



ttc

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

Equus

By Peter Shaffer

Directed by John Buckingham

Sun 25 Jan – Sat 31 Jan 2015

£1.50



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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.

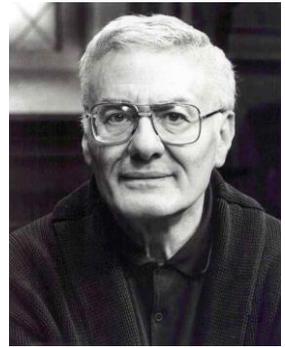
An induction loop system is installed in the Main Auditorium to assist those who use hearing aids with the relevant setting.

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.

Peter Shaffer

The Playwright



Peter Shaffer was born in Liverpool in 1926. He studied history at Cambridge University, and during and after World War Two was variously employed as coal miner, bookstore clerk, and assistant at the New York Public Library. He secured his reputation as a playwright in 1958 with *Five Finger Exercise*, which opened in London and transferred to New York. It was showered with awards and subsequently filmed. His greatest plays became associated with the nascent National Theatre Company and encompass a great range, from philosophical dramas to zany comedies. For example, *The Royal Hunt of the Sun* (1964) presents the tragic conquest of Peru by the Spanish, while *Black Comedy* (1965) is a farce, set during a power cut but performed in full light. *Equus* (1973) won the 1975 Tony Award for Best Play as well as the New York Drama Critics Circle Award. It ran for over 1000 performances on Broadway. He followed this with the equally successful *Amadeus* (1979) which explored the fatal jealousy of Salieri for his rival, Mozart. Many of Shaffer's plays, including *Equus*, have received film adaptations but none - with the possible exception of *Amadeus* (1984), which won eight Academy Awards including "Best Picture" - have captured the essential theatricality of his vision. Shaffer was knighted in 2001.

The Origins of *Equus*

Shaffer alleges that the story behind *Equus*, of a boy who blinded several horses in a stable for no apparent reason, is based on fact. It was told to him by a friend who died before the details could be verified, but Shaffer was so affected by it that he determined "to interpret it in some entirely personal way" in order "to create a mental world in which the deed could be made comprehensible." His research was assisted by "a distinguished child psychiatrist", and he claims to have come to the perception "that psychiatrists are an immensely varied breed". Behind his creation of Dysart, however, are distinct echoes of the anti-psychiatry movement that achieved prominence in the late 1960s, under the influence of such luminaries as R.D. Laing and David Cooper. Therein, madness and psychosis were seen as the manifestation of a disparity between one's own 'true' identity and our identity as 'constructed' by society, including our family. Shaffer had used the template (of a conflict between the 'authenticity' of a younger man and the self-contemptuous cynicism of an older one) previously. Pizarro's encounter with Atahualpa in *The Royal Hunt of the Sun* was now reprised in *Equus* by Dysart and Alan. Later, Shaffer would do it again with Salieri and Mozart in *Amadeus*. Significantly, these three plays constitute Shaffer's major and lasting theatrical achievement.

Equus as Archaeology

Some design thoughts

The text of *Equus* explicitly references the first 1973 National Theatre production, including John Dexter's direction and John Napier's landmark design. This seems to have had a limiting effect on the creativity of many subsequent productions of the play. Too often, these have simply duplicated the design style of that original production; a trend that Shaffer himself anticipated in his preface. In fact, Shaffer's design demands can be reduced

to one simple descriptor, namely "A SQUARE...set on a circle..." This leaves the director/designer exceptional latitude in determining their own aesthetic for any new production. John Dexter (whose aesthetic founding fathers, according to Shaffer, "are Noh Drama and Berthold Brecht: the bare plank; the clear light...") gave us a memorable rotating 'boxing ring' for his Square, but this isn't the only way.

