



LEWES THEATRE CLUB
Newsletter No.57 OCTOBER 2015



HEROES

by **Gérald Sibleyras**
translated by Tom Stoppard & directed by Nigel Sharpe

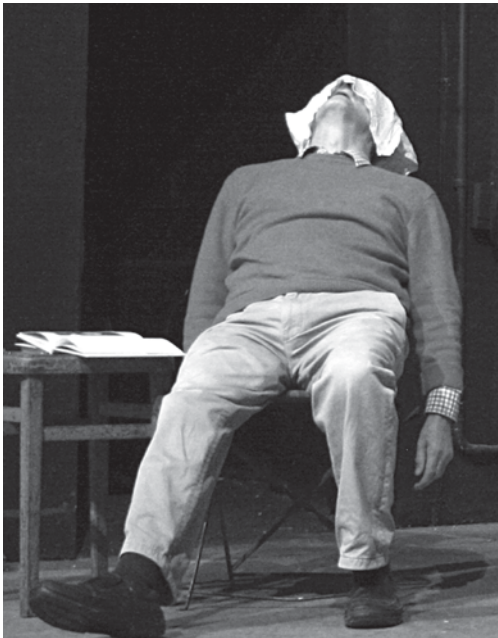
Saturday 10 October to Saturday 17 October 2015
at 7.45 pm except Sundays

Matinee
Saturday 17 May at 2.45 pm

Editor's notes

A first glance at the forthcoming season shows the huge variety which Lewes Little Theatre at its best is capable of. A piece of Tom Stoppard-translated French whimsical comedy moves effortlessly into classic drawing room comedy with a bite. The calendar year opens with an adaptation of one of the enduring children's classics before technical as well as emotional heights are scaled in the story of John Merrick. Classic satire of our political system follows in a production which will surely fill the theatre while the season ends with one of the classic 20th century American dramas. Some criticized - unfairly, as it turned out - the selection of plays last season for being too downbeat in its subject matter; nobody could level that same accusation at the next six productions.

Mike Palmer



IN THIS ISSUE...

- 3 PREVIEW**
Heroes
- 6 REVIEW**
Inherit the Wind
- 9 AUDITION ALERT**
The Elephant Man
- 10 WW1 COMMEMORATION**
- 11 INFORMATION**
- 12 CLUB DIRECTOR'S NOTES**
- 13 LETTERS**
- 14 ANNOUNCEMENTS**
Gilbert & Sullivan
- 15 ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- 16 BOOKING FORM**

DIARY DATES

PERFORMANCES

Heroes

10 - 17 October

Paul Myles

Lewes Little Theatre Genesis

29 September

Gilbert & Sullivan

24 October

The Circle

28 November - 5 December

*The Editor, after having
written his notes*

PREVIEW HEROES

by **Gérald Sibleyras** and translated by **Tom Stoppard**

Directed by **Nigel Sharpe**

10 October to 17 October 2015

This little gem of a comedy is just the right play to start the new season. The cast of Richard Griffiths, John Hurt and Ken Stott had delighted audiences at the Wyndham's Theatre premiere in 2005 and the following year *Heroes* won the Olivier Award for Best New Comedy.

The play was written by Gérald Sibleyras as *Le Vents des Peupliers*. When Tom Stoppard translated it, he felt that the title of *The Wind in the Poplars* might cause confusion with a certain other tree species and so instead called the play *Heroes*, which now could be confused with the cult TV series of the same name! But there is nothing super-hero-like about the three adventurers you will meet here.

Henri, Gustave and Philippe all took part in the Great War but we find them in 1959 as residents of a veterans' home. They are bound by the monotonous minutiae of the daily routine but a plan is hatched, which takes on the scope of a major campaign - with hilarious results.

