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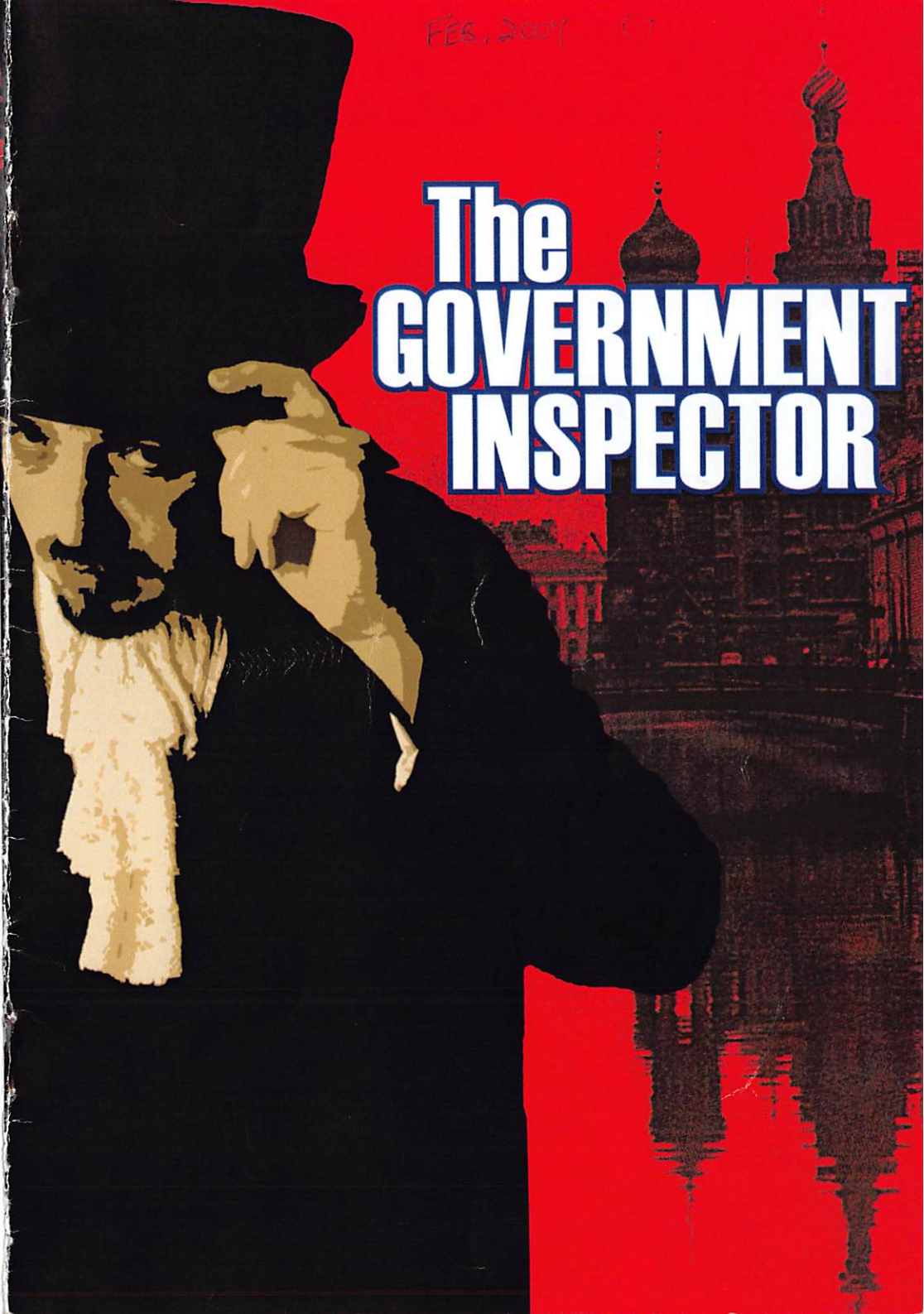
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COMING SOON.....*Dial M for Murder* by Frederick Knott, Thu 17 May – Sat 19 May 2007

