

NEW VENTURE THEATRE

newsletter
february 2022

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Bedford Place, Brighton BN1 2PT

Preview

18–26 February 2022

THE HERD

by Rory Kinnear

directed by Charly Sommers

Who was it that said, “Family isn’t only about blood – it’s about sweat and tears, too.”? It’s the kind of quip you might dismiss if you see it on a greeting card. If you see it while reading Rory Kinnear’s *The Herd*, though, it might make you pause...

I say that because *The Herd* is one of those plays that resonates with different people in different ways – and at different times. If I’d read this play ten years ago, I might not have ‘got it’. Now I’m raising three kids, however – one of whom sees the world from a place on the autistic spectrum – I look for light in shade just as much as I check for monsters in shadows. Even so, it’s hard to imagine what the family in *The Herd* has been through...



The play revolves around Andy: Andy has been intellectually and physically disabled since birth and has a mental age of ten months. As he turns 21, his mum – Carol – arranges a small gathering to celebrate. While the guest of honour is

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- October 1-9** **Di and Viv and Rose**
Studio *by Amelia Bullmore • directed by Claire Lewis*
- December 10-18** **Bag Lady's Christmas Present**
Studio *by Brenda Bishop, Sarah Davies & David Tutton*
- January 21-29** **The Lieutenant of Inishmore**
Main Theatre *by Martin McDonagh • directed by Steven O'Shea*
- February 18-26** **The Herd**
Main Theatre *by Rory Kinnear • directed by Charly Sommers*
- March 18-26** **Unsanctioned (double bill)**
Studio *by Sam Chittenden • directed by Sam Chittenden*
- Measure 2 Measure (double bill)**
 by Shakespeare • adapted by Sam Chittenden
- April 22-30** **Hangmen**
Main Theatre *by Martin McDonagh • directed by Pat Boxall*
- May 13-21** **Cock**
Studio *by Mike Bartlett • directed by Richard Lindfield*
- May 27-June 4** **Consent**
Main Theatre *by Nina Raine • directed by Scott Roberts*
- June 17-25** **Turpin**
Studio *by Barry Purchase • directed by Mark Lester*
- July 15-23** **Communicating Doors**
Main Theatre *by Alan Ayckbourn • directed by Ian Black*

THE HERD

brought from his nursing home to the house, we meet the rest of the family that's pulled together and fallen apart around him.

The script of *The Herd* offers extraordinary contradictions: it's raw and it's warm; it's funny and it's brutal. On occasion, I've read a line while heading to rehearsal and thought little of it. Then I hear the actor say it and it completely changes how I feel. Just as in real life, words that harbour little meaning to one person can be hiding hope, horror or heartbreak for someone else. This is painfully true with *The Herd's* sensitive subject matter...

The Herd is the second play I've directed at the NVT and, as with the first – the 2018 production of Dennis Kelly's *Orphans* – I'm extremely grateful to be collaborating with a universally brilliant cast and crew. Our initial attempts to stage *The Herd*, back at the start of 2020, were completely derailed by the first lockdown... So it's both an enormous pleasure and a huge relief to finally be able to share this very special play with you.

Charly Sommers

The Herd is an amateur production by arrangement with Nick Hern Books



THE LIEUTENANT OF INISHMORE

by Martin McDonagh

directed by Steven O'Shea

Horror and comedy are, on the face of it, an unlikely combination. But the recipe has a long tradition in the theatre. Seen up on stage, situations of terror and loathing, and those of clownish stupidity, tap into a similar part of our mind. Martin McDonagh's *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* is an extreme and brilliant example of this. The NVT production fully embraced it, along with the other unsettling qualities that distinguish all five of the Irish plays that McDonagh wrote in the 1990s. The result was superb.

We found ourselves in a world of sublime daftness, with characters every bit as unconsciously funny – even outright unhinged – as in the parish of *Father Ted* (another wacky creation from the 1990s). At the same time, this is also a world where extremely violent acts are perpetrated as an almost everyday

activity. Mutilation and murder abound, dismemberment is part of the territory. Not even cats are safe. This the world of Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs* (or a *Reservoir Cats* version).

The mainspring of the piece is Padraic, excellently played by Nikolas Balfe. He skilfully convinced us of a character flipping rapidly between psychopathic extremes and moments of empathy (especially towards cats) and even kindness. His would-be nemesis, Christy, in a fine performance by Culann Smyth, showed us a more 'mainstream' form of extremity, from the official side of the terrorist-gangster-splinter-group world. But his actual nemesis was Mairead, a sweet young colleen and a dab hand at putting out the eyes of cows, at long range, with her air rifle. Susanna Elliot did well in portraying this disturbed

BELOW Nikolas Balfe and Andy Hutchinson.
(Photos by Strat Mastoris)



THE LIEUTENANT OF INISHMORE

tomboy waif and her unfolding romance with Padraic – sadly doomed (very bloodily) on account of a cat, of course.

