



SOUTHPORT
DRAMATIC CLUB



Presents

Tilting Ground

By Guy Hibbert
Directed by
Celia Pope

21st - 29th
November 2003
7.45pm

sponsored by
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Director's Notes



Now you are sitting on a beach near Escondido on the Gulf coast of Mexico. The sound of the sea washes over you, the birds call and sail from sky to sand. Luxurious, tranquil. How long will it last?

Nancy, Jack and Charles. Three complex people who form an ever changing triangle under whose feet there is permanently *Tilting Ground*.

Guy Hibbert, who wrote our play, afforded us the convincing substance with which to work. I am grateful.

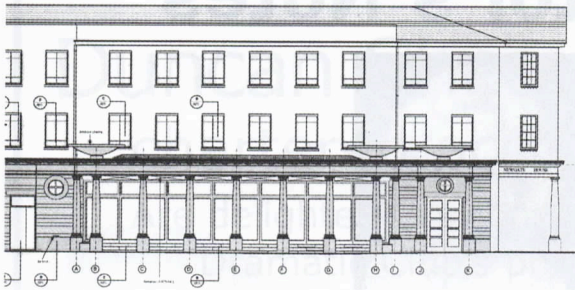
This play requires a great deal of dedication from the cast, with thousands of words to learn between them, powerful emotions to endure and direction from a 'demanding perfectionist' (their words). I believe they could not have given me more. I thank them all.

You will hear Tango music. Did you know originally that this South American dance was performed by two men armed with blades who were prepared to kill each other for love?

Why do temperance rules apply back stage? Because in the course of production the cast would have consumed 120 totos of whisky, 40 bottles of red wine, 240 bottled lagers and 20 bottles of Champagne.

Listen as tonight our play unfolds its passion. Be shocked and moved.

Celia Pope
Director



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Guy Hibbert



Guy Hibbert, the author of our play this evening, started work in the theatre as a stagehand, moved on to become a touring stage manager before deciding to turn his hand to writing plays for both the theatre and television. This decision proved to be fortuitous and extremely successful as his list of writings (far too numerous to include in total) would portray.

His first play *Jetty* was written and performed at the Oxford Playhouse in 1978. *On The Edge* starring Barbara Jefford and Phyllis Logan appeared at the Hampstead Theatre, London in 1985 and received the John Whiting Award in 1986. *Tilting Ground* was first produced in 1996 at Swanage.

It was, however, towards television, both the BBC and ITV, that his interests turned and since 1989, he has constantly been writing top quality dramas, plays and documentaries, receiving innumerable awards and nominations for his work. *Aimee* starring Donald Sumpter and Juliet Stevenson was nominated as Best Drama in 1991 by the Royal Television Society and Writers' Guild and also received the Prix SACD award for Best screenplay at the Cannes Television Festival in 1992. The BBC2 play *Bad Girl* received the Prix UNDA for best drama and *Nymphe D'Argent* for best screen play at the Monte-Carlo Television Festival in 1993.

Guy Hibbert has also written individual episodes of some famous television series, including *Prime Suspect*, starring Helen Mirren; *The Ruth Rendell Mysteries* and *Nice Town*. Many well-known actors and actresses have appeared in his screenplays such as Kenneth Cranham, John Hurt, Linus Roache Sheila Hancock and Paul McGann.

Future films of his are to be broadcast on BBC1 in March 2004 and Channel 4 in May 2004. He has currently been commissioned by Granada Television to write the screenplay for a film about the war in Sierra Leone. Although a very busy person, he has been most helpful and approachable and has sent his personal good wishes to the director and cast of the Southport Dramatic Club's production of his play.

