

# NEW VENTURE

T H E A T R E

COMING SOON | HUGHIE by Eugene O'Neill & THE REAL INSPECTOR HOUND by Tom Stoppard | 21 - 29 April

## THE DEEP BLUE SEA

by Terence Rattigan | directed by Pat Boxall | 17 - 25 March



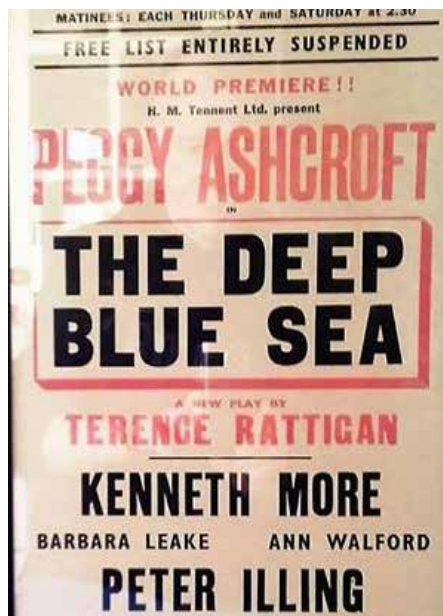
Emmie Spencer

Photo by Strat Mastoris, digital manipulation by Tamsin Mastoris

circumstances surrounding Rattigan's inspiration for this play; Rattigan described it as "a study of obsession and of the shame that a sensitive, clear-minded and strong-willed woman must feel when she discovers she has inside her a compulsion that seems too strong for her to resist". It is a beautifully written, achingly poignant play shot though with darkly ironic humour which has been complete joy to work on.

I am extremely fortunate to have assembled a very talented cast including Emmie Spencer in the central role; you will have seen her in various roles at NVT, most recently in 'Dick Barton and the Tango of Terror'. Joining Emmie and following their very successful pairing in 'The Clean House' are Jeremy Crow and Diane Robinson together with Ben Pritchard, last seen in 'Parlour Song'. I am delighted to welcome back Mark Lester who last appeared in 'Orphans' nearly 20 years ago! Completing the cast and making their debut appearances at NVT are Isabella McCarthy Sommerville, Neil Drew and Matthew Davies.

So here we are, 65 years later in Brighton again, presenting Rattigan's masterpiece at the NVT. We have an amazing creative team and superb support so I look forward to seeing you during the run when we hope to give you a night to remember!



*"When you're between any kind of devil and the deep blue sea, the deep blue sea sometimes looks very inviting."*

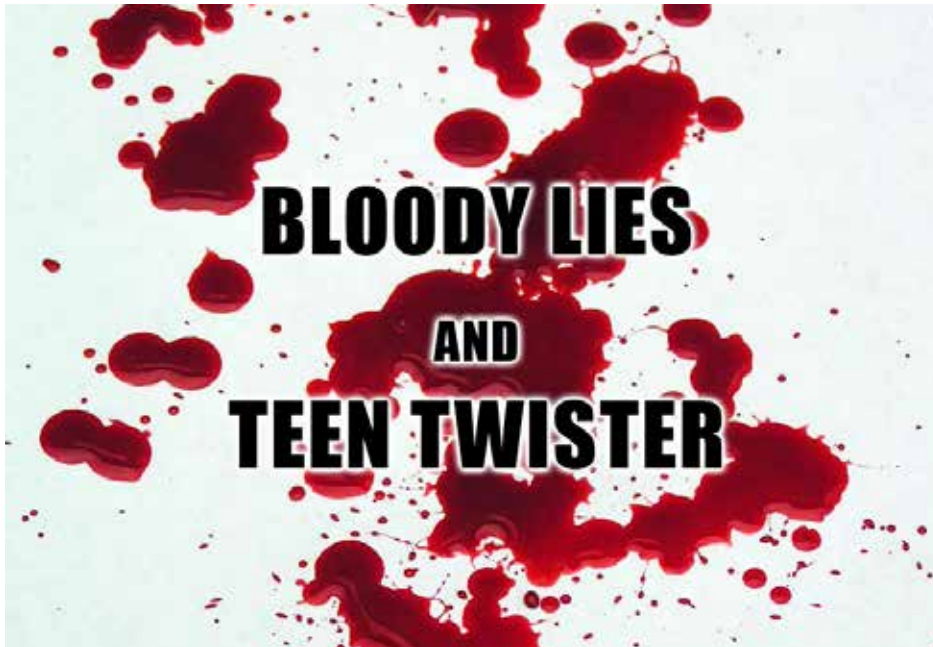
Widely regarded as Terence Rattigan's finest play, 'The Deep Blue Sea' opened on 6 March 1952 at the Duchesse Theatre London to rave reviews. I have recently discovered that the play premiered at The Theatre Royal Brighton on 4 February 1952 for a two week run, Peggy Ashcroft and Kenneth Moore in the roles of Hester and Freddie. Also in the cast was Raymond Francis playing Jackie Jackson. His widow Margaret and daughter, Caroline Johnson, are long standing supporters of the NVT.

