

From our *noda* rep

Following her previous productions for APS - 'Lettice & Lovage' among the most memorable - Patricia Harris returned to direct this charming and most engaging version of the well-told tale. With appeal to all ages, thanks to the Alan Bennett influence and contributions from the Junior Wriggle Valley Players, the play provided a highly entertaining experience for all its patrons. The four principal roles, led by Adrian Thorpe as an excellent Toad and well supported by Janet Vincent (Mole), Andrew Cross (Ratty) and John Bowles (Badger), were clearly defined and competently portrayed each as a distinctive character. There were also some superb cameo parts from Tony Birks-Hay (Albert the horse), Ruth Rice (Chief Weasel) and Jennie Ward (Bargewoman).

But the stars of the show for me were the most impressive settings masterminded by Charles Napier together with his lighting, costumes and sound colleagues. The magic of the River Bank, the Wild Wood and even the Wide World was most convincingly conveyed, and duly enhanced by a realistically-mobile boat, car, and railway engine, in a series of ten or so different original settings created on a stage well known for its severe limitations for the set designer.

Well done, everyone!

Peter Wheeldon
NODA Regional
Representative

Wind in the Willows photos -

With 291 photos now available to view/buy on our website, you're sure to find at least one or two you absolutely must have.

Xmas Party 2010



Left: John Bowles, winner of Best 'Blue and Silver' outfit.

A mild night outside - comparatively - but inside The Cider House, a merry gathering of members enjoyed a lively Christmas Party full of good food and drink and festive cheer.

Many thanks to the hospitality of our generous hosts, Adrian and Myoko (what a fabulous dress!)

Upcoming APS social events in January

Jennie's Workshop

APS 2011 starts with a theatre workshop, especially concentrating on mime.

Jennie will be directing next Autumn's production, a very special and unique play: Thornton Wilder's 'Our Town'.

This play requires really good and careful acting - there is no set, no props, just acting. So come along [in your droves please!] **for 7.30 pm on Wednesday 5th January upstairs at The Mermaid.**

'Opera as Drama'

Adrian, our Secretary, has put together a series of three presentations using new video recordings to demonstrate the drama of modern opera performance. If you love theatre - and you wouldn't be reading this if you didn't—please come. Come even if—no, *especially* if—you think you don't like opera! **7.30 pm on Monday 24th January at Nether Compton Village Hall.** If you need a lift do contact a Committee member.

- THEATRE VISIT 2011 -

Thursday 7 April is the date for our annual theatre visit to Salisbury Playhouse. The play is Marivaux's *The Game of Love and Chance*.

This is French farce with a makeover and with a Sixties house party where nothing – and no-one – is to be taken at face value.

Needless to say, things get very complicated very quickly, and the servants fall in love just as their master and mistress do – but everybody thinks they're falling in love across the boundaries of social class – and what will that lead to?

David Smith has reserved 24 tickets in rows B&C centre. Cost: Matinee £14, Theatre Day morning talk £6. Train fare will depend on precise numbers and possible price increases but should not exceed £7 per person



return. He will need full payment of £27 by 7th February at the very latest as theatre now need payment 8 weeks in advance. Refunds will be calculated and repaid on the day if the cost is below £27.

Timetable: Leave Sherborne Station at 9.36am arriving back in Sherborne at 6.34pm.

Anyone using own transport need pay only £20.

Get in touch with David Smith now on 01935 817439 or email: drysmith@btinternet.com
See p3 *Famous Names of the Stage*.



The 5th season of The Met: Live in HD will feature many of the most popular operas.

8 Jan: Puccini: *La Fanciulla del West*

12 Feb: Adams: *Nixon in China*

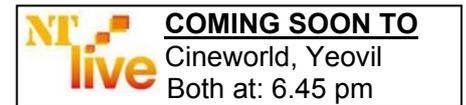
26 Feb Gluck: *Iphigenie en Tauride*

For performance details and video sample go to:

www.metoperafamily.org/metopera/broadcast/hd_events_next.aspx

For Yeovil show times and advance bookings go to:

www.cineworld.co.uk/cinemas/71



FELA! explores the extravagant, decadent and rebellious world of Afrobeat legend Fela Anikulapo-Kuti.



Donmar Warehouse production with Derek Jacobi as **King Lear**. Also Theatre Royal, Bath 5-9 April.

NODA SUMMER SCHOOL 2011

This year the NODA Summer School will take place at the University of Warwick from 30 July to 8 August.

