

The Proposal & The Bear

by Anton Chekhov



Translated by Stephen Mulrine

NVT

**NEW
VENTURE
THEATRE**

Bedford Place
Brighton BN1 2PT

PERFORMANCES:

Fri 3rd to Sat 11th November 2023 at 7:30pm

Matinee: Sun 5th November at 2:30pm

www.newventure.org.uk

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Director's note:

Anton Chekhov is one of the most studied and prolific writers of the nineteenth century. Most scholars focus on his later dramatic works, however in his early years he wrote an abundance of comic material for publication, often under various pseudonyms such as Antosha Chekhonte.

Working as a physician Chekhov was exposed to various classes within Russian society. The idiosyncrasies and absurd interactions he witnessed from his unique vantage point gave him rich pickings for unbelievable stories and characters which translate directly into his plays. It seems that the vaudevilles were an escape for the playwright from more serious work and were written in his spare time for extra cash - some were reportedly written in less than 2 hours!

I am really excited to bring these two examples of Chekhov's lighter side to the NVT stage and am so privileged to have the incredible cast and crew that have worked - and laughed - so hard to make this production come to life. Seeing this production grow, from a little idea last year, into a living, breathing, fun piece of theatre has been a joy. Thank you to everyone that has helped along the way. And thank you, to you, the audience, for coming along with us for the ride.

The Bear was first performed in 1888 in Moscow, The Proposal was quickly written after the success of the former and premiered in St Petersburg in 1889 – 28 years after the “Emancipation of the Serfs” and 28 years before “Female Emancipation”.



Sophie Gilkes-Tarsey/Natalya Stepanova (*The Proposal*) & Yelena Ivanovich Popova (*The Bear*) Sophie graduated from the Institute of Contemporary Theatre Brighton in 2022 studying performing arts. This is her first show at New venture theatre and hopes to be involved in many more productions.

Killian Wheeler/Grigory Stepanovich Smirnov (*The Bear*) Killian is so honoured to be part of this double billing, and has had a blast with *The Bear*, it is his second time working with New Venture Theatre, and couldn't be more thrilled about the future! Rehearsing has been an absolute privilege and he can't wait for people to see it. It has been an incredible experience all round for him!



Jerry Lyne/Stepan Stepanovich (*The Proposal*) Jerry has acted in and directed for various Theatre Companies over the years, winning awards for his productions and acting roles.



Chris Phipps/Luka (*The Bear*) Chris has been performing as an actor and singer for over 20 years and is delighted to be appearing in his first production at the NVT, '*The Bear*'. Recent productions include '*Made In Dagenham The Musical*' (Sid / Mr Buckton / Ensemble) with Southwick Opera and '*Neighbourhood Watch*' (Martin) with Streatham Theatre



The Proposal The Bear



Simon Bigg/Ivan Vassilievich Lomov (*The Proposal*) Simon Bigg was born and raised in South London until the age of nineteen when he attended The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama's 2020 class of BA (Hons) Acting. In the years that followed his credits include *Lysander* (A Midsummer Night's Dream), *Stanley Kowalski* (A Streetcar Named Desire) & *Agamemnon* (The Oresteia). Soon you will be able to watch him on your screen in the sequel to hit internet horror film, '*Guest 2*'.

Elaine Larkin/Director Elaine is a graduate of Theatre Studies from The Samuel Beckett Centre, Trinity College, Dublin. She has performed in, directed and devised various shows in Ireland, Greece and UK. Most notably she has performed for BBC Radio 4 in Christopher Hampton's *The Prague Trial*, as well as numerous appearances in both Brighton Fringe and Edinburgh Fringe. She was a founding member of the successful *Scratch That Comedy Improv Show*. After an acting and directing hiatus, Elaine returned to the stage last December in New Venture's production of *It's A Wonderful Life*, directed by Gerry McCrudden.





APPEAL PUZZLE

G	N	I	N	I	A	T	R	E	T	N	E
F	C	L	E	M	I	L	B	U	S	U	F
Y	W	O	R	T	H	Y	S	P	P	F	F
U	H	O	N	E	S	T	E	C	E	U	E
C	L	A	S	S	I	C	V	L	C	O	C
C	O	T	S	R	I	F	A	E	I	F	T
T	P	E	D	A	N	D	D	V	A	X	I
Q	U	F	L	Z	B	T	E	E	L	S	V
Y	L	R	E	T	S	A	M	R	A	T	E
G	R	I	P	P	I	N	G	R	E	A	T
V	H	X	P	A	S	S	U	R	E	D	P

Special Gripping Fun Adept

Considered Sublime Worthy Great

First Rate Classic Masterly

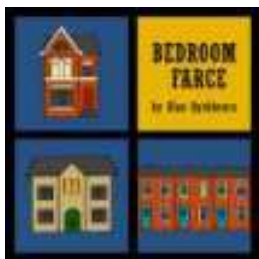
Honest Assured Effective Clever

Entertaining

Here are some comments we hope to hear after a production, but to create *quality* theatre requires money for production costs overheads and building expenses. If you can help with a donation, however small, you can put cash in the Donations Box beside the fireplace in the Bar, or donate online by visiting :

www.newventure.org.uk

Booking NOW at newventure.org.uk



BEDROOM FARCE

by Alan Ayckbourn

Fri 1st to Sat 9th December

As the title implies, the play is an absurd and confusing farce, comparing and contrasting the differences between couples young and old, and the different troubles they encounter.

Elderly Ernest and Delia in their bedroom. Worrying over son Trevor's relationship with 'complex' wife Susannah. Fish on toast in bed is a comfort.

Nick and Jan's bedroom. Jan was once 'destroyer' Trevor's girlfriend.

Malcolm and Kate's bedroom. Tonight it's a cloakroom for their housewarming party. Trevor arrives. Then wife Susannah. Blazing row. Jan appears. Complications.

Nick and Jan's. Back at home Jan tells jealous Nick she and Trevor had a mutual snog.

Ernest and Delia's. Doorbell. It's crazy daughter-in-law Susannah

Nick and Jan's. Trevor's ringing their bell.

Kate and Malcolm's. Awaiting Trevor's return to sleep over.

Anything but a typical bedroom farce - though we hear about a range of sexual troubles. Is marriage sustained more by habit than mutual excitement? Or is there a certain blessedness? Ayckbourn's play is moving, observant and hugely funny.



Forthcoming Auditions

An Experiment with an Air Pump

by Shelagh Stephenson - *directed by Sam Chittenden*

Audition Dates - 9, 10 & 12 December

Performance Dates - 19 to 27 April 2024

For further details go to newventure.org.uk



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



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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

NVYT - Youth Theatre

NVT welcomes all young people (12-17) with a passion for or an interest in theatre. Fridays 4.30-8.30pm. £50 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.