

WHAT'S ON / COMING SOON

Latin Mass Society Oxford Pilgrimage
 Saturday 3rd June

To honour Blessed George Napper, martyred for his priesthood 1610.

Traditional Solemn High Mass

11.15am at the Oxford Oratory, followed by Procession and Benediction

www.oxfordlmsrep.blogspot.com



SARA WHEELER - The highly respected travel writer will be discussing the life of Karen Blixen's lover and companion, Denys Finch Hatton at Blackwell's on Tuesday 6th June at 7pm. Sara's new book 'Too Close to the Sun' will be available to buy. Tickets £2 available from Blackwell or call (01865) 333623.

INSTRUMENTS & PA HIRE

DISCOS, LIGHTING, PA HIRE: Crossfade - soundtrack to your party. 01865 873970. www.crossfade.co.uk

DISCOS, KARAOKES AND EQUIPMENT HIRE - Dave Seamer Entertainments: (01865) 240054.

DISCO, PA, AND LIGHTING EQUIPMENT - hire and sales. 118 Cowley Road, 01865 722027



Bid for a delicious meal for two at the Big Bang worth £42.50.

You could have:

Wild Venison Sausages (Gluten Free) over a Garlic and Rosemary Mash

with a rich red wine jus

and a bottle of **Wakefield Ozzie Shiraz 2003**

Rice Pudding with Brandied Sultanas served with custard, cream or ice cream

www.dailyinfo.co.uk

CARS FOR SALE

RENAULT ESPACE, dark green, not immaculate but reliable, 2.2 diesel, 91,000 miles, 1 year's MOT, 7 months' tax. £4750. 01865 553878

MEETINGS AND LECTURES

Thu 1st
PORTUGUESE CONVERSION / 7.30pm / www.mintypoppet.com/portuguese.html / G&D's, St Aldates

LUNCHTIME TALK / Dr Andrew Spicer: Commonwealth, Church Building, and Iconoclasm / 12.30pm. Free / St Giles Church, St Giles

EASTERN EUROPE CONNECT / Chance to explore business opportunities in the new EU member states / AIESSEC Oxford / 5pm, free, register in advance / darja.luchinskaya@aiessec.net / St. Anne's College, Woodstock Road

THE LATE SHIFT / A group for adults age 16+ suffering mental health problems / Mind / 5.30-8.30pm / Cowley Community Centre, Barrs Road

Fri 2nd
THE CHORAL PILGRIMAGE 2006 / Tomás Luis de Victoria & Marian Antiphons / Pre-Concert Talk 7pm, concert 8pm / Sheldonian Theatre, Broad Street, Tel: 305305

BIG BROTHER EVICTIONS / Oxford's official Big Brother Venue lets you see evictions, live / 9-2.30am Dress for Press / oxford@oceanollins.com / www.oceanollins.com / Ocean and Collins, 43 Park End St, Tel: 01865 241144

GINEMA
 Until Fri 2nd June

Odeon George St (0871 2244 007)

X-MEN: THE LAST STAND [12A] Thu: 1.15, 4.00, 6.45, 9.30pm
 Fri: 12.15, 3.00, 5.45, 8.30pm (wheelchair access to all)

THE DAVINCI CODE [12A] Thu: 12.00, 1.00, 2.30, 3.30, 4.30, 5.30, 7.00, 8.00, 9.00pm

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE III [12A] Thu: 8.15pm

THE WILD [U] Thu: 11.30am, 1.30, 3.45, 6.00pm

POSEIDON [12A] Thu: 12.45, 3.45, 6.30, 9.15pm
 Fri: 12.30, 3.30, 6.15, 9.00pm

CURIOS GEORGE [U] Fri: 11.45am

UNITED 93 [15] Fri: 12.45, 3.45, 6.30, 9.15pm

Vue Cinema (08712 240 240)

PRIME [12A] Thu: 8.30pm, Fri: 8.45pm

CURIOS GEORGE [U] Thu: 11.00am, 1.15, 3.45, 6.15pm

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE III [12A] Thu: 8.45pm, Fri: 8.45, 8.20, 11.10pm

THE DAVINCI CODE [12A] Thu: 11.15am, 1.00, 1.45, 2.30, 4.15, 5.00, 5.45, 6.30, 7.30, 8.15, 9.00, 9.30pm
 Fri: 10.45am, 1.00, 2.00, 3.00, 4.20, 5.15, 6.15, 7.30, 8.30, 9.30, 10.45pm

X-MEN: THE LAST STAND [12A] Thu: 11.00am, 12.15, 1.30, 2.45, 4.05, 5.30, 6.40, 8.00, 9.15pm
 Fri: 11.00am, 12.15, 1.30, 2.45, 4.05, 5.30, 6.50, 8.00, 9.15, 10.30, 11.40pm

