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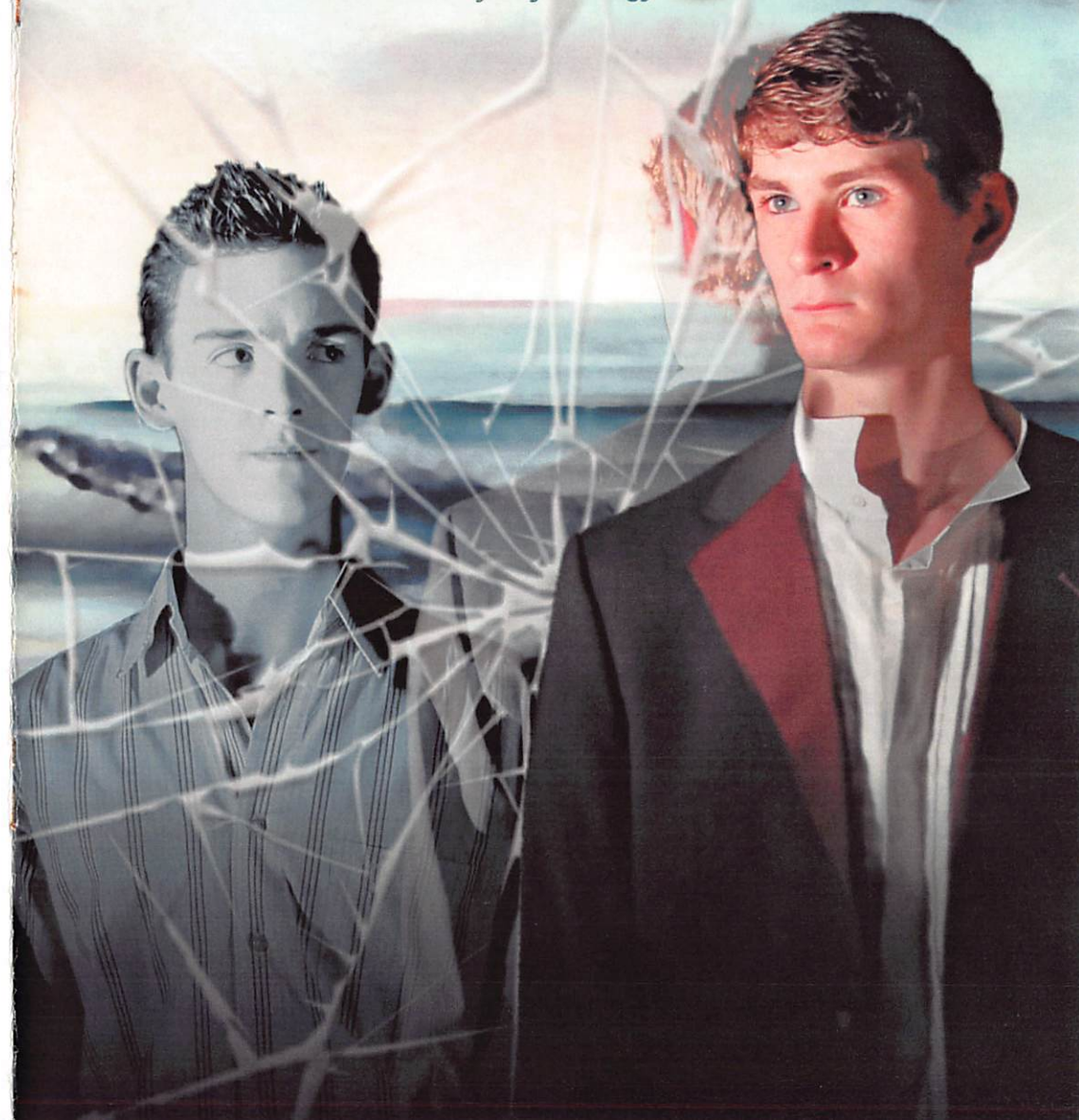
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# The Talented Mr Ripley

By Phyllis Nagy





WELCOME to the Tivoli Theatre and Wimborne Drama's eightieth year and its first production of 2008, The Talented Mr Ripley.