To determine the look of this production, we began first with the text. It is crammed with references to the past; both in an historic and mythic sense. Alan's parental upbringing has filled his mind with a melange of kings and quotes, although the principal influence, through his mother, is biblical. Alan's earliest memories, the domestic tensions and repressions he experiences, together with pure happenstance, lead to his creation of *Equus the God*. *Equus* is an analogue of Christ, but with the presence of the fierce Old Testament Deity not far behind. At first it was tempting to look here for clues for an aesthetic style for the play. However, there is no clear aesthetic through which Alan's vision of *Equus* can be presented to an audience which does not also consider Dysart's vision. As Dysart explores Alan's mind, the *Equus God* is mediated to the audience through Dysart's imagination. Yet, Dysart's imagination continually references Greek culture. Dysart's vision is Hellenic.

The first vital Greek image comes when Dysart relates a dream (Sc. 5) in which he



MASK OF AGAMEMNON
Mycenae 1550–1500 BC

imagines himself as a high priest sacrificing children on an altar. He alludes to a number of specifics "...the so-called mask of Agamemnon found at Mycenae" and "...the lumpy pop-eyed masks, also found..." Describing his own state of mind to Hesther, Dysart claims, "Mentally... I'm in some Doric temple..." (Sc.18). When he describes Alan's ecstatic experience with horses, once again the imagery is Grecian, "I sit looking at pages of centaurs trampling the soil of Argos – and outside my window he is trying to become one, in a Hampshire field!" (Sc.25). The inner conflict in Dysart's mind, as it is played out in his encounter with Alan, is really a dialectic between the Rational and the Ecstatic.



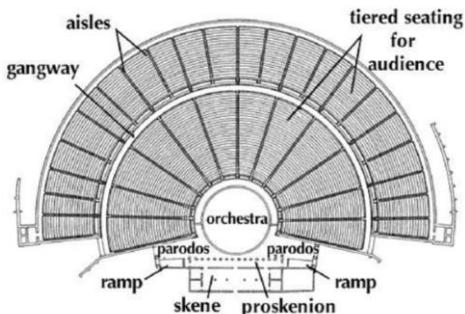
HORSE OF SELENE
from the Parthenon,
Athens 438-432 BC

In European culture this has been conventionally represented through two oppositional Ancient Greek deities, Apollo and Dionysus.

An ancient Grecian look for the play became increasingly irresistible. It was thematically consistent with the play's internal imagery, and simultaneously a reminder of the social function of Tragedy. The very words Drama and Theatre derive from the Greek for "A thing done or performed" and "A place for seeing (i.e. bearing witness)". If we take a

Greek amphitheatre as the timeless Circle, this is the "seeing place", from where other cast members join our audience in bearing witness. What they (and we) watch - the thing done or performed - is Dysart's investigation into and the reenactment of Alan's crime. This takes place in the present on the Square, in the original production presented as a raised (and rotating) wooden platform. More pertinently, this can now be represented as an archaeological dig; not in a realistic sense but, metaphorically, taking us below the surface, since Dysart's explorations are a kind of psychic excavation.

The colour scheme was also determined by the text. The grey stone circle of the amphitheatre was clear enough, but our square excavation into the circle was determined by a line from Dysart's dream. He locates it as occurring on the plain of Argos. "I know it's Argos," he says, "because of the red soil..."(Sc. 5). Interestingly, recent studies by geologists have determined that the Greeks actually chose their temple sites based on the soil. As this was only discovered in 2008, it is almost impossible that Shaffer could have known. Whether he did or not, the colour red seems a highly appropriate signifier for both ancient ritual sacrifice, and for the sanguinary event that triggers Shaffer's drama.



ODEON OF HERODES ATTICUS
Completed 161 AD

John Buckingham

The main action of the play takes place in the
Rokeby Psychiatric Hospital
in Southern England in the early 1970s.



Act One runs for approximately 80 minutes
Act Two runs for approximately 55 minutes.
There is one 20 minute interval.

PLEASE NOTE: This production contains smoking, strobe effect lighting, strong language, full nudity and adult themes and is unsuitable for persons under 15 years.



“One might compare the relations of the ego to the id with that between a rider and his horse...all too often...we find a picture in which the rider is obliged to guide his horse in the direction in which it itself wants to go.”