ICE AGE 2 [U] Thu: 11.45, 2.00, 4.30pm, Fri: 12.45pm

THE WILD [U] Thu: 12.00, 2.15, 4.45, 7.00pm

POSEIDON [12A] Fri: 11.45am, 1.30, 3.15, 6.00, 8.25pm

CURIOS GEORGE [U] Fri: 11.45am

UNITED 93 [15] Fri: 11.15am, 1.45, 4.10, 6.40, 9.00, 11.30pm

Phoenix Picture House (0870 758 3218)

THE DAVINCI CODE [15] Thu: 7.00, 5.15, 8.30pm

BRICK [15] Thu: 4.00, 9.10pm

CHALLENGING CONVENTIONS: MEMENTO [15] Thu: 7.00pm

UNITED 93 [15] Fri: 1.30, 4.00, 6.30, 9.00pm

Odeon Magdalen St (0871 2244 007)

PRIME [12A] Thu: 9.00pm

X-MEN: THE LAST STAND [12A] Thu: 12.15, 3.00, 5.45, 8.30pm
 Fri: 11.00, 4.00, 6.45, 9.30pm

CURIOS GEORGE [U] Thu: 11.45am, 2.00, 4.15, 6.30pm

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE III [12A] Thu: 8.15pm

THE WILD [U] Fri: 1.30, 3.45pm

Ultimate Picture Palace (245288)

CASANOVA [12A] Thu: 7.00pm

THE NEW WORLD [12A] Thu: 9.15pm

Magdalen College Auditorium

THE SURREALIST PROMENADE Fri: 7.30-10pm

Short films (Dali/Bonnet, Lynd, Scharpenberg, Nyman, poppy, screening £4 seat fee 01796 831429)

review on www.dailyinfo.co.uk

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FRIENDLY AU PAIR for French family. Two daughters 7 and 9 living in Brussels, Belgium, from 09/2006 until 06/2007. Email: natouly@aol.com

MBA INTERNATIONAL FINANCE TUTOR required. 3rd July to 8th September. 4.5 hours per week. Please fax C.V. to: 01865 245059 or e-mail: priscilla@oxfordbusinesscollege.co.uk

WANTED: TWO PART TIME NIGHT PORTERS

City centre hotel. 24 to 28 hours p.w. £5 per hour. Responsible English speakers. Tel: 01865 791812 or email info@bathplace.co.uk

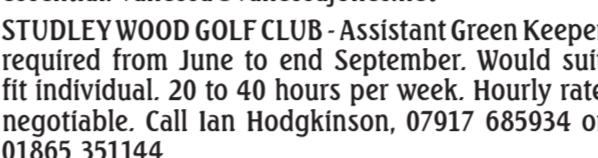
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Full-time academic administrator to deal with students, tutors and examinations (job share considered).

Send CV and letter to: Senior Tutor, Greene's Tutorial College, 45 Pembroke Street, Oxford OX1 1BP or email registry@edward-greene.ac.uk

PART-TIME HOUSE-KEEPER / NANNY required in Summertown. Driving licence essential, some cleaning / ironing required, picking up children from school once a week. Can be live in or live out. Childcare experience essential. Occasional evening and weekend babysitting/childcare. References essential. vanessa@vanessajones.net

STUDLEY WOOD GOLF CLUB - Assistant Green Keeper required from June to end September. Would suit fit individual. 20 to 40 hours per week. Hourly rate negotiable. Call Ian Hodgkinson, 07917 685934 or 01865 351144



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THEATRE REVIEWS

Ghosts

Old Fire Station Theatre, 30th May - 3rd June 2006

The subject matter of *Ghosts* is grisly and morbidly fascinating; taking the dregs of society in 1870s Europe and looking at the realities behind the outward appearances of respectability. Broken marriages, adultery, incest, drunkards and syphilis are everywhere, as if inescapable. Over it all the pompous and self-righteous Pastor judges and delves into the Alving family secrets, conscious of nothing but his own reputation.

This is the setting for the play, but the student production directed by Ben Bransfield has set the play in 1970s Britain, at the height of a sexual and cultural revolution and at odds with the moral climate of the 1870s. This serves to heighten the claustrophobia in the play, set in one room and surrounding a family which has not been able to move on with the times due to the ideals and standards they relentlessly uphold.

Desperate and bleak, as are most of Ibsen's plays, the heavy atmosphere is relieved at times by the comic characters of Oswald (the son returning from an artist's life in Paris), and Jakob (the drunken father who wants to open a hostel for sailors). This is needed in such a closed and serious setting to make the play more watchable. Even though the play is supposed to be stagnant and claustrophobic, sitting through two hours of it took a dedicated and patient audience.

