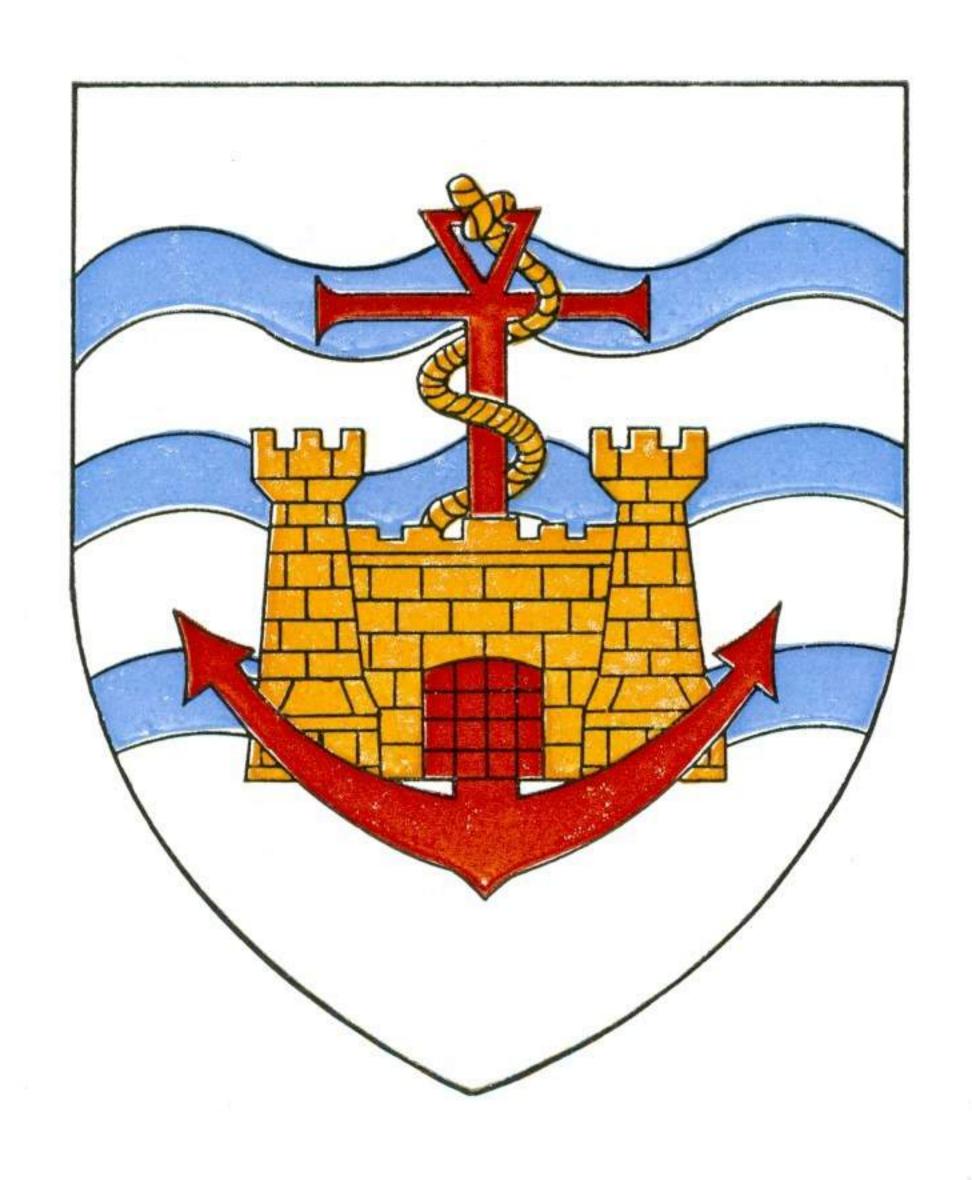
FOR STREATRE BILLINGHAM CLEVELAND

28th May to 2nd June 1979

The Duchess of Malfi by JOHN WEBSTER





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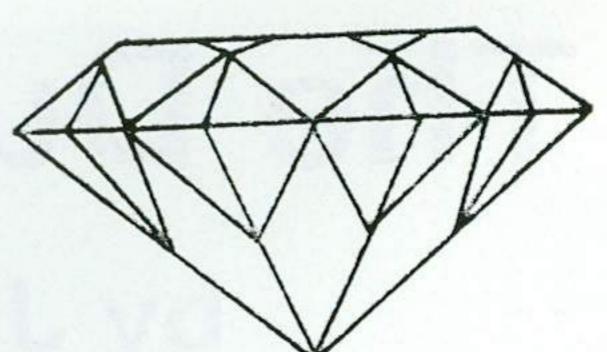


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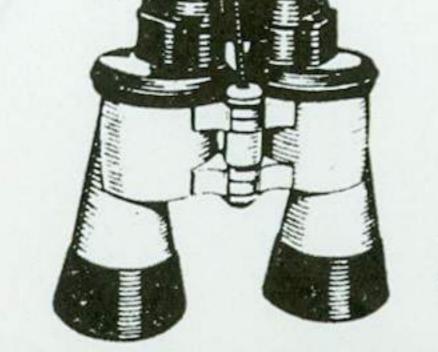
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by Eric Shorter

Picture a man towards the end of his middle-aged tether. An American, much mothered, the owner of a restaurant with a wife and two children and an itch. Why the itch?

Yes, you have guessed. Not the seven-year one but the twenty-year one. Barney Cashman fancies adultery. He is the hero of Neil Simon's Last of the Red Hot Lovers.

Now Barney is not by nature promiscuous. On the contrary he is a loyalist — not only towards his mother and his wife but also towards traditional ideas about people. He thinks well of them until they cause him ill. He is an optimist, gentle, kindly, considerate, polite and a bit worried about death.

For that is his basic trouble. He is 47. All is going well. His fish restaurant thrives. So does his family. So does his mother. And yet he is passing the half-way mark in his life and he feels he hasn't lived.

And what does he mean by "living"? He means, for the moment, adultery.

Having lived a cloistered, quiet and safe existence ever since he can remember, he views adultery as the most daring and perhaps exciting outlet open to him.

