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LADIES' NIGHT

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Monday 9 July for one week

LADIES IN RETIREMENT

THEATRE ROYAL
BRIGHTON

PROSCENIUM

LADIES' NIGHT

by

Michael Cotton in association with John Newman

by

Stephen Minakawa & Anthony McCarten

with

Inspiration! Co-accents

with

Choreographed by

Directed by

2273 28488
ANATOMY of a MALE STRIPPER

As the MC leaves the stage the music turns jazzy and Private 69 comes bounding on — full of life and energy. His face is lit up by a thinly grins. He leaps around the stage and down into the audience grabbing the punters suggestively. Oh me, not me, please don’t stop here... you can almost hear them say it. But there’s nothing remotely threatening about Private 69. He’s a cheeky naughty boy certainly, but he’s too charming to be scary. As his act is on — the clothes come off. There’s no doubt he’s a sexy lad — good looks, nice body. The right bits in the right places and the right sizes. But there’s no sterilisation here, nor any shade whatever of the stereotypical female stripper. This soldier-boy routine is rougher, sharper and much more “full” than that.

The stage persona is not just a fabrication either; he really is a bright amusing character — as full of life as his act and as deceptively as that naughty smile. I talked to him in the small hours of the night after a gruelling day when he had performed in three different clubs, in London, Basingstoke and Bristol, before returning to his home in Oxfordshire, a round trip of nearly three hundred miles. He was characteristically relaxed, honest and amusing.

John, alias Private 69, comes from a working-class London background. His family are full supportive of his profession. In fact, far from being the black sheep he is something of the blue-eyed boy. He’s the one with the nice car, the house, and the black bank balance.

He took up his current profession some five years ago aged twenty, when he entered a male stripping contest in the row closed Piccadilly club in London. In the audience were some agents out to spot new talent. In the stripping business agents handle strippers of both sexes as well as singers, club comics, drag acts and other “speciality” performers.

Private John was a big success and found himself with some immediate bookings. Since then he has discovered that agents are fine so long as they work for you and not the other way around. Mostly now he handles his own bookings, fortunately able to choose where and when he works. He fiddled through his address book page after page of neatly written contact numbers, all of them regular dates.

In fact, his first paid performance was a Sunday lunchtime event at the Beverly Hills Club in Brighton. Just five days after winning the competition. In that original act he was already a boxer, dressed to kill, as you might say, and armed with a nasty looking knife with which to cut through his shoes laces and other encumbrances.

That first professional engagement turned out to be one of his most memorable. As he straddled the laces on his left shoe the knife slipped easily through the leather tongue and into his foot. In seconds there was blood everywhere. The audience loved it. Here was an act with amazing special effects. Wore still the very energetic bull of his routine was still to come, with somersaults and cartwheels into and out of the audience. He quickly bound up the foot with his sock end carried on mantently. As he says: "You have to finish the act, no matter what happens. Otherwise you just don’t get paid!"

Money of course is the name of the game in stripping like any profession, "if you are a popular stripper you can earn good figures — up to £2,000 on a really heavy schedule for a one week tour" he says. "More often though, for a single routine, about 15 minutes performance, you get from £75 to upwards of £150." Most strippers aim to work two or three events in a day — perhaps one at lunchtime and two in the evening — and avoid long-distance travelling if possible.

The demand for male strippers comes from two quite different sources: women’s venues and gay men’s clubs. Many of the strippers work for both male and female audiences, though some either prefer one to the other or refuse to work for gay or straight clubs depending on their own particular tastes. Private 69 works both, getting most of his work from pubs, clubs and functions on the "ladies" night" circuit. He was looking forward to key third one of the big events of the stripping year when eight male strippers entertain a thousand women at a club in Chesterfield. After each of them has done their act the three selected by the audience come back on for a second spot.
women. "The whole atmosphere in a
hen night is more excited, more game
and altogether more fun. Guy men on
the other hand are quiet audiences,
much more self-conscious of their
environment, less prepared to let their
hair down or let livin' change them."

The most difficult audiences of all are
the men, and this is where the need for
mixed couples comes in. Normally
naked men move freely from women to
women in the audience bringing the usual
mixture of embarrassment and
emulation. "Women together are out
for a good time and game for almost
anything. And that's all part of my act."