You may have heard of the novel by Patricia Highsmith, you may have seen the film version by Anthony Minghella, but I was very delighted to discover a stage version adapted by Phyllis Nagy. The play version has no scene structure but takes advantage of a continuous narrative, which overlaps in both time and location. Therefore it is challenging to both the cast and the crew. The play is set in four locations: America, Mongibello, an apartment in Rome and Tom Ripley's imagination.

This is the third production I have directed for Wimborne Drama and is altogether very different from my previous productions, Charley's Aunt and Stepping Out, which were comedies. In this psychological thriller the central character Tom Ripley is an ambitious talented young man who will stop at nothing to get what he wants. In my direction of this play I wanted to explore the audience connection with the central character. In the play we hear all Tom's thoughts and feelings, it's his story from his point of view. Should we admire the talents of a villain?

I would like to thank everyone who has been involved with this production. They all deserve a huge debt of thanks for their hard work and commitment to this project. From established members Paul Dodman, Boo Feltham, Penny Pearson, Alfie Tyson-Brown and Andy Cragg on stage and Colin Pile, David Brown, Phyllis Spencer, Carey Fern on the technical side, they have all been a joy to work with. We have welcomed as part of the team newer members Greg Verver, Jackie Lawson, Michaela Slatford, Paul Oliver, Ryan Clements, Steve Symonds, Michael Smith and Alison Clements.

I have to give a special thanks to Rob Cording who, since joining Wimborne Drama during the final week of Journey's End last November, has impressed so many people with his enthusiasm, energy and commitment. Thanks Rob for all your hard work on this your first major role on stage.

Thank you for your support and I hope you enjoy the performance.

**STUART GLOSSOP (DIRECTOR)**

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**JACKIE LAWSON  
(MARGE SHERWOOD)**

After many years away from the amateur dramatic scene, Jackie found a fresh taste for treading the boards after appearing in Brownsea Open Air Theatre's All's Well that Ends Well in 2007. Jackie is extremely pleased to have been given the challenge of playing Marge Sherwood for Wimborne Drama in the Talented Mr Ripley, and what a challenge it has become to perfect her American accent! Jackie looks forward to appearing as Vera in Castle Player's Production of And Then There Were None in April and once again having a minor role in the forthcoming BOAT production of The Merchant of Venice.

**PAUL OLIVER  
(TENENTE ROVERINI)**

Paul has been performing in local productions for the past two years, playing parts in Shakespeare, Wilde, a musical, comedies, and dramas. This will be Paul's last production (for the

foreseeable future) as he feels it is time to focus on his career. He would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has made these couple of years so much fun.

**PENNY PEARSON  
(EMILY GREENLEAF)**

Penny has been with Wimborne Drama for five years, appearing in Loot, Murder in the Cathedral and Roleplay. Penny says: "I feel very sorry for Emily Greenleaf. I think she's probably tried to do all the right things - marry well, be a good wife, provide a son and heir - and what has she got to show for it? A disinterested husband, an absentee son and an early death to look forward to!"

**MICHAELA SLATFORD  
(SOPHIA)**

Michaela joined Wimborne Drama in 2007. Since then she has been an Assistant Stage Manager for the productions Relatively Speaking and Journey's End. Playing the role of Sophia is Michaela's

first acting part with the company. Sophia is a street smart young Italian call girl. Michaela says: "I like Sophia; she is a feisty girl and gets one over Tom before she leaves him. This is something which very few characters manage to do."

**ALFIE TYSON-BROWN  
(FAUSTO)**

Alfie is a 15 year old from Wimborne who has been involved in Wimborne Drama since 1999. He has appeared in David Copperfield, On the Razzle, Charley's Aunt, and Journey's End. He has enjoyed acting from an early age and has been enthusiastic about doing so. He has been thoroughly looking forward to this production as it is the most challenging he has done to date.

**GREG VERVER  
DICKIE GREENLEAF)**

This is Greg's second production for Wimborne Drama. In November he gave an "outstanding performance" (Daily Echo) as the naïve young officer Raleigh in Journey's End.

