

# Cast announced for the first complete London revival since 1936 of Noël Coward's **Tonight at 8.30**



Theatre as part of its **The Reaction Season** - 15 plays and musicals - 12 of them one-act - based around themes of reacting and re-enacting.

Noël Coward's **Tonight at 8.30**, running from 10 April – 20 May, features nine one-act plays ranging from music-hall pastiche, to light comedies, to heartbreaking drama. These have been arranged into three trios entitled *Secret Hearts*, *Nuclear Families*, and *Bedroom Farces*, with the chance to see all three trios (nine plays) in a single day on Saturdays and Sundays.

Nine actors play 73 roles across the nine plays. The ensemble cast includes Olivier Award-winning Sara Crowe (her West End roles include Sybil in *Private Lives*, *Calendar Girls*, *Bedroom Farce*), Ian Hallard, who was nominated for Best Actor for *The Boys in the Band* in last year's WhatsOnStage Awards, Nick Waring (*Queen of the Desert* with Nicole Kidman, *The Heart of Things*, Jermyn Street Theatre), Miranda Foster (Gertrude, *Hamlet*, Shakespeare's Globe; Harry, *Springs Eternal*, Orange Tree Theatre), and Olivier Award nominee Rosemary Ashe. Musical direction and piano is provided by Coward specialist Stefan Benardczyk, who also plays a number of roles. Jeremy Rose (currently at English Theatre Frankfurt in *Jekyll and Hyde*), Boadicea Ricketts (nominated for two OffWestEndAwards as Best Actress and Best Ensemble in her debut as Sylv in the revival of Steven Berkoff's *East*), and Ben Wiggins (Princess Katherine, *Henry V*, Regent's Park Open Air Theatre) complete the cast. Set design is by Louie Whitmore, twice nominated for OffWestEnd Awards for her work at Jermyn Street Theatre last year, and costume designs are by Emily Stuart (two-time OffWestEnd Award winner). Choreography is by Gabriella Bird, lighting by Tim Mascall, and sound by Tom Attwood. The plays are directed by Tom Littler, Jermyn Street Theatre's Artistic Director.

**Press Nights: Saturday 21 April & Sunday 22 April - performances at 11.30am, 3.30pm, 7.30pm**

**Critics are invited to attend the trilogy on either day but they can also 'mix and match' between the two days.**

Cast (and the roles they are playing in the season):

**Rosemary Ashe:** Clara (*We Were Dancing*), Nanny (*Ways and Means*), Martha (*Shadow Play*), Lily Pepper (*Red Peppers*) Violet (*Star Chamber*), Myrtle (*Still Life*), Emily (*Family Album*), Clare Wedderburn (*Hands Across the Sea*).

**Stefan Benardczyk** Musical Director / Piano and playing: Major Blake (*We Were Dancing*), Alf (*Red Peppers*), Jimmie Horlick (*Star Chamber*), Albert (*Still Life*), Bu:rows (*Family Album*), Peter (*Hands Across the Sea*), Sir Reginald (*The Astonished Heart*)

**Sara Crowe:** Louise Charteris (*We Were Dancing*), Olive Lloyd-Ransom (*Ways and Means*), Victoria (*Shadow Play*), Xenia James (*Star Chamber*), Dolly (*Still Life*), Lavinia (*Family Album*), Mrs Wadhurst (*Hands Across the Sea*), Leonora (*The Astonished Heart*).

**Miranda Foster:** Stella (*Ways and Means*), Sibyl (*Shadow Play*), Miss Mabel Grace (*Red Peppers*) Dame Rose (*Star Chamber*), Laura (*Still Life*), Jane (*Family Album*), Piggie (*Hands Across the Sea*), Barbara (*The Astonished Heart*).

**Ian Hallard:** Karl (*We Were Dancing*), Chaps (*Ways and Means*), Simon (*Shadow Play*), Johnny Bolton (*Star Chamber*), Johnnie (*Still Life*), Richard (*Family Album*), Mr Wadhurst (*Hands Across the Sea*).

**Jeremy Rose:** Servant (*We Were Dancing*), Gaston (*Ways and Means*), George Cunningham (*Shadow Play*), George Pepper (*Red Peppers*), Julian Breed (*Star Chamber*), Bill (*Still Life*), Edward (*Family Album*), Ally (*Hands Across the Sea*), Ernest (*The Astonished Heart*).

**Boadicea Ricketts:** Eva (*We Were Dancing*), Princess Eléna (*Ways and Means*), Lena (*Shadow Play*), Hester (*Star Chamber*), Beryl (*Still Life*), Harriet (*Family Album*), Walters (*Hands Across the Sea*), Susan (*The Astonished Heart*).

**Nick Waring:** Hubert Charteris (*We Were Dancing*), Toby Cartwright (*Ways and Means*), Michael (*Shadow Play*), Mr Edwards (*Red Peppers*), Mr Farmer (*Star Chamber*), Alec (*Still Life*), Jasper Featherways (*Family Album*), Major 'Bogey' Gosling (*Hands Across the Sea*), Christian (*The Astonished Heart*).

**Ben Wiggins:** George (*We Were Dancing*), Stevens (*Ways and Means*), Young Man (*Shadow Play*), Alf (*Red Peppers*), Maurice (*Star Chamber*), Stanley (*Still Life*), Charles (*Family Album*), Mr Burnham (*Hands Across the Sea*), Tim (*The Astonished Heart*).

