

# NEW VENTURE

T H E A T R E

COMING SOON | PARLOUR SONG by Jez Butterworth | directed by Claire Lewis | 15 - 30 May

## THE THRILL OF LOVE

by Amanda Whittington | directed by Pat Boxall | 24 April - 2 May



Emmie Spencer  
and Matthew  
Houghton

Photo by Strat  
Mastoris

*Yes, loving is a painful thrill,  
And not to love more painful still;  
But surely 'tis the worst of pain,  
To love and not be loved again.*  
(Thomas Moore)

On April 10th 1955 Ruth Ellis shot and killed her lover, David Blakeley, outside the Magdala Pub in Hampstead. Following a short trial she was hanged on July 13th, only three months after the crime and her execution provoked such controversy that it was instrumental in the abolition of the death penalty in this country just ten years later.

Much has been written about this case and there is an enduring sense of injustice because of Ruth's background of profound physical abuse, her mental state at the time and the fact that the jury was never told the identity or the motive of the person who gave her the fully loaded gun which became the murder weapon.

Amanda Whittington's play takes a fresh look at the woman behind the headlines and the events that drive her to murder.

I am extremely fortunate to have assembled a talented cast including Emmie Spencer in the central role; you will have seen her in various roles at NVT and, most recently, in 'Decade' last year. Joining Emmie are Emma Hutton ('The Winslow Boy' and 'Decade') and Matthew Houghton ('Strangers on a Train', 'Festen' and 'Mojo') who makes a very welcome return to the NVT. Completing the cast and appearing for the first time at NVT are Harriet Wakefield and Pamela Sian Evans.

We have an amazing creative team, superb support and the haunting music of Billie Holiday. So, I look forward to seeing you during the run for a night to remember!

**Pat Boxall**

What do you say when nine young women storm on to the Theatre Upstairs stage at NVT? "Don't Panic" would be a good bet. The NVT Youth Theatre gave us their end-of-project production, and it was loooooosely based on 'The Hitchhiker's Guide to The Galaxy'.

They couldn't call it that though - copyright law being pretty much the same right across the galaxy - so the group had workshopped the basic HG2TG ideas to devise their own version, and the show was introduced as 'Athena Dent meets Amanda Dent'.

Brilliant! Athena and Amanda, the two daughters of Arthur Dent - the hero, you'll remember, of the actual HG2TG. So we have A.D. and A.D. the children of A.D. and it was explained that the whole play takes place in a 'parallel parallel universe' - "It's like a parallel universe, but it's more than parallel, it's parallel parallel". Got that?

Every so often the action would break off so that we could be given an explanation of something, like 'The Guide' in HG2TG. In this show they had a large book with DON'T PANIC on the cover, and this became the central theme of the show.

There was loads of witty dialogue, occasionally delivered maybe just a little too fast, and as they read from the book the group acted out a lot of the material as physical theatre. At one point they were showing the boredom of everyday life, marching machine-like to work, like robots, locked into their mobile phones. Very visual - very memorable.

Then towards the end we had actual robots. More physical theatre - mechanical movements by the group, with the principal pair of robots wearing a metal colander and the wire frame of a lampshade to give them that necessary metallic appearance. Unforgettable!

A great performance - confident delivery of some very funny lines, with completely believable banter back and forth between the actors. They made good use of the space, too, moving around the large stage of the Theatre Upstairs, and managing to occupy every corner, keeping the audience's attention moving as we followed the action.

At the end, Youth Theatre leader Sarah Davies told us that the show - the

## NVT YOUTH THEATRE

### End of Term Performance



devising and writing as well as the rehearsals - had taken only eleven sessions. I can imagine them working under a huge sign... DON'T PANIC.

**Strat Mastoris**

*Photos by Strat Mastoris*

# ACTING CLASSES

**6 & 13 April**

**Ulrike Schilling**  
*Directing*

We will look at short scenes and various aspects of directing. Working with each other we will explore both sides, directing as well as being directed. If you are curious about directing and what is involved, this is a good way to have a go at it.

**20 & 27 April**

**Ulrike Schilling and Moog Gravett**  
*Physical work and stage combat*

In the first of these 2 sessions we will be working with each other, weight and choreography in preparation for session 2.

In session 2 we will look at some stage combat techniques and fight each other.

Please wear comfortable clothes.

**Are you a young person interested in acting training?**

**Perhaps you enjoy script writing or creating sketches?**

**Fancy learning about costume design or behind the scenes work?**

NVT is delighted to announce the second year of its Youth Theatre. NVT is open for ages 11–17 with weekly term-time 2 hour acting classes. Each term culminating in a showing and sharing of work at NVT.

