



TEDDINGTON THEATRE CLUB PRESENTS AN AMATEUR PRODUCTION BY BY SPECIAL
ARRANGEMENT WITH CATHERINE KING OF INDEPENDENT TALENT GROUP LTD

Muswell Hill

By Torben Betts

Directed by Susan Conte

Sun 28 Feb – Sat 5 Mar 2016

£1.50



Hampton Hill Theatre

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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 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.

*Our thanks to Whatsonstage & Theo Bosanquet
for their kind permission to reproduce the following.*

Torben Betts: I'm not Alan Ayckbourn's lovechild

The playwright talks mobile phones and making ends meet

Theo Bosanquet • London, Off-West End • Whatsonstage.com. Feb 2015

What inspired *Muswell Hill*?

The idea came when I was sitting in a pub in north London on the night of the Haiti earthquake in January 2010. Most people in the pub were in their 20s and 30s, and most of them had phones or iPads and were generally ignoring each other and focussing on these. Then news of the earthquake filtered through, and people were discussing it between tapping away on their screens. So the play is really about connectedness and about what technology has done to the way that we communicate with each other, as well as the contrasts between the concerns of those people in the pub and the horror of what was happening in Haiti. The action of the play takes place during a dinner party in Muswell Hill on that same night.



TTC production of Muswell Hill 2016

Technology, particularly phones, is notoriously difficult to use effectively on stage - how did you deal with that?

I write two kinds of plays, one naturalistic and the other not. I think for the former, if it's fly-on-the-wall in style, you can't really avoid incorporating mobile phones. So in the play, people read texts and phone other people all the time, often to fill awkward silences. It starts with the hostess of the dinner party on the phone as she is told news of Haiti by somebody who's on a laptop, and the conversation continues in this vein. I think that's just the nature of modern communication.

Almost everything I read about you mentions Alan Ayckbourn. How do you feel about that?

It's slightly irritating, to be honest. I think because I was writer-in-residence at the Stephen Joseph Theatre, people consider me to be some sort of lovechild of Alan's.

He was certainly an influence on me but he never sat me down and taught me to write plays. I think my plays are much darker, and that's probably why he has much more money than me [laughs]. I was interviewed by *The Telegraph* and they took a photo of me with him, which makes it look like I'm in love with him. The caption was something like 'master and pupil', which is a bit silly considering I'm 47!

What was your breakthrough as a playwright?

I was an actor when I started writing. I wrote a huge range of plays in my mid-twenties, in different styles, and sent them off. I got a huge amount of rejection letters until Alan picked up *A Listening Heaven* [1999]. That was the play that made me think, 'maybe I can be a playwright'.

There's much talk currently of the difficulties of arts careers - how hard was it for you to make a living as a writer?

Well I moved out of London due to the financial pressures. I was the sole breadwinner for my family and we just couldn't make it work economically in London. I don't know how anyone does it, frankly, unless you get a big West End hit. Even now I'm relatively established it's still a huge struggle - it's only in the last few years that I've stopped doing other work to supplement my income. The life of a playwright is far from comfortable, but then you don't go into it for the money.

Did leaving London change your writing?

Not really, no. I come down every month or so, so I still feel part of London. But moving away [to Berwick in Northumberland] has afforded me more time; I don't feel under nearly as much pressure. It's very quiet and you have to like your own company, but I enjoy that - as a writer you have to deal with solitude.

Tell us about your upcoming projects

If you'd asked me that a year ago there would have been an embarrassing silence, but I do have a few things happening currently. I have a play opening at the Live Theatre [in Newcastle] called *What Falls Apart*, which is about a Labour MP who's full of remorse having voted for the Iraq War. It coincides with the general election, opening in April. After that I'm doing a new version of *The Seagull* for Regent's Park Open Air Theatre, directed by Matthew Dunster. And I'm adapting *Get Carter* for Northern Stage, which I'm trying to reimagine with Greek masks. I think Original Theatre Company are doing a national tour of *Invincible*, which was at the St James Theatre last year, and there's also a Spanish version happening in Madrid, starring Maribel Verdú.

Thanks for speaking to WhatsOnStage

No problem. Just promise me the headline won't involve the phrase 'Alan Ayckbourn's lovechild...'



