

Director's Note

Still Life is one of ten short plays by Noel Coward that make up 'Tonight at 8.30', a cycle to be performed across 3 evenings that was first produced at the Phoenix Theatre in London in 1936. Coward originally also directed and starred in all ten plays opposite Gertrude Lawrence.

Coward himself said that "Still Life was the most mature of the whole series it is well written, economical and well constructed: the characters I think are true, and I can say now, reading it with detachment after so many years that I am proud to have written it."

After the successful production of the play Coward expanded it into a full length film script Brief Encounter in 1945, filmed by David Lean and famously starring Celia Johnson and Trevor Howard.

The Browning Version by Terence Rattigan was written and set in 1948 and coincidentally also first performed at the Phoenix Theatre in London. In conversation in the 1960s Rattigan reflected on The Browning Version that 'a play isn't well made if you think about how well made it is, if you think about the wheels turning'.

It was subsequently made into two film versions with the original 1951 version starring Michael Redgrave with the screenplay by Rattigan.

While both Coward and Rattigan were popular and well respected playwrights across the 1930s, 40s and 50s they fell out of fashion with the new wave of 'angry young man' and 'kitchen sink' drama of the later 50s that conveyed a more gritty realism and railed against emotional inhibition. Rattigan himself described the 'English Vice' as our refusal to admit to our emotions. Both Coward and Rattigan having good legal reason at that time to suppress and conceal their true feelings.

The themes of these two plays explore the relationship between Love and Duty, the damage that can be done by repressing emotion and about ultimately finding the strength to make the right choice (or at least a choice). Encouragingly, we also see how an act of kindness can be transformational and how, if we lighten up and get on with life, love can be fun along the way.

We now live in an age where it is almost compulsory to express our every emotion but has this also turned us into a nation prone to tears and tantrums, 'following our dreams' and 'doing what is right for me'. So what place has duty, restraint and the Stiff Upper Lip today? None, thank goodness or have we gone too far? Discuss. But ultimately Enjoy!

Ruth Miller
October 2010

www.criteriontheatre.co.uk

Criterion Theatre

Our next Studio Production

Not About Heroes



by Stephen McDonald
3rd Nov to 6th November 2010



BOX OFFICE (Direct)

024 7667 5175

This is a notice to members

Not About Heroes

This moving play is about the poetic life and the inter relationship between two of the finest Great War poets:

Owen who died and Siegfried Sassoon who didn't. Told by means of letters and poetry, Not About Heroes paints a vivid and haunting picture of war.

Production photography by
Richard Johnson
079 0450 6280

The Criterion is a non-smoking theatre.

Two versions of life, love and duty

The Browning Version

by Terence Rattigan

Still Life

by Noel Coward



Contains smoking on stage
under the The Smoke-free
(Exemptions and Vehicles)
Regulations 2007

Programme

Produced in association with Samuel French Ltd

The Browning Version

by Terence Rattigan

John Taplow	Elliot Relton Williams
Frank Hunter	Jon Elves
Millie Crocker-Harris	Anne Marie Green
Andrew Crocker-Harris	John Fenner
Dr Frobisher	Bill Bosworth
Peter Gilbert	Jeremy Goldthorp
Mrs Gilbert	Carly Taylor

The action passes in the sitting room of the Crocker-Harris's flat at a Public School in the South of England in July 1948.

There will be an interval of 20 minutes

Director	Ruth Miller
Assistant Director	Liz Thompson
Production Manager	Tony Cuttiford
Stage Manager	Tony Cuttiford
Assistant Stage Manager	Clair Henrywood
Prompt	Shirley Jobson
With thanks to Maggie Parkes	

Properties	Erica Young i/c Jackie Crisp, Clair Henrywood Kathy Lole, Les Rahilly Kim West, Bill Young
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Costume	Maureen Liggins i/c Pam Coleman, Anne Houston Nancy Edwards
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Lighting Design	Ian Knight
Lighting Operator	Pete Bagley

Sound Design and Operation	Dave Cornish
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Projection Design	Ian Hill
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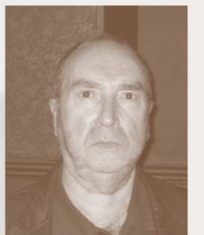
The Players



Bill Bosworth



Tony Cuttiford



Jeremy Goldthorp



Jon Elves



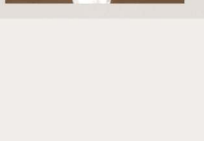
John Fenner



Michael Hammond



Gennie Holmes



Anne-marie Greene

Sarah McDonagh

Rachel Newey

Matt Sweatman

Carly Taylor

Elliot Relton-Williams

Still Life

by Noel Coward

Laura Jesson	Anne Marie Green
Myrtle Bagot	Rachel Newey
Beryl Walters	Carly Taylor
Stanley	Jeremy Goldthorp
Albert Godby	Bill Bosworth
Alec Harvey	Jon Elves
Man	Tony Cuttiford
Bill	Michael Hammond
Johnnie	Matt Sweatman
Mildred	Sara McDonagh
Dolly Messiter	Gennie Holmes

The action of the Play takes place in the refreshment room of Milford Junction station in 1936.

Set Design	Doug Griffiths
Set Build	Doug Griffiths, John Griffiths Des Ali, Dave Crisp Dave Holmes, Sally Patalong Simon Sharpe, Mike Tooley Kevin Woods, Ben Woodward
Set Paint	Judy Talbot, Emma Withers Paul Chokran, Sue Hadlum Sally Patalong, Dave Crisp Doreen Belton
Set Change Team	Dave Crisp, Joe Fallowell Bill Butler, Mike Tooley Sam Taylor, Simon Sharpe Dave Holmes, Paul Chokran Tony Cuttiford