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SHOTGUN PLAYERS
PRESENTS

Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness

Written by Anthony Neilson
Directed by Beth Wilmurt

"In a world where death is at our shoulder every hour, even the smallest act of creativity is a marvelous, courageous thing." - Edward Gant

Berkeley— Behold! For your enjoyment, Master Gant has crafted an evening of incredible tales featuring his troupe of traveling performers. Submit to a sensual Edwardian world of top hats, fantastical puppets and flash powder. But beware, there is a dark underpinning to the festivities. Damsels pop pimples to reveal pearls; a young soldier gets a lobotomy to forget a lost love. It is a feast for the senses and a song for the heart! **Performances for *Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness* begin December 5 and run through January 11 at The Ashby Stage.**

What is a story for, really? An exciting tale. Sure. A strong plot. Great. Edward Gant's storytelling is certainly full of fantastical things. It's imaginative and outrageous, but it's also rife with truthful observations about human existence that punch you in the gut and pierce your heart. The play speaks to a natural human desire – the urge to control the narrative of our lives. It's a constant struggle that begs reckoning.

Anthony Neilson's *Gant* is on the one hand, a comic romp. But it's also about one man's struggle to find the real story of his life. Neilson says: "*Edward Gant* marked quite a change in my writing style. I'd never been a realist, particularly, but I'd largely stuck to a naturalistic style and more domestic settings. *Gant* was the moment when I really began to let my imagination run free, to embrace a more theatrically dynamic style and - basically - to have a little more fun with things. It was that moment when I realized - as many artists before me have realized, and as Gant himself says - that "the truth of life lies least of all in the facts". *Gant* is the only play I've written that actually addresses the nature of art and storytelling. But it's full of things that make me laugh - there's a lot of what some might call 'low-brow' sitting alongside more sophisticated material. I've never been afraid of that kind of juxtaposition and that might be where my Scottishness comes in... a certain earthiness doesn't disqualify something as a work of serious intent."

Director Beth Wilmurt notes: "I not only *connect* to this play because it's about what I have dedicated so much of my time to - storytelling and 'a life in the theater' - but I also *crave* it. *Gant* wrestles with all the big unanswered questions surrounding life, death, love and family. These are the questions that bring me to the theater again and again because no matter how much I try to get a handle on these things, they are still and will always be a *mystery*. This confrontation with the big questions reminds us that any control we think we have

over the events of our lives is really an illusion, and getting through life can really feel like an amazing feat of loneliness.”

Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness features **Brian Herndon***, **Patrick Kelly Jones***, **Ryan Drummond*** & **Sarah Moser**. Set Design by **Nina Ball**, Costume Design by **Christine Crook**, Sound Design by **Jake Rodriguez**, Light Design by **Mark D'Angelo** & Properties Design by **Kirsten Royston**.

* A member of Actor's Equity Association.

CALENDAR LISTING

WHAT: Behold! For your enjoyment, Master Gant has crafted an evening of incredible tales, featuring his troupe of traveling performers. Submit to a sensual Edwardian world of top hats, fantastical puppets and flash powder. But beware, there is a dark underpinning to the festivities. Damsels pop pimples to reveal pearls; a young soldier gets a lobotomy to forget a lost love. It is a feast for the senses and a song for the heart!

WHEN: Previews for *Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness* are December 5 - 12. Opens Friday, December 13th. Runs Wednesday and Thursday at 7PM, Friday and Saturday at 8PM, Sunday at 5PM through January 11th.

WHERE: The Ashby Stage, 1901 Ashby Avenue, Berkeley

TICKET PRICES: December 5 - 12 are Pay-What-You-Can. Regular performance nights \$20 - \$35. Advance reservations strongly advised.

For more information go to www.shotgunplayers.org or call 510.841.6500