

Next month:  
**'IRON'**  
By Rona Monro  
Directed by  
Jerry Lyne  
19-26 November

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Other enquiries  
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NEW VENTURE  
T H E A T R E

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# 'Love Letters'

By A.R. Gurney  
Directed by Strat Mastoris  
22-29 October 2011



*"Dear Andy.*

*If I ever get another one of those drippy Xeroxed Christmas letters from you, I think I'll invite myself out to your ducky little house for dinner, and when you're all sitting there eating terribly healthy food and discussing terribly important things and generally congratulating yourselves on all your accomplishments, I think I'll stand up on my chair, and turn around, and moon the whole fucking family! "*

'Love Letters' is the story of a never-quite-fulfilled love affair between two upper class Americans, Andy and Melissa. It's told through a series of letters that the pair have exchanged throughout their lives, which the characters read out on stage. (that's Melissa above ...)  
The letters begin with both of them aged about seven, in 1937, and continue for the next fifty years. Sounds too simple? At first sight it is, but once you become involved in the progression of Andy and Melissa's lives as recorded in the letters, with all their hopes, assumptions and anxieties, the narrative is remarkably moving.

The American playwright A R Gurney wrote 'Love Letters' in 1988, specifically as a play where the words are read out from the script rather than being learnt by heart in extended rehearsal. It's popular

with actors, who can fit it into a busy schedule without a long commitment to the piece, but 'Love Letters' is much more than just a rehearsed reading. Reading the lines straight off the page produces a sense of freshness and discovery in the play's delivery, which would be lost with too much preparation. It's acutely observed and sometimes very funny.



Julie Jerome and Mike Stubbs

The characters are reviewing letters or postcards written decades before, and as they re-read words that they wrote long ago, a lot of forgotten emotions resurface. The pauses are often as important as the lines, and there are truly magical moments where someone recalls a long-lost event or person, and as they conjured into existence and seen again in the character's memory, we the audience see them too.

*Continued on page 2 column 1*

Mark your diary:

**NVT AGM**

7.30 pm 2 November 2011

Come and have your say!

We can make something truly special out of this material, and I am very fortunate to have two great actors to realise the characters for us at the NVT. Juliet Jerome plays Melissa as a born rebel and artist, and Mike Stubbs gives a thoughtful portrayal of Andy, looking back on a life governed (blighted?) by a sense of family responsibility and patrician duty.

As we all know, there is a great wealth of technical expertise at NVT, and a number of these talented people were keen to sign up to help stage 'Love Letters'. We are all looking forward to something rather unique.

'Love Letters' runs 22-29 October.

### **Strat Mastoris**

## **Acting Class**

24, 31 October, 7 & 14 November

These classes will help you bring the text to life by routing your acting in truth . . . And they'll be fun, too!

## **Woman in Mind - Look out for us on BBC1**

BBC One's flagship Arts strand Imagine, presented by Alan Yentob is currently in production on a documentary about the award-winning dramatist Sir Alan Ayckbourn, whose work, Woman In Mind, was presented at NVT in July this year.

In order to demonstrate the prolific nature of Ayckbourn's output, the producers intend to include, in the programme, a montage of photos and/or videos documenting productions of his work in 2011.

### **Pat Boxall**

# **NVT Awards 2010/2011**

At the New Season Launch Social on Saturday 17 September the annual NVT Awards event was held. Many thanks to all who voted and those who came along to an enjoyable evening at the theatre. Thanks are also due to Natasha Borg who created the awards this year.

Prior to the awards being made a special thank you was expressed to four people who had worked almost every day throughout August in getting the South Hall floor and Studio developments completed during the summer break. They are Tony Shoesmith, Richard Gamper, Chris Pugh and Michael Yates. Michael, our cleaner, is not even a member so he was also presented with an honorary Friends Membership.