The problem with The Cock and Hen
in London, and the kind of mixed
audience, is that you never know who
is with who and if you are going to
provide some sort of hostile response
from someone's husband or boyfriend.

He has to tread carefully here,
identifying appropriate jokes in the
crowd and working them into his
script. Meanwhile the more restrained
women look on enjoying other peoples
reactions, but staying clear of the
action themselves.

Ironically though, in these mixed clubs
which feature both boy and girl
strippers, it is the boys who are by far
the most popular. Only at lunchtimes,
with the "punts" are almost exclusively
male. On their own (or lunchtimes
from the office or the building site) do
demonstrating girls come into their
own. In the evenings the boys are
perhaps the specialty acts, whilst the
girls become somewhat more
eccentric, more part of the
candlesticks, frills and malarky
decor.

Of course the worst thing of all for a
stripper is to be ignored. If your act
relies on some variety of exhibitionism
you need a little excitement by way of
reaction! Private 69 has a fairly regular
booking at a gay pub in Kent where he
finds nothing but the money appealing.

The regulars say "I've seen them all before
anyway, and they just deliver on their
promises and their pub while I carry on
with my act. But they still ask me back
in fact I'm there again in a few weeks".

Then there is the opposite problem,
irritatingly associated with hen nights,
when someone in the audience gets
a little too carried away! There was an
occasion in London when the girl he
invited to remove her G-string shouted
he was a pervert(

In fact Private 69 arrived on the scene
as well trained as he could be for his
current profession. His training was
provided by a series of training
sessions provided by the army. He was
in fact a soldier for three years, which
is how he developed his body. Whist he
was in the forces he boxed regularly, swam,
ran and generally got very fit. At the
same time he lost any inhibitions about
showing off his physique - life in boot
camps barnets doesn't exactly
encourage modesty or offer much by
way of privacy.

And he enjoys his work. "If I didn't
I wouldn't give it up tomorrow. The turn-on
for me in stripping isn't a sexual one. I
enjoy the variety of this life and the
excitement I can pick up from
audiences. The big kick is to take
pleasure in other peoples enjoyment,"

better still is the fact that people talk
about his act afterwards, as they would
discuss an actor or a singer they have
been watching. It's that curious notion
of fame. "You don't need to hear
people talking about you, nor what
they say. It's enough to know that they
do."

He enjoys the business too. He and his
better half often go to see other
strippers he knows or has worked with.
It's the kind of professional socialising all performers seem to thrive on, keeping abreast of what other people are doing and talking shop. He knows the business well and admires a whole range of different acts. "Oh this is difficult," he says. "I suppose I particularly like Redhead Red, Just J, Simon Toppur, Billie Holms, Danny Boy, Andy King, Dave C, Hordle Horn, Tim the Mechanic, Dale Knight and Nick The..." "Nick the what?" I ask, trying to keep pace with him. "No, Just Nick The", he smiles.

Their stage acts vary enormously. At one end of the spectrum is the outrageously funny Hordle Horn, whom Private 69 describes as 'Top of the bill for comedy. Bottom of the bill for looks. He looks like a clown, but he's a real comedian'... Then there is Dale Knight, a real old trouper who does a stick, wing tip routine, stripping as he goes. Top and tail as you might say. He's not exactly lovely young dream, but he's good and his act's a lot of fun. On the other hand there are really serious strippers like Tony Frisco and Street Hawk (two more of his favourites, though the latter has recently gone back to his native Australia). Their acts are truly professional and very sexy, every step choreographed, every movement of every sinew designed to heighten the effect.

Private 69 himself's somewhere between the two. His routine is a kind of controlled chaos of acrobatics, jerky dancing and mock sexualities. But there are two things people invariably react to - his smile and his bum. "It doesn't matter where it is or what the audience is like. Those are always the parts of my act that turn people on. Everyone I've talked to says the same."

But then his act doesn't really rely on his face or his body (though he'd hardly have got where he is with a harlequin or a pot belly!). It's the combination of everything: the physique, the humour, the boyish innocence and that smile.

Unlike many other strippers he has kept the same basic act for five years. "If it works what's the point of changing it?" And he plays so much on his audience's reaction that it's as different each performance as it's the same.