John Everett and Joseph Gavin were a convincing pair of sidekicks in Christy's assassination squad, with their own quirky philosophical take on life in a rag-tag terrorist group. Mark Lester (as Padraic's feckless dad) and Ben Grafton (his unfortunate neighbour) succeeded in keeping up the comic undertow - suffering panic and indignity as they haplessly try to get out of the peril they're caught

up in (all because of a cat). And Andy Hutchinson did a fine job as James, a transgressor whom we see being tortured by Padraic early in the play – an unlikely source of comedy indeed!

BELOW Culann Smyth, Joseph Gavin and John Everett.

RIGHT (back, left to right) Nikolas Balfe and Susanna Elliot (front) Mark Lester and Ben Grafton.



The production was masterfully brought together by director Steven O'Shea. The technical demands are daunting and detailed, but they were all handled well. A set that served very effectively for the 'core' cottage interior, but also allowed other locations to be suggested along a shallow forestage area - and with skilful lighting to separate the settings. Costume and make-up (including the bloody stuff) that were just right. Smooth fight moves and use of multiple firearms. Some spectacular special effects. And a very weird and wonderful success with props – although dead cats and dismembered limbs do pose a big challenge when an audience is so close to the action! The attention to authentic accent (here so important to get right) was meticulous, expertly coached. And the stage management team had a very busy time, covering a huge number of demands but doing it

slickly and almost invisibly. It's a pity that the particular demands of the final scene (the transformation of cottage to abattoir) necessitated an interval, as this inevitably affected the ghastly momentum of the action. But it's hard to see how this could be overcome on an open stage, except perhaps in a large professional playhouse.

This is a very ambitious play to take on, with all sorts of 'bars' set very high. I saw it at the opening performance and was delighted by how wonderfully shocking – and funny – this accomplished production succeeded in being.

Bob Ryder

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
February		1	2	3	4 NVYT	5	6 Sussex Playwrights 6pm
	7	8	9	10	11 NVYT	12	13
	14	15	16	17	18 THE HERD 7.45pm	19 THE HERD 7.45pm	20 THE HERD 2.30pm
	21	22 THE HERD 7.45pm	23 THE HERD 7.45pm	24 THE HERD 7.45pm	25 THE HERD 7.45pm NVYT	26 THE HERD 7.45pm	27
	28						

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
March		1	2	3	4 NVYT	5	6 Sussex Playwrights 6pm
	7 Acting class 7:30pm	8	9	10	11 NVYT	12 Turpin auditions	13 Turpin auditions
	14 Acting class 7:30pm	15	16	17	18 NVYT	19 UNSANCTIONED / MEASURE 2 MEASURE 7.45pm	20 UNSANCTIONED / MEASURE 2 MEASURE 2:30pm
	21 Acting class 7:30pm	22 UNSANCTIONED / MEASURE 2 MEASURE 7.45pm	23 UNSANCTIONED / MEASURE 2 MEASURE 7.45pm	24 UNSANCTIONED / MEASURE 2 MEASURE 7.45pm	25 UNSANCTIONED / MEASURE 2 MEASURE 7.45pm / NVYT	26 UNSANCTIONED / MEASURE 2 MEASURE 7.45pm	27 Communicating Doors auditions
	28 Acting class 7:30pm Communicating Doors auditions	29 Communicating Doors auditions	30	31			

UNSANCTIONED / MEASURE 2 MEASURE

directed by Sam Chittenden

UNSANCTIONED

WRITTEN BY **SAM CHITTENDEN**

In a world ravaged by climate change a strange young woman turns up at the remote home of a reservoir keeper and his wife, sparking temptation and betrayal.

MEASURE 2 MEASURE

ADAPTED BY **SAM CHITTENDEN**

BASED ON THE PLAY BY **SHAKESPEARE**

A stripped down, one-act version of Measure for Measure, focusing on the seduction at the heart of the play

Audition Notice

COMMUNICATING DOORS

by Alan Ayckbourn | directed by Ian Black

DATES

PERFORMANCES 15–23 July 2022

AUDITIONS at the NVT, 27 March, 1pm; 28 and 29 March, 7pm

RECALLS at the NVT, 1 April, 7pm

ACTORS REQUIRED FOR FOLLOWING ROLES

REECE 30 & 70; wealthy, slightly seedy businessman. Role may be split

JESSICA 25 & 45; Reece's first wife

RUELLA 45; Reece's second wife, no age changes, a central figure

JULIAN 45 & 65; Reece's Business associate and friend

POOPAY (PHOEBE) 33; a 'specialist sexual consultant', no age changes, a central figure

HAROLD 35 & 55; hotel security/detective

Poopay, a Specialist Sexual Consultant, arrives at a hotel for an appointment. This is no ordinary booking and one that will change her life and that of others who have previously died 'accidentally'.

