

"Soon the women will vote, and we'll all go to Hell, Look! Now that Wilson is in"

sedos grapevine

august 2009

Those Lazy, Hazy, Crazy Days Of Summer

Nat King Cole had it right, and if you'd like to spend an afternoon kicking back then there's still time to join us for the Summer Social this Saturday.

Tickets are £5 for members and £10 for non, so please feel free to bring along partners and friends who might like to get to know some of the people you've spent so much time rehearsing and performing with of late! If you're new to the group this is the perfect way to get to know many of our existing members, talk show shop if you'd like to and experience the other side of Sedos life offstage! There will be a delicious BBQ, with all the usual burgers and sausages and loads of salads and condiments to go with them. There will also be some vegetarian options (but let us know so we get enough!)

As well as the eating, the drinking, and the general merriment, there will also be some summer games to bring out the competitive side of the sedos membership. So if you are an expert Welly Wanger, Cake Weight Guesser, or Egg and Spoon Sprinter, then there are also prizes on offer.

Many thanks to Chris de Pury and his family for hosting the get together at their home in Bromley.

You can get tickets from the sedos website, and the price includes food and games. If you think that £5 each will cover all the booze, then you obviously haven't been to a sedos do before....so bring your own!

The fun starts at 2pm, and should go on till about 8pm. Get your tickets from www.sedos.co.uk



How to get to CDP Mansions: (17 Sundridge avenue BR1 2PU)

Get a train to Bromley South, and then get a cab for £4
Or

Get a train to Elmstead Woods, and then get a cab for £4

Or Follow this map. →



Going cuckoo?



With only four weeks to go until our Third Bridewell play of the

year opens, I talked to Becky Smith, the director of the upcoming *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* to find out a little bit more about the play, and how she is approaching it.

What attracted you as a director to OFOTCN?

As a Director the play poses some really interesting challenges for someone who loves the novel. The novel is written first person by the big Chief allowing you to get right inside his mind.. with a play this is obviously more difficult and one of the exciting and challenging things for me is bringing the intimacy of the novel to the show whilst also creating a theatrical spectacle for the audience....

You talk about the novel, but surely the iconic film must be an influence?

Honestly? Not really.. The film is awesome but as you say it's iconic.. I'm not looking for Jack Nicholson and Danny De Vito impressions from the cast. Having said that though the cinematography of the film did an awesome job of capturing



the intimacy and heartbreak of some aspects of the novel. I'm hoping we can also achieve that...

Was the role of MacMurphy hard to cast?

Yes he was definitely one of the hardest roles to cast.. we had lots

of fantastic talent.... Liam brought to the table a combination of boy-ish enthusiasm and the kind of naive innocence that brings MacMurphy to the asylum in the first place... a boundless interest in people and experiences...but also the darker energy and edge needed for us to see where his fight against the 'Combine' began....



Tackling mental illness in theatre can be tricky – how are your cast finding it?

They've been fantastic. We talked from the very beginning about not wanting to portray a bunch of stock theatrical loonies so they've all really researched their characters and each come up with a full back story on why they are there, what it is that they have been diagnosed with and what ways this may effect them physically as well as mentally. We have also invited a psychiatrist in to chat to each of them in more detail about what these syndromes mean, where they may come from and how they manifest themselves. For the most part it is felt that very few of the inmates would be institutionalised in this day and age which has been another interesting aspect for them to explore.. how 'mad' are any of them really...?

So your first time with a budget to spend on visuals? Has this changed your approach?

The main thing is actually having the space and money to articulate my ideas. During the play, as a theatrical device to deal with the fact the narrator of the novel is deaf and dumb, Dale Wasserman has Chief Bromden performing dream-like monologues throughout the



show. Having seen the play a few times I was keen to try something a little different during these pieces. Taking one of my favourite quotes from the novel as a starting point

"like a cartoon world, where the figures are flat and outlined in black, jerking through some kind of goofy story that might be real funny if it weren't for the cartoon figures being real guys"

I asked an animator mate of mine to create some cartoons that we want to project during these monologues. He's also created a trailer for us...