Sigmund Freud: The Ego and the Id, 1923



Cast and Crew List

Martin Dysart

Alan Strang

Frank Strang

Dora Strang

Hester Salomon

Jill Mason

Harry Dalton

Nurse

Horse

Horse

alternating **Young Horseman/Nugget**

Horse

alternating **Nugget/Young Horseman**

Nigel Cole

Steve Shepherdson

John Wilkinson

Jane Marcus

Annabel Miller

Sophie Hardie

Charles C Halford

Jenny Hobson

Anna Carlson

Rowan D'Albert

Dane Hardie



Director

Production Manager

Assistant Production Manager

Original Music

Movement Director

Set Design

Lighting Design

Lighting Technicians

Video

Sound

Stage Manager

ASM

Props

Wardrobe

Artistic Link

Horse Mask Design

Photography

John Buckingham

Janey Elgey

Darien Skinner

James Bedbrook

Gita Singham-Willis

Trine Taraldsvik

Jean Goodwin

Steph Pang

Malcolm Maclenan

Gary Stevenson

Harry Jacobs

Martin Stonelake

Clive Russell

Vicky Horder

Yvonne Stonelake

Keith Wait

Kerry Bradley

Sarah Carter

Cast Biographies



Nigel Cole

Nigel has been dabbling in theatre since the age of twelve. Roles include Oliver in *Oliver!*, Billy Bigelow in *Carousel*, Jerry in *Zoo Story*, 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*, Aldolpho in *The Drowsy Chaperone*, Mack Sennett in *Mack and Mabel* and Lars in *Dinner*. His directing credits include: *Boy Gets Girl*, *Privates on Parade*, *La Cage Aux Folles* and most recently *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*.



Steve Shepherdson

Steve's main bread and butter is in creative writing, predominantly plays and screenplays. However, having done a few short courses in acting with City Academy and the Hampstead Academy of Acting and Drama, the performing bug caught and he decided to try and audition for TTC. His first role was as Billy in the critically acclaimed *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*. This is his second production but hopefully far from his last.



John Wilkinson

John is delighted to be part of such a strong team for *Equus*. John's first role at TTC was as second murderer in John Buckingham's production of *Richard the Third*, since then he has appeared in *Penny for a Song*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, *Privates on Parade*, *'Allo 'Allo* and *Rat in the Skull*.

Cast Biographies



Jane Marcus

Jane is hoping that being cast as yet another dysfunctional mother is not a reflection on her parenting skills, but rather worryingly, her teenage children all readily agreed that Dora Strang was an ideal role for her. Her last few appearances at The Playhouse have been in OHADS production of *The Graduate*, as Mrs Bates in *Brimstone and Treacle* for TTC, and shortly before that as the irrepressible Lady Fidget in *The Country Wife*. Other notable productions include Hester in *The Deep Blue Sea* at The Mary Wallace Theatre in Twickenham, Joyce in *Last Tango in Little Grimley*, Leanne in *Are You Lonesome Tonight?* and Susan in *Woman in Mind* (OHADS).



Annabel Miller

Annabel has been acting and singing all her life. Born into a musical family she was drawn to the stage at an early age. Roles include Marlene in *Top Girls*, Abigail in *The Crucible*, Sally Bowles in *Cabaret*, as well as key parts in *Sweet Charity*, *MacBeth*, *Grease* and many others. In the last couple of years Annabel has starred in several adverts and if you want a good laugh google her toilet ad for Villeroy and Boch!



Sophie Hardie

Sophie has been a part of TTC from a very young age, first appearing as a little field mouse in *The Wind and the Willows*. Since then she has gone on to play roles such as Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, Belle in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* and most recently Patty in *Brimstone and Treacle*. Sophie has also just made her co directorial debut with David Harrower's *Blackbird* which was seen in the studio last November.