PLAYWRIGHT, screenwriter and director Phyllis Nagy was born in New York City and has lived in London since 1992. She was Writer in Residence at the Royal Court Theatre in London and is currently writing for the Royal Court Theatre, the Royal National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Her plays include Weldon Rising, written in 1992, first staged at the Royal Court Theatre and the Liverpool Playhouse; Butterfly Kiss, first staged at the Almeida Theatre in London in 1994; The Scarlet Letter, an adaptation of the classic novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne, first staged at the Denver Center Theatre in the US in 1995 and premiered in the UK at the 2005 Chichester Festival; Trip's Cinch, first staged at the Actors Theater of Louisville in 1994; Disappeared, first staged



at Leicester Playhouse and subsequently at the Royal Court Theatre in 1995; and The Strip, also first staged at the Royal Court Theatre in 1995. Her adaptation of Patricia Highsmith's novel, The Talented Mr Ripley, was first staged at Watford Palace Theatre in 1998. Never Land premiered at the Royal Court in 1998.

Her work has been performed widely throughout Europe, Australia, Canada and the United States. She translated Chekhov's The Seagull in 2003 for the Chichester Festival and Claudine Galea's The Idiots for the Royal Court Theatre's International Programme. She directed the first productions of Disappeared and The Scarlet Letter in the UK, and the Italian-language premiere of Never Land in Rome in 2001.

She has most recently been working as a writer/director in film. Her first feature film, Mrs Harris, starring Ben Kingsley and Annette Bening, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in September 2005. She has also adapted for film two other Patricia Highsmith novels, Found in the Street and Carol.

PATRICIA HIGHSMITH was an American author of more than twenty books. Born in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1921, she was raised in New York. Her parents, who separated before she was born, were both commercial artists. Her father was of German descent and she did not meet him until she was twelve - the surname Highsmith was from her stepfather. For much of her early life she was cared for by her maternal grandmother. She read English, Latin and Greek at Columbia University, graduating in 1942.

Her first novel, *Strangers on a Train*, published in 1950, proved to be a major commercial success and was filmed by Alfred Hitchcock in 1951. But her work was not always well received in America and she spent much of her life in England, France and Switzerland.

Writing under the pseudonym of Claire Morgan, in 1953 she published *The Price of Salt*, which had been turned down by her previous American publisher because of its frank exploration of homosexual themes. The book was reissued in 1991 under the title *Carol*.

Her most popular literary creation was Tom Ripley. The dapper sociopath first appeared in her 1955 novel, *The Talented Mr Ripley*, for which she was awarded the Edgar Allan Poe Scroll by the Mystery Writers of America. Highsmith wrote four more Ripley novels. The books document the degenerate and deviant behaviour of a character some of Highsmith's friends described as her alter-ego.

According to the writer Marijane Meaker, with whom Highsmith had a relationship in the 1950s:

"Ripley was completely immune from liability of any kind, and that was her. She was sort of grandiose."

Meaker added:

"She was always herself in her male characters" and often behaved like a gentleman.



## ROB CORDING (TOM RIPLEY)

Rob only started acting in recent years. The Talented Mr Ripley marks his debut performance on the Tivoli stage. Recently he took part in a school production of *Oklahoma!* playing the part of Ike Skidmore. Rob has only been a member of Wimborne Drama for a very short time, as he joined during production week of the last play, *Journey's End*. He helped out where possible and prompted at times, and enjoyed the experience so much, he eventually auditioned for a part in the Talented Mr Ripley and here he is!! He hopes you enjoy the show!!

## ANDY CRAGG (REDDINGTON)

Andy was previously a member of the Zenith Theatre Company appearing in both *Cabaret* and *Hay Fever*. Since becoming a member of Wimborne Drama he has appeared in *The Government*

Inspector, *Dial M for Murder*, *Stepping Out* and most recently, *Relatively Speaking*. Of his role in *The Talented Mr Ripley* Andy says: "Reddington is a character that appears at the beginning of the play and introduces us to Tom Ripley's character when dealing with other people. It's a very short role in this intriguing play but sets the scene."

## PAUL DODMAN (HERBERT GREENLEAF)

Paul has been with Wimborne Drama for the past ten years and was last seen on stage in our November production of *Journey's End*. Favourite roles have included Proctor in *The Crucible*, the Prince of Wales in *The Madness of George III* and Orsino in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. Paul has directed three times for the group and particularly enjoyed working on *Daphne du Maurier's Rebecca* in 2005. He

says: "Herbert Greenleaf seems a lost soul, like many other characters in the play. He has a complicated, prickly relationship with his wife, Emily, and is at a complete loss as to why Dickie should have abandoned the family business. He is fooled completely by Tom Ripley, as becomes evident at the end of the play..."