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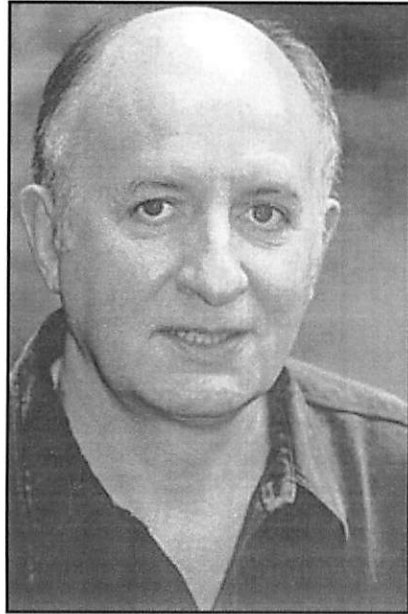


'DON'T BLAME THE MIRROR - IT'S YOUR FACE THAT'S THE PROBLEM'

IN ANY translation there is a natural and entirely healthy tension between a wish to respect the original and the need to create a fluent and credible version in another language. But when attempting to render Gogol into English, the translator soon finds a further tension intruding. How on earth is one to capture the essential *oddness* of Gogol's world and Gogol's language?

When we learn, for example, that the court clerk has smelt of vodka all his life because as a baby he was dropped, or struck, by his nanny, should the translator try to 'explain' this in some way, or should it be rendered faithfully? And how should one deal with the wonderful moment when that opportunistic fraud Khlestakov casually says to Zhemlyanika, 'Forgive me, but weren't you a little shorter yesterday?' and Zhemlyanika replies, 'Very possibly.'? And what of the rats that appear to the Mayor in his dreams, the rats that according to Gogol simply 'came, sniffed, and went away'? There is no explanation as to what the rats were doing, what made them come or what made them leave, just as there is no explanation as to why Zhemlyanika may have mysteriously grown in the space of twenty-four hours. I have left these oddities untouched, because to try to smooth out such absurdities, to try to let the language always make sense, is to soften the broken glass of Gogol's Russian and thereby damage the original.

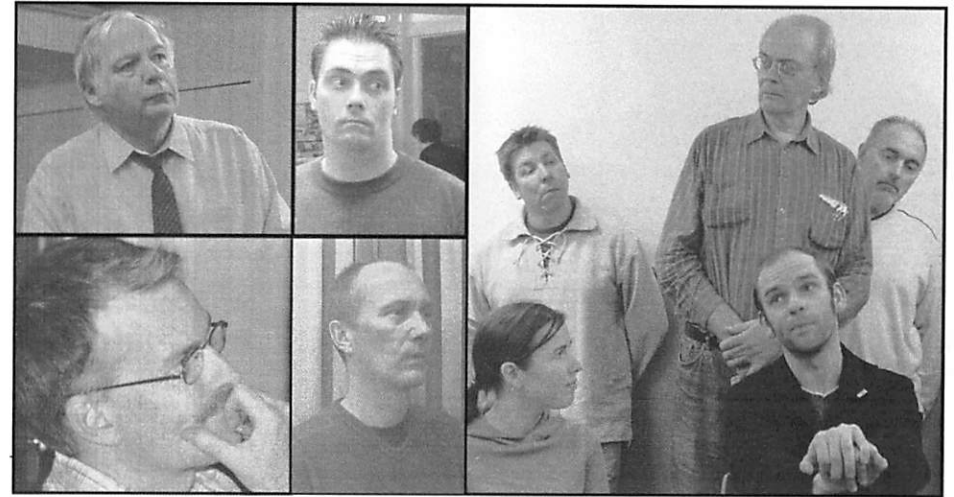
And yet, every translation is for today, for the here and now, and *The Government Inspector* being a comedy, audiences have to be allowed to laugh. For these reasons, and for the sake of clarity, I have taken liberties. I have made some cuts and I have added some lines. I have been brutal in dispensing with asides, even to the extent of adding a character to the



scene in the inn, as an aside can feel like a terribly dated convention that threatens to come between an audience and the action.

I have also pointed up the names and the occupations of the principal characters, because in this respect Gogol is not hugely helpful to his audience. I have also extended Osip's speech at the beginning of Act Two, so that the basic idea of the Table of Ranks, so vital to understanding Russian society of the time, is more clearly introduced to the audience. In addition, since few non-Russian speakers find it easy to grapple with the complexities of Russian names and patronymics, I mainly use surnames instead.