This year we are expanding our public performance opportunities and shall be offering Arts Award Qualifications, as well as participation in a range of cultural events.

If you would like to come along or have further questions please send an email to [youththeatre@newventure.org.uk](mailto:youththeatre@newventure.org.uk)

Summer term starts 17th April, 4.30pm – 6.30pm every Friday until 10 July.

More information about the NVT can be found at [www.newventure.org.uk/youththeatre](http://www.newventure.org.uk/youththeatre)



**NVT SOCIAL EVENING**  
**Announcement of the New Season**

**Friday 17 April**  
**7pm**





# BENEFACTORS

directed by Tess Gill

review by Barry Hewlett-Davies

**M**ind Your Own Business.

This is a clever award-winning play by a clever writer. The two couples involved, early middle aged professionals, are the sort of people you'd do your damndest not to have anything to do with on holiday – over-earnest, socially aware to the point of nosiness, and oozing too much smooth success for the sake of everybody's peace of mind.

All of them are convinced the others need help sorting their lives. They don't, of course - and Michael Frayn's message is don't ask questions and don't offer rescue.

There is the architect and his anthropologist wife (Jeremy Crow and Carrie Lambe) and a journalist with political ambitions and a meek and mild spouse (Steven Adams and Jen Ley.) My reaction on meeting them was to rush out and do something outrageous like deliver leaflets for the communist party, such is their repellent smugness. When they reveal their truth, they turn out as vulnerable as anyone else. Thank goodness for that.

All four actors are comfortably well cast, all with an easy confidence on-stage which makes you trust them on sight. Jeremy Crow is a perfect study in self-containment which compliments Carrie Lambe's insistent common sense, the sort of woman who'd know exactly who to contact at the town hall if your house was taken over by Visigoths. The Steven Adams' character, by contrast, wants to be a devious schemer and doesn't quite manage it through being slightly too honest. His wife (Jen Ley) seems a woman positively killed by helpfulness.

Though a comedy, the play is not an easy laugh and the destructive element beneath is real. As a result the architect's high-rise flats don't get built, the journalist's political ambition comes to very little, the anthropologist's do-goodery collapses and the meek spouse ends up, well, meek. There is another resonance to the play not







1. Jeremy Crow, Carrie Lambe, Jen Ley & Steven Adams
2. Jen Ley & Carrie Lambe
3. Carrie Lambe & Steven Adams
4. Jeremy Crow & Jen Ley
5. Carrie Lambe, Jeremy Crow & Steven Adams
6. Steven Adams & Jen Ley

Photos by Strat Mastoris

pursued here, relevant to the current political situation about social housing. To emphasise this would have carried the play off in another direction, perhaps.

The show looks good and is particularly well lit. (The lighting is designed by Emma Shiel.) I did wonder about props. Could they have had wine in the bottle and glasses, and coffee in the jug and cups? And how about that magic phone which rings without being connected to anything?

This is Tess Gill's first production for the company, two hours of absorbing theatre, well worth seeing for the sheer good quality she creates.



# WHO DO YOU THINK WE WERE?

## NVT Archive Update



Photos from  
NVT's 'The  
Cactus Garden'  
February 1973

The Launch of the New Season Social on 17 April will also see the completion of the first phase of our Archives project, which has been in progress over the last year or so.

Some time ago I had noticed that there did not seem to be a definitive list or record of the many productions staged by the NVT since its founding in 1947 by A. Graham Phillips, and that the theatre had boxes and bags of photos and

memorabilia about the place which was mostly unmarked and starting to badly deteriorate. Unless something was done many of these records would have been lost to posterity, and it would have been a shame to lose this record of the creative efforts of our many talented predecessors - those actors, crew and directors on whose shoulders we stand.

So I started to drag all the stuff back to my flat and sort it out, and realised very quickly that if this project was going to have any chance of success, I would need the help of willing volunteers and those whose memory stretched back a few years. My merry band included; Sheelagh Baker, Pat Boxall, Alex Epps, Granville Williams, Tamsin Fraser, Strat Mastoris, Janet Hewlett Davies and Len Holloway. Others also delved into their own records and offered programmes and photos; they are a committed and enthusiastic bunch.

The first task was to try to create a list of all the productions. I calculate that there have been over 700, all of which are now chronologically listed. We then poured over the 4000 unmarked photographs trying to match them to our list. We have been remarkably successful in matching most to a production, though sadly a number of the early photographs may never be fully identified. We will however keep these secure and stored. The next task was to collect programmes and where possible press cutting and so on. It has been a great treat marrying photos, programmes and cuttings together - probably for the first time.