This play is set in a hotel room in London. The location stays the same, but the time changes; thanks to the use of the

communicating door that enables travel back 20 years. Due to the time-travel aspects of the play most of the cast will need to change their age during the performance. The action is mainly led by the female characters in this ensemble piece.

Contact ian.black@newventure.org.uk or

TURPIN

by Barry Purchase

directed by Mark Lester

DATES

PERFORMANCES 17–25 June 2022

AUDITIONS at the NVT, Sat 12 March, 10am–1pm; Sun 13 March, 10am–1pm

RECALLS at the NVT, Sat 19 March, 10am–1pm

REHEARSALS will be held on two weekday evenings, and one weekend day.

ACTORS REQUIRED FOR FOLLOWING ROLES

RICHARD TURPIN The playing age for all characters is from mid-20s and up. Some doubling up of roles may be required - this will be decided following the auditions, so please be prepared to read for any role.

JACK

PAMPHLETEER

TOM KING

GEORGE

TAILOR

JAILER

MARY JOHNSON

MAN

PRIEST

THE EARL

WOMAN

BOB WEAVER

THE VOUNTESSA

To book auditions and enquire about audition pieces, please contact the director Mark Lester on mark.lester70@hotmail.com

When you have confirmed your intention to audition, Mark will send you a copy of the play, which he would like you to have read prior to your audition. This an open audition, but if you become a member of the cast or crew you will be expected to become an NVT member.

If cast, you will also be expected to carry out lateral flow tests twice a week during the rehearsal period, as well as during the production run.

Prison. A time for reflection on the wrong-doings visited on your victims. A place for remorse and rehabilitation. Or in days gone by, a place to be kept away from society while awaiting the death sentence.

Incarcerated and awaiting sentence, notorious highwayman Dick Turpin entertains, reminisces and rails against his captors, and the society he lives in.

Redemption is within striking distance through his priest, who wants Dick to re-

pent and save his soul. Meanwhile, Dick awaits news from his father, quietly confident that his sentence will be commuted to transportation. This complex, intelligent and charismatic man is a caged lion, and the sand runs relentlessly through its timer...

This play is an original work, taking us into Turpin's world to how much can fact be separated from legend. Where does our obsession with gangsters and serial killers come from, and just how much has changed since Turpin's time?

Volunteering Update

As a charity we are heavily reliant upon our volunteers to help make productions and support all the activities behind the scenes that make us good at what we do, and we are looking for more volunteers, with roles available to suit all levels of commitment. As well as backstage roles for our productions, we are also looking for:

BAR

On show nights we need people to run the bar. You will take interval drinks orders and lay them out, and then before the show, in the interval and after the show, sell drinks. We encourage all members to offer themselves for a bar shift, and we are happy to give full training.

So, if you are interested please contact Ian Black ian.black@newventure.org.uk

BOX OFFICE

Serving in the Box Office is a great role for being in the centre of what is going on at NVT. You meet lots of people, both the creative types and audience members, and you're doing something which is, of course, critical to the theatre: no box office, no tickets, no money, no theatre!

If you can support the manager one night during a run, we can show you the ropes.

So, if you are interested please contact the Box Office Manager, Ian Amos boxoffice@newventure.org.uk

In addition we have the following non-trustee roles where giving a few hours a month or a few hours per week (depending on which role):

FRONT OF HOUSE COORDINATOR

Manage the bar and front of house services; working with the Front of House team to ensure the bar is adequately stocked; and ensure the bar has adequate cover by organising volunteers into shifts for each live performance and other events in liaison with the Volunteer Coordinator. The person undertaking this role should be a Personal License holder or be willing to obtain one, and bar experience would be an advantage.

SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR

Provide media support to the theatre through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc to inform the public on productions and other items of interest promoting the theatre. This role will involve interaction and coordination with other volunteers such as the Artistic Director, Publicity & Marketing Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ASSISTANT

Assist the Chairman with overall health and safety activities, including H&S risks in productions.

COMPANY STAGE MANAGER

Help deliver a successful season of plays by overseeing the backstage and technical work of the Theatre. Including coordination of other members/actors and set design & construction, lighting, sound, props, wardrobe and stage management.

If so, please contact us at: volunteering@newventure.org.uk

NVT Information

Our angels

Why not become an angel, Fallen Angel, Archangel or even Archangel Gabriel to help us support our 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 Angel Coordinator Gerry McCrudden:

angels@newventure.org.uk

If you are a UK tax payer your donation may also benefit from Gift Aid.

Our sponsors

Our sponsorship deal is £250 for a year's advertising on our website and in our newsletter and programmes, plus 2 complimentary tickets for each production in that year.



