

# Theatre arts review



## Eye-catching and compelling work

POWERFUL images by vulnerable people attending Creative Response workshops are on show in Vernon House, Farnham, until February 15.

The independent arts-related organisation was founded by artist Michael Prinsep to provide a safe haven and a creative outlet for those in need.

A local success story it now has 22 arts workers, who are practising artists, leading sessions at its bases in Farnham, Guildford, Cranleigh, Bognor Regis and Petersfield.

There were more than 200 entries for the exhibition, which celebrates the different methods of printmaking. These were whittled down to 50, which are mostly on display in the light and airy upstairs exhibition space.

Prints by the professional arts workers are also featured but clients compete with their teachers to create the most compelling images on show.

Client Julia Muggleton displays impressive assurance in her richly detailed drypoints capturing finches in flight. Her monochromatic prints demonstrate an unerring use of line and composition.

Equally assured is Nigel Brown who patterns masking tape to dramatic effect in his striking two-plate collograph *Broken and Fixed*.

Also eye-catching is Hilary Forrester's *Colourful Cats* drypoint and ink, a boldly composed and appealing owl and the pussycat scenario.

The freshness and directness of the images is one of the most engaging aspects of the exhibition, notably in Barry



The exhibition at Vernon House includes work by people attending Creative Response workshops.

Gilliam's radiant abstract *Barry's Berries*, also notable is David Fenn's expressive abstract drypoint and ink of *The Garden* with its vivid washes of transparent colour and rhythmic use of line.

Exhibition organisers and practising artists Helena Harper and Bex Burchell are each represented by some striking compositions.

Harper's *In the Wind* etching features a firework-like fountain erupting from a glittering sea of blue, while Burchell's photo-etching *Submerged* is a dark and mysterious dreamlike portrait with wavy seaweed.

Fellow arts worker Jillian McLaren demonstrates her prowess with linocut in her exuberant print *Polish*

*Musicians*, which juggles a bold use of line with a sensuous appreciation of colour.

The exhibition at Vernon House next to Farnham Library, 38 West Street, Farnham is open Tuesday to Friday 10am to 2.30pm. Michael Prinsep has a one-man exhibition there from March 4 to March 20. *Beatrice Phillips*



Felicity Kendall in Noel Coward's *The Vortex* at the New Victoria Theatre, Woking

## Life of idle rich revealed

NOEL Coward was just 23 when he wrote *The Vortex*. And set it in the sophisticated milieu of the idle rich.

That milieu is familiar in Coward plays. But the themes of drug addiction, nymphomania, homosexuality and possible incest made contemporary reviewers call it "A dustbin of a play" and "The most decadent play of our time". So not surprisingly, it was an immediate success.

The tragic leitmotifs are hardly noticeable in the first act, set in a Mayfair flat where "it's never too early for cocktails" and ageing beauties wear ermine in the afternoon. By Act 2 cracks begin to appear in the hedonistic facade and by Act 3 the entire edifice collapses culminating in a climactic scene between mother and son.

Felicity Kendall is perfection as Florence. She has absorbed the spirit of the beau monde of the twenties as if by some osmosis and voice, movement and face combine to transport her and the audience back 80 odd years to an age which was all surface and no depth.

Terrified at "the utter foulness of growing old" she lives life with a succession of toy boys and a routine of frenetic leisure. A performance to cherish, making the harrowing journey from beautiful and elegant party giver, to distraught mother, without make up, without coiffure, without hope.

Opposite her as her son Nicky, is Dan Stevens. He too gives a powerful performance as a gifted young man who has 'grown up all wrong', addicted to cocaine and struggling with

homosexual and incestuous feelings. "We swirl about in a vortex of beastliness. We're absolutely rotten". It says a lot for the quality of the acting and of the sense of period that lines like these are taken seriously.

Peter Hall's direction escalates the action in a masterly way towards the riveting final scene. There are no laughs in Act 3. It ends with a hope. A forlorn hope. "Promise me you'll be different". "I'll try...we'll both try". And then, as if in despair, "Oh God".

Not what you expect of Noel Coward. This is a powerful, painful play and deserves a larger audience than it had this week at the New Victoria. It goes to the West End shortly where it is certain to do well. It's at Woking until February 2.

Margaret Burgess

## Lion of England brought to stage

THE Mill Studio in Guildford plays host next week to *Henry V* - *Lion of England*, by the Maverick Theatre Company.

