

The
Stockholm Players
Sweden's Oldest English Theatre Company

NEWSLETTER

December 2006

Editors: Lisa Cockette & Dave Meur

An Inspector Called

In November, Stockholm audiences were treated, yes treated, to a wonderful performance of *An Inspector Calls*, by J. B. Priestley. All kudos to Dave Meur, who, in his debut as Director for the Stockholm Players, selected and directed a fine cast of new members and old, who delivered this chilling drama with panache.

David Hynes was the epitome indignation as the bumbling head of the Birling family. Camilla Janzon gave a wonderful portrayal of the hard-headed and proud Mrs Birling. Esther Edlundh-Rose's Sheila Birling was utterly believable as the slightly spoiled daughter, who progressed through petulance, hurt, fear and finally compassion.

The crumpled son of the family, Eric, was played by Chris Latham who gave the character and the show poignancy. Neil Banks played the eager-to-impress future son-in-law Gerald wonderfully, sometimes adding a touch of comedy to the show. Another newcomer, Kristian Nilsson, played the title character hauntingly, adding a supernatural element to the play. Finally, Claire Eriksen played the family maid, always in the background, but reminding the audiences of the social inequalities that the Birling family refused to acknowledge.

The strong cast was complimented by a strong and slick production crew headed up by Garry Wevill. Thanks to all of you who gave your time to made this work on stage and off – I wish we had space to list you all here.



Back Row: Kristian Nilsson. **Middle Row:** Neil Banks, Esther Edlundh-Rose, David Hynes, Camilla Janzon, Chris Latham, Claire Eriksen. **Front Row:** Nina Riikon, Dave Meur, Louise Ulvelund, Linn Leary

I went to see the performance on the final evening, and was delighted to see that the theatre was almost full. In fact, four of the five nights were sold out – what a pleasure for the actors and crew.

A huge thanks goes to all of you who supported in the team, and all of you who came along to see the show.

Spring production workshop

In preparation for the Spring production (see below) our production directors Nigel Harvey and Cynthia Morissette organised a workshop to start developing some of their ideas.

A group of ten people attended, and enjoyed an evening of fun. After warming up and looking at the 5-tableaux approach to play structures, we broke up into groups to do some small improvisations. I was impressed by the two new members featured on this page as they portrayed children playing in the sand on the beach.

Thereafter, one group developed Nigel's "alter-ego" concept, while another read one of the scene's from Cynthia's play. We were all impressed by the results achieved in such a short time. A good sign of things to come for our Spring production.

Welcome to two of our new members

Neil Martin Banks



Newcomer Neil played Gerard in An Inspector calls. He is originally from Ealing, London and moved to Stockholm in September 2005 to be with his fiancée Anna. They are getting married in August.

Neil has been a professional actor since 2003, although his journey was a long one. As a teenager he was part of a theatre group associated with the local church, the group put on variety evenings which included comedy, singing and dancing. He also played a T-Bird in a production of Grease!

Unfortunately he didn't originally pursue his interest in theatre. Instead he spent his time on other interests such as football, an avid Queens Park Rangers supporter, and Darts, representing London at under 18 level.

He returned to acting when he was 26. He started evening classes at The City Literary Institute (The City Lit) in London and he quickly picked up the acting "bug" again.

Together with his mentor, George Pensotti, Neil helped start a theatre group called "Rooftop Productions" Their first theatrical performances were on the roof of The City Lit – 7 floors up and

with an incredible view of London! The plays they performed were written by George and were comedy farces, with a hidden environmental message. All the characters were animals. Over 3 summers they performed these plays playing up to 20 different characters in about 45 minutes which Neil describes as "Tiring, but a wonderful experience!"

In 2003 Neil did a Theatre in Education tour of Italy for 10 weeks, so he gave up his job to finally become a professional actor. He hasn't looked back since then, being involved in more theatre and a few small TV appearances.

Since moving to Stockholm, he's been doing voice-over work, doing dubbing, radio commercials, information films and a couple of training/internal films.

Neil admits that his first love is comedy, his favourite playwrights being Noel Coward, Alan Ayckbourn and Alan Bennett, but equally enjoys the challenge of more serious roles. His goal for 2007 is to get at least one Swedish speaking role "Even if it's only 3 lines"

Camilla Janzon



Camilla debuted for the Stockholm Players as Mrs Birling in An Inspector Calls. She was introduced to Stockholm Players through Kate Kabala with whom she has performed a number of Swedish plays.

She says that she is very happy to be a new member of our group and is enjoying meeting all of us who love the theatre as much as she does.

Originally from Stockholm, Camilla says that she looks forward to being on stage acting and singing, and off stage, helping with marketing. In fact, it was Camilla who put us in contact with a great designer who did such a wonderful job of the posters, tickets and programme for An Inspector Calls.

Rumour has it that Camilla is also open to writing drama and perhaps directing. Both talents much sought after by the committee.

When not on stage Camilla enjoys fishing – like a true Swede. She is a copywriter, and also a student at Skrivarakademin, where she studies drama amongst other things.

