



HONG KONG
PLAYERS

TEN: A Festival of (Very) Short Plays

Directed by Stephen Bolton & Judi Bolton

Tue 23rd March to Sat 27th March, 2004
McAulay Studio, Hong Kong Arts Centre,
2 Harbour Road, Wanchai

www.hongkongplayers.com

ten

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Chairman's Notes

Welcome to the first Players production of 2004. We're trying new things this year at Players, and these exciting new plays are a big part of that. Our recent forays into the world of mass e-mail are also a part, but let's not go there...

It's been a productive few months since Cinderella in December – those of you who have attended our workshops in February and March will know that we're very keen to build up our profile and do all we can to make sure the standard of community theatre in Hong Kong is at the highest possible level. One of the great pleasures of this production is that there are so many new faces involved and so much cross-pollination with other like-minded groups.

On behalf of the Players committee, my thanks go to a number of people: **Colin Wolstencroft**, for his brilliant lighting design; **Deborah Erwin**, for appearing deus (dea?) ex machina to stage-manage so effortlessly; **Jo Dehaney**, for her stylish promotional design; **Neerja Sujanani**, for once again producing our publicity material and programme within such tight timelines; **Roger Sansom**, for invaluable production advice; **Adrian Davis**, for keeping the jungle drums beating; **Brian ("Tree") Schwarze**, for leaving his hospital bed to work his customary miracles; **Priscilla Jones**, for handling all the minutiae that producers have to face; **the cast**, for pulling together to create a show in record time; and of course you, **the audience**, for recognizing that "shorts" and "Players" aren't the exclusive property of the Rugby Sevens.

We hope you enjoy these shows, and that you'll be inspired to come and join us on-, off- or backstage.

Stephen Bolton



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Director's Notes - Judi Bolton

(Anything For You, The Man Who Couldn't Dance)

Working on this collaborative project with my "husband" (no relation) has been a challenge - one day, decades from now, we may be on speaking terms again. I always knew from the beginning that this was going to be an exciting project - providing something contemporary, cutting edge and thought-provoking for the Hong Kong audience. There are so many people to thank for making this production happen: Colin Wolstencroft and Roger Sansom, whose combined theatrical expertise can transform any show; the people behind the scenes who work tirelessly with such little acknowledgement; Deborah, our godsend of a stage manager; the mighty Tree (Brian Schwarze); and I suppose I have to mention the actors! (Del, Lara, Lou, Stephen - you've been great.)

As ever, on a personal note, none of this would have been possible without friends and family support. Fergus, I love you. As for you - the audience - I hope this production makes you squirm in your seat and recognise that we are trying hard to push your buttons.

Director's Notes - Stephen Bolton

(The Battle of Bull Run Always Makes Me Cry, Ferris Wheel, Love Poem #98, Mrs Sorken, A Sermon, Siobhan)

I don't know what Judi's on about - I've been a delight from start to finish. She, on the other hand... Directing these shows is a far cry from panto, or even Wilde - there are real characters, with thoughts and feelings an' that! Bringing these scripts to life has been made much easier, and a great pleasure, by a great group of actors (and thanks for all the wine!). In my more statesman-like chairman capacity, I've expressed all my thanks elsewhere in this programme, so I refer you there. Enjoy your evening.

List of Shows and Synopsis

Mrs. Sorken *by Christopher Durang*

A well-meaning but faintly confused Society housewife gives a lecture on the history of theatre - but unfortunately she's forgotten her notes. The comic genius of Christopher Durang (*Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You* and *Beyond Therapy*) makes this monologue a hilarious treat.

Cast: Mrs Sorken - Priscilla Jones

Ferris Wheel *by Mary Miller*

Mary Miller has won national theatre awards in the United States and has been described as "an American Alan Bennett". *Ferris Wheel* is the story of two strangers who meet at an amusement park and quickly develop an intimacy based on shared stories of fears and disappointments. This play is both moving and very, very funny.

Cast: Dorie - Annie Mueller; John - Robert Nield

Siobhan *by John Augustine*

Siobhan has been to every self-help group there is, but they don't seem to be helping. Maybe, as she says, she should go the "I DON'T HAVE A F***ING CLUE" meeting. This poignant look at addiction and personal failure is a cocktail made with equal parts of bitter-sweet humour and indomitable spirit.

