

Headgate Theatre Productions

“The Browning Version” by Terence Rattigan directed by Andrew Hodgson

Week ending : May 18th 2019

Rehearsals: Wednesday evenings commencing 6th February 2019

Auditions will be held at the Headgate Theatre on Tuesday September 4th at 7.45 pm.

“The Browning Version” is seen by many to be Terence Rattigan’s best work. It was originally performed in London in 1948, and has been revived many times since. There have been two film versions: one in 1951 starring Michael Redgrave and Jean Kent, and a 1994 production starring Albert Finney and Greta Sacchi. Both are available on DVD.

CHARACTERS/PLOT:

ANDREW CROCKER-HARRIS (40’s/50’s):

Andrew is a gifted classical scholar and a strict, unpopular schoolmaster. He has worked at the same school for 18 years but is leaving for a less-stressful job at a school in Dorset. It seems a heart condition is forcing the move. Andrew has tried to reach his students by being something of a “character”, but this has only increased most students, and faculty’s dislike of him. When the play opens, Andrew is suffering several indignities; he is aware that his wife is having an affair with a younger colleague, he has been denied a pension by the school as he hasn’t been there long enough, and he has been asked to speak first at the school prize-giving, when he should speak last because of his seniority...

MILLIE CROCKER-HARRIS (30’s/40’s):

Millie is the attractive, long-suffering wife of Andrew. She is having an affair with Frank Hunter due to her loveless marriage. Millie resents her husband’s lack of success and his unpopularity as a schoolmaster. She is a woman of some means, including a yearly income from her father, so being associated with Andrew is a frustration and disappointment to her. Millie expresses her resentment by undermining anything Andrew does or says with a mean comment.

FRANK HUNTER (30’s):

Frank is a colleague of Andrew’s and is attractive and popular. He has been having an affair with Millie for several months but is becoming unsettled by her neediness. Although Frank does not like Andrew, he feels sorry for him and is always polite to him, unlike Millie. After Millie tries to ruin her happiness over a gift, Frank breaks off the affair and tries to do everything he can to protect and support Andrew.

DR. FROBISHER (50’s/60’s):

Dr. Frobisher is the Headmaster at the school where Andrew and Frank teach. He is uncomfortable with Andrew but recognises his intelligence. Dr. Frobisher is the official who informs Andrew that he will not be given a pension and he asks him to speak first, not second, at the Prize-giving.

PETER GILBERT (20's/30's)

Peter is the personable new master who is taking over from Andrew as House Master. He has recently left the services and married. He is the one who informs Andrew that he is known as “the Himmler of the lower fifth”. This knowledge upsets Andrew. Gilbert looks to Andrew for advice on teaching and Andrew responds with a bold emotional statement about his shortcomings. Gilbert is embarrassed but remains polite.

MRS GILBERT (20's):

Recently married, Anne Gilbert is to takeover from Millie as a House Master's wife, which involves social duties. She is kind, and supportive of her husband therefore a complete contrast to Millie.

TAPLOW (16/17):

John Taplow is one of Andrew's students. Andrew is tutoring Taplow in classical Greek, and they are translating the play “Agamemnon”. He does not want to work on the last day of term, and expresses his frustration to Frank. Taplow fears Andrew because he realises his future is in Andrew's hands. However, he also likes him and gives him a copy of Robert Browning's translation of “Agamemnon”, with a meaningful inscription. This touches Andrew until Millie ruins it for him.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT ANDREW HODGSON on
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