Working as much as he does he hardly needs to visit the gym to keep in shape. His act is a work-out all in itself. And he is certainly no body-blower - that just, as much as a spare tyre, would ruin his sinuous-next-door appeal. Only occasionally does he feel the need to drop in on the local sports centre to tone up some muscles which is losing the necessary definition (mostly his chest, he says). But even then he sees the need to be careful - "after a hard day's work out, what sort of performance are you likely to give in the evening?" He recalls the tale of another stripper, Tony Frisco, who became so addicted to the weights room that he had to give up stripping to concentrate on his search for the perfect body.

One day he'll give all this up too. Maybe in ten years' time, maybe more, maybe less. Perhaps he'll open a night club in London. He's already appeared in commercials and films - so that could be another possibility, or pop singing or acting. "Really I don't mind. I never expected to wind up where I have - it just happened - so I'm prepared to face the future with no preconceptions. It will happen anyway. And for the moment there's always his other half and the form where they live.

If he is happily fatalistic about his own future he is more pessimistic about the future of the stripping business itself. "In lots of venues, particularly council-run ones, the picture is already starting to change. There is a new puritanism about it, and to be more accurate British hypocrisy is making a comeback. In the world of politics, there is a moral bashing they think, and what starts with local authorities will soon spread to more commercial dates."

To begin with strippers will be required to "tone down" their acts no more than bus entertainment, just S strings and putting on pouches. Audience participation will be put to as a recent court case in Leeds suggests, where a DJ and a pub manager were fined (and sacked) for keeping a disorderly house. (The case concerned two girls who had applied oil to a stripper Dave C's body while hiding under his cloak.)

Sometimes it is going to be more prudent than ever before - but as long as there's demand there'll be boys and girls ready and willing to bare either more than their souls.

Our sexy romp inside a Samurai stripers cloak
Girls tell all inside out of Britain's naughtiest pub

The Deadline

Steve C Sunday Mirror 11 Feb 1980
LADIES' NIGHT

by Stephen Sinclair & Anthony McCartney

Craig Guy Oliver Watts
Barry Jeremy Beckman
Grahame Jason Hetherington
Gavin Alan Perrin
Wesley Andrew Goth
Norman Andy Deane
Bernie Ian Marr
Glenda Elizabeth Elvin

There will be one interval of 15 minutes.
Jeremy Beckman

Jeremy's theatre credits include the parts of Tracy in Accommodation, Jill in Why Joe Hurry? Shakespeare's Marlowe in Cheapside and Cut in Life Like Pigs. He appeared with and co-wrote the comedy revue team 4-pot. He also co-wrote and directed Never September and Everything But the Shower Scenes.

His television appearances include the part of Pope in Daybreak and Marcus in Shave in South Africa. Jeremy also appeared in an episode of The Bill for Thames Television.

Jeremy was in the original production of Ladies' Night at the Oldham Coliseum.

Andy Deane

Andy trained for the stage at London's Arts Educational School, graduating from there in 1989 after completing a three year diploma course. Whilst at college he appeared in many productions including Hamlet, The Tempest, The Glass Menagerie, Taming of the Shrew, Macbeth and The Crucible. After graduation he appeared in Richard III, The Cherry Orchard, A Moon for the Misbegotten, A Christmas Carol, The Lion in Winter, and The Importance of Being Earnest. His television appearances include EastEnders, The Bill, and Holby City. His film credits include The Others.

Elizabeth Elvin

Elizabeth Elvin trained at the Arts Educational Schools and started her career performing at the Glasgow Citizens Theatre where she played principal boy under the direction of Charles Hawton - a role she has successfully repeated in several major productions. She then spent a year in America under contract to MGM and immediately on her return created the comic role of Mrs Bird in Dade's British TV series "Bread". She was featured in the "People's Choice Awards" and "The Times" and was nominated for "Best Actress in a TV Series".

Since then she has appeared in a number of stage productions including "The Importance of Being Earnest" and "The Importance of Being Earnest". Her television appearances include EastEnders, The Bill, Holby City, and Casualty. Her film credits include "The Others".

Jason Hetherington

Jason graduated from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 1988. His theatre work includes Tigris in The Songbird, Harry in Company, Lysander in A Midsummer Night's Dream, Oedipus in Aeschylus, Mike in Food for Thought (Edinburgh Festival), and contemporary Greek theatre with the Cambridge Independent Theatre. His television work includes A Place in the Sun, and A Hand on the Bridge. His film credits include "The Others".