## BOO FELTHAM (AUNT DOTTIE)

Boo's last stage appearance was in *Stepping Out* in 2006, also directed by Stuart Glossop. Her previous productions with Wimborne Drama include *RolePlay*, *Outside Edge*, *The Hollow*, *The Lion in Winter*, *An Inspector Calls* and *David Copperfield*. Before joining Wimborne Drama, Boo performed in musicals and pantomimes at the Tivoli, including *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Me and My Girl*, *Showboat* and *Little Miss Muffet*.





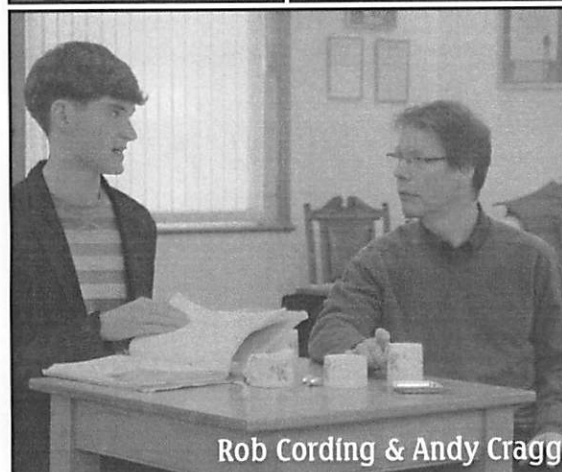
Rob Cording & Alfie Tyson-Brown



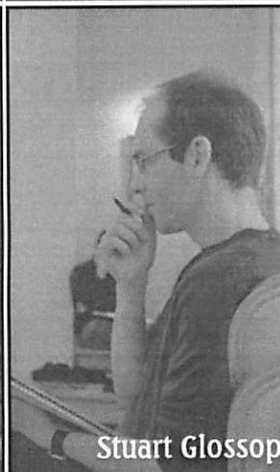
Greg Verver & Jackie Lawson



Penny Pearson



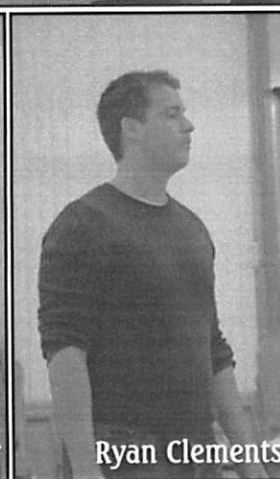
Rob Cording & Andy Cragg



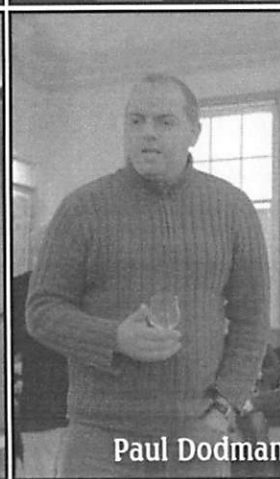
Stuart Glossop



Paul Oliver



Ryan Clements



Paul Dodman

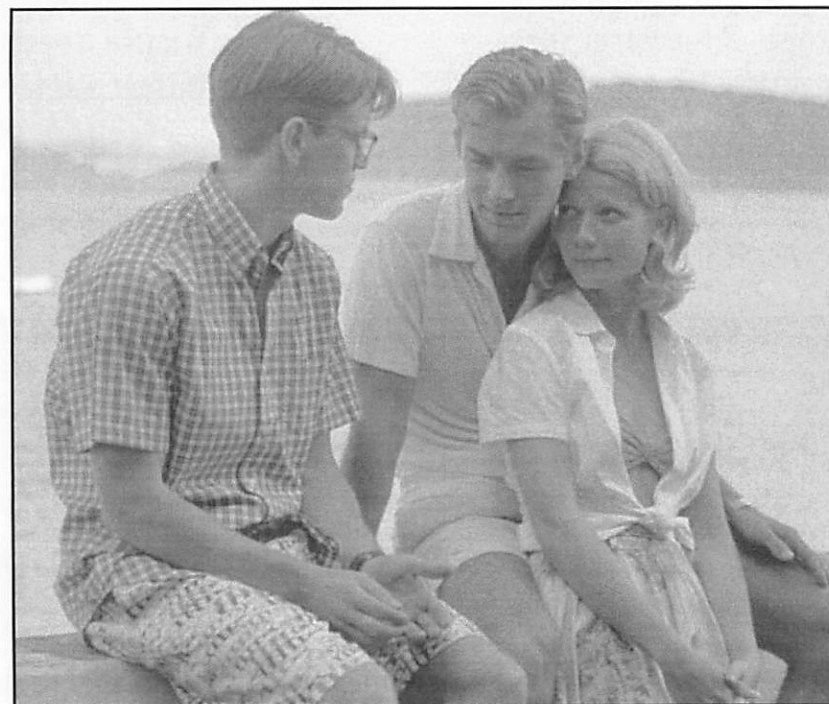
"If a woman came into the room, she would get up, grabbing the crease in her trousers, and she'd bow."

