

PRESS RELEASE

Logos Theatre Company presents the first 21st century London revival of an unjustly neglected play by Noël Coward...

NUDE WITH VIOLIN

Following the success of our 2009 production of Noël Coward's *I'll Leave It to You*, our next production will be another rarely performed Coward play: *Nude with Violin*.

Nude with Violin was his last light comedy. Its first London production opened in 1956 and ran for over a year, with three different leading men: John Gielgud, Michael Wilding and Robert Helpmann. It subsequently played on Broadway with a cast headed by Coward himself.

This witty satire starts after the death of Paul Sorodin, an acclaimed and famous 'modern' artist. His English family (who knew him very little), and his faithful agent and champion of his work, are gathered together for the funeral. Sorodin's loyal valet gradually reveals that all may not be as it seemed, and a series of extraordinary characters arrive, causing increasing dismay to the great man's heirs.

The play has seldom been revived, and there may be a variety of reasons. It has a large cast, and its casting requirements are complex, ranging from a young boy to a Jamaican singer of "Negro Spirituals" – not to mention a leading man who speaks on-stage in several languages. There is no doubt also that Coward shared some of the assumptions of his era, and dramatised them. The characters' reactions to people of other races are patronising or worse to modern ears. We do not propose to patronise Coward or his time by half-modernising anything. We believe that our audiences are all grown-ups.

Nude With Violin tells of an artist feted, but at the mercy of critical whim. At the end of his life, the great man makes fools of the arts experts and confounds everybody. There is a forceful speech in the last scene which attacks modernity, and tells practitioners in the arts to learn the basics of their jobs. The parallels are clear.

It was written when Noël Coward's star seemed to have fallen. There was a revival ahead for him – "Dad's Renaissance" was his term for it – but no one could have predicted any such thing in the 'fifties. He was unpopular as a tax exile, and was berated by the British press. Then, as now, tax avoidance was tricky territory. He was seen as a figure from the past, and he commented outspokenly on the "kitchen sink" plays that were currently fashionable. He makes a character refer to the critics as sycophantic sheep!

But who is right about the "genius" of Paul Sorodin? You will discover the truth of that, and other intriguing matters, when you join us for *Nude With Violin*. You will find a very funny play that has gone unheard for too long.

ENDS



Logos Theatre Company's 2009 production of *I'll Leave It to You*

UPSTAIRS AT THE GATEHOUSE, HIGHGATE VILLAGE, LONDON N6 4BD

9th - 28th July 2013: 23 performances | Tuesday to Saturday 7.45 pm - Sunday 4.00 pm
PRESS NIGHT: Friday 12th July | BOX OFFICE: 020 8340 3488

Logos Theatre Company Ltd (www.logos theatre.co.uk) is Registered Charity no. 1043039.
The company was established in 1989 by the late Kenneth McClellan.

