



SOUTHPORT DRAMATIC CLUB



Presents The Emotional Thriller

The Herbal Bed

By Peter Whelan

Directed By Richard Woodward

Friday 18th - Saturday 26th
October 2002

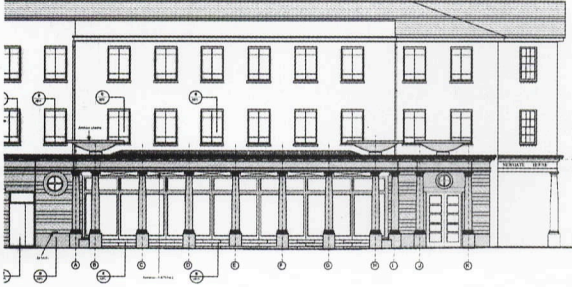
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Director's Notes



The Herbal Bed has received many productions since its premiere in Stratford in 1996 and I wonder whether its success is partly due to our apparent renewed interest in history?

But this is history with a dramatic difference as the events leading to Susanna's "court appearance", as portrayed in the play, inspire the intriguing thought: "is this what really happened?" Has Peter Whelan uncovered the truth or has he used a documented event from 1613 to create a piece of drama by tapping into his vivid imagination and therefore using his art of "dissembling"? Perhaps tonight's performance of his play may encourage you to think of different possibilities!

Most of the action takes place at Susanna and John Hall's house in Stratford and it is still possible to visit Hall's Croft today and appreciate what it was like when it was first built in the early 17th century. Several of the people involved in this production have paid a visit, and walking in the gardens, it is very easy to picture the events of "The Herbal Bed".

Hall's Croft is in need of funds to further its restoration and perhaps this evening's production may tempt you to see for yourself Susanna and John Hall's home and garden and ensure its continued existence.

"The Herbal Bed" has been a fascinating experience to prepare and work on - not least because of a brilliant and hard working team both on and offstage. I hope you enjoy this tantalising piece of "historical" drama.

Richard Woodward
Director



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Peter Whelan

"The Herbal Bed," a dramatic hit in England in the late '90s, focuses on the Bard's elder daughter, Susanna. British dramatist Peter Whelan built "The Herbal Bed" on the sparse facts we know about the Susanna Hall suite. The playwright takes that and speculates what might have happened. As Peter Whelan explained in an introduction to the stage performance, "It was the pain of the moral dilemma detectable behind this small handful of facts that drew me to write it." Whelan has created a plot of complexity in both situation and character, not unlike the conflicting truths of Shakespeare's own works.

"The Herbal Bed" was such a hit for the Royal Shakespeare Company, it was moved from Stratford to London's West End. The play received the Writers of Great Britain Award for 1996 as the best regional play.

His stage works include six plays produced by the RSC, including "The Accrington Pals" (1983), "Clay" (1989), and "The Bright and Bold Design" (1998). In 1993 he wrote "Shakespeare Country" for the Little Theatre Guild/ BT Biennial.

THE HERBAL BED



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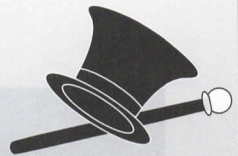
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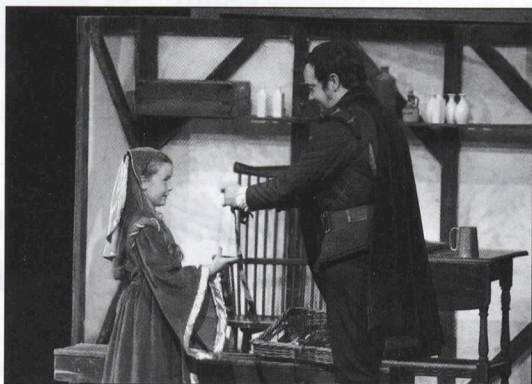
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Open Wed - Sat 10am - 5pm

THE HERBAL BED



THE HERBAL BED



THE HERBAL BED

By Peter Whelan
Directed by Richard Woodward

Cast

John Hall.....DAVID PARRY

Susanna Hall.....LIANNE NAUGHTON

Elizabeth Hall.....ZOE FINDLAY

Hester Fletcher.....HELENE PORTER

Rafe Smith.....SCOTT ROWAN

Jack Lane.....JAMIE GAVIN

Bishop Parry.....DOUG CARRICK

Barnaby Goche.....HUGH WOLFSON

The Action takes place in the Garden of Hall's Croft,
Worcester Cathedral

Time: Early June 1613

There will be a 20 minute interval during the performance.