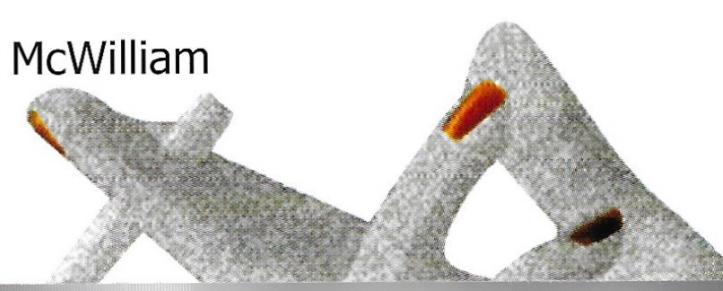
Cast: Siobhan - Judi Bolton

The Man Who Couldn't Dance *by Jason Katims*

Jason Katims is best known as the creator of *Roswell*, but before he became interested in absurdly attractive young aliens, he was much more down to earth. *The Man Who Couldn't Dance* is a touching moment in the lives of a former couple who've moved on - or at least one of them has.

Cast: Eric - Stephen Elting; Gail - Lou McWilliam

INTERVAL



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The Battle of Bull Run Always Makes Me Cry *by Carole Real*

A ten-minute chick flick! Donna is the last of a group of friends to remain single, and meets her best chums at a coffee shop for a debriefing session on her recent date with Patrick, who's "seriously cute", but has a tendency to drone on about the American Civil War. The difficulties that men and women sometimes have in communicating are the basis of this sweet, very entertaining comedy.

Cast: Amy - Heidrun Kraft; Donna - Lou McWilliam
Linda - Lara Edelman; Patrick - James Graham

Love Poem #98 *by Regina Taylor*

With elements of film noir, gritty realism and kitchen-sink drama, Love Poem is easily the most emotionally taxing of the plays we're presenting. This unsettling, mysterious story explores the violence that can sometimes underlie male-female relationships.

Cast: Emmanuel - Robert Nield; Mary - Amanda Chapman;
Wife - Linda Davy

Anything For You *by Cathy Celesia*

Gail and Lynette are best friends and both happily married. Or are they? This clever, funny two-hander is full of surprises - just how far can friendship be stretched?

Cast: Gail - Lara Edelman; Lynette - Del Kaddatz

A Sermon *by David Mamet*

David Mamet is a towering figure in contemporary drama. His plays include Sexual Perversity in Chicago, Speed-the Plow and the Pulitzer prize-winning Glengarry Glen Ross. His screenwriting credits include The Postman Always Rings Twice, The Untouchables and Wag the Dog. In A Sermon, a clergyman gives his "insight" into the big questions of life - it's like nothing you've ever heard from a pulpit!

Cast: Clergyman - Josh Blue

Production Team

Directors

*Judi Bolton &
Stephen Bolton*

Producer

Priscilla Jones

Production Adviser

Roger Samson

Lighting Designer

Colin Wolstencroft

Stage Manager

Deborah Erwin

Make-Up Designer

Margaret Wright

Programme Designer

Neerja Sujanani

Artistic Design

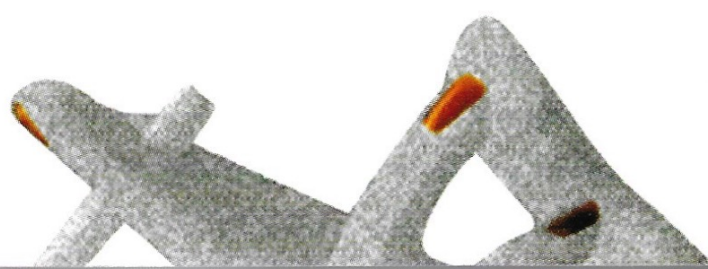
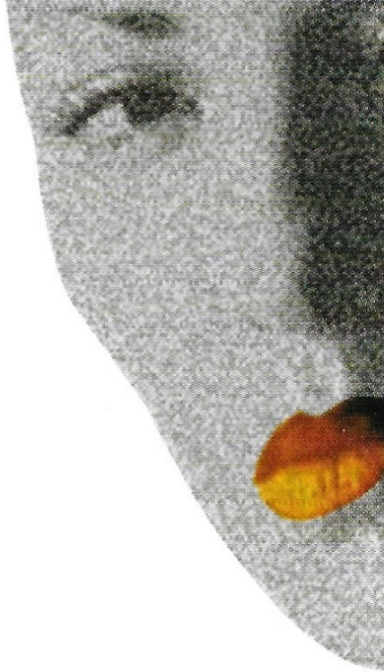
Jo Dehaney

Print Production Manager

Neerja Sujanani

Front of House

Brian Schwarze



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Josh Blue - Clergyman (A Sermon)

Josh Blue is proud to be making his "preaching" debut in Hong Kong with the Hong Kong Players. When not on stage, Josh enjoys learning Cantonese from his kindergarten students in Sau Mau Ping. He hopes you take home some wisdom from his sermon and reminds you that he is available for weddings, bar mitzvahs, funerals, and supermarket openings.

