

JUNE 2015

newsletter

sewellbarn
THEATRE

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Our Next Production

Mint

by Clare Lizzimore | Directed by Jen Dewsbury

11-13 & 17-20 June at 7.30 pm, matinée 20 June at 2.30 pm

"I thought it would stop. After I was punished.. But I think now. I think it lasts for ever... and it's a black mark. And it won't ever go away" Alan

When I first read *Mint*, what really appealed to me was the way Claire Lizzimore had captured the awkwardness of moments in her characters' dialogue, the rhythms of their conversation, and the Caryl-Churchill-like reality of it all. I couldn't wait to see it onstage!

In rehearsal we've come to admire the subtle developments in relationships, the clues that the characters are becoming familiar with the routine of prison visits and the humour.

Criminals are convicted and sentenced. That is their punishment. But how does this affect their families? Living and working amongst friends, neighbours and strangers who all know. It's all very well saying that this week's headlines are tomorrow's chip wrappers, but how do you go on if you've been the subject of those headlines? This play indirectly explores this as well as following Alan's time adjusting to life inside 3 different prisons. It asks us to consider whether a criminal's 'sentence' is ever really over? Are they ever really forgiven? Do their actions leave scars within the family unit? What happens when strong feelings are buried for too long?

I have a great cast - Roger and Glenda Gardiner play husband and wife, the parents. Steve Dunn plays their son Alan, who spends the majority of the play in prison. Rebecca Wass, actress, director and previously manager of the Cromer Pier Theatre plays eldest child Stephanie. Connie Reid plays her daughter Amber. Rachel Godfrey Bennett plays Nicola, the youngest, and has the task of playing from aged 15 to 23 years during the life of the play! No pressure!

Can I just add that only at The Barn have I been offered rehearsal prompts. I can't tell you what a useful luxury this is at a time when actors are trying to put down their scripts, the director is watching and commenting and the Stage Manager is busy double checking lighting and sound effects, props etc. and writing The Book. I understand that we have a shortage of rehearsal prompts at present and urge you to step forward and try it out!

Jen Dewsbury



Photographs: Sean Owen

Booking

Tickets can be booked at Prelude Records who are located on St Giles Street in the city centre. With this new service, you can continue to buy tickets in person and over the phone by calling 01603 628319. We've also introduced online booking, available on our website and via Prelude Records (a small booking fee applies if you use a credit card online). You can book tickets for any of this season's shows, so why not check your diary and book us in now?

PRELUDE RECORDS

Our Previous Production

Cowardy Custard

Words & music by Noël Coward | Devised by Gerard Frow, Alan Strachan & Wendy Toye
Directed by Cassie & Selwyn Tillett

You know what it's like when you go to someone's birthday party expecting Prosecco for the toast and the host suddenly produces a bottle of vintage champagne? Well, last night at the Sewell Barn, Team Tillett and company presented us with a sparkling bottle of pure Moët & Chandon called Cowardy Custard!

Noel Coward is sadly neglected today, and is long overdue for a revival à la Terence Rattigan. His most autobiographical song "If love were all" (sadly never recorded by him) contains the line "The most I've had is just a talent to amuse" and belies his immense talent for drama, wit, politics, social commentary, patriotism and melody. Listening transfixed last night, I was surprised at the modern jazz 'feel' for so many of his songs, 'Mad about the Boy', 'Poor Little Rich Girl' etc. I would love someone to write a play about the real man.

But anyway... Cowardy Custard... what a magical, entrancing production! It would be invidious to single out any performer, so of course I will... Gill Tichborne was an absolute delight with her infectious enthusiasm and energy, and wonderful resonance, lighting up the stage with her every entrance. But this was a company full of delights, held together by the musical glue that is Selwyn Tillett. Huw Jones with his beautiful rich baritone, Ruth Bennett's boundless energy, Angela Rowe looking as if she had stepped out of a 1920's fashion magazine and persuading me that it would be wonderful to hear her tackling some jazz standards, Scott Brown and his penchant for silly ass characterisation. Dawn Brindle, Fiona MacPherson, and Rob Tiffen all lovely, entertaining, and informative in the autobiographical sections. All in all, a wonderful, wonderful show. Did I mention that I liked it?

