

ALEXANDRA PLAYERS NEWS

SPRING 2018



The Alexandra Hall, Bramshot Avenue, SE7 7HY
8pm | 30th May - 02 June 2018
(Doors open 30 minutes before curtain up)
Seats £9 Conc. £8

THE ALEXANDRA PLAYERS
PRESENT

Agatha Christie

A MURDER IS ANNOUNCED

Adapted by Leslie Darbon

BOX OFFICE OPENING SOON | alexandraplayers@gmail.com
www.alexandraplayers.org.uk

IMPORTANT INFORMATION—PLEASE TAKE ACTION!

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THE DEEP BLUE SEA

Reviewed by Graham Johnson

Terence Rattigan is regarded as one of the country's greatest 20th century playwrights. *The Deep Blue Sea* is one of his finest plays. Set in 1950s London in a seedy boarding house furnished room, the play opens with Hester Collyer lying unconscious in front of a gas fire in an unsuccessful attempt at suicide, which, at the time, was a criminal offence. Her despair is caused by the unrequited love she has for the dashing but prodigal ex-RAF pilot, Freddie Page. Having escaped from a passionless marriage to a High Court Judge, Rattigan skilfully explores how Hester battles against the repressive social mores of the time, and how she is consumed by an intense but ultimately ill-fated affair. Eventually, through the kindness and support of another tenant and outcast, 'Doctor' Miller, she slowly realises that perhaps she can escape both the devil and the deep blue sea.

Juliette Harrison as Hester captured the character's anguish and unhappiness beautifully. She demonstrated extremely well her fragile state of mind which ultimately resulted in a breakdown as she realised that the relationship with Freddie she craved for was doomed to failure. We were well aware of the maelstrom of emotions swimming inside her, and Juliette sustained this expertly.

Sam Moore as Freddie was physically perfect as the ex-pilot, and he captured the self-indulgent, free-drinking character effectively. We could well believe that the "little bit of business" he did in the City would come to nothing. But Freddie had his own demons, a legacy of the trauma of war. Perhaps here, the actor could have given a more measured rather than fast-paced delivery to allow the audience to understand his thought processes more fully. This aside, it was Sam's first appearance for the Alexandra Players, and it was an impressive debut.

Keith Hartley as the husband, William Collyer (they hadn't actually divorced) gave an assured performance as the Establishment

figure who was able to give Hester financial security. But incapable of giving her the kind of love she longed for. He captured the heartache of still being in love with Hester skilfully.

Roy Moore as Mr Miller gave us a character whose empathy with Hester was apparent and touching. We were never quite sure of the reason for his being struck off as a doctor, and the actor succeeded in demonstrating the desolation of the outsider struggling against the social claustrophobia of the post-war period.

Good support was given in the smaller roles by Mark Higgins and Alex Parker as Hester's concerned fellow tenants, Mr and Mrs Welch; by Hereward Cruttwell-Reade as Freddie's friend Jackie Jackson; and, in a delightful cameo, by Janet Sweet as the attentive but rather busybody landlady, Mrs Elton. One was never quite certain if her questioning of Hester was out of concern or nosiness!

Rob Hames' 1950s boarding house set expertly used all the space of a small stage, and suggested a place that had seen more affluent times. Lighting and sound (David Hawke) complemented the action well, and the music throughout captured the period perfectly.

Louise Gaul as director, marshalled her actors very impressively within a tight area, and she enabled them to develop their characters in keeping with Rattigan's text. The suffocation, despair and helplessness that consumed Hester and others were clearly on show. Yet also, as Rattigan intended, the director allowed the audience to see that perhaps, just perhaps, Hester had finally found her salvation.

The evening was a delight. It is always a pleasure to see a good Rattigan play performed well. Front of house were friendly and helpful, and the programme informative and professionally produced.

www.alexandraplayers.org.uk

The Alexandra Players Alexandra Hall, Bramshot Avenue, SE7

The Alexandra Players
present

Agatha Christie's

A MURDER IS ANNOUNCED

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At The Alexandra Hall, Bramshot Avenue, SE7 7HY

WED.—SAT. 30th MAY to 2nd JUNE

At 8pm (Doors open 7-30) Seats £9, concessions £8

An announcement in the local paper states the time and place when a murder is to occur in Miss Blacklock's Victorian house. The victim is not one of the house's several occupants, but an unexpected and unknown visitor. What follows is a classic Christie puzzle of mixed motives, concealed identities, a second death, a determined Inspector grimly following the twists and turns, and Miss Marple on hand to provide the final solution at some risk to herself in a dramatic confrontation just before the final curtain.

For the first time, the Alexandra Players proudly present an Agatha Christie Mystery! Co-directors Rose Bayley and Katie Cleanthous bring together a cast of twelve, consisting of a mixture of familiar faces together with a number of new members who will keep you on the edge of your seats until the final curtain!

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SEAT RESERVATIONS

You can now book your seats by telephone, e-mail or, to ensure your seats are reserved and will not be re-sold, you can book and pay in advance with PayPal by logging on to our website at www.alexandraplayers.org.uk

Book by telephone: 07867 627 987

E-mail: alexandraplayers@gmail.com

Pay in advance with PayPal at www.alexandraplayers.org.uk

(Seats booked by telephone or e-mail must be collected and paid for no later than 15 minutes before the performance or they may be re-sold. Seats booked and paid by PayPal will be held until collected and not re-sold)

Please note that many of our recent performances have been fully booked. It is therefore advisable to book in advance. However, there have been a few occasions when a few seats have remained vacant. This has been caused mainly when large bookings have not been fully taken up on the night. We are therefore requesting that party bookings are paid in advance

In October, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the ending of the 1st World War, we will be presenting "Oh What A Lovely War"

Visit our website—www.alexandraplayers.org.uk

The Alexandra Hall is part of Charlton U.R.C. in Bramshot Avenue. The church supports the work of the Alexandra Players thereby enabling the Players to put on their productions.