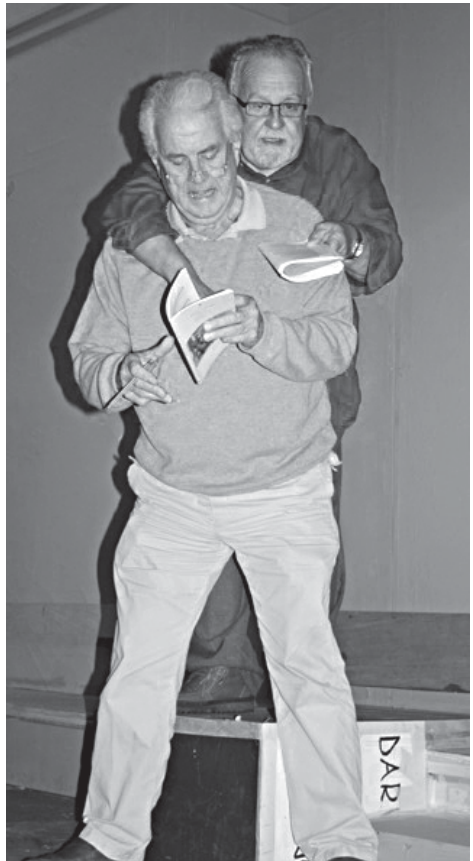
Setting the play in a time before the constraints of political correctness has enabled the author to indulge in risqué banter, which I am sure our experienced cast – Nick Betteridge, Peter Wellby and Alan Baker – will relish bringing to life.

Dudley Ward and the set-building team have composed a little bit of France for the setting and, with their technical skills,

have created the fourth, canine member of the cast.

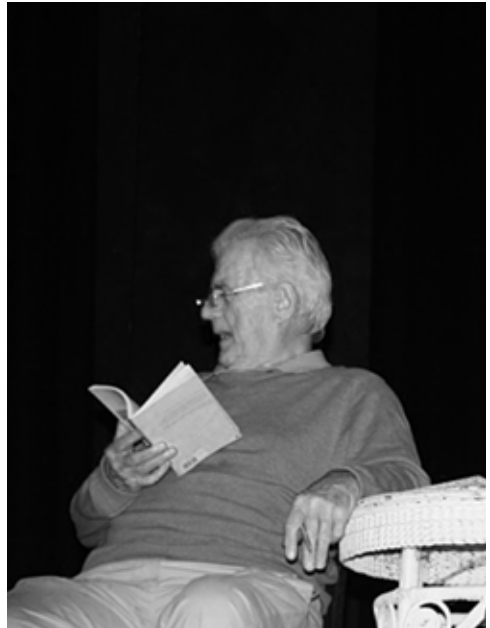
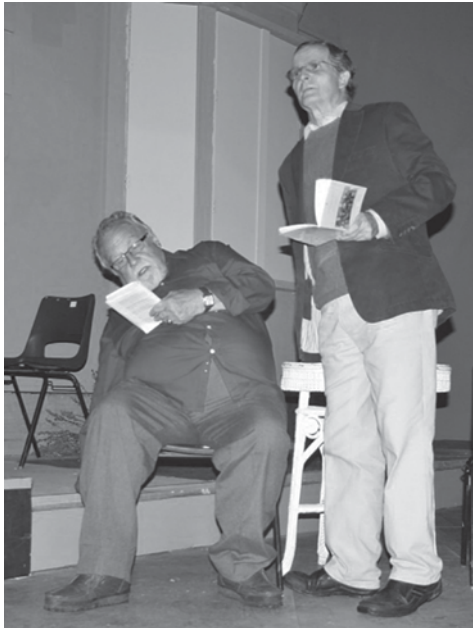
So if a risible, heartwarming evening, or matinee afternoon, is your desire, please come along to Lewes Little Theatre to see *Heroes*.

Nigel Sharpe
Director



Rehearsal pictures

PREVIEW HEROES



CAST COMMENTS HEROES

Alan G. Baker *Philippe*

I think that Philippe is the most vulnerable of the three characters that make up *Heroes*. He dreads the years ahead and is obsessed with the fact that the nuns at the home he is in will kill him. He has centred this around his birthday, convinced the nuns will murder him if it falls on the same day as another resident. He has become cynical over time, but at the same time very attached to the other two friends he shares the terrace with.

