

NEW VENTURE

T H E A T R E

COMING SOON | THE DEEP BLUE SEA by Terence Rattigan | directed by Pat Boxall | 17 - 25 March

BLOOD WEDDING

by Federico Lorca | directed by Chris Dangerfield | 17 - 22 February



Jamie Marchant & Ruby Phelan

Photo by Strat Mastoris

“To burn with desire and keep quiet about it is the greatest punishment we can bring on ourselves” -Federico Garcia Lorca

This is a tragedy about a young bride and two men fighting for her love, and the conflict between traditional expectations and forbidden love and the desire for revenge. In 1928, Federico García Lorca read a newspaper account of a wedding that ended in tragic circumstances. That wedding, in Nijar in the province of Almería, Spain, became the inspiration for this play. Lorca, a great lyric poet and theatre director, blends language, movement, colour, lighting and music to investigate subjects which fascinated him: desire, repression, ritual, vengeance, death, gender roles, and the constraints of the rural Spanish community.

This version by Ted Hughes fuses Lorca’s vision to his own, resulting in a powerful poetic text capturing the violence and pathos for an English-speaking audience.

Lorca draws on ‘duende’ (the energy of Flamenco) which he

calls ‘that mysterious power which everyone senses and no philosopher explains’. The play demands a great deal from its cast, crew and from its audience, but, in my opinion, lets that ‘duende’ permeate your soul and mind. I have set the play at its time and location of writing, an environment and moment in history which may seem out of step with 21st Century life. Lorca identified and struggled with the restraints of the Society he lived in, but look around us - aren’t forced marriages, domestic abuse, repression, social demands, unrequited love prevalent themes still today?

One of his other themes is nature- the moon, trees, the river, death. All these references suggesting in fact that there is something in human nature which is simply unavoidable.

To bring this earthy tale of love and vengeance to life, I am joined by a fabulous cast, with faces familiar and not so familiar at the NVT stage, and supported by a fantastic backstage crew, briefed to bring a slice of Andalusian village life to a cold and gloomy February week in Brighton. I am gratefully joined by Musical Director, Steve Hoar, fresh from the ‘Dick Barton’ production, who says: ‘Lorca knew the great Spanish composer Manuel de Falla and shared his love of cante jondo the ancient deep song of Andalucia. Deep song, with its irregular time signatures and haunting melodic lines, inspired my original compositions, along with the Palmas (hand clapping) rhythms integral to flamenco. Also, extracts from De Falla’s music, particularly his ballet ‘Love Bewitched’, tie this tragedy together’.

Chris Dangerfield



ROUND THE HORNE

The 50th Anniversary Tour

Colin Elmer, one of our renowned actors, is currently on a professional tour with the Apollo Theatre in 'Round The Horne', playing Kenneth Williams in a remake of this well-loved radio show which was hugely popular in the 60's. We urge you to go and see this hugely successful tour it before it closes. He is appearing at the Theatre Royal Brighton on 21 February and at the Capital Theatre Horsham on February 24 and 25.

NVT is delighted that Colin has gone on to turn professional and we all here wish him well and a long and successful career.

Jerry Lyne

PROPOSALS TO DIRECT

NVT is still accepting proposals to direct in the 2017/18 season. You can find a 'Proposal To Direct' form on the NVT website.

The closing date is Sunday 12 February 2017.

AN OLD BUILDING FOR A NEW VENTURE

By Len Goldman (Life member)

It once housed a youthful centre of learning;
Now it's a playhouse to which I'm often returning.
As a boy there I listened to all of my teachers,
Now its the habitat of quite different creatures.

Its where gifted and talented players perform,
Entertain us royally and keep our hearts warm.
They probe into our souls and stir up our feeling,
The essence of life most clearly revealing.

Yes, New Venture continues to pry into our souls,
Providing its thespians with challenging roles.
I shall always remember my school building of old
And rejoice that New Venture our hearts can enfold.

SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday 9 & Sunday 10 September

Once again, NVT will be taking part in the Heritage Open Day scheme, and will be offering tours of the building and fun activities exploring all aspects of life at NVT, and the opportunity to explore our seven decades theatrical history.



QUOTE CORNER

"The stage is a magic circle where only the most real things happen, a neutral territory outside the jurisdiction of Fate where stars may be crossed with impunity. A truer and more real place does not exist in all the universe."

- P.S. Baber, Cassie Draws the Universe

Write in with your favourite theatrical quote to newsletter@newventure.org.uk

The Homecoming sticks in your gullet. No-one is quite what they seem. No-one is telling the truth.

The play starts with Teddy returning to his working class family home in London after six years in the USA. He is happily married to Ruth and they have three wonderful children. He teaches philosophy at an Ivy League university.

You might think—for a moment—that this would be a simple tale of the prodigal son. Teddy elopes to the middle class and returns to overcome the family's resentments about his success. Ruth, the outsider, would face rejection until she rescues the elderly uncle through mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Such a tale might end in reconciliation over a knees-up with whisky and dance.

But this is a Harold Pinter play. All of this is upended.