In *The Government Inspector* the line between sound and language is blurred. The characters frequently seem to be overwhelmed



Clockwise from top left: Barry Baynton, Peter Brown, Tony Feltham, Jeremy Austin, Graham Hawkins, Stuart Glossop, Caroline McBrearty, David Brown and Richard Neal

Colin Pile played the sole male character Geoffrey in our production of *Stepping Out* last year. He has also appeared in *On the Razzle* and *David Copperfield*. Colin has also been a member of local musical societies, playing Will Parker in *Oklahoma* and Tommy Keeler in *Annie Get Your Gun*. Colin plays three characters in *The Government Inspector*, his favourite being the waiter who serves up disgusting food to pretentious guests.

David Pile, chairman of our group, has a rich experience of dramas, comedies, musicals and pantos. Favourite roles include Widow Twanky in *Aladdin*, St Brioche in *The Merry Widow*, Captain Orton in *The King and I*, Dr Willis in *The Madness of George III*, Barkis in *David Copperfield* and Jan Coggan in *Far from the Madding Crowd*. Here he plays Osip, a wily old geezer. "I prefer to say that he has the intelligence and intellect to make a fast rouble when the opportunity arises!"

In the original Russian, Gogol matches many of the characters' names with their personality or physical description. Is it, therefore, a deliberate choice of name for Anna, wonders **Jan Singfield**. "She is bossy, rude, cruel to her daughter and servants, ambitious and powerfully affected by young men. Anna is from the Hebrew meaning Gracious!". Jan played the delightfully drunken Arabella Lazenby in *RolePlay*, and before that Donna Lucia d'Alvadorez in *Charley's Aunt*. Jan has also been seen at the Tivoli in many musical productions and pantomimes.

Dave Williams played Frank Crawley in *Rebecca*. He has also appeared in *Habeas Corpus*, *The Madness of George III*, *On the Razzle*, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *Charley's Aunt*, and *Murder in the Cathedral*. Dave sees similarities between the Mayor and Basil Fawley. "The parallels between *The Government Inspector* and *The Hotel Inspector* are obvious – even down to the

reference to spoons, the bogus hotel inspector being a spoon salesman. There is however no room in *The Government Inspector* for a silly walk."

Richard Neal (Director) has twice won Daily Echo Curtain Call Awards for directing *The Madness of George III* and *On the Razzle*. Other plays he has directed include *A Voyage Round My Father* and *Woman in Mind*. Richard's acting credits include Maxim de Winter in *Rebecca* and Truscott in *Loot*, for which he won a Curtain Call Award for Best Actor in a Comedy. On *The Government Inspector* Richard says: "The story is one of the great cons in theatre, and Khlestakov one of the great tricksters, though his deception is at first delivered unwittingly. Gogol shows us a society where deceit and corruption have become so endemic that its people imagine deception where there is none – and so effectively con themselves."



Clockwise from top left: Chrissie Neal, Joe Brooks, Jan Singfield, Carol Bruton and Carolyn Hewitt

to seniority, so Dobchinsky and Bobchinsky it is."

Stuart Glossop played Justin in *RolePlay*, Kevin in *Outside Edge* and a Temptor/Knight in *Murder in the Cathedral*. Stuart also directed *Stepping Out* and *Charley's Aunt*. Stuart plays Khlestakov, the minor civil servant mistaken for a government inspector. "I know how Khlestakov feels," says Stuart, "I was once mistaken for the guy who played a skinny wimp called 'The Hulk' in the 1980s kids' programme called *Murphy's Mob*".

Graham Hawkins appeared in our productions of *Rebecca*, *RolePlay* and *Stepping Out* (he was the one telling the rotten jokes!). "I feel that Dobchinsky is cheerfully ignorant of his circumstances, only seeing the best in people. I'm sure he would have proclaimed the birth of Nicholas I with 'A Tsar is born!' Further contributions from me can be prevented with any sizeable cash donations."

Carolyn Hewitt feels a bit like the loud woman who used to run

on at the end of the Morecambe & Wise show, barge between them and take a bow shouting "Goodnight and I love you all!" This is probably the longest she has had to wait to make an entrance! Carolyn joined Wimborne Drama more than 25 years ago. Here most recent appearances include Connie in *Habeas Corpus*, Frau Fischer in *On the Razzle* and Gerda Cristow in *The Hollow*.

