

A NEW VENTURE THEATRE PRODUCTION 2014

HAY FEVER

by Noel Coward



NVT

**NEW
VENTURE
THEATRE**

Bedford Place,
Brighton BN1 2PT


PERFORMANCES:

Fri 31st Oct - Sat 8th Nov 7.45 pm

Sun Matinee 2.30pm (No Sun/Mon eves)

ONLINE BOOKING: www.newventure.org.uk/tickets

BOX OFFICE INFORMATION: 01273 746118

 @nvt_brighton

THEATRE ◀
NEW WRITING ◀
CLASSES ◀
LICENSED BAR ◀

60p

Registered Charity No. 268627



HAY FEVER

Noel Coward self-deprecatingly described his delicious comedy "*it has no plot at all, and remarkably little action*". Despite his protestations it is considered one of his best plays and a personal favourite of his.

The Bliss family are by any measure a tad eccentric and avant-garde. Without mentioning it to each other David Bliss, a novelist, his wife Judith, a retired actress, their son Simon and daughter Sorel each invite a weekend guest to stay. Misunderstandings and tempers flare as Judith's new flame and David's newest literary 'inspiration' come to visit. Their children and their amours follow suit. The Bliss family's weekend inevitability comes to an exhausting and hilarious finale.

Coward penned Hay Fever in 1924. It set the seal on his reputation as a playwright and established him as a craftsman. He later wrote; "*The idea came to me suddenly in the garden, and I finished it in about three days, a feat which later on, when I had become news value, seemed to excite gossip writers inordinately...*". Laurence Olivier applied for a part in the touring version but did not get that call back.

Along with Hay Fever many of Coward's works including Private Lives, Relative Values, Design for Living, Present Laughter and Blithe Spirit remain firmly in the theatrical repertoire. They are rarely out of production. So we thought now was the time to bring it back to the NVT after a gap of 31 years since last staged in our theatre.

Given the current commemorations marking the Centenary of the First World War it is interesting to reflect that this play - written in the years following the war makes no mention or reference to it. No doubt part of a deliberate attempt to put all the sadness behind them.

Coward reflected "*Hay Fever is far and away one of the most difficult plays to perform that I have ever encountered. I am very much attached to Hay Fever. I enjoyed writing it, and I have frequently enjoyed watching it*". So no pressure then! I am delighted to have worked with our talented Creative Crew and Cast as they helped bring Hay Fever to The Theatre Upstairs.



Gerry McCrudden - Director

Since coming to Brighton, Gerry has directed a number of plays at the NVT including; 'The Winslow Boy', 'Biloxi Blues' and 'Dancing at Lughnasa'. He has also appeared in 'The Weir' and the 'The Lieutenant of Inishmore' at Brighton Little Theatre as well as 'The Building' and 'The Herbal Bed' at NVT. Next year he also plans to direct 'Best of Friends' at the BLT.



CAST ORDER OF APPEARANCE

| | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Sorel Bliss | Lex Lake |
| Simon Bliss | David Eaton |
| Clara | Sheelagh Baker |
| Judith Bliss | Nikki Dunsford |
| David Bliss | Gerry Wicks |
| Sandy Tyrell | Ben Pritchard |
| Myra Arundel | Red Gray |
| Richard Greatham | Richard Conolly |
| Jackie Coryton | Naomi Horsfall |

*The action of this three act play takes place in the Hall of the Bliss's House at Cookham.
There will be two intervals.*

PRODUCTION TEAM

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Director : | Gerry McCrudden |
| Production Manager : | James Macauley |
| Assistant Production Manager : | Anja Schultz |
| Stage Manager : | Dennis Cumming |
| Assistant Stage Managers : | Barry Purchase, James Camp, Igor Goran Macukat |
| Set Designer : | Xeli Perez |
| Assistant Set Designer : | Giulia Gubernati |
| Set Construction : | George Walter, Tomasz Bareniecki, Kilian Rodriguez, Ignacio Antoranz, Richard Gamper |
| Costume Design : | Hepzibah Sessa |
| Costume Assistants : | Liz Miller, Lorena Maldonado |
| Lighting Design & Rigging : | Strat Mastoris |
| Sound Design : | Emilio Pascual |
| Special Effects : | Rick Moore, Mark Green |
| Lighting Operators : | Alex Epps, James Macauley |
| Sound Operators : | Emilio Pascual |
| Props : | Dennis Cumming |
| Upholsterer : | Christopher Jessop |
| Photography : | Strat Mastoris, Tamsin Fraser |
| Poster & Programme Design : | Tamsin Fraser |
| Bar Performance : | Chris Stubbs, Michael Stubbs |
| Marketing : | Dan Walker, |
| Twitteratrix : | Jane Clarke |
| Artists Artwork : | Aldo Oliver Henriquez, Damian McCrudden, Paul Macauley |
| Technical Manager : | Chris Pugh |



Lex Lake - Sorel Bliss

This is Lex's second production with the NVT having been involved in the 10 minute plays in 2013. She has recently played Head Girl Clare Baumont in Brighton Little Theatre's production of 'Daisy Pulls it Off'.