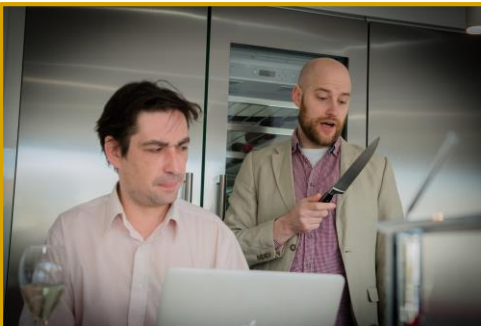
Torben Betts

CAST

Jess	Francesca Ellis
Mat	Chris Mounsey
Karen	Tarryn Meaker
Simon	Charlie Golding
Annie	Tulasi Das
Tony	Chris Butler
Voice of BBC	Juliana Anderiesz

The setting is Muswell Hill, a leafy suburb of North London, one evening in January 2010.

Events take place immediately after the catastrophic Haiti earthquake of 12th January which gave rise to 24 serious aftershocks in the following few days. An estimated 3 million people were killed, injured, displaced or directly affected by the quake.



CREW

Director	Susan Conte
Stage Manager	Juliana Anderiesz
Props & set dressing	Penny Heighes
Set Design for TTC	Alan Corbett with Colin Swinton and Sarah Taylor
Lighting Design & Operator	Nick Osorio with Steph Pang
Sound Design & Operator	John Pyle
Wardrobe	Margaret Wrightson
Original Music	James Bedbrook
Photography	Marc Pearce

Thanks

- Original Set design by Nancy Surman & supplied courtesy of Two Sheds Theatre.
- Livin Kitchens for photoshoot in wonderful Richmond kitchen showrooms www.livinkitchens.co.uk
- All those at TTC who give so generously of their time and support.
- Jo Harry, Michelle Hood and Andy Smith for contributions to the production.

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



Francesca Ellis as Jess

Muswell Hill is Francesca's first acting role with TTC. It is also her first non-Shakespearean role, having played Maria in *Loves Labours Lost* (RSS, 2014), Helena in *All's Well That Ends Well* (RSS, 2015) and, most recently, Viola in *Twelfth Night* (Barnes Community Players (BCP), 2015) also directed by Susan. She is hoping she won't accidentally break into blank verse over the monkfish stew.



Chris Mounsey as Mat

Chris was active in Edinburgh theatre from 1996–2006, where he produced, directed, or acted in over 40 shows and designed publicity material for around 150 (including the Fringe). He also reviewed theatre and comedy for Fringe publications *Three Weeks* and *EdinburghFringe.com*. Chris has appeared with the BCP since 2007, appearing (mainly as a posh chap of varying degrees of drunkenness) in such plays as *Mrs Warren's Profession*, *The Real Inspector Hound*, *Seven Year Twitch*, *The Panel*, and *Flare Path* (Swan Award nomination) and last summer as the Duke in *Twelfth Night*. He was cast as lead role Freddie in *The Deep Blue Sea* for RSS in 2013 which was also directed by Susan.



Tarryn Meaker as Karen

Tarryn grew up in Durban, South Africa, where acting wasn't considered a "real job" – which was unfortunate since all she could ever remember wanting to do was act, dance and sing. Having dutifully completed an academic degree Tarryn gave up trying to do the right thing, deciding instead to pursue her dreams. She has since appeared in various bits in the US, UK, SA, Europe and Japan (at 5'10" she was definitely Big In Japan!). She hopes to become successful enough that designers will send her free stuff but in the meantime has acquired some kids, made some of her own short films and written a screenplay and a novel which she would love someone to read and publish!

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



Charlie Golding as Simon

Charles makes his debut for TTC as the 'easygoing charmer' Simon. He has appeared in numerous productions across London and at the Edinburgh Fringe including *Clybourne Park* with Putney Arts (Jim/Tom), *The School for Scandal* with Urgent Breath (Uncle Oliver), *Julius Caesar* with Southside Theatre (Marc Antony) and *The Libertine* with KDC (King Charles II). He previously wrote and directed for his own pub theatre company and is hoping to produce a new work in 2017. When not daydreaming of an Olivier Award, Charles is a surveyor.



Tulasi Das as Annie

Tulasi Das grew up in the Netherlands, where she indulged in a bit of acting. After stellar performances as Veruca Salt, Titania and an evil elf in various school plays, she went on to study history at Leiden University. Last August Tulasi moved to the UK in an effort to get her filmmaking career off the ground and decided to try acting again. Annie's dramatic personality instantly drew Tulasi in, and she felt compelled to audition. Getting the part means carte blanche to scream and cry a lot, so Tulasi feels she has made the right decision.



