

# INTERNATIONAL ART MAGAZINE

AN EVENING WITH

HAROLD PINTER

AT

Krudttonden Theater, Copenhagen, Denmark

Produced by That-Theater Company

Artistic Director: Ian Burns

THEATER REVIEW

BY

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The best surprise of the fall season of theater was the brilliant production of PINTER'S FOUR SHORT CLASSICS ENTITLED, AN EVENING WITH PINTER IN COPENHAGAN UNDER THE SUPERB DIRECTION OF CLAUS BUE.

IAN BURNS, THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF THAT-THEATER COMPANY WHO ALSO ACTS IN THE SHOW CLEARLY LOVES PINTER [and rightly so]. BURNS HAS A METICULOUSLY KEEN AND SENSITIVE FEEL FOR PINTER'S HEARTRENCING, TERROR FILLED, ASTUTE AND TOTALLY ABSORBING WORK ABOUT THE HUMAN CONDITION AND ITS VAGUE UNKNOWN HAUNTING TERRORS THAT OCCUPIES THE PINTER LANDSCAPE.

The evening consists of four short classics by Harold Pinter who was awarded the Nobel

Prize for Literature 2005

The evening offered, SPECIAL OFFER (Sketch 1959)

TROUBLE IN THE WORKS (Sketch 1959)

MONOLOGUE (Play 1972)

THE COLLECTION (play 1962)

There is no single word ever written by Pinter which lacks drama and intrigue and

SPECIAL OFFER and TROUBLE IN THE WORKS have these for sure.

TROUBLE IN THE WORKS, which was also written for BBC is about a relationship of power and the powerless, a boss and a worker, (Union boss)

The last line of the play was changed at its production. This is how it was:

the representative of the union worker tells the union boss that his workers no longer want to make useless machine tools.

“ What do they want to make in its place? “, asks the boss?

“ Trouble “ says the representative of the union men.

That’s a great line ever written; the new production of Pinter’s cannon of sketches and monologues coming up in London with Bill Bailey will have the original line.

The whole evening was charming. THE COLLECTION and MONOLOGUE were absolutely riveting, performed with great skill by the cast which consisted of the unforgettable Tom McEwan, brilliant Gorden Kennedy, sexy and enticing Sira Stamps, and charming, brooding, handsome lover of Pinter. Ian Burns, who absorbed every word down to the farthest depth before he uttered it and we heard it and totally believed

it. In the short play called "MONOLOGUE", he is just the character Pinter wanted him to be. Menacing one minute and tender and longing for the warmth and love he lost, - but angry almost furious at the same time for not having met his erotic desire to the fullest, his domestic life is unresolved and disturbed.

"MONOLOGUE ", is a one character play originally produced by BBC in 1973 and acted by Henry Woolf. In this production the part is played by Ian Burns. The monologue is about a woman whom the speaker loved who left him for his friend. The speaker, who has not seen the couple for a while, likes to be friends with them again...he mostly addresses his friend, whom he knew perhaps) for a very long time.

But what is the play about?

We can ask. Pinter once said, " My plays are about what the titles are about."

"MONOLOGUE" is a dramatic recall of a memory passed and not yet completely passed. Ian Burns brings that haunting memory back to life in a perfect and precise manner.

"THE COLLECTION" is the longest play of the evening, is staged on both sides of the stage. It involves two couples, Stella and James and Bill and Harry in two different flats. Bill is a designer who travels a lot on business. One early morning Harry, receives an alarming phone call from an anonymous gentleman which, (We find out later is from James, Stella's husband). The man on the phone asks for Bill and insists upon knowing A particular detail about his wife, Stella and Bill meeting in a hotel room while away On business in Leeds and what precisely happened in that hotel room between the two of them.. The man eventually shows up at Harry and Bill's apt and has an interrogation of Bill about the details of intimacy between Bill and his wife.

And no one can bet on its certainty, - that's Pinter for you.

Pinter with his taut dialogue and incredible quality of suspense keeps the audience on the edge of their seats guessing if that interlude ever happened. Since we are never sure and Pinter simply refuses to round up things in nice little endings, all of us become actors and real people living from moment to moment on and off stage, guessing if things we are watching with such interest happened or not. and Pinter never feels any justification to explain any thing or justification for action, his words, like little gems and bullets connect everything even when it doesn't seem connected, but don't be fooled- everything is interwoven precisely to the previous and oncoming thought like a strong thread passing through a garland of exotic wild flowers with thorns of disturbed human behavior, betrayal menace lurking around.

All the actors, Sira Stampe, Gordon Kennedy, Ian Burns, and Tom McEwan are excellent, And Tom McEwan is exceptionally brilliant in "THE COLLECTION".

The evening is smartly and precisely directed by Claus Bue who doesn't clutter the stage with any riff raff, but the language of a superb master, Pinter and what a delicious clutter it is.

I couldn't have asked for a better theater experience than AN EVENING WITH HAROLD PINTER in COPENHAGEN.

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