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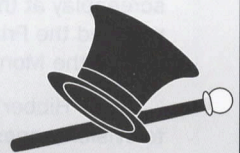
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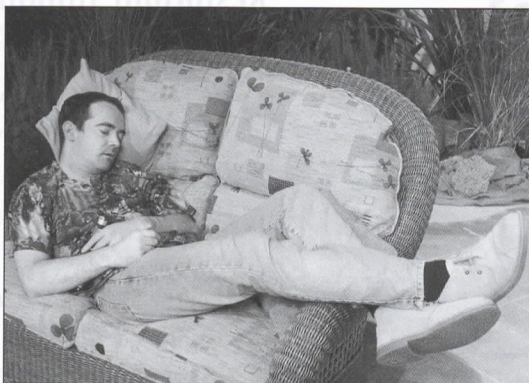
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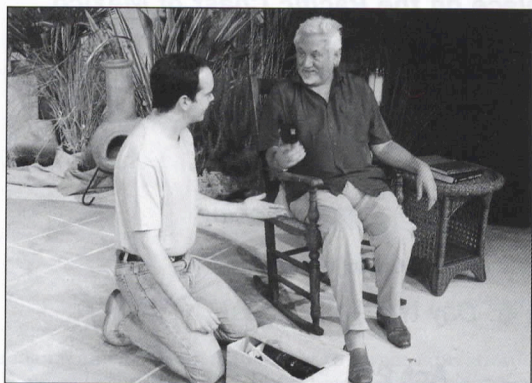
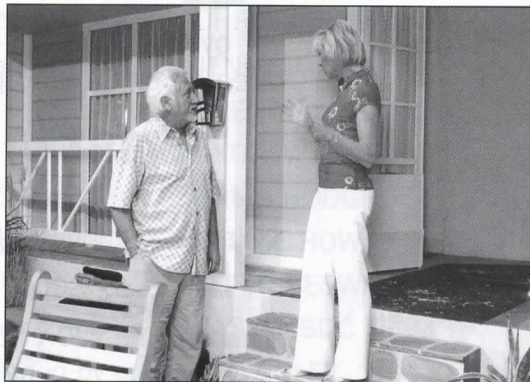
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Tilting Ground



Tilting Ground

by Guy Hibbert
directed by Celia Pope

Cast

Nancy JACQUIE WADE
Jack SCOTT ROWAN
Charles JON ELLIS-FOX

The action takes place on the Pacific Coast of Mexico

Act 1

Scene 1: *Day one – mid morning*
Scene 2: *Day one – afternoon*
Scene 3: *Day one – early evening*
Scene 4: *Day one – 9pm*
Scene 5: *Day two – breakfast*

Act 2

Scene 1: *Day three – 3.20am*
Scene 2: *Day three – breakfast*
Scene 3: *Day four – 3.00am*
Scene 4: *Day four – late morning*
Scene 5: *Day four – 8pm*
Scene 6: *Day five – morning*
Scene 7: *Days later*

There will be a 20 minute interval between the two acts

Staging

Stage Manager	CHRIS APPLETON
Assistant Stage Manager (Book)	JENNY PARKER
Props	BRENDA WHELAN
Lighting	ANDREW CONNARD
Sound Design	BRIAN HODGE
Sound Operators	BERNIE HOWAT PETER BESWICK
Wardrobe	CAST & SDC TEAM
Set Designed by	SYD COLEY
Set Constructed by	SDC PRODUCTION TEAM
Scenic Artist	BOB JESSAMINE
Choreographer	PHILLIPA SANDIFORD
Photography by	NEIL HICKSON

Acknowledgements

The director would like to thank:

Lady Green Nurseries and Lamplighters of Ainsdale

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.

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'.

Please ensure that all mobile telephones are switched off

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.

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Tilting Ground

Cast

Celia Pope (*Director*)

At the tender age of seven Celia's life long ambition to be a ballet dancer was shattered by her Grandma's spotted dick and custard. Hence she moved to the London stage, West End E11, behind her auntie's parlour curtains with a dressing up box.

Her most enjoyable performances have included:

Her Ladyship *Kingfisher*

Her Ladyship *Ladies Who Lunch*

Her Ladyship *Me & My Girl*

Will Hollywood please recognise her ability to do "gutter". In recent years Celia has directed *Chip in the Sugar*, *Once a Catholic*, *42nd Street* and now *Tilting Ground*. She finds it hard to choose between directing and acting "as long as its theatre, keep it coming. When its time to go, sprinkle my ashes in the orchestra pit".



