

PROSCENIUM

PACK OF LIES HUGH WHITEMORE



6-9 November 2024

Programme

PROSCENIUM

Pack of Lies

By Hugh Whitemore

Wednesday 6 to Saturday 9 November 2024
Compass Theatre, Ickenham

Cast

Bob.....	Robert Ewen
Barbara	Hannah Lester
Julie.....	Sarah Rabin
Helen.....	Elene Hadjidaniel
Peter.....	Charles Anthony
Stewart	Aaron Rice
Thelma.....	Sam Mistry
Sally*	Eva Peerless

*On Friday the part of Sally will be played by Lynette Alston

Creative Team

Directed by	Crystal Anthony
Stage Manager	Richard Kessel
Assistant Stage Managers	Anne Gerrard / Janet Harrison
Properties	Shirley Wootten
Costume Advice	Angela Evans
Lighting Design / Lighting Operation	Helene Smith
Sound Operation.....	Paul Davis
Sound Compilation	Mark Sutherland
Programme Compilation.....	Mark Sutherland
Poster and Programme Design.....	Charles Anthony

A semi-detached house in Ruislip, 1960/61

There will be one interval of
fifteen minutes between Act 1 and Act 2

With thanks to East Lane Theatre, Richard Kessel,
Paul Kessel and David Hampton

Hugh Whitemore (1936-2018)

Hugh Whitemore was an accomplished craftsman for theatre and TV for more than 50 years, moving easily between the disciplines and writing major stage roles (usually based on real-life characters) for Glenda Jackson, Judi Dench, John Gielgud and Derek Jacobi. Having started out with ambitions as a performer, he was told by one of his teachers at RADA, the actor Peter Barkworth, that he had the potential to make a great contribution to theatre – “though perhaps not as an actor”.

And so it proved. He was busy in television from the early 1960s, contributing to such important one-off drama series as the BBC’s Play for Today and ITV’s Armchair Theatre, as well as to popular series such as the soap opera Compact, set in the world of magazine publishing, and No Hiding Place, one of the earliest police and crime fictional programmes.

An inherently funny man, he was a writer of silky dialogue and well-turned narrative who won the respect, as well as the friendship, of fellow writers such as Harold Pinter, Simon Gray and Ronald Harwood. Like Pinter and Harwood, he benefited hugely from his own background and experience as a professional actor; he knew what “worked” and, more importantly, what actors could comfortably say. And his themes, more often than not, were friendship and betrayal.

Whitemore was an only child, born in Tunbridge Wells, Kent. He was educated at King Edward VI school in Southampton. After RADA, and registering little success on regional theatre stages, he began writing. He was twice divorced, and is survived by his third wife, the actor Rohan McCullough, whom he married in 1998, and his son, Tom, from his second marriage, to the literary agent Sheila Lemon.

Hugh Whitemore - Selected Plays

Year	Title	Theatre	Stars
1977	<i>Stevie</i>	Vaudeville	Glenda Jackson
1983	<i>Pack of Lies</i>	Lyric	Judi Dench, Michael Williams
1986	<i>Breaking the Code</i>	Haymarket	Derek Jacobi
1988	<i>Best of Friends</i>		John Gielgud
1991	<i>It's Ralph</i>	Comedy	Timothy West, Jack Shepherd
1997	<i>A Letter of Resignation</i>	Comedy	Edward Fox, Clare Higgins
2000	<i>God Only Knows</i>	Vaudeville	Derek Jacobi
2012	<i>A Marvellous Year for Plums</i>	Chichester	Nicholas le Prevost, Anthony Andrews

Hugh Whitemore - Selected Television Plays, Adaptations and Film Scripts

Year	Title	Stars
1970	<i>Elizabeth R</i>	Glenda Jackson
1974	<i>David Copperfield</i>	
1975	<i>Moll Flanders</i>	
1984	<i>Concealed Enemies</i>	Edward Herrmann
1986	<i>84 Charing Cross Road</i>	Anne Bancroft, Anthony Hopkins
1989	<i>The Final Days</i>	
1996	<i>Jane Eyre</i>	William Hurt, Charlotte Gainsborough
1997	<i>A Dance to the Music of Time</i>	Simon Russell Beale
2002	<i>The Gathering Storm</i>	Albert Finney, Vanessa Redgrave
2003	<i>My House in Umbria</i>	Maggie Smith

Excerpts from obituary by Michael Coveney,
The Guardian July 18th 2018

The Portland Spy Ring

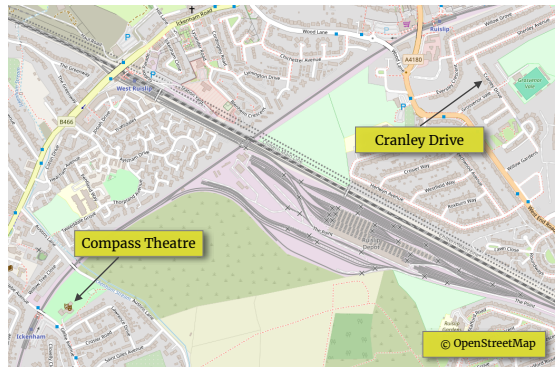
The Portland Spy Ring was a Soviet spy ring operating in England from the 1950s until 1961 and one of the most famous examples of using illegal residents – spies who operate in a foreign country without cover of their embassy. Members included Morris and Lona Cohen aka Peter and Helen Kroger. In 1959, the CIA received letters from a mole saying information was reaching the Russians from Portland, England, where the Royal Navy tested warfare equipment. These letters were passed to MI5.