Much has been written about the

Pat Boxall

# BLOODY LIES & TEEN TWISTER

Friday 31st March & Saturday 1st April 7.45pm



Since September NVYT have been exploring different ways of devising. Devising is a form of collective creation where one starts with a concept, image or stimulus of some kind and explores stories and ideas connected to it. It can be described as employing a funnel effect where initially you accept all suggestions and then filter them down, rejecting some ideas and refining

others until you end up with a script. It's like the opposite of picking a script up from the bookshelf, reading and analysing it then blocking it to create a show. Devising produces new work and has been a popular method used by contemporary theatre companies such as Frantic Assembly and Complicite who also work with writers in their process. As you can appreciate this

is a challenging process. The current NVYT group will be showing the results of their work on 31st March and 1st April, so come along to witness the fruits of their labour.

'**Bloody Lies**' is a tense crime drama featuring love, affairs of the heart, deceit, trauma and ultimately murder. James Long finds himself accused of bludgeoning to death the woman he has been having an affair with. Tormented by guilt and loss of memory has he been wrongly convicted? Can any of the characters be trusted?

'**Teen Twister**' is a light-hearted response to the question, 'what is it like being a teenager in 2017?' Witness their concerns, stereotypes, contemporary pressures all re-imagined with a sense of play and humour.

Following on from the inspiring visit by Keith Bartlett from 'Hamlet: The Globe on World Tour' we too wanted to use our creativity to help others. Therefore, we are hugely pleased to announce that all proceeds from NVYT ticket sales will go to Mary's Meals, the charity Keith brought to our attention, which helps to provide a nourishing daily meal in impoverished communities for youngsters attending school in countries not so well off as our own. Tickets are £6 and £4 for under 16's.

Several of our members have been with us for three years now and are coming up to a busy, stressful period of their young lives - their GCSEs! Therefore there will be a few spaces for keen, new talent to join our company from after Easter from Friday 28th April. For further information contact: [sarah.davies@newventure.org.uk](mailto:sarah.davies@newventure.org.uk)

## MICHAEL JOHN WILLIS

NVT Archangel

Mike and I were work colleagues; over the years our paths crossed many times and we developed a lasting friendship. He was always particularly interested in my involvement with the theatre and enjoyed attending many productions at NVT. His friends and I were devastated when he died suddenly in November 2015 and wanted to do something which would mean he would be remembered in perpetuity. We agreed to make him an NVT Archangel and I know his friends plan to see a production soon and look forward to seeing his name on the South Hall screen when they next visit the theatre.

*Pat Boxall*

## THANK YOU HERMIONE

Hermione Huxley specialises in helping me clearing up paint stores and she did so again recently...it was going to pot.

She's my no.1 little helper - small but stronger than she looks!

And those of you who use the paint store, I hope you enjoy it. Could you please put paint pots back on the shelves not the floor.

Any empty or nearly empty pots can be put in the rear courtyard for disposal.

Try to keep it tidy or Hermione will give you the brush off...

*Mike Stubbs*

Having blown in to the NVT on a windy Sunday afternoon, a near full house assembled in the main theatre with the now familiar staging of the opening scene in gentle commencement, with the Mother peeling her spuds in silence bar the crickets at work.

The opening scenes introduce us to a number of characters whose lives interconnect across three families in this rural Andalusian setting, and Lorca gives the audience immediately the context of this mother's loss of a murdered father and brother by the Felix clan. Sam Chittenden does well to portray her life remaining fixated on grief and anger at their deaths, whilst wanting to see her son, the Bridegroom (Marc Pinto) to find a wife and reinvigorate the family around their thriving vineyard.

The Mother's wonderful opening monologue of despair at past deeds sets the tone for latent violence and hints of foreboding despite the early scenes preparing our cast of families to be brought together and ostensibly celebrate the union with a Bride (Ruby Phelan) of some equal status in her Father's (David Balfe) land wealth, though suspiciously beyond the pale in geography and maternal lineage.

A knife is 'that snake in my kitchen', and the Mother's 'despair makes my eyes roar', yet the Mother is fixed in situ in this village and cannot countenance moving away with her son and daughter-in-law from this place of terrible memories as she needs to visit the two graves every day.

