



The Browning Version by Terence Rattigan

John Taplow	Elliot Relton Williams
Frank Hunter	Jon Elves
Millie Crocker-Harris	Anne Marie Green
Andrew Crocker-Harris	John Fenner
Dr Frohisher	Bill Bosworth
Peter Gilbert	Jeremy Goldthorp
Mrs Gilbert	Carly Taylor

The action passes in the sitting room of the Crocker-Harris's flat at a Public School in the South of England in July 1948.

There will be an interval of 20 minutes

Crew

Director	Ruth Miller
Assistant Director	Liz Thompson
Production Manager	Tony Cutofford
Stage Manager	Tony Cutofford
Prompt	Shirley Johnson
With thanks to Maggie Parkes	

Properties	Erica Young I/c Jackie Crisp, Clair Henrywood Kathy Loke, Les Raffilly Kim West, Bill Young
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Costume	Maureen Liggins I/c Pam Coleman, Anne Houston Nancy Edwards
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Lighting Design	Ian Knight
Lighting Operator	Pete Bagley

Sound Design and Operation	Dave Cornish
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Projection Design	Ian Hill
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Still Life by Noel Coward

Laura Jesson	Anne Marie Green
Myrtle Bagot	Rachel Newey
Beryl Walters	Carly Taylor
Stanley	Jeremy Goldthorp
Albert Godby	Bill Bosworth
Alec Harvey	Jon Elves
Man	Tony Cutofford
Bill	Michael Hammond
Johnnie	Matt Sweatman
Mildred	Sara McDonagh
Dolly Messiter	Gennie Holmes

The action of the Play takes place in the refreshment room of Milford Junction station in 1936.

Set Design	Doug Griffiths
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Set Build	Doug Griffiths, John Griffiths Des Ali, Dave Crisp Dave Holmes, Sally Patalong Simon Sharpe, Mike Tooley Kevin Woods, Ben Woodward
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Set Paint	Judy Talbot, Emma Withers Paul Chokran, Sue Hadlum Sally Patalong, Dave Crisp Doreen Belton
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Set Change Team	Dave Crisp, Joe Followell Bill Butler, Mike Tooley Sam Taylor, Simon Sharpe Dave Holmes, Paul Chokran Tony Cutofford
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Review

The English stiff upper lip is celebrated in these two excellent plays at the Criterion with demanding dual roles for several members of the talented cast. Particularly enjoyable was John Fenner's wonderful performance as stiff classical scholar Mr Crocker-Harris, in *The Browning Version*, written by Terence Rattigan in 1948.

John perfectly captured the unbending rigidity of a man who continues to do his best despite life's disappointments.

And 16-year-old Elliot Relton Williams demonstrated fine timing and lots of promise as schoolboy John Taplow, the one pupil who develops a soft spot for the grouchy old schoolmaster - which is more than can be said for his faithless wife, played by Anne Marie Green.

Having seen Anne Marie play a loveable flippertygibbit in *The Memory of Water*, I have to say she looked less comfortable in this hard-edged harridan of a part, not helped by an unflattering 1940s dress.

Jon Elves was his usual suave self, his role hardly varying much for the second play, *Still Life*, when once again he is opposite Anne Marie, although by then she gets to change into some stylish 1930s outfits and seems far more at ease as a good woman tortured by temptation.

In *Still Life* we again meet Bill Bosworth, who switches from bombastic headmaster to saucy railway porter, and Jeremy Goldthorp and Carly Taylor who go from idealistic newly-weds to courting hopefuls.

I rather enjoyed Rachel Newey's version of Beryl, the buffet bar manager, with her fluctuating high-falutin accent, as the real drama is played out on a table nearby, over perhaps a slightly longer period of time than was entirely compelling.

And yes, if you think *Still Life* sounds all too much like *Brief Encounter* then remember this is the one Noel Coward wrote earlier. The famous film version, with Celia Johnson and Trevor Howard, is the expanded and more sexually restrained version.

As usual, the Criterion set-makers work as hard as the cast. How do they continue to do it?

Personally I preferred the Rattigan play. But full marks for these twin productions focusing on restraint, love and duty. As director Ruth Miller points out, how different from our world today.

A combined running time of 2 hours 40 minutes

Barbara Goulden



