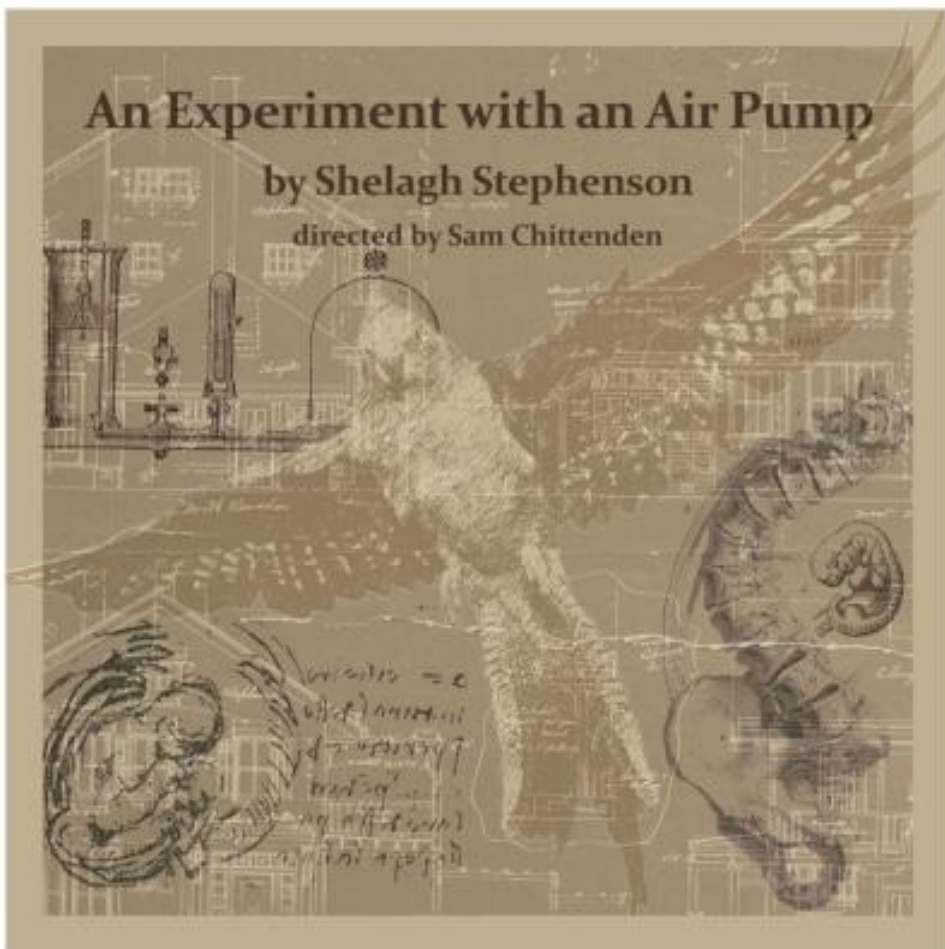


An Experiment with an Air Pump

by Shelagh Stephenson

directed by Sam Chittenden



NVT
NEW
VENTURE
THEATRE

Bedford Place,
Brighton BN1 2PT

Friday 19th - Saturday 27th April 2024 at 7.30pm
Matinee: Sunday 21st April at 2.30pm

www.newventure.org.uk
www.facebook.com/NewVentureTheatreBrighton

Registered Charity No. 258637

An Experiment with an Airpump

"Is Progress an Illusion and the Past a Myth?"

Inspired by Joseph Wright's painting "An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump", Shelagh Stephenson's ambitious play invites the audience into a world where the old collides with the new.

One grand house in Newcastle is occupied by two families each teetering on the edge of change:

1799: It is the eve of a new century; the age of enlightenment - when science promises to dissipate the darkness of superstition and ignorance. The house buzzes with scientific experiments, furtive romance and farcical amateur dramatics.

1999: A world of technology, genetic engineering and changed societal roles that would once have been unimaginable; yet ethical dilemmas and irrationality persist. As a new millennium dawns, the cellar reveals a dark secret buried for 200 years.

As we travel back and forth, the two tales are linked by a common thread: what moral price are we willing to pay for scientific advancement?

Shelagh Stephenson is an English playwright and actress born in Tynemouth. Her other stage plays include *The Memory of Water* and *Five Kinds of Silence*.

The talented cast will take you on a roller coaster ride across two centuries on a quest for knowledge and progress, with a plot full of twists, gender role reversals and a little magic. With live music by Steve Hoar.

Directed by award-winner Sam Chittenden (*Brighton Fringe Outstanding Show, 2021*). This will be Sam's sixth full length production at New Venture. Previous shows include *The Arsonists*, *The Clean House*, *Antigone*, *The Language Archive* and a double bill of *Unsanctioned / Measure 2 Measure*.

