

Friday 4th - Saturday 5th OCTOBER 2002

COMING

ASIAN MUSIC CELEBRATION at THE OXFORD PLAYHOUSE

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Kafka's Dick
by Alan Bennett

Sydney and Linda have a tortoise in their garden. A tortoise with a death wish. Little do they realise that it is a leading figure in European literature. Little does Franz Kafka realize it either. And once he does, all hell breaks loose. Even his old man gets in on the act.

Old Fire Station Theatre
Tues 1 - Sat 8 October at 7.30pm
Saturday matinee at 2.30pm
Tickets £8 (£6) Box Office: 01865 297170

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EXHIBITIONS

Christ Church Picture Gallery

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Thirty-five Old master drawings that Lely collected
Opens 8th October
Entrance via Canterbury Gate / Oriel Square.
Open: Mon-Sat 10.30-1.00, 2.00-4.30, Sun 2.00-4.30, Tel: 276172

MEETINGS / LECTURES

Fri 4th
ANDREW MALCOLM / Introduces his books 'Making Names' and 'The Remedy' / free / 7pm / Borders bookshop, 9, Magdalen St, Oxford; Tel: 203901
STONES AND GEMS FOR SEALING / Lunchtime Gallery Talk / £1.50 / 1.15-2.00pm / Ashmolean Museum, Beaumont Street; Tel: 278000

CINEMA

Phoenix Picture House 512526
THE ROAD TO PERIDITION (15) Fri, Tues, Wed: 1.30, 4.00, 6.30, 9.00 Sat: 4.00, 6.30, 9.00
Sun: 4.10, 6.30, 9.00 Mon & Thur: 1.30, 4.00, 9.00
30s gangster yarn with style to spare. See review at www.dailyinfo.co.uk
SWEET SIXTEEN (18) Daily (exc Sun): 2.00, 4.30, 6.50, 9.15 Sun: 2.50, 4.50, 7.00, 9.15
Ken Loach's latest tale of hope and despair
THE FOLLOWING (15) Fri & Sat: 11.30pm Sun: 12
Crisp, Hitchcockian thriller in black and white
DOUBLE BILL: FREAKS/ THE DEVIL DOLL (12A) Fri & Sat: 11.30pm Sun: 12 noon
Unsettling discoveries ripe for rediscovery
MUHSE DOSI KAROGE (U) Sun: 2.00pm
Grand Yash Chopra romantic comedy
KIDS CLUB: HALO (PG) Sun: 11.30pm
India's answer to the Lassie movies. No unaccompanied adults.
FRENCH CINEMA: LATE AUGUST, EARLY SEPTEMBER (15) Mon: 6.45
Changes wrought upon 4 people in a year
42 SPACES: SCANNER - A LOVE UNHEARD Thu: 7pm
Internationally acclaimed sound artist Followed by Q & A with Scanner. Booking: 0870 750 0659 £8/£6
AKA Thu: 11.30pm
Working class lad pretends to be aristocrat in Thatcher's London
SEX AND LUCIA (18) Thu: 11.30pm
Spanish love story