And from one of our longest serving members - Else Luscombe (by Else)

I was born in north Sweden. The family moved to Stockholm in 1949. I loved singing and dancing so started taking singing lessons, played the guitar, belonged to the busy Bel Canto-kören, sang in churches and enjoyed the big city. I also got an interesting job as private secretary to the leader of the Liberal party, Professor Bertil Ohlin.

After five years working from the Folkpartiet HQ, the Riksdag and Handelshögskolan, I felt I wanted to learn more about England, so got a job with the Swedish Chamber of Commerce in London. That's where I met Don! We married in 1957, settled in Stockholm and had two sons.

My first contact with British amateur theatre was in Nairobi Kenya where we lived from 1965 – 1967. I enjoyed very much singing and dancing in The Wizard of Oz. The Society had its own beautiful theatre. Just imagine!

Back in Stockholm we joined The Stockholm Players and we have so many happy memories from performances and various other activities. Taking part in pantomimes was always fun. I have been a Clown, a variety of Queens and in the chorus. An interesting role was the ghost Amelia in Strindberg's "Ghost Sonata". We took it to FEATS 1999 and won! (Thank you Deirdre for that perfectly ghastly ghostly make-up!) I also enjoyed acting in comedies like Alan Ayckbourn's "Season's Greetings" and "Confusions". "A Dog's Life" in 2003 has a very special place in my heart – what a team!

Favourite moment? At the acting course in Munsbach Castle, Luxembourg. 1989: Everyone on the course gathered in a big hall for a trial session. A chap and I were given a paper with 3 or 4 words on it. We were then given 15 minutes to work out a theme for an improvisation using those words. I don't remember the words, but I do remember the fantastic feeling when everybody was laughing uproariously at our antics and we felt we could have continued - there was no doubt we had captured the audience. A rare occasion which one is lucky to experience even once.

I would just like to say thanks to all those members, especially past but also those present, who have shared so many wonderful experiences.

Looking forward to our Spring Production

The Stockholm Players Summer Production will be a double bill featuring "Stay Carl Stay" by Peter Tolan and directed by Cynthia Morissette, and "Connections and Disconnections" (working title) to be directed by Nigel Harvey.

The plays will be performed in Stockholm in May, before going down to The Hague for FEATS 2007. It is hoped that one of the plays will complete at the festival, while the other will be presented at the Fringe.

Stay Carl Stay

Caroline lives unhappily with her boyfriend Brian. At the suggestion of her friend, Mary Sue, she decides to get a dog, Carl. The introduction of Carl into Caroline's life brings a number of surprises and changes. This intelligent and funny play gives a fresh perspective on relationships, both human and canine!

Connections and Disconnections

This play will be developed from an idea that was presented by Nigel at the Workshop on 5th December (see the write up below for further details).

There will be auditions for both plays at ABF Huset, Sveavägen on Sunday 14th January at 1pm and Monday 15th January at 6pm.

Please see website for further details.

Members of the Actors Studio to visit Stockholm

A Daring Evening of Two One-Act Plays in English:
Strindberg Meets Joyce Carol Oates!

“THE STRONGER” and “HOMESICK”
Strindberg’s Intima Theatre
Premieres January 8 2007 at 7pm

Dates: January 9,11,12,13,16,17,18,19,20,22 at 7pm; January 14 & 21 at 4pm.

“The Stronger,” one of August Strindberg’s most intriguing plays, features Gina Bonati and Bo Corre as two friends who lift the veil on their tangled emotional past. The scene plays out on Christmas Eve when they share a painful truth.
Directors: Lee Grant & Elizabeth Kemp

In “Homesick” by Joyce Carol Oates, two tragic souls find each other in America’s wasteland. Kevin Stapleton plays the serial killer Mr. America and Bo Corre plays the lost Pinktoes.
Director: Elizabeth Kemp

Special Events:

January 14, 6pm - A conversation with Stig Björkman, author of the interview book “Joyce Carol Oates - Samtal med Stig Björkman”. / Tickets 80 kr

January 15, 7pm - “The Stronger,” followed by a seminar, “Art of Acting.” Tickets 200 kr.

Tickets: 08-20-08-43. 200 kr, 175 kr students.

IF YOU BUY YOUR TICKETS BEFORE DECEMBER 22 YOU PAY 150 CROWNS

Address: Barnhusgatan 20, Norra Bantorget.
Box office opens two hours before performance.
Week 50+51 Tue 11-15 pm, Wed 14-17.30 pm,
Thur 14-17.30 pm, Fri 11-15 pm
www.strindbergsintimateater.se



Dates for your diary

Auditions for Spring Production

- Sunday 14th January at 1pm & Monday 15th January at 6pm
- ABF Huset, Sveavägen

Annual General Meeting

- Saturday 10th March (time TBC)
- ABF Huset, Sveavägen

Spring Production

- Saturday 12th and Sunday 14th May
- Time and venue TBC

FEATS 2007

- Mat 25th – May 27th
- The Hague
- Details TBC

Contributions

We would very much like to receive tips for events, reviews, short articles, you name it; or perhaps you even have a play dying to see the light of day. Please forward contributions or any ideas or comments to the Editors.

Note that the publication of submitted material is not guaranteed.

Are you a budding director, or would you like to be one? Contact any of our committee members and let us know.

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