"I have never been offered a bribe, but if anyone has one to give, then could they please make it a large one," says **Bob Hucklesby**, who works in the finance department of Bournemouth Borough Council. He had to be asked very nicely to take two small roles in this production. He previously appeared in *David Copperfield*, *The Madness of George III* and *Loot*.

"They say money talks, but it usually only says 'goodbye' to me," says **Simon Jackson**. "I'm afraid I'm too honest to take a bribe, but honesty is the best poverty." Simon has been a member of Wimborne Drama since 1977. Most recently he was in *The*

Madness of George III, *David Copperfield*, *On the Razzle*, *The Hollow*, and *Loot*, when he played McLeavy.

This is **Caroline McBrearty's** first appearance on the Tivoli stage. She has previously performed in *The Wedding Guest Stood Still*, *Three's a Crowd* and *A Touch of Glass* with Broadstone Players. "Playing Marya has been an enjoyable experience," says Caroline. "I could almost feel sorry for her, having the family she does, if she weren't so like them already!"

Chrissie Neal played Mrs Danvers in *Rebecca*, and before that Rose in *Flesh & Blood*. She played Madame Knorr in our award winning production of *On the Razzle*. She has also appeared in *Habeas Corpus*, *An Evening with Gary Lineker* and *The Madness of George III*. "So I was asked by the director if I'd ever taken a bribe. This was after he had asked me to take on three roles in this play. So the answer has to be yes, and Richard, I am looking forward to the holiday you promised me!"

by their own words. Sentences tail off, noises intrude. This is why I have added a number of stage directions suggesting particular sound effects: to create an aural texture which reinforces the grotesque of language and of character. At points, words cease to be a means of communication altogether, becoming instead a jungle of obfuscation and deceit. This somehow feels appropriate for a society where all meaning is defined by status, all aspiration to human communication smothered by flattery and deceit.

The society of Nicholas I, with its secret police and its casual brutality, its contempt for human dignity and its destruction of hope, is apparently very far away from our own. After the first staging of the play, in 1836, Gogol was horrified to find it taken for a satire on the nature of Russian society. He had meant it to be a comedy commenting on mankind's loss of spirituality. Thus began a debate which has raged to this day. As with many great plays, *The Government Inspector* can bear more than one interpretation. It is an enduring classic precisely because it refuses to be labelled. It may reflect a society profoundly different from our own, but it still has plenty to say about how we live today. The erosion of spirituality, the reduction of people to consumers, the banalisation of our culture, Gogol would have had something to say about all that. His bizarre and grotesque depiction of a small town in nineteenth century Russia is also, perhaps, a depiction of the fate of any culture which sacrifices real human values in favour of avarice and self-advancement His chosen weapon is comedy. But it is a comedy grounded in the grimmest of realities - what Gogol famously described as 'laughter through tears'. At times it's an uncomfortable laughter. To quote the same Russian proverb that Gogol quotes in the text: 'Don't blame the mirror - it's your face that's the problem.'

ALISTAIR BEATON

ALISTAIR BEATON is arguably Britain's foremost political satirist.

He was born in Glasgow in 1947 and was educated at the Universities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Bochum and Moscow, graduating from Edinburgh with First Class Honours in Russian and German.

Beaton was one of the original team that created *Not the Nine O'Clock News*, and he also wrote many song lyrics for *Spitting Image*. His other TV work includes the comedy series *Downwardly Mobile*, *A Very Social Secretary* (about David Blunkett's affair with Kimberly Quinn) and *The Trial of Tony Blair*, broadcast on Channel 4 last month.

His stage plays include *The Nose* (based on the Gogol short story of the same name) and *Follow My Leader*. In 2001 his political satire *Feelgood* won the Evening Standard Award for Best Comedy and had successful runs in Canada, Germany, Austria, Denmark, Hungary and Portugal. With Ned Sherrin he wrote *The Ratepayers' Iolanthe* and *The Metropolitan Mikado*. His new English versions of *Die Fledermaus* and *La Vie Parisienne* were staged by the D'Oyly Carte Company.

Beaton's adaptation of Gogol's *The Government Inspector* was written for the 2005 Chichester Festival.

He has also written a satirical novel called *A Planet for the President* and with Andy Hamilton he co-wrote the best-selling *Drop the Dead Donkey 2000* and *The Thatcher Papers*. Other titles include *The Little Book of Complete Bollocks*, *The Little Book of New Labour Bollocks* and *The Little Book of Management Bollocks*.