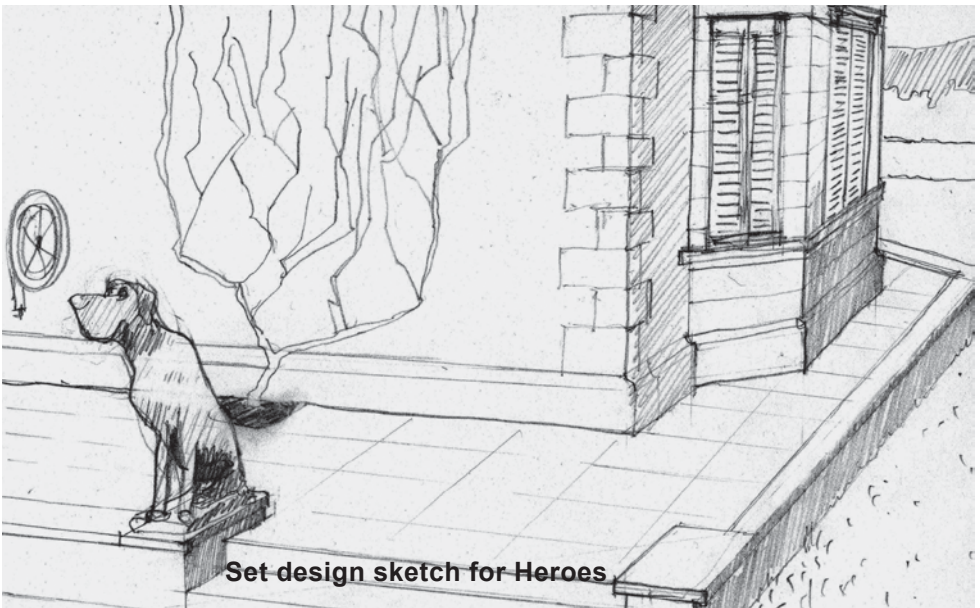
Like a lot of elderly people he has this irrational fear, which in his case is exacerbated by his head injury that causes him to regularly pass out. He has been a delight to play.

Peter Wellby *Henri*

Henri is the sanest and the most stable and practical of the trio, but he is not without romantic impulses, though more inclined to women than trees or dogs. It is not a coincidence that he ends half the scenes leaving the stage, exasperated by the other two. Despite his lameness, he is the only one actually to dip his toe into the frightening outside world. All three are, like the tramps in *Godot*, waiting for death. They try to escape from reality into fantasies and employ their brittle comradeship as a buffer against fear and time.

Nick Betteridge *Gustave*

Gustave is unavailable for comment because he has escaped to Indochina



Set design sketch for *Heroes*

REVIEW *Inherit the Wind*



Playwrights and lyricists Jerome Lawrence and Robert Edwin Lee were an award winning American partnership whose work included numerous radio series and 39 plays written together. In WW2 they established the Armed Forces Radio Network. Their biggest success was *Inherit the Wind*. Written in 1955, it fictionalises the famous Scopes Monkey Trial and the struggle of a teacher to justify the introduction of Darwinism to his pupils in a God-fearing Mid-West America. The writers used the theme of the play to highlight the contemporary issue of McCarthyism. It remains one of the most widely performed of American plays and in 1960 they adapted the stage version, resulting in an Oscar winning film.

In 1965 they founded the prestigious American Playwrights' theatre in a bid to bypass the commercialism of Broadway.

This timeless, thought-provoking and ambitious play with a cast of approximately 50 was chosen as the last in the LLT season. Skilfully

directed by Cathryn Parker with a highly committed ensemble cast and excellent central performances this was an impressive production that did justice to the pedigree and content of the play. Cathryn cast her actors with precision fleshing out a gallery of characters inhabiting the God-fearing town of Hillsboro – an American Mid-West town in a sweltering summer 'not too long ago'.



From the first scene when the talented young actor Walter Hall walked onto the stage as Howard Blair, with the charming Evie Flynn as Melinda Loomis,

REVIEW

Inherit the Wind

the audience felt in safe hands. As the characters populated David Moon's eye catching, clever, well-designed set it was clear that this was a production where everyone was pulling together to create something special.



Tony Bannister as the evangelical White House candidate Matthew Harrison Brady and Michael Bulman as the charismatic maverick defence lawyer Henry Drummond were perfect sparring partners at the centre of this court room drama. These were two impressive performances, doing full justice to the depth of the issues and emotions and the numerous quotable, beautifully written lines on the subject of the human condition, spirituality and freedom of thought.

Other notable performances included Isabella McCarthy Sommerville as Rachel Brown who sensitively caught the struggle between her respect for her zealous preacher father and her love for Bertram Cates – James Meikle well cast as the principled teacher who had tried to widen the minds of his pupils. I really enjoyed Alan Lade's performance as Rev. Jeremiah Brown and his fire and brimstone speech. Scott O'Brien as E.K. Hornbeck, the reporter who comes to

town to cover the trial, was great value as the puckish character who punctuated the unfolding drama in his asides to the audience.

