

Coming
22-29 January

'Speed-The-
Plow'
By David Mamet

Directed by
Steven O'Shea

Box Office (24hr)
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Other enquiries
01273 808353

NEW VENTURE
T H E A T R E

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"The Steamie"

By Tony Roper

Directed by Leanne McKenzie

4 - 11 December 2010

"A tale of women, whisky and washing"

At the time of writing, Tony Roper was starring in the BBC sketch shows 'Scotch & Wry' and 'Naked Video' and was later to star in 'Rab C. Nesbitt' as Rab's partner-in-trouble, Jamesie Cotter. Here he shows us he is just as good at writing as he is at acting. Although this is one of Scotland's most-loved plays, it has rarely been performed south of the border.

Set in the 50's on Hogmanay in a Glasgow washhouse, 'The Steamie' depicts a night in the lives of 4 women desperately trying to get their washing done before the New Year comes. Join Dolly, Magrit, Doreen and Mrs Culfeathers sharing their happiness, sadness and their gossip as they sing, laugh and cry their way through the last day of the year - with a little help from the not-so-handy Andy.

I was 12 years old when I first encountered this play. It was the 1993 television version starring Dorothy Paul and Eileen McCallum, and I was im-



L-R Laura Scobie, Sarah Davies, Leanne McKenzie (Director), Ben Pritchard, Front - Charlotte Grimes

Photo by Strat Mastoris

mediately struck by the hilarity of the women's exchanges fused with the gritty portrayal of Glaswegian working class life. I have seen the play many times since, and have grown to appreciate the authenticity of this drama and have recognized many of the features of these women, having myself grown up in Glasgow. In 1997 I went on to play the part of Dolly, and feel that this brought me even closer to the soul of the play.

'The Steamie' remains an inspiration to me and countless others who continue to enjoy new productions of this contemporary Scottish classic.

I'm lucky working for the third time with my good friend Mark Green. Mark and I worked together in the award winning childrens musical 'Alice's World' (written by Eliza Wyatt, music by David Ingledew). We also worked together on 'At Night in Praha' (Steve Capra) which took third place in NVT's 10 minute play competition. Now we have taken on our biggest project so far. 'The Steamie' is a comedic play heavily interspersed with moments of poignancy and musical numbers! We have a fantastic cast of 5 actors.



Wishing a very happy holiday season to all the dedicated people who give us so much pleasure with NVT productions and to our audiences who enable it all to happen.

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Sarah Davies, Charlotte Grimes, Sheelagh Baker and Ben Pritchard are all seasoned NVT actors. Laura Scobie is new to acting at NVT but has worked on other outside theatre projects. All have a great instinct for the words as well and the songs in this difficult piece where one minute actors require strong comic timing, the next dramatic intensity.

This is my second time directing for New Venture Theatre and I continue to be, not only highly impressed, but also very thankful for the hard work, professionalism and support I have been given since beginning

these productions.

4-11 December 2010, 7.45pm.

Matinee:

Sunday 5 December at 2.30pm.

No evening performances on Sunday 5 and Monday 6 December.

** Contains some strong Language and smoking.*

Tickets for the show are available - £8 (£9 final Friday and Saturday night) (Tuesday-tickets £6) and can be purchased online at www.newventure.org.uk

Box Office Information on 01273 746118

Leanne McKenzie

Acting Classes

Characterisation and Text into Performance - becoming an exquisite actor in five easy sessions

8, 15, 22, 29 November and 6 December

Mark Wilson

This set of five sessions will take participants through the processes of communicating a character's situation to an audience, both physically and vocally, by looking at 'story' and how the writer's story might then be told by actors. Each class will be run in a way that fits all levels of experience and as a discrete unit - perfect for those able to attend all or just one or two of the sessions. You will be working on your own and in small groups. There will be opportunities to present work and gain feedback on performance but there will be no pressure to perform - process being more important than product. The intention is that it should be a learning, skills-based process, ideal for the 'beginner' as well as those with more experience. It is my intention that all of us shall leave the session with more than we came in with.

