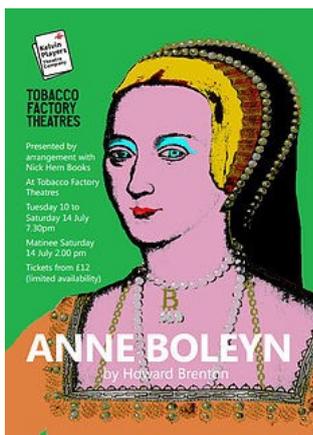




The Jester



June — July 2018



GOING POSTAL
by Terry Pratchett & Stephen Briggs



5-8 & 12-15 December 2018
Kelvin Studio

Our Upcoming Productions

Hi all Kelvin members!

It seems summer's come early this year! I've not had many pics this month, so don't blame me if this issue looks a bit flat picky-wise — thank God for Nicky sending me pics of our newest Kelvin member!

The Jester is our bi-monthly Kelvin Players members' newsletter. We aim to produce a newsletter about the 1st of December, February, April, June, August, October, and so on, i.e. 6 issues a year.

About the middle of the month before each edition of **The Jester** is due to come out, we will put a call in **The Digest** for articles about upcoming and recent shows, photos, submissions, diary dates and things of interest for inclusion in **The Jester**. The Digest will tell you the deadline for articles for the next Jester. Of course, if you have something to submit for inclusion in the next issue of **The Jester**, you can do so at any time by emailing it to us at: jester@kelvinplayers.co.uk Please try to avoid emailing it to me personally, because your article may get lost in my own inbox if you do!

I do urge you to go and see all our great upcoming presentations. Anne Boleyn is going to be a sumptuous Kelvin experience at the Tobacco Factory, with opportunities for anyone at all to get involved in some way or other. The read-through of **The Effect** directed by Mat Rees is this weekend so go along to the studio this Sunday evening 3rd June at 7.30! The script is on the members' webpages on the website. Nobody could accuse Kelvin of being boring or unimaginative, especially after **Knowledge and a Girl!** so do get involved, and go and see them all! After all, it's your club, and I never cease to be amazed at the breadth and range of Kelvin's theatrecraft and adventure.

Geoff Collard (Editor).

FROM THE GREEN KEYBOARD OF THE CHAIR'S DESK

Hello and welcome!

Extraordinary!! What?? Howard Barker's ***Knowledge and a Girl***, directed by Sam Grayston. Again, if you missed it – why? Don't miss the interview with Sam inside this **Jester**.

Now, I've made no secret of the fact that I'm not a big fan of Mr. Barker's work, but I still went to see it. How can I express any sort of opinion, about a production I haven't seen? So my opinion is that it was extraordinary and ought not to have been missed. As members of Kelvin Players you ought to make the effort to see theatre produced by this company, regardless of whether you think you'll like it or not. I write whilst we still await the Adjudication from the Rose Bowl. Interestingly, because of considerable disparity of opinions between Rose Bowl adjudicators, they chose this production to attend *en masse* so they could each assess the production and compare their approach to adjudication. It will be interesting to find out what they come up with.

Jacqs is now well into rehearsals for ***Anne Boleyn*** by Howard Brenton which, in case you'd missed it, is to run at The Tobacco Factory Theatres 10th to 14th July. This is to be a prestigious (billed as our 250th) production. Kelvin Players is the only non-professional theatre company to be invited to perform at the Tobacco Factory Theatres, as a visiting production company. Already over £2500 worth of tickets have been sold so don't hang around. You need to see this production. Book your tickets now via kelvinplayers.co.uk

Thanks to Jacqs and team for organising a big clear out of accumulated junk from the Morris Room. A problem is that props and ephemera accumulate during the rehearsal process or things are donated and are either not collected or are left to add to our props/furniture collections. Sadly, we don't have enough room to store loads of new stuff, so it's a breath of fresh air when someone like Jacqs organises a big tidy up and re-creates a new, clear and workable rehearsal environment!

Coming up:

9th to 13th October, Mat Rees is directing ***The Effect*** by Lucy Prebble. Mat's on the hunt for a production team so now's the opportunity to get involved, even if you're planning on auditioning, there's no harm in getting a foot in the door early on. A script and audition pieces are on the Members' website. Check in and check them out!

Finally another two-week production. 5th - 8th & 12th - 15th December - ***Going Postal*** by Terry Pratchett and Stephen Briggs directed by Tim Whitten. I anticipate that this may be an immersive, great fun, large cast production. Again if you're interested in being involved, Book Early!