Jacquie Wade (*Nancy*)

Jacquie is thrilled to be playing the part of Nancy and has found the rehearsals both challenging and enjoyable. With such a small cast she has found it lovely to be working with "old friends" again. She last worked with Celia six years ago in *Lock Up Your Daughters*, when Jacquie played the young, virginal Hilet, while Celia was the worldly Mrs Squeezem. She has also worked with Scott in *Dead Guilty* when she played the murderess Margaret Hadrell and he played Gary. She has also played Jon's wife before in *Death Trap*. Another bonus for her is to be playing an American, as she feels quite an affinity with the USA after first visiting there as a child with her parents in the 60s. They travelled to New York on the first Queen Elizabeth which took five days to get there. She managed to acquire a credible American accent even before the ship docked! Jacquie feels her family will be relieved that she is playing a "mother" this time and not cavorting around in her underwear as she did playing Rose last season in the comedy *Business Affairs*.



Tilting Ground

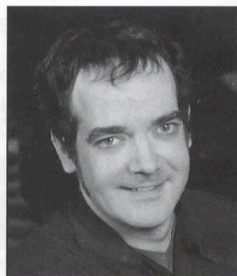
Cast

Scott Rowan (*Jack*)

Having been acting for a number of years now, Scott has realised the older he gets the nastier the parts get. He is delighted to be playing the part of Jack in *Tilting Ground* as Jack's wild mood swings and Scott's own are so similar, very little acting is required.

Scott was most distressed to find out that he needed to have a beer bottle glued to his hand for the majority of the play, and not a pint of Guinness which would have been preferable.

He would like to thank the rest of the cast for their patience, and especially Celia, as he has always wanted to work with the Pope.



John Ellis-Fox (*Charles*)

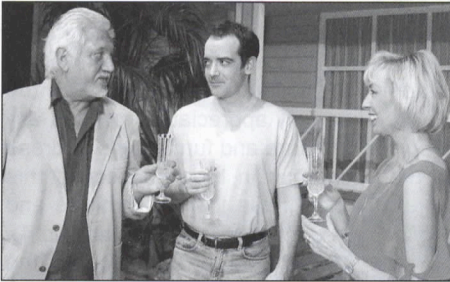
Once again Jon lies about his age. Rehearsals have been very challenging for Jon and Celia, the director, as she coaxes Jon to dance.

His favourite roles to date have been, Calvinus in *Time of Your Life*, the Duke of Norfolk in *Katherine Howard*, Sydney in *Death Trap* and Aylott in *Month of Sundays* and now this role of Charles in *Tilting Ground*.

All of his above roles have been under the direction of very talented directors and Jon is looking forward to performing with this very talented cast.



What is the link between the people in the cast photograph and the stage crew photograph of *Tilting Ground*?



Cast



Stage Crew

1 2 3 4 5 6

Simply, that neither could put on the play without the other!

This group of people are collectively known as “The Backstage Crew” and they are, together, responsible for every aspect of the work that goes on behind the scenes, in order that the play is presented to you in as authentic and believable a manner as possible. Without them you would merely witness dialogue on a bare, unlit stage without the bonus of atmosphere, effects and a furnished set to act within.

These members all have their individual roles to play, a potted description of which, we hope you will find of interest.

Chris Appleton (No.6) is Stage Manager. The Stage Manager is the person, male or female, to whom the Director hands over the entire responsibility of the running of the play, once rehearsals are over. Chris is the one in charge now and his word goes! He says when the curtain goes up and comes down after consulting with the Front of House Manager if it is safe to do so, i.e. all the fire doors closed and stewards in place. He is in touch with the sound and lighting box, and cues in all effects. Scene changes are masterminded by him and in the case of Chris, he will also have spent time in rehearsal and also been involved in the actual building of the set.

The set itself was designed by **Syd Coley** (No.2) from an original idea provided by the Director, Celia Pope. Syd has been a member for as long as we can all remember, a man of extreme artistic ability and was Lighting Director for the club for many years.

Brian Hodge is Sound Director and responsible for correlating all music and sound effects required within the play. This can be very challenging especially, when I have it on good authority, the current Director wanted the audience to feel the sensation of sitting on the edge of, if not actually in the sea! All done by sound! **Peter Beswick** (No.1) and also **Bernie Howat** will be operating more than 50 sound cues during each performance.