One Flew Over The Cuckoos nest is on at the Bridewell Theatre from the 8th to the 12th September, from 7.30. Tickets are available from www.sedos.co.uk.



Reduced City? Reduced Shakespeare!

The credit crunch has hit us all, and everyone is looking for bargains. So what better offer than 37 plays for the price of one? The director of the next Shakespeare in the City outing, Dan Chasemore conducted an interview with himself.

So what is 'Shakespeare in the City'?

Each year, since 2005, sedos has taken a well known Shakespeare play and performed it in venues across the city. Previously we have brought The Merchant of Venice, A Midsummer Nights Dream, Much Ado About Nothing and Julius Ceasar to life in a modern adaptation.¹

So which play are you doing this time?

All of them.

I beg your pardon?

We are doing the Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)²

That should take a while! At 2 hours a play, that works out at a performance time of three days . Not including interval.³

Yeah, I know. We're going to try and cut it down to 80 Minutes.

It cannot be done, I say!!

Well actually it has been done. The show itself is written by The Reduced Shakespeare Company, and became the longest running comedy in West End history. The show has been performed all over the world in several different languages, just like Shakespeare's actual plays.⁴

The Reduced Shakespeare Company? I have heard of them!

Well done you.

So there's a script then?

Um....well there definitely was a script at one point. I think I remember handing something out at the first rehearsal.....to be honest since then we've mainly been playing with swords, and dressing up in wigs.⁵

So are you saying it's improvised?

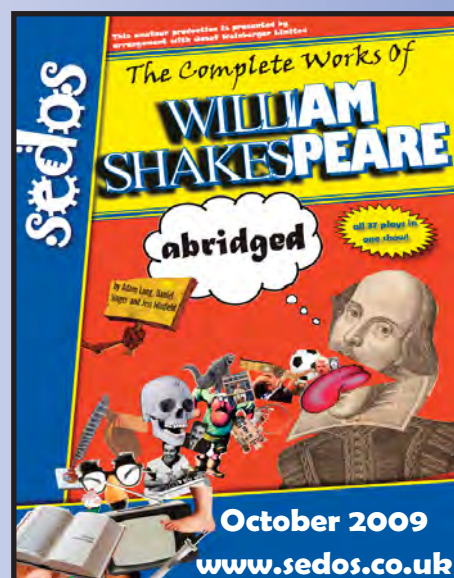
Well, kinda. We started with the script, and then went off it a little, then went back to it, and then decided it was more fun just to wear wigs and see what happened.

So who is in it?

Well there's Archie, who you might have seen in Festen. He directed Rosencrantz and Guildenstern last year, so he is our Shakespeare expert. He's very clever and has seen Macbeth more than three times.

Then there is Paula, who you may remember from Wild Party, and several other sedos plays. Paula is really brilliant at remembering what prop goes where, and the difference between stage left, and stage right.

And finally we have Jamie Lee Pike, who you might remember as Mimi from RENT. Jamie is really enthusiastic, and has just finished training, so she is very keen to impress, and terribly hard working.



Only three actors?

Yes, but three amazing actors who look great in a codpiece. Trust me, it'll work...

How can I see it?

Well, the only chance you will have is to buy a ticket from www.sedos.co.uk for the 2 public performances at the London Stock exchange on the 13th and the 16th of October.

FOOTNOTES

- 1.) For clarity, we didn't actually bring Julius Caesar to life.
- 2.) The official title is 'The Compleat Wrks of Wilm Shkspr (abridged) but spellchecker won't allow that.
- 3.) Nice Maths.
- 4.) Not all of his plays, actually. Whilst hits like Hamlet, Macbeth and A Midsummer Nights dream are performed all over the world, Troilus and Cressida has only ever been as far as Woking.
- 5.) If Josef Weinberger are reading this - of course there is a script, and we have stuck faithfully to it. Honest.

1st rule of the Audience club? Talk about the Audience Club!

In the immortal words of its Director, Angela Hyde-Courtney, "The Audience Club exists to put bums on seats". www.theaudienceclub.com. Members pay an annual fee to the Club then choose to attend as many performances as they wish, purchasing tickets for just £2.00. Theatre managers expecting audiences to be thin, for whatever reason, ask the Audience Club to flesh them out and word goes onto the Club's list of current productions, its "Theatre Ladder".