You may have seen some of these photos in recent editions of the newsletter, and we have also started to display some photos on the wall in the bar - a popular innovation that has attracted positive comments.

So from 17 April you will be able to see the fruits of this first stage of our efforts and view our 'production folders' of organised material, which will be moved into cabinets around the NVT building. It will be a work in progress, and in the long term it would be wonderful to be able to place the archive online. Donations to the archive are always welcome.

We hope this will be a fitting way to help mark the theatre's upcoming 70th Platinum Anniversary in 2017.

**Gerry McCrudden**



# CASTINGS

## The Arsonists | 19 - 27 June

Fires are becoming something of a problem in this town - but Biederman has it all under control. A respected member of the community with a loving wife and a flourishing business, he believes nothing can get to him. Being the great philanthrope, he wants to fulfill his civic duty and give shelter to two new house guests, and when they fill the attic with petrol drums he'll help them wire the fuse.... But who is fooling who?

The Arsonists has themes in common with Brecht, Dario Fo, and - with its narrating chorus of firemen - greek tragedy. Although with political undertones, its main focus is on human behaviour and the psychology of self-deception. It is pacey, surreal and fun. There will be fire!!

### Cast:

**Biedermann**  
**Babette**  
**Anna**  
**Schmitz**  
**Eisenring**  
**Doctor of Philosophy**  
**Chorus Leader**

**John Tolputt**  
**Cathy Carr**  
**Teresa Kuna**  
**Jonny Parlett**  
**James Macauley**  
**Mark Green**  
**James Harkness**

### Chorus Members & other characters:

**Claire Coull**  
**Fenia Giannopoulou**  
**Nick Lazar**  
**Igor Macukat**  
**Andy Osborn**

# NVT TICKET BOOKING INFORMATION

book online at [www.newventure.org.uk](http://www.newventure.org.uk) or by post using the form below

• Ticket prices: £9 (£8 members) Final Fri/Sat £10 (£9 members) First Fri/Tue £8 (£7 members) • Evening performances 7:45pm Sundays are Matinees only 2:30pm No performances on Mondays • Please note that access to the Theatre Upstairs is only possible by 4 flights of stairs, and therefore may not be suitable for those with mobility difficulties.

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 Cut along the line, and return your completed slip together with a cheque to: New Venture Theatre, Bedford Place, Brighton BN1 2PT

	date	member	standard	total cost
<b>'The Thrill of Love' by Amanda Whittington</b> 24 April 2015 - 02 May *Theatre Upstairs				
<b>'Parlour Song' by Jez Butterworth</b> 15 - 30 May Studio All tickets £10 (£9 members)				
<b>'The Arsonists' by Max Frisch</b> 19 - 27 June Studio				

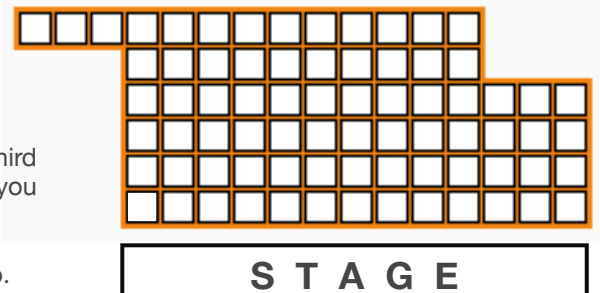
It is important you provide your name, phone number and address, and email address where possible

### \*THEATRE UPSTAIRS ALLOCATED SEATING

Allocated seating is available for productions taking place in the Theatre Upstairs.

Please mark your preferred seat(s) with 1's, and a second and third option with 2's and 3's, in case your first choice is unavailable. If you leave this blank, seats will be allocated for you.

Allocated seating remains unavailable for productions in the Studio.



# CONTACT US

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## OUR ANGELS

Why not become an Angel, Fallen Angel, Archangel or even Archangel Gabriel to help us support the current and future improvements to our theatre. Our Angels have proven to be generous in the assistance they give us. For further information please contact the Angels Coordinator Gerry McCrudden: gerrymccrudden@hotmail.com. If you are a UK tax payer your donation will also benefit from Gift Aid.

### We'd love to hear from you!

Please write in with any comments, articles or reviews of our productions and events to Natasha Borg, Newsletter Editor: newsletter@newventure.org.uk - or by post if you prefer.

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