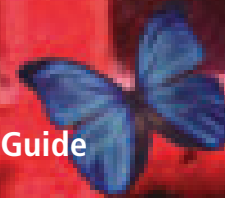


IN & OUT

October 22 - 28

The Copenhagen Post Guide



The Collector, Krudttønden Theatre; starts Wed, ends Nov 27, Mon-Fri 20:00, Sat 17:00; tickets 165kr, www.that-theatre.com

ANOTHER COLLECTOR'S ITEM FROM THAT THEATRE

I dumped a girlfriend for hoarding. In most normal relationships that first visit to meet the parents is the deal sealer, but in our case it was the two-minute warning. I already had my suspicions, and her parents' home confirmed the condition was hereditary. I simply walked away, the very act most hoarders find so difficult to do.

According to psychologists Frost and Hartl (1996), a hoarder (i) collects possessions that appear to be useless or of limited value, (ii) clutters living spaces so they can't be used for their original purpose, and (iii) and causes distress. Avoid these and you're a collector – a much more preferable hobby.

So which one was Buffalo Bill? No, not William Frederick Cody – the legend who is Jame Gumb, the serial killer in *The Silence of the Lambs*!

He was a collector, or hoarder ... of the skins of size 14 women, but while killing their owners to make a coat to magically transform himself into a woman ('Jeez, look at that fat broad, her skin is literally falling off her' – 'And she smells ... like a hundred dead people') was horrible, was it hoarding? The hides were of (i) extreme value to him, (ii) it didn't really impact on his living space, unless you include turning a disused well into a dungeon, and (iii) Hannibal Lector certainly enjoyed it, and Clarice Starling, and don't forget Precious, his dog.

The jury's out – the only certainty is that his other hobby, the cultivation of moths (most notably the Death's-head variety on the movie posters) is a direct homage to the butterflies of Freddie Clegg, the granddaddy of every

fictional weirdo loner, and the main character in That Theatre's latest drama, *The Collector*, which starts next Wednesday at Krudttønden.

Clegg, played by Copenhagen's favourite son of English drama, Ian Burns, is a loner who struggles to interact with others. John Fowles' original novel, which has been adapted by Mark Healey for the stage, was set in the 1960s (during which it was made into a film starring Terrence Stamp), but for this production this tale is wisely set in the modern day. After all, Burns is much older than the original protagonist, and who's ever heard of a 20-year-old who doesn't have 500 friends on Facebook. This is essentially the same Clegg from the original, but now he's grown older and living in 2010.

Clegg abducts a woman, Miranda (played by Maria Lohmann, a Danish actress trained in England). He's a photographer and a butterfly collector, she's an art student – it should be a match made in heaven, but unfortunately it's a 'romance' played out in his basement.

'For me it is mainly a story about loneliness,' says director Claus Bue. 'Miranda experiences loneliness because she is suddenly torn away from her familiar surroundings - away from her family, friends, studies and everything you would associate with an ordinary life. Clegg's loneliness is a permanent state, which makes him incapable of establishing normal relationships with other people. We understand that his intentions are to create a "normal" life with a woman he is certain he loves. He just does not understand that the "love" he shows can never be reciprocated.

'It is as it was described in some early PR for the film: it is almost a love story, at least from Clegg's point-of-view,' adds Burns, who, as a boy was a collector of Airfix aeroplane kits and Subbuteo teams. 'He's in love and maybe only about 12 years old. Remember your first love? Miranda Grey is his first love. And it's even sadder at the tender age of 53 - possibly his only love outside butterflies, aberrations and fritillaries.'

But this isn't just another tale of a loner with a boner, even if it is 'the' original story. Any of you who have read Fowles' novel, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, will know how the author liked to subvert genres and play with our presumptions. There are other themes at work as well, many of which you might not expect in such a story.

'A fairy tale, a love story, a fable, *Beauty & The Beast*,' suggest Burns. 'As we've been rehearsing we've found out that it's actually very funny sometimes as we observe two human beings - one male, one female - at close quarters. Are we different species?. Many women of a certain age even seem to find this story erotic.'

If that includes you, you need to get your skates on. 'It is virtually sold out Mon- day-Thursday,' reveals Burns. 'Only Fri- day at 8pm and Saturday at 5pm are left.'

Go and you'll be entertained by a psycho- logical thriller that will chill you to the core. It's the book that every other serial killer names as their inspiration, probably because its content is so commonplace, so true.

So influential that without it Buffalo Bill wouldn't have collected moths.

Ben Hamilton