The deadline for submissions for next year's season has now passed (do not call as you may still be charged) Fran and the APC are now furiously reading submitted scripts and proposals before choosing a shortlist of directors to be invited to pitch their productions. All very exciting!

Don't forget that there's loads of stuff coming up all the time on the Members' website* www.kelvin-members.co.uk and on facebook members' group, and twitter @kelvinplayers, (and potentially Instagram but I'm not sure about that).

Get involved, get busy, get happy!



**Jonny Wilkinson's
Chair!**

chair@kelvinplayers.co.uk

Anne Boleyn

- well a-head of the game!

Rehearsals are in full swing for our production of Howard Brenton's play to be performed on the main stage at the Tobacco Factory Theatre this summer.

We've had workshops, improvisations, character analysis, text study and brainstorming. There's been a fascinating historical insight from expert Professor Hutton, and accent coaching from the ever-brilliant Gary Owston. The musical dimension is a very important part of this play with hymns, songs and dances (...including with oranges!) being learnt.



We're rehearsing four times per week which is pretty intense, but definitely worth it. The cast made a fabulous start and now you can literally see characters coming to life. Lines are learnt. That's so good, I'm going to say it twice, and large...LINES ARE LEARNT.

I'm delighted to welcome a few newer members to the cast and hope they're enjoying the experience as much as we're enjoying working with them. Here are the full cast details:

In Tudor times...	In the court of James I...	Ensemble...
Anne Boleyn - Rosie Closs Henry VIII - Ben Culverhouse Cardinal Wolsey - David Alexander Thomas Cromwell - Tim Whitten Sloop - Tom Summerill Simpkin - Mike Lockett Lady Rochford - Martha Graham Lady Celia - Lucy Payne Lady Jane - Sammi Cousins William Tyndale - Steve Graham	James I - Steve Dale George Villiers - Nathan Richards Robert Cecil - Phil Joyner Parrot - Toby Brierley Dean Lancelot Andrewes - Martin Walsh Henry Barrow – David Alexander Dr John Reynolds – Mike Lockett	Mandi Bailey-Turner Rhona Jamieson Peter Philpott Emma Smart

We're doing well behind the scenes too. People are busy sorting venue details, managing PR and marketing, designing lighting, sewing costumes, finding props, making furniture and building the set – all to our usual high standards.

This only leaves one key ingredient...the audience - and YOU in particular as fellow members!



***Anne Boleyn* is a really special and exciting production. Please, please, please do all you can to promote the show to your friends, family, neighbours and colleagues – and, don't forget to book your own tickets.**

Tickets are flying out the door, so don't miss out and book NOW! You can book direct via the Tobacco Factory website at: <https://www.tobaccofactorytheatres.com/shows/anne-boleyn/>

Thanks very much everyone.

Jacqs



READ-THROUGH & AUDITIONS

I'm pleased to say that our latest production, *The Effect*, has kicked off and there seems to be plenty of interest.

There was a positive attendance for the recent launch night, and lots of people have expressed interest in auditioning for the play.

The read through and audition dates for *The Effect* have been confirmed. If you are interested in auditioning for this show, please join us on Sunday 3 June at 7:30pm.

The auditions will then be held on Tuesday 5 and Thursday 7 June, also from 7:30pm. Auditionees will be required for one whole evening.

Your Artistic Director, Fran Lewis, will be taking on the role of Production Manager, and is so far proving more than capable in this role. But there are still other backstage roles that need filling. If you're interested in taking one on please get in touch.

If you would like to find out more about the play, read it in advance or read the audition pieces, please visit the members website: <https://www.kelvin-members.co.uk/effect>

Thanks,

Mat Rees (director)

Rehearsed Readings

Dearest Kelvinians,

Well there's good news and bad news in this edition of the Jester, so I'll hit you with the bad news first and then heal your wounded souls with the good news - right? Sadly I had to take the decision to cancel the Rehearsed Reading ("RR") that was scheduled for 9th June. Of the 2 directors originally in place, Ralf Togneri had to pull out due to family commitments. Peter Spence was still keen to go ahead, but will now do so in the second half of 2018 (hopefully with the same cast).

