

The Finborough Theatre is fully heated and air conditioned

FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

VIBRANT **NEW WRITING** | UNIQUE **REDISCOVERIES**
Spring 2014 | February–May 2014

HPZ Productions in association with Neil McPherson for the Finborough Theatre presents
The world's first production in more than 50 years

VARIATION ON A THEME

by Terence Rattigan.
Directed by Michael Oakley.

"Feelings can't sometimes be helped, but the expression of them can."

The first ever production in more than fifty years of Terence Rattigan's **Variation on a Theme** opens at the multi-award-winning Finborough Theatre for a strictly limited four-week season from Tuesday, 25 February 2014. (**Press Night: Thursday, 27 February 2014 at 7.30pm**).

Inspired by *La Dame aux Camélias*, and set amidst the glamorous and exotic society of the 1950's French Riviera, **Variation on a Theme** revolves around the tempestuous love affair between Rose, a beautiful and worldly socialite, and Ron, a young bisexual ballet dancer with a keen eye for social advancement.

In an emotionally charged story of desire and disillusionment, Rose is persuaded by Ron's choreographer and mentor, Sam, to sacrifice her personal happiness for the sake of her young lover's success and career. But as Rose's health deteriorates, and Ron is faced with the loveless reality of their separation, they finally face up to their need to be needed.

A forgotten classic by "one of the supreme dramatists of the 20th century" (Michael Billington, *The Guardian*), this will be the first production of the play anywhere in the world since its original 1958 premiere when it was directed by John Gielgud, and starred Margaret Leighton and Jeremy Brett.

Terence Rattigan was born in South Kensington, close to the Finborough Theatre, in 1911. His many classic plays include *French Without Tears*, *After The Dance*, *Flare Path*, *While The Sun Shines*, *The Winslow Boy*, *The Browning Version*, *Harlequinade*, *The Deep Blue Sea*, *The Sleeping Prince*, *Separate Tables*, *Variation On A Theme*, *Ross*, *Man And Boy*, *A Bequest To The Nation*, *In Praise Of Love* and *Cause Célèbre*. He also wrote screenplays for such classic films as *The Way To The Stars*, *Journey Together*, *While the Sun Shines*, *The Winslow Boy*, *The Browning Version*, *The Prince And The Showgirl*, *Separate Tables*, *The Sound Barrier*, *The Deep Blue Sea*, *The VIPs*, *The Yellow Rolls Royce* – and collaborated on *The Quiet Wedding*, *The Day Will Dawn* and *Brighton Rock*. His television plays include *Heart To Heart*, *Adventure Story* and *High Summer*. He was awarded a CBE in 1958, and knighted in 1971. Sir Terence Rattigan died in 1977. Please visit the official Terence Rattigan website at www.terencerattigan.co.uk

Director **Michael Oakley** won the 2008 JMK Award for Young Directors for which he directed *Edward II* at BAC. In 2012, he was Co-Artistic Director of Chichester Festival Theatre's pop-up space Theatre on the Fly. Directing includes *Playhouse Creatures* (Chichester Festival Theatre), *The Changeling* (Southwark Playhouse), *Shooting Truth* (NT Connections) and *Graceland* (Old Vic New Voices 24 Hour Plays for). Michael has worked with Trevor Nunn as an assistant and Associate Director on six productions. He has also worked with Jonathan Kent, Adrian Noble, Sean Foley, Jonathan Church, John Doyle, Tamara Harvey and Cheek by Jowl at venues including Theatre Royal Bath, Theatre Royal Haymarket, The Old Vic, Chichester Festival Theatre, Bush Theatre and Shakespeare's Glove. Michael was trainee director-in-residence at Chichester Festival Theatre in 2011.

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www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk Artistic Director Neil McPherson

The press on director Michael Oakley

"Marvellously entertaining and stylishly directed by Michael Oakley, in sum one of those evenings when theatre is more alive than life" ★★★★★ Five Stars, The Daily Telegraph on Playhouse Creatures

"A sure gift for racy, pacey storytelling that bodes well for the future and his classical career; a young director who already knows that it is telling the story that really counts" Lyn Gardner, The Guardian, on Edward II

PHOTOCALL: TUESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2014 AT 1.00PM-1.30PM

PRESS NIGHT: THURSDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2014 AT 7.30PM

LISTINGS INFORMATION

Finborough Theatre, 118 Finborough Road, London, SW10 9ED

Box Office 0844 847 1652 Book online at www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk

Tuesday, 25 February – Saturday, 22 March 2014

Tuesday to Saturday Evenings at 7.30pm. Sunday Matinees at 3.00pm. Saturday Matinees at 3.00pm (from the second week of the run).

Ticket Prices for Weeks One and Two (25 February – 9 March 2014) – Tickets £16, £14 concessions, except Tuesday Evenings £14 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £16 all seats. Previews (25 and 26 February) £12 all seats. £10 tickets for Under 30's for performances from Tuesday to Sunday of the first week when booked online only. £12 tickets for residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea on Saturday, 1 March 2014 when booked online.

Ticket Prices for Weeks Three and Four (11 – 22 March 2014) – Tickets £18, £16 concessions, except Tuesday Evenings £16 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £18 all seats.

Performance Length: Approximately two hours with one interval of fifteen minutes

For more information, interviews and images, please contact

Neil McPherson on e-mail admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk or **07977 173135**

Download press releases and images at <http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk/press-resources.php>

Variations On A Theme: The Sonnet Form In English Poetry. A The form of lyric poetry known as 'the sonnet', or 'little song', was introduced into the English poetic corpus by Sir Thomas Wyatt the Elder and his contemporary Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, during the first half of the sixteenth century. D Early on, however, English poets began to vary and experiment with this structure. The first major development was made by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, altogether an indifferent poet, but was taken up and perfected by William Shakespeare, and is named after him. The Shakespearean sonnet also has fourteen lines in iambic pentameter, but rather than the division into octave and sestet, the poem is divided into four parts: three quatrains and a final rhyming couplet.