Cast Biographies



Charles C Halford

Charles has been a member of TTC for 17 years. He directed *Daisy Pulls It Off* at The Vera Fletcher Hall and *How the Other Half Loves* at HHP. His roles include appearances in *An Enemy of The People*, *Relative Values*, *On the Razzle*, *Rebecca*, *Trewlawny of the Wells*, *Look Who's Talking*, *Absurd Person Singular*, *Alphabetical Order*, *A Piece of My Mind*, *Tons of Money* and *Festen*. Musicals include *Gypsy*, *Large as Life* and *The Wizard of Oz*.



Jenny Hobson

Jenny trained at the Birmingham School of Speech Training and Dramatic Art, and subsequently played various roles in radio for Midland and London Regions, at the same time as teaching in a Sussex School. Since then she has pursued her lifelong passion for theatre in the amateur world, enjoying comedy and strong drama in equal measure. Over the years she has played many parts, from Electra to Madame Arcati, and from Ayckbourn to Albee. She also directed some thirteen productions for the Sewell Barn Theatre in Norwich where she was a member for 21 years. Jenny has just moved back to Middlesex, and having some years ago been part of another production of *Equus* she has greatly appreciated the warm welcome given to her by Teddington Theatre Club, whilst enjoying retracing old steps in this outstanding piece of theatre.



Anna Carlson

Anna has been involved with productions for both YAT and TTC virtually non-stop for the past four years, during which time she has represented a range of characters of a largely human and exclusively non-equine persuasion. However, hailing from Sweden - the country with the most horses per capita and where 'no' is denoted with a neigh ('nej') - she could not miss this opportunity for physical exploration of animal being; emotional exploration of the human-animal relationship; and, of course, some serious horsing around.

Cast Biographies



Rowan D'Albert

Rowan has worked in voice-over since 1994, appearing in numerous dramatisations of children's novels and the animated feature *The Snow Queen* (1995). In theatre, he has performed at the Edinburgh Fringe and Camden People's Theatre in *The London Thing* (2000) and *Lucky* (2001), both with In Human Form. He joined YAT in 2007 and appeared in many of their productions including *Coming Around Again*, *The Royal Hunt Of The Sun*, *Elizabeth I* and *Faustus*. He studied Drama and Physical Theatre at St Mary's in Twickenham, and has trained additionally with companies such as NIE, Lost Banditos, Hoi-Polloi, Complicité and the Royal Shakespeare Company. In March, he is moving to Japan to teach English and Drama.



Dane Hardie

Dane attended The London Centre for Theatre Studies and is a former British and European Middleweight (185 lbs) Wrestling Champion. He will be completing his British Academy of Dramatic Combat (BADC) Advanced Stage Combat and Fight Directing qualification in 2015. Recent TTC credits include - Acting: Martin Taylor - *Brimstone and Treacle*, Chris - *The City*, Gaston - Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, Allan Bollards - *My Own Show*. Directing: *Arcadia* - Tom Stoppard, *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* - Frank McGuinness, *Bouncers* - John Godber. Fight choreography: *Peter Pan* the Musical, Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, *Blackbird*.



Crew Biographies

John Buckingham

John has worked as a drama teacher, examiner and director for over 35 years. He trained at Rose Bruford and St Mary's, Strawberry Hill, and has a doctorate in Theatre & Performance from Royal Holloway, University of London. *Equus* is the 23rd production he has directed for TTC. At the old Hampton Court Theatre, these included *The Duchess of Malfi*, *Top Girls*, *Mother Courage*, *King Lear*, *Nana* and *Death & the Maiden*. More recent productions at Hampton Hill Playhouse have been *Suddenly Last Summer*, *Speed-The-Plow*, *The Crucible*, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, *Mary Stuart* and *Richard III*.

James Bedbrook

James studied at Morley College and is a bass-player. James is also the bandleader of Teeth and Catenary Key, a songwriter, a composer, an arranger and is currently working on ambient pieces, jazz themes, and concert works. Stage scores that James has worked on include *Electra* (TTC), *Midsummer Night's Dream* (RSS), *Six Characters In Search Of an Author* (TTC). Film scores: *Little Match Girl*, *The Rubaiyat*, *Willow Place*, *Dreams and Recollections*, *The Cat*.