Sam says "An Experiment with An Air Pump is a fascinating play that we hope will move audiences and spark debate. We have had enormous fun exploring the themes in this play and I am blessed with a brilliant team of actors and creatives to breathe life into its two contrasting worlds"

CREATIVE TEAM

Director: Sam Chittenden

Assistant Director: Elysa Hyde

Musical Director: Steve Hoar

Stage Manager: Moon Berglind, Erin Burbridge

ASMs: Richard Lock, Karl Petrie, Ollie Wilson

Set Design: John Everett, Sam Chittenden

Lighting Design & Rigging: Strat Mastoris

Sound & Projection Design: Sam Chittenden

Animation: Morgan Corby

Technical support: Apollo Videaux, Ian Black

Costume Design: Millie Sutherland Thorne

Costume / Dressers: Emi Salkeld, Millie Sutherland Thorne, Flea Traini-Cobb, Claudia Ezraelian

Hair & Make Up: Flea Traini-Cobb

Set Construction & Painting: Tomasz Baraniecki, Sam Beards, John Everett, Yulia Girina, Simon

Glazier, Christine Hauschild, Parkash Kaur, George Walter

Chalk illustrations: Fiona Hewitt, Jean Parker

Prop Design and Making: Karl Petrie, Jeremy Crow, Sam Chittenden

Lighting Operation: Tamsin Mastoris

Sound Operation: Cameron Davies, David Turton, Ollie Wilson

Voice Coaching: Sam Ferree

Fight Director: Dodger Phillips

Props & Set Furniture: Moon Berglind, Sam Chittenden, John Everett

Poster & Programme: Tamsin Mastoris

Photography: Strat Mastoris

Publicity: Elysa Hyde

Social Media: Ayshen Irfan

Health & Safety: Ian Black

CAST

Fenwick/ Tom: Jeremy Crow

Susannah/ Ellen: Laura Witham

Harriet/ Kate: Maria Evans

Maria: Esther Dracott

Roget: Morgan Corby

Armstrong/Phil: Benjamin Baeza

Isobel: Rose O'Kane

MUSICIANS

Bertie Purchase: Violin

Juliet Rowley: Viola

Steve Hoar: Piano

With many thanks to Stephen Stuckes, John Dutton, Edda Sharpe and, as always, to the Front of House and Box Office teams, without whom no show would ever go on.



Fenwick/ Tom: Jeremy Crow

Jeremy is delighted to be back at the NVT, where his previous credits have included *The Clean House* and *Antigone*, both directed by Sam Chittenden, as well as roles including Dr Miller in *The Deep Blue Sea*, Major Glendinning in *How Many Miles to Babylon?* and David in *Benefactors*. He has also appeared at Brighton Little Theatre and with the Southwick Players. Other roles in Brighton include Noel Coward in *Mad About the Boy* (Dandyking Productions) and Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Slurring Words Productions).

Susannah/ Ellen: Laura Witham

Laura is a newcomer to NVT but no stranger to treading the boards. She studied Drama and Theatre Studies at St Mary's University in Twickenham.

Recent credits include: Caroline - *Seven Stages of an Affair*, Amanda - *Timing*, Slave of the Ring - *Aladdin*, Salt'n'Pepper - *Jack and the Beanstalk* and other productions at Burgess Hill Theatre Club: *The Graduate*, *Eclipsed*, *A Phoenix Too Frequent*. Like her character Ellen, Laura has a science- based job in Forensics. She loves the gym, skiing, travelling with family has an exceptionally barky dachshund called Winston!



Harriet/ Kate: Maria Evans

Maria trained in Performing Arts at The Brighton Academy. She performed in several roles, including include Maureen in *Rent*, Martha in *Spring Awakening* and Julia in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* at The Court Theatre in Tring. Maria is also a keen sea swimmer, theatregoer and bookworm. At the weekend you might find her on her own in a bar with a dirty martini and an old book.

Maria: Esther Dracott

As part of NVT Youth Theatre, Esther performed in *Charmless!* and is now making her debut as an adult. She's very excited to be returning to NVT after studying Acting at the University of Chichester, where she formed theatre company OnTheNose Productions, of which she's a producer, writer and performer. Other credits include *60 Minutes of Mood Swings* - Brighton and Edinburgh Fringe, FernFest and most recently as Bernadette in *Little Wars* for Brighton Little Theatre. Esther is inspired by the creative opportunities Brighton has to offer.



Roget: Morgan Corby

This is Morgan's first production at NVT. Previously a member of NYT and performed in *Coming Clean* with Brighton Little Theatre. Morgan studied fairy tales for his degree and visits folk stories sites around the UK. He's also an enthusiastic doodler who loves watching and creating hand drawn animations.

Armstrong/Phil: Benjamin Baeza

Benjamin has been part of the Brighton theatre scene for over a decade. Following the challenges of COVID-19, Baeza spent three impactful years with the One Fell Swoop Project, in such roles as Ferdinand - *The Tempest*, Troilus - *Troilus and Cressida* and Adriana - *The Comedy of Errors*. Ben also found creative homes in Brighton with Brief Hiatus - *Spring Awakening* and *Dracula*, Unmasked Theatre - *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Writers Bloc*, Blue Devil Theatre - *I am a Camera* and *Geminus*, and True Story Theatre Company - *Frankenstein*.