Meaker explained: "I think Pat's wonderful gentleman's demeanour hid a lot of anger . . . She was angry at so many things: at her mother [who had tried to abort her], at her publisher [who sometimes rejected her books], at this country [America] for not loving her work as people did in Europe . . . That's what gave her the desire to get even. But she did it on paper. She was born to the genre. She once said to me that life didn't make any sense if there wasn't a crime in it."

As Highsmith herself once confessed: "I myself have a criminal bent. I have a lurking liking for those who flout the law."

Patricia Highsmith died in Switzerland on February 4, 1995.

THE TALENTED MR RIPLEY has been adapted for film twice, first by René Clément in 1959 as *Plein Soleil*, starring Alain Delon as Tom Ripley, and then again by Anthony Minghella in 1999 with an all-star cast including Matt Damon, Jude Law, Gwyneth Paltrow (pictured below) and Cate Blanchett.



# **WIMBORNE DRAMA**

presents

## The **Talented Mr Ripley**

by Phyllis Nagy

ADAPTED FROM THE NOVEL BY PATRICIA HIGHSMITH

### **THE COMPANY & DIRECTOR WOULD LIKE TO THANK:**

The Staff and Volunteers  
of The Tivoli Theatre

The Royal British Legion (Wimborne)  
for use of rehearsal space

Heidi and all her team at Eskape hair  
for their kind contribution of time  
and effort in styling Marge's hair

The Layard Theatre at Canford School  
for the hire of furniture and set for  
this production

And for assistance with costumes:

Claire Camble-Hutchins and the Canford  
School Layard Theatre Wardrobe  
Department

Anne Ponting of Eclectia Costumes

Castle Players Wardrobe

### **CAST**

<b>Tom Ripley</b>	<b>ROB CORDING</b>
<b>Dickie Greenleaf</b>	<b>GREG VERVER</b>
<b>Marge Sherwood</b>	<b>JACKIE LAWSON</b>
<b>Freddie Miles</b>	<b>RYAN CLEMENTS</b>
<b>Herbert Greenleaf</b>	<b>PAUL DODMAN</b>
<b>Emily Greenleaf</b>	<b>PENNY PEARSON</b>
<b>Aunt Dottie</b>	<b>BOO FELTHAM</b>
<b>Fausto</b>	<b>ALFIE TYSON-BROWN</b>
<b>Sophia</b>	<b>MICHAELA SLATFORD</b>
<b>Tenente Roverini</b>	<b>PAUL OLIVER</b>
<b>Reddington</b>	<b>ANDY CRAGG</b>

**Other parts played by MICHAEL SMITH and MEMBERS OF THE COMPANY**

**TIVOLI THEATRE  
13 - 16 FEBRUARY 2008**

In memory of Lady Jane Hanham - Friend and Patron of Wimborne Drama

### **CREATIVE TEAM**

**Director**

**STUART GLOSSOP**

**Company Stage Manager**

**DAVID BROWN**

**Assistant Stage Managers**

**PHYLLIS SPENCER**

**JAN STEVENSON and STEVE SYMONDS**

**Properties**

**ALISON CLEMENTS**

**Costumes**

**CAREY FERN**

**Theatre Stage Managers**

**ASHLEY THORNE**

**STEVE CHARTERS**

**Lighting**

**RUSSELL PARKER**

**Sound**

**COLIN PILE**

**Accent Advisors**

**SHIRLEY BELWOOD and VERENA SMITH**

**Choreographer**

**CLAIRE CAMBLE-HUTCHINS**

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