Except that it isn't immediately open. True, he runs a restaurant.

But it isn't a brothel. And as owner of the restaurant he has to work as well as trying to pick up women

without his mother or his wife noticing.

So, for Barney, adultery isn't easy. He has heard that it is. He gathers that the world is having a great illicit time. But he isn't. He is too careful. That is Barney's nature. He takes care. He doesn't take risks. He thinks he would enjoy a fleeting sense of danger but in fact it gives him more fright than fun. Hence his cautious approach to this first diffident fling, due to take place in his mother's New York apartment one afternoon during mother's absence.

His search for a mistress begins with a brunette. She proves wittily and critically indifferent to Barney's gambit but would be willing to come to terms if he could find enough confidence to do anything but talk nervously. His diffidence preoccupies him. She departs exasperated — a hooker in a huff.

The second of his projects, some months' later, is a goofy blonde anxious to enter show business and obsessed by her eccentric Bohemian life to an extent that tests Barney's well-mannered air of curiosity and his firmness of character when required (from politeness) to smoke pot.

The meeting fizzles out in a puff of pot smoke. And guilt. For guilt is the thing that Barney feels more than anything else about his would-be

continued overleaf

CATCHING THE LIMELIGHT continued

muttered: 'May be going to the races later on.'

For Ascot? Charlot pouted as a whiff of champagne came my way. 'I thought you had put it on for me!'

He then explained why he had sent for me: 'My revue is to go to New York. There you would play in sketches and understudy Jack. But I have to see others. You must be patient for a week.'

Back home, Laura asked: 'Is Charlot going to give you anything?'
'He says he'll let me know.'

'That means he won't. He must have thought you very unbusinesslike wearing that get-up.'

For ten days there was no word from Charlot; so I accepted a long part for a long provincial tour. Then, in the thick of rehearsals, I received the summons to the States which I had to decline. If there was a blessing, it was very much in disguise. Charlot was renowned for giving opportunities and the revue was an enormous success.

Laura was famous for her back handers, her best crack being some years' later after my first performance in *Road House*. It was a gangster play starring Peggy O'Neil. Although she had slipped from the dizzy heights she attained in *Paddy The Next Best Thing* bands still played her song: *Sweet Peggy O'Neil*.

Rex Harrison gave a brilliant performance and accordingly was not easy to follow. The company were at the Royal, Brighton when I joined them on a Tuesday, and the management considered four days long enough for me to open on Saturday.

Stepping into someone else's shoes is seldom satisfactory. No one is keen to rehearse with the newcomer. Certainly not at Brighton

when the sun shines. Apart from the role being something new for me, a villain, there were shooting effects which required intensive rehearsal. However, all went well at the Saturday matinée. And after the show the company gathered in my dressing room congratulating me.

Enter Laura: 'At last, we've found a part to suit him.'

In her eighties, though possessing a very dicky heart, Laura was full of determination and vigour. While on holiday, in Madeira, she terrified everyone by performing a backward somersault off a raft.

Laura was in fine form a few hours before she died. I'd come from a Savage Club dinner and was telling her about the Duke of Edinburgh's speech. 'Were you presented?' she asked.

'Yes, indeed.'

'What did he say?'

'I complimented him on the way he tied the tie we gave him. It's hard to tie a tie without a mirror.'

'I don't want to hear what you said — what did he say?'

'H.R.H. said the one he'd been given was of an inferior quality to the one I was wearing; and very difficult to tie.'

'So - you got yourself noticed.'

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Well, at the Evening Gazette we do. That's why Keith Newton, our theatre critic writes a special column every Saturday. He talks about the personalities, the productions and reviews what is coming up. And during the week we regularly review the first nights. We think it's important to keep in touch. Agreed?



KEITH NEWTON

Your complete entertainment guide from Monday to Saturday

Evening (Famelie)