Isobel: Rose O'Kane

Rose recently graduated from Drama Studio London with a BA in Professional Acting; her credits whilst in training range from Masha in *Three Sisters* to *Jane Eyre*. Rose was most recently seen at NVT in *Measure 2 Measure* as Isabella. Outside of acting Rose can be found playing guitar, practising yoga and swimming.

Director: Sam Chittenden

Sam is an award-winning playwright/director, and Artistic Director of Different Theatre. She won Best New Play (2019) and Outstanding Show (2021) at Brighton Fringe for her musical *Clean*. Sam's feminist folk horror *Sary* was nominated for the Infallibles Award at Edinburgh Fringe, and her one-woman *Metamorphosis* was selected for the Fringe Encore series at SoHo Playhouse, NYC. Recent work includes *Unquiet Slumbers: The Haunting of Emily Brontë*, Mary Shelley's *The Last* and dystopian drama *Chemistry*. Sam's previous NVT productions include *The Arsonists*, *The Clean House*, *Antigone*, *The Language Archive* and *Unsanctioned / Measure 2 Measure*. @DiffTheatre www.different-theatre.com



17th - 25th May 2024
In the Studio Theatre

Picnic at Hanging Rock by Tom Wright directed by Diane Robinson



On a sweltering hot Valentine's Day 1900, in the Macedon region of Australia, 3 Australian schoolgirls and a teacher, on a picnic expedition to the remote Hanging Rock, abscond from their group. They are last seen heading towards the Rock.

In this chilling adaptation of Joan Lindsay's classic story, 5 female performers struggle to solve the mystery of the missing girls and their teacher, they also tell of the horrific reverberations that their disappearance creates in the community.



Steve Hoar: Musical Director & Piano

Steve first worked as Musical Director and composer on *A Christmas Carol* in 2015. Since then, he has worked on *Dick Barton*, *Blood Wedding* and previously collaborated with Sam Chittenden on *The Clean House*, all at the NVT. He also worked with Slurring Words Theatre on *The Pillowman* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Steve works as a piano tutor and sings with Brighton Voices. He enjoys composing original soundtracks for theatre. He's also a friend of The Brighton Philharmonic and encourages you to support your local orchestra!

Bertie Purchase: Violin

Bertie was in the Brighton Youth Orchestra growing up and studied music at A-level, but left violin behind shortly after. He wouldn't return to it until nearly 15 years later when he - coincidentally - landed his first acting role at NVT: *A Christmas Carol* in 2015. Since then, Bertie has appeared in a number of productions as an actor and on occasion, has played violin in them. 'Air Pump' musical director Steve Hoar was musical director of *A Christmas Carol* all those years ago, and Bertie is appropriately pumped to be working with him again.



Juliet Rowley: Viola

Juliet is a multi-instrumentalist, playing the oboe and the viola. She has extensive experience playing in orchestras and smaller ensembles, and most recently was a member of Sutton Symphony Orchestra prior to moving to Brighton. She played the oboe in an adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by Slurring Words Theatre at Stanmer House grounds in 2018, working with Steve Hoar in his capacity of Musical Director. Juliet balances her digital desk job by walking on the South Downs. She is also a keen photographer, enjoys baking but is a terrible cake decorator!

Supporting The New Venture

We all need a little 'care and maintenance' from time to time and our lovely Grade II listed theatre is certainly no exception. Whether it's fixing the roof or upgrading equipment it is all increasingly expensive. So any donation you can make to help keep the New Venture alive and kicking will be hugely appreciated, and you can do it either via the donations box by the fireplace in the bar, or using the Donate Button on the homepage of our website - www.newventure.org.uk

THE PEBBLE TRUST

Constantinople Bistro

Fusing the tastes of the Middle East, the Balkans,
Greece, the Caucasus and Central Anatolia.

51 Norfolk Square, BN1 2PA 10am - 11pm, Mon - Sun
Tel: 01273 777 355



silverado

MBE MAIL BOXES ETC.®

- Print & Copy
- Office Services
- Stationery
- Packing & Shipping
- Packing Materials
- Post & Parcels

Tel: 01273 70 60 20 • www.mbebrighton.co.uk
Email: print@mbbrighton.co.uk • 91 Western Road, Brighton, BN1 2NW

Contacting the NVT

For ticket information only, call the Box Office - 01273 746118. To book tickets or for other information check our website at www.newventure.org.uk. All other enquiries 01273 808353

New Venture Young Adults Theatre

For young people wanting to build their skills and experience within the theatre sector (17-25) Fridays 4.30-6.30pm. £55 per 10 week term, first session is FREE!

NVT Acting Class

Monday evenings at 7.30pm for all levels of acting skills. It will cost you just £5 per session (£2.50 for NVT members) First visit is FREE! See website for details.

Become a Sponsor

£250: Advertise on the website, in each programme and our newsletter for one year. Plus two free tickets per show. Contact fundraising@newventure.org.uk for details.

Or why not become an Angel, Archangel or even Archangel Gabriel to help us support the current and future improvements to our theatre. For further information please contact the Angels Coordinator Gerry McCrudden: angels@newventure.org.uk.

Membership

Company membership - £15 a year. Full participation, discount on tickets & newsletter. Student/Unwaged - £10 a year. As above... Proof of status is required.