

# Mother and daughter make class act



Mother Sue Viney and Daughter Jo Viney team up to perform *Amy's View* in its amateur premiere.

FIRST seen at the Royal National Theatre in 1997, *Amy's View* is now receiving its amateur premiere at the Hampton Hill Playhouse.

The play had a sell-out West End run, originally starring Judi Dench and Samantha Bond as Esme Allen and her daughter Amy.

Now Teddington Theatre Club has taken the play, based on a mother/daughter relationship, and with inspired casting, sees mother and daughter, Sue and Jo Viney, playing these two challenging roles.

Sue, well-known locally as a director, last appeared at the Playhouse last March in 'On the Razzle'. Jo has just finished making a film for Channel 4 which will be shown in the New Year.

They are joined by Miles Hawkins as Dominic, the journalist and would-be-film-maker who disrupts the harmonious mother/daughter relationship. Miles is paying a return visit to TTC. He was last seen at the Hampton Court Theatre in 'A Slice of Saturday Night'.

Derek Stringer is Frank Oddie, Esme's neighbour and admirer - and the eventual emissary of her

misfortune. Cynthia Carss, who recently played Madam Armfeldt in the Swanbank production of 'A Little Night Music' is Esme's mother-in-law, Evelyn.

Esme describes herself as being good at acting 'layers', and the play itself, like other David Hare productions such as 'Plenty' and 'The Secret Rapture', certainly works on different levels - look how much there is going on beneath the surface. As well as being the history of a mother-daughter-boyfriend triangle, it can also be seen as a critique of Thatcherism and the 1980s attitudes.

Director Mair Graham is remembered for her sparkling 'Lettice and Lovage' which ran at the Playhouse last year. Production is by Rita Stringer.

## RICHMOND DRAMA AWARDS

# Beautifully understated performance

Amy's VIEW  
2001

DAVID Hare had Dame Judi Dench in mind for the character of Esme Allen, the famous actress at the centre of his play *Amy's View* and she triumphed in the part when it opened at the Lyttelton Theatre in June 1997.

Following in the footsteps of so august a figure is not easy but in Mair Graham's production for Teddington Theatre Club at Hampton Hill Playhouse recently, Sue Viney was quite believable as the actress of the 'old school' tradition. This was an actress at home in a beautifully understated performance.

Home for Esme is in Pangbourne, Berkshire where the first three acts take place. Spanning sixteen years, fast-forwarding from 1979 to 1985 to 1993 and finally 1995, the play is about relationships and viewpoints and how they change - or don't.

Constant throughout is Esme's daughter Amy, played by real-life daughter Jo Viney in a spirited performance. It is Amy's view that everyone should love each other but there are some people who will just never get on.

Throwing fuel on their already combative



Jo Viney and Sue Viney in *Amy's View*.

relationship, Dominic Tyghe (Amy's partner played by Miles Hawkins) interviews Esme for his 'trash it all' television arts show on the subject 'Theatre is dead'. Arguing well for new, youthful, throw-it-all away culture against traditional values, he needed more vocal dexterity to convince as the charismatic presenter.

Derek Stringer, equilibrium maintained throughout, demonstrated genial affability as neighbour Frank Oddie, whose financial advice ruins

Esme in the 90s.

Cynthia Carss, semi-conscious in a wheelchair throughout the long third act, was most convincing as senility took over Esme's mother-in-law Evelyn.

Richard Jussey was refreshingly youthful and eager as actor Toby Cole. His likeable character lifted the mood for the beautifully written final scene.

Hampton Hill Playhouse is one of the first venues for this play since its National Theatre debut.

George Francis