NVT membership

If you are already an NVT member and if you haven't done so already, can I encourage you to sign in to the membership database and check your personal details. Our new on-line data base is now fully operational and you will receive an email when your membership is due for renewal but it is important that we have your correct details. If you are not a member and want to join NVT the annual membership is £15.

To join, renew or check your membership details just go to our website:

www.newventure.org.uk/join-us

Raymond Tongue

membership@newventure.org.uk



Contacting the NVT

The New Venture Theatre
Bedford Place
Brighton BN1 2PT



[@NewVentureTheatreBrighton](#)

Chairman

Ian Black*
chairman@newventure.org.uk

Secretary

Jerry Lyne*
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Artistic Director

Katie Brownings*
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Treasurer

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Front of House Coordinator

VACANT
frontofhouse@newventure.org.uk

Company Stage Manager

VACANT

Box Office Info

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(answerphone only)
boxoffice@newventure.org.uk



[@nvt_brighton](#)

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General Enquiries

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Little Theatre Guild Rep

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pat.boxall@newventure.org.uk

Child Protection Officer

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VACANT
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NVYT Coordinator

Andrew Allen
youththeatre@newventure.org.uk

Angels

Gerry McCrudden
angels@newventure.org.uk

Archives

Gerry McCrudden

Acting Class Coordinator

Neil Hadley
(assisted by Apollo Videaux)
actingclass@newventure.org.uk

Social Media Coordinator

VACANT

*Asterisks indicate trustee
committee members.

Booking tickets

TICKET PRICES AND PERFORMANCES

Members £9 / Non-Members £10 until
February 2022, then £10 and £12
respectively from March.

Evening performances are at 7:45pm.
Sundays are matinees only at 2:30pm
and they will have reduced seating to
allow the audience to socially distance.
There are no performances on Mondays.

HOW TO BOOK TICKETS

You can book by post using the form
below or online at:

www.newventure.org.uk

CONTACTING BOX OFFICE

Box Office (answerphone only):

01273 746118

For all ticketing enquiries, please email:

boxoffice@newventure.org.uk

STUDIO THEATRE SEATING AND ACCESS

The Studio has unallocated seating.
There is one step at the entrance.

THEATRE UPSTAIRS SEATING AND ACCESS

The Theatre Upstairs has allocated seat-
ing; please use the seating chart overleaf
and indicate your first, second and third
choice seats using 1s, 2s and 3s respect-
ively, and fill out your contact details be-
low. Access to the Theatre Upstairs is
only possible by 4 flights of stairs and
therefore may not be suitable for those
with limited mobility.

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

CUT ALONG THE LINE, AND RETURN YOUR COMPLETED SLIP
TOGETHER WITH A CHEQUE TO: NEW VENTURE THEATRE,
BEDFORD PLACE, BRIGHTON BN1 2PT

your name:

address:

email:

phone number:

NVT Covid Precautions for the 2021–22 Season

While we are very pleased to be open for the 2021–22 season, we want to do our very best to minimise the risk of infection for our audiences and volunteers. For this reason, our current policy is as follow:

WEARING MASKS

We request that all members of the audience wear masks at all times other than when seated in the South Hall bar unless exempt from doing so.

DOUBLE JABS & TESTING FOR CAST AND CREW

All cast and crew should be double-jabbed (and have any boosters when appropriate) if they will be in direct contact with other cast and crew in the theatre and will need to self-test twice per week any week they are in the theatre.

SOCIALLY DISTANCED SUNDAY MATINEES

The Herd's Sunday matinee will be at reduced capacity and the seating will be unallocated to allow for social distancing.

NVT member John Lawrenson would like to invite you to a **FREE COMEDY ACTING WORKSHOP!**

19 February - 1.15pm at Friends Meeting House, Ship Street, Brighton

20 February - 1.15pm at The Broughelm Centre, North Road, Brighton

For more information and to reserve your place: www.comedytalks.co.uk

Production	Date	# Members tickets (£9 until March)	# Non-member tickets (£10 until March)	Total cost
THE HERD (18–26 February) Theatre upstairs – mark seat preference below				
UNSANCTIONED/MEASURE 2 MEASURE (18–26 March) Studio theatre – unreserved seating		(£10)	(£12)	
HANGMEN (22–30 April) Theatre upstairs – mark seat preference below		(£10)	(£12)	

	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12	* Seating for Sunday matinees in the Theatre Upstairs will be unallocated, so don't indicate a seat preference	
Write '1', '2' or '3' for your first, second and third choice seats. Seat F1 is normally unavailable.	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8	E9	E10			
	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	D10	D11	D12	D13
	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	C12	C13
	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	B12	B13
	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	A10	A11	A12	A13
STAGE													