Judi Bolton - Siobhan (Siobhan)

Having thought that being a fairy in the 2003 panto, Cinderella, was her final Hong Kong performance, here she is for what really is the final time. Playing a part that is far from fairy-like has proved a challenge to Judi's delicate constitution. She is also conscious of friends making analogies between herself and a bitter alcoholic, which for the record she would like to strongly refute.

Amanda Chapman - Mary (Love Poem #98)

Amanda has enjoyed taking time out from her Conservative Ladies' Club duties for this bit of jolly fun. A keen needlepoint enthusiast and collector of antique stuffed toys, Amanda is most at home curled up with her Andy Williams 8-tracks or swapping cookie recipes with the gals from her church group. She sends big sloppy kisses to hubbie Norman and the twins, Bethany and Bryce. (Sorry, gents - this lady's been snapped up!)

Linda Davy - Wife (Love Poem #98)

Linda Davy appeared on stage in school productions circa 1967 and was so traumatised by the experience that it took her until last year to repeat it. Having whet her thespian whistle, so to speak, by standing in the shadows at the back of the chorus in productions of Fiddler On The Roof and Oklahoma! with Hong Kong Singers, she has now decided that it's time to move forward into the light and speak a few lines.

Lara Edelman - Gail (Anything for You) /

Linda (the Battle of Bull Run Always Makes Me Cry)

Originally from Australia, and a relatively recent arrival in Hong Kong, Lara is looking forward to her debut with Players. She is relieved to be learning lines in English again, as her last role was playing Snow White in a French production. Her return to the stage was prompted by continuous accusations by her friends that she is a drama queen.



Stephen Elting - Eric (The Man Who Couldn't Dance)

Originally from Pensacola, Florida, Stephen Elting has been in Hong Kong for 3 years. He was last seen on stage as Thomas Putnam in ACT's production of *The Crucible*. This is his first show with Hong Kong Players, and unlike his character tonight, Stephen prides himself on his eclectic dancing skills: The Smurf, Rumba, The Mashed Potato, Foxtrot, Swing, Square, Waltz, Morris and some mad freestylin' that'll leave you begging for more - you name it, he can do it and it usually takes him only three drinks to get out there.

James Graham - Patrick (The Battle of Bull Run Always Makes Me Cry)

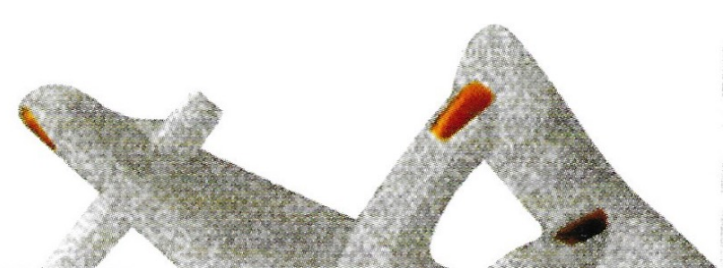
James Graham hails from Winnipeg, Canada, and has been living in Hong Kong for a year now. This will be his first experience on the stage and he is very grateful to have had such an experience with such talented and friendly people. The blind panic he felt on first showing up to audition has now mellowed into more manageable feelings of stark terror.

Priscilla Jones - Mrs Sorken (Mrs Sorken)

Priscilla has previously appeared with Players as Lady Bracknell and as Cinderella's somewhat scatty Fairy Godmother. While Mrs Sorken is not a complete "(photo)synthesis" of these characters, alert audience members will notice elements of both these ladies. That the daft side seems to be winning over the autocratic may be why Diana Rigg was not available for this production.

Del Kaddatz - Lynette (Anything For You)

This is Del's first performance in Hong Kong, having arrived here 6 months ago. It also marks her return to the stage after an acting hiatus lasting a few years. She studied acting and theatre at University and lived the dream and the lifestyle for a while, becoming involved in experimental theatre and audience research with a crazy French director. Ultimately, reality took over and teaching secondary school drama paid the bills. Del has played a variety of roles, predominantly in works by Pinter, Brecht and Chekhov.



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Heidrun Kraft - Amy

(The Battle of Bull Run Always Makes Me Cry)

My name is Heidrun and no, I don't like to be called Heidi - she's Swiss. That's not to be mixed up with The Sound of Music, which is Austrian - we Germans can be a bit picky about this. I had my first steps on stage as Margaret in Much Ado About Nothing in Vienna, where I studied to be a vet. This is my first time with Hong Kong Players but I hope not the last. Between rehearsing I look after the pussies and doggies of HongKong

Lou McWilliam - Donna

(The Battle of Bull Run Always Makes Me Cry) / Gail (The Man Who Couldn't Dance)

The chance to work with Players again was just too good to miss! Lou likes and relates to her two different roles, Donna and Gail (but not absolutely, oh beloved husband Jamie, honestly!). By the way, dearest lovely audience, if there's anything you find remotely amusing tonight, do let it all out... you can do it... We really don't mind you laughing at us. And if you need another glass of vino collapso, go on, no one's looking...

Annie Mueller - Dorie (Ferris Wheel)

Annie reckons this is about as close as she will get to an ingenue role. The RTHK casting agents seem to want to use her strictly for granny parts (actually the whole granny intact). Currently she is one of the oldest members of HK Players in all manners of speaking and would love to see more baby boomers on board. Like the t-shirt says, 'I act therefore I am, I audition therefore I may be' and so, she is pleased for the chance for another go round. It's wonderful to be part of the talented ensemble for these one-act plays.

Robert Nield - John

(Ferris Wheel) / Emmanuel (Love Poem #98)

Having been told that he has a great face for radio work, Robert now wants to see if his singing is good enough for non-musical drama. He is making his Hong Kong Players debut with this series of ten-minute plays. If all goes well, he will consider stepping up to eleven minutes - or maybe even twelve.

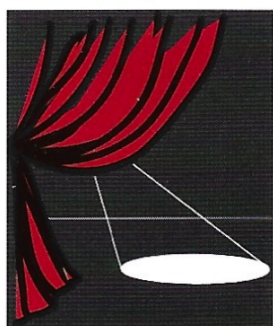
Acknowledgements

Hong Kong Players would like to thank the following organizations and individuals for helping with this production:

John Liu - The Venue
Stauntons Cafe
Roger Samson
Hong Kong Arts Centre
Stewie Griffin
RTHK
Metro Radio

Our apologies to anyone whose name reached us too late for inclusion on this page - Thank you for your support.

About Hong Kong Players

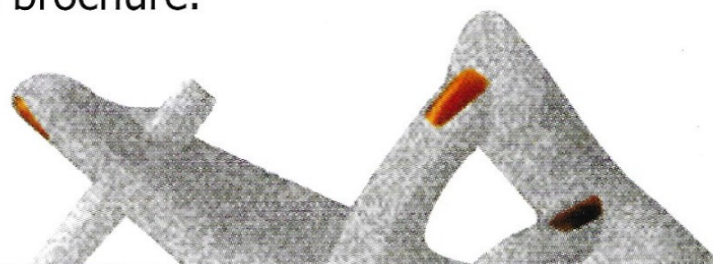


HONG KONG
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Hong Kong Players has been the SAR's foremost community theatre group since 1844, although known by other names. In its current guise, the group began life on 1 January 1991 as the successor to the Garrison Players and Hong Kong Stage Club. Maintaining the spirit of these predecessors we put on a rich diversity of shows, from Shakespeare to contemporary drama. Today, Players mounts three or four productions a year, most significantly the annual pantomime. And it's not just about acting!

Many members remain happily backstage, contributing in areas such as set design, make-up and crewing. If you would like to join us, please complete the membership form in this brochure.

www.hongkongplayers.com



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Hong Kong Players

Check the Hong Kong Players website
for upcoming shows and workshops

www.hongkongplayers.com

Hong Kong Singers

Guys and Dolls

22-27th April 2004

Hong Kong City Hall Theatre

www.hksingers.com

American Community Theatre

Roald Dahl's *The Witches* directed by Chris Baldwin

20-29th May 2004

www.act-hk.com



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