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Vol. 3 No. 18

A Member of The Theatrical Management Association

DUNCAN C. WELDON & LOUIS I. MICHAELS for Triumph Theatre Productions Limited

present

JANET SUZMAN

CHARLES KAY
PETER EYRE

BERNARD LLOYD
IAN McDIARMID

in

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

by JOHN WEBSTER

with

DOUGLAS HEARD ROBERTA IGER SKIP MARTIN JILL SPURRIER JEFFERY KISSOON SEAN MATHIAS C. C. TAYNTON

Directed by KEITH HACK

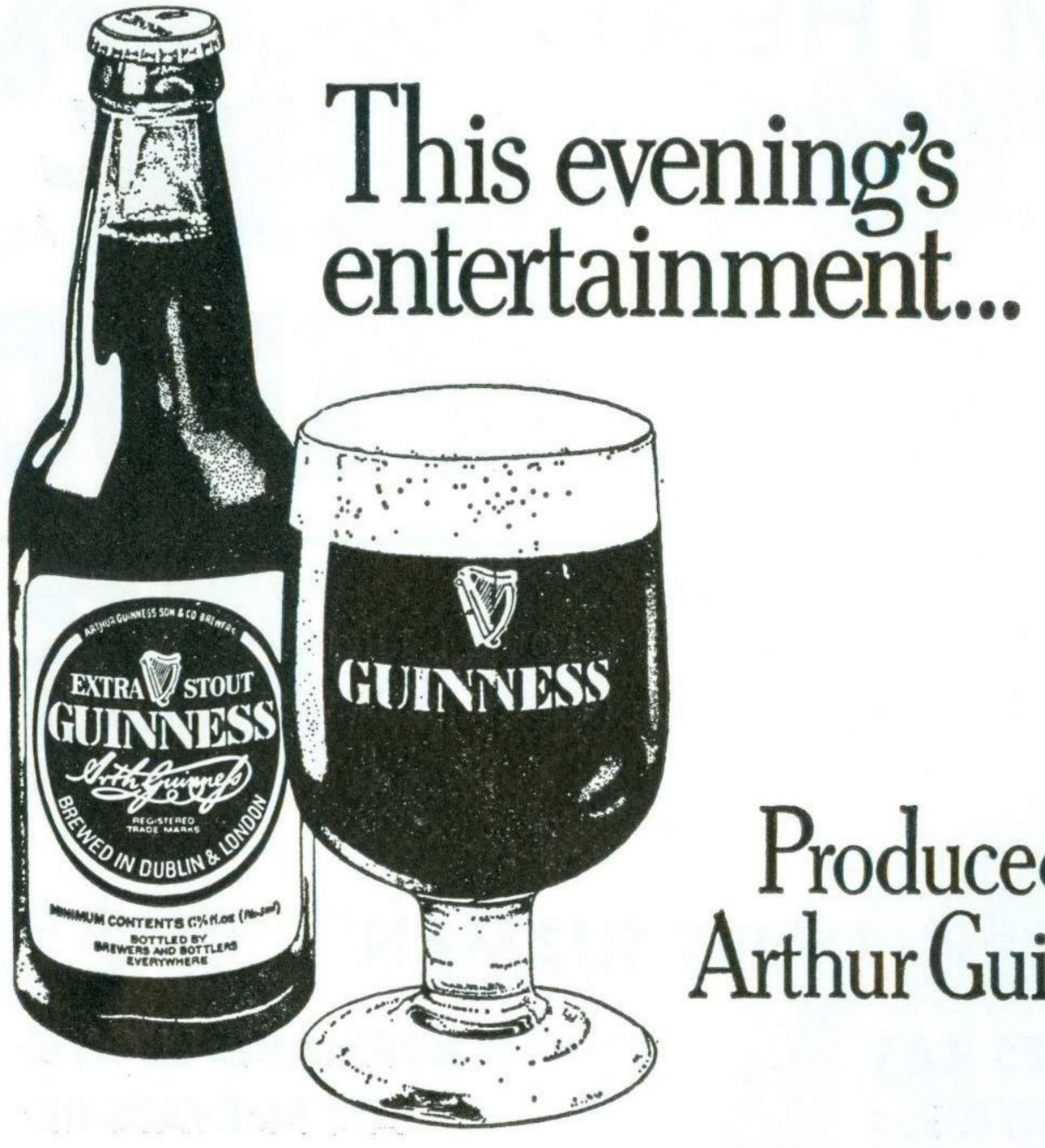
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FROM THE THEATRE DIRECTOR

We welcome the company of *The Duchess of Malfi* and hope they have a happy and successful week at Billingham. This is the third time we have welcomed Miss Janet Suzman, her previous visits being in *Three Sisters* and *Hedda Gabler*.

Next week we have a break, then into two plays in one week. These are from the Malvern Festival — Shaw's comedy *Misalliance* and T. S. Eliot's *The Elder Statesman*. A distinguished cast has been assembled for the two plays, headed by Paul Rogers who, in a long career, has played leading parts with many of our finest companies, Bristol Old Vic, Old Vic, and Royal Shakespeare Company among them. He has also appeared frequently in the West End and in New York. In America he won the Tony Award for best actor in drama in 1967. The other leading artistes are Robert Flemyng (last at Billingham in *Suite in Two Keys*), Kate O'Mara (from TV's *The Brothers*) and Carol Drinkwater (in the popular TV series *All Creatures Great and Small*).

We follow that interesting week with a return to lyric theatre — Northern Ballet's highly praised productions of two very famous ballets, *Coppelia* and *Giselle*. These are beautifully produced with full orchestra and well worth a visit. As each is on only three performances, do book soon.

We end the current season with one of the lively Restoration comedies *She Would If She Could*. Directed by Jonathan Miller, the cast is led by another well-known artiste from TV, Paul Eddington. Mr. Eddington is one of our busiest actors, his latest West End appearance being in *Ten Times Table*, but, of course, in these TV times so many artistes are known to the general public only through the box. Which can be very difficult for artistes whose major and best work is done on the stage.

Work is going full steam ahead for the production of a major musical *Calamity Jane* which opens at the end of August. This is a really big show and preparations will go on non-stop until opening night. After that it is in the hands of the public — their response is vital.

Janet Suzman (The Duchess of Malfi)

After leaving LAMDA in 1962 was offered, by Peter Hall, the part of La Pucelle in his remarkable Quartercentenary Season at Stratford: The War of the Roses. The parts she played in subsequent Seasons at Stratford and the Aldwych included Portia, Katherine, Beatrice, Cilia and Rosalind, Lavinian, Rosaline and Cleopatra — which was also televised. In between these plays she also made many TV appearances including Saint Joan, Macbeth, The Family Reunion, Twelfth Night and for ATV the Clayhanger series (Hilda Lessways). Her films include A Day in the Death of Joe Egg, with Alan Bates, for which she received the New York Drama Critics' Nomination, and Nicholas and Alexandra for which she received an Academy Award Nomination for her portrayal of Alexandra. In 1973 she won the Evening Standard Award for her Hester in Fugard's Hello and Goodbye -- seen at King's Head Theatre Club. She received it again in 1976, along with the Plays and Players Award, for her Masha in Jonathan Miller's production of Three Sisters. This production of The Duchess of Malfi marks the third occasion that Janet has worked with Keith Hack on plays they both admire — the others being Hedda Gabler and The Good Woman of Setzuan.

Charles Kay (Daniel De Bosola)

Trained for theatre at RADA after qualifying in dental surgery at Birmingham University. Theatre since has included 2 years with Coventry Belgrade; Roots, The Wesker Trilogy; The Changeling, and Twelfth Night — Royal Court, London. 1963-67 member of RSC, parts included Clarence — Wars of the Roses; Dauphin — Henry V and VI; King of Navarre — Love's Labour's Lost, and Antipholus of Ephesus in Comedy of Errors. Played Beau Clincher in The Constant Couple, and recently The Dauphin in Saint Joan — Prospect Theatre Company. Many leading roles with National Theatre include Celia in all-male As You Like It, Gaviston — Edward II, Loach — National Health, Robespierre — Danton's Death. Spent 2 years with Actors Company — played Tartuffs at 1974 Edinburgh Festival. Recently: Julius Caesar (Cassius) — Chichester Festival; The Homecoming (Sam) — Garrick; and The Millionairess (The Doctor) — Theatre Royal, Haymarket. TV roles include The Duchess of Malfi (Ferdinand); Fall of Eagles (Tsar Nicholas II); Devil's Blood (Louis VII); The Microbe Hunters (Roux); and Jennie (Montagu Porch).

