

Youth Action Theatre

Youth Action Theatre is dedicated to stimulating the love of drama and theatre through drama workshops and production experience in young people aged fifteen to twenty-five. Other than age, there is no restriction on membership. Although it is a completely voluntary group and the work is thoroughly enjoyed, a strict disciplined approach is maintained and dedication is required to achieve the maximum possible professionalism and the highest standard in the final production.

Founded in 1970, YAT's first production in Spring 1971 was *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Since then, it has presented nearly seventy major productions of a full range of plays including Shakespeare, modern, progressive, musical and also new plays by members.

Since 1981, YAT has taken a production abroad approximately once every two years, this being the 10th overseas visit. The first was *Godspell* which was taken to Hamburg; Berlin has been visited three times along with trips to Vienna, Leipzig and Kiev (when still part of the Soviet Union). The last two occasions were to the USA to perform at the Harry Hope Theatre in the Eastern Connecticut State University; In 1995 *Cider with Rosie* and in 1996 *Juno and the Paycock*.

The warm welcome YAT received on these occasions has encouraged the company to return with *Adam Bede* which will be presented subsequently on its return to the UK.

Affiliated to the Teddington Theatre Club, YAT has presented many of its productions at TTC's Hampton Court Theatre, which is in the process of being replaced by a completely new theatre; The Hampton Hill Playhouse the shell of which is currently in the process of being fitted out. The cost of this is being borne by a National Lottery award from the Art's Council of Great Britain. YAT is hoping to stage its first production in this theatre in the Autumn of 1999.

WEBSITE: <http://www.shadlox.demon.co.uk/yat>
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Adam Bede

YOUTH ACTION THEATRE
PRESENTS
GEOFFREY BEEVERS
ADAPTION OF THE 19TH
CENTURY CLASSIC NOVEL
BY GEORGE ELIOT

Adam Bede

GEOFFREY BEEVER'S ADAPTATION OF GEORGE ELIOT'S NOVEL WAS UNDERTAKEN ON THE SUGGESTION OF SAM WALTERS, THE BRILLIANT DIRECTOR AND MANAGER OF THE ORANGE TREE FRINGE THEATRE IN RICHMOND-UPON-THAMES, WHICH IS IN THE SAME LONDON BOROUGH WHICH SUPPORT YOUTH ACTION THEATRE. IN FACT, BOTH MR WALTERS AND MR BEEVERS TELEPHONED THEIR SUPPORT FOR THIS PRODUCTION.

WHEN FIRST PRODUCED, THE UK NATIONAL PRESS WAS LOUD IN IT'S PRAISE, TIMEOUT WROTE "... ONE CANNOT IMAGINE A MORE EFFECTIVE ADAPTATION" AND THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT "...BEEVERS HAS COMPRESSED THE NOVEL BRILLIANTLY".

IT WAS HOWEVER WRITTEN FOR 3 ACTORS AND 3 ACTRESSES TO INTERCHANGE AND PLAY ALL THE CHARACTERS, USING MINIMUM SETTING AND PROPS. YAT, IN WISHING TO GIVE EXPERIENCE TO THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE, EXTENDS THE CAST TO SEVENTEEN.

IT IS HOPED THAT YOU WILL FIND THIS EVENING'S PRODUCTION EQUALLY EFFECTIVE.

The Author

MARY ANN EVANS WAS BORN IN THE COUNTY OF WARWICKSHIRE, ENGLAND IN 1819. IN HER THIRTYS, SHE MOVED TO LONDON WHERE SHE MET A DISTINGUISHED 'MAN OF LETTERS' GEORGE HENRY LEWES, WHO WAS SEPARATED FROM HIS WIFE BUT NO POSSIBILITY OF DIVORCE. THEY DECIDED TO LIVE TOGETHER, AND DID SO UNTIL HIS DEATH. IT WAS HE WHO ENCOURAGED HER TO TURN FROM PHILOSOPHY TO FICTION AND DURING THOSE YEARS SHE WROTE HER MOST FAMOUS NOVELS WHICH AS WELL AS ADAM BEDE INCLUDE THE MILL ON THE FLOSS, SILAS MARNER AND MIDDLEMARCH. BECAUSE OF HER LIFESTYLE, SHE WROTE UNDER HER PEN-NAME GEORGE ELIOT.

Time & Place

THE NOVEL IS SET IN THE DYING YEARS OF THE 18TH CENTURY BEFORE THE MAIN EFFECTS OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION HAD TAKEN EFFECT IN RURAL COMMUNITIES.