Ultimate Picture Palace 245288

TOGETHER (15) Fri - Mon: 9.30
Commune life in Sweden
STAR WARS : ATTACK OF THE CLONES (PG) Fri: 6.45 Sat & Sun: 4.00, 6.45 Mon-Thurs: 6.45
A Jedi shall not know Love
BANGKOK DANGEROUS (18) Tue - Thu: 9.30
A deaf-mute hit-man (!)
Odeon Magdalen St 0870 5050007
THE ROAD TO PERIDITION (15) Daily: 12.00, 2.45, 5.30, 8.30
30s gangster yarn with style to spare. See review at www.dailyinfo.co.uk
SWEET SIXTEEN (18) Daily: 12.30, 3.00, 5.45, 8.15
Ken Loach's latest tale of hope and despair
Odeon George St 0870 5050007
LILO AND STITCH (U) Fri & Mon-Thurs: 1.00, 3.00, 5.45, 8.40 Sat & Sun: 10.45, 1.00, 3.30, 5.45, 8.40
On a distant planet alien authorities have captured the most dangerous of all criminals...
THE BOURNE IDENTITY (12A) Fri & Sun - Wed: 3.00, 8.30
Assassin on the run with amnesia. See review at www.dailyinfo.co.uk
VAN WILDER: PARTY LIASON (15) Fri & Sun-Wed: 12.30, 9.00
Another brainless beer fest
BOAT TRIP (15) Daily: 1.30, 4.00, 6.30, 9.00
Uter silliness as hormonal straight guys on gay cruise ship
ONE HOUR PHOTO (15) Daily: 12.15, 2.30, 5.15, 8.15
Obsession with suburban family
MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING (PG) Daily: 1.15, 3.45, 6.15, 9.00
Marrying the WHOLE family
SIGNS (12A) Daily: 12.45, 3.15, 5.45, 8.45
Are aliens coming? See review at www.dailyinfo.co.uk
RED DRAGON (15) Daily: 11.30, 2.45, 5.30, 8.30
Prelude to Silence of the Lambs
SPIDERMAN (12A) Sat - Sun: 10.45
Webbing action. See review at www.dailyinfo.co.uk
STUART LITTLE 2 Sat - Sun: 11.00
Little creature's rescue friend
SENIOR SCREEN: CIDER HOUSE RULES (12) Wed: 10.45
Michael Caine as orphan director with a heart. Over 55s only

THEATRE REVIEW

KAFKA'S DICK
OFS, to Saturday 5th October

As surreal as anything the man himself produced, Alan Bennett's humorous take on the life and legacy of Franz Kafka is an exploration of fame, and the ownership of intellect, with the occasional something unexpected done with avocados.

In a normal suburban household, Sydney, a Kafka-obsessed insurance man (the excellent Bill Mulford), and his long-suffering wife Linda (Annie Bayliss), find themselves suddenly visited by Max Brod (Joe Kenneway), the should-have-been-long-dead best friend of Kafka. Brod has unfortunately urinated on the couple's tortoise, and whilst rinsing him off, Linda's whim to kiss the hapless animal prompts a metamorphosis (ah, the irony), from tortoise to "leading figure of European literature" (Josh Howard-Saunders, as Kafka). Matters are complicated further by the repeated appearances of Sydney's father (played with superb comedy and pathos by Don Fathers), who is convinced that the increasing number of black-coated men are in fact from the health authority, and about to have him put in a home ("one puts the cat out when it's a nuisance, why not parents?"). With the appearance of Kafka's tyrannical father (Paul Harvey), the die is well and truly cast.

Kafka, you see, as his dying wish, asked Brod to burn his works. Had he complied, the name Kafka would have been less than a footnote - the faceless nobody of the incinerated Trial. Yet Brod did not burn his works, instead subsequently publishing everything: books, letters, the lot. When Kafka returns, he has no idea of his subsequent fame, and the ensuing revelations provoke serious questions concerning the ownership of thought, and the apparently perverse and contradictory desire of Kafka to be a nobody. Instead, Kafka is a household name: as Brod says, "he's an adjective in Japanese, why should he kiss you?" The play takes increasingly surreal turns as 'K' is put on trial, and fame itself becomes the object of analysis. One thing to note: when they say "it is not the end", they really aren't joking.

The production itself is competently done; acting is consistently good, and as the problems of timing and cue-bites are ironed out the comedy of the piece should flow a little smoother. In places it seems to lack conviction as to what it is: in many places, distinction between the reality and self-awareness of the play could have been clearer, and would have added to the drama and 'cleverness' of the writing. All in all, however, the production is one they can rightly be proud of. And in summary? Darling, it's positively Kafka-esque.

Rebecca Smith 01.10.02

FREVD

Fri 4 DJ Manfree Music & Dancing
Sat 5 Havana Latin
Sun 6 Dave Dunbar (piano) 2-4pm then Viva Salsa! from 6pm
Mon 7 Neil Mason Piano
Tue 8 Closed for Private Party
Wed 9 Karl Demata Blues Guitar
Thu 10 Los Hombres Guitar Duo
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THEATRE

Old Fire Station Theatre 297170
KAFKA'S DICK Fri 4 & Sat 5 Daily: 7.30pm
Alan Bennett's comic exploration of the myth of the artist / £8 / £6. See review.