Bernard Lloyd (Antonio Bologna)

Was in Rep productions of Arms and the Man (Sergius), Equus (Martin Dysart), Measure for Measure (The Duke) and The Devil is an Ass (Satan) — also seen at Edinburgh Festival, National Theatre, and on European tour. Other credits include many roles with the RSC at Stratford and the Aldwych including Delio — The Duchess of Malfi, Satin — Lower Depths, Mercutio — Romeo and Juliet, Ferdinand — Love's Labour's Lost, and London Assurance (also Toronto, Washington and New York); played Charlie Stobbs in Peter Dews' BBC TV serial Jorrocks, later the same part in the musical at the New Theatre; for 4 months was in Man and Superman at National Arts Centre, Ottawa. Most recently: Cauchon in Saint Joan opposite Eileen Atkins — Prospect Theatre Company — at the Old Vic, and Autumn Garden — Palace Theatre, Watford. Recent TV includes The Signalman and Deep Concern — to be shown on BBC in July.

Peter Eyre (The Cardinal)

Theatre includes Alceste in *The Misanthorpe* — Birmingham Rep; Seasons at the Old Vic and Glasgow Citizens'; leading roles in many productions at Nottingham Playhouse; *The Seagull* (Konstantin) — Chichester Festival and Greenwich; *Hamlet* and Oswald in *Ghosts* — Greenwich; several roles for the RSC including Tesman in *Hedda Gabler* — also America, Canada and Australia; *The Three Sisters* (Tusenbach) — Cambridge Theatre; *Stevie* — Vaudeville, London; *Crime and Punishment* and Cain in *Abel and Cain* — Haymarket, Leicester; *As You Like It* (Jacques) — Bristol Old Vic. Much TV work includes *Platonov* (Play of the Month), *Doran's Box* (Play for Today), *Death of Socrates, Alice in Wonderland, Misfortune* and *The Birds Fall Down*. Films include *Julius Caesar, Mahler*, and *La Luna* (to be released).

lan McDiarmid (Ferdinand)

Theatre includes repertory at Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle, and a Season at Glasgow Citizens' where parts included Galileo — The Life of Galileo, also Sir Toby Belch — Twelfth Night, Bajazeth — Tamburlaine — Edinburgh Festival; Timon of Athens (title role) — Dublin Festival; spent 6 months with Le Theatre National Populaire, Paris. Was in Brecht's Jungle of the Cities — The Place, and British Premiere of And They Handcuffed the Flowers — Open Space, London. As a result of a Season with the RSC, where parts included Turner — Destiny, Rigault — Days of the Commune, The Comic — Dingo, Billy McPhee — That Good Between Us, he won Plays and Players Critics' Award for Most Promising New Performer. Then played Nightingale in British Premiere of Vieux Carré and Ivanov in the Stoppard/Previn Every Good Boy Deserves Favour at the Mermaid, London.

Douglas Heard (Silvio)

Trained at Central School. Has appeared in repertory at Harrogate, Sheffield, Billingham, Guildford. Worked extensively at Glasgow Citizens' Theatre appearing in *Tamburlaine* (Edinburgh Festival), *Saved* (Rome Festival), *The Duchess of Malfi* (Nations Festival, Warsaw). Also played *Dracula*, Klestakoff in *Government Inspector*, Horner in *Country Wife* and recently Lorenzo in *Spanish Tragedy*.

Denis Holmes (Castruchio)

Following 2 years at the Old Vic, London, joined the RSC with whom, during 6 years, he played at Stratford, the Aldwych and toured to Australia, Japan and Broadway. West End appearances include *The Thistle and the Rose, The Firstborn, Maigret and the Lady* and Kafka's *The Trial.* Played 2 Seasons at Pitlochry Festival — recently Prospero in *The Tempest* and Azdak in *Caucasian Chalk Circle*. At Leeds Playhouse played Duke of Norfolk in *A Man for All Seasons* and Sir Toby Welch in *Twelfth Night*. Over 100 TV roles include Peacey in a recent Play of the Month, *The Voysey Inheritance*, and Cully Hotson in *Emmerdale Farm*.

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

by John Webster (Adapted for this production by David Essinger)

CAST

The Duchess of Malfi

Delio, his friend

JANET SUZMAN

Ferdinand, Duke of Calabria, twin brother to the Duchess

IAN McDIARMID

The Cardinal, their elder brother

PETER EYRE

Daniel De Bosola

CHARLES KAY

Antonio Bologna, the Duchess' steward

BERNARD LLOYD

JEFFERY KISSOON

Cariola, the Duchess' waiting woman

JILL SPURRIER

Castruchio, husband of Julia

DENIS HOLMES

Julia, wife to Castruchio and mistress of the Cardinal

ROBERTA IGER

Pescara, an aide to the Cardinal

SEAN MATHIAS

Silvio

DOUGLAS HEARD

Roderigo

C. C. TAYNTON

Grisolan

SKIP MARTIN

A doctor

DENIS HOLMES

Executioners Mad People Servants

SEAN MATHIAS

DOUGLAS HEARD C. C. TAYNTON

ROBERTA IGER

Director Keith Hack
Designers Voytek and Jenny Beavan
Lighting Nick Chelton

There is one interval of 15 minutes

JOHN WEBSTER (c.1580-1634)

English Dramatist

Webster's fame as a dramatist rests mainly on two plays:
The Duchess of Malfi (c. 1614) and The White Devil (c.1612).
Apart from Appius and Virginia (c.1608) and The Devil's Law
Case (c.1623) his other plays, including some now lost,
were written in collaboration — chiefly with Dekker.
Although there is no real proof, suggestions have been made
that Webster contributed to Tourneur's Revenger's Tragedy.
Virtually nothing is known of his life.

