

A NEW VENTURE THEATRE PRODUCTION 2019

SHORT PLAY FESTIVAL

AGENCY BY MICHELLE DONKIN
HOPE THAT PLAYS A TUNE ALONE BY SARAH DREW
MATCH AND MATRIMONY BY JUDEY BIGNELL

NVT
**NEW
VENTURE
THEATRE**

Bedford Place, Brighton BN1 2PT

PERFORMANCES:

Friday 19th to Saturday 27th July 7.45 pm

Sunday matinee 21st July 2.30 pm

No show Sunday or Monday evening

BOX OFFICE INFORMATION: 01273 746118

ONLINE BOOKING: www.ticketsource.co.uk/newventuretheatre

Registered Charity No. 268607

50p

Production Team

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Production Manager | Ian Black |
| Script Advisors | Barry Purchase and Rod Lewis, with Mark Wilson for <i>Hope That Plays a Tune Alone</i> |
| Stage Manager | Gaby Bowring |
| Assistant Stage Managers | Trish Bayliss, Jo Carpenter, Cata Lindegaard and Natalie Sacks |
| Set Design | Simon Glazier and George Walter |
| Lighting Design & Rigging | Strat Mastoris |
| Sound Design | Ian Amos, Chris Gates, Mark Wilson and Ian Black |
| Lighting Operation | Stacey Frost |
| Sound Operation | Matt Foster and Richard Michalec |
| Costumes | Ian Amos, Chris Gates and Mark Wilson |
| Set Construction | Simon Glazier, George Walter and Peter Wood |
| Poster and Artwork | Tamsin Mastoris |
| Photography | Strat Mastoris |
| Publicity | Cata Lindegaard, Kate McGann and Emmie Spencer |
| Health & Safety | Ian Black |

We would like to express our appreciation and gratitude to the Front of House and Box Office teams.

The productions run for a total of approximately 1 hour 40 minutes, including a 20 minute intermission.



Bramble Cottage
Retirement Home
01273 565821

Fully Compliant with CQC Standards.
Established Luxury, Retirement Home
Contact Diana Shaw For Further Details

Long or Short Stay & Convalescence Breaks. Large Individual Rooms
All With Colour TV (Satellite TV Available) .Lift Servicing All Floors.
Attractive Gardens & Balconies. First Class Food Prepared By 'In House'
Chef. Optional Social Programme. Visiting Hairdresser And Chiropodist.
24 Hour Care By Fully Trained Staff. Family Owned.
Highest Standards of Care, Support & Service.



18 Carden Avenue
Patcham, Brighton
East Sussex BN1 8NA
Tel: (01273) 565821
www.bramblecottagebrighton.com



Hope That Plays a Tune Alone

written by Sarah Drew
directed by Mark Wilson

Set in Kitty's home, circa 1946

Cast

| | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| Kitty | Victoria Thomson |
| Elsa | Emmie Spencer |
| Father Andrew | Matt Davies |

My first contact with Sarah Drew's play was one of supporting its writing through a work-shop process that allows the writer to actually see and hear their work as opposed to imagining the voices and visualising the scenes. That is actually the first step in the sometimes difficult 'letting go' process that a writer undergoes when the work he or she has created begins to take on a different form simply because a director and actors have started to 'act it out'. For Sarah this appeared to be the opposite, marvelling at the experience of seeing her words 'brought to life'.

From that point I was invited to take on the role of director. This meant taking the work through an audition process, on to a stage and then, through rehearsal, to the finished – if a piece of work can every really be thought of as 'finished' – play you'll see tonight.

On behalf of everyone involved I hope you enjoy the experience. For me it's been a delight to have worked with such a talented, exciting group of creative people.
Mark Wilson

Sarah Drew (writer)

Sarah trained at Bretton Hall in Theatre Acting and Music and has an MA in Scriptwriting from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth.

She has acted in numerous plays at New Venture and Brighton Little Theatre and is also a screenwriter. She is currently working on a feature film about despatch riders in WW1 and a TV series about Wimbledon in the early twentieth century. This is her first play.

Mark Wilson (director)

Mark has directed a number of plays both at NVT and other Brighton venues. These include *The Crucible*, *A View From the Bridge*, *A Streetcar Named Desire* and more recently, *Our Lady of Sligo*. He is also a writer, his play *You* winning the 2015 Brighton Festival Award for Theatre and The Fringe Review Outstanding Theatre Award as well as Play of the Week at the 2018 London Vault Festival. It is published by Samuel French.