He lives in London.

GOGOL : A SOUL IN TORMENT

NIKOLAI VASSILYEVICH GOGOL was born on March 20th, 1809, at Sorochintsy in the Ukraine. Gogol's family belonged to the minor Russian-speaking nobility, and his father had some literary pretensions, writing plays based on Ukrainian folk-tales. The young Gogol is said to have shown considerable acting talent at the local high school, from which he graduated in 1828, at the age of nineteen. Intent on a career in the government service, Gogol moved to St. Petersburg, but failed to find employment, either as a civil servant or as an actor.

In July 1829, he attempted to launch a literary career with a sentimental poem, *Hans Kuckelgarten*, published under a pseudonym, but the work attracted such unfavourable reviews that Gogol bought up all the unsold copies and made a bonfire of them, before leaving for Germany, where he remained until September. On his return to Russia, Gogol's fortunes took a turn for the better, and in 1831 he succeeded in obtaining a post as a teacher of history in a young women's college.

In September of that year, Gogol published a collection of tales of Ukrainian village life, *Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka*, which met with immediate critical acclaim, including that of the great Alexander Pushkin himself, and with the appearance of a second volume, in March 1832, Gogol was established as an important new voice.

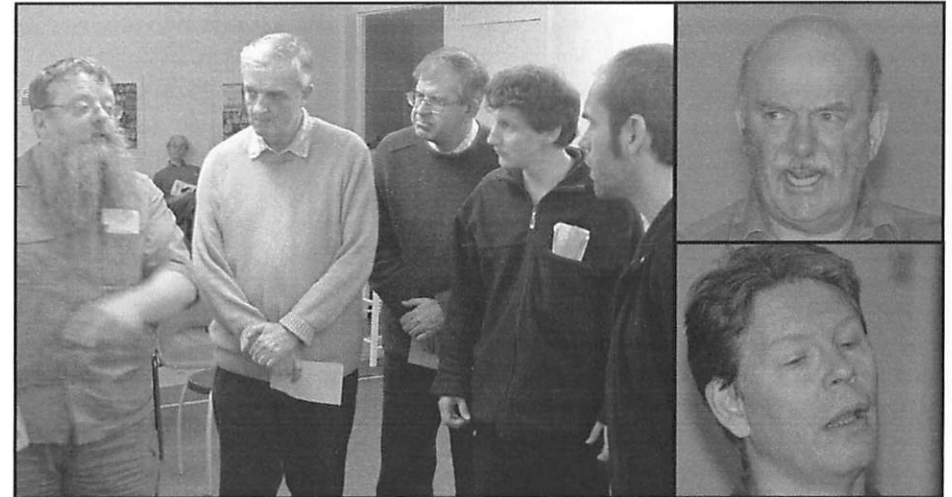
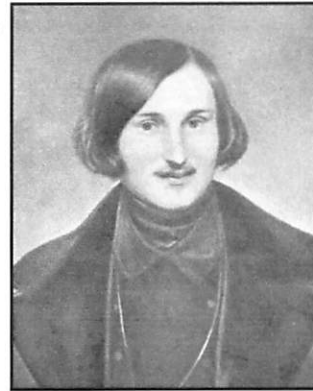
A career in education still beckoned, however, and although he began work on a comedy, *Vladimir Third Class*, he was appointed assistant professor of history at the University of St Petersburg in July 1834. The following year saw the publication of *Arabesques*, essays and stories of life in the capital, including *Nevsky Prospect*, *The Portrait*, and *Diary of a Madman*, in addition to another collection centred on his native Ukraine, *Mirgorod*.

Gogol soon tired of academic life, and his departure from the university in December was crowned by the completion of *The Government Inspector*,

which was given its first performance on April 19th, 1836, at the Aleksandrinsky Theatre in St Petersburg. The play was an instant hit, but Gogol became alarmed at attempts by both left and right-wing critics to turn it into a *cause celebre*, and again left the country, settling eventually in Rome, where he remained for the next eleven years, returning to his homeland only twice, to oversee publication of his books.