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Production and Stage Supervisor LES ROBINSON

First Stage Dayman BOB BASFORD

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Company Manager PETER BEVIS

Stage Manager GEORGE McLAREN

Deputy Stage Manager CAROLYN SOUTAR

Assistant Stage Manager DIANA BARTON

Roberta Iger (Julia)

Theatre includes Seasons with Common Stock Theatre Company, 6 months weekly-rep at Butlins, Filey; Erpingham Camp (Eileen) and The Conformer (Ann) — Crucible, Sheffield; Summer Season in Jersey with Richard O'Sullivan in Boeing Boeing; Dutchman (Lula) — London Fringe; Bathroom — Half Moon, London; and Night of the 20th — Theatrespace. TV includes Two of Three Graces, The Madness, Act of Rape and Pit Strike — all BBC.

Jeffery Kissoon (Delio)

Theatre includes Black Macbeth — Wyvern, Swindon and London; Season at Glasgow Citizens' including title role in Tamburlaine — Edinburgh Festival; A Taste of Honey — Belgrade, Coventry, and Holland tour; Measure for Measure (The Duke) — Yvonne Arnaud Theatre; RSC 1974-75 and 1978-79 roles included Provost — Measure for Measure, Caliban — Tempest, Danny — Jail Diary, Alton — The Sign in Sidney Pristine's Window, and Chicken — The Kingdom Earth — in Vienna; 1976-77 several roles with Bristol Old Vic: Silvio — The Duchess of Malfi, Rex — City Sugar, etc. Played Roger in Streamers — Liverpool Playhouse and Roundhouse, London. TV includes Joe and Mary, Frederick Raphael's Something's Wrong, several episodes of Beryl's Lot and Space 1999, and BBC Play for Today Rocky Marciano is Dead.

Skip Martin (Grisolan)

Theatre includes Mime roles — French Ballet; Cousin Lyman in The Ballad of the Sad Cafe. Has appeared in a variety of films including Horror Hospital — Frederick; Vampire Circus — Michael; Sandwich Man — Joey; Masque of the Red Death; and Circus of Fear — Mr. Big. TV includes The Avengers, Canterbury Tales, and, in the USA, Murray's World, Jekyll and Hyde, Shirley's World.

Sean Mathias (Pescara)

Theatre includes 3 Seasons with National Youth Theatre; repertory Seasons at Midland Arts Centre and Birmingham Rep; tour of Hair; Aladdin — Glasgow Citizens'; Ghosts — Hampstead Theatre; You're a Good Man Charlie Brown — on the Fringe; How Green Was My Valley — Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford; Shifts — 1978 Edinburgh Festival. TV includes The Corn is Green, Kilvert's Diary. Films include Juggernaut and A Bridge Too Far.

Jill Spurrier (Cariola)

Trained at E.15 Acting School. Theatre since has included Interaction work with Ed Berman doing Community/Street Theatre. 1972-79 was with Glasgow Citizens' Theatre playing numerous roles, most recently Madam Arkadina in *The Seagull* and Princess Death in *Orpheus*.

C. C. Taynton (Roderigo)

Theatre includes *The Hostage*, *The Balcony*, *Twelfth Night* (Feste) — Glasgow Citizens'; *Downright Hooligan* (The Hooligan) — Everyman, Liverpool; *Sons of Light* — University Theatre, Newcastle; Keith Hack's production of *Titus Andronicus* — Roundhouse; *Threepenny Opera* — Prince of Wales, London. 1976 joined Ken Campbell and Chris Langham as a founder member of 'The Science Fiction Theatre of Liverpool' and appeared in the 12-hour epic *Illuminatus* in Liverpool, Germany and at National and Roundhouse Theatres, London.

Keith Hack (Director)

Assistant Director Berliner Ensemble, then at Theatre de la Cite, Lyon. Directed in Cambridge at the ADC, the Arts Centre, and for Edinburgh Festival including British Premieres of Brecht's Kleine, Mahagonny and Man is Man. Wrote Candide '70 and Nana. Translated The Breadshop, Galileo, Roundheads and Pointheads (Brecht), Danton's Death, Woyzeck (Büchner). 1970-72 Associate Director Glasgow Citizens'. 1973-74 trained as TV director with Granada. 1975 Co-Director Tyneside Theatre. Directed Measure for Measure and The Tempest — RSC; Hedda Gabler and The Good Woman of Setzuan — West End; It's Only Rock and Roll — Thames TV; British Premiere of Vieux Carré — Piccadilly; World Premiere of Tennessee Williams' Creve Coeur — New York.

Voytek (Designer)

Voytek has several London credits to his name, amongst them Man in the Glass Booth, Voyage Round My Father, Marquis of Keith for the RSC, Jeeves, and recently Tennessee Williams' Vieux Carré at the Piccadilly Theatre — directed by Keith Hack for whom he has also designed Barrie Keefe's Barbarians and Strindberg's The Father at the Greenwich Theatre. Voytek is also known as a TV designer and director.

Jenny Beavan (Designer)

In theatre has designed for: Half Moon, London; Orange Tree, Richmond; Theatre Royal, York; Greenwich Theatre; Welsh Drama Company and the RSC. Opera: Welsh National Opera; Royal Opera House; Nederlands Operastichting. Ballet: Tranzforum, Cologne; Ballet Rambert; Nederlands Danstheater. Films: Hullaballoo Over Bonnie and Georges Pictures — for Merchant Ivory Productions, and The Europeans.