Never fear however, as the good news is that it isn't long at all now until the next inaugural Launch Night! It is on 30th June (a Saturday, as always) and there'll be a new slate of directors telling everyone what they'll be directing for their RRs during the rest of 2018. The dates currently scheduled for RR evenings are 8th September, 29th September, 20th October, 10th November - so the directors will be aiming to fill their casts for RRs on those dates at the launch on 30th June, and that's where you come in folks! If you fancy acting in a RR (and really, why wouldn't you?!) come along on 30th June and - gosh darn it - you shall act in one.

If you're new to Kelvin and aren't sure what this is all about, well the best way to find out is just to turn up - and don't worry, you won't be made to do anything you might not want to. It'll be a socially fun evening, and there's no requirement other than listening to the directors talk about their planned RRs - but then if you fancy acting in any of them, you would of course be welcomed, and you can sign up the same evening! (No pressure then!) You can read more about how the RRs work on the Kelvin Members website, specifically under Members' Stuff heading.

So on Saturday 30th June, the doors and bar will open at 7:00pm - so come along then, get yourself a drink and start chatting to fellow friendly members - and then the RR directors will be revealed and start 'pitching' their shows to you at 7:30pm. See you all there!

It's a very low-stakes and fairly low-pressure thing to do, but a wonderfully fun thing too - with a guaranteed supportive and friendly audience that won't be too dauntingly large. Go on, give it a go won't ya? Please contact me and get your name on the 'potential RR directors' list - or just catch me in person in the bar just before the next Launch Night begins, and we can have a good old chat about it.....!

Rick Procter
RR Organiser
07941 878 460
rick.procter@icloud.com

30th June – Launch night for second half of the year
8th September
29th September
20th October
10th November

Today I'm joined by Sam Grayston, director of *Knowledge and a Girl*, a play written by Howard Barker, and Kelvin's third studio production of 2018.

Sam, welcome to The Debrief.



AC Sam, first of all perhaps you could tell us a little *Knowledge and a Girl* and why you were keen to

something about direct it?

SG The play is a retelling of the Snow White story Mother's perspective; a dark fairy tale. It's full of actors, each with their own intricate backstory and ested by the fact that it's written with no punctua- was almost in it but when the producer invited attend, we were told by his agent, in no uncertain terms, that we didn't have the performance rights and we couldn't put it on! I guess you could say I had unfinished business with it then.

from the evil Step extraordinary char- I was really inter- tion. At university, I Howard Barker to

AC Unlike some plays, there aren't many resources available to a director of *Knowledge and a Girl* that would give him or her clues to the author's intentions, nor are there many previous productions of the play. How did that impact upon your interpretation?

SG Actually, for me that's hugely attractive. It's wonderful to work on a play that you can't watch on YouTube, for example, because it means you're not recreating somebody else's vision. We were able to explore the play ourselves and make it completely original to us. Of course, when I began the process I had some fundamental truths about the play that I wanted to get across but, by being unhindered by previous interpretations, we were able to find out new things and take the play in directions I couldn't have conceived beforehand.

AC What challenges does a play like this present and how did you deal with them?

SG The subject matter was always going to be tough and the way the characters behave towards one another is, at times, deeply unpleasant. It was important then to make sure that we found a way to explore that in the rehearsal room so that it's honest and genuine for the characters, but it's separate enough from our real lives.

AC The play does deal with some pretty difficult subjects: adultery, rape, miscarriage, infertility. How did you work with your cast to tackle those safely and do you think you succeeded in your staging of them?

SG I think we were successful. I worked a lot with the cast for the first two weeks just getting to know one another and playing together lots. I think this groundwork really helped when it came to us tackling the harder elements of the play. My intention was to create an environment in the rehearsal room that made the actors feel like they were in a safe place - a place where it was ok to make mistakes and to try things out. I think this made it a lot easier for us to explore those difficult subjects together.