As well as the lyricism of Lorca lines, this production does well in its musical interludes; beginning with, in a neighbouring family, the Wife (Kasha Goodenough) and Mother-in-Law's (Amanda Harman) rendition of a 'sweet little rose' nursery rhyme to still the baby, whom we do worry may be traumatised in later life with the chorus talking of 'blood [...] flowing stronger than water / down by the river.'

The fine singing has to be reprised amidst the blustering of husband, Leonardo waking up the baby, and is equally accomplished in the song of the Servant (Ellie Mason) in preparing the wedding table feast under an effective lowered lattice canopy with foliage. The later musical selections (by Steve Hoar) of Spanish composer, Manuel de Falla, are redolent of the ignited passions of the closing scenes of act one and of dramatic tension when the plot unravels with the eloping of the

# BLOOD WEDDING

by Federico Lorca | directed by Chris Dangerfield | review



Bride with her former lover, Leonardo.

Throughout the play, in a fine performance by Jamie Marchant, Leonardo barely maintains control of his emotions of a deep love for the Bride, coupled with thinly concealed contempt for the family life with which he has tried to make do. We are not fooled when he retorts to his wife that he has no feelings any longer for the engaged girl despite being her boyfriend for three years 'before I left her'.

Lorca's critique of society's bourgeois values and constraining social codes, that operate to tame natural forces of deep human love and passion, is set up in the nice interplay of the Mother with the bride's Father when they discuss final wedding terms. It is as if they are weighing up livestock. Both parties in the forthcoming nuptials are deemed to be hard workers and so meritorious, and the Bride could even 'cut a rope with her teeth'.

While a good deal seems to have been struck between these families, talk in the fourth scene of 'endless pleasure' versus 'endless bitterness' nudge the audience towards expecting the latter to prevail. A key exchange between the Bride and Leonardo suggests that time and circumstances will be too strong forces for the rekindled love still felt between them.

The traditional wedding morning harking of 'let the bride awake' presages her running away during the post-wedding dancing, while Leonardo's 'go as a shooting star to your wedding' evokes that simmering mood of violence in the air between the three protagonist families.

It is with a combination of glee and knowingness that the bridegroom's mother declares, when the lovers have gone missing, that 'the bloody days are back'.

The final scenes are a sudden and fascinating register change by Lorca, adroitly managed by the Director (Chris Dangerfield) and his imaginative production team (Jezz Bowden et al). The short second act opens with a wonderful freeze frame of three, poetic woodcutters (Mark Green, Matt Mulvay and Cosmo Rana-lozzi) in front of branch shadows in the background on the walls. Menacing and malignant forces surrounding our ill-fated couple who futilely seek refuge in the far from nurturing woods.

A dark, Gothic fairy tale unfolds further with the Beggar Woman's (Heather Andrews) discomfiting cameo as a patchwork of rags coming to life in order to deliver further portents of doom for the fleeing couple; while a determined bridegroom embarks on 'the greatest hunt of them all', brooking no let up in the search.

A final message to the "star-crossed lovers" from the natural (other) world comes with the tuning in of the Moon



(Adam Kincaid), in a cross between a YouTube posting and a transmission from Holly in Red Dwarf (Norman Lovett version). Masterfully rendered, the Moon's monologue is a pleading to be let in from the cold sky and culminating in the death warrant of Leonardo in that 'tonight there'll be blood to warm my cheeks'.

The final scene of the conflicted lovers epitomises their indecisive history of attachment and separation, with Ruby and James enacting well their rapture for each other's sole company through flight from their families and a destined unhappy life with inferior partners. With their 'pledge of inseparability,' Leonardo says 'your beauty burns me' yet goes on to sacrifice himself for her sake, which we do not see on stage but after the scream is evoked gorgeously in a death rattle of red wool by the two knitting girls (Sarah Elliott and Joanna Crocker).

The girls go on to frame the all female final scene with their procession of a flower laden white cross to which the



mourning women (for Leonardo and the Bridegroom) prostrate themselves, as 'two men who were in love [with the same woman] killed each other' with a small knife.

There is a chanting of 'sweet nails, sweet cross, sweet name of Christ' as the play draws to a close. The last scene with the absence of men shows that while there is no reconciliation in mourning between the bride and deceased bridegroom's mother, neither do women seek to avenge as men do instead accepting a common plight of shared victimhood, in Lorca's eyes, of men's passions but also their uncontrollable and deadly emotions abetted by social mores of family honour and the sanctity of marriage rites.

It is not a play with much humour to bring out, bar a bawdy line on the "happy" couple's well-matched 'strong back' and 'wide hips'. The redeeming, or at least ameliorating, power of song in the midst of human strife fuelled by historical injustices is a comforting feature throughout.