Nick Chelton (Lighting Designer)

As Lighting Consultant Royal Court (1974) lit: Life Class, What the Butler Saw, Bingo, Gimme Shelter! etc. Is Lighting Consultant to Greenwich Theatre (where he has lit over 30 shows: Norman Conquests, Jonathan Miller's 'Family Romances' Season etc.), also to Kent Opera: Cosi Fan Tutte, Idomeneo, Iphigenia in Taurus, The Return of Ulysses etc. Has designed lighting for: English National and Welsh National Opera, Miller's production of Three Sisters — Cambridge Theatre; Love's Labour's Lost, The Way of the World, Antony and Cleopatra — RSC; Yahoo, Absent Friends, Just Between Ourselves — West End; musicals: Hans Andersen, Cole, I Do, I Do, and forthcoming The Rake's Progress — Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

Duncan C. Weldon and Louis I. Michaels

To date some thirty-six productions have been presented in the West End by Duncan C. Weldon and Louis I. Michaels. Their circuit of theatres consists of the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, the Richmond Theatre, Surrey, the Theatre Royal, Brighton, the Theatre Royal, Bath, the Devonshire Park Theatre, Eastbourne, and the Playhouse Theatre, Bournemouth. latest West End productions have included John Clements in Ronald Millar's The Case in Question, Arthur Lowe, John Le Mesurier and Clive Dunn in Dad's Army, Glynis Johns and Louis Jourdan in 13 Rue De L'Amour, Glenda Jackson in The Royal Shakespeare Company production of Hedda Gabler, Janet Suzman in Jonathan Miller's acclaimed production of Three Sisters, Alan Bates in Chekov's The Seagull, John Mills and Jill Bennett in Terence Rattigan's Separate Tables, Janet Suzman in Ibsen's Hedda Gabler, Kenneth More in Frederick Lonsdale's On Approval, Glenda Jackson in Hugh Whitemore's Stevie, Googie Withers and John McCallum in Somerset Maugham's The Circle, Janet Suzman in Brecht's The Good Woman of Setzuan, Ibsen's Rosmersholm with Claire Bloom, Bernard Shaw's The Apple Cart with Keith Michell and Penelope Keith, Ingrid Bergman and Wendy Hiller in N. C. Hunter's Waters of the Moon, Paul Scofield and Harry Andrews in Ronald Harwood's A Family, Geraldine McEwan and Clive Francis in Noel Coward's Look After Lulu and Penelope Keith in Bernard Shaw's The Millionairess. They have also presented many distinguished productions in Canada, the United States of America, South Africa and Australia including Ralph Richardson in Lloyd George Knew My Father by William Douglas Home, John Gielgud in Half Life by Julian Mitchell, Michael Redgrave in A Voyage Round My Father by John Mortimer, Douglas Fairbanks Jnr. in William Douglas Home's The Secretary Bird, Samuel Taylor's The Pleasure of His Company, Robert Morley in his own play A Picture of Innocence, Hayley Mills in Daphne due Maurier's Rebecca and Trevor Howard in Jean Anouilh's The Scenario. Triumph are also responsible for most of Britain's major touring productions; these range from farce to the classics. Currently at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, Keith Michell and Susan Hampshire in Paul Giovanni's The Crucifer of Blood, a new Sherlock Holmes mystery.

For Your Future Entertainment:-

11th, 12th, 13th June — Nightly at 7.30 p.m.

PAUL ROGERS, KATE O'MARA ("The Brothers"), ROBERT FLEMYNG, CAROL DRINKWATER ("All Creatures Great and Small") in

MISALLIANCE

A comedy by Bernard Shaw

Prices: £1.75, £2.00, £2.25, £2.50

14th, 15th, 16th June — Nightly at 7.30 p.m.

PAUL ROGERS, KATE O'MARA, ROBERT FLEMYNG, CAROL DRINKWATER in

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Please no smoking or photography in the auditorium.

The Management reserves the right to refuse admission to the theatre and to change, vary or omit, without previous notice, any item of the programme.

Coffee is available during the interval in the restaurant area.

Drinks for the interval may be order before the show commences.

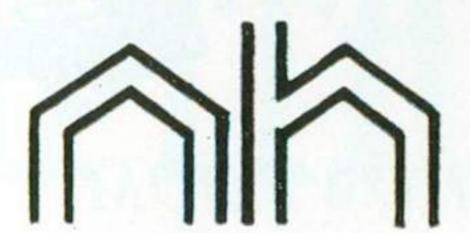
For quick and convenient exit after the performance, theatre patrons are advised to leave by the emergency exits.