Gita Singham-Willis

Gita has performed in numerous BROS productions since 2005. She has more recently turned to choreography for TTC and BROS, with most recent productions being *Mack and Mabel* at the Minack Theatre in Cornwall, *Privates on Parade* and *La Cage aux Folles* at Hampton Hill Playhouse. She is very happy to have been a part of the *Equus* journey and is very proud of her horses.

Janey Elgey

Janey has been a member of TTC for many years and has worked in various capacities on many productions in that time. She has been production assistant on *After Miss Julie* and *Privates on Parade* for TTC and *La Cage aux Folles* for BROS. Janey has loved working with John Buckingham and his fabulous cast and crew.

Darien Skinner

This is Darien's first production with TTC and he has been working under the expert guidance of Janey as Production Manager. Darien's main career has been as an IT project manager and he is also a volunteer Community First Responder with the London Ambulance Service. Darien is currently running refresher sessions on "emergency first aid" with HHP duty managers and front of house staff.

Crew Biographies

Harry Jacobs

Since Harry's migration from TV to theatre, this is his 13th sound production involvement at Hampton Hill Playhouse, and his second under the direction of John Buckingham. Shakespeare, comedy, drama, musicals and now a play about a young man who has a pathological religious fascination with horses - all show the diverse productions you can expect from working at Hampton Hill Playhouse.

Martin Stonelake

Martin has acted onstage in the past, but now prefers to work exclusively backstage. He has stage-managed a large number of TTC shows, including all of *Equus* director John Buckingham's productions since *The Tempest* in 1977. Martin is a retired engineer, and lives with Yvonne in Whitton.

Jean Goodwin

Jean's first lighting design was for *Mother Courage* in 1987. Her first set design was the kitchen setting for *Miss Julie* two years later. She received Swan Award nominations for her designs for *The Happy Marriage*, *Arsenic and Old Lace* and many more. She won Swan Awards for *The Alchemist*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*. Her previous designs for John have included *The Revenger's Tragedy*, *Mary Stuart* and *Richard III*. Jean was formerly TTC's Artistic Director.

Keith Wait

Keith has broad experience as a producer, but is better known as a writer and director, encompassing the professional, fringe and club theatre stage. He has written over twenty performed plays. At HHP, Keith has directed *The Forest* and *Forever in Trust* and acted last year for TTC as Lambert le Roux in *Pravda*.

Clive Russell

Clive last appeared at the Playhouse as Arthur in *The Accrington Pals*. He was also Tai Chi coach for *Calendar Girls* and Japanese martial arts (Kendo) instructor for *Pravda*.

Yvonne Stonelake

Yvonne has been involved with costumes for many TTC shows, including *Hobson's Choice* and *The Boy Friend* (circa 1980). She then had a break, and has returned this year to do *Equus*. Yvonne is a retired physiotherapist, and lives with Martin in Whitton.

Trine Taraldsvik

Trine has a background in TV Art Direction and Design, and has carried this through to design and set build for TTC. Previous productions include *The Linden Tree and Night of Dark Intent*, and next up is *Proof* in June.

Special Thanks...



John Gilbert, TTC Office



All the volunteers on the Bar, TTC



TTC Box Office, Roberta Cole



Gus Macdonald



Kathryn Smith



Jane and Roger Smith



The Rising Sun



Hampton Methodist Church



Michael Cabot London Classic Theatre



Claygate Horse Stables



Alan Corbett, Terry Stevens, Mike Elgey, Chris Ledger, Trine Taraldsvik, Martin Stonelake and Jack Tidball for their help with set building



Antony Antunes from the RNT Production *War Horse*

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.

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

Alfie

By Bill Naughton

A tale of a cockney lothario and his amorous affairs

Sun 1 March 2015 – Sat 7 March 2015

Coward Studio

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By Amanda Whittington

A life for a life – the Ruth Ellis story

Sun 15 March 2015 – Sat 21 March 2015

Main Auditorium



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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.