The shows on offer vary wonderfully. This year venues have ranged from the Royal Festival Hall and Shaftesbury Avenue to the Fringes, with their host of small theatres. The really exciting reward of membership is admission to these fringes with their strong tradition of live theatre and experiment. This year we have seen there productions of the highest quality. It is no sycophancy to mention first the Bridewell The-

atre's recent superb Antigone, elements of which could not be surpassed. Moliere's School For Wives at the Gatehouse offered inimitably brilliant comic acting. At The White Bear Cibber's Love's Last Shift was played as though for a Command Performance. The Pentameter's Twelfth Night made that classic utterly novel and fresh - this spectator still wants to join Sir Toby and Sir Andrew and Maria juggling up at midnight. Not all we see can be of quality such as this and there have been a few stinkers like Too close to the Sun and some triumphs like The MountainTop that transferred from the Fringe to the West End but we are sure of finding novelty and dedication and new life, and also love for the stage, on both sides of the footlights.

Special Price for all SEDOS Members just £35 for the whole year - enquiries@theaudienceclub.com

Which pitch?

So, what should sedos do in 2010? I'm not going to be here of course, as I'll be off in New Zealand drinking kiwis and dancing the Haka. But strangely I do care. I'll be at the EGM in October waiting with baited breath to hear which shows I would have loved to be in if I were here, and gossiping in the bar afterwards about what a terrible choice the musical was, because of course, we all know far better than the committee....

To choose the shows that make up the season, sedos asks for 'pitches' from its members. 'Pitches' is probably the wrong word for it, as it conjures up images of sitting with Chris DePury in a boardroom with a powerpoint presentation about 'bluesky solutioneering'.



"I think my show can really maximise your turnover vis a vis Arse to seat ratios, for inter theatrical experiences"

What the committee are really looking for are 'ideas'.

The idea has to be viable, of course – I'm not sure sedos is ready to tackle an all midget Siamese twin version of the Vagina Monologues – but as they say "Every Project Starts with an Idea". (They don't really say that, but it is true.)

So what is 'viable'? Well remember that you aren't the only one in sedos. You may be dying to unleash your two person mime show onto the London fringe, but it doesn't leave a whole lot for the rest of the membership to do. A big cast with lots for people to do is ideal. That doesn't mean we won't do 'Waiting for Godot', but it does mean we'd rather be doing 'Waiting for Godot', with a cast of interesting characters, who all have lines and possibly a song.'

It also has to be paid for. Now I don't really go in for show budgets and the minutiae of sedos financing (ccing in Becky Smith) but a good rule of thumb I use, is that if I think it can be done on the cheap, then it will only be quite expensive. You can have costumes, but I'd think twice about the laser light show and the mechanical elephant.



Pictured: The ideal amount of set for a sedos show

One thing that often people don't realise is that to be able to perform a show, we have to secure the rights to perform it. And being situated in London doesn't help. Often

the owners of a show will be hoping for that West End run, so won't allow a London group to perform it. It also means that if something is also playing nearby, then we probably won't be able to do it (this explains the chronic lack of Grease, Wicked and Les Mis productions performed by sedos recently.) If you want to check out what is available, I'm afraid you'll have to trawl through the websites of Samuel French and Josef Weinberger.

If it is viable, and it is available, and it won't cost an MP's expense account, then the only other thing that will make the show happen is you. The enthusiasm of the director for the project is the one failsafe gauge as to whether the show will be a Spring Awakening, or a Too Close To the Sun. You've got to love the project, and be brimming with enthusiasm and passion – cos if you can't do it in the pitch, then it'll be tough at those Monday night production meetings.

I hope next season is good. We have enough talent on and off stage to make sure that whatever production we do will be well received. What I really hope though, is that the creative, original, brave and smart people within sedos give the committee enough ideas to choose from.

As long as it's not Grease.



Or mime. I hate mime.