Suspicion fell on Harry Houghton, a former sailor and now civil servant at the base, who had just bought his fourth car and a house when MI5 put him under surveillance. He and his mistress (Ethel Gee) often went to London to meet a Canadian businessman identified as Gordon Lonsdale. He was frequently at 45 Cranley Drive, Ruislip, visiting an antiquarian bookseller and his wife, Peter and Helen Kroger. In 1960 the Krogers were also put under close but discreet watch.

Ruislip

Ruislip is a suburb in the London Borough of Hillingdon in West London. Prior to 1965 it was in Middlesex. Ruislip lies 13.8 miles (22.2 km) west-northwest of Charing Cross, London.

Ruislip appears in the *Domesday Book* as *Rislepe*, thought to mean 'leaping place on the river where rushes grow', in reference to the River Pinn. The parish church, St Martin's, dates from the 13th century. The buildings at the northern end of Ruislip High Street form the core of the original village square and are now Grade II listed. The expansion of the Metropolitan Railway from Harrow in the early 20th century acted as a catalyst for development in the area. Ruislip station opened in 1904.



In The News

Five Held on Secrets Act Charges

Three men and two women were arrested in swoops by officers of Scotland Yard's Special Branch at the weekend...

...The five were all charged at Bow-street yesterday that "Between June 1960 and January 1961, in the Metropolitan Police area and elsewhere, they did with other persons unknown, unlawfully conspire to commit breaches of Section 1 of the Official Secrets Act 1961" ...

...The five accused are:

- Gordon Arnold Lonsdale, 37, a company director of The White House, a block of luxury flats in Albany Street, Marylebone, London
- Henry Frederick Houghton, 55, Admiralty Civil Servant, of Meadow View-road, Broadway, Weymouth, Dorset
- Ethel Elizabeth Gee, 46, Admiralty Civil Servant, of Hambro Road, Portland, Dorset
- Peter John Kroger, 50, bookseller, of Cranley Drive, Ruislip, Middlesex, and his wife Helen Joyce Kroger, 47, of the same address...

...The Krogers were arrested at their Ruislip home on Saturday afternoon, and the other three were held in dawn swoops yesterday.

Daily Mirror, front page, January 9th 1961

Aftermath

Following their trial at the Old Bailey in March 1961, sentences for the group ranged from fifteen years (for Houghton and Gee) to twenty years (for the Krogers) to twenty-five years (for Lonsdale).

Lonsdale was released in 1964 in a spy swap for the British businessman Greville Wynne. The Krogers were exchanged in October 1969 as part of a swap with Gerald Brooke, a British national held on largely falsified claims. The last to be freed were Houghton and Gee, who were given early release in May 1970.

Under Boris Yeltsin's government, the Krogers were named heroes of the Russian Federation.

Helen died in December 1992; Peter in June 1995. They were both buried in the KGB's Novokuntsevo Cemetery. The couple were honoured by the Russian government by appearing on stamps in 1998.



HARROW
CHORAL
SOCIETY

Christmas Celebration

A Festival of Music for Choir and Audience

Guest reader : **Simon Williams**

Capt. Bellamy of Upstairs, Downstairs – Justin Elliott of The Archers

Harrow School Speech Room

Harrow-on-the-Hill, HA1 3HP

Saturday 14th December 2024

5.30 pm



Death of a Salesman

By Arthur Miller

After spending his entire working life with the same company Willy Loman finds himself tired, worn-out and working on commission only. A salesman whose product, himself, he can no longer sell. The play is both a critique of how capitalism feeds on itself and a love story between a man and his son, for whom Willy has the highest expectations and for whom he makes the ultimate and tragically futile sacrifice.

Last staged by Proscenium in 1988, Arthur Miller's iconic play "Death of a Salesman" is both a modern classic and a heroic tragedy.

"I don't say he's a great man...but he's a human being, and a terrible thing is happening to him...attention, attention must finally be paid to such a person."

Directed by Anton Jungreuthmayer
Wednesday 19 to Saturday 22 March 2025 7.45 pm
Compass Theatre, Ickenham
Box Office : 01895 250 615

About Proscenium

Proscenium was founded in 1924. Since then, the aim of this experienced group has been to present classic and contemporary plays to as wide an audience as possible. Since 1990, performances have taken place at the Harrow Arts Centre and, more recently, at the Compass Theatre, Ickenham.

The company meets three times a week in Harrow for rehearsals, so that up to four plays are presented in each season. Social, fund-raising activities and play readings take place throughout the year.

Chair : Mike Williams

Contact us at www.proscenium.org.uk



Belmont
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A STING IN THE TALE

by Brian Clemens and
Dennis Spooner



Wednesday 4th, Thursday 5th, Friday 6th
Saturday 7th December @ 7.45pm
Saturday 7th & Sunday 8th @ 3.00pm
Doors open 30 minutes before start

www.eastlanetheatre.co.uk