For full details of the many courses available go to www.noda.org.uk If you book before 28 February you will receive a free limited edition Summer School T-shirt!

All course fees are £540.00 (including full board, accommodation and tuition), except the RSC 2-day Open Stages (£175) and Musical Directors (£610) courses.

STARS TO PLAY IN DORSET

Stephanie Cole and Patricia Hodge have agreed to come to Dorset to perform 'Myra and Joyce Playing to the Gallery'. It tells the story of Dame Myra Hess and lifelong friend Joyce Grenfell. Pianist Myra Hess gave a lunchtime recital at the National Gallery every day during the Blitz. Joyce Grenfell toured the front lines with ENSA - when she wasn't serving tea at

the concerts! Third member of the cast is a pianist, and with his aid the friends reminisce - he plays some of Dame Myra's shorter pieces, and accompanies Patricia Hodge when she sings a few of Grenfell's songs, and some Noel Coward numbers of the period.

It is expected this delightful show will be staged in Sherborne and Sturminster Newton in the spring.

£50,000 ARTS CENTRE BOOST

Sherborne Community Arts Centre, scheduled for a 2012 opening, received a £50,000 boost from Sherborne Town Council last month. It is hoped that the council's clear financial commitment will stimulate West Dorset District Council to become a major funder of the project.

The town council grant will enable site access and clearance and vital survey work to begin. No date has yet been fixed.

The donation of the land (valued at £450,000) from Dorset County Council, means that there is still a long way to go in raising the remaining £1.45 million required to build, equip and resource the proposed arts centre. Watch the space!



A Brief History of Theatre - in several parts: 5

Processional plays: 14th - 17th century AD

In parts of Europe, particularly Spain, the players perform on carts, each with its own scenery, moving through the town to appear before a succession of audiences. It is an ingenious way of bringing drama to more spectators than can be gathered in one place. These Spanish plays are known as *autos sacramentales*, 'eucharistic plays'.

The four English mystery cycles (linked with the cities of Chester, Coventry, Wakefield and York) are also of this kind. The plays are performed during the Corpus Christi festivities by different guilds, often with a direct link between their scene and their craft. The tailors are usually entrusted with Adam and Eve - who sew fig leaves to make themselves aprons.

The mystery plays go out of fashion in the 16th century. In Protestant Europe their broad humour and bawdiness offend the reformers. But this vigorous popular entertainment also seems unduly frivolous to solemn humanists of the Renaissance. Performance of the plays is banned in Paris in 1548. Many other places follow suit. The exceptions are the strongholds of the Catholic Church, where the church recognizes the power of drama if doctrinally correct. The *autos sacramentales* still flourish in Spain in the late 17th century (many of them written by Calderon, a dramatist turned priest).



Europe's best-known surviving cycle of plays, at Oberammergau (above), dates from 1634.

Noh theatre: from the 14th century AD

A father and his 11-year-old son, Kanami and Zeami Motokiyo, perform in 1374 before the shogun, Yoshimitsu, at the Imakumano shrine in Kyoto. Kanami has made innovations in a traditional form of theatre, deriving originally from China and known as *sarugaku-noh*. The shogun likes what he sees, and particularly likes the performance of the talented young Zeami. He takes the family into his service.



With the name reduced to the more simple *noh*, this is the beginning of the Noh theatre of Japan - and the beginning of some five centuries of patronage by the shoguns of this most refined of theatrical styles.

The style of Noh production and performance, and almost the entire repertoire of Noh plays, is established within a few decades of that day in 1374. Kanami is the author of the first plays in the new style; Zeami writes the bulk of those which survive; a few more are the work of Zeami's son-in-law, Zenchiku. Only a small number of Noh plays have been written since Zenchiku's death in the 15th century.

In Noh the all-male actors, accompanied by a small chorus and orchestra, sing and dance scenes from legend with an immense slowness and solemnity which can nevertheless imply great passion. The dimensions of the cypress-wood stage, and the placing of certain scenic props, are invariable.

This is a form of art so exquisite that it almost seems to begin life as a classic, a rare national treasure. In fact, in its first two or three centuries, it does reach a reasonably wide audience. But then, in the 17th century, an offshoot of Noh adopts a more popular style.

Known as kabuki, this new departure soon becomes the vigorous mainstream of Japanese theatre. The earlier form of Noh, fossilized in its perfection, is henceforth the preserve of the court and nobility.