If you are interested in pitching for next season, send any and all ideas to admin@sedos.co.uk. You can also ask for a copy of the pitch guidelines, although your best bet is probably to grab Chloe, Becky or any other committee member from the pub and ask their advice. All suggestions by 28th August.

Sue Who Pudding

Hi everyone, Bex here! The following recipe is legendary in Weymouth family history, hence the name which has reference to an Evil Step Aunt. It is the only positive thing that she's brought to the clan since joining back in 1989. The pud is even easier than traditional Eton Mess but far more fun to make and absolutely scrummy. A fail safe for summery bbqs or perfect comfort food for a sneaky soiree - enjoy!



Ingredients

1 large tub double cream
1 box meringue nests
1 bag summer fruits (frozen) or 1 carton summer fruits compote
Fresh strawberries or raspberries to decorate

Method

Get a large bowl.
Take great satisfaction from smashing and crushing the meringue nests into it.
Pour in cream mmmmm....
and chuck in the fruit/compote.
With big spoon stir it all in together until a deep pink colour.
Taste test a couple of times, just to be sure.
Resist urge to dive in and swim in the cerise ambrosia.
Pour mixture into a decorative glass bowl that can go in the freezer, or divide into individual sundae glasses.
Freeze for about 2hrs. Less is fine for impromptu shindigs however will be a bit gooey. For planners, make the night before but leave a little defrosting time prior to serving or you'll need a hammer and chisel to do so.
Serve with wafers, fresh summerfruit, dark chocolate curls or just a glass of crisp, cold champers and your pals.
It's so more-ish it's criminal, so ensure you've enough for seconds!

KDC spring season

This week sees the start of KDC's summer season with *Stags and Hens* by Willy Russell at the Landor Theatre. A classic of sedos playreading nights, this fast-paced comedy follows the stag and hen do's of Dave and Linda, who have scheduled their do's for the same night.

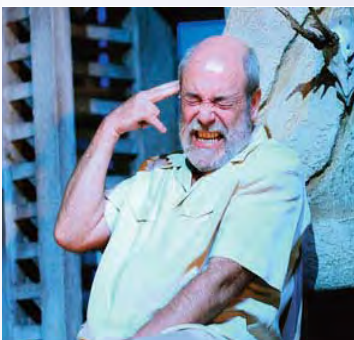


A couple of weeks later, from the 18th August, KDC present *The Libertine* by Stephen Jeffreys. It is the poignant, yet shocking tale of the Earl of Rochester, the most notorious rake of the 17th Century. Played by Jonny Depp in the movie, the Earl spends his time trying to find the next thrill – be it women, wine or theatre – a situation that shouldn't be too unfamiliar to most of us.

Both shows are £12, and you can get tickets from the box office on the night.

KDC are also celebrating their 70th year, and are holding a special 'plays from the 1930's' season and are looking for directors! If you fancy wielding some KDC power, email directing@kdctheatre.com or head over to the website, here.

To Close by Sunday



I love going to the theatre to see a fantastic show. But what I actually love more, is going to the theatre to see a truly awful show. I get a sort of ghoulish delight in the bad press they get, as the critics sharpen their claws and thumb through their thesauruses for synonyms for 'Atrocious'.

Too Close To The Sun has been fascinating to me. It received so many one star reviews that they really should have put them on the poster. Before it even opened, it was re-named 'To close on Sunday'. Described as 'implausible and unnecessary' by the guardian, and 'so bad it's bad' by the Telegraph, the show annoyingly has been put out of its misery, and closed last week. Which is a real shame. I was looking forward to seeing

the worst musical Carrie Dunn has ever seen. But I was really looking forward to reading more unfettered bitching by Theatres elite class.

"Pat Garrett's production plods through this rubbish heap of a show with leaden tedium"

Charles Spencer, *The Telegraph*

"How anyone considers this a framework for a musical is mind-boggling. But Roberto Trippini and John Robinson (dodgy lyrics and over-lush music) ploughed relentlessly on"

Paul Callan, *Daily Express*

Tammy Joelle, as the secretary, sings in a manner best appreciated by canine members of the audience.....Hemingway cleans his gun, and explains that the best suicide method is to shoot through the roof of the mouth. By then the musical has so successfully cast its spell that one starts to think, "what a good idea".

