

OCTOBER 2023

newsletter

Design Cassie Tillett admin@sewellbarn.org

sewellbarn
THEATRE

Constitution Hill
Norwich NR3 4BB

Box Office: 0333 666 3366

www.sewellbarn.org

- Our next production: **1984**
- Our previous production: **The Cemetery Club**
- Coming next: **Immaculate**
- Auditions (1): **The Clearing**
- Auditions (2): **Barbed Wire and Teddy Bears**
- Membership: **subscriptions**
- **What's on in Norwich**

Our next production: **1984**

by Robert Icke and Duncan Macmillan | based on the novel by George Orwell
directed by Ginny Porteous

12-14, 18-21 October at 7:30pm, plus matinee at 2:30pm on Saturday 21 October



Photography: Sean Owen of Reflective Arts

In George Orwell's *1984*, a totalitarian Party outlaws individualism, independence, and free thought; re-writes history and memories; monitors every action of its citizens; and controls their behaviour with fear and violence. That book was written in the context of Soviet communism, more than 70 years ago. Yet those themes are as relevant now as they were then; arguably more so – in the age of alternative truths, ongoing proxy wars between global super powers, and constant 'security' surveillance, now using facial recognition technology.

The Director of the Sewell Barn production of *1984*, Ginny Porteous said: "I loved this version, and have been trying for several years to get the rights to stage it. Orwell's imagination and insight into the future blows my mind. Everyone who has read *1984* takes something different away with them. We don't all remember the same things as there are so many themes and complexities, speaking to so many people on so many levels. Theatre should really challenge actors, technical teams and audiences from time to time, and this script certainly delivers on all of those counts. *1984* in the Barn promises to be a thrilling visceral experience."

Jez Pike plays Winston Smith, who dares to dream of a world free of Big Brother, starts a diary and falls in love; Jo Parker Sessions plays his girlfriend, Julia. Other roles also involve both newcomers and Barn regulars, with John Dane (as O'Brien), Kevin Oelrichs (Parsons), Jonathan Redding (Martin), Alison Utting

(Mother), Surya Bajracharya (Syme), Hans-Christian Harder (Charrington) and introducing Cleo Whiteley (Child) - who stole the show at the recent Summer Shakespeare event at St Martin's at Palace Plain.

There will be after-show discussions on the two Fridays, with the session on 13 October introduced by DJ Taylor, author of the critically-acclaimed biography, Orwell: The New Life. Tickets available online at £12 and £13 from TicketSource via www.sewellbarn.org, also by phone via 0333 6663366. Booking fees are included in the ticket prices. Ticket sales are high at the time of writing so advance booking is highly recommended. Please note that this play includes adult themes and implications of torture.

Our previous production: The Cemetery Club

by Ivan Menchell | Directed by Claire Stretton

3-5, 9-12 August



Photography: Barry Parsons

Due to the rescheduling of *The Welkin* into the July slot, after an outbreak of COVID among the cast in October 2022, director Claire Stretton and her team were kind enough to accept an unusual slot in August. Our audiences still arrived in enthusiastic droves, despite the holiday season, and this charming, moving and memorable show was received with much laughter and not a few tears.

"What a superb script and what a totally talented, completely believable trio of experienced actresses. A delight to watch and much to think about on the way home." *Zanna*

"This play is well written, and is played with great competence and energy by this skilled cast directed by Claire Stretton. The set is one of the most impressive that I have seen at the Sewell Barn and as ever the players make full use of this atmospheric space. It is a play that I might have hesitated to go to as a customer, judging wrongly that I would not be interested in the content and context, but that would have been a big mistake." *Julian Swainson - Norwich Eye* ([click here for full review](#))

[Click here for more reviews of this and previous shows.](#)

Coming next : *Immaculate*

by Oliver Lansley | directed by Sabrina Poole

23-25 November and 29 November-2 December

Director Sabrina has held her first readthrough and it was apparently riotous... here she is with most of her team!





Auditions (1): The Clearing

by Helen Edmundson

directed by Chris Bealey

Performance dates: 29 Feb-2 March and 7-10 March 2024

Auditions: Thursday 2 November 7pm

Recalls: Sunday 5 November 2pm

Contact details: please email sewellbarnad@gmail.com, the director will be in contact to arrange an audition slot.