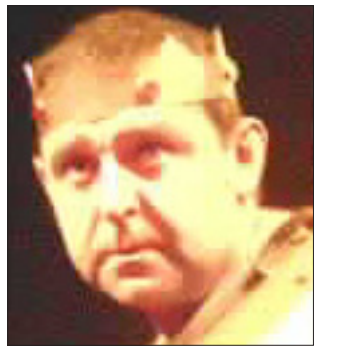
Arguably one of Shakespeare's finest history plays, this adaptation, written and directed by Nick Hennehan features historical accuracy with much of Shakespeare's original text.

A modern day chorus takes us back to the dark dangerous days of 1415, when an insulting gift of tennis balls from the headstrong Prince Dauphin of France provokes King Harry of England.

These two young men eventually meet in a bloody war that climaxes with the Battle of Agincourt. It's clear that the subjects of provocation, invasion and who holds the moral rights to a just war are as relevant today as they were in 1415.

This spirited production combines an innovative recipe of one actor and a "supporting cast" of lights, sound, special effects and an evocative and original live music score.

The play runs Thursday, February 7 and Friday, February 8 at 8pm.



Henry V at the Mill Studio.

### Cathedral services

SERVICES at Guildford Cathedral this week:

**Sunday February 3:** 8am: Holy Communion (BCP 1662) celebrant: The Dean. 9.45am: The cathedral eucharist (BCP 1662), hymns: 2, 474, 466, 248. Jackson in *G, O salutaris hostia* - Tallis. Preacher: the sub dean, celebrant: Canon Angela Weaver. 6.30pm: Candelmas Service, preacher: Canon

Angela Weaver.

**Monday February 4:** 5.30pm: Evensong (men's voices), responses: Harris.

**Tuesday February 5:** 5.30pm: Evensong.

**Wednesday February 6:** 7pm: Ash Wednesday Eucharist with the imposition of Ashes. Preacher: Canon Jonathan Frost, celebrant: The Bishop of Guildford.

## Ayckbourn play is confusing but rewarding

AN Alan Ayckbourn play is always worth seeing. Some more than others. And *A Trip to Scarborough* at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre this week, clever, ingenious and amusing as it is, is not one of his best.

Since its first airing in 1982 it has more or less sunk into oblivion. Until now. Sheridan wrote the title play having

based it on Vanbrugh's *The Relapse*. Sir Alan, long time resident of Scarborough, brought his fertile imagination to it and created this adaptation of an adaptation.

There is some of the Sheridan play there but that's only one of three strands. The other two, set in an excellent recreation of the lobby of the

Royal Hotel are placed firmly in 1942 and the present day. Not tidily packed into three separate acts, but interlocking, interloping, intermingling.

The action suddenly hurtles forwards or leaps backwards at the drop of a sword stick. Each period has its own plot and sub plot and no sooner do you get involved than you're whisked

off to another time. It's very confusing at first and it takes you some time to get to grips with it all. If you ever do.

The cast rose to the occasion admirably playing three roles with three costumes and different voices. Quick change after quick change - a triumph for the stage management team. Terence Booth was a deli-

ciously camp Lord Foppington, a wide shouldered spiv and a shady antiques dealer. And Sarah Moyle was an irresistible amalgam of Princess Anne and Joyce Grenfell as Mrs Love.

Linking it all were Adrian McCloughlin and Dominic Hecht as the staff. But it's very much an ensemble piece and there were no weak links.

It's confusing to start with as plots were developed, abandoned and revived, and at times it felt like a drama school exercise in acting and stage management. But Ayckbourn cannot write a play which isn't funny, clever and, as in this case, gloriously theatrical. It runs until February 2.

Margaret Burgess

# The Professionals



Advertising Feature

### LifeStyle Access and Mobility

A PARTNERSHIP between a major LifeStyle retailer and Rowleys - formerly Cranleigh Day Centre will be launched early in February.

Age Concern Waverley - which operates Rowleys as well as other major services for people over 55 years in the borough - will shortly join forces with the London-based LifeStyle Access and Mobility.

This follows Rowleys other successful partnerships with Sainsbury's Plc; One Forty, the Cranleigh High Street Restaurant and the Birtley Housing Nursing Home.

Age Concern chairman Kay Newnham said: "The trustees of ACW are absolutely delighted that Rowleys had caught the eye of such a prestigious company for this new venture.

"Anything and everything required to help older people live active healthy lives and remain independent in their homes will be available at the new sales outlet that will be provided at Rowleys.

"We are convinced it will satisfy an important need in our area and will be hugely beneficial to the profile of Rowleys by enhancing the portfolio of services it already offers to the

residents of Waverley." The venture will co-incide with the relocation of the Age Concern Waverley offices from the other side of the Rowland House sheltered housing site at Flat 2 Ivy Hall into the former wardens' offices and adjacent to Rowleys in Victoria Road.