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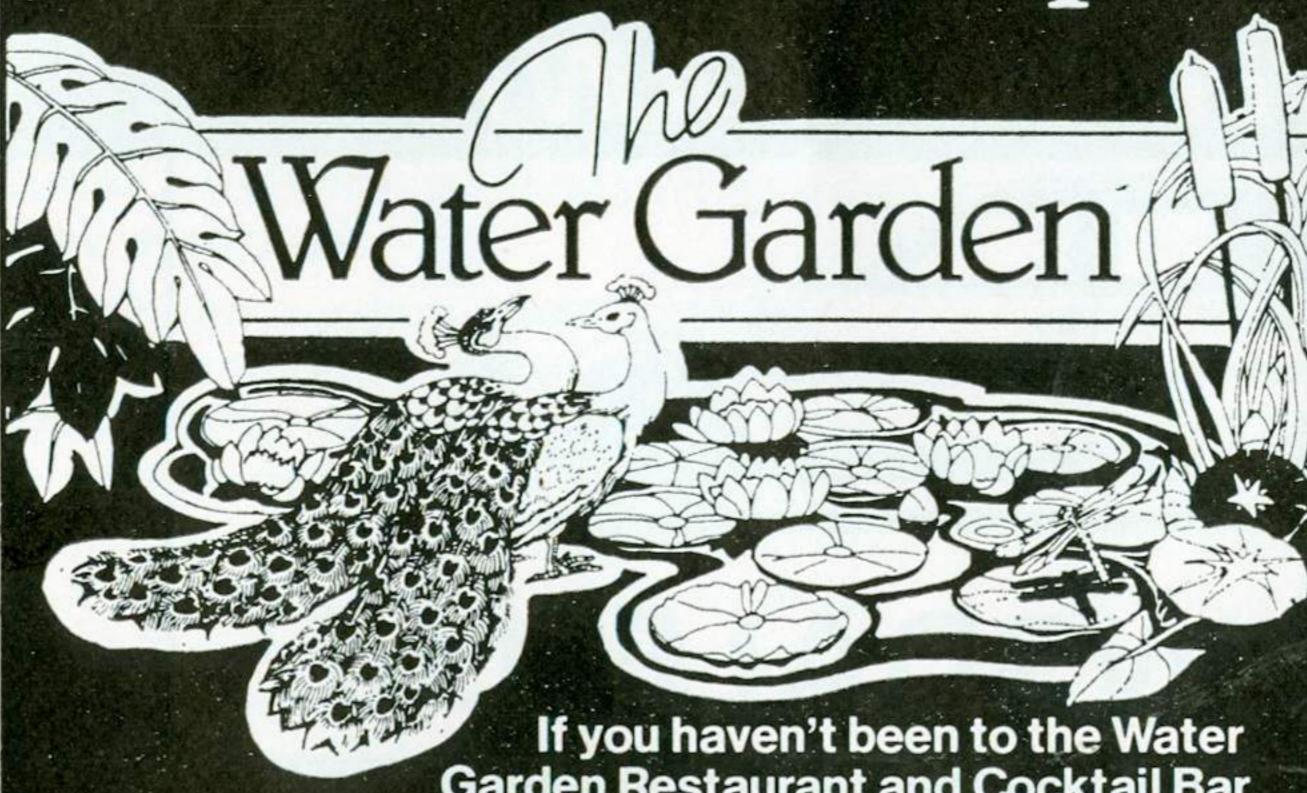
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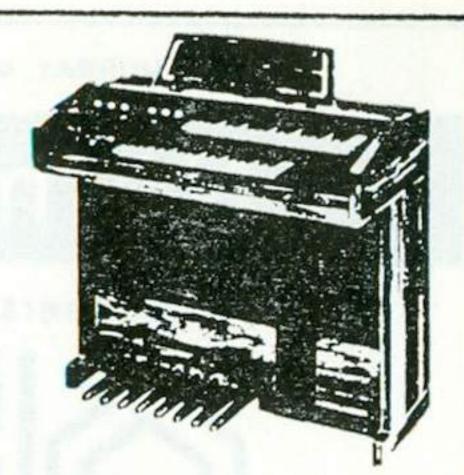
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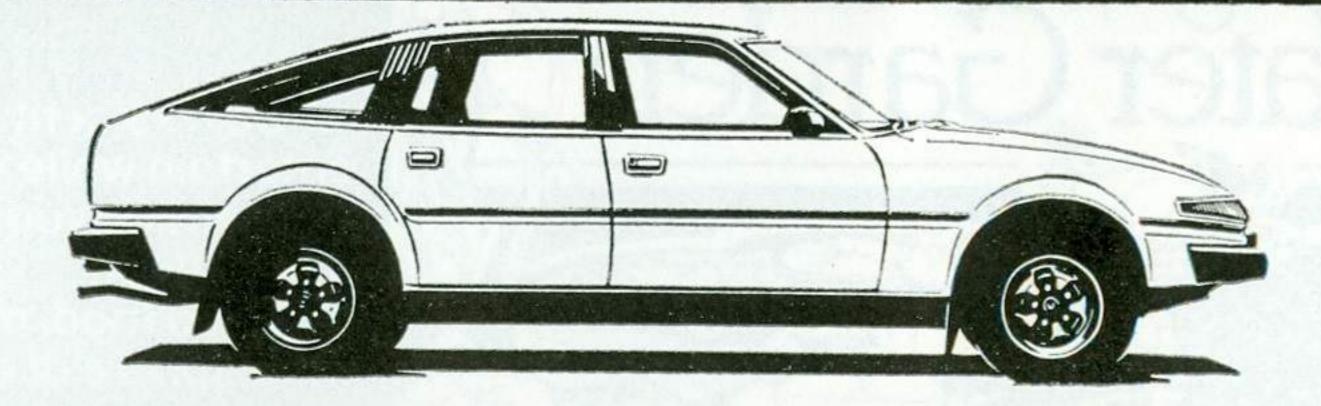
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SHOWING THE CHPITHL HOW

by Patrick Ludlow

'Get yourself noticed — you haven't been seen in the West End for some time.' This was mother's advice when I was about to open in a new play at the Savoy. 'Get yourself noticed' was a favourite expression of hers. It irritated me. I liked to think of my Thespian calling on a higher level. But she was right. Everyone in the public eye has to draw attention to himself. Even prime ministers do it with pipes and cigars.

My difficulty, in this trifle about magic braces, was that the part was nebulous. It had no witty, profound or even interesting lines. The director gave me a free hand; and I thought about playing with a stutter, and again with a cleft palate, but discarded both ideas as being too farcical. Besides, the stars Kate Cutler and Horace Hodges might not have approved.

Then I had another idea. I asked my tailor to build me the widest lapelled dinner jacket and the most enormous oxford bagged trousers. It did the trick. Peter Page, then an eminent critic, having little to write about the nonsense, came out with banner headlines: "Magic Braces and a Wonderful Dinner Jacket". And in his column urged every arbiter elegantiarum to inspect my ensemble.

Said mother: 'Whatever made you

wear that ridiculous dinner jacket?'
Bernhardt got herself noticed with tantrums, Coward dressing gowns, Crawford acrobatics, Marilyn Monroe nudity, Edith Evans decorum and diction, Bea Lillie always wore the same hat, Gertie Lawrence had fabulous furs and Jack Buchanan had the dulcet toned throwaway line.

The last three were in *The Charlot Revue* together in 1925 packing them into the Prince of Wales. One night Charlot had to reprove Buchanan: 'Jack, it is terrible — I am standing at the back of the dress circle and I cannot hear a word you say.'

'Oh,' said Jack, 'Why didn't you come down to the stalls?'
Nevertheless, Buchanan did speak up — a little — at the next performance.

Mother — 'Call me Laura — they'll think I'm your sister' — wasn't given to compliments but in the paddock, at Ascot she did say: 'You look a bit like Jack Buchanan in that morning coat — you had better wear it when you see Charlot tomorrow.'

I did — but felt a bit of an ass.
The sponge bag trousers seemed ill suited to a little office; and I didn't know where to put my topper.
While settling for the floor I

SHOWING THE CAPITAL HOW continued

seductions. He is devoted to his wife and family but feels that he must be missing something in having lived only by "nice" standards.

Which brings us to his third presumed victim (except that we know there will never be a victim because Barney is a born innocent and nothing and no one will corrupt him.) The third lady is a born (or cultivated) pessimist. She is consumed by guilt compared to Barney. Not only is she a friend of his family's (who once made a pass at dinner). She is his wife's best friend.

