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 thelir.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 Foskett 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 /          Shane Mc Cormick
D.I Roach
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
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
Siófra 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
Josefine “TJ” Danielsson
Jovetta “Jovy” Tan Ler Sin
Maeve Talbot

Niamh McGrath
Oliver Kampman
Peter Bond
Sarah Doyle
Thea Xia
Thomas Wall
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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