But the audience is hypnotised by the poetic turns of phrase abounding from the poet-playwright Lorca's pen and kept entertained by a talented large cast, from the strong leads to the mini ensembles of girls and woodcutters, and also a chorus of wedding guests helping evoke well the marriage "celebration".

The Director has his work cut out, trying to match the right pitch and intensity for his main characters in the early scenes crafted by Lorca who wants the lyricism in his lines and underlying polemics to pierce the audience's emotions as much as through the actorly performance.

This is reinforced by the re-working of the translated play by Ted Hughes, who gives primacy to the power of language over dramatic representation. Maybe the Iberian passions could have just been turned up a notch or two in the first half of the play to compensate if this is not being too finicky towards such a formidable production with all the talents of its 37 on and back stage contributors on show.

**Jason Lever.**



1. Adam Kincaid (face of the moon) & Heather Andrews
2. Mark Green, Cosmo Rana-lozzi & Matt Mulvay
3. Marc Pinto & Sam Chittenden
4. Kasha Goodenough, Ellie Mason, Sam Chittenden, Ruby Phelan, Marc Pinto, David Balfe & Jamie Marchant
5. Sarah Elliott & Joanna Crocker
6. Sam Chittenden & David Balfe

*Photos by Strat Mastoris*

# TALES OF TODDOGRAPHY



Carol Todd's entertaining and enlightening talk about life in the world of Musical Theatre

## TALES OF TODDOGRAPHY 7th April 7.45pm | Theatre Upstairs

Carole started off her professional career at the age of seven, as Colin the boy-babe in 'Babes in the Woods' and went on to appear in 'The Nutcracker' at the Royal Elizabeth Hall at thirteen. By the age of twenty she had already worked a professional contract in Sydney and an extensive tour all over Italy. She then moved into the West End performing for six years in three musicals back to back. This experience led her to a lifetime in choreography and direction, mostly in the world of Musical Theatre - in which she still currently works.

The NVT are delighted to welcome Carole for an enlightening 45-minute talk about her life in the 'Biz', with enjoyable anecdotes from specific parts of her career backed by a slide-show presentation. Carole will be available in the bar

afterwards for an open Q&A session to all audience members that wish to stay around and chat with her.

Carole is kindly doing this evening's presentation for free for us, but has asked audience members to make discretionary donations to the 'Guide Dogs for the Blind' charity in the collection bucket that will be located in the bar on the night.

Doors open at 7pm

## COMING SOON A Double Bill Of One Act Plays

**Hughie** by Eugene O'Neill | directed by Dan Walker

New York is on the cusp of the Great Depression; in its seedy underbelly, small-time gambler Erie is crawling back into his hotel after days of drunken mourning. The Night-Clerk would rather be somewhere - and someone - else, but to his horror he finds that Erie has many tales to tell about his lost buddy. 'Hughie' is Eugene O'Neill's completely honest exploration of a friendship between two people, one of whom is

an inveterate liar, and the struggle to make new connections when we feel alone.

**The Real Inspector Hound** by Tom Stoppard | directed by Mary Allen

The Real Inspector Hound is a wildly funny, surreal comedy. The action is set in a theatre, where it's the first night of an Agatha Christie-style whodunit. The play is watched by two critics, who

make ponderous - and very funny - pronouncements about it. A character is killed. Inspector Hound comes onstage to try and solve the mystery. Gradually the critics are drawn into the action, with catastrophic consequences. Only at the end do we learn who is the Real Inspector Hound.

# 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](http://www.newventure.org.uk), where you can sign up to our mailing list, or email: [actingclass@newventure.org.uk](mailto:actingclass@newventure.org.uk).

# 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 Deep Blue Sea' by Terence Rattigan</b> 17-25 March *Theatre Upstairs				
<b>A double bill: 'Hughie' by Eugene O'Neill &amp; 'The Real Inspector Hound' by Tom Stoppard</b> 21-29 April Studio				
<b>'Lulu' by Frank Wedekind</b> 19-27 May *Theatre Upstairs				

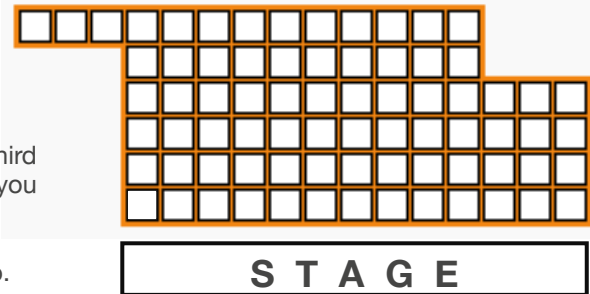
**It is important you provide your name, phone number and address, and email address where possible**

**\*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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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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