Agency

written by Michelle Donkin
directed by Ian Amos

Set in an office in a government building in the present day

Cast

Amy Victoria Thomson
Sam James Bennison

Agency is a play that draws upon up-to-the-minute issues; government, news, truth, lies. A press secretary turned whistle blower prepares to leave a destructive administration behind. The personal and the private collide as she faces a colleague for one last time.

Michelle Donkin writes that '*Agency* was inspired by contemporary American and British political commentary. I often write about women and I was intrigued by President Trump's former White House Communication's Director, Hope Hicks and the media's interpretation of her character.'

It features two faces new to NVT – Victoria Thomson and James Bennison – and is directed by yet another new comer to working on the NVT stage, Ian Amos (although you might have seen him on the box office this past year).

Music: Time Lapse/Ludovico Einaudi. Thanks to Freesound.org, and to Ian Black for compiling the sound FX. *Ian Amos*

Michelle Donkin (writer)

Michelle is a theatre producer and writer. After script reading for the BBC Writersroom and Theatre 503, she went on to train in Screenwriting at NFTS and was the winner of the NBC Universal & SyFy Channel's Original TV Pitch Competition. Michelle writes for stage, audio and the page. Her work has been performed in London and Brighton.

Ian Amos (Director)

While this is Ian's first time directing at New Venture, he has been directing for over 35 years at venues including Questors Theatre in Ealing, the Headgate Theatre and Priory Players in Colchester and for the Dedham Players. He'd like to thank everyone at NVT for the warm welcome. In early November he will be directing *Fen* by Caryl Churchill, the second play in the 2019–20 season.

Match & Matrimony

written by Judey Bignell
directed by Chris Gates

Set in Jane Austen's England

Cast

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Evelyn | Emma Lillie Lees |
| All the men | Chris Gates |
| Mrs Phelps | Justine Smith |
| Sydney | Chris Knight |

Being a huge Jane Austen fan, it is an absolute pleasure to be directing (and acting in) *Match & Matrimony*.

Originally, the writer Judey Bignell was considering a much more provocative title where the second word was 'Countryside'. It's lovingly written Jane Austen parody it began as a two hour play with 20 characters and a number of anachronistic parody songs based on contemporary artists such as Meatloaf and Robin Thicke. It was strongly reminiscent of *Pride & Prejudice*, though with six daughters instead of five, all of whom had their own subplot and all of whom had their own object of love/heartbreak/frenzied lust. Obviously, for the purposes of the festival it had been scaled down somewhat, and it speaks of Judey's skill as a writer that this adaptation has lost none of the original's wit and romance, nor its wonderfully skewed presentation of Austen's characters and style. I'm absolutely delighted to be bringing this highly energised and hilarious piece to the NVT. *Chris Gates*

Judey Bignell (writer)

Judey graduated from the University of Sussex with a Master's degree in Creative and Critical Writing, for which her final dissertation was a full length version of *Match and Matrimony*, designed to be a Jane Austen parody musical. She is a director, writer and actor, and has written various other projects including an adult pantomime, murder mystery dinner performances, and several short plays for Cast Iron Theatre. *From A to B* (2013), her first short play, was a shortlisted finalist in the Worthing WOW festival.

Chris Gates (director)

This is Chris's third time as director. He adapted and directed a sell out production of *Woyzeck* in the 2018 Brighton Fringe, and he also directed *Ubu Roi*, which appeared in the Paris Dreams Before Dawn festival. He is currently directing a one man show for the Edinburgh festival called *Dancing In The Moonlight: A Play About Phil Lynott*. Chris graduated from The Academy Of Creative Training in 2016, and hopes to continue working in the arts until either he wins a BAFTA, or is able to steal someone else's.

James Bennison (Sam)

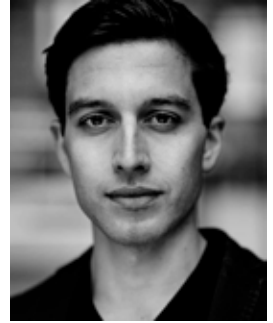
James has been on the stage since he was 11 years old and enrolled in Playbox Theatre Company in Warwickshire, both acting and performing comedy. Since then he has won the IYAF Brighton Fringe Stand Up Comedy Award, written and performed the hit children's show *Doktor James's Academy Of Evil*, and has been involved with Cast Iron Theatre's short plays evenings and Most Curious Productions Brighton Fringe show *Hunters of Ghost Hall*.



Matt Davies (Father Andrew)

This is Matthew's fifth production at NVT following his role as Ray in *Lone Star* (2019).