By now he has learned to fill his mother's apartment with the correct seducer's equipment, such as cigarettes and two kinds of spirit.

But he is still, though surely more forthcoming than at first, easily intimidated. And the melancholic lady who keeps asking what they are both doing alone in such circumstances and questions every move she has made in her life is altogether so neurotically inquisitive that the poor desperate Barney (whose first pick-up was so disgustingly matter-of-fact) feels more matter-of-fact than he has ever felt before and more self-ashamed.

So nothing will come of this interlude any more than it could come of the others — nothing satisfactory for the hero, that is. Why therefore should it be so satisfying for us? After all, we could tell from the start, or soon after the start, that The Last of the Red Hot Lovers was never going to commit adultery. He never had. He never would. Not for virtuous reasons but because of his nature, his character.

And that is where the charm of this comedy lies, in the characterisation of Barney Cashman. Of course the women he invites so guiltily into his

life are very sharp, amusing and witty creations. But they are essentially types, and very actable types as well. Whereas Barney is Everyman who ever supposed himself a kindly, decent, average, modest, unadventuorous sort of chap in search — half way through life — of adventure.

The author, whose other comedies and scripts for the cinema are noted for snappy dialogue and in particular for what are known as one-liners, here offers a Woody Allen-ish figure of sympathetic New York-Jewish fun which found its first British outlet the other day in who would have guessed it? — Manchester. It was the first time in Europe that a play by Neil Simon had had its première outside a capital city; and it was of course greatly to the credit of the Royal Exchange Company and to the director Eric Thompson and the cast — Lee Montague, Georgina Hale, Frances Tomelty and Bridget Turner — that they should have caught its mood with such brisk and amusing persuasion.

Presumably such an intelligently popular piece would reach the capital (and subsequently the rest of the country) in due course. But how on earth did Manchester beat London to it? What was the West End doing to let an enterprising regional theatre snatch from under its nose (the play is ten years' old) a comedy of such verve and clever construction?

Only a month or two earlier it was on Sheffield's initiative that a Broadway musical comedy called *Chicago* had an English airing. Now it is in London. And here was Manchester to prove itself equivalently daring. Our provincial theatre is now a force to reckon with. Instead of merely echoing the capital, it shows the capital how.



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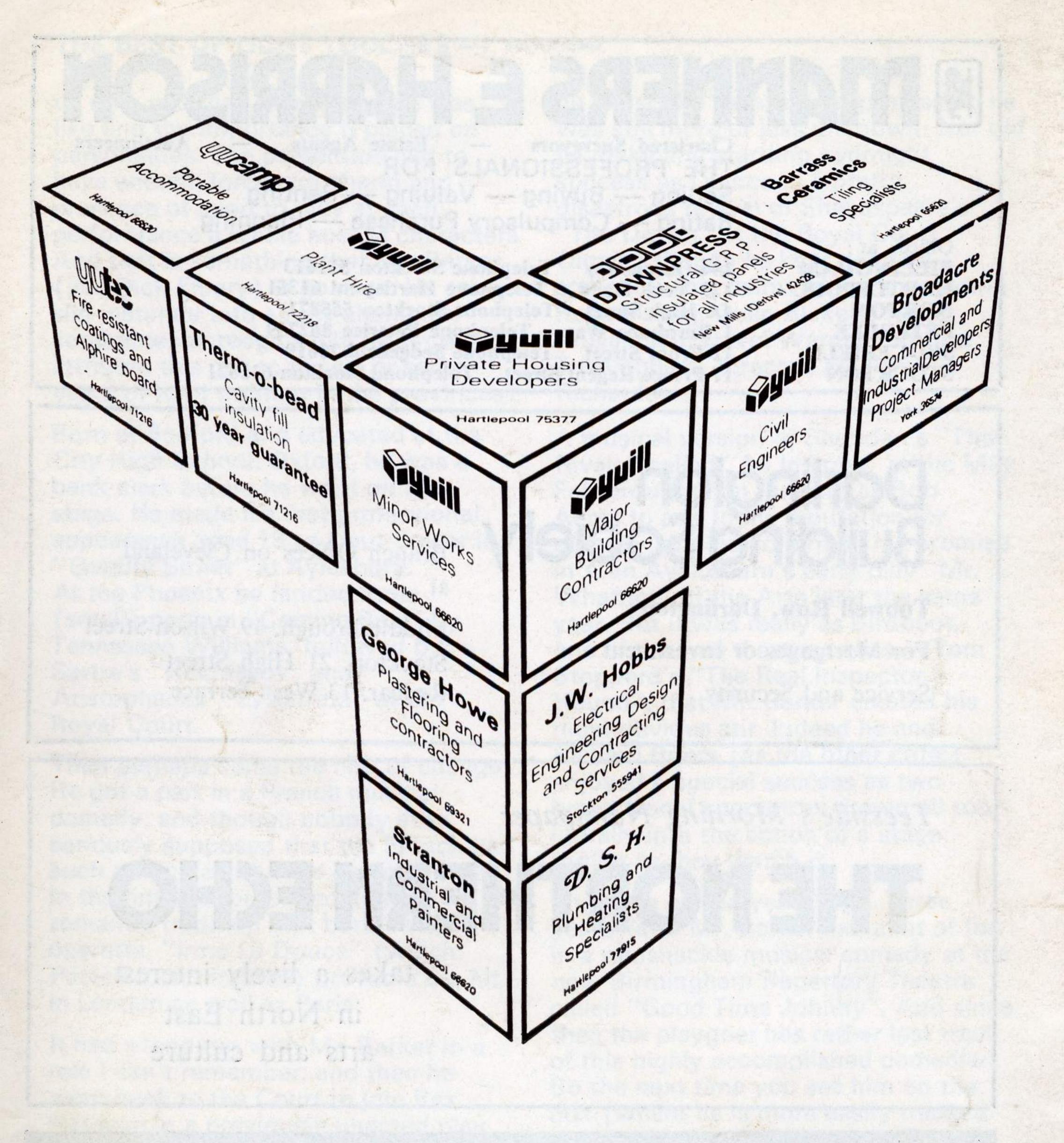
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