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Theater Bios

Ella Hickson (*Eight*)

Ella Hickson (Writer/Director) graduated from Edinburgh University in May 2008, where she studied English Literature and Art History. While at University, Hickson worked as a producer for BBC comedy troupe The Penny Dreadfuls, site-specific theatre company Offstage Theatre and The Edinburgh Film Festival. *Eight* is Hickson's first play. It debuted at The Edinburgh Festival in August 2008, winning a Fringe First Award, the NSDF Emerging Artists Award and The Carol Tambor 'Best of Edinburgh' Award. Since August, *Eight* has enjoyed successful runs in London and New York. Hickson continues to live and work between Edinburgh and London, and has established her own production company, Tantrums Productions. She works as a freelance journalist and director, and is currently writing her second play, *Precious Little Talent*. For more information visit <http://www.eight-theatre.com/index>.

Elevator Repair Service *The Sun Also Rises First Part (Workshop Premiere)*

Elevator Repair Service (ERS) was founded by director John Collins and a group of actors in 1991. Since that time, ERS has built a body of work that has earned it a loyal following and made it one of New York's most highly-acclaimed experimental theater companies of the past 20 years. The group's theater pieces are built around a broad range of subject matter and literary forms. They combine elements of slapstick comedy, hi-tech and lo-tech design, both literary and found text, found objects and discarded furniture, and the group's own highly developed style of choreography. ERS creates its performances through extended periods of collaboration. Sources for the ensemble's work include novels, non-fiction writings, films, plays, television programs, and various other media.

In New York, ERS has performed at Performance Space 122, The Performing Garage, HERE, The Ontological at St. Mark's Church, The Flea, The Kitchen, Soho Rep and New York Theatre Workshop. Abroad, ERS performances have been presented in Holland, Belgium, Slovenia, Austria, Norway, Germany, France, Portugal and Switzerland; and, in The United States, the ensemble has been presented in Philadelphia, Columbus, Seattle, Minneapolis, Houston, Burlington, Washington D.C. and Portland (OR). For more information visit www.elevator.org.

Peter Brook/C.I.T.C. (*Love is my sin*)

Peter Brook (director) was born in London in 1925. He directed his first play there in 1943. His work with the Royal Shakespeare Company includes *Love's Labour's Lost* (1946), *Measure for Measure* (1950), *Titus Andronicus* (1955), *King Lear* (1962), *Marat/Sade* (1964), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1970) and *Antony and Cleopatra* (1978).

In 1971, he founded the International Centre for Theatre Research (C.I.T.C.) in Paris and in 1974, opened its permanent base in the Bouffes du Nord Theatre. There, he directed *Timon of*

Athens, The Ik, Ubu aux Bouffes, Conference of the Birds, L'Os, The Cherry Orchard, The Mahabharata, Woza Albert!, The Tempest, The Man Who, Qui est là?, O! les Beaux Jours, Je suis un Phénomène, Le Costume, The Tragedy of Hamlet, Far Away, La Mort de Krishna, Ta Main dans la Mienne, Le Grand Inquisiteur, Tierno Bokar, and Sizwe Banzi is dead.

In opera, he directed *La Bohème, Boris Godounov, The Olympians, Salomé* and *Le Nozze de Figaro* at Covent Garden; *Faust* and *Eugene Onegin* at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, *La Tragédie de Carmen* and *Impressions of Pelleas*, at the Bouffes du Nord, Paris and *Don Giovanni* for the Aix en Provence Festival.

Peter Brook's autobiography, *Threads of Time*, was published in 1998 and joins other titles including *The Empty Space* (1968), *The Shifting Point* (1987), *Evoking (and Forgetting) Shakespeare* (2002), and *There are no Secrets* (1993). His films include *Lord of the Flies, Marat/Sade, King Lear, Moderato Cantabile, The Mahabharata* and *Meetings with Remarkable Men*.

Michael Pennington (actor) Born to a Scottish mother and a Welsh father, Michael Pennington grew up in London. He first played Hamlet and Troilus at Cambridge University and was then invited to join the RSC. For them in later years he played the title roles in Hamlet, Timon of Athens and Hippolytus, Berowne in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Angelo in *Measure for Measure*, Donal in *Shadow of a Gunman*, Mirabell in *The Way of the World*, and the Narrator in *Venus and Adonis*.

He was also co-founder and Joint Artistic Director of the English Shakespeare Company from 1985 to 1992, playing the title roles in *Coriolanus, Henry V, Macbeth* and *Richard II*, and *Leontes* in *The Winter's Tale*.

Other UK theatre credits include: Charles Dickens in *Little Nell*, Robert Maxwell in *The Bargain*, Nathan in *Nathan the Wise*, Archie Rice in *The Entertainer*, title role in *John Gabriel Borkman*, title role in *The Madness of George III*, Major Arnold in *Taking Sides*, Walter Burns in *The Front Page*, Dorn in *The Seagull*, Dr Prentice in *What the Butler Saw*, Oscar Wilde in *Gross Indecency*, Alceste in *The Misanthrope*, Domenico in *Filumena*, Henry Trebell in *Waste*, Sir John Brute in *The Provok'd Wife*, Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*, Edward Damson in *The Gift of the Gorgon*, Claudius in *Hamlet*, Deeley in *Old Times*, the title role in *The Guardsman*, Jaffier in *Venice Preserved* and the title role in *Strider*.

His current work includes two solo shows: *Anton Chekhov* (National Theatre and International touring) and *Sweet William* (on Shakespeare - West End and US tour). He has recently finished playing Richard Strauss in *Collaboration* and Wilhelm Furtwängler in *Taking Sides* in London's West End.

Michael Pennington's published writing includes *User's Guides to Hamlet, Twelfth Night* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; *Are You There Crocodile – Inventing Anton Chekhov*; and *Sweet William* (in preparation). He was the British Academy Shakespeare Lecturer in 2004.

Natasha Parry (actress) has worked in cinema, theatre and television with a career that spans the classics to the avant-garde. She joined Peter Brook in 1968 at the start of his Theatre of Research Company in Paris, playing in *Orghast, Timon of Athens, The Ik, Conference of the Birds, The Cherry Orchard* and *O! les Beaux Jours*. She has also worked with other directors: Andreas Voutsinas in *Nuit de l'Iguane*, Jean-Marie Simon in *Schiller's Cabale et Amour*, Francis Huster in *Richard de Gloucester* and Maurice Béjart in *Cinq Nô Modernes*, as well as Peter Brook's *Tchin Tchin* at the Théâtre Montparnasse.

She continues to work in London, notably as Clytemnestra in Deborah Warner's *Electra* for the Royal Shakespeare Company, *Hamlet* directed by Declan Donnellan and *Madame de Sade* at the Almeida. The Georgian writer, artist and cineaste Rezo Gabriadze wrote a play for her - *Quelle Tristesse, la fin de l'allée* - which was performed at Vidy Lausanne. Recently, she performed in Brook's *Ta main dans la mienne* opposite Michel Piccoli. Her film credits include: René Clement's *Monsieur Ripois* with Gerard Philippe, *Midnight Lace* with Doris Day, Zefirelli's *Romeo and Juliet*, Peter Brook's *Meetings with Remarkable Men*, Jacques Doillon's *La Fille Prodigue* and Marion Hansel's *Le Lit*. For more information visit www.bouffesdunord.com.

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