The varied and artistic lighting effects have been cleverly designed by our resident Lighting Director, **Tony Berry** and the 40 different lighting cues will be subtly brought in and out by our young operator **Andrew Connard** (No.5). The combined effects of lighting and sound can make or break the atmosphere created by the actors on the stage and we are more than grateful for the many unrecorded hours of work that go into achieving the final result.

The properties necessary to create the picture you see before you, are gathered from far and wide, for each play. Although we have a well-stocked Property Department on the premises, every play (and every Director) requires something different and relevant on the particular period or place they are interpreting. We are extremely appreciative towards any suppliers in the town or local area, who allow us to borrow furniture and furnishings to dress our sets. Lady Green Nurseries have been more than generous in their support of this production and we extend to them our most grateful thanks for the loan of furniture and plants. The lady in charge of props for the run of *Tilting Ground* is **Brenda Whelan** (No.4). Hers is the unenviable job of making sure that every prop is in the correct place for the actors to sit on, write with, eat off, or whatever, throughout the play!

Finally, the post of Assistant Stage Manager (On the Book) - i.e. the Prompt! This is one of the unsung jobs back stage, during performance and indeed, all through the rehearsal period, which involves the person in question keeping their eye firmly on the script, line, page by page, in case a member of cast forgets a line and needs quietly, but clearly reminding! **Jenny Parker** (No.3) herself an actress, understands well, the reassurance that a good prompt can give a cast. Ironically, in an ideal situation, she should never be heard! All that dedication for nothing - it is just nice to know you are there, Jenny, along with the rest of the team.

We would like to add that this photograph only includes the people involved in the running of this particular play, there are many other members of the club who have been an integral part of the backstage planning and organisation of the season, not mentioned here. Perhaps next time, it will be their turn to get their name in print!

Also not forgetting all those volunteer members who are also present in the theatre during a performance, for your safety and enjoyment such as Front of House Manager and stewards, servery staff, bar staff and box office staff.



Stage Manager's desk, backstage



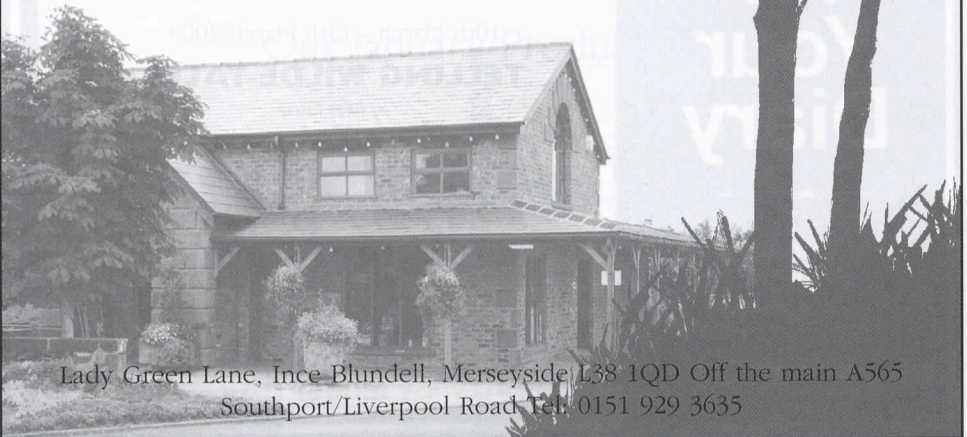
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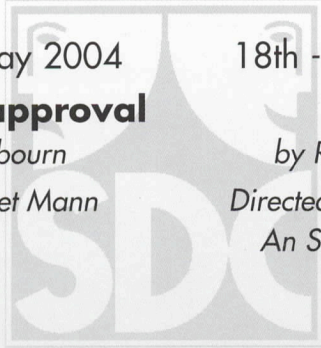
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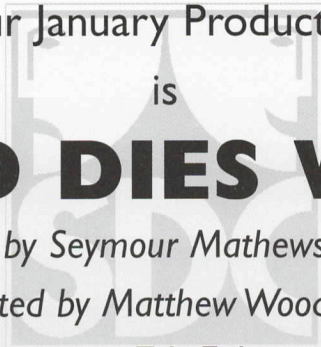
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WHO DIES WINS

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Directed by Matthew Woodhams

30th January - 7th February 2004





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Cinderella

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