Rhoda Koenig, *The Independent*

what is amazing is that serious theatre professionals (including an Oliver award winning lighting designer) should ever have collected around it to bring it to the stage, or that a West End theatre owner should have given it houseroom.

Mark Shenton, *The Stage*

"it's such a muted, muddled experience, such a waste of time and talent"

Dominic Maxwell

Edinbecky

I asked Becky Smith if she was excited about going to the Edinburgh festival. Turns out she is. A lot....

So August is upon us once again and whilst for some it is the month of sunshine, picnics, and the start of the Premiership (really? already?) .. for me it means pear cider in the rain, cheap burgers eaten whilst running down steep grey streets to the next venue and endless hilarious, wonderful gobsmackingly brilliant and mindbogglingly awful theatre and comedy.

Yes it's the Edinburgh Festival and this year will be my sixth trip up to the Scottish capital.. this time as a punter rather than taking up a merry band of actors and crew. So what's the plans (aside from lots of sitting outside a giant inflatable purple cow)? For me it's a time to catch lots of comedy - something I do woefully little of back here in London. I'll be booking for Jon Richardson, back with another mournful hour of wingeing, Stewart Lee proving he's not just that guy wot wrote Jerry Springer, Andrew Maxwell the cheekiest Irishman around, plus lots of fantastic sketch troops including the Penny Dreadfuls, Pappy's Fun Club and Tommy and the Weeks.

The Comedian's Theatre are back with a Stephen K Amos penned version of School for Scandal starring Lionel Blair and Marcus Brigstock which has to be



seen, plus I'd love to catch Janeane Garofalo if only as she was my favourite in Reality Bites! Comedy aside there doesn't appear to be the usual 'must see' big show this year (like On the Waterfront or Blackwatch) but some shows to try and catch include A Girl of Slender Means, and the site specific Barflies at the Tra-verse.

Having said all this, as I'm only up for 5 days this time I've decided to book very little until I'm up there and can hear all about the best and hottest tickets from those in the know - the Edinburgh punters themselves- as all the recommended shows are gleefully shared across pints in the Pleasance courtyard.. can't wait!!!!!!!!!!!!

Audition mission

The Parade auditions attracted a lot of people. Seriously, loads. Like over 100 people in one day. That's a lot of people. With sedos auditions becoming more and more competitive, I asked some of our previous directors to give their tips for how to stand out in an audition, and give yourself the best chance of getting cast.

Anne Marie

Be prepared. Read the play. Be bold. Listen and respond. Be yourself. Arrive early. Be patient.

Chase

Prepare. Even if you are the most talented actor in the world, if you haven't prepared it shows. And why would I want to work with someone who thinks that it is okay just to blag it?

Make bold choices. If you play it safe in an audition, you'll never get cast. If you are bold and daring, you're more likely to get a callback. Directors will never cast someone who is just okay.

Becky Smith

Prepare, audition numbers at the moment mean you will often only get one chance to give it your all, so give it your all.

Be on time and then be patient

Be truthful about what parts you are prepared to consider, if you are not interested in ensemble be up front about it. Either way it will not make a difference to whether or not you are cast.

Andrew Overin

Think about the part you're going for. If you're meant to be a business man don't turn up wearing jeans and scruffy trainers.

Being nervous is good because it can really focus your mind to bring everything together for those few minutes in the audition, but being too nervous will just make the panel feel uncomfortable so really try to relax and smile...you never know they might smile back!



Okay, we're going to get you in groups of 80 for a warm up with Matt, then we'll go on to some dancing.



WEDNESDAY 27TH MAY – SATURDAY 6TH JUNE 2009

THE WILD PARTY

THE BRIDEWELL THEATRE, LONDON EC4Y 8EQ

photos courtesy of

nick chronnell
photography

headshot & theatre photography

www.nickchronnell.com

info@nickchronnell.com

Tuesday 21 July – Saturday 25 July 2009

antigone

The Bridewell Theatre, London EC4Y 8EQ

