



ABSOLUTE HELL

By Rodney Ackland

Saturday 2nd – Thursday 7th December at 7pm

Preview: Friday 1st December at 7pm

Matinee: Tuesday 5th December at 1pm

Studio One

Book online at their.ie

____ THE PRODUCTION

Smoke filled rooms.
Falling rubble.
Flowing drinks.

In the aftermath of WW2, devoted members of a faded Soho club drink into the darkness. La Vie En Rose offers this eclectic mix of shell-shocked libertines a temporary refuge to push away the coming dawn and drown themselves in illusion, before the harsh and inevitable break of day.

____ CREATIVE TEAM

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Director | *Davey Kelleher |
| Set Designer | *Ronan Duffy |
| Costume Designer | *Chrysi Chatzivasileiou |
| Lighting Designer | Zia Bergin Holly |
| Sound Designer | Lara Gallagher |
| Wigs and Make Up | Leonard Daly |

____ CAST

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Christine Foscett | Alexandra Bierer |
| Doris | Alison Kinlan |
| Mrs Marriner / Fifi | Allie O'Neill |
| Douglas Eden / P.C Molsen | Connor Curran |
| Maurice Hussey | Conor O'Hara |
| Michael Crowley | Daniel Tracey |
| Butch/Nigel | Eimhin Fitzgerald Doherty |
| Sam Mitchum | Gabriel Draper |
| R.B. Monody | Gemma Allan |
| Bill | Isabelle Clare |
| Elizabeth | Kailey Greenberg |
| Cyril Clatworthy | Nathan Patterson |
| Lettice Willis / Madge | Niamh Murphy |
| Hugh Marriner | Sean Landau |
| Siegfried Shrager / | |
| D.I Roach | Shane Mc Cormick |
| Julia Shillitoe | Síofra Ní Éilí Duggan |

____ CREW

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Company Stage Manager | Thomas Wall |
| Deputy Stage Manager | Beth Thomas |
| Assistant Stage Manager 1 | Bianca Baguio |
| Assistant Stage Manager 2 | Dora Starr Poulos |
| Production Manager | TJ Danielsson |
| Set Construction | Oliver Kampman |
| Costume | Thea Xia |
| Chief LX | Alison O'Shea |
| Lighting Programmer | Avram Rosewood |
| Scenic Artist | Alessandro Molina |
| Sound HOD | Christopher Nolan |

* Welcome back to all The Lir Academy graduates working on these productions

— ABOUT THE PLAY

The original version of *Absolute Hell* by Rodney Ackland was titled *The Pink Room* (or *The Escapists*), it opened in Brighton and then was performed at the Lyric Hammersmith in London in 1952. This version was first presented in 1988 and adapted for television by the BBC in 1991. It was revived in 1995 for the National Theatre UK and again in 2018.

Absolute Hell is a poignant and visceral exploration of post-war Britain, capturing the turbulent zeitgeist of a nation grappling with the aftermath of the Blitz. The play unfolds in the dimly lit, gritty La Vie en Rose, a basement drinking club that serves as a metaphorical microcosm for a society wounded and disoriented by the consequences of war.

The play holds a mirror to the immediate post-World War II era, a period marked by physical and emotional devastation. Set against the backdrop of the 1945 General Election, the spectre of the Nazi death camps casts a haunting shadow. The once hopeful dreams of victory have given way to a harsh reality of rubble, rationing, and a society grappling with the profound disillusionment of a world forever altered.

Rodney Ackland crafts a tapestry of characters, each carrying the weight of their own desires, and conflicts. The inhabitants of La Vie en Rose represent a society yearning for connection, love, validation, and purpose amid the ruins of their collective aspirations. At the heart of *Absolute Hell* lies a raw and unflinching portrayal of disappointment and isolation. The characters, once united by a sense of purpose during the war, find themselves adrift as the promises of victory have yielded little more than shattered dreams. The seedy atmosphere of La Vie en Rose mirrors this moral and social decay.

Loss, in its myriad forms, permeates the narrative – loss of innocence, comrades, ideals, and, ultimately, faith in a brighter future. As they navigate the wreckage of their lives, the quest for redemption emerges as a driving force, a glimmer of hope amid the darkness.

Absolute Hell depicts a society in flux, struggling to redefine itself amidst the debris of war. The play captures the tension between the old and the new, tradition and change. Its thematic richness lies in its ability to resonate with audiences across time by exploring universal human struggles against the backdrop of historical upheaval.

GRADUATING ACTING STUDENTS



Alexandra
Bierer



Alison
Kinlan



Allie
O'Neill



Connor
Curran



Conor
O'Hara



Daniel
Tracey



Eimhin
Fitzgerald
Doherty



Gabriel
Draper



Gemma
Allan



Isabelle
Clare



Kailey
Greenberg



Nathan
Patterson



Niamh
Murphy



Penny
Morris



Sean
Landau



Shane
Mc Cormick



Siofra
Ní Éilí Duggan

GRADUATING STAGE MANAGEMENT & TECHNICAL THEATRE STUDENTS



Alessandro
Molina



Alison
Meehan



Alison
O'Shea



Arden
Tierney



Avram
Rosewood



Bianca
Baguio



Callum
Stanley



Cathal
Brace



Chiara
Mangold



Christopher
Nolan



David
McGee



Dragana
Stevanic



Elizabeth
Thomas



Isaac
McGrath
Long



Jenna
Crossan



Josefina "TJ"
Danielsson



Jovetta "Jovy"
Tan Ler Sin



Maeve
Talbot



Niamh
McGrath



Oliver
Kampman



Peter
Bond



Sarah
Doyle



Thea
Xia



Thomas
Wall

____ PRODUCTION CREW

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Technical | Alanna Busher Carley Brad O'Brien Jen Faherty Lara Hughes Nell Snyder |
| Costume | Aoife Doyle Danny Nolan Ellen Hodggers Sophia Brocklebank |
| Set & Stage | Bradley Whelan Coco Londres Gráinne Clancy Kaitlin Gaddy Konstantinos Papagiannis |
| Scenic & Stage | Clíodhna Ryan Elena Cullen Eoin Bloomer Bonner Theo Lynch Zoren Haljaste |
| Props Department | Colm Lombard Jovetta "Jovy" Tan Ler Sin |

This production of *Absolute Hell* is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

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____ INFO

Booking Tickets

Book tickets and find out more about shows at The Lir Academy in the What's On section of our website thelir.ie/events

Content Warnings

Please note that this production contains adult themes. If you would like to learn more, please contact boxoffice@thelir.ie or see the events page on our website. Suitable for ages 16+.

____ THANK YOU

Many thanks to our staff and tutors who have supported the realisation of this production.

Thanks to Bewley's Café Theatre, the Gate Theatre, The Gaiety Theatre, and the Abbey Theatre for supporting this production. Additional thanks to Joseph Collins & Project Arts Centre, Colm Maher, Michael Canney, Alessandro Molina, and Eimer Murphy.

We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to all our supporters who give so generously to our students. As always, we are immensely grateful to our bursary supporters who work with us to ensure that training at The Lir Academy is made possible for more emerging talent.

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For further information on our fundraising activities, please contact development@thelir.ie

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