It was during these years of voluntary exile that Gogol's prose masterpieces were completed. The peculiar story *The Nose* appeared in the journal *The Contemporary*, which was edited by Pushkin. A few years later, in 1842, *The Overcoat* was published in a collection of Gogol's works, but this story, which subsequently became one of the most famous stories in Russian literature, was overshadowed at the time of its publication by the release of Gogol's novel *Dead Souls*, a mordant portrayal of provincial Russian society that triggered a strong reaction.

Gogol continued to agonise, morally and spiritually, over the purpose of his fiction, and in the summer of 1845 he burned the manuscript of the second volume of *Dead Souls*, destroying five years' work. And the following year, the erstwhile hero of the liberals published his notorious *Selected*



Clockwise from top left: Chris Brown, Simon Jackson, Bob Hucklesby, Colin Pile, Stuart Glossop, Dave Williams and Andy Cragg

Allendale Centre. David is also a member of the Broadstone Players. As for bribes – "When I was 17, just after I passed my driving test and had my first car, I tried to bribe my Dad to lend me the road tax disc from his car as mine had expired. All I received instead was a severe reprimand – I always buy them now, and on time!"

The third Brown in the cast – all unrelated – is **Peter Brown**. This is Peter's first role for Wimborne Drama since 2001 when he appeared in *The Madness of George III* and *Ten Times Table*. Since then he has completed a BTEC national diploma in drama, taken a lead role in an independent feature film called *Money Shot* and helped with fight choreography on a short film entitled *Lotus Flowers*. In *The Government Inspector* he plays a police constable who steals spoons!

This is **John Bruton's** first acting experience since school. "Nobody is more surprised than me," says

John, "that my debut has turned out to be a role in which I speak only in German! I do hope that there are not too many people in the audience who speak the language fluently."

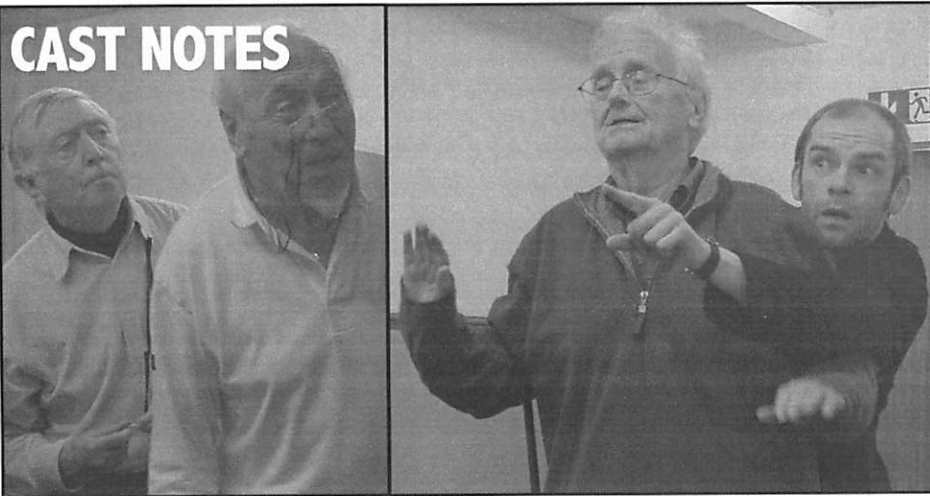
Like husband John, this is **Carol Bruton's** first role with Wimborne Drama, although she is no stranger to live performance. As a member of the Bach Choir in London, she has sung in several concert halls around the world including the Sydney Opera House. Also she has taken part in several state pageants including the Queen's 40th anniversary at Wembley Stadium and the 50th VE and VI celebrations in Hyde Park and Buckingham Palace. "As the youngest of three children, I always got the smallest part in family Christmas plays. I am happy to continue the tradition in this production as Korobkin's Wife!"

Andy Cragg was previously a member of the Zenith Theatre Company performing in *Cabaret*, *Hay Fever* and many musicals – "the non-singing, non-dancing

roles - there are some!" says Andy. This is Andy's first on-stage performance for Wimborne Drama, having been off stage shouting into a microphone as 'Voice of Man' in *Stepping Out*. He says that he has never been bribed or bribed anyone, except, perhaps, one or two kopecks to Wimborne Drama in order to appear as The Postmaster in this intriguing play - and to perform in this beautiful theatre.