And so to the main event of the evening, the NVT Awards. From the voting both prior to and during the evening the top three became the nominees and the following awards were made.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Nominations</b>	<b>Winner</b>
Greatest Contribution	Natasha Borg Richard Gamper Tony Shoesmith	<b>Natasha Borg</b>
Best Poster Design	Four Play The Well Woman In Mind	<b>Four Play</b>
Best Sound	The Steamie The Well Woman In Mind	<b>The Steamie</b>
Best Make-up	All My Sons connection unsecure:continue? The Steamie	<b>All My Sons</b>
Best Costume	All My Sons Four Play The Steamie	<b>Four Play</b>
Best Lighting	The Steamie The Well Woman In Mind	<b>The Well</b>
Best Set Design	Four Play Of Mice and Men The Steamie	<b>The Steamie</b>
Most Innovative Production	connection unsecure:continue? Four Play The Well	<b>The Well</b>
Most Effective Backstage Team	All My Sons Four Play Gaby Goes Global	<b>Four Play</b>
Best Newcomer	Caryl Buckley Frank Leon Hannah Liebeskind	<b>Frank Leon</b>
Best Actress	Lyn Fernee Sam Anderson Tessa Pointing	<b>Tessa Pointing</b>

*Continued next page*

# New Venture Titter Friday 4th November

Remember, remember the 4th of November: it's the latest sparkling collection of Brighton's hottest and brightest up and coming stand up talent appearing at the next NVT comedy night. Presented by Andrew Allen, prepare to go 'oooh', and 'aaah', and, most importantly, 'ha ha ha' with our carefully selected selection box of cracking good acts – and not a damp squib between them. Previous guests have included the fantastic Angela Barnes, who went on to win the BBC New Comedy Award 2011. We're not claiming the two facts are connected, we're just sayin'. Join us and ten top acts that will blow any fireworks party out of the water...

£6 (£5 members)



NVT Awards 2010/2011

Photo by Natasha Borg

## **NVT AWARDS 2010/2011**

*continued from page 2*

Best Actor	Andy Bell Steven O'Shea Tim Blissett	<b>Andy Bell</b>
Best Direction	All My Sons Speed The Plow Woman In Mind	<b>Woman In Mind</b>
Best Production	All My Sons The Steamie Woman In Mind	<b>All My Sons</b>

Look out for awards reminders through the season and we'll be back with the NVT Awards 2011/12 next year.

## Creative Writing

How many people have you waxed lyrical to about the merits of our celebrated theatre only to be met with the phrase 'Oh, there's a theatre there, I never even knew it existed!'

Well, it's happened to me. So when my company, Blue Edge ([www.blue-edge.co.uk](http://www.blue-edge.co.uk) for anyone that's interested), asked myself and two colleagues (Antonia Drake and George Hadley) to use our company time for a not-for-profit organisation, I felt NVT would be a worthy recipient.

Having decided that our aim would be to boost awareness of NVT to a wider Brighton audience we approached Pat Boxall to see if we could hijack *Woman In Mind* for our vehicle to do this.

Chatting through the themes we landed on an idea that we hoped would entice people to engage with us on a personal level while reinforcing the messaging of the play. Our final idea was to welcome women of Brighton to sit on our couch in Jubilee Square, chat to our 'psych cam' and tell us what was on their mind.

The results were great, from the rather perplexing details of soup for dinner to a real fear for where our world is heading in the wake of the News Corp scandal, I was really touched by the generosity of thought. Local businesses Ten Green Bottles and Sk:n on Jubilee Square even kindly donated prizes for the best videos which was an added bonus for chatting to us. You can view the videos on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Woman-in-Mind-Competition-brought-to-you-by-wwwblue-edgcock/132510263497232>.

Having raided Natasha Borg's meticulously kept box office records, I'm pleased to say that the theatre was consistently packed with a record-breaking 21% uplift in non-member tickets sales. I hope our efforts contributed to that figure and that we have laid down the gauntlet for new shows this season to up the anti and think up even more elaborate ways to get bums on seats.

**Hannah Liebeskind**

## 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.



**The Meeting Place Cafe**

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**November newsletter copy deadline:  
Monday 17 October  
Printing: Thursday 27 October  
Stuffing & posting: Thursday 3 November**

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Charles Gilson	Newsletter Editor			
Pat Boxall	LTG Rep			
Mike Stubbs	Fundraising			

*I apologize for leaving out Mike Stubbs from the list in the last newsletter. He will, of course, be Fundraiser until the AGM.*

*Charles Gilson, Newsletter Editor*