

TONIGHT'S MENU

Perhaps we should have called this evening's show "You're On Your Own" or "The Loneliness of the Long Distance Actor"? It is a thin line that separates a monologue (one person talking for a very long time) and a one-man show (one person talking for a very long time possibly with music and dance thrown in). With this in mind we have blurred the boundaries between the two by offering at the start of this evening an aperitif in the form of a "one man show" by Lindsay Stafford-Smith prior to the main course: three of the best "monologues" from Talking Heads.

Written for and presented on BBC TV in the late eighties, playwright Alan Bennett's Talking Heads were received by a delighted audience. Never before had such vivid writing exposed such depth of character and story by a single character talking to the camera. In the original TV series the professional actors recorded their monologues over a period of days, re-filming where necessary, and their stellar talent was of course more than evident in the finished product. However I believe without doubt, that faced with the task of performing the monologues live and uncut, it would have terrified the very best of them. The sheer rock-face the performers have scaled in terms of commitment, memory, talent, faith in themselves and you the audience cannot be underestimated and I thank every actor tonight for rising to that challenge. It has crossed my mind that they could be;

Mad

Brave

Talented

Naive

Foolish

In fact they are all of the above.

I particularly wish to praise and thank Fiona Quilter-Wood, who stepped in at just over a month's notice to perform the role made famous by Julie Walters. 'Her Big Chance' is the wordiest of the monologues performed this evening and Fiona has proved herself to be the hero of the hour. I don't think even London cabbies could have absorbed all that text in such a short time!

Transferring Bennett's work to the stage threw up a number of challenges. The balance between staying true to his original work and creating a theatre 'performance' was much discussed and we hope you enjoy the result.

Naomi Glasser
Chairman of Frayed Knot

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ALAN BENNETT'S



TALKING HEADS

APRIL 25TH - 28TH 2012

GRASS ROOTS
**COURT THEATRE
PENDLEY, TRING**

PROGRAMME
50P

Three short pieces written and performed by **Lindsay Stafford-Smith**

**THE MALE ARRANGEMENT
MAKING IT
THE RAMPANT TERRIER**

A CHIP IN THE SUGAR written by **Alan Bennett**

Malcolm - Andy Faber Directed by **Lindsay Stafford-Smith**

Interval

HER BIG CHANCE written by **Alan Bennett**

Lesley - Fiona Quilter-Wood Directed by **Mike Code**

A CREAM CRACKER UNDER THE SETTEE
written by **Alan Bennett**

Doris - Lindsay Stafford-Smith Directed by **Naomi Glasser**

Lights - **Chris Cooper**

Sound - **Nick Cooper**

Stage Managers - **Sarah Amsden & Chris Dearden**

Programme thrown together by **Rob Farrow**

Special thanks to:

Tim Amsden, Dan Clucas & Philip Smith

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CAST AND PRODUCTION NOTES

Lindsay has performed her own material – a mixture of songs, monologues, satire and comic ‘doggerel’ - on BBC radio and in the theatre. In recent years she has taken a break from performing her own work to concentrate on other styles of writing, composing, acting as musical director and appearing in assorted plays and musicals in the area. Now she contributes a short selection of her own pieces to Frayed Knot Theatre Company’s ‘Talking Heads’ as well as playing the hygiene-obsessed Doris in ‘A Cream Cracker Under The Settee’.

Andy has performed in a variety of shows at the court Theatre , from plays, panto, musicals and farce, to Shakespeare, comedy and revue. With a certain amount of backstage work for variety. He is a big fan of Alan Bennett's work and considers it a great privilege to be asked to perform tonight. Andy would like to extend many thanks to Lindsay Smith for her patience and biscuits.

Fiona's first visit to the Court was as a (very) young pupil of Arts Ed, Tring , in 1979 and as a (very!) young schoolgirl she didn't think she would be back here quite so soon!!! As Head of Drama at prep schools for the last 15 years she is normally the other side of the curtain, directing, and this is her first performance for many years. Please be kind to her and hopefully it won't be another 33 years before we get her back.

Fiona would like to thank her great friend, Sally, for pulling out of the performance and dropping her in it (or rather suggesting she take over!)

Mike says: “Talking Heads is one of those t.v programmes that for a certain generation has alot of good memories. It was landmark television at the time and didn't do any harm for the actors who appeared in them. 24 years later and there is now a whole generation or two that have never heard of it and I loved the idea of resurrecting them. They may have been written two decades ago but the themes within the scripts and the scripts themselves have not aged and i believe that no matter what age you are: as long as you enjoy great british writing at it's very best you are going to really love these three unique and still original slices of quintessentially British life”

Naomi has been acting in, directing and producing shows at The Court Theatre for over 10 years. She chairs Frayed Knot Theatre Company and hopes that if you enjoy the show and have an interest in acting, directing, producing, costumes, props, photography, media or anything else you will get in touch with her and become part of our next production "Jeffrey Bernard is Unwell".

Please email: **naomi@fktc.org**