Previous roles at NVT include Liam in *Bad Jews* (2018), Schwarz in *Lulu* (2017) and Philip Welch in *The Deep Blue Sea* (2017). Last year Matthew was Benjamin Braddock in *The Graduate* (2018) and Willoughby in *Sense and Sensibility* (2018) over at the Brighton Little Theatre.



Chris Gates (all the men)

When not too busy directing or writing, Chris has acted in a wide variety of roles, from classical and contemporary plays to devised theatre and improvisation; last year he performed a month-long stand-up show in the Edinburgh Fringe, and earlier this year he played Jake in *Further Education* at the Brighton Fringe. He last appeared at the NVT in *Anna Christie* in 2017. When asked to describe the experience of directing and acting in *Match and Matrimony*, Chris summed up the experience in two words, one of which was 'challenging'; the other is not suitable for publication.



Chris Knight (Sydney)

This is Chris Knight's fifth production at the NVT. Previous credits include *The Homecoming* (2017), *Antigone* (2017), *Lulu* (2017) and *Bad Jews* (2018). Chris will be attending The Academy of Live and Recorded Arts from September for a BA Acting course.



Emma Lillie Lees (Evelyn)

Emma Lillie trained at East 15 Acting School and is a regular corporate and voiceover performer. She has performed in Fringe venues across London and Edinburgh and has appeared in numerous commercials, features and award nominated shorts. No stranger to Austen, she has written and starred in an adaptation of one of Austen's juvenilia works at The Soho Theatre and at The Theatre Royal Bath. This is her first appearance with NVT.



Justine Smith (Mrs Phelps)

Justine recently completed a two-year course at École Philippe Gaulier. Before that her performances include roles in *Cloud Nine* and *Picnic*, both directed by Scott Williams for the Impulse Company in 2015, and she has regularly performed at the Brighton Fringe.



Emmie Spencer (Elsa)

Emmie has appeared in several productions at the NVT, most recently as The Woman in *The Father* (2019), Bea in *Happy Now?* (2018), Daphna in *Bad Jews* (2018), and Hester Collyer in *The Deep Blue Sea* (2017). Recent appearances elsewhere include *Voices From Home* at the Old Red Lion Theatre, Islington (2018), Broken Silence Theatre's *Bug Camp* (Winner of Best New Play at Brighton Fringe 2017) and Matron in Kasabian's *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* inspired music video "You're In Love With A Psycho" (Sony Music 2017).



Victoria Thomson (Amy, Kitty)

Victoria is making her debut at New Venture Theatre performing in two of the plays in the short play festival, *Hope that Plays a Tune Alone* and *Agency*. Her most recent performances include three roles in *Plaza Suite* for which she won Best Supporting Actress at the Arts Council Awards 2018 and Paulina in *Death and the Maiden* earlier this year. She is delighted to be involved with such a talented cast and crew for this festival and thrilled to be part of the New Venture family.



NVT Acting Class

Monday evenings at 7.30pm for all levels of acting skills. It will cost you just £5.00 per session (£2.50 for NVT Members). First visit is FREE!

Become an NVT Sponsor

Advertise your business to hundreds of local residents with NVT from only £250. For a range of print and web publicity options and opportunities for free show tickets, please contact: fundraising@newventure.org.uk

Contacting the NVT

For ticket and performance enquiries only, call the Box Office: 01273 746118, or email: boxoffice@newventure.org.uk

All other enquiries: 01273 808353

Supporting NVT

We are a membership club, founded in 1947. We perform established plays, both classical and contemporary, and are a showcase for new writing. If you are interested in joining us, please pick up a membership form in the foyer.

In 1983, NVT bought the freehold of this listed Victorian building which needs constant investment to maintain its integrity. To keep NVT going, we rely on the generosity of the community, to provide donations that are essential to the upkeep of the building and the refurbishment of the main auditorium.

For more information on how you can support NVT. Please contact: fundraising@newventure.org.uk



FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS

2019

Friday 4th to Saturday 12th October

Gabriel

by Moria Buffini

directed by Gerry McCrudden

Friday 1st to Saturday 9th November

Fen

by Caryl Churchill

directed by Ian Amos

www.ticketsource.co.uk/newventuretheatre

Many thanks to our current donors and our special appreciation to our major anonymous donor.

Youth Theatre

(11 to 17 year olds)

Every Friday, 4.30pm to 6.30pm, during term time.

The sessions are led by experienced actors, directors, writers and teachers. The first session is free so you can come and try it out before committing. No experience is necessary and everyone is welcome.

For further information, see www.newventure.org.uk/youththeatre

For enquiries, please contact: youththeatre@newventure.org.uk