Andrew Gough

Andrew recently left the Academy of Live and Recording Arts where he trained for three years. He has just finished touring England and Ireland in The Importance of Being Earnest. Other theatre work includes Billy Elliot and Final Me with the Gery and Talesw Theatre Companies. His television work includes The Oxford Road Show and The Cat in the Hat. His film credits include The Others.


Last year Elizabeth returned to the West End where she created the role of the Empress Jules in the premiere production of C.A. Leivis's The Magdalen's Name. This play was performed at The Oldham Coliseum and most recently Breather and Stamford in A Study in Scarcity at the Greenwich Theatre.

Ian Marr

Ian was born in Oldham and studied at Raine School College where he gained a BA (Hons) degree in Theatre Arts. He made his debut as Doug in Oldham Coliseum's production of Me and My Girl. Returning there to play the lead role in the sequel, Seaside or Shad. Other Coliseum credits include Pass in Roots, Plaf, and director of the Annual Winter Workshop. He has also appeared in The Importance of Being Earnest. Other theatre work includes Billy Elliot and Final Me with the Gery and Talesw Theatre Companies. His television work includes The Oxford Road Show and The Cat in the Hat. His film credits include The Others.

Guy Oliver-Watts

Guy trained at the East 15 Acting school, since when he has performed in a variety of productions. He was in Greek, for Manchester Library Theatre Street, for Galatastra Mercury Theatre. The Assignment, for Old Red Lion Theatre, and a wide variety of Shakespearean productions for the Elizabethan Theatre Company.

Guy is very pleased to be cast in this role, having been one of the original members of Lastrin's Night, which was first performed at the Coliseum, Oldham.

On television, Guy's parts have included a young reporter in Across the Lake, an assistant dealer in Capital City for Benson Films, and a prize suspect in Criminal Justice. In addition to his acting abilities, Guy is an experienced and accomplished singer/songwriter having performed with several known bands.

Paul Kerryson

Paul was Resident Director for the Library Theatre Company in Manchester before his appointment as Assistant Director for Oldham Coliseum, where his productions have included Prof (Manchester Evening News Best Musical Award winner), A Christmas Carol (Godspell), Breaking the Code, In the Heights, Comedy of Errors (currently on national tour), and Chicago. He recently directed and choreographed Babes in Toyland for Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

His television appearances include London's Burning, LWT's The Big and Square Deal.

Alan Perrin

Alan Perrin trained for the stage at the Webber Douglas Academy. He has worked extensively in the theatre and in 1997 and 1998 was nominated for the Manchester Evening News Best Actor Awards for his performances in Elkeld's East and West. He also worked with Himself in the London production of Greek. He has recently spent a season at the Coliseum Theatre, Oldham as Tim in Polaroids Off and on and in the West End in Cinderella.

He has appeared in productions such as Sleeping Beauty, The Hound of the Baskervilles, and many others.

Charles Cusick-Smith

After graduating from Glasgow School of Art in 1978, Charles went on to do a postgraduate course at the Slade School of Art. He followed this by becoming an Arts Council trainee designer for London Festival Ballet. Since that time he has been responsible for designing many shows – 90% of which he did. In his capacity as Associate Designer for Manchester’s Library Theatre Company where he was for four years. Whilst with the Library Theatre he designed costumes for the European premieres of Stephen Spielberg’s Pacific Ocean Tides and Pacific Overtures. Charles has also undertaken freelance work at Chester, Newcastle, Birmingham, Liverpool and Bolton. In 1990 he was awarded the Manchester Evening News Award for Best Designer for Pacific Ocean Tides. Other work includes the costume design for Peter Pan in York, Private Lives at Newbury’s Blackpool Tower Theatre, Oh! The Ritz on the West End and many others.

His television appearances include London’s Burning, LWT’s The Big and Square Deal.

Anthony McCarten

Anthony McCarten has written four plays for the stage: Cyril BEELE Where Arm Art Goes? (1994), Yellow Century Membrane (1995), Linden Night (1988), and Yellow England (1989). All have been performed around New Zealand. For television he has written episodes of Women’s World, Staging over from fairyland, and Walk Away, and has just completed his first novel, The Secret of the Red Cross, for publication this year.