MOST OF THE ACTION AND CHARACTERS LIVED IN THE FICTIONAL VILLAGE OF HAYSLOPE IN A COUNTY CALLED LOAMSHIRE WHICH IS DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: 'THE GREEN LAY AT THE EXTREMITY OF THE VILLAGE AND FROM IT THE ROAD BRANCHED OFF IN TWO DIRECTIONS, ONE LEADING FURTHER UP THE HILL BY THE CHURCH AND THE OTHER WINDING GENTLY DOWN TOWARDS THE VALLEY. ON THE SIDE OF THE GREEN THAT LED TOWARDS THE CHURCH, THE BROKEN LINE OF THATCHED COTTAGES WAS CONTINUED NEARLY TO THE CHURCH GATE; BUT ON THE OTHER SIDE, THERE WAS NOTHING TO OBSTRUCT THE VIEW OF GENTLY SWELLING MEADOW AND WOODED VALLEY AND THE DARK MASSES OF DISTANT HILLS. THAT RICH UNDULATING DISTRICT OF LOAMSHIRE TO WHICH HAYSLOPE BELONGED, LIES CLOSE TO A GRIM OUTSKIRT OF STONYSHIRE..."

Youth Action Theatre thanks the Principal, Dr. Carter, the Faculty, students and all at Eastern Connecticut State University for their invitation for this third return visit and the warmth of the welcome which has been extended to all of us.

Our thanks are due, in particular, to Professor Ellen Brodie without whose support, enthusiasm and hard work this trip would never have been possible. Also to Bob Ritz, Technical Director of Theatre, who gave such unstinting help to create the setting and many other aspects of this presentation. My very sincere and personal thanks to them both!

YAT acknowledges Financial assistance from: Marks & Spencer plc, The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, Richmond Parish Lands Charity and The Rotary Club of Teddington & the Hamptons; without whose help this trip would not have been possible.

Additional acknowledgments are due to Biddy and John Osborne for their work on organising the UK Box Office, to Joy McQuade for supplying many props and furnishings which are used during the production, to Tony Hill for assistance on voice and accent.

Eric Yardley, July 1998

YAT'S TRAVELLING COMPANY:

ADAM BEDE, A CARPENTER	Stephen Hogben
LISABETH BEDE, HIS MOTHER	Dawn Henderson
SETH BEDE, HIS YOUNGER BROTHER	Andrew Chevalier
MR POYSER, A FARMER	Ben King
MRS POYSER, HIS WIFE	Sophie Vickers
DINAH MORRIS, A METHODIST LAY PREACHER & MRS POYSER'S NIECE	Emma Donaghy
HETTY SORREL, MR POYSER'S NIECE	Maria Gale
CAPTAIN ARTHUR DONNITHORNE, THE HEIR TO THE ESTATE	John Mole
THE REVEREND MR IRWINE, THE PARSON	Ben Best
BARTLE MASSEY, THE SCHOOLMASTER	Peter Gardiner
YOUNG GIRL & SERVANT	Anne Laure Guichard
SARAH STONE, A WITNESS	Katie Barton
JOHN OLDING, ANOTHER WITNESS	Richard White
SIX COMPANY MEMBERS PLAY MANY CHARACTERS BUT ALSO REPRESENT GEORGE ELIOT TELLING THE STORY	Katie Barton / Thea Edwards / Faye Jamison / Richard White / Laura Wake / Lydia Mason

OTHER CHARACTERS PLAYED BY COMPANY MEMBERS

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERVAL OF FIFTEEN MINUTES

THE SUPPORT TEAM:

DIRECTOR	Eric Yardley
ASSISTED BY	Andrew Thackeray
PRODUCTION DESIGN	Christine Osborne
LIGHTING DESIGN	Simon Roose
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT / PUBLICITY	Alex Beauchamp
COMPANY MANAGER	Bill Compton
STAGE MANAGER	Zoe James
SOUND	Pam Rooke
COSTUMES	Eileen Baker
SETTING CONSULTANT & PHOTOGRAPHY	Dennis Baker
SET CONSTRUCTION (UK)	Robin Johanssen
VIDEO FILM OF THE PRODUCTION & TOUR	Robin Nurse
ASSISTED BY	Madeline Frost

PERFORMED AT
THE HARRY HOPE THEATRE
EASTERN CONNECTICUT
STATE UNIVERSITY, USA
AUGUST 6-8 1998

AND AT
THE VERA FLETCHER HALL
THAMES DITTON, SURREY, UK
AUGUST 18-22 1998

Stephen Hogben is one of the few YAT members to have made the trip to ECSU for the third time, and is looking forward to being part of the Summer School as well as performing in the show. His recent theatre credits include *George and the Dragon*, *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Wasting Time*. He has just finished filming his first commercial.

Zoe James has been a member of YAT for three years, during which time she has performed in plays and helped backstage. This is her first play in the role of Stage manager and she looks forward to the challenge.

Faye Jamison joined YAT in 1996. since then she has played an active role in both YAT and TTC productions. Her acting career began at school and she hopes to continue it for many years to come.

Ben King is currently studying for a degree in Drama at Brunel University. He has only been with YAT a few months but has previously appeared in plays such as *Death of a Salesman*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Salad Days* and *Road*.

Lydia Mason has been in a variety of drama groups previous to YAT. These include Teddington Community Players and the Richmond Shakespeare Society. She has been a member of YAT for ten months.

