

# The Herald

Spring 2010 Newsletter



So, volcanic ash, eh? It's been a funny few months since the last newsletter.... First there was the frozen two step – snow, snow, thick thick snow, and now the suspiciously auspicious sunshine. Not that any of us noticed (?) too much – we were all busy learning lines, making sets, doing warm-ups.

You know, business as usual...

In this edition....

Our latest success!

Upcoming social events

Bits and bobs



# TOP THAT!

Fresh from The Electric Theatre, reeking of After Eights and Obsession comes this... Of course I'm referring to The Heralds' latest production: *Top Girls* by Carol Churchill, directed by Jane MacIntyre. 3 months of intensive character, physical and vocal work paid off with a resulting production that delighted audiences, provoking thought and laughter in equal measure.

## Notes from the cast....

I have been keen to do this play for a number of years, and for two reasons: firstly because it's a play which presents a true challenge to all involved (*so rare*) and secondly, for the chance to work with Jane MacIntyre.

I wasn't disappointed! Jane is one of those rare directors that not only knows exactly what she wants from day 1 (in terms of the overall effect of the production), but she also knows a thousand and one ways of getting it out of you. Every rehearsal was an opportunity not just to develop our performances but to develop ourselves as actors. When we stepped out onto that terrifying square, we not only knew exactly what we were doing, but why, and how. There's not one of us that has come away from "Top Girls" without feeling a greater depth of skill.

Plus, it was fun and I adored working with my fellow Top Girls! For instance, I will never again be able to listen to "Echo Beach" without memories of mad dancing in the wings with the wonderful Kelsey! Jane MacIntyre is a joy to work with and I know all of us would jump at the chance to work with her again!

Thérésa Hedges (*Dull Gret/Angie*)

I've always wanted to act in the round. I love theatre as a workshop space and by having minimal scenery/props it meant that the audience had to concentrate on the language and the characters. It was very much a woman's play but engaged a wider audience whom I know could not help but discuss its themes, if only to work out the relationship between Act I and the rest of the play!

Jane MacIntyre was an inspiration to work with, encouraging us to bond as a company. Everyone got on so well, supporting each other. All girls together! I'm proud to have been part of it.

Elaine Brace (*Isabella Bird/Mrs Kidd*)



Here's what some of the audience had to say:

"I went to see Top Girls on the opening night with 3 friends and thoroughly enjoyed the performance. I was not familiar with the play so was grateful for the information on the programme, especially for Act 1. Seeing the play performed in the round was also different to other plays that I have seen at the Electric Theatre but it worked very well, with the action taking place on a raised stage, and making me really focus all the actors. I thought that the characterisation and performances from all the actors were outstanding. When I saw that the play had two intervals I thought that maybe it would be a little long and drawn out but it wasn't like that at all. My only criticism might be the use of strong language, which at times seemed a little unnecessary. We spent the whole journey home talking about the acting and also the story lines and recommended it to our work colleagues the following day."

Claire Jackson



"Thoroughly enjoyed the play. Superb acting by all the cast, you must have been exhausted by Saturday evening!"

Penny Merryfield

"This one of those occasions when you forget you are watching 'amateur theatre' because it's just great theatre. "Top Girls" is a wonderful play: at turns thought-provoking, funny, moving and always surprising. Really interesting to see in-the-round done at the Electric - it works very well and makes the space much more intimate than when it's used traditionally. A very strong cast all given the opportunity to flex their acting muscles to the full."

Rachel Stanton



“Top Girls was THP’s first ‘in-the-round’ production at The Electric Theatre; a great success but not without its challenges.

Stunning performances and excellent characterisation were brought to life under the skilful direction of Jane MacIntyre, with the audience in close proximity to the action.

It would be unfair to single out any individual performances for noteworthy praise as it was an ensemble piece of theatre. There was total focus and concentration by the whole cast which made the characters completely believable – even some of the more historically fictitious ones!

As with all Herald Players productions backstage work was competently and efficiently managed by all crew members concerned. The costumes looked very authentic and the simple set did not detract from the superb acting.

The only difficulty for the audience was that in some of the more static scenes the actors could not be seen or were masked by others, due in part to the raised stage. Perhaps the audience’s experience would not have been so compromised if higher tiered seating had been possible and the stage made level.

But the Herald Players have every right to be proud of yet another outstanding production of quality theatre in Guildford.”

Richard Seymour

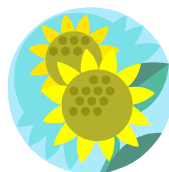
# SUMMER PRODUCTION



## ROUND AND ROUND THE GARDEN

Performance Dates: **23 July - 31 July 2010**

Venue: **Castle Grounds**


The events of one weekend as seen from the Garden. In which Ruth thoroughly confuses Tom - Tom succeeds in asking Annie - Annie’s offered a glimpse of Norman's pyjamas - Norman tells Sarah stories by moonlight - Sarah disapproves of Reg's outdoor sports - which lead to rolling in the grass (if not the hay)!




 AUGUST 1<sup>ST</sup> – AGM   
Yes, that is the day of the get-out.

Come along for fun, views and dismantling. And food. The plan is to have the RARTG get-out then move seamlessly into our Annual General Meeting, hopefully in the Castle Grounds. Unless the squirrels object. Should be a good day.

### social events

 Time to break bread together... Join us at the Seahorse in Shalford, May 10<sup>th</sup>. Please let Anne Leggett know at [anneleggett41@googlemail.com](mailto:anneleggett41@googlemail.com) whether you're a 'yay' or a 'neigh' (is that pun too tenuous?)

 MDS have their production of John Osborne's "Look Back In Anger" at the Electric Theatre from 12 - 15 May.

### other news

Want to support amateur drama? Of course you do! Here's a shameless plug for the Friends of the Electric Theatre. Join today. You know it makes sense... And only £10!  
Contact [janemacintyre@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:janemacintyre@hotmail.co.uk) for details.

### bits and bobs

To respond to any/all of the below, send me an email at: [spookypurple7@hotmail.com](mailto:spookypurple7@hotmail.com) or leave a comment on our Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=13420116180&v=info>

- 📧 Ever wanted to rule the world? Have power over all you survey? Well, can't help you on that one – but Stage Managing/ASMin'g comes pretty close. Interested? Get in touch!
- 📧 Do you have anything you're burning to have included in the next newsletter? Get it to me by 5pm, 20 June.

The next Herald will be winging its way to you at the beginning of July.