This is **Tony Feltham's** 32nd production with Wimborne Drama. His portrayal of Lord Fancourt Babberley in *Charley's Aunt* earned Tony the 2004 Daily Echo Curtain Call Award for the Best Actor in a Comedy. Other recent roles include Gerald Croft in *An Inspector Calls*, a tempter/knight in *Murder in the Cathedral* and Jack Favell in *Rebecca*. "No bribe was required to be part of a great comedy duo to rival Laurel and Hardy," says Tony, "The hardest part was agreeing the name. I still think Bobchinsky and Dobchinsky is more catchy but I had to give in

CAST NOTES



John Bruton and Roy Birch

David Pile and Stuart Glossop

Jeremy Austin most recently played Derek Jobson in *RolePlay* and Thomas Becket in *Murder in the Cathedral* in the Minster. "Like his colleagues, Zyemlyanika the Health Commissioner is arrogant, self-serving, blinkered, and susceptible, though perhaps a little less easily, to the false conclusions induced by a guilty conscience. How do you pronounce his name? Well, the stress is on the final syllable, so when you think of him, think 'knickers'."

Barry Baynton plays 'utterly innocent' Khlopov who, he says, shows respect to anyone higher in rank, so bribes are out of the question. Barry is a familiar figure here at the Tivoli where he has been a volunteer for many years, as well as directing a number of plays for Wimborne Drama, including *Forty Years On*, *Habeas Corpus*, *Ten Times Table*, *Lion in Winter* and *Loot*.

Roy Birch was for many years actively involved in musical theatre, appearing as Fagin in *Oliver*, Higgins in *My Fair Lady* and

Judd Fry in *Oklahoma*. Since putting his singing voice into retirement, he has appeared in Wimborne Drama's *Murder in the Cathedral* and *Rebecca*. Here he plays the Magistrate, whose name, "Lyapkin-Tyapkin", is derived from the phrase "lyap-tyap" which is used to describe something done rapidly and slapdash, which is appropriate in his case.

Joe Brooks - veteran of more than 50 plays most recently played Sir Henry Angkatell in *The Hollow*, and William Tabb in *Rebecca*. "Have I ever taken a bribe? I have, although I didn't realise it at the time. It was December 1943 and I was stationed with the RAF in Alexandria where I was overseeing the work of an Arab motor engineering firm. One morning I found a crisp Egyptian £5 note in my desk - nearly two weeks pay! - which I was told was my Christmas present for my help during the year!"

Chris Brown is well known in Wimborne as Town Mayor's

Serjant and Town Crier. Onstage Chris has appeared in *The Madness of George III*, *David Copperfield*, *Charley's Aunt* and *Flesh and Blood*. "In 1981 a friend and I were in Prague (then under the Soviet yoke) and we managed to bribe our way to getting the best seats in the house to see a play we had previously been told was sold out for weeks in advance. Notes pressed into the theatre manager's hand soon saw us led to seats swiftly vacated by some minor officials who had to go and sit on the aisle steps. We later learnt that all the tickets for this play, which was considered subversive by the State, had been bought by the Communist Party to stop any free thinkers getting in to see it."

David Brown originally trained in Drama and Theatre Arts and returned to the stage in 2004 after a 15-year break. This is his first venture with Wimborne Drama but will also be appearing in *Dial M for Murder* in May. Recently, he appeared in the panto *Robinson Crusoe and the Pirates* at the

Passages from Correspondence with Friends, in which he defended the Tsarist autocracy and serfdom. Again, Gogol was taken aback by the hostility it encountered, and in 1848 he embarked on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, in a vain search for spiritual solace.

In his latter years, after his return to Russia in 1848, Gogol fell prey to religious mania, and became chronically ill through self-imposed starvation. On February 21st, 1852, in a final act of creative self-sacrifice, he burned the rewritten second volume of *Dead Souls*, and died ten days later, from exhaustion and malnutrition, at the age of forty-two.

The table of ranks

THE Table of Ranks, introduced in Russia by Peter the Great in 1722, determined a person's position and status according to service to the tsar rather than to birth or seniority. The ranks remained in force until the Russian Revolution of 1917.

This is what the French Marquis De Custine recorded in his journals of 1839 whilst touring Russia:

Peter the Great took it into his head that the aristocracy thought too much and were too independent. This great master of arbitrariness could think of nothing better than to divide the people into different classes, irrespective of the name, of the birth of individuals, or of the illustriousness of families. Thus, the son of the greatest lord of the Empire could be a member of an inferior class while the son of one of his peasants could rise to the top classes, according to the good pleasure of the Tsar. This is how Russia became a regiment of sixty million men; it is called the *tchin* and is composed of fourteen classes, each of which has privileges which pertain only to it.

