

ttc



TEDDINGTON THEATRE CLUB PRESENTS AN AMATEUR PRODUCTION
BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH SAMUEL FRENCH LIMITED

Dinner

By Moira Buffini

Directed by Harry Medawar

Sun 11 May – Sat 17 May 2014

£1.50



Hampton Hill Playhouse

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90 High Street
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www.hamptonhillplayhouse.org.uk

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

For reasons of safety, glassware must NOT be taken into any part of the auditorium.

Latecomers will be admitted at the first convenient moment provided that no interruption or distraction to the performers might be caused.

All gangways, passageways and stairways must be kept free from obstruction. Persons are not permitted to sit or stand in any gangway.

The taking of photographs and the making of sound and/or visual recordings in the auditorium are not permitted.

An induction loop system is installed in the Main Auditorium to assist those who use hearing aids with the relevant setting.

Wheelchair positions are available in both Stalls and the Balcony. The Box Office Manager will be happy to discuss your requirements.

TTC Ltd, as managers of the Playhouse, reserves the right to refuse admission and to make alterations to the programme and cast without notice.

Reflections on Dinner

It was a few years ago, on one of my frequent trawls through the shelves of the second-hand bookshops on the Charing Cross Road, when I first came across a battered copy of Moira Buffini's *Dinner*. I knew immediately that I wanted to direct it. Quite simply, I loved it and not only because it appeared to be set in Hampton! As I had flicked through the pages, there were distinct echoes of an old edition of Desert Island Discs that had recently been repeated on BBC 4 Extra. Applauding myself on my brilliance, I knew that I knew precisely what Moira Buffini was doing with *Dinner*.

And I was of course entirely wrong.

Despite containing an explicit reference to the castaway in question, it was simply impossible that there could have been any connection between the programme I had heard and Moira Buffini's play for the simple reason that the former was broadcast almost a year after the play had opened.

So much for directors' insight. But as the marriage of the castaway in question began to unwind in an extraordinarily public way just after the announcement of TTC's 2014 season, that original thought came to mind once more together with a curious observation about the number and nature of the characters in *Dinner* and *Dante's Inferno*, the book selected by my irrelevant castaway to go with the collected Shakespeare and The Bible.

And there was a further echo of Desert Island Discs when, shortly after we began our rehearsals, I discovered that Moira Buffini had rewritten the ending of *Dinner* for the West End run – not because one critic had described the original as preposterous but because Buffini had felt the original had been affected by the recent birth of her first child - "*As a writer, what you lose when you've just had a baby is sharpness and clarity. You're not getting any sleep. Your mind is totally elsewhere. It was a good experience but it was strange and exhausting*". For me the second ending was perfect because it provided the final link in the chain, an explicit connection with the luxury selected by my entirely irrelevant castaway. It is the second version you will see this evening.

So much for coincidence, though you may have fun trying to identify the castaway in question from our production and then like to search for the programme on the internet.

The original production of *Dinner* was directed by Fiona Buffini, the writer's sister. It opened in November 2002 in the intimate space of the Loft at the Royal National Theatre. Starring Dame Harriet Walter and Nicholas Farrell, the production was unanimously praised by the only critics who count and in 2003, after transferring to the West End, *Dinner* went on to be nominated for the Olivier Award for Best Comedy, losing out to a play by Martin McDonagh.

Dinner is Moira Buffini's fifth play as a professional writer - her first - *The Fantasy Life of Gilbert Cunliffe* - was written when she was only 14. *Dinner* was written when her daughter Bridie was six months old and she would later described the process of writing the play as curiously close to birth - "I've never had an experience like it: it literally fell out of me on to the paper". Inspired - if that is the word - by the destruction of the Twin Towers in September 2001 to write about "a world out of joint", Buffini said she "deliberately made the characters in *Dinner* intelligent, educated, liberal, selfish, miserable people, with a spiritual and moral vacuum at their heart".

Undeniably then, hers is a unique and subversive sense of humour. It pervades *Dinner* and much of her other work not least *Handbagged*, a hilarious and hugely inventive comedy about the relationship between HM Queen and Margaret Thatcher which was recently recognised with an Olivier award and continues to play in the West End. Buffini has also written several filmscripts including *Tamara Drewe* and *Byzantium*, and she is a member of the Monsterists, an important group of British writers that includes Richard Bean and Sarah Woods and is dedicated to writing ambitious, purposeful drama that can crowd out the classics and reverse the trend for new drama to be smallscale.

As Buffini sees it, the Monsterists' motive and mission are as vital as it gets - "If this generation fails to produce work of scale and depth, so that all we've got are plays by dead writers starring people from TV, then theatre will ultimately die."

