

BETTE AND JOAN

SALLY DILLON – BETTE DAVIS

Audiences last saw Sally in Tip Top Productions' The 39 Steps directed by Dan Ellis and Talking Heads here at the Forum so add this next play Bette and Joan to the mix and there are some varied parts in those play choices! Previously Sally has been seen in productions in Chester such as Fawcety Towers (Sybil), Habeus Corpus (Mrs Swabb), God of Carnage (Veronica), and The Cripple of Innishmaan (Kate). Sally has also played many parts at Grove Park Theatre, Wrexham. Newly retired she has carried out some voluntary work in the Wrexham & Chester area and spends as much time as she can (weather permitting) on a bike! As soon as Bette & Joan is over she and her family are off to Holland with bikes so she is very much looking forward to that.

GWEN COWAN – JOAN CRAWFORD

Originally from Manchester, Gwen arrived in Chester via Kent and has since made select stage appearances. With Tip Top Productions Gwen has appeared in Stepping Out, A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum, When We Are Married, and most recently, Michael Palin's comedy The Weekend. Originally a musical theatre performer, she has now embraced plays and says Joan Crawford is her most demanding role to date "All those lines"!! Gwen is a lecturer at The Hammond in Chester.

PHIL EDWARDS - DIRECTOR

This is Philip's third directing assignment for Tip Top Productions his previous being our Millennium productions of Our Day Out and The Rise and Fall of Little Voice. One of the founding members of Tip Top, Phil has appeared in some of our big musicals, notably La Cage Aux Folles and Hello, Dolly! at the Chester Gateway. He has appeared in many of our pantomimes, indeed Phil has appeared in a variety of parts in almost 40 pantomimes. Other highlights include Godspell, Emcee in Cabaret, Outside Edge, Canterbury Tales, Dangerous Obsession and Harold Pinter's A Kind of Alaska all at Grove Park Theatre, Wrexham. Two of Phil's favourite productions in which he has appeared are Charley's Aunt for The National Trust in the grounds of Erddig Hall as Lord Fancourt Babberley and When We Are Married at Volkes Theater,, Wayland, Massachusetts. Most recently, Phil has appeared as Dame in two pantomime seasons at The Garrick Playhouse Altrincham and in their production of the Ray Cooney farce Two Into One.

The action of the play takes place at Warner Bros. Studio, Hollywood during 1962

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director – Phil Edwards
Set Designer – John McGinn
Set Construction – Chester Theatre Club, John McGinn,
Kevin Keegan and Keith Allmark
Lighting – Mark Shenton
Sound – Gary Roberts
Piano accompaniment – Simon Phillips
Music Supervisor – David Delamere
Thanks to Dial House Shop Mobility.

ANTON BURGE – AUTHOR

Anton is a writer and actor. As a writer he specialises in writing for women about celebrated women. His first play, Whatever Happened to the Cotton Dress Girl? premiered in 2008 at the New End Theatre, Hampstead, starring Paula Wilcox. This was followed by G & I (2009), and Bette & Joan (2011), which opened in the West End starring Greta Scacchi and Anita Dobson. The play went on national tour in 2012, directed by Bill Alexander. Bette & Joan opened in Germany in June 2016 and opens in Spain, Estonia, Italy, Brazil later this year. A Broadway production is planned for next year. The play was hailed as 'an evening of polished malice', and applauded for its two 'fabulous parts' for older actresses.

His next was Storm in a Flower Vase, about the society florist Constance Spry, starring Penny Downie, and directed by Alan Strachan. The Times gave it a **** review calling it 'an attractive bouquet of fragrant art and pungent emotion.' He has just completed a book entitled Portraying Elizabeth, which includes interviews with Eileen Atkins, Glenda Jackson, Miranda Richardson and Harriet Walter.

His latest performed play, Mrs. Pat, was performed at Chichester Festival Theatre in 2015 and starred Penelope Keith, it was directed by Alan Strachan. Other work includes Lady Mosley's Suite, which was read in October 2010 at the Trafalgar Studios with a cast including Emilia Fox and Patricia Hodge. He is at work on his first contemporary piece entitled Year of the Virgin.