Detailed and concentrated acting by the smaller and non-speaking characters are crucial to this ensemble play and to the creation of an engrossing production. Each and every one of the LLT actors had developed detailed performances and so the necessary atmosphere and drama in each scene was fully captured. I especially want to mention Anna Crabtree who played Mrs Krebs with total commitment, wonderful verve and imaginative skill. It was really encouraging to see so many members of the LLT youth theatre in a main production in the season.



Alison Soudain and Gerry Cortese and their wardrobe crew designed and executed a beautiful, high quality set of costumes for the cast of nearly 50. The choice of incidental music by director Cathryn Parker was delicately and perfectly chosen. I was really glad to see lighting designer Trevor Morgan working with the continued involvement of young members in the sound and lighting

REVIEW

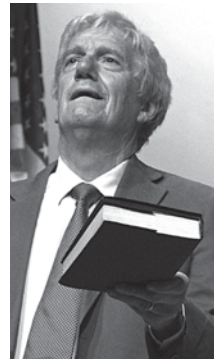
Inherit the Wind

department. Cameron Wallis, Charlie Pope and Thomas Sayers are clearly adding to their growing CVs and will, no doubt, achieve their theatrical ambitions.

Once again, LLT has not only produced an impressive and engrossing production made possible the enthusiasm and commitment of its members, but Cathryn Parker's choice of *Inherit the Wind* is certainly timely. In an era where the struggle for informed debate and the acceptance of different

views seems to touch our everyday lives, it is crucial that these issues are illuminated. As Henry Drummond so rightly says to Bert Cates at the end of the play - "You don't suppose this kind of thing is ever finished, do you? Tomorrow it'll be something else – and another fella will have to stand up. And you've helped give him the guts to do it".

Lucy Fitchett



AUDITION ALERT AUDITION ALERT

Audition Notice

7 and 10 November 2015. Performance dates 19-26 March 2016.
The Elephant Man by Bernard Pomerance directed by Alison Grant
Ensemble cast of 5 men and 3 women.

1884-1890 London.

The story follows the rescue and subsequent transformation of the severely deformed John Merrick from the squalors of a travelling freak show by a young up and coming young surgeon, Frederick Treves. This play won numerous Tony awards including "Best Play" when it was first produced in 1981. The part of Merrick will be played without prosthetics or make-up.

Frederick Treves Age 30-40
 An aspiring young surgeon and teacher.

Belgian Policeman

Mr. Carr-Gomm
 Administrator, London Hospital

London Policeman

Ross
 Manager of the Elephant Man

Lord John
 Socialite

John Merrick
 The Elephant Man Age 20-30
NB. No one with a history of back trouble should attempt this role.

Bishop Walsham How

Three Pinheads
 Three women freaks whose heads are pointed

Conductor
 of Ostend - London boat train

Porter
 at the London Hospital

Snork
 also a porter

Mrs. Kendal
 Actress

Miss Sandwich
 Nurse

Princess Alexandra

Duchess

Countess

Please contact Alison Grant for more information and scripts
adwgrant@gmail.com 07981 462 581

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to the 2015-16 season from the Membership Secretary

Thank you for renewing your membership. If you pay your subscription by standing order or by cheque in advance, you will have received your membership card with the AGM papers. Subscriptions fall due on the 1 August each year. So, if you haven't renewed for 2015-16, please

use the renewal/application form as soon as possible.

We are always looking for members to help backstage and front-of-house. Tick the boxes on the form if you are interested. New helpers will be most welcome.

**COMMEMORATING
WORLD WAR I**

|||||

**AN EVENING
OF VERSE AND MUSIC
REMEMBERING
THE 100 YEARS
SINCE WORLD WAR I**

**Saturday 26 September,
at 7.00 pm at All Saints Centre, Lewes.**

The verse will be read by members of Lewes Theatre. Directed by Mike Turner. The music will be provided by Lewes, Glynde and Beddingham Brass Band conducted by Ian Stewart. Tickets for this free event are available from Lewes Town Hall. Presented by Lewes Town Council.

LEWES THEATRE CLUB INFORMATION

Committee Chair Mike Pillar

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION £10 Double £16
Over 60s, Student & Juniors £6 Double £10
ADMISSION PRICES Evenings £8.
Matinées £6

ANTHONY JENNER BAR

All are welcome in our bar. It is open before and after all evening performances, as well as during the interval. Interval drinks may be ordered in advance.