"This will ensure the advice and information, gardening

and handyman services will be even more accessible for our many thousands of clients, which will now be on the ground floor and with disabled access," said ACW chief officer Denise Graves.

The venture will be launched on February 5. LifeStyle's managing director Mark Foster said: "We will display a selection of

products that we feel will be most in demand by visitors and will provide other products by catalogue or bring items down on request for demonstration.

"The products on offer will change from time to time, but will be selected based on our experience of those that are most popular and effective in enhancing people's independence and will always include a range of aids to daily living.

"We will also feature scooters, riser recliner chairs and wheelchairs, amongst others.

"We will open from 10.30am and 2.30pm Monday to Friday, though there may be some adjustment in these hours depending on the traffic at the centre."

The venture will be operated by former Cranleigh Parish Council chairman Elwyn Williams who has had a lifelong career in access and mobility equipment.

"It is a real thrill for me to be working with an organisation that I have admired and supported for so many years in Cranleigh," he said.

"We really hope to welcome a whole new group of people to Rowleys, which provides services which include hairdressing, chiropody, bathing, a host of activities and a daily lunch club where a home-cooked two

course meal, using fresh fruit, meat and vegetables, can be enjoyed by anyone over 55 years for the princely sum of £3.50."

Rowleys has recently been awarded a £2,000 grant from the Surrey Community Foundation, to provide a new well-being room.

This will include treatments from reflexology to manicure, pedicure and other treatments to allow older people to feel and look even younger said manager Jane Bacon.

### Luck's Yard Clinic

WOULDN'T it be nice to have a spring in your step! Our feet are essential for our every day activities and life!

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Many people think they might have arthritis when it could simply be a joint restriction or mal position. Occasionally the problems with the feet may stem from a restricted hip joint or the pelvis being tilted. The chiropodists are trained to look at this and ascertain where the problem may arise from and then correct it manually.

Our sports therapist will look at the muscle balance in the legs and may use massage techniques or strengthening exercises to help you.

Our reflexologist works with the feet to find imbalances in the rest of the body. This is not only rejuvenating but also very relaxing!

For further information please feel free to call or e-mail us as we would be delighted to be of help or see our website [www.lucksyardclinic.com](http://www.lucksyardclinic.com)

### Yummi Scrummi

GET YUMMI and feel Scrummi with our top tips for becoming a ski bunny.

Skiing is physically demanding. These exercises at home will strengthen muscles especially those behind the knee, thus making you a stronger skier with reduced risk of injury on the slopes... so all you'll need to worry about is which outfit to wear!

#### Aerobic

After the all-important warm-up stretches, do something to get the heart pumping for 30 minutes, five times a week such as a brisk walk with hand-weights, a jog in the park or as fitness levels increase, try interval training alternating jogging with sprinting every two minutes.

#### Squats

Stand feet hip width apart, knees slightly bent, holding weights with palms facing inwards, slowly raise your arms away from your sides, elbows slightly bent, until your hands are at shoulder level and slowly lower down. 15 times x three sets with a pause in between.



Yummi Scrummi has top tips for getting you on the slopes.

#### Lunges

Step forwards about one stride length from the back foot, making sure your leading knee doesn't bend forwards over your toes. Push back off the leading leg to return to the start position. 15 times each leg x three sets with pause

#### Step-ups

On the stairs at home, or in the park, stand facing a step or stair, step up with one foot, placing your whole foot on the step, back straight, step up with your other foot so both feet are flat on the step, step down one foot at a time. 15 times x three with pause

#### Side arm raise

Stand feet hip width apart, knees slightly bent, holding weights with palms facing inwards, slowly raise your arms away from your sides, elbows slightly bent, until your hands are at shoulder level and slowly lower down. 15 times x three sets with pause.

#### Basic crunch

On your back, knees bent, feet flat on the floor, fingers to temples, tense your abs and slowly curl up keeping your lower back into the floor, breathing out as you lift and in as you lower, with a space the size of an apple under your chin. 15 times x three sets with pause.

#### Nutrition

Finally, when on the slopes, a good hearty breakfast such as porridge with raisins and a drizzle of honey will keep you fuelled for longer...well...at least until lunch

Yummi Scrummi is the new name in personal training, deep massage and nutritional advice specifically for women, who want to feel totally energised and seriously fit.

For more information please contact: Philly on 0777 151 3232, or e-mail [philly@yummi-scrummi.co.uk](mailto:philly@yummi-scrummi.co.uk) or visit [www.yummi-scrummi.co.uk](http://www.yummi-scrummi.co.uk)

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