

Light in Focus

'Light in Focus' was the title of the second exhibition mounted by The Institute's photography students at the Footstool Restaurant Gallery, St John's, Smith Square, during May and June. Following their success at the same venue in summer 1994, the students were invited back this year for an extended period by the management of the prestigious concert venue.

The Footstool Restaurant provides a tremendous opportunity for the Institute's photographers to reach a wide and cosmopolitan central London audience, consisting not only of concertgoers, but also those who go there purely to eat. The basement of St John's, with its numerous brick arches and recesses, offers a very unusual and attractive setting, in which diners sit cheek-by-jowl with the exhibits.

Eighty-six photographs were on display, representing the work of twenty-eight students from the Institute's seven photography classes, which cover all levels from beginners to City and Guilds examination courses. A number of the pictures were taken 'on location' throughout the world, in countries as diverse as Holland, Greece, Czechoslovakia and the USA, but could in no way be described as holiday snaps. The range of subjects and styles in evidence were a testimony not only to the talent and enthusiasm

of the students, but also to the skills of the Institute's team of teachers, Pat Clough, Isabel Lilly and Bob Rothero, in helping them to make the most of their abilities.

From September the photography programme at the Institute will be further augmented by the re-introduction of a Masterclass, to be taught by Pat Clough, which will give a small group of experienced photographers the chance to pursue in-depth studies aspects which particularly interest them.

Photography, a comparative newcomer to the Institute's curriculum, has come a long way in a few years, and events like the St John's exhibition can only enhance its growing reputation.

Richard Bradbury



Yvonne Oliver with the Institutes Hon Treasurer Alan Rabin



The Real Inspector Hound (from left to right): Joanna Farrer as Felicity, Toby Moore as Simon, Debbie Lane as Cynthia and Simon Ramsey as Magnus

Stoppard's Entertainments

The Garden Suburb Theatre bravely, but somewhat unwisely, presented two of Tom Stoppard's "entertainments" at the Institute in April.

Comedy is always difficult and when you are dealing with the "theatre of the absurd" the problems are even greater. You have to give special attention to the timing of the jokes and be aware that the characters do not know that they are either funny or strange.

Of the two one act plays "After Magritte" came off best. The plot is simple. A policeman sees through the window a woman, seemingly dead, lying on an ironing board, a man in a bowler hat and half naked standing on a chair holding a rope hanging from the ceiling. The furniture is piled against the door. All is later fairly logically explained after the police arrive to investigate.

Colin Gregory, Victoria Grant

and Diana Bromley played with the right seriousness. I especially liked Diana Bromley's tuba-playing mother. Andy Farrer and Michael Sabine-Bacon were the dimly comprehending policemen.

"The Real Inspector Hound" is a much more daunting play. The stage instructions are impossible for such a small stage as at the Institute. The designer, Mike Ash, found an acceptable solution.

Briefly, two rival critics arrive at a play - a whodunnit - and are slowly drawn into the action with dire consequences for one of them. Joshua Berle and Roger Rose were the critics, Moon and Birdwood and managed fairly well though the stance in which they are drawn into the drama were not clearly enough stressed.

The plays were directed by Mary Penwarden. It was an adventurous project which succeeded in part.

Léonie Stephen

out the facts about robbery as objectively as possible, and the actions which residents can take to protect themselves from this serious crime. Although it is rare, needless to say the police are extremely concerned about it and are taking a whole series of undercover initiatives to stamp it out, the details of which cannot be divulged. If we, too, can all play our part in acting responsibly and taking the precautions described in this article, hopefully we can achieve the same success against this crime as we have against so many others over the past few years.

Peter Loyd

Neighbourhood Watch

Robbery

Many Suburb residents are aware that the crime of 'robbery' - or theft accompanied by violence - is becoming more prevalent. This article is intended to explain the present position as objectively as possible and to suggest actions that residents can, and should, take to minimise the risk of becoming victims to this particularly nasty crime. And, if this repeats some of the information which residents have read already in Neighbourhood Watch newsletters, there may be no harm in setting out the information again.

As burglary of our houses becomes more and more difficult for criminals, a few of them are now resorting to attacking people outside their homes or in public places and robbing them of cash, jewellery, watches and other valuables which they may be carrying. This is not happening just to Suburb residents but throughout the home counties and elsewhere in the country.

However, we need to get this crime into perspective. Altogether 793 crimes were committed on the Suburb and its adjoining areas over the last twelve months. This overall figure was made up of 226 burglaries, 345 vehicle crimes and 222 other crimes of which only 22 were robberies. So, robbery is still a comparatively rare crime.