THE NEWSLETTER

Published before each production.
Contributions in the form of articles or correspondence are welcomed and should be addressed to The Editor, Lewes Little Theatre, Lancaster Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2PX.

MEMBERSHIP

Applications should be sent to the Membership Secretary. Acting Membership involves no extra subscription. Members wishing to act are invited to attend auditions announced in the Newsletters.

CAR PARKING

Limited space at the theatre is available to those with disabilities. Municipal Car Parks, close by in Brook Street and the Needlemakers Centre, are open free of charge after 6pm.

THE WORKING PARTY

This hard-working group undertakes set building, costume, repairs and maintenance, both inside and out, meeting every Tuesday evening.

DISABLED PEOPLE

Members who have difficulty negotiating stairs and steps may enter the Theatre by the former entrance on the east side of the building. Seating close to this entrance is in Rows G9-11, H10-12 and J5-7. We can accommodate one wheelchair at certain performances. For details, ask at the Box Office. A disabled persons' toilet is located between the two main doors to the Auditorium. A fully operational induction loop has been installed. Aids should be adjusted according to the manufacturer's instructions.

OFFICERS

President Joanne Cull
Director Pat Shrimpton
Treasurer Bob Leeds
General Secretary Derek Watts
Membership Secretary Nigel Sharpe

Buying your tickets

Evening performances at 7.45pm.

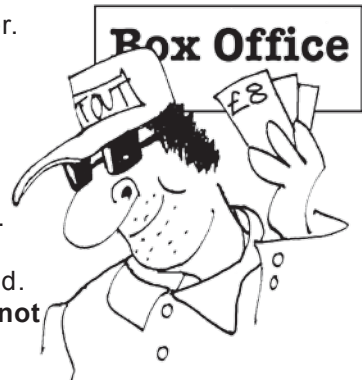
Matinee at 2.45pm on Saturday 17 October.

THE BOX OFFICE 01273 474826 will be open daily except Sundays from Monday 5 October to Saturday 17 October 10.30 am until noon and from 7pm to 7.30pm.

Postal bookings received before the Box Office opening period will be given priority.

Tickets not paid for 15 minutes before the performance is timed to start may be resold.

In any case seats booked in advance but not taken up must be paid for if not resold.



Club Director's notes

The last play of the 2014-15 season *Inherit the Wind* directed by Cathryn Parker was a great success. A huge cast with many new members really enjoyed their time rehearsing and the finished production reflected this. Their enthusiasm and concentration, especially during the trial scene gave great support to the leading characters who all gave outstanding performances. The director received so many tributes from members of the audience saying how much they enjoyed the evening. These accolades were well deserved as Cathryn spent hours researching and planning, she even bought an original newspaper featuring the actual trial. Unfortunately it was too fragile to display in the foyer. The play was a fitting end to our Anniversary Season.

Our new 2015-16 Season.

Nigel Sharpe has been rehearsing his cast of three for the past few weeks. We welcome back Peter Wellby - Kipling and Crocker- Harris, Nicholas Betteridge - director *Richard III* and Alan G Baker - *Waltz of the Toreadors*.

I'm hoping that many of you will come to see *Heroes* especially on Tuesday night as we have a public adjudication after the performance. As usual we have entered a production for the Brighton and Hove Drama awards. Last year we entered *The Diary of Anne Frank* and did very well.

Making his debut with us as director is Graham Stapley, who played the Judge in *Inherit the Wind*. His rehearsals for *The Circle* will commence shortly.

As you will see from the advertisement we have Gordon Peters coming to the

theatre to perform an evening of *Gilbert and Sullivan Comic Songs* on 24 October. Also the actor Ray Brooks from the iconic film *The Knack* is coming to talk about his life and work on 12 December. We have many more such evenings scheduled in the new year.

The Wardrobe Ladies would like to thank all the helpers who arrived on Saturday 29 August to help with their Sale of Costumes. This was a successful event adding over £700 to Club funds.

We have just heard that Paul Myles has had to relinquish his dual role, that of Archivist and Newsletter Editor - in partnership with Mike Palmer. He and Kathy are moving from the area, so we would like to thank him for the work he has done for us and give them our best wishes for their new venture!