- AC How concerned were you that an audience might find the play unnecessarily vulgar or violent?
- SG I was very concerned, particularly about the miscarriage scene and I knew that I had to approach it with a great deal of sensitivity. Our challenge was to make this traumatic moment in the play have impact, but be as honest as possible, and not to the point of being gratuitous. I talked a lot with the cast about it and we discussed the whole tone of that last section of the play, from the costume and the soundscape to the behaviour of the characters who share that moment in the play. In the end, I think we achieved the balance I was hoping for, but I think that judgement should really lie with the audience.
- AC The sound and the visual aspects of the play were very important to you. Can you tell us more about those and the people involved?
- SG I had an idea of what the world of the play might look and sound like and I was delighted to have a creative team that just injected so much life into the production with the staging and design. Bronwen's set was everything I had hoped for and completely captured the feel of this once great place that has decayed and deteriorated. The make-up, hair and costume team gave a fabulously twisted nod to Disney that told us clearly that this play is anything but a sugary sweet fairy tale, and Peter's soundscape just added another level of texture and coherence to the production. I was totally blown away, to be honest, by the amount of work and energy and commitment that all the crew invested, and it's quite humbling actually to see just how much work goes into making a Kelvin studio production like this.
- AC Ok Sam, it's the Would'a, Could'a, Should'a question next. What would you, could you or should you have done differently? Or wouldn't you change a thing?
- SG I absolutely wouldn't change a thing.
- AC So, did the play work for you, Sam?
- SG I was asked when I pitched the play what I wanted an audience to feel, and my response was that I hoped each audience member had a strong but personal reaction that was unique to their experience. Watching and hearing one person giggle at a darker moment whilst another gasps in horror was very satisfying because it showed to me that this play does lure you in and provokes a truthful, and at times visceral, reaction. So, yes, the play worked for me on that level.
- AC Apparently Howard Barker enjoyed 'playing' with his audiences' emotions. Did you get a sense of this and was it also a source of pleasure for you, too, Sam?
- SG Weirdly for a play, not one single character in *Knowledge and a Girl* experiences any kind of catharsis by the end and this can really take an audience off guard. We had a couple of performances where the audience remained seated for a few moments after the curtain call and I think that's because the play forced them to really consider their experience in a way that others may not. I wouldn't say I took a perverse pleasure in it, but I was certainly fascinated by how our show affected people.



AC A number of people commented in the bar after the show and on social media that *Knowledge and a Girl* was a risky play to stage. What do you think they meant by that and do you agree?

SG Well it's certainly not a well-known play so there is a commercial risk in staging it and, given the content and subject matter, I think there could also be reputational risks if it were staged poorly or gratuitously. Kelvin demonstrates time and again that it is willing to put challenging material on the stage and the faith it shows to its members in doing so is unique, in my opinion.

AC What advice would you give to a Kelvin member that has never directed before but wanted to give it a try?

SG There is excellent scope within the club to learn new skills and try things out, so I think if you're genuinely interested and curious about directing at Kelvin, then you should go for it. With directing, I think it's really important to create the right environment for your actors to thrive and find their characters.

AC And finally: this was your first studio production as a director for Kelvin. Would you do it again?

SG Yes, absolutely. Maybe a jolly one next time, but who knows?

Sam would like to thank: all the fabulous cast and crew - you know who you are - especially Tim, who helped keep everything on the straight and narrow throughout!

**New and Returning Members*!*

Peter Phillpot

Peter first became involved in am dram in 1972 and over the subsequent decade took parts in a variety of full length and one act plays. He has been involved in all aspects of back stage work but his first love is acting. In recent years, his career has taken priority but he still managed to squeeze in "Henry V" and "Equus" plus music hall acts and a few short sketches in churches. He has since retired and is ready get involved once again.

Florence Wood

Florence recently went to a production of a musical and was struck by the obvious sense of accomplishment that the cast were experiencing together. She would like to meet new people and pursue her personal interest in drama. She has found it difficult to do this while working as a teacher of English and Drama but now feels more confident to be able to do something she feels passionate about.

She has a Degree in Drama and Creative Writing and has experience of directing Shakespeare for young people.

She will be a dedicated member who will bring lots of energy and ideas.

Frances Cox

Frances is another teacher who is about to leave the profession and would like to spend more time doing the things she enjoys. She acted at University where she also directed and did make-up. She has had little time to pursue drama since but has done lots of singing, mainly in choirs as a mezzo-soprano. She is a competent dancer having done "all sorts" ceroc (modern jive), swing, ballet and Hawaiian. An accomplished writer who has written sketches, gags, novels and screen plays, she will be an asset to the writer's group.

She describes herself as hard working, reliable and a bit of a show off!

She would be interested in voice workshops hoping to pursue voice-over as a new venture.

Michaela Hollow

Michaela was attracted by the reputation of the company, the opportunities for development in all aspects of Drama and the friendliness of our membership.

She can bring enthusiasm and some skill in Drama techniques learned from her University course. Together with acting, she has back stage experience in lighting and sound.

Jean Renevey

Although Jean has only had a few experiences of acting, it is something she has at heart. She would like to develop her skills not only in acting but in production and other creative processes. She believes Kelvin will be able to help her do this.