The play is set in Ireland in 1652. Oliver Cromwell has passed the Act for the Settlement of Ireland, decreeing that all Catholic landowners must relocate to the province of Connaught, a blighted and barren land in the west of the country. Madeleine, an Irish woman married to an English man, Robert Preston, has just given birth to their first child, but their joy is short-lived. Their union becomes the focus of an ever-rising resentment within their small farming community. As the English parliament under Cromwell's command mount their 'to Hell or Connaught' policy, the Prestons' happy world is torn apart.

- MADELEINE: young female, Irish - strongly committed to her family and homeland
- ROBERT: young male, husband to Madeleine, an English 'gentleman'
- KILLAINE: young female or older nurse female, Irish, anxious, and fragile
- SIR CHARLES STURMAN: mid to older male, English authority figure with no love of the Irish
- PIERCE: young male, Irish republican, wholly committed to his cause
- SOLOMON WINTER: older male, English farmer who has lived in Ireland for 30 years, sure of his rights but defeated by the system.
- SUSANEH WINTER: older female, English farmer, who has lived in Ireland for 30 years, cannot be reconciled to her fate.
- Sailor, commandant, Judge, older male – this could be played by one actor, each role has a different place of authority and power.

Please make contact with the director via the link shown above to book your audition slot.



Auditions (2): Barbed Wire and Teddy Bears

by Karen Forbes

directed by Robert Little

Performance dates: 14-16 March 2024

Auditions: 8 November 2023 7:30pm

Contact details: r.little@uea.ac.uk

The play is based on the collected memories of islanders who lived in Jersey during the Occupation years. The stories are all told from the perspective of the children who would have gone to school, got into mischief and played their games in the shadow of the Nazis. The piece is both funny and poignant in equal measure and gives a sense of how those youngest members of society reacted to the Germans, played tricks on them and grew up under their watchful eyes.

We are looking for adult performers to play the roles of children and all actors will perform as part of the ensemble. We are looking for a maximum of 8 performers (4 male and 4 female) to play a range of roles in this ensemble piece.

The four main child roles are:

Gwen – The oldest of the children, a sensible girl and daughter of a local rector. (12/13)

Roy – A sweet boy who loves to play and enjoys school. (8/9)

Tommo – A rather naughty little boy who loves his dog, getting into trouble and swearing. (9/10)

Queenie – The youngest girl who doesn't always understand what's going on. (7)

Please contact Robert Little as shown above to express your interest and book an audition slot.

Membership: subscription rates

Our membership runs from July to July each year so, if you are an annual member and would like to renew your membership, please could you send £15 for a single person, £25 for a couple at the same address or £75 for life membership. (Please note increase in rates as explained in our May newsletter – the first increase in many years.) This can be paid:

- by BACS bank transfer: Sewell Barn Theatre Sort code 30 96 17 account 02167536 *or*
- by cheque made out to The Sewell Barn Theatre posted to Jill Fuller at 20 Blofield Road, Brundall, Norwich NR13 5NN

Remember: if you buy a ticket for any first night and produce your membership card you get a free drink from the bar. Please send me an email (membership@sewellbarn.org) if you pay by BACS so I know to update your records.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The 2023 **AGM** will take place either later in October or early in November. The Agenda will potentially include a significant change to the Constitution. Only Life Members, and members who have paid their annual subscription for the current year, are entitled to vote. So if you don't want to be disenfranchised but you haven't yet paid your sub for the year 2023-2024, or you're not actually a member at all yet but would like to be, then please get in touch as shown above as soon as possible!

Jill Fuller – Membership Secretary

What's on in Norwich

Dracula

Dramatised for the stage by Hamilton Deane and John L Balderston

The Norwich Players at the Maddermarket Theatre

Tue 7 to Sat 11 November at 7:30pm / Sat 11 at 2:30pm

<https://maddermarket.co.uk/whats-on/>



This melodramatic re-telling of Bram Stoker's well known gothic tale aims to thrill, excite and entertain in equal measure.