The bleak setting is thankfully broken up just often enough by humour and scary moments to keep our interest. Haunting lines such as "You are worm eaten from birth" and the presence of those from the past who still haunt the house and Mrs Alving, like ghosts, make the play effectively scary at times, especially when the lights go out at important moments and the music runs to a screaming pitch and makes you want to look away as you know what is coming. As the last hopes of salvation are lost, the play becomes predictable and spirals towards its ending.

Reputation, respectability and ideals are upheld by people to this day, protected at all costs; and the underworld of drugs, prostitution and "lost souls" who do not belong to a traditional family unit are still as unmoved by the attempts of the Pastor to guide them back to a "respectable life" as they were over 100 years ago. It makes one wonder how far we have really progressed.

Sarah Vanstone

Decadence, By Steven Berkoff

Burton Taylor Theatre, 30th May - 3rd June 2006

'I wouldn't have it any other way', says Helen, one half of the upper class pair in Steven Berkoff's verse play *Decadence*, which is being staged by the Philadelphia Players at the Burton Taylor Studio. She does so after riding her married lover in imitation of her hunting mount, graphically describing the social whirl and glory chase of riding to hounds. Starting off side-saddle, resoundingly slapping his rear, she ends up astride, bouncing, graphically describing the kill, the climactic bleeding of the younger members of the hunt immediately preceding her battle cry.

In this study of sex and class, Molly Davies and David Cochrane take two roles apiece; that of Helen and her lover Steve, and of Steve's *nouveau riche* wife, Sybil, and the gangster she has hired to discover his infidelities. In alternating scenes in the typical Berkoff style of traded confessions and drawn-out anecdotes, they act out key moments of their respective affairs; the toffs in a "sumptuous pad" in the West End, the working class in a suburban house (the kind that can be found, according to Helen, in "rancid East Cheam"). The ambit* of the upper crust in the play is wide, taking in concerts, the theatre and supper at the Savoy, whereas the flat-vowelled Sybil and Les act out their highly carnal affair behind closed doors. What unites both couples is the frankness and depth of their sexual talk, revealing to the audience the bones of their difference, and the values that Berkoff sees the English attaching to sex.

More than twenty-five years on from its first performance, the stripping down of the English class system in *Decadence* defiantly survives as a familiar dramatic and fictional trope. It is tempting to see its inventive class war as a dusty relic of Thatcher's England, and viewed as a contemporary piece this play doesn't quite push the boundaries it did in the 1980s now that sex and sexuality in their many variant forms are the constant themes of film, theatre and television.

Molly Davies' performance is spot-on, easing into the contrasting accents and physicalities required from her for the two roles. The seams show more in Cochrane's breathless and halting portrayal of Steve and Les, but his energy is palpable and helps especially to realize the sensuality of the cashed Steve. The stark set, composed of nothing more a central settee, does much to keep the audience's mind on the fact that we are being invited to see these two couples as a mirror not only of one another, but also of ourselves.

Joseph Kennedy

*Ambit - 1. A circuit, compass, or circumference 1597; 2. The limits of a district 1845; fig. The compass of actions, words etc. *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*.

Buddy: The Buddy Holly Musical

New Theatre, Oxford, 29th - 3rd June 2006

Essentially, this is a glorified tribute show. Not that there's anything wrong with that. After all, the atmosphere at 9.45pm when the curtain descended after protracted bows was undoubtedly electric.

For two hours we follow the rise to fame of the 1950s rock and roll legend, Buddy Holly, from his first recording contract to his final performance. If you're looking for a serious biographical study, you'll be disappointed as the writers and director take a firmly populist stance. In between scenes of ambition, love and laughter well over twenty of the bespectacled performer's greatest hits are performed live including 'Peggy Sue' and 'That'll be the Day'.

The plot is thin, the jokes weak, the characterisation two-dimensional, the set far too small for the New Theatre's vast stage and the acting is hammy but who cares? It's the toe-tapping brilliance of the music and the boundless enthusiasm of the 16-strong cast which bring the greying audience swaying to its feet. Edward Handoll as Buddy has a strong singing voice and leads with confidence. Ricky Glowacki as Richie Valens should also be mentioned for his shameless camp, seemingly endless rounds of pelvic thrusts and excellent rendition of La Bamba. But it falls upon Debralee and Ann Marie Roberts as the Apollo Performers to inject some humour into an otherwise flaccid first half.

Being far too young to have witnessed such antics first time around, I couldn't exactly wallow in the nostalgia of Nixon jokes. I did however find incalculable satisfaction in watching the slightly childish, wide-eyed excitement, enthusiasm and wonder of the well-to-do sixty-something sitting next to me who couldn't bear to sit to his seat and sing along. It's not often you see an audience jiving in the aisles. This is feelgood theatre at its most heartfelt and best.

Joe Pike, 31/05/06

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