Staging

Stage ManagerANDY STEEL
Assistant Stage Manager (Book)JEAN WATKINSON
PropertiesROY CARR
RICHARD WOODWARD
LightingTONY BERRY
SoundBRIAN HODGE
CostumesANN RICHARDS & SDC TEAM
Set Constructed bySDC PRODUCTIONS
Scenic ArtistBOB JESSAMINE
Photography byNEIL HICKSON

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Director would like to thank:-

Lady Green Nurseries for the plants and Aladdin's Cave for the properties.

The management reserves the right to refuse admission to the auditorium after curtain up, until a suitable opportunity occurs. First aid facilities are provided at this theatre by St John Ambulance Brigade, whose members give their services voluntarily.

•
Patrons are welcome in our licensed bar downstairs before and after tonight's performance.
Why not beat the rush and pre-order your interval drinks in the bar?

•
An induction loop is installed in this theatre for the benefit of hearing impaired patrons.
Please turn your hearing aid to 'T'.

•
At the end of tonight's performance you may leave by any of the exits, all of which will be open.
In an emergency, this theatre can be emptied in three minutes or less if everyone leaves in an orderly manner.

•
Smoking is prohibited in the auditorium.

THEATRE LICENSEE, PETER BURROUGHS.

QUIZ

For a change, we're going to let you work out the link between the play and the quiz. Here goes:

- 1 What number is at 6 o'clock on a dartboard?
- 2 A snooker game needs how many balls?
- 3 What is the point value of F in Scrabble?
- 4 How many squares are there on a Japanese chess board?
- 5 How many points are there on a backgammon board?

For answers see bottom of page 18
for the link see the next programme

Top Ten

Herbal Bed is set in the reign of James I
but which country has had the most monarchs?

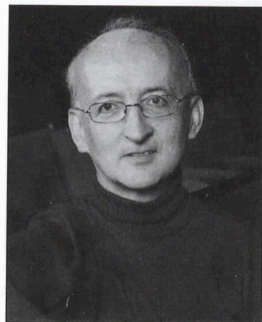
- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1, Japan 125 since 40 BC | 6. Monaco 20 since 1458 AD |
| 2, England 64 since 802 AD | 7, Spain 18 since 1516 AD |
| 3, Sweden 59 since 980 AD | 8, Netherlands 14 since 1572 AD |
| 4, Denmark 55 since 940 AD | 9, Liechtenstein 16 since 1699 AD |
| 5, Norway 42 since 858 AD | 10, Thailand 9 since 1782 |

THE HERBAL BED

Cast

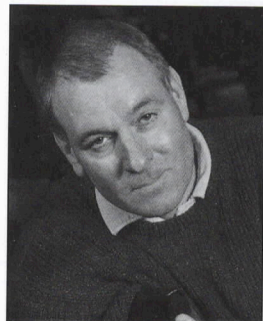
Richard Woodward (*Director*)

The bed of the title must have reminded the play selection committee to get Richard out of his prolonged theatrical 'rest'. It is some seven years since he trod the boards at the Little as an eighty year old in *Another Time* and other appearances include *A Small Family Business* and *Separate Tables*. Previous productions for SDC have been the farce *Holiday Snap* and the thriller *Someone Waiting*



David Parry (*John Hall*)

This is a role far removed from those performances by David in recent years. His most recent performance having been in *Lost in Yonkers*, *Breezblock Park*, *All My Sons* and *Gym and Tonic*. Having decided years ago that period plays did not appeal this is an experience he will not be repeating



Lianne Naughton (*Susanna Hall*)

Lianne is no stranger to strong female character roles and is probably most remembered for her role in *Katherine Howard*

She is delighted to be back in the same period, albeit 150 years on, and even more delighted that she gets to "keep her head" in her latest role.