Chris Butler as Tony

Chris is a new member of TTC but has been on stage most of his adult life. He loves taking on challenging characters such as "Tony". Chris has been "Cashiered" from the Austrian Army, cheated the Prince of Wales at Cards, held hostage in Africa, Spied for Queen and Country, Defended and Prosecuted the innocent (and Guilty) in Court, played a Charing Cross Road book seller, an assertive Pig and a world famous Toad. In all this he has been loved by an assortment of wives, lovers, mistresses and a Nun – what more excitement can be packed into a life?

PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

Susan Conte - Director

Susan has previously directed several times for TTC including *A Doll's House*, the epic *Pravda (A Fleet Street Comedy)*, *The Thrill of Love* and now back in the studio with *Muswell Hill* which has been great fun to work on. Susan also directs a range of plays, including Shakespeare, with Barnes Community Players, Richmond Shakespeare Society & The Directors' Hub which she co-founded last year.

Juliana Anderiesz - Stage Manager & voice of BBC

Juliana is a TTC newbie and thrilled to be part of this production. She started life as a professional musician and has spent most of her life either on stage or backstage, as happy with a jigsaw as she is with a script or score in her hand. Juliana would like to thank the cast and production team for making her feel so welcome to the group and looks forward to this being the first of many productions with TTC.

Penny Heighes - Props & set dressing

Penny looks after all the props we keep at TTC and sources new ones for shows as they come along. Penny has sourced props and set dressings for many shows including *My Boy Jack*, *The Country Wife*, *Boy on a Swing* and with *Pravda* and *The Thrill of Love* both being for Susan in the main auditorium.

Nick Osorio - Lighting Design

Nick has been involved with TTC for well over 30 years and at Questors before that. He is now unable to single out favourite shows but *Amadeus* at the old theatre, *Women of Troy* in the main auditorium and *Not About Heroes* in the Studio come to mind. Now he is mainly doing studio shows which are easier for an ageing brain. He has worked with Susan before on *A Doll's House* and *The Thrill of Love* last year.

PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

John Pyle - Sound Design

John loves making authentic, realistic and timely sound effects for plays/shows. John is also a member of several groups where he sings and acts. More than 50 years on stage - at 13 with 2 solo roles at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, he's played most tenor/baritone leads in the G&S repertoire – most recently as Captain Corcoran - HMS Pinafore. Other singing roles - the Baker (*Baker's Wife*), Mushnik (*Little Shop of Horrors*), Oliver Warbucks (*Annie*), Mr Beaver (*Lion Witch/Wardrobe*), Dr Neville Craven (*Secret Garden*) and Scrooge (*Christmas Carol*) - all RUT Swan Award-winning shows.

Margaret Wrightson - Wardrobe

Mags has worked with the wardrobe team at TTC for a few years now and been involved in a range of productions from intense drama to panto. Her last venture was the Christmas panto so working with a smaller cast on a modern drama has been a delight.

Alan Corbett - Set design & build

Alan has worked on many, many productions for TTC and also built and designed *A Doll's House* (2011), *Pravda* (2013) and *The Thrill of Love* (2015).

James Bedbrook - Original Music

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

Marc Pearce - Photographer

Marc is a hugely creative professional photographer and part time filmmaker as well as a set & lighting designer.

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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 Arts Richmond.

This production is entered for the Arts Richmond Swan Awards for Drama and Musicals.

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at Hampton Hill Theatre

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By Hugh Whitemore

Based on the book **Alan Turing: The Enigma** by Alan Hodges

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Sun 13 Mar 2016 – Sat 19 Mar 2016

Auditorium

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By Neil LaBute

9/11 – a chance to die and love again

Sun 3 Apr 2016 – Sat 9 Apr 2016

Coward Studio



For up-to-date information on TTC and the Theatre, and to book tickets online, please check our website: www.teddingtontheatreclub.org.uk

Postal bookings are accepted on publication of the booking form.

Telephone enquires open two weeks before each production.

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

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Teddington Theatre Club is a Club Theatre open to members and their guests.

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 Front of House, Bar and Marketing activities of the Club and Theatre. To find out more please visit our website

www.teddingtontheatreclub.org.uk or call our Membership Secretary on 020 8287 2663 or complete one of the forms you can find in the Foyer.