I fervently believe that something like this is true of amateur theatre - if a play isn't challenging, it isn't worthwhile - and very much hope you will enjoy our production of *Dinner*. I am very grateful to everyone in the cast and crew and especially Heather Morgan.

Harry Medawar



Nicolas Farrell, as Lars, and Harriet Walter, as Paige, in the original production of *Dinner*.

Act 1

Aperitif

The Starter



Act 2

The Main

The Dessert



Setting

The White Lodge
Oak Avenue
Hampton



Special Thanks



With thanks to the National Lobster Hatchery and Sandys of Twickenham.
Thanks to Jo Medawar for the loan of numerous props
Special thanks to Wesley Henderson Roe for advice;
Heather Morgan for inspiration;
and to Moira Buffini for writing *Dinner*.

Cast List

The Waiter	<i>Luke Linton</i>
Paige	<i>Amanda-Jade Tyler</i>
Lars	<i>Nigel Cole</i>
Wynne	<i>Helen Geldert</i>
Hal	<i>Marcus Ezekiel</i>
Sian	<i>Kelly Wood</i>
Mike	<i>Paul Furlong</i>



Cast from left to right:
Paul Furlong, Helen Geldert, Nigel Cole, Harry Medawar (standing), Luke Linton (standing),
Kelly Wood, Marcus Ezekiel, Amanda-Jade Tyler



This amateur production of *Dinner*, by Moira Buffini, is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French Ltd.
The video and/or audio recording of this performance by any means whatsoever are strictly prohibited.

Crew List

Set Construction	<i>Alan Corbett</i>
ASM	<i>Fiona Collins</i>
Director	<i>Harry Medawar</i>
Sound	<i>John Pyle</i>
ASM	<i>Juliette Sexton</i>
Wardrobe	<i>Margaret Williams</i>
Hairdresser	<i>Maggie Wilkins</i>
Lighting	<i>Paul Nicholson</i>
Stage Manager	<i>Sue Birks</i>



The Bar is open after the show

The foyer bar remains open after the show and is well used by cast, crew and members. We extend a very warm welcome to everyone who has been to see the performance - it is an ideal opportunity to meet the actors you have seen performing, find out more about our theatre and our club or simply relax over a drink.



**Please
Turn off Your
Mobile Phones**

Please don't spoil the performance

We respectfully request all members of the audience to make sure that mobile phones are switched off during the performance. Thank you.

Cast Biographies



Amanda-Jade Tyler

Amanda-Jade joined TTC in 2004 and has enjoyed many roles which include: Helene in *Festen*, Charlotte in *Private Fears in Public Places*, Bertha Mason in *After Mrs Rochester*, (2010 Swan Adjudicators Award), Kitty in *The Drowsy Chaperone* and Theresa in *Boy Gets Girl*. Amanda-Jade is delighted to be playing the role of Paige and working with the director and the rest of the cast and crew in this challenging and exciting production.



Helen Geldert

This is Helen's third TTC production, having previously appeared as Mimi in 'Allo 'Allo and Daphne in *Present Laughter*. Other roles at Hampton Hill Playhouse are Woman in *A Woman of No Importance*, Anne Bennett in *Dead Guilty* and Monica in *Rehearsal for Murder*. Helen also recently played Olivia in *A Chalk Garden* with Richmond Shakespeare Society. Helen has found this play fascinating and has enjoyed working with such a great team.



Kelly Wood

This is Kelly's first appearance for TTC in an acting role though she co-directed *Women of Troy* in 2012 and *A Night of Dark Intent* in 2013. She played Lisa in *Dead Funny* for OHADS in 2013 and earlier this year co-directed OHADS' production of *Follow Me*, a two-hander about the last days of Ruth Ellis. Kelly's professional credits include Clare in *I Never Used to Be Like This*, nominated for best film in Rave On Air 2009, and *The Inconsiderate Aberrations of Billy the Kid*.



Luke Linton

Following early acting experience at school where he unsuccessfully lied about having done his homework and took part in the obligatory nativity play, Luke joined TTC a few years ago. After appearing in *Women of Troy* as a soldier, Luke was delighted to be cast in *Dinner* and he is looking forward to some more vocal roles in the future.

Cast Biographies



Marcus Ezekiel

Marcus is delighted to be playing Hal in *Dinner*. Hal is delighted to be invited to Dinner as the only true intellectual in the room! Recent credits include Michael in *Limbo*, Etcetera Theatre, Camden, various parts in *La Ronde*, City Lit Theatre, Judge Ives in *Judgment at Nuremberg* by Abby Mann at the Bridewell Theatre and Pinchwife in TTC's recent production of *The Country Wife*.



