



GREENWICH STUDIO THEATRE

Out in the Cold

By Wolfgang Borchert

25th May 1995 – 2nd July 1995

Translated by Julian Forsyth

Directed by Margarete Forsyth



PROGRAMME

The Greenwich Studio Theatre Company
&
The Greenwich Festival

present

OUT IN THE COLD

by
Wolfgang Borchert

in a new translation by Julian Forsyth

Directed by Margarete & Julian Forsyth



First Performance May 25th 1995

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During the Greenwich Festival the GST will be staging an exhibition
of German War Illustrations and German Weaponry
with the help of the Goethe-Institut.

Richard Appleyard, sculptor and arts teacher in Exeter, kindly loaned these pieces.
They will also be shown as part of an exhibition of British cartoonists
in Cologne, Germany, to be opened on Sep 8 1995.

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LONDON

THE COMPANY

Imogen Bain *River Elbe*

Trained at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Theatre includes; *Once A Catholic* (Bromley), *Daisy Pulls It Off* (Globe), *Blithe Spirit* (Vaudeville), *The Sea*, and *The Night of the Iguana* (both National Theatre), *The Showman* (Almeida), *Cartoons From A Cold Corner* (Gate), *Leonardo's Last Supper* (Tristan Bates Theatre). Recent television; *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *Jo Brand*, *Red Dwarf*, *Rumpole of the Bailey*, *The Bill*, *Made in Heaven*. Films; *The Shuttered Room*, *Scrubbers*, *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*, *Decadence*, *The Crow With Andrea Brooks* she founded The Good Luck Theatre Company. She is married to the actor Simon Holmes, with whom she has a cocker spaniel called George.

Patricia Benecke *Assistant Director*

After a British and a German MA in Drama (Royal Holloway College and Cologne University) Patricia was assistant director in Basle on *Pillars of Society*. In London, she has assisted on the recent GST revival of *The Will* and on *The Counting of Years* by Louder Than Words Theatre Company at the Young Vic. Future projects include working for L.I.F.T. this summer, assisting on *Minna Von Barnhelm* in Bonn and on the next production by Forced Entertainment. Patricia is also British Correspondent for the German Theatre magazine *Theatre Heute*.

Jack Chissick *Cabaret Director*

Jack has worked extensively in theatres all over the country, including Lancaster, Hornchurch, Farnham, Royal Exchange Manchester, and Salisbury. Favourite roles include Feste in *Twelfth Night*, Peachum in *The Beggar's Opera*, Truscott in *Loot*, the

Police Officer in *Can't Pay Won't Pay* and Pozzo in *Waiting for Godot*. He was co-author at Salisbury with the late David Horlock (the Artistic Director of Salisbury Playhouse so tragically killed in 1990) of four pantomimes in which he also played the Dame. He has also worked with companies such as Paines Plough and CVI. In London he has been seen in *Chicken Soup with Barley* (Shaw), *Merry Wives of Windsor* (Mermaid), *Anchorman* (Theatre Upstairs), *St. Joan of the Stockyards* (Half Moon), *Man is Man* (Hampstead), *Better Times* and *Fatty* (Stratford East), *Commitments* (Bush), *All or Nothing at All* and *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* (Tricycle) and *Line Em* (Royal National Theatre). He was in the national tour of *Driving Miss Daisy*. On television he has played in four Plays for Today: *Terra Noa*, *Commitments*, *Bavarian Nights* and *Beyond the Pale*, as well as featuring in *Boon*, *Minder*, *Freud*, *Birds of Prey*, *The Bill*, *Forever Green*, *Lovejoy*, *Coasting*, *Darling Buds of May*, *The Marshall* and the *Madwoman* and *Running Late*. Films include *Escape from Sobibor*, *Comrades*, *Deptford Graffiti* and *Restoration*. Latest theatre: *A Working Woman* (West Yorkshire Playhouse), *Wimpey in Popeye* (David Glass Ensemble at the Arts), *Ghosts* (Watford) and *Spanner In The Works* (GST). Jack can currently be seen as Stan Duggan in *EastEnders*.

Ciprian Dragomir *Stage Manager/Sound Design*

After arriving in England from Romania in October 1993 Ciprian was stage manager and lighting designer for the production of *Mad Forest* (St Albans Theatre) and *Double Jeopardy* (Unmask Theatre Company). Whilst training on the Technical Training Course at the Half Moon Theatre, Ciprian worked as theatre technician at the Battersea Arts Centre on the productions of *Strictly Entre Nous*, *The Promise*, and *The Ken Campbell Road Show*. He was also lighting designer on some rock concerts staged at Chat's Palace in Homerton.

Terry Edwards Mr Kramer

Terry trained at the Rose Bruford College. He has taught drama and acting in schools and colleges and has written and directed extensively. He has performed in music hall, pantomime and variety, and is currently making his return to stage work.

Vicky Emptage Co- Designer

Vicky studied at Middlesex University and is an established designer who has been part of the GST team since the beginning. Her work for the GST includes set painting and poster design for all their previous productions.

Away from the theatre she has illustrated many books and produces a range of designer stationery and gift wrap.

Margarete Forsyth Director/Designer

Margarete is the Artistic Director of the GST. She took an MA Degree in English and German at the University of Erlangen in Germany before teaching for four years at Goldsmiths College, University of London.

Since then she has embarked on a career as a theatre and opera director, directing regularly for Carlos Opera and founding The Rude Mechanicals for whom she directed Goethe's *Faust*, Büchner's *Danton's Death* and Brecht's *Life of Galileo*, all at the Young Vic Studio.

Margarete has also directed a wide range of European classics at some of London's leading drama schools.

For the GST she has directed *Minna Von Barnhelm*, *And Women Must Weep* (Nominated for Best Director - London Fringe Awards 1993/4) which she also translated, *The Nun*, *The Green Parakeet*, *A Spanner in the Works* and *The Will*. As a

designer Margarete created the sets for the GST's *Erasmus Montanus*, *Minna Von Barnhelm* and *The Will*.

For Margarete's first season at the GST the theatre was awarded a Time Out Award for Outstanding Achievement.

Julian Forsyth Director/Translator

Julian taught at Erlangen University in Germany before training as an actor at Webber Douglas Academy. As Associate Director of the GST he has adapted and directed *Erasmus Montanus* (for which he won Best Director at the 1994 London Fringe Awards), adapted *The Nun*, translated *A Spanner in the Works* and *The Green Parakeet*, and played Major Tellheim in *Minna Von Barnhelm*, Gilbert & Dr Witte in *And Women Must Weep* and The Marquis in *The Will*.

His other recent theatre work includes Dr Manette in *Tale of Two Cities* at Greenwich Theatre, Poulengey in *St Joan* at the Strand, Trevor Nunn's productions of *The Blue Angel* and *Measure for Measure* for the RSC, Wedekind's *Lulu* and Howard Barker's *Scenes From An Execution* for Ian McDiarmid at the Almeida, Barker's *The Europeans* for Greenwich Theatre and the Wrestling School, and Fagin in *Oliver* at Sadler's Wells and the Crucible, Sheffield.



Donald Francke
Colonel/Undertaker

Donald studied at Cambridge University, where he was a Footlights member. He made his London debut, whilst studying further at the Royal College of Music, with The New Opera Company at Sadler's Wells in the world premier of Arthur Benjamin's *A Tale of Two Cities*. He has played many roles with Opera North, Welsh National, Scottish Opera and Chelsea Opera, as well as the Sacristan in the Zeffirelli production of Puccini's *Tosca* at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. During Shakespeare Centenary year he toured with the Lincoln Theatre Royal Company. TV and radio broadