



AN AMATEUR PRODUCTION BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH  
SAMUEL FRENCH LTD, A CONCORD THEATRICALS COMPANY

# Cause Célèbre

By Terence Rattigan

Directed by Fiona Smith

Sat 7 Mar – Fri 13 Mar 2020

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Hampton Hill Theatre

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- For reasons of safety, glassware must NOT be taken into any part of the auditorium. Bottled water and ice cream are allowed.
- 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 infra-red hearing assistance system is available in the auditorium but not in the Coward Room. Personal systems with a T-switch will require an additional unit available in the foyer. 'In ear' headsets are also available.
- 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 theatre, reserves the right to refuse admission and to make alterations to the programme and cast without notice.

# Director's Notes

Terence Rattigan's work has gone in and out of favour with theatre critics since his heyday. In the 21st century, the emotionally stunted lives of his middle class, little Englanders were too readily dismissed as irrelevant period pieces. It would be a mistake to see Rattigan's attitudes toward this reticence and repression of emotions as straightforward. There is understanding and compassion for all his characters and their flaws. Love, betrayal, guilt, marital incompatibility, sexual hypocrisy and tumultuous passions that come to breaking point, remain wholly contemporary. The plays themselves will continue to be revived, never losing their place in the hearts of audiences.

The fact that *Cause Célèbre* is rarely performed, may have much to do with its dramaturgical complexity. Originally written as a radio play which was later adapted for stage, it is non-linear in both time and place, with a state-of-flux style and pace that combine to make it quite a staging challenge.

**Fiona Smith**  
Director

**"My name is Alma and Alma is Spanish for soul".**  
Tennessee Williams, *Summer and Smoke*.

# About the Author

Sir Terence Rattigan is one of Britain's finest 20th century playwrights. He was born in London in June 1911. Educated at Harrow and Trinity College Oxford, he served as a flight lieutenant in the RAF from 1940-45.



By 1934 he had become a full-time playwright. His many successful plays include *French Without Tears*, *The Deep Blue Sea*, *The Winslow Boy*, *The Browning Version* and *Separate Tables*.

In 1958 he was awarded a CBE and in 1971 he was knighted for services to the theatre.

*Cause Célèbre*, his final play, is based on the true story of Alma Rattenbury, who in 1935 stood trial with her 18 year old lover George Stoner for the murder of her husband Francis, who was bludgeoned to death in his own home.

Rattigan admitted the character of the steely jury forewoman Edith Davenport, was based upon his mother's unhappy relationship with his father - his mother uncomprehending of male sexuality, his father a serial adulterer, with he himself struggling to be loyal to both sides.

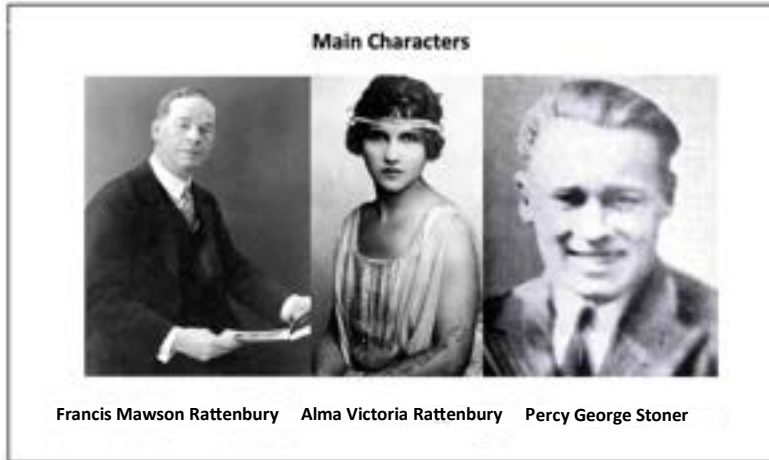
It first aired as a BBC Radio play in October 1975 with Diana Dors as Alma. Subsequently adapted for the stage, it then opened in July 1977 at Her Majesty's Theatre London, starring Glynis Johns. Rattigan checked himself out of hospital to attend the opening night. He died only four months later.

# Cause Célèbre

or

## A Woman of Principle

A **Cause Célèbre** is “....an issue, person or legal trial arousing public attention and controversy”.



Alma Clarke was born in 1897 and grew up in Vancouver, British Columbia. Her first husband Robert Dolling was killed in the First World War. Alma volunteered as a nurse on the western front. At the end of the war she became involved with the married Thomas Packingham. His wife subsequently divorced him for desertion and adultery, leaving them free to marry in 1920. Their son Christopher was born in 1921. The marriage broke down and she and her son returned to Canada to live with her mother. An accomplished pianist and composer of songs, she taught music and gave piano recitals.

In 1924, she met Francis Rattenbury, much older, married with adult children, considered a pillar of polite society. He was born in 1867 in Yorkshire, moving to Canada in 1924 to seek his fortune as an architect. Within a year he had won an open competition to design the Parliament buildings in the capital of BC, Victoria. It was met with widespread approval and resulted in further important commissions.

His wife consented to divorce in 1925 and he and Alma married two

months later, estranging himself from his children permanently. Their son John was born in 1928. Cold shouldered by former friends and business associates in Canada, they decided to start afresh in England, settling in Bournemouth in 1931. The difference in age and temperament between them now began to tell. Their sexual relationship was effectively over, with Francis settled on the ground floor and Alma upstairs.

George Stoner was just 17 when he responded to the following advertisement in the Bournemouth Echo:

**‘Daily willing lad 14-18 for housework. Scout trained preferred. Apply between 11 and 12. Manor Rd Bournemouth.’**

George had left school at the age of 14 and learnt to drive at 15. Somewhat a loner, he did not drink, mix with local lads or have any girlfriends. Within a month he had moved into the **Villa Madeira** (pictured below).



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### **Did you enjoy this production?**

Would you like to be a part of making a show like this happen?

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# Cast

Alma Rattenbury	Mia Skytte-Jensen
Francis Rattenbury/Judge	David Robins
Christopher Rattenbury	Jack Dwyer*
	Charlie McDowell*
Irene Riggs	Genevieve Trickett
George Wood	Jake O'Hare
Edith Davenport	Jane Marcus
John Davenport	Darren McIlroy
Tony Davenport	Jacob Taylor
Stella Morrison	Dionne King
O'Connor	Daniel Wain
Croom-Johnson	Graham Titcombe
Casswell	John Mortley
Montagu	Sue Reoch
Clerk of the Court/Coroner	Liz Salaman
Joan Webster	Heather Mathew
Sergeant Bagwell/Porter	Chris Morris

\*The role of Christopher Rattenbury is shared between these two young actors

# Production Team

Director	Fiona Smith
Production Manager & Set Construction	Steve Wayman
Stage Manager	Ron Hudson
Set Design & Construction	Patrick Troughton
Wardrobe	Zoe Harvey-Lee
Lighting & BAT Link	Mike Elgey
Sound	John Pyle
Rehearsal Prompt	Jenny Hobson
Photographer	Cath Messum
Promo Videographer	Pete Messum
Artistic Link	Daniel Wain
Set Construction	Rob Thirtle, Alan Corbett, Fiona Auty, Ozgur Genca, Rochelle Taylor-Butcher

The action of the play takes place between 1934 and 1935 in Bournemouth and London



# Cast Biographies



**Mia Skytte-Jensen**

Alma Rattenbury

Mia has just had the privilege of acting in the premiere of *Living Memory*, a play written by fellow *Cause Célèbre* cast member Genni. Before that she performed in shows for several local groups including *The Dresser*, *Blythe Spirit*, *The Weir*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The End of the Affair*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *The River*, *Uncle Vanya*, and *Joking Apart*. She even had a solo singing spot in last year's TTC panto *Dick Whittington!* She has wanted to play Alma ever since seeing Anne-Marie Duff in the role at The Old Vic in 2011.

David has long been a fan of Rattigan's plays and was delighted to be offered the opportunity of taking part in this one – who wouldn't be? His previous theatrical outings - generally with RSS - have included Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night*, his own one man show *Lunch Time with Mr Dickens* and as the old gentleman in *The Railway Children*. He also played Tom in the TTC studio production of *After Electra*.



**David Robins**

Francis Rattenbury/  
Judge



**Jack Dwyer**

Christopher Rattenbury

12 year old Jack has been acting and singing since he was four. He has recently completed his Grade 5 Trinity Musical Theatre exam with Distinction and is currently studying for his LAMDA Grade 5 Acting. He's just completed a tour with Rogers & Hammerstein's *The King and I*, playing the role of Louis, travelling around the UK, Ireland and finishing in Japan. As well as his activities on stage, Jack is a keen rugby player, Parkour athlete and he's learning piano and trombone.

Charlie first performed with BROS in *Carousel* at the Minack Theatre in Cornwall. He has been involved in many productions with the British Theatre Academy, most notably as William Beech in *Goodnight Mr Tom* at Southwark Playhouse. He was proud to be selected by BTA to work with Sir Cameron Mackintosh to present *Oliver Jnr* at the MTI Junior Theatre Festival in Atlanta, and enjoyed working on the new *Matilda Jnr* presented in Sacramento in February.



**Charlie McDowell**

Christopher Rattenbury





**Genevieve Trickett**

Irene Riggs

Genni has been an active member of the SW London am-dram scene for nearly ten years. Recent roles include: Marcy in *Ravenscroft*, Ruth in *Coward's Blithe Spirit*, and as Sante in *Nightfall with Edgar Allan Poe* by Eric Coble. Last year she wrote and directed her own show *Living Memory*, which was performed at The National Archives by Q2 Players. She's currently playing hooky from her role as Secretary for Q2 Players to take part in *Cause Célèbre*.

Jake recently played two titular Shakespearean roles in *Romeo & Juliet* and *Macbeth*, so the 1930's setting for this play, Jake's TTC debut, is somewhat more modern! He has particularly enjoyed his previous travels up to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival with YAT, which gave him a connection to TTC. Jake is looking forward to his forthcoming stint as Assistant Director on *Noughts & Crosses* in association with The Unseen later this year.



**Jake O'Hare**

George Wood



**Jane Marcus**

Edith Davenport

Jane is delighted to be back at TTC, working with such a brilliant cast, crew and director. She was last seen on our stage as Margaret Thatcher ('T') in *Handbagged*, before that as Elinor Glyn in *The Cat's Meow*, Sara Turing in *Breaking the Code* and as Stevie in Hugh Whitmore's eponymous play, for which she won the Swan Best Actress award. Other recent roles include *Gertrude* in *Hamlet*, *Bette Davis* in *Bette and Joan*, and *Hester* in Rattigan's *The Deep Blue Sea* (all RSS). And let's not forget playing a reindeer in *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*!

Darren has recently played Mr Causeway in the OHADS production of *Sex Cells*. He has also performed with TTC in *Wolf Hall & Bring up the Bodies* playing Brereton, Harry Percy, Monk and pall bearer, and he was Antigonus in *The Winter's Tale*. Recently he played Cardinal Wolsey in an EWTN TV production of *The Reformation*, Inspector Davies in SMDG's *Something to Hide* and Boris in RSS's production of *The Seagull*.



**Darren McIlroy**

John Davenport



**Jacob Taylor**  
Tony Davenport

This is only Jacob's third show with TTC having performed his first in 2014 with *My Boy Jack*, for which he won the Swan Award for Best Young Male in a Play or Musical. Jacob is a recent graduate from the University of York and studied Music Technology & Applied Electronics. He is also constantly involving himself in the amateur dramatic scene, recently performing in *Pirates of Penzance*, *Make Believe*, *East*, *Pornography* (at TTC) and directing *Straight & Narrow*. Jacob was also very fortunate to have performed in *Princess Ida* at The Minack Theatre on the cliffs of Cornwall in September.

Dionne has played a number of renowned Shakespearean roles, including Goneril in *King Lear*, Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* and Lady Macbeth in the Scottish play (all with RSS) and Paulina in *The Winter's Tale* (her last TTC venture). She played Dawn in TTC's 2017 production of *Jerusalem* and most recently was in the OHADS comedy *Sex Cells*.



**Dionne King**  
Stella Morrison



**Daniel Wain**  
O'Connor

*Cause Célèbre* ticks both Rattigan and courtroom drama off Daniel's bucket list. He's played legal/illegal before: murderers (Iago, Flamineo, Captain Hook), detectives (*Taking Sides*, *Rat in the Skull*, *Dial M for Murder*) and both in *This Story of Yours*, also Judge Brack. However, none reached the full-blown wig-and-gown stage. O'Connor isn't Daniel's first real-life character either. Earlier idiosyncratic impersonations include the Earl of Rochester, Field Marshals French and Haig, Henry VIII, Einstein, Chekhov, Philip Larkin and King Charles III. Sadly, research reveals Terence O'Connor wasn't the imagined iconoclastic Irish outsider but an officer-class Tory from the shires. Pity, that Dublin accent worked a treat at the auditions...

Graham has been appearing in TTC productions for ten years and has not so far bumped into the furniture. His roles have been mostly authority figures - headmaster, doctor, academic - or butlers. His favourite roles have been Underling the butler in *The Drowsy Chaperone* when he had 'iced water' spat at him every night, and Michael, an academic chained to a wall as a hostage in *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* - at least he stayed dry in that one! Each TTC appearance brings its own delights - in *Cause Célèbre* Graham's wig provides him with a constant source of amusement.



**Graham Titcombe**  
Croom-Johnson



**John Mortley**  
Casswell

John has been a member of RSS for 25 years and performed in many of their productions, during which time he received five Swan Nominations and one Swan Award. His last performance was as Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* last December. John has been a member of TTC for three years, playing the part of Seppings in the three-hander *Jeeves & Wooster in Perfect Nonsense* and receiving a 2017 Swan award for his part as Ratty in *Wind in the Willows*. John is a big 'Ratty-gan' fan (!) and was aware of the *Cause Célèbre* back-story, though not the play itself.

Susan started acting at aged seven, appearing in her junior school play *There's More to The Sea* as a fisherman's wife. Since 1990 she has been treading the boards at TTC, Questors and RSS. Her favourite shows include *Extremities*, *Steaming*, *The Night of the Iguana*, *Mill on the Floss*, *Be My Baby*, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, *This Story of Yours*, *Simpatico* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. In 2018 she joined Saint Mary's Drama Group, winning the Swan award for Best Actress in *Night Must Fall*. Her next appearance is in Wild Duck Productions' *Humble Boy* at the OSO in Barnes.



**Susan Reoch**  
Montagu



**Elisabeth Salaman**  
Clerk of the Court/  
Coroner

This will be Liz's third TTC production. Her previous appearances were in the studio, first as Lion Aunt in the 2016 production of *Stevie*, for which she received a Swan Nomination and then in 2018 in *Echoes of the War*, two short plays by J.M. Barrie. Liz has also worked at RSS, appearing in *Collaborators*, *Tom and Viv*, *The Railway Children* and as another old auntie, in *Hedda Gabler*. The prospect for her of being at the Old Bailey, and on the main stage at TTC, both for the first time, is sobering yet exciting.





**Heather Mathew**

Joan Webster

This is Heather's second show with TTC, having previously enjoyed a jolly old time in the cast of *Daisy Pulls it Off*. She is also a member of BROS where she has rather cornered the market in rampant eccentric old ladies, the highlight being *The Producers*. In getting to know Wardress Webster, her character in *Cause Célèbre*, she has grown rather fond of her, and realised she likes being a prison warden. Time for a career change perhaps?

Chris has worked with some wonderful performers since 2003, across the various companies of TTC, BROS and 1000 Day Productions and at some amazing venues - Richmond Theatre, Parkshot Studio, the incredible Minack Theatre in Cornwall – and especially our own Hampton Hill Theatre, where in 2016 he played the lead in *Dick Barton Special Agent*. Chris has been nominated for Swan Awards on three occasions and was awarded the NODA Best Male in a Musical in 2019 as Ed Kleban in *A Class Act*.