We will now need a new Editor and Archivist. Ann Thomas who was a very efficient archivist for some years has offered to assist anyone willing to take on the job. Please get in touch with Ann and Derek Watts.

LUCKY NUMBER IN THE PROGRAMME

We are handing out a raffle ticket when you buy a programme. Keep your half of the ticket and the other half will go in the box. A ticket will be drawn from the box during the first half of the play. This winning ticket will be displayed on the black shutter by the kitchen in the foyer.

The winner can choose a bottle of wine or a Lewes Theatre pen.

I'd like to end by once again thanking all our volunteers without whom we wouldn't be able to function.

Many thanks

Pat

Letters...

Dear Editor

Just a note to let you know that we four thoroughly enjoyed the excellent performance of *Inherit The Wind*. Congratulations to all involved!

Diane Post, Fletching.

Dear Editor

Congratulations to all involved in *Inherit The Wind* everyone on stage were so good from the townsfolk to the local juryman who stayed in character throughout.... the acting from principals so professional. Thank you Cathryn for your expertise in the directing of this really good play.

Joan Newth

Dear Editor

Lewes Theatre Club *Inherit The Wind*. What an excellent play & well performed by all, the two leads were being particularly well rehearsed and word perfect. Congratulations to all.

Audrey S. Coward, Brighton

Dear Editor

Just to say that I think that *Inherit the Wind* was one of the finest plays I have seen at the Little Theatre. I have been a member for about 30 years. The acting and voice production was excellent, the crowd scenes well executed, the set simple but perfect for the times and the music well-chosen. The whole experience was very thought-provoking. Well done and congratulations to the director, the actors and the whole production team. (and that includes the sound/lighting crew!)

Jan Groom



ANNOUNCEMENTS

A CELEBRATION OF GILBERT & SULLIVAN



**Starring
Gordon Peters**

**BBC1 - *The Gordon Peters Show, My Family, Little Britain*
*One Foot in the Grave, Dad's Army***

**Including songs from all the favourites
HMS Pinafore, The Pirates of Penzance, The Mikado
and many more.**

**The audience are welcome to turn up and sing in the costume of their
choice.**



With David Carter at the Piano



**Saturday 24 October 7.30 pm. Tickets £10
Box Office 01273 474826**

if no answer leave a message it will be responded to

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Paul Myles discusses

The Genesis of Lewes Little Theatre

for the Friends of Lewes

**Thursday 29 September, Lewes Town Hall Lecture Room,
7.45pm Friends of Lewes free - non members £3.00**

Paul and Kathy Myles

Paul and Kathy are relocating to Cornwall early in the New Year
This has left a vacancy for a **Club Archivist** and **Newsletter Editor**
Please contact Pat Shrimpton or Mike Palmer with expressions of interest.
Paul will assist with the handovers.
lewpatshrimpton@sky.com or catharine.palmer@btinternet.com

Jack Wilkinson

Due to my current health situation I am having to stand down as Newsletter Distribution Co-ordinator. I would like to thank everyone who has helped with labelling, stamping, stuffing and delivering.

We are always looking for more helpers so, if you can help in any way please contact the new co-ordinators, Sue Piller and Sue Stone. Many thanks to them for volunteering to take over my duties.

Contact details for the two Sues are Sue Piller - 01273 472566
Sue Stone - 07751455504 jands.stone19@gmail.com

HEROES
10 - 17 October

The Circle

28 November - 5 December

BOOK NOW



NAME

MEMBER NO

ADDRESS

TEL DAY TEL EVE

Please complete the form legibly and send it with remittance and S.A.E. to Box Office, Lewes Little Theatre, Lancaster St. Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2PX. Cheques should always be made payable to LEWES THEATRE CLUB.

TELEPHONE BOOKINGS: 01273 474826. See page 3 for Box Office hours.

PLAYS	Preferred Date	Alt. Date	Matinee or Evening	No. of seats	Preferred Location	Total
Heroes	First night only 2 for 1	X	Evening £8.00			
Heroes			Evening £8.00			
Heroes		X	Matinee £6.00			
The Circle	First night only 2 for 1	X	Evening £8.00			
The Circle			Evening £8.00			
The Circle		X	Matinee £6.00			

Grand Total

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Please note. If the Box Office is able to fulfil only part of a request, a refund may be collected from the Box Office during opening hours. Alternatively, members may prefer to enclose either separate cheques or an open cheque crossed with a maximum amount.