What an asset to the Sewell Barn Cassie Tillett is! Her dedication and hard working talent accompanied every song, sketch and dance in the show. Thank you, Cassie. Long live Team Tillett!!

David White



Photographs: Andrew Evans

Coming Soon

Copenhagen

Michael Frayn | Directed by Carole Lovett

16-18 & 22-25 July

We are in the early stages of rehearsals for Copenhagen but already we seem to have become immersed in the shadows, conflicts and terrors that surrounded our three characters as they tried to find a way for morality and friendship to survive whilst their countries were at war. Heisenberg was an internationally respected German physicist and he had travelled to visit his old mentor, the Danish physicist Neils Bohr and Bohr's wife, Margrethe. There is no dispute at all as to the reality of their meeting but as to why they met and what they talked about there has never been a satisfactory conclusion. In a time very reminiscent of the later European Cold War they had to battle with half-truths and half-understandings both of each others characters and the science of atomic fission that would go on to play such an important part in the final ending of the Second World War. My three wonderful actors - Jane de la Tour, Kevin Oelrichs and Rob Tiffen - are now well on the way towards gaining their Physics A-Levels!

Carole Lovett

Company News

Workshop

Wed 24 June, 7.30 pm at the Barn

Viewpoints Technique

Led by David Green

Viewpoints offers a practical way of creating dynamic and expressive ensemble movement work through the use of a short set of guidelines. This workshop introduces those guidelines, and gives directors the opportunity to discover a liberating way of working with actors that allows for maximum individual creativity within a defined structure. The workshop is also tailored to actors who want to explore the full range of their onstage movement, by breaking down the toolbox of the actor into individual elements with which they can experiment.

Audition : Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare

Director: Carole Lovett carolelovett@btinternet.com

Performance dates: 26-28 Nov & 2-5 Dec (including a matinee on 5 Dec at 2.30pm) 2015

Initial auditions will take place at the theatre on **Monday 13th July 2015 7.30pm** with recalls to be scheduled later if necessary. I would ask that you prepare any speech from a Shakespeare play. Should anyone arrive without, I will have a stack of speeches at hand!

The Play

This is one of Shakespeare's best-loved romantic comedies. Mistaken identities and deliberate trickery lead to a great deal of complication for the wonderful characters that are caught up in his play.

Orsino is in love with Olivia, but Olivia is in love with Cesario. Cesario is actually Viola, a girl dressed as a boy – don't ask! Just come and see the play! Viola is in love with Orsino. She has a twin brother, Sebastian, and they both think that the other one is dead. Meanwhile the humourless and judgemental Malvolio thinks that Olivia loves him and she really, really does not.

Casting

I have listed the main characters and the approximate ages that the actors need to be. When I cast, my decisions will be based on how the actors correspond in age and appearance to each other.

Duke Orsino 30

Lady Olivia 30+

Malvolio 40+

Maria 30 +

Sebastian late teens, early twenties

Viola late teens, early twenties

Sir Toby Belch 50+

Sir Andrew Aguecheek 30+

Feste 30+ (must be able to sing)

Fabian 20+

Antonio 40+

Sea Captain 40+

Rehearsal details

Once cast I will devise the schedule to fit around all of us, rehearsing some weekday evenings (probably starting at 7.30) and the occasional Sunday afternoon if required.

Carole Lovett

Membership renewals

Just a quick reminder that your membership will be due for renewal in **July**, and we'll send a reminder with the next newsletter. It's an excellent way to support our work at the Sewell Barn, and we very much appreciate it. Membership costs £10 for a year or £15 for a couple at the same address, or £50 per person for lifetime membership.

What else is on in the area?

The Great Hall Theatre Company (at the Assembly House)

Time to Kill by Leslie Darbon

9-13 June at 7.30 pm, matinée 13 June 2.30 pm

The Maddermarket Theatre

What the Butler Saw by Joe Orton

25 June-4 July at 7.30 pm, matinee 4 July at 2.30 pm

great hall
THEATRE COMPANY

**MADDER
MARKET**