WOYZECK – GEORG BUCHNER  (source Wikipedia)

*Woyzeck* is a stage play written by Georg Buchner. He left the work incomplete at his death, but it has been variously and posthumously "finished" by a variety of authors, editors and translators. *Woyzeck* has become one of the most performed and influential plays in the German theatre repertory.

Büchner probably began writing the play between June and September 1836. It remained in a fragmentary state at the time of his early death in 1837. *Woyzeck* was first published in 1879 in a heavily reworked version by Karl Emil Franzos. It was not performed until November 8, 1913 at the Residenztheater, Munich, where it was produced by Max Reinhardt.

*Woyzeck* deals with the dehumanising effects of doctors and the military on a young man's life. It is often seen as 'working class' tragedy, though it can also be viewed as having another dimension, portraying the 'perennial tragedy of human jealousy'. The play was admired both by the German naturalist Gerhart Hauptmann and, subsequently, by expressionist playwrights. It is loosely based on the true story of Johann Christian Woyzeck, a Leipzig wigmaker who later became a soldier. In 1821, Woyzeck, in a fit of jealousy, murdered Christiane Woost, a widow with whom he had been living. He was later publicly beheaded.

**Plot summary**

Franz Woyzeck, a lowly soldier stationed in a provincial German town, is living with Marie, the mother of his child which is not blessed by the church as it was born out of wedlock. Woyzeck earns extra money for his family by performing menial jobs for the Captain and agreeing to take part in medical experiments conducted by the Doctor. As one of these experiments, the Doctor tells Woyzeck that he must eat nothing but peas. It is obvious that Woyzeck's mental health is breaking down and he begins to experience a series of apocalyptic visions. Meanwhile, Marie grows tired of Woyzeck and turns her attentions to a handsome drum major who, in an ambiguous scene taking place in Marie's bedroom, sleeps with her.

With his jealous suspicions growing, Woyzeck confronts the drum major, who beats him up and humiliates him. Finally, Woyzeck stabs Marie to death by a pond. While a third act trial is claimed by some to have been part of the original conception, the fragment, as left by Büchner, ends with Woyzeck disposing of the knife in the pond and most renditions extrapolate this with him drowning while trying to clean himself of the blood after having dumped the knife in deep waters.

**Commentary**

*Woyzeck* is a comment on social conditions as well as an exploration of complex themes such as poverty. Woyzeck is considered as morally lacking by other characters of higher status, such as the Captain, particularly in the scene in which Woyzeck shaves the Captain. The Captain links wealth and status with morality suggesting Woyzeck cannot have morals as he is poor. It is the exploitation of the character Woyzeck by the Doctor and the Captain which ultimately pushes him over the edge.

**Audition and Rehearsal Commitment**

Auditions will be held on Tuesday 3rd December 2013. Rehearsals will be on Tuesdays from 7th January @ 7.45pm – 10pm to production, plus Wednesday 12th, 19th and 26th February 2014 and Saturday 1st March. Tech and Dress on 3rd and 4th March, with production running Wed 5th-Sat 8th March. Further information from Andrew Hodgson – andre56gary@yahoo.co.uk
KISS ME LIKE YOU MEAN IT by CHRIS CHIBNALL

Kiss Me Like You Mean It was written in 2000 while Chris Chibnall was attached to the Soho Theatre – he has since gone on to become a very successful TV writer whose credits include Torchwood, Doctor Who, Life on Mars and most recently Broadchurch.

Kiss Me Like You Mean It is a celebration of love and life; it examines the nature of love, how it starts and then changes in the course of an enduring relationship. Chris Chibnall wrote the play when he was at the start of a relationship, hoping it would continue; two years later he was married to the girl who inspired the play. The title comes from song of the same name by The Magnetic Fields; Chris Chibnall is a great Northern Soul fan.

Synopsis

The action of the play takes place in Manchester on a hot, midsummer night. Two parties are taking place; one in the downstairs flat of a terrace house and the other in the upstairs flat. Tony and Ruth meet for the first time in a backyard at 3.0am, both seeking respite from a drink-sodden party. They have both come with other people. Both Tony and Ruth are in their late twenties, stuck in a rut, trying desperately to escape their circumstances and both want to love and be loved.

