href="mailto:dan.walker@newventure.org.uk">dan.walker@newventure.org.uk</a>		
Sarah Garbutt	Volunteer Liaison	<a href="mailto:volunteering@newventure.org.uk">volunteering@newventure.org.uk</a>		
Lou Preecy	NVT Front of House	<a href="mailto:frontofhouse@newventure.org.uk">frontofhouse@newventure.org.uk</a>		
Linda Potter	Membership Secretary			
Natasha Borg	Box Office	<a href="mailto:boxoffice@newventure.org.uk">boxoffice@newventure.org.uk</a>		
Charles Gilson	Newsletter Editor			
Pat Boxall	LTG Rep			
Scott Sheridan	Fundraising			