John Mole has just finished college. This is his first play with YAT and is thoroughly enjoying it and is looking forward to performing in America. He has appeared in several plays, including *A Prison Wall*, *The Great Gatsby* and *An Inspector Calls*.

Christine Osborne is a graduate from Wimbledon School of Art with a degree in Theatre Design. Since 1990 she has designed for over thirty productions in numerous venues in London, Berlin, Leipzig and Connecticut.

Pam Rooke - Pam's theatre experience is wide and varied, including productions of *Me and My Girl* and *Crazy for You*. This her first production in America, her first with YAT and her first solo flight on sound. (Fingers crossed the dog doesn't bark when Adam Bede rings the door bell!)

Simon Roose is fondly known as 'Blackout'. This is Simon's fourth YAT tour and sixth year with the group. Previous productions include *Billy*, performed in Leipzig - Germany, *Cider with Rosie* and *Juno & the Paycock*, both performed at ECSU. He says its great to be back and looks forward to a cold pint of Sam Adams!

Andrew Thackeray - This is Andrew's third production with YAT in the role of Assistant Director. He is pleased to be a part of YAT's history and is sorry that he is unable to be with them in the United States. He wishes them the very best of luck.

Sophie Vickers joined YAT after spending a year studying part time at Mountview Theatre School. Following her stage debut as a pig in *Animal Farm*, she is excited to be part of Adam Bede in the USA.

Laura Wake is studying 'A' Levels in Theatre studies, English Literature and French. She has been involved with YAT for two years, appearing in *Animal Farm* and *Wind in the Willows*. Additional appearances have been at college and school and has performed in a Comedia Del Arte style play at Sadler's Wells in London.

Richard White - This is Richard's second visit to ECSU and he is glad to return. He loves the atmosphere and the people who helped make his last visit such an endearing memory. He hopes, that as a group, YAT can return this experience to fellow ECSU students.

Eric Yardley is a retired Sales Office Manager for an international paint manufacturer. He has a long life of involvement in non-professional theatre as an actor and director, specialising in youth drama. He founded Youth Action Theatre 28 years ago & it is still going strong.

Eileen & Den Baker are here on their third visit to ECSU. Responsible for wardrobe and set building respectively. Both have longstanding involvement with the group - Eileen for over ten years!

Katie Barton is at Bristol University studying for a degree in Drama. This is her second production with YAT, her first being *Toad of Toad Hall*, an experience that she'll always treasure. She hopes one day to write a Hollywood blockbuster!

Alex Beauchamp trained as a Graphic Designer and is currently working for a London advertising Agency. She has been involved with YAT for eight years mainly as a Stage Manager but also as a Producer. Alex is an active member of Teddington Theatre Club at both committee and artistic level. This is her second visit to ECSU.

Ben Best has been a member of YAT for just over one year and in that time has been involved in three of their productions. Previous to this he has been a member of several other theatre groups and acted whilst at school, college and university. Currently he working as a software developer for a large logistics company.

Andrew Chevalier is enjoying performing his second play with YAT during his four months with the company. He is looking forward to being part of *Adam Bede* in the States.

Bill Compton - This is Bill's third visit to ECSU, the previous two as an acting member of the company. His most recent theatre credits include *Glen Garry Glen Ross* and *Twelve Angry Men*. This year, Bill has directed his second short film titled *Now or Never*, starring Peter Gardiner and only last month, wrote and directed his first piece of theatre called *Listen* which was well received.

Emma Donaghy has now been a member of YAT for six years. She has enjoyed being involved on, around and off-stage, appearing in *Billy*, *The Crucible*, *Cider with Rosie* and *Juno and the Paycock*. She is looking forward to returning to Willimantic for massive shopping excursions!

Thea Edwards has just taken her GCSEs and is currently between school and college. She has been with YAT since September 1997 appearing in *Animal Farm*. Thea also has experience in other plays for her previous drama group.

Minnie Gale has been acting with YAT for three years. Theatre credits include *Juno & the Paycock*, *A Man for all Seasons* (TTC) and a short film called *The Morning After* made by Bill Compton. She is currently studying Drama at Birmingham University. 'Sassiges' to anyone who remembers the '96 tour.

Peter Gardiner - This is Peter's second visit to ECSU and he is pleased to be running workshops as part of the education programme. His last outing as an actor was in a short film 'Now or Never'. Has previously played John Proctor in *The Crucible*, Gatsby in *The Great Gatsby* and the narrator Laurie Lee in *Cider with Rosie* with YAT at ECSU in 1995.

Anne Laure Guichard has studied media techniques in France for five years, including script writing, editing and directing. She has acted for four years at an amateur level and at drama school for three years. Her first English play: *Animal Farm* by Orwell was with YAT in December.

Dawn Henderson was a member of YAT in 1990 and appeared in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and the musical *Pippin* which was performed in Berlin. She rejoined YAT after graduating from Glasgow University with a degree in English. This is her second play this time round and she is joyful to be going to America.