Objectives, Beats, Actioning

13 and 20 December

James Newton

Discover how you create truly natural dialogue full of nuance and detail. Learn how objectives, beats and the secret art of "Actioning" come together to create a powerful naturalistic performance.

Five Characters In Search Of Actors

10, 17, 24, 31 January and 7 February

Andrew Allen

There are many ways to approach the creation of a character, and it's not always the most obvious way. Using script, improvisation, game-playing, movement, and a variety of acting techniques, we will explore over the course of five weeks the toolbox of skills that can be utilized to improve confidence and creativity on the stage : there is no one 'right way' to play a part, and even mistakes can lead to something wonderful. We hope to celebrate plenty of mistakes in these workshops .

Ulrike Schilling

Looking back

by Ulrike Schilling, Artistic Director

Since joining the NVT in 2006, I've been part of several productions and experienced various roles within those productions. Whilst being on the committee in the capacity of Production Manager, I've enjoyed supporting productions and backstage development. The NVT, namely its members, offers unique opportunities to create and to pass on skills and training within a community of theatre lovers. Since becoming Artistic Director I've focused on extending these opportunities for members within all aspects of NVT. Not only have we introduced many additional events of various theatrical genres and build upon the social aspect of NVT, but members kindly offered workshops and training sessions to a very high standard. This of course influenced and supported our regular productions and we are able to offer new writing, devised work and innovative approaches to established work in our wonderful Studio Theatre. The versatility of the space was utilised by the variety of approaches and

genres that directors choose throughout last season.

We further continued addressing Actors training and explored a diversity of themes, e.g. presence, voice, text, physicality and contemporary practices in the Acting Classes and additionally offered intensive workshops for people who would like to take those classes to the next level.

Backstage training as well as Light and Sound were ongoing throughout the season. And further creative workshops focused on Lighting Design, Stage Make-up and Directing. Thanks to all the amazing workshop leaders and their helpers to make this happen!

This season has already brought us interesting and innovative approaches to well known as well as new writing and that is only the beginning of the season! In between productions we had several very successful and well attended workshops, some of which focus

on the development of new work others on more general themes. Again there are more to come – so watch this space!

And after last years success we are continuing with additional one-off events attracting a variety of new audiences and making membership of the theatre even better value as well as fun.

I am inviting members who would like to get involved or have ideas how we can add to our already rich season to come forward and have a chat about possibilities and opportunities. This could be participation in a Social event or a production, another additional event, workshops, symposiums, anything that relates to theatre and what you consider interesting to our members and audiences.

I am looking forward to hearing from you and to seeing you at the next production!

Calling all directors!

Even though this season has just seen 2 of its 10 productions, I am inviting directors to submit proposals for the season 2011-2012.

Due to the Fringe being in the later part of May, the deadline for proposals is February 19.

You are more than welcome to submit proposals earlier. If you need a Proposal to Direct form, please email ulrike.schilling@newventure.org.uk

Short Story Evening

Friday 11 February, 7.30 pm.

Please submit stories on the theme of Love's Labour's Lost (to be interpreted *as you like it*), maximum 1500 words by 16 January.

Selected stories will be read on the night by NVT actors.

Live Theatre on the Big Screen

Both the National Theatre and the Donmar Playhouse are presenting their current productions live on a big screen near you somewhere this Autumn and Spring. Watch out for the venues, and if past experience is anything to go by, BOOK EARLY!

9th December: NT production of *Hamlet* with Rory Kinnear, directed by Nicholas Hytner

16th January: *FELA!* The new Afrobeat musical, at the NT from New York!

3rd February: *King Lear* from the Donmar, with Derek Jacobi, directed by Michael Gradage

17th March: *Frankenstein*, a new play by Nick Dear, directed by Danny Boyle

30th June: *The Cherry Orchard* with Zoe Wanamaker

For more information contact www.ntlive.com

Yet Another List!

It was announced at The Stage at the end of September, that readers were being polled on who is the greatest theatre actor of all time - what a pointless exercise, when it is impossible to compare the living with the dead! But I suppose that as a snapshot of opinion at a specific moment, it might be of interest to some future historian of the theatre.