Violence is only a heartbeat away. The family is a military junta of manipulation: physical, emotional and financial. Masculine domination is celebrated as glory. Feminine power is outnumbered but wicked. This is power by gender, class, age and rank. Pinter sets up the characters and lets them fire at each other.

From the start Teddy and Ruth don't look in love. Ruth wants the house key so she can walk the streets at midnight. The father, Max, dominates with violent threats but his grip on the walking stick becomes increasingly hesitant. The sadism and flirtation of Lenny, Teddy's brother, morphs into a business plan for prostitution. Joey, the younger brother at the bottom of the hierarchy, is beautifully callow but blurts into emotional maturity. And uncle Sam's subtle secrets twist him into heart failure.

The drama is accomplished through meticulous directing by Steven O'Shea with acting that precisely embodies Pinter's script. The transition in power balances and allegiances between characters is superbly signalled and timed: Teddy's lifeless academic body, Lenny's scheming smile, Ruth's legs uncrossed and crossed – and uncrossed.

By the end everything can be doubted: were Ruth and Teddy really married and did they have three children? Was Teddy even a professor? Lenny seems to trip up his brother's academic philosophy with only a tenth of the education. And what of Lenny's boasts

THE HOMECOMING

by Harold Pinter | directed by Steven O'Shea | review



of sexual attacks under brick arches and on the rubble of industrial waste?

We don't want adornment. So the set is a bluff front room with a standard lamp and drinks cabinet. We can almost see out the window. The lights are precise and sufficient. A piano tinkle between scenes is curt enough.



For today's audience the sparring characters conjure a highly specific working class existence. We would expect to find Max's family anywhere from White City to the East End. Curiously, however, 'The Homecoming' was written in Worthing during 1964. There can't have been a single fairy light on the pier.

It would be easy to over-do Pinter - to hector and fight into hysteria. It would be easy to underplay the subtleties. Instead this production kept us superbly, uncomfortably, unbalanced.

Mike Aiken



1. Bridgett Ane
Lawrence & James
Macauley
2. John Tolputt &
Culann Smyth
3. Bridgett Ane
Lawrence & Culann
Smyth
4. Scott Roberts &
James Macauley
5. Scott Roberts,
Chris Knight,
Bridgett Ane
Lawrence & Culann
Smyth

*Photos by Strat
Mastoris*

FAST FORWARD FLASHBACK

Saturday 4th March | 7pm - 12.30am



A dazzling 1950s themed evening of live music, entertainment and interactive fun in aid of Gladrags Community Costume Resource.

Come and experience NVT's South Hall and Studio Theatre in a whole new way! Dress up in your best 1950s outfit and prepare to have a great night out with live music and DJ; 1950s photo booth and impromptu performance; jive lesson and limbo competition! Add a touch of glamour in the pop-up vintage beauty salon; sip on a Hawaiian cocktail at the best-value bar in town, and be sure to snap up some of the fantastic prizes on offer at our mini auction!

If you want to come dressed up but don't have the costume of your dreams in your own wardrobe, come hire from our extensive range of vintage 50s outfits at the Gladrags store, at 40% discount.

Tickets are £15 or £12 concessions (including all NVT members!). Available via the NVT website and direct from Gladrags, on 01273 609184. 100% of the proceeds will go to Gladrags Community Costume Resource (Charity Reg. No. 1122704)

If you don't know about Gladrags already, it's where many of the costumes come from in NVT shows! Gladrags is a unique charity providing subsidised costume hire to amateur and fringe arts, community groups and schools. In addition we take the magic of costumes to groups and individuals who experience disadvantage, providing creative workshops and activities for young and old alike. You can find out more at: www.gladragscostumes.org.uk

"We had so much fun with props and costumes, and having my hair and make-up done, I felt so treated. It was so original, I can't wait for the next one as there's nothing else similar in Brighton." Chele Verrechie, FF Flashback 2015 (2nd to right)

Photos by Romain Ley

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

Diplomat turned director Gerry McCrudden talks about how theatre and the arts are an oft under-utilised tool for diplomacy



A rapt crowd enjoys a performance of Hamlet in the Jungle camp in Calais

Some weeks back I was talking to a mate of mine, an actor of some repute, on what it was like to take the Shakespeare's Globe production of Hamlet on a world tour. He said that what struck him in the nearly 200 countries and territories they visited was the connection and understanding which the many diverse audiences had of Shakespeare and his works – at differing levels of comprehension of course. From the gilded theatres of the Hapsburgs and a UN auditorium, to the 'jungle' in Calais and a refugee camp in Jordan, it was instructive to see the reach of this element of British culture and influence. A fine example I suppose of our soft power.

As diplomats serving overseas we have all seen and benefitted from local reactions to touring British Council funded theatre as well as commercially supported productions. They are in my view worth their weight in gold in making useful connections with target audiences and in turn opening up links and an understanding of the UK and what makes us tick. Though I am rather out of the loop now, I get the sense that these activities have fallen down the list of priorities. We are missing a trick.

