

“OUT OF BOUNDS”

Two banned plays in Repertoire exploring sexuality, adolescence and conformity

Young Woodley Tea and Sympathy

by John Van Druten

by Robert Anderson

Directed by Adam Penford. Designed by Simon Kenny. Sound by Giles Sutton.

Cast includes: James Bye. Robin Chalk. Richard Crawley. Joanna Croll. Andrew Cuthbert. Christopher Fletcher. James Joyce. Andrew Macbean. Laura Main.

"Years from now, when you talk about this... you will... be kind?"

The multi-award-winning Finborough Theatre presents two plays in repertoire - *Young Woodley* (1928) and *Tea and Sympathy* (1953) – for a four week-season from 3 November 2006. Both plays were originally banned by the theatre censor, The Lord Chamberlain, and both are receiving their first major London revival since the original production.

The plays tell the story of an adolescent boy at a boarding school that falls in love with his Housemaster's wife with life-changing consequences. By juxtaposing the two plays in repertoire with the same cast of actors, this is a unique observation of the changing social attitudes on sexuality, education and masculinity between 1920's Britain and 1950's America. It also highlights the progress in the development of theatre between the decades - *Young Woodley* highlights the conservative British stiff upper lip, and the playwright had no choice but to explore his controversial themes through implication and subtext; *Tea and Sympathy* is much more explicit, and introduces a gay subplot that shocked 1950's Broadway.

Young Woodley is the story of Roger, an 18 year-old prefect at an English public school in the 1920s. Roger nearly throws away his future when he falls in love with Laura Simmons, the wife of his schoolmaster – only for her husband to plan his revenge... The play is a coming-of-age drama that explores the pain of first love and the responsibility of adulthood. First produced in the West End in 1928 in a production by Basil Dean with Frank Lawton and Jack Hawkins. Playwright **John Van Druten** (1901–1957) remains best known for *I Am a Camera*, later adapted into the musical *Cabaret*, as well as *I Remember Mama*, *Bell, Book and Candle*, *The Voice of the Turtle* and a string of successful light comedies.

Tea and Sympathy is the story of Tom Lee, a young student at an American boys' prep school in the 1950s. Tom is a loner, uninterested in conventional "masculine" pursuits, and cruelly bullied by his classmates and housemaster for his supposed homosexuality. The housemaster's wife, Laura, becomes determined to help Tom, leading to conflict in her marriage and to a final, dramatic act intended to save Tom from despair. First produced on Broadway and in the West End in 1957 and also a major feature film, directed by Vincente Minnelli, starring Deborah Kerr. Playwright **Robert Anderson** (1917-) received two Best Adapted Screenplay Academy Award nominations for *The Nun's Story* (1959) and *I Never Sang For My Father* (1970). He was also nominated for the Writer's Guild Award for his television drama, *The Patricia Neal Story*.

The season has been commissioned by Finborough Theatre Artistic Director Neil McPherson from exciting young director Adam Penford who most recently directed a workshop of *Holes*, adapted from the award-winning American children's novel by Louis Sachar, at the Theatre Royal, Stratford East. The cast includes: **James Bye** recently graduated from Webber Douglas where he played the title role in *Alfie*. **Robin Chalk**'s credits include *The Prince Among Men* (Union), *The Hidden City* (Channel 4), and the lead in the musical *The Fantasticks*, which he also played on the cast recording. **Richard Crawley**'s credits include *The Empty Space* (European Tour), *The Lying Kind* (Linbury Studio), *The Tempest* (Hobbs Factory). **Joanna Croll**'s extensive theatre credits include *Marieluise* and *Habitats* (Gate). **Andrew Cuthbert**'s many theatre credits include *On the Razzle* (National Theatre), *Daisy Pulls It Off* (Leicester Haymarket), *The Crucible* (Salisbury Playhouse/Birmingham Rep.). TV appearances include *Lovejoy*, *Big Deal*, *In the Secret State*, *Wish Me Luck*. **Christopher Fletcher** recently graduated from the Drama Studio London. **James Joyce** recently graduated from LAMDA and has just completed *Soldiers' Loves And Soldiers' Lives* for Radio 4. **Andrew Macbean**'s theatre credits include *Richard III*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Measure for Measure* (all Royal Shakespeare Company), *Killer Joe* (Bristol Old Vic), *Bloody Sunday* (Tricycle) *The Little Years* (Orange Tree) and *Habitat* (Gate). **Laura Main**'s theatre appearances include playing the title role in *Romeo and Juliet* and Phoebe in *As You Like It* (Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park) and *Alice in Wonderland* (RSC). She is best known for her regular TV appearances that include *The Forsyte Saga*, *Monarch of the Glen*, *Murder City*, *Trevor's World of Sport* and *Is Harry on the Boat?*

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PRESS NIGHT: FRIDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2006.
YOUNG WOODLEY AT 4.00PM and TEA AND SYMPATHY AT 8.00PM.
PHOTOCALL: TUESDAY, 31 OCTOBER 2006 AT 1.00-1.30PM.

For more information, interviews and images, please contact
Neil McPherson on e-mail admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk or **07977 173135**

LISTINGS INFORMATION

Finborough Theatre, The Finborough, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED
 Box Office 0870 4000 838 Book online at www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk

Tuesday, 31 October – Saturday, 25 November 2006

The plays can be seen in any order, separately or together.

Tuesday to Saturday Evenings at 8.00pm. Saturday and Sunday Matinees at 3.00pm.
 Tickets £12, £9 concessions. Tuesday Evenings £8 all seats. Saturday evenings £12 all seats.

Previews (31 October, 1 and 2 November) £8 all seats.

Performance Length of each play: Approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes including two intervals.

Tuesday 31 Oct	8.00	<i>Young Woodley</i>	Preview
Wednesday 1 Nov	8.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	Preview
Thursday 2	3.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	Preview
	8.00	<i>Young Woodley</i>	Preview
Friday 3	4.00	<i>Young Woodley</i>	Press
	8.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	Press
Saturday 4	8.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	
Sunday 5	3.00	<i>Young Woodley</i>	

Monday 6	No Performance		
Tuesday 7	8.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	
Wednesday 8	8.00	<i>Young Woodley</i>	
Thursday 9	8.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	
Friday 10	8.00	<i>Young Woodley</i>	
Saturday 11	3.00	<i>Young Woodley</i>	
	8.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	
Sunday 12	3.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	
	8.00	<i>Young Woodley</i>	

Monday 13	No Performance		
Tuesday 14	8.00	<i>Young Woodley</i>	
Wednesday 15	8.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	
Thursday 16	8.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	
Friday 17	8.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	
Saturday 18	3.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	
	8.00	<i>Young Woodley</i>	
Sunday 19	3.00	<i>Young Woodley</i>	
	8.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	

Monday 20	No Performance		
Tuesday 21	8.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	
Wednesday 22	8.00	<i>Young Woodley</i>	
Thursday 23	8.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	
Friday 24	8.00	<i>Young Woodley</i>	
Saturday 25	3.00	<i>Young Woodley</i>	Last Performance
	8.00	<i>Tea and Sympathy</i>	Last Performance

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