When not treading the boards, Lex co presents and produces Brighton Moon Radio Show for Brighton and Hove Community Radio.

David Eaton - Simon Bliss

David has had a wonderful time playing Simon Bliss in the New Venture Theatre's production of 'Hay Fever'. This is David's third production with the company, previously playing Edward in 'The Building' and Wilfred Owen in 'Not About Heroes'. He would like to thank his friends and family for their support and encouragement over the years.



Sheelagh Baker - Clara

One of Sheelagh's many delights in being a member of NVT is the challenge of a joyful mix of accents which are needed for specific roles. Just recently she has needed Estuary Essex for a vitriolic Mother 'The Anniversary', a Scottish Washer Woman 'The Steamie', New York characters 'Decade' and now, with a fresh new accent, a family treasure.



Nikki Dunsford - Judith Bliss

Nikki was trained at the Royal Ballet School and was a professional dancer for 15 years. In the last 10 years her acting credits include 'My Fair Lady' (Theatre Royal) 'Romeo and Juliet' (Minack Theatre) 'A Murder is Announced', 'Lady Windemere's Fan', 'Festen', 'Glorious', 'Calendar Girls' and 'The Boyfriend' for BLT. Her debut at NVT was 'The Winslow Boy'. She is filled with excitement and trepidation to be playing Judith Bliss in 'Hay Fever'.

Gerry Wicks - David Bliss

A long standing member of the Brighton Little Theatre (a few streets away) this is Gerry's first appearance with the New Venture Theatre, and follows a welcome trend of closer ties between the two theatres. He appeared in 'Hay Fever' at the 'BLT' a few seasons ago, but couldn't resist the temptation of auditioning for the play again, to relive the huge enjoyment it creates for both cast and (hopefully) audiences.



Ben Pritchard - Sandy Tyrell

Ben is an actor, writer and stand up. An NVT stalwart, he has appeared in such shows as 'A View From The Bridge', 'Bouncers', 'American Buffalo', and this year's Brighton Fringe phenomenon, 'Hedwig and The Angry Inch'. Having also appeared in 'The Full Monty' earlier this year, a Noel Coward seems like the natural progression (?!).



Red Gray - Myra Arundel

Red's recent roles at NVT have included Kate 'Old Times' and Susanna 'The Herbal Bed'. Her next role after Myra will be Felicity in 'The Ealing Inheritance' at Brighton Festival Fringe 2015.

Next year will see Red in performances of Jukebox Opera 'In and Out of Love' and with 20 piece contemporary jazz outfit Studio9Orchestra.

Red runs her own part-time Theatre Arts School and Vocal Teaching Practice.

Richard Conolly - Richard Greatham

Richard started his Sussex theatre adventures at the NVT five years ago as a cross-dressing vicar in 'The Lying Kind'. Since then he has knocked about stages, castles, fields and beaches in Brighton, Burgess Hill, Hurstpierpoint, Lewes, Worthing and back, taking in farces, musicals and Shakespeare.

After returning to the NVT to do backstage stuff for 'Decade', he is delighted to return to this theatre's stage.



Naomi Horsfall - Jackie Coryton

This is Naomi's first performance with NVT and she says it has been a wonderful experience! "The play has had me laughing in every rehearsal without exception and the cast have been great to work with."

Previously Naomi has been involved in small productions of; 'A Doll's House', 'Billy Liar', 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', 'Animal Farm' and 'Our Country's Good'.

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Thanks to; David Lilly of Simply Stained Glass www.simply-stained.co.uk for his art deco graphics, Kevin Baldock of Moss Bros, Aimas Lebanese & Middle Eastern Restaurant, Nigel Wicken, Steve Adams and Margaret Skeet at Brighton Little Theatre, Tim McQuillen-Wright, Jay Chappell, Gladrags, Jackie Crier of South Coast Costumes, Poppy Swain, Allan Cardew, Dan Holloway, Sam Harris, Michael James, Sophie Nunns, The New Venture Angels, All of the Front of House Team.



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Contacting the NVT

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NVTYT - NVT Youth Theatre

NVT welcomes all young people (11-17) with a passion for or an interest in theatre.
 Fridays 4.30-6.30pm.

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!

Become a Sponsor

£250: Advertise in our brochure, 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.

Membership

Full (company) membership - £25 a year. Full participation, discount on tickets & newsletter. Student/Unwaged - £13 a year. As above... *Proof of status is required.*

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

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which needs constant investment to maintain its integrity. To keep NVT going we need your financial support, either to add to our regular sponsors (Annual package £250) or why not become an Angel, Archangel or even Archangel Gabriel to help us support the current and future improvements to our theatre. Our Angels have proven to be generous in the assistance they give us. For further information please contact the Angels Coordinator Gerry McCrudden: gerrymccrudden@hotmail.com. If you are a UK tax payer your donation will also benefit from Gift Aid.