Hesitant communication begins between the two of them and as the conversation flows it emerges that Tony has had testicular cancer and Ruth is wavering on accepting a proposal of marriage from her partner of 5 years. Ruth is spiky and not inclined to friendliness- but something keeps them talking – then they get a glimpse of an older couple in various states of undress through their bedroom window and from the accompanying noises it is obvious what’s going on. Then the older man Don emerges in dressing gown with a twinkle in his eye looking to source a condom from an increasingly bemused Tony. They strike up a conversation. Don and his wife Edie live in the flat upstairs and fight and love like any ordinary couple. Edie appears and she strikes up a conversation with Ruth.

The second half of the play takes place in Don and Edi’s flat. It is obvious from all the open bottles that they are celebrating. They play games, dance, reminisce and listen to music, mostly Northern Soul. Music has played a great part in their shared lives, they were regulars at Palais dances. Gradually it becomes clear that what they are celebrating is their last night together. Don is terminally ill and Edie is going to administer an injection. They invite Ruth and Tony up to witness Don’s will. After much deliberation Edie agrees that she will join him.

The play ends with Tony and Ruth vowing to stay together. From the rooftop they hear a tune which was one of Don and Edie’s favourites. They realise that Don and Edie have carried out their plan.

Whilst the play is about love, the beginning of a love and the end of a love, it is also about making the most of every opportunity that life presents us with. The play is topical, full of humour, has four very interesting characters and is touchingly optimistic.

Character Profiles.

All four parts are very endearing, fun to play but also challenging in the range of emotions they display. Don and Edie have a lot to do in Act 2!

Tony 20’s Both characters are working class people with dead-end jobs and low aspirations, but you get the sense they’re restless for something more. Both characters are working-class people with dead-end jobs and low aspirations, but you get the sense they’re restless for something more. Tony is slightly awkward, self depreciating and his sense of humour and his efforts to impress are like a clumsy puppy dog’s. He nevertheless is quite insightful. He has a monologue at the end of Act 1 which became popular with actors auditioning for Drama School (see below).

Ruth 20’s
Ruth is disillusioned with her current relationship and like Tony is looking for something she cannot quite express. She can be acerbic, defensive and she has a brittle, stay-away-closer sophistication. She opens up as the play progresses. Tony and Ruth end the play by deciding to give it a go together. Their love match is sharply contrasted with the older couple and represents the freshness and beginning of a new love.

Don late 60’s/70

Don and Edie radiate the sort of intimate togetherness that only time can create. They laugh, joke, dance and cry together. They ‘courted’ at the Palais dances and were avid lovers of Northern Soul. Don is a strutting and goatishly devoted old salesman of Singer sewing machines. He supports a set of values of ‘go get ‘em’ and do things without complaining. He has a soft but also a grumpy side. His breakdown at the end and avowal of his love for Edie is moving in the extreme.

Edie late 60’s/70

Edie is the fun-loving and strong-willed partner in the relationship. She adores Don and cannot bear to see him suffer. Her love is unconditional. She draws up an ‘agenda’ of what they are going to do on their last evening together and continually nudges Don forward with it. She shocks Don during the evening in many ways but the love they share is deep and lasting. She is the one that is going to administer the injection.

Tony’s Monologue

Listen … I need to…Um…say…. I mean… I know we only met earlier…and I nearly set you on fire… and we’re both going out with people. Obviously that’s quite tricky. But… well… you’re the most beautiful woman I have ever laid eyes on in my entire life. I saw you and my heart leapt. You make me want to change my life. To… participate. I know it’s not possible and that you have a boyfriend and we’re not…compatible or whatever but…I just… I know it’s stupid… but maybe just hear me out for a second and then you can tell me I’m an idiot and we’ll go back in and pretend this never happened but… I want to travel the world with you. I want to bring you ice cold Amstel to your Greek shore. And sit in silence and sip with you. I want to go to Tesco’s with you of a Sunday. Watch you sleep, scrub your back, rub your shoulders, suck your toes. I want to write crap poetry about you, lay my coat over puddles for you, always have a handkerchief available for you. I want to get drunk and bore my friends about you, I want them to phone up and moan about how little they see me because I’m spending so much time with you. I want to feel the tingle of our lips meeting, the lock of our eyes joining, the fizz of our fingertips touching. I want to touch your fat tummy and tell you you look gorgeous in maternity dresses, I want to stand next to you wide eyed and hold my nose as we open that first used nappy, I want to watch you grow old and love you more and more each day. I want to fall in love with you. I think I could. And I think it would be good. And I want you to say yes. You might feel the same.

Beat

Could you? Maybe?