The fourteenth class is the lowest. It is placed immediately above the serfs and gives its members the sole advantage of being called free. This freedom means only that no one can strike a member of this class without incurring criminal proceedings. In return, every individual who forms a part of this class must write the number of his class on his door, so that no superior can be led into temptation of error. This fourteenth class is made up of the most menial employees of the government: postal clerks, letter carriers, and other subordinates charged with carrying or executing the orders of superior administrators. It corresponds to the grade of non-commissioned officer in the imperial army. The men who compose it are servants of the Tsar, not serfs of an individual, and they have the feeling of their social dignity; as for human dignity it is not yet known in Russia.

All the classes of the *tchin* correspond to equivalent military ranks. Thus the hierarchy of the army is found, so to speak, in parallel with the hierarchy that reigns in the entire State. The first class is the peak of the pyramid and is composed today of a single man: Marshal Paskievitch, Viceroy of Warsaw. Since it is solely the will of Tsar which brings about advancement of the individual in the *tchin*, a man may rise step by step to the highest military honours without having served in any army. The favour of advancement is never asked for, but is always manoeuvred.

There is in this social organisation an immense power of fermentation which is put at the disposal of the chief of State, a fever of envy so violent, a straining of minds toward ambition so constant, that by now the Russian people must be inept in everything except the conquest of the world.

(Extract from *Journey For Our Time: The Journals of the Marquis De Custine Russia 1839*)

WIMBORNE DRAMA

presents

The GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR

By Nikolai Gogol

Translated and adapted
by Alistair Beaton

TIVOLI Theatre
15-17 February 2007

In memory of Sheelagh Williams

CAST

Mayor
His wife, *Anna*
Their daughter, *Marya*

Magistrate, *Lyapkin-Tyapkin*
Commissioner for Health, *Zyemlyanika*
Director of Education, *Khlopov*
Postmaster, *Shpyokin*
Bobchinsky, *local landowner*
Dobchinsky, *local landowner*
Dr Hübner, *local physician*

Police Superintendent, *Ukhovyortov*
Police Constable, *Svistunov*

Khlestakov, *a minor civil servant*
Osip, *his servant*

Mishka, *Mayor's servant*
Avdotyia, *housekeeper*
Waiter, *at the inn*

Locksmith's Wife, *Poshlyopkina*
Sergeant's Widow, *Ivanova*

Abdulin, *shopkeeper*
Shopkeeper 1
Shopkeeper 2
Shopkeeper 3

Korobkin, *retired landowner* **JOE BROOKS** / **DAVID BROWN**
Korobkin's Wife **CAROL BRUTON**
Khlopov's Wife **CAROLYN HEWITT**
Lyapkin-Tyapkin's Wife **CHRISSIE NEAL**

Gendarme

DAVE WILLIAMS
JAN SINGFIELD
CAROLINE MCBREARTY

ROY BIRCH
JEREMY AUSTIN
BARRY BAYNTON
ANDY CRAGG
TONY FELTHAM
GRAHAM HAWKINS
JOHN BRUTON

BOB HUCKLESBY
PETER BROWN

STUART GLOSSOP
DAVID PILE

SIMON JACKSON
CHRISSIE NEAL
COLIN PILE

CAROLYN HEWITT
CHRISSIE NEAL

CHRIS BROWN
COLIN PILE
BOB HUCKLESBY
SIMON JACKSON

COLIN PILE

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RICHARD NEAL

Designers

RICHARD NEAL
JACKSON ELLEN

Sound Designer

JACKSON ELLEN

Production Manager

CHRISSIE NEAL

Assistant Stage Managers

DAVID BROWN
LYN GREENE

Costume Designer

ANNE PONTING OF
ELECTIA COSTUMES

Theatre Production Manager

RUSSELL PARKER

Theatre Stage Managers

ASHLEY THORNE
STEVE CHARTERS

Lighting & Sound

DON SHERRY

Publicity & Programme Editor

RICHARD NEAL

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RICK DYER MARK ELLEN KRISTIN WILLIAMS
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