Readers however are not being given a wide range of choice - already a panel of the great and good are short-listed, just 10 actors from which to make your pick. They are, in alphabetical order: Judi Dench, Michael Gambon, John Gielgud, Ian McKellen, Laurence Olivier, Vanessa Redgrave, Ralph Richardson, Mark Rylance, Paul Scofield, and Maggie Smith. No foreigners of course! And we can leave the cinema to look after its own!

I suppose it is just good simple fun, and one way to fill the column inches!

Barrie Jerram reviews 'Gaby Goes Global'

Local writer Judy Upton's comedy tells of Gaby Johnson, an employment adviser whose transfer to the Brighton Job Centre leads to her becoming an on-line and media celebrity.

Although lacking in self-esteem Gaby always looks for the best in others. And it is this naivety that is easily exploited by some of her long time unemployed artist clients. Seeking to promote their artistic skills but unaware of their deviousness and the extreme entrepreneurial paths that they are prepared to tread she is persuaded to make a documentary with them.

What follows is a snowballing series of events that make up an amusing comedy with farcical and satirical elements. The world of modern art is sent up with digs at the Turner Prize and of changing fashions – here close-up paintings of genitalia and secret lavatorial videos prove to be the money spinners that they hit upon.

Also the shallow world of chat show programmes come in for some wicked ribbing when Gaby appears on The Coffee With Kate programme – great fun as the two swap jibes between false smiles.

As the innocent Gaby, who eventually becomes corrupted by success and money, Hannah Liebeskind successfully accomplished the character's transition from the mousey down trodden clerk to the hard nosed business woman seduced by fame and money. The changes in facial expression and body language were remarkable.

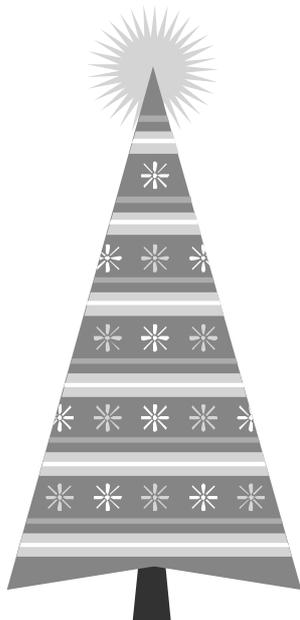
Sarah Lauriden gave a fine performance as her bitchy ice-maiden boss, Kay – switching from mean prissiness to girlish simpering whenever a male came near. Moog Gravett and Dan Walker played two long term unemployed brothers – Matt, a wheeler dealer whose talent lay in sculpting and Jed, a photographer who comes up with the idea of the documentary. Gravett brought out the opportunistic, Jack-the-Lad nature of the character whilst, in contrast, Walker made Jed a more introverted and self-centred person.

Nick Green played Larry, a visitor to the Job Centre who was actually looking for work. He gets drawn into the money making venture and raises Gaby's romantic hopes.

Debra Wallis, an agoraphobic artist who paints from the soul, was in the very capable hands of Imogen Miller Porter – a truly comic portrayal of a person whose principals can be easily bought by a new Paula Rosa kitchen. Although playing two small roles Sarah Garbutt had great success as Marjorie, an elderly visitor to the Centre and with the chat show host, Kate - highly contrasting characters played extremely well.

Play and players combined to provide a fun and entertaining offering. However I did feel at times that some of the performances were a little hesitant. This I put down to the fact that I saw it very early in the run. No doubt subsequent performances improved as the play bedded down.

Ian Black's direction was sound and his choice of play was ideal for a studio production – a minimum set of desks and chairs were sufficient. I liked his idea of creating a pre-play atmosphere with the bar area having a stand with jokey job adverts pinned up. I understand that for performances after the one I attended there was to be a busker in the room as well.



A very Happy Christmas!

A bit early I know, but I wanted to remind you all about our party on Saturday 18 December.

Please see the flier sent with this Newsletter. Come dressed to impress and hear all about the plans for the rebirth of the old theatre.

And we want your ideas for a new name for the old theatre....The Phoenix, perhaps?

Mike Stubbs

Our sponsors

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

We need more sponsors, so please email mikestubbs2000@yahoo.co.uk if you have any ideas in that direction.



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January NVT newsletter

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