She will bring positivity, humour, enthusiasm and creativity to the club and is keen to get involved.

Jamie Fitzpatrick

Jamie believes one of the most important things you can do for your soul is to share experiences through as many different mediums as you can. She says she is very passionate about story telling through theatre, especially as it is so much fun.

She has some acting experience and stage managed for a production of Entertaining Mr Sloane. She also helped direct the annual Shakespeare promenade for Clifton Amateur Dramatics Society last year.

She would like to develop her acting and directing skills.

Marta Yazbek

Marta is 45 years old and has been involved with theatre groups for many years. Since moving to Bristol, 5 years ago, she hasn't had the opportunity to join a group due to my personal circumstances. But now she wants to return and has heard good things about the Kelvin Players. She has some acting experience, but wants to learn much more. She says she has energy and will power to make things work. In theatre she has only stage-craft but would like to learn about backstage and production too. Most of her experience with drama was in social theatre, playing in hospitals to entertain children and patients on long-term illness; also playing to vulnerable people in the "favelas" in Brazil or the abused people in Spain. She likes DIY, painting and handcrafts and has experience working with events and catering. She says she is a very open person, communicative, passionate and loves the way human relationships can be expressed through theatre. Living in different countries has given her the opportunity to see and know about different cultures and languages. She thinks that joining Kelvin Players will be good to socialize and meet new people. It will also help to improve her communication skills as it will be her first time making theatre in English, which will be a challenge and a pleasure at the same time.

She is looking forward to it.

Julie Clerc

After seeing our productions and future programme, Julie decided she would like to be part of our company. She has experience of acting in plays and musicals with a number of societies including "Much Ado About Nothing", "The Snow Queen" and "The Wizard of Oz". She is currently in Avenue Q and a murder mystery with OOOH ARRR productions.

Backstage she has been a wardrobe assistant manager.

She has LAMBDA examination level 2 in performance, Grade 4 with distinction and training in fight performance (basic bare hands).

She says she will bring joviality and hard work to the company.

Emma Smart

Emma has 10 years acting experience, recently with ProAct Theatre Group and TWORX productions. She is a versatile actress who enjoys taking on various types of roles, notably in recent years Mrs Robinson in "The Graduate" and Bea in "A View from the Bridge". She enjoys the different challenges that roles bring, playing characters as diverse as Eva in "Absurd Person Singular", where she has to spend the entire second act unsuccessfully trying to commit suicide (a comedy part) to the gritty roles she has played in "Equus" and "Extremities".

She says she is a team player and not afraid to get her hands dirty if necessary. We like our members to be a bit grubby Emma.

Bits 'n Bobs

Key Amnesty

Bill mentioned to me whilst he was stocking the bar recently that it seemed like for every one member who buzzed to be let in to the building another three had keys to let themselves in!

This is now a security risk if so many have keys either cut or have not returned their keys after temporary need etc.

To avoid us having to change the locks again at vast expenses we invite you to (secretly if necessary) return any keys to Dean (email below) if you're not either an official key-holder or currently authorised – like being Director/Production Manager of the current production.

If you like, you can simply put the keys in an envelope and put them in Dean's secret tiny cupboard (the hidden cupboard outlined in red at the bottom of the stairs) no questions asked. Of course you could put your name on the envelope to let us know who has returned the keys – but not essential.

If we get no keys returned, we'll have to plan to change the locks - an expense which we shouldn't need to have.....

Jonny Wilkinson

Chair

chair@kelvinplayers.co.uk

Dean - premises@kelvinplayers.co.uk

Nicola Rope tells *The Jester* about a new member! - a potential new Kelvin member is welcomed into the fold... !

We are proud to present Dexter (Dex) Schoonderwoerd, born 9 May at 23.42, weighing 3.7kg or 8.2lbs.

After a gruelling 24 hour labour he was born via an emergency caesarian. Dex is totally chilled. Mum and Dad sleep deprived.



Your **DIARY DATES** at a glance

(all events at the Studio unless otherwise stated)

June

3rd Sunday 7.30pm. Read-through of *The Effect* by Lucy Prebble, directed by Mat Rees.

5th Tuesday & Thursday 7th - Auditions for ***The Effect*** 7.30pm.

30th Saturday Rehearsed Readings Launch Night (second half of the year)

July

10th — 14th ***Anne Boleyn*** at the Tobacco Factory (including Saturday matinee)