Lianne recently played Princess Jasmine in *Aladdin* and has had tremendous fun in all the various productions at the SDC over the past years



THE HERBAL BED

Cast



Zoe Findlay (*Elizabeth Hall*)

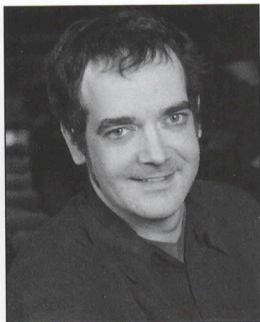
Zoe is not a newcomer to the Little Theatre, she appeared in Aladdin last year and this year can be seen in Robin Hood and Babes in the Wood

Zoe is a pupil of Sunnymede School and attends the King School of Dance. Zoe has thoroughly enjoyed working on the Herbal Bed and would like to thank everyone for being so kind and helpful



Helene Porter (*Hester Fletcher*)

As a new member to the SDC, joining this summer, Helene is thrilled to be playing her first role as Hester Fletcher in the Herbal Bed. She has enjoyed the challenge that this role has brought and is looking forward to performing the play on stage



Scott Rowan (*Rafe Smith*)

After a lengthy absence Scott is delighted to be back treading the boards at the SDC

Scott's last appearance was as Dr Caius in the Merry Wives of Windsor which he had great fun with

He returns in a more melancholy role as the storm-tossed Rafe and has enjoyed working with a wonderful director and an extraordinary cast

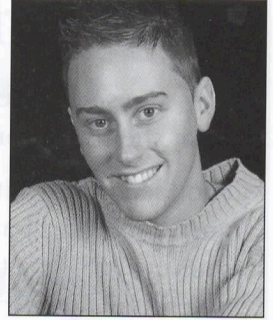
Welcome back Scott

THE HERBAL BED

Cast

Jamie Gavin (*Jack Lane*)

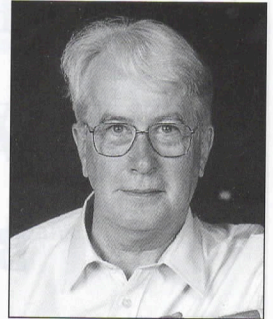
Since his outstanding debut in *Lost in Yonkers*, Jamie has enjoyed a variety of distinguished performances here at the Little Theatre, including *Breezblock Park*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and an appearance at Sefton in the title role of *David Copperfield*. As a youngster, he took the lead role in the youth theatre production of *Cider With Rosie* and more recently has taken part in *Henry IV part I* a combined Southport and Sefton production commissioned for the Formby Art Festival



Doug Carrick (*Bishop Parry*)

Douglas returns to the Little Theatre a year after his challenging part in the two-hander, *Revenge*

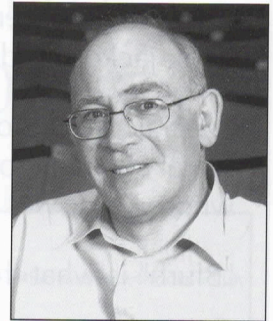
He has been directing and acting at Formby Little Theatre. He last worked with Richard in *Someone Waiting* and returns to us in February as director of the *Perfect Murder*



Hugh Wolfson (*Barnaby Goche*)

Hugh Wolfson joined SDC in 1984 and remained an active member after moving to Manchester in 1986. He recently directed *Peggy for You* and appeared as *Warnie* in *Shadowlands*

Other contributions he would like remembered include *Out of Order*, *Ladies who Lunch*, *Toad of Toad Hall*, and *Pack of Lies*. Barnabas Goche is another in a line of unpleasant clerics, most recently *Cranmer* in *Katherine Howard*. Hugh is also a member of *Altrincham Garrick*



The St. Andrews Old Girls Society The Theatre Experience?

This doesn't quite have the same ring as our slogan below, but it is what the SDC's predecessor was called.

Founded in 1913 it was felt, after a few years, that men could in fact be quite useful but having them as members of an Old Girls Society didn't sound right. So, the SDC was born in 1920 and the journey began from the Opera House to a variety of venues until the SDC had its own home, the Little Theatre.

SDC-THE THEATRE EXPERIENCE

Birth of the Blurb

American humorist Frank Gelett Burgess (1866-1951), best known as the author of the nonsense poem "I never saw a purple cow", was also the inventor of the word "blurb", the effusive text used on book jackets to describe the book within.

Special promotional copies of Burgess's "Are you a Bromide?" were claimed to have been written by a Miss Belinda Blurb, whose work was said to be the "sensation of the year".

"Blurb" is what this sort of writing has been called ever since.



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28th February - 8th March 2003

THE PERFECT MURDER

by Hugh Jane, directed by Doug Carrick

12th March - 15th March 2003

OUR DAY OUT

an SDC Youth Production

Answers for Quiz 1) 3, 2) 22, 3) 4, 4) 81, 5) 24



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