Nigel Cole

Nigel has been dabbling in theatre since the age of 12. Favourite roles include Gethin Price in *The Comedians*, Rev Hale in *The Crucible*, Carter in *Simpatico*, Roo Webber in *Summer of the 17th Doll*, Dudley in *Mary Stuart*, Peron in *Evita*, Treves in *The Elephant Man* and Mack Sennett in *Mack and Mabel*. He's also directed many shows including *Boy Gets Girl* (TTC), *Privates on Parade* (TTC), *La Cage aux Folles* (BROS) and will direct *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice* for TTC this Autumn.



Paul Furlong

After a break of nearly two years, Paul is delighted to be involved in a sixth production at Hampton Hill Playhouse. A step away from the usual genre, this excellent black comedy has been a superb experience working with a fantastic cast, crew and Director. Paul's TTC credits include performances in *The Elephant Man*, *After Mrs Rochester*, *After Miss Julie* and a guest 'appearance' from the lighting rig as the crowd-pleasing Tinkerbell in *Peter Pan*!

Crew Biographies

Fiona Collins

Although new to adult theatre, Fiona remembers the devastation of forgetting to don her 'head gear' – a white knitted balaclava with ears - as one of 25 or so 12 year old stoats in *Toad of Toad Hall*, and the shame of creeping off stage! When promoted to The Cook in *Alice in Wonderland* aged 14, Fiona made damn sure she had a baby to throw to the Duchess!

Harry Medawar

This Harry's first production for TTC but he is no stranger to the Playhouse, having directed in the main house and the studio for OHADS and St Mary's Drama Group on numerous occasions, including *Feelgood*, *Dead Funny* and the mind-bending puzzle that was *Audience with Murder*. Most recently, he co-directed *Follow Me* and in 2015 he will be directing *The Collector* by Mark Healy for OHADS. Harry wrote his first play at the age of nine!

John Pyle

John has provided sound for over 100 plays and musicals, including his award winning turn in *Hancock* for OHADS. As well as early roles at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, he has played most tenor/baritone lead roles in the Gilbert & Sullivan repertoire, as well as roles shows as diverse as *Die Fledermaus* in *Die Fledermaus*, Mr Bumble (*Oliver!*), Mushnik (*Little Shop of Horrors*), Oliver Warbucks (*Annie*) and Scrooge in TTC's award-winning show.

Juliette Sexton

This is Juliette's first production with TTC and the first time she has worked in a backstage role. At the Broadbent Theatre, Wickenby, she appeared in numerous pantomimes – including the eponymous *Little Red Riding Hood* - and in plays including *Steel Magnolias*, as Shelby, and Carol in *The Truth about Women* and *What Brutes Men Are*.

Paul Nicholson

Paul has been practising stage lighting since 1975. The majority of his work has been with amateur theatre companies including St Mary's Drama Group and RSS. He has lit four shows at the Playhouse and six outdoor shows at Marble Hill House, The Minack and York Gardens including *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 2010 for which he was awarded a Wild Swan award for lighting design. For further information see www.brightideaslightingdesign.com

Sue Birks

Sue loves drama on and off stage, and has stage managed many productions for numerous local amateur theatre companies. As an actress, Sue has twice been nominated for a Swan and she won the Best Supporting Player Award at the 2011 Elmbridge Drama Festival in *A Bridge Too Far*. Most recently she appeared as Ernie in *Rehearsal for Murder* for St Mary's Drama Group.

Teddington Theatre Club Ltd

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Teddington Theatre Club acknowledges with grateful thanks the practical and financial support given by local residents, businesses and community groups.



Teddington Theatre Club is affiliated to the Little Theatre Guild of Great Britain and to **artsrichmond**.
This production is entered for the **artsrichmond** Swan Awards for Drama and Musicals.

Coming Soon

at Hampton Hill Playhouse

The Linden Tree

By J.B. Priestley

A captivating insight into a family feuding over their father's future

Sun 15 Jun 2014 – Sat 21 Jun 2014

Coward Studio

My Boy Jack

By David Haig

If any question why we died, tell them, because our fathers lied

Sun 29 Jun 2014 – Sat 5 July 2014

Main Auditorium



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Membership line: 020 8287 2663**

Postal bookings are accepted on publication of the booking form.

Telephone enquiries open 2 weeks before each production.

Call: 0845 838 7529 (10am - 8pm)

For up-to-date information on TTC and the Playhouse check our website

www.teddingtontheatreclub.org.uk

Teddington Theatre Club is a Club Theatre open to members and their guests. It is easy to join as an audience member, or as a full performing and technical member.

Each month, details of forthcoming productions are mailed to each member together with Theatre, our club magazine and newsletter.

All are encouraged to help with the Front of House, Bar and Marketing activities of the Club and Playhouse. To find out more please visit our website www.teddingtontheatreclub.org.uk, call our Membership Secretary on 020 8287 2663 or complete one of the forms you will find in the Foyer.