



Lady Betty

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

When I first saw this play some eleven years ago now, I was immediately drawn to its wild earthy poetic language, the exciting blend of storytelling, ballad and dance and the haunting music of Paddy Cunneen. It all made for one of those remarkable and exhilarating experiences in the theatre. At that time Cheek By Jowl were at their most prolific and had just bowled over audiences with their fabulous *Fuente Ovejuna* at the National. I vowed then, that one day, I would direct Lady Betty at Questors and although it has been a long journey, that day has now come. It is also fitting that the Studio Theatre, also known as the Stanislavsky Room, is the venue for this production because Declan used to attend Young Questors acting classes here many years ago. Even more co-incidentally, John Turner and I use to teach him in this very room. So the wheel has come full circle and I am now privileged to direct Declan's inspired Lady Betty.

So why direct a play that was the product of a particular group working closely in a workshop style to create an inimitable theatrical event? Well for one thing the play stands alone as a beautiful piece of poetic writing and is full of startling imagery. Also the text is devoid of any stage directions; it is a blank canvas. For that reason it is entirely possible to create a different theatrical experience from the same script. The group of actors who have worked with me on this show have all contributed enormously towards the end result. Their considerable input is what has helped shaped my vision for this show and I am grateful for their extreme dedication and commitment. It has been a tough show to rehearse requiring huge amounts of energy and stamina.

We have based our production on a concept that is fundamentally different from *Cheek By Jowl's*, but certain similarities in the style have, understandably, remained. The Lady Betty story is basically true, although a certain amount of myth has evolved around that truth. Declan Donnellan has created a wonderful narrative that compiles around the facts a poetic drama of ghosts and visions, songs and tirades, dancing and political tension. There is no doubt that Betty has become a legend to this day in Ireland and the retelling of her story makes for a powerful and dramatic experience.

Mike Langridge

Lady Betty

by Declan Donnellan

with original music composed by Paddy Cunneen
First performance of this production Saturday 17th June 2000.

Cast

Betty	Caroline Bleakley
Sarah, Lucy, Morning	Victoria Butler
Mr. Hanrahan, O'Leary	Anthony Curran
Christy, Cold, Michael Flynn	Nigel Lawrence
George, Dunne	Kevin Madley
Bridie, Mrs Mills	Lisa Milne Henderson
Mrs. Hanrahan, Night	Anne Neville
Father Molloy, a Prisoner	Ray Orley
John, Oliver, Captain Mills	Antony Quinlan
Liamog, Silence, Sergeant, Padre	Derek Stoddart
Bridget	Sinéad Ryan

All other parts and music played by members of the company.
The action of the play takes place in Roscommon Gaol, Ireland, towards the end of the 18th C.

ACT ONE

Interval of 20 minutes

ACT TWO

The play lasts approximately 2 hours 20 minutes including the interval.

Production

Director and Set Designer:	Mike Langridge
Musical Director:	Guy Middlemiss
Assistant Director:	Bernice Wolfenden
Costume Designer:	Emma Goodwin
Lighting Designer:	Francis Stevenson
Stage Manager:	Nigel Bamford
Deputy Stage Managers:	Helen Carter, Julia Russell
Assistant Stage Managers:	Theodora Athanasiadu, Tsvety Voynova, Patrick Waplington
Properties:	Bernard Brady
Prompter:	Gordon Miller
Wardrobe:	Elisabeth Bisinotto, Valerie Chung, Robin Lill, Sylvia Wall
Lighting Operator:	Mel Pereira
Choreography:	Caroline Bleakley, Anne Neville
Mask by:	Kate Morton
Wigs by:	Oxana Allen, Lisa Isles

Thanks to:

Declan Donnellan, Andrea Cunneen, Paddy Cunneen, Colin Horne,
Imelda O'Neill and Roscommon County Library

Lady Betty

FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS

1st July - 8th July

THE HAPPIEST DAYS OF YOUR LIFE *by John Dighton*

IN THE PLAYHOUSE - FREE TO MEMBERS

The 53rd Student Group's Graduation Production

There's a certain type of farce that is so quintessentially English that only the English can do it - and this is it! One of the best examples of its kind, this classic farce from 1948 imagines the mayhem that results when a girls' school is billeted on a boys' school just after the war.

2000/2001 SEASON

16th September - 23rd September

THE HERBAL BED *by Peter Whelan*

IN THE PLAYHOUSE

Our new season opens with a play by Questors member, Peter Whelan. *The Herbal Bed* is a very absorbing play based on the true story of a 1613 scandal in Stratford-upon-Avon involving Shakespeare's eldest daughter Susanna Hall. Premiered to great acclaim by the RSC in 1996 it is a play about relative truth and absolute truth, morality and compromise in which three people's lives are exposed to the intense glare of public scrutiny. A moving exploration of "love's alchemy", wise and funny, generous of spirit, it is very much a play for our time

NEXT SEASON'S LINE UP WILL ALSO INCLUDE:

MY NIGHT WITH REG *by Kevin Elyot*, **WOMAN IN MIND (December Bee)** *by Alan Ayckbourn*, **TRAINSPOTTING** *by Irvine Welsh*, **TONGUES OF FIRE** *by David Fletcher*, **A LITTLE HOTEL ON THE SIDE** *by Feydeau and adapted by John Mortimer*, **CLOSE-UP** *by our very own Tony Rushforth*, and of course our special Christmas show **THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS** for which we are already taking bookings.

9th December 2000 - 6th January 2001

Kenneth Grahame's **THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS**

Adapted for the stage by Alan Bennett with additional lyrics & music by Jeremy Sams

IN THE PLAYHOUSE

Hang spring cleaning! Go boating with Mole and Ratty. Thrill to Toad's passion for fast travel. Follow Mr Badger down secret passages. Join the River Bankers in beating the living daylights out of the Wild Wooders in the battle for Toad Hall! Book early for the best seats in town this Christmas as the Questors is magically transformed into the setting for Alan Bennett's sparkling adaptation of Kenneth Grahame's enduring classic.

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