



Trapped: The cast of *When Atlas Met Tantalus*

Drama uncovers hidden secrets

An East Finchley producer is staging the second play from her theatre company this month following her first show at the Edinburgh Fringe five years ago. Tiff Milner has written *When Atlas Met Tantalus* herself and is directing it with Emily Layton.

It's a taut and witty one-hour LGBTQ+ period drama following the story of two men trapped together in a Victorian parlour where they face the secrets they are hiding from each other and from themselves.

Tiff, 28, said: "We have had the kind sponsorship of a London-local LGBTQ+ historical fiction writer named KJ Charles, whose new book *Death in the Spires* is also out this year. We're really grateful for her support and believe it's a really great

sign to see LGBTQ+ creatives supporting each other, especially for a show during Pride Month."

When Atlas Met Tantalus runs from Sunday 2 to Saturday 8 June at the Lion & Unicorn Theatre in Kentish Town, curtain up at 7.30pm every night, followed by a run at The Bridge House Theatre in Penge from Tuesday 11 to Saturday 15 June. Tickets can be booked at www.greateggtheatre.co.uk/tickets

Review: Silver Lining

Upstairs at the Gatehouse, Highgate

by Ruth Anders

Silver Lining, written by comedian and TV host Sandi Toksvig, was first performed at the Rose Theatre, Kingston in 2017 and recently enjoyed a brief season at Upstairs at the Gatehouse in Highgate.

The comedy sees five elderly ladies stuck in their care home in Gravesend as flood waters outside rise and a national emergency is declared. The staff seem to have deserted them and they rely on an unpredictable young freelance carer who arrives out of the blue and, more importantly, on themselves.

Part One was a little uneven and a few prompts were needed for forgotten lines. This interrupted the flow, as did the reliance on one-liners, some very predictable jokes and a deluge of swear words which, on the night I attended, prompted loud guffaws from members of the audience. The play's most ancient inmate surprised the others by producing a sparkling pink dildo from her box of possessions which again brought the house down.

Part Two was more rewarding, with further character development and a resultingly quieter audience. We heard about May's long-term partner Peggy, whose funeral she had been unable to attend; May's sister June, a devout Christian, turned out to be a kleptomaniac; Gloria was hoarding pills for a planned suicide; and Maureen admitted that she had been happy to watch her husband die in the bathroom after a loveless marriage.

Dildo-wielding St Michael, the oldest inmate, so named because of the label on her nightgown, had dementia and some of the best lines. Sandi Toksvig herself was there the night I went, and I wonder what she thought of it.

This reviewer wanted to like the play but found it hampered by dated concepts despite the Garden Suburb Theatre's cast giving it their all. However, the audience gave it a very warm reception. Upstairs at the Gatehouse has admirable ambition and attracts a healthy crowd (the run was sold out), and *The Archer* looks forward to their future offerings.



Church setting: *The Romeo and Juliet* cast rehearse at St John-at-Hampstead

Star-crossed lovers meet in Hampstead

The Hampstead Players, one of London's longest established amateur theatre troupes, is building up to this year's summer production of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. It will be the first time in the company's 48 years that they have performed the play.

This adaptation, set in a Verona of the 1940s, promises an entirely fresh take on a firm favourite. The cast have been in rehearsals since April, including learning fight choreography. The venue is the parish church of St John-at-Hampstead, a Grade 1 Listed building in the heart of Hampstead village, NW3 6UU.

There are evening performances on Thursday 4, Friday 5 and Saturday 6 July. Doors will be open from 7pm and the show begins at 7.30pm. There will also be a matinee on Saturday 6 July, starting at 2.30pm. Tickets can be bought at the TicketSource link on the Hampstead Players homepage at hampsteadplayers.org.uk



Merry men and ladies: Some of the *Robin Hood* cast

Robin Hood rides into the Suburb

Garden Suburb Theatre's next production will be *Robin Hood In The Wood*, a pantomime-style family show in the heart of Little Wood in Hampstead Garden Suburb from Friday 21 to Saturday 29 June.

It's a battle for good over evil as Robin and his gang fight the dastardly Sheriff of Nottingham, his sidekick Gisbourne, an evil Priest, and a daft bunch of hapless guards in the infamous Little Sherwood Wood. Writer Dave Barron has cre-

ated this site-specific show for families and friends to enjoy in this unique venue. Tickets are available from www.gardensuburbtheatre.org.uk. Anyone in groups of 10+ can contact boxoffice@gardensuburbtheatre.org.uk for group discounts.

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