**Chris Morris**

Sergeant Bagwell /  
Porter

# Production Team Biographies

## **Fiona Smith** - Director

Actor and director Fiona has directed, amongst other plays, McDonagh's *The Lonesome West* (2019) and *Julius Caesar* (2013) - both at RSS, and on the HHT stage she directed *Rat in the Skull* (2013), *God of Carnage* (2015), *Conspiracy* (2016) and *The Cat's Meow* (2017). Her acting credits include the role of Sonya in *Uncle Vanya* (RSS, 2015), Margaret of Anjou in the *Henry VI* trilogy and Mrs Chevelly in *Wilde's An Ideal Husband*.

## **Steve Wayman** - Production Manager

Steve is a self-confessed theatre addict, but possessing no discernible acting talent he prefers to steer well clear of the footlights. He was deputy PM last year on *Handbagged* and is loving the challenge of the PM role with this talented team and a celebrated author. Steve has recently been elected to the TTC board as a Non-Executive Director and can also regularly be seen working on our box office.

## **Ron Hudson** - Stage Manager

Ron has been acting and undertaking backstage roles for many years, including direction, stage management, set building, lighting and sound. His acting roles include Meyer in *Conspiracy* (OHADS), the waiter and gaoler in *The Merchant of Venice* (RSS) and a mariner in *The Tempest*. Backstage & technical roles include Assistant Director on *Hedda Gabbler* (RSS) and Stage Manager/ASM for *From These Green Heights*, *Macbeth*, *Journey's End*, *The White Devil* (all RSS), *84 Charing Cross Rd* (SMDG) and *The Turn of the Screw* (TTC).

## **Patrick Troughton** - Set Design and Construction

Patrick spent many years playing jazz across the UK and Europe in a Glenn Miller jazz orchestra. However, these days he is more often spotted backstage, usually set design or lighting. Having previously worked for the Beck Theatre in Hayes, he's now a regular at TTC with recent shows including lighting *Amadeus* and *Daisy Pulls It Off*, and cast in our pantomime, *King Arthur In Space*, as well as a Swan Award nomination for Best Stage Presentation for his set design on *Handbagged*.

## **Zoe Harvey-Lee** - Wardrobe

Zoe loves a costume challenge and in the case of this show it was researching and then capturing the fashions and styles of the 1930s. Zoe has worked extensively over the last ten years with TTC, most recently on *Pink Mist* and *Handbagged*.

### Mike Elgey - Lighting

Mike's great depth of experience as a Lighting Designer and BAT Link for TTC goes back more than four decades, with most recent lighting credits including *Pink Mist*, *Stones in his Pockets*, *A View from the Bridge*, *Under Milk Wood*, *Jerusalem*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Pornography* and *Handbagged*.

### John Pyle - Sound

John is a member of several local groups, in both performing and technical roles. His singing career began when he was a child at no less than the Royal Opera House. He has performed most tenor/baritone leads in the G&S operettas and was nominated for a Swan Award for Scrooge (*A Christmas Carol*), Corcoran (*HMS Pinafore*) and Colonel Calverly (*Patience*). Designing the sound for over 100 plays/musicals in the past 20 years and winning several awards, his recent TTC shows include *Handbagged* and *Marvin's Room*.

### Jenny Hobson - Rehearsal Prompt

The versatile Jenny has directed two shows herself at TTC, *Stevie* in 2016 (Swan award winning) and last year the Alan Bennett double-bill *A Visit from Miss Prothero* and *An Englishman Abroad*. She has also been prompt before on *After Electra* and *The Ruling Class* and has acting credits in *Under Milk Wood* and *Equus*.

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## Special Thanks

Dane Hardie for the 'slap training', Kim Jackson and the box office team, and to all our dedicated and hard-working front of house volunteers.

Special thanks to Junis Olmscheid for the ladies' wigs and for her expert advice on hair and makeup.

#### Images:

Francis and Alma Rattenbury image - courtesy of City of Victoria Archives (CVA M10335 & M00846). George Stoner image – ©John Walker/courtesy of [www.dorsetlife.co.uk](http://www.dorsetlife.co.uk)

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Tickets can also be booked by using the production flyers and by telephone **(020 8410 4546, 5.00-8.00 pm, Mon to Sat)**.

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