But then I am a bit of a luvvy I suppose – a badge I wear with pride. I trod the boards from Saigon to Nairobi and New Delhi to New York. In my many postings I invariably tried to make some sort of connection with local creative types; to get another perspective of how a country works as well as its wrinkles.

Curtain raiser

In my experience we are much better at reaching out to a diverse range of contacts but it is always too easy to over

focus just on politicians, government officials and journalists. Those in the creative sphere always have an interesting insight into social structures in their countries as well as its political pulse. For me that in turn gave access to people of influence – a fortuitous marriage of my personal interest and professional agenda you might say.

I recall my first posting in early 1970s Saigon. I kicked off my local theatrical efforts as part of an English language initiative by giving readings from well regarded British playwrights. It did not go as planned. When the students in turn read selected pieces back to me I realised to my horror that they all did so in a broad Belfast accent. I had been too successful. I decided that the war torn Vietnamese had enough to cope with without having the burden of my dulcet long vowelled tones. But I met some great people. One of whom I am still in touch with.

Things improved somewhat as I moved via Mexico, to Pretoria, from Bahrain to Bridgetown and beyond. In Bridgetown I was the only European in the local West Indian theatre group and learned many things about Bajan and Caribbean culture and politics which would have otherwise evaded me. Similarly in New Delhi where I think my thespian interests opened many doors to the media. There was an amusing follow on from my Delhi activities. I had the joy of working for a fine High Commissioner who along with his wife shared my interest in the theatre.

When some years later they retired to France, I was invited over to play a resident of a mental facility who believed he was Napoleon. I was suitably attired as the Emperor complete with cocked hat and decorations. I played him with a mixture of atrocious French and Franglais in front of an erudite French audience which included a descendant of Talleyrand. Thankfully they laughed in the right places and got the joke.

Now that I am retired I have used my theatrical interests as an ideal way to get involved with the local creative scene in Brighton and Hove. I have met so many new people and quickly settled into my new life on the coast.

Enter stage left

I am currently directing Dick Barton and the Tango of Terror – a pastiche of Dick Barton, hero of the BBC's much loved 1940s wireless serial. It predates our Brexit convulsions but it could have been written for it. A ruthless Latin lothario has set his sights on the women of London. No gal is safe from his sultry seductions. Thank heavens that square-jawed British hero, Dick Barton, is on hand to save the dignity and diamonds of our dowagers and debutantes. Will the fancy footwork of this foreign fiend and the dreaded EFIL (Evil Foreigners in London) defeat Dick and his pals Jock and Snowy? Well, it keeps me out of mischief as the winter nights close in.

So if you have a local theatre group do go and join. After all there are many similarities in both professions. We both have our scripts or lines to take, invariably written by someone else. We deliver our lines with conviction to appreciative audiences who may not agree with us but who admire the style and aplomb with which we deliver our brief. We can feign joy, sadness, incredulity, anger, sorrow or compassion. The microphones are open and the lights upon us. We can enter stage left with a head start.

Article by Gerry McCrudden | Reproduced from Password: The Magazine For Members Of The FCO Association | <http://tinyurl.com/jn39rnf>

NVT ACTING CLASSES

Mondays 7:30 - 9:30 PM

Please arrive in good time to begin promptly at 7:30 PM

COST: £5 (NVT members £2.50)

In these drop in sessions you will be working with various teachers and cover acting techniques as well as theatre skills. We will be looking at audition techniques, working with text, movement, comedy and stage presence amongst other themes. The classes are mixed levels and open to anyone 18+, no previous experience needed. Attending the acting class is the best way to get involved with what we do and find out about auditions and productions. We encourage all our members as well as those who want to get involved in the theatre in anyway to come along.

To find out more, come along to a class or to request more information about a particular block of sessions, have a look at our website at www.newventure.org.uk, where you can sign up to our mailing list, or email: actingclass@newventure.org.uk.

NVT TICKET BOOKING INFORMATION

book online at 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.

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
'Blood Wedding' by Federico Lorca 17-25 February <i>Studio</i>				
'The Deep Blue Sea' by Terence Rattigan 17-25 March <i>*Theatre Upstairs</i>				
A double bill: 'Hughie' by Eugene O'Neill & 'The Real Inspector Hound' by Tom Stoppard 21-29 April <i>Studio</i>				

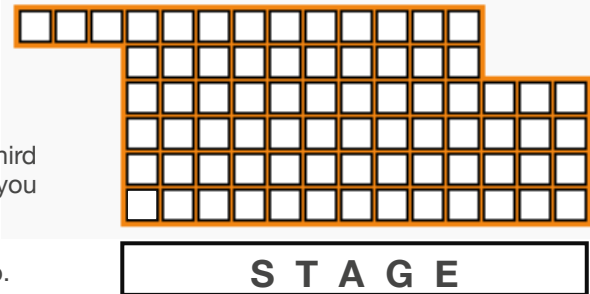
It is important you provide your name, phone number and address, and email address where possible

***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.



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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: angels@newventure.org.uk. If you are a UK tax payer your donation will also benefit from Gift Aid.

THE PEBBLE TRUST

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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