Stephen Sinclair

Stephen Sinclair lives in Wellington and writes for film and the stage. Other plays include The Black Rose, a comedy about a couple who win the lottery, which received productions last year at the Fortune Theatre, Dunedin and the Depot Theatre, Wellington. Also Le Motif, a play about Polynesian living in post-Massey performed at the Depot Theatre in 1984. He has recently completed a race entitled The Secret of the Red Cross, which was produced in Wellington in 1980. Stephen is co-writer of the feature film Meet the Fishman a bizarre satire with puppets. The film is in post production and due for worldwide release in early 1998.
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tomato & lime sauce
(£2.50)
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mayonnaise & rice in place
(£2.50)

To Conclude
Chocolate mousse
Tiramisu
Grand marnier soufflé
Baked apple & orange pudding
Mandelbrot loaf

2 course £11.00
3 course £12.00

DAVID LAND
(Chairman)

David Land began his theatrical and stage involvement when he left school. He began producing concerts starring Ben Lee, Anne Batten, Bradley Walsh, the
Spinners and many other west End stars. He became Head of Programming for the Harrow Odeons and introduced them to Great Britain. He
also became a manager of the Dagmar and Girl Fingers. He presented numerous shows with leading
artists in London, Paris, Las Vegas and many other
cities across the world. With his wife, Gillian, and Jackie
and Jojo he presented all the cabaret and jamborees to
over 100,000 people. Re-opening the Museum of Hermes,
Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice have their musicals
in America and sold the London and New York
Theatre tickets in America and New York. For his production of "The
Phantom of the Opera" in London and New York, he
produced with Brian Singleton from the Nine Network
of Australia, and the "Phantom of the Opera" for the
New York Theatrical Company, Academy Award, directed many other productions both in
London and New York. For his production of "The
Phantom of the Opera", he was the recipient of a Tony Award, a New York City Benefit
Dinner Award, several Screen Actors Guild Awards and many
other, gold and platinum records. In April 1792 David Land was appointed Deputy Chairman of the Robert
Stevenson Group, Negotiators for worldwide
recordings, stage and film productions of Joseph..."Joe Castello and atas have all been rehearsed in
his Windsor Street Office in London. He is also
Chairman of The Young Vic Theatre in London. Through an article in the Evening Standard in February 1994, he heard that the Royal Theatre Royal was
sold to leal landlords to be referred to the council that this was not true. In July they approached
him to purchase the theatre and the result, becoming
the "Edwards in December 1995, after his
ship in the museum, some of the greatest stars of Stage and
Screen have appeared at the Theatre Royal. Past
Stars: Sonya Peterson, Lenore Beaulieu, Richard Baver, Alan Lets, Colin Baker, Peter Brocco, Kenneth
Barrington, Richard Wynn, Brenda Clark, George Cole,
Timothy Dalton, John Cleese, The Drop Dead Diva Court
Theatre, Denzil Molog, Freda Pilkington, Elspeth Lorimer,
Christina Hendricks, Kevin Ewan, David Jason, Norma
Kendal, Deborah Kerr, Rita Moreno, Estelle Meredyth,
Betty Johnson, Rosalynn Farrow, Tim Manners, Julia
Mackenzie, Ian McKellan, Keith Michell, Kate
O'Hara, Peter O'Toole, The Ealing Opera, Sir
Anthony Quayle, Vanessa Redgrave, Anne Baxter,
Paul Broadhurst, Patrick Todd, Dame, Dorothy Tutin,
Denise Waterman, Michael Williams and Kenneth
York. All of these have been featured in some of the
stars. Several shows have completely sold out, and many productions
have transferred to London.

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The History of the Theatre Royal, Brighton

The Theatre Royal, Brighton, is one of the most elegant of English provincial theatres, loved by actors and playwrights alike. The theatre first opened in the 1730s as a tea house and eventually became a theatre. The present building was completed in 1812 and designed by architect John Nash. It was one of the first theatres in the country to have gas lighting and is considered one of the finest examples of Nash's architecture.

In its early years, the theatre was known for its fine productions and famous actors. During the 19th century, it was a popular destination for visitors to the seaside town of Brighton. The theatre was also known for its fine china, which was often displayed on stage. In the 20th century, the theatre continued to thrive and was the setting for many famous productions.

Today, the Theatre Royal, Brighton is still one of the most popular theatres in the country and is a major tourist attraction. It continues to produce a wide range of productions and is a important cultural hub for the city.
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