Oxford Playhouse 305305
GOODYE GILBERT HARDING Fri 4 & Sat 5
Fri: 8pm Sat: 2.30 & 7.30pm
Edward Woodward stars as 'Britain's rudest man'.
£8.50-£21.50. See review.

A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE Tue 8 Sat 12
Daily (except Fri: 8pm) 7.30pm. Thurs & Sat mat: 2.30pm
The Touring Consortium present Arthur Miller's raw American tragedy. £8.50-£21.50

The Apollo Oxford 0870 6063500
THE KING AND I Tue 1 - Sat 19
Mon-Sat: 7.30pm, Sat & Wed mats: 2.30
Dazzling new look at time-honoured classic. £10-£28
THE KATE RUSBY BAND Sun: 8pm
Acclaimed young northern folksters. £10.50-£14.50

Pegasus Theatre 722851
TRILOGY: ORGANILLO Fri 4: 8pm
Fishes' tale of sex. 2nd of 3 of Stephen Mottram's Animata puppetry & music productions. £7/£4.50/£2.50
TRILOGY: THE SEED CARRIERS Sat 5: 8pm
Story of human fertility. 3rd of 3 of Stephen Mottram's productions. Ages 12 up. Prices as above
MARK THOMAS Tue 8th: 7.30pm
See review above
THE NIGHTWATCH Thu 10 & Fri 11: 1.30pm, 4.30pm
Pop-Up present Michael Punter's tale of a haunted house. Ages 7 up. £3.50/£2.50

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GIGS

Fri 4th
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ESSENCE FOR WOMEN / 80s theme night. FREE for OLGCC members. £3.00 as guest / NorthGate Hall, 18 St. Michael's Street, Oxford; Tel: 200249 / 9pm chill out, 10.30pm DJing, close 2am / Web: http://www.olgcc.co.uk/events.asp
DJ MANFREE / Music and dancing / 11pm-2am / Freud's, Walton Street; Tel: 311171
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OXFORD FOLK CLUB OPEN NIGHT / £1 / 8.30 / Port Mahon, St. Clement's
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COMEDY REVIEW

"The man is a national treasure"
Mark Thomas's sister, who is training for the priesthood, describes him, he tells us, as "a prophet, preparing for a better way." While I understand why he responds to this allegation with a blizzard of profanity, I also see her point. Few comedians, if any, have the heart and the courage to tackle the sort of subject matter he does. Fewer still would be able to make it funny. The man is a national treasure, and to be able to see him up close and personal, in a local venue, where he can usher people to the front with the promise that he's "user-friendly", well it's a ****ing privilege.

Yes, he swears a lot. And he will say some shockingly rude things. But the sheer joy with which he does so makes it not just OK, but vaguely necessary. He's been doing stand-up for, I dunno, over ten years, at least, and his aura of simple matinee beliefs a finely honed comic talent. Witness how he instantly silences a laughing audience into rapt attention with a barely perceptible change of tone.

He's not quite a prophet: he doesn't offer a yellow brick road to a sane future. But you can tell he's still thinking about it. He does point out what doesn't work, and he's clearly been looking deeply at the motivations of governments and individuals. In spite of which, he's still very funny. His caricature of the editor of the New Statesman alone is worth the price of admission.

This series of shows is how he develops his material. It will be the same show, refined, each week. As he explained: "You'll have the chance to say you saw it when it was shit." No such luck.

Ian Threadgill 2/10/02

Mark Thoms will be appearing at the Pegasus Theatre each Tuesday throughout October

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Daily Information

returns to daily publication from today.
Sheets will appear Wednesday, Thursday Friday and Saturday.
Deadline: 10am of the day before.

FOOD

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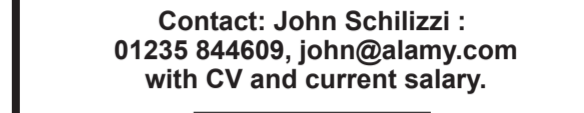


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Or call Ian on Ox 432901

THEATRE REVIEW

Goodbye Gilbert Harding

by Leonard Preston
Playhouse until Saturday October 5th

Gilbert Harding was a