How robberies take place

Nevertheless, however rare it may be, it can be particularly vicious and unpleasant for its victims and so Suburb residents need to understand how robberies take place and what they need to do to minimise the risk and protect themselves from becoming victims. A pattern seems to be emerging as follows:

- criminals wait around at places such as Brent Cross shopping centre, in Golders Green Road, at various prestigious West End stores and shopping areas, at cash dispensers and outside expensive restaurants and gaming clubs, selecting their victim(s) from people who are



displaying expensive jewellery or watches, or who otherwise appear conspicuously wealthy. In some cases, one of them will approach a potential victim and ask the time in order to see what sort of a watch he or she is wearing;

- having selected their victims, the criminals then tail them and follow them home by car, drawing up behind them as they get out and rob them of jewellery, cash and other valuables at knife point;
- a variation on this procedure is that, on a few occasions, the criminals have been able to find out the addresses of their victims in advance and to get to their homes before them, surprising them on their doorstep and forcing their way into the house. On one occasion, a woman was forced to admit masked men to her home and to unlock a safe containing her jewellery and other valuables.

The lessons to be learnt

All of this may sound pretty horrific, but there are clear lessons to be learnt and counter measures to be taken to ensure that none of us becomes a victim:

- First, and most important, it is extremely unwise to display wealth conspicuously anywhere in public, especially in shops, shopping arcades or in the street. It is virtually saying to a certain type of criminal "look at me dressed up like a Christmas tree and ripe for the picking!"
- Then, anyone travelling home with valuable property, either on their person or in the car, should keep a careful look-out especially in their rear mirror. If it is suspected that a car may

be following, either dial 999 on a mobile 'phone or drive to the nearest Police Station;

- On arriving home, make a special point of observing to see whether any car has been following. If in doubt, drive on and go to the nearest Police Station;
- In all cases, if at all possible, note the car registration number of the suspect vehicle and inform the police.

Residents also need to be reminded that:

- the front of their homes should not have high hedges where criminals could hide and wait;
- it is worth fitting a halogen type light that come on automatically when anyone approaches which thoroughly illuminates the front door and path leading to it;
- they should carry a personal attack alarm when out at night and hold ready for use in a situation like this;
- anyone hearing a personal attack alarm go off should immediately dial 999;
- there is safety in numbers - if at all possible, residents carrying valuable items on them should be escorted by as many others as possible!

Robbery from car drivers and passengers

There are also increasing instances of another form of robbery - that of criminals getting into cars stopped at traffic lights or in slow moving traffic, and robbing the drivers and passengers of cash at knife point.

The new lesson which we must all now learn from this is that regrettably, whenever driving in a car - whether during the day or at night - all car doors should be firmly locked at all times. It would seem that somehow we have all got to learn a new procedure which is that, before we drive off, as well as fastening seat belts, adjusting mirrors and so on, we have conscientiously got to go through the 'drill' of locking all the car doors.

Conclusion

This article has attempted to set

Garden Suburb Theatre

The Garden Suburb Theatre's forthcoming season sees revivals of several plays performed by the group before. The first of these fills the October slot and who better to introduce it than someone who was around the first time? Megan Hooley writes:

"Many years ago, well before our dramatic society became the Garden Suburb Theatre, we mounted a prestigious production of *Ring Round the Moon* by Jean Anouilh, adapted by Christopher Fry. Photographs of that show were in black and white, which illustrates how far back in time it took place. But in October there will be an opportunity for the younger generation(s!) to enjoy a new production of this fascinating play and for those who saw the earlier one to revive old memories.

"I have no intention of revealing the plot in advance. Christopher Fry describes it as 'A charade with music, in which the characters play and dance under the twinkling lights of a winter garden.' Perhaps the French title, *L'Invitation au Château*, sheds more light on the play than its English translation.

"The characters couldn't be more varied - among them an ingenue ballet dancer with her piano teacher mother and an old lady in a wheelchair (played in the original 1950 professional production by Margaret Rutherford) and her faded companion. But pivotal to the whole plot are the twins Hugo and Frederic... identical in appearance but totally different in personality.

"Robert Jayes, who was in the earlier production, will direct the 1995 version. I too was in the cast, playing opposite Robert. We had relatively small parts but they involved a Façade type tango. In addition we had to continue with dialogue while dancing, which is rather more than is required of ballet dancers. The director, Edward Newman, was a very skilled man of the theatre but recognised that this particular episode called for

specialist attention. So we enlisted the help of a young dancer and choreographer from the Royal Ballet, no less.

"He was undaunted at having to cope with two people who fell far short of the lissome, well-trained bodies which were his usual raw material. His hard work paid off in more ways than one. His name was Peter Wright and he eventually became Director of the (now) Birmingham Royal Ballet and collected a knighthood along the way. Robert and I can hardly claim credit for that but, over 30 years later, Sir Peter still remembers that tango, as well he might!

How will Robert deal with all this? A firework display at the end of the play adds to the staging problems. There is only one way to find out... do come and see it."

Little Wood Theatre

On a different subject, grants from the Borough and from the Millie Apthorp Trust have helped bring the amount raised by the Little Acorns project, which aims to improve the open air theatre in Little Oak Wood, to over £15,000. An official ceremony sometime in the autumn will herald the start of the second phase of tree and shrub planting and the replacement of the audience terracing.

In the meantime fund-raising goes on and the group is holding another of its popular quizzes on 30th September on the theme of entertainment, with cold buffet included. Everybody is welcomed so why not get a team together?

Please see **What's On** for details of dates and tickets for both *Ring Round The Moon* and the quiz.

Debbie Lane

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