FAMOUS NAMES OF THE STAGE

Pierre Carlet de Chamblain de Marivaux, born. Feb. 4, 1688, died. Feb. 12, 1763. He was the most important French playwright of the 18th century. After Moliere his comedies are the most frequently performed in today's



French theatre. He wrote numerous comedies for La Comédie Française and La Comédie Italienne of Paris, the most famous of which are **The Game of Love and Chance** (1730; Eng. trans., 1923) and **Les Fausses Confidences** (1737; translated. as False Confessions, 1958). The French word *marivaudage* signifies the

flirtatious bantering tone characteristic of Marivaux's dialogue. He also published a number of essays in the manner of Joseph Addison and Sir Richard Steele, and two important though unfinished novels, **La Vie de Marianne** (The Life of Marianne, 1731-41) and **Le Paysan parvenu** (The Fortunate Peasant, 1735).

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

JANUARY 2011

Sat 1st to Sat 15 Jan 2011	Swallows and Amazons New musical version	Bristol Old Vic Times vary
<i>APS event</i> Wed 5th	Jennie's Workshop Acting techniques	The Mermaid 7.30 pm
Wed 5th to Sat 8th	Dear Brutus J M Barrie comedy	New Theatre, Exeter 7.30 pm
 Sat 8th	La Fanciulla del West Puccini	Cineworld, Yeovil 6 pm
 Thurs 13th	Fela! No ordinary musical	Cineworld, Yeovil 6.45 pm
Mon 17th to Sat 22nd	Stevie About Stevie Smith	Swan Theatre, Yeovil Times to be confirmed
Thurs 20th to Sat 29th	Water Multimedia experience	Salisbury Playhouse Times vary
<i>APS event</i> Mon 24th	Opera as Drama Presented by Adrian Thorpe	Nether Compton Village Hall 7.30 pm
Thurs 27th to Sat 5th March	Pygmalion Bristol University Student Theatre	Bristol Old Vic 7.30 pm, Mats Sat 2.30 pm
FEBRUARY 2011		
Wed 2nd to Sat 5th	Goldilocks and the Three Bears Pantomime	Electric Palace, Bridport 7.30 pm Mats Thurs/Sat 2.30
 Thurs 3rd	King Lear Donmar Warehouse	Cineworld, Yeovil 6.45 pm
Wed 9th to Thurs 10th	Hamlet Icarus Theatre Collective	Octagon Yeovil 7.30 pm
 Sat 12th	Nixon in China Opera by John Adams	Cineworld, Yeovil Check time with cinema
<i>APS event</i> Tues 15th	Opera as Drama Presented by Adrian Thorpe	<u>Nether Compton Village Hall</u> <u>7.30 pm</u>
Wed 23rd to Sat 26th	Orphans Galore Play by Bill Wilkinson	Studio Theatre, Salisbury Times to be confirmed
Sat 26th	She opened the door Play about Thomas Hardy	The Exchange, Sturminster Newton 7.30 pm

The Exchange, Sturminster Newton: Call 01258 475137 www.stur-exchange.co.uk

Electric Palace, Bridport: Call 01308 420045 www.electricpalace.org.uk

Studio Theatre, Salisbury: Call 07789 858126 www.studiotheatre.org.uk

The Warehouse, Ilminster: Box Office 07943 779880 www.thewarehousetheatre.org.uk

New Theatre, Exeter: Box Office 01392 277189 Credit cards 01392 211080 www.cygnetnewtheatre.com

Cineworld, Yeovil: Call 0871 200 2000. Google Cineworld, Yeovil then select advance booking.

Bristol Old Vic: 0117 987 7877 www.bristololdvic.org.uk

Swan Theatre: Tourist Information Centre 01935 845946. www.swan-theatre.co.uk

Theatre Royal, Bath: Box Office **01225 448844** or www.theatreroyal.org.uk

Salisbury Playhouse: Call 01722 320333 www.salisburyplayhouse.com

The Octagon, Yeovil: Call Box Office 01935 283884 or www.octagon-theatre.co.uk

NB: As Diary Dates are compiled in advance, do check with the venue for any programme changes.

NewsLetter
DEADLINE

If you would like any local performances advertised in the **Dates for your Diary** section please send any details to me at: jim.reville@btinternet.com or give me a ring on (01935) 814626. If I'm not there leave your message and I will ring you back.

February Copy DEADLINE: Friday 28 January

Last Word...

The unencumbered stage encourages the truth operative in everyone. The less seen, the more heard. The eye is the enemy of the ear in real drama.

Thornton Wilder