**Tonight at 8.30** plays in repertory with **Tomorrow at Noon**, featuring three new plays by Jenny Ayres, Emma Harding, and Morna Young, each of which reacts to one of Coward's **Tonight at 8.30** plays, and responds to it in a contemporary voice. Ayres, Harding and Young were chosen from over 390 anonymous entrants.

**Tomorrow at Noon press night is Tuesday 1 May at 7.30pm.**

Tom Littler said: "This is the most ambitious season in our 24-year history, and I am incredibly grateful to all of the people who have helped to set it up. I am very excited to be directing the whole of Noël Coward's **Tonight at 8.30** - in our intimate studio space, I think these plays can be revealed as works of extraordinary insight, wit, and emotional impact. Although each trio stands alone, I hope people will come to experience the full breadth of this remarkable cycle, which I count as Coward's finest achievement."

10 April – 20 May

## TONIGHT AT 8.30

Nine one-act plays by Noël Coward

**Bedroom Farces** (*We Were Dancing*, *Ways and Means*, *Shadow Play*)

**Secret Hearts** (*Star Chamber*, *Red Peppers*, *Still Life*)

**Nuclear Families** (*Family Album*, *Hands Across the Sea*, *The Astonished Heart*)

Noël Coward's dazzling versatility shines across nine one-act plays. From the railway station of *Still Life* to the Pacific island of *We Were Dancing*; from the music-hall of *Red Peppers* to the ache of *The Astonished Heart*, this is the first complete London revival since 1936.

We have arranged the nine plays into three trios, called *Nuclear Families*, *Bedroom Farces*, and *Secret Hearts*. Each trio stands alone, but we hope you see all three! On Saturdays and Sundays, you can see the entire cycle across a single day, with breaks for lunch and dinner.

With a Weekend Trilogy Ticket + Meal Deal your day will include a delicious two-course dinner at Getti Restaurant.

The plays are directed by our Artistic Director, Tom Littler.

### Bedroom Farces

"I knew marrying you was a mistake seven years ago – but I never realised the thoroughness of the mistake until now." Affairs of the heart, the bed, and the chequebook are wittily and touchingly captured in this trio of plays, containing some of Coward's most popular music.

*We Were Dancing*, a comedy featuring Coward's song of the same title, is set on an idyllic island, where the guests of a country club are enmeshed a complex web of extra-marital affairs.

*Ways and Means* is a comedy about the bohemian Stella and Toby, who go from villa to villa on the Côte d'Azur. But when they cannot pay their gambling debts, they plan to make an easy fortune...

*Shadow Play* is a 'musical fantasy'. Peppered with songs and dances including 'Play, Orchestra, Play', it is a moving portrait of a marriage under strain.

Running time approx 2 hours 15 minutes, including an interval.

### Secret Hearts

"I know that this is the beginning of the end – not the end of my love for you – but the end of our being together." Secret dreams, unfulfilled ambitions and impossible desires: this trio of two plays and one musical comedy has everything from outrageous farce to heartbreaking romance.

*Star Chamber* is a comedy about a charity committee meeting, set in a theatre and peopled by outrageous characters.

*Red Peppers* is a riotous tribute to music-hall. George and Lily Pepper battle with tiny dressing rooms, a grumbling audience, and a drunken pianist.

*Still Life* was later immortalised as *Brief Encounter*. In a station refreshment room, Laura meets Alec.

Running time around 2 hours 15 minutes, including an interval.

### Nuclear Families

"You'd better come and dine tonight – I'm on a diet, so there's only spinach." The glitter of middle-class life is exposed as the thinnest of façades in these three plays, ranging from laugh-out-loud comedy to mesmeric drama.

*Family Album* is a social comedy wickedly poking fun at Victorian sentiment. The Featherways family have gathered to mourn their father. But the siblings are not on their best behaviour.

*Hands Across the Sea* is a glittering comedy reminiscent of *Hay Fever*. Naval officer Peter Gilpin and his wife 'Piggie' are the most eccentric party hosts in London.

*The Astonished Heart* is a gripping drama of secrecy and betrayal. A brilliant psychiatrist, Christian appears to have the perfect life. Then he meets Leonora...

Running time around 2 hours 30 minutes, including an interval.

## Creative Team

Directed by Tom Littler  
Set design by Louie Whitmore  
Costume design by Emily Stuart  
Lighting design by Tim Mascal  
Sound design by Tom Attwood  
Choreography and associate  
direction by Gabriella Bird  
Musical direction by Stefan Bednarczyk

### Show Times:

Wednesday to Friday at 7.30pm. Saturdays and Sundays at 11.30am, 3.30pm, and 7.30pm.

### Tickets:

For Bedroom Farces or Secret Hearts or Nuclear Families):  
£30 / £20 concessions.  
Concessions available to over-60s, theatre unions, unwaged, access, students.  
Please note that after Sunday 29 April all tickets are full price.

### Weekend Trilogy Ticket

Enjoy all three performances with our Trilogy Tickets. Each ticket gives you:

- A seat for the 11.30am, 3.30pm and 7.30pm performances on the same day.
- A signed programme and free drink.

£50 for concessions (£10 cheaper than booking individually), or £75 full price (£15 cheaper than booking individually).

### Weekend Trilogy Ticket + Meal Deals

Include a delicious, specially designed two-course dinner and a glass of prosecco at Getti Restaurant, directly above the theatre, to enjoy between the matinee and evening performances. £72.50 for concessions or £97.50 full price. Available for Saturday or Sunday performances, excepting the previews on Sunday 15 April.

### Previews

Tuesday 10 April to Sunday 15 April. £15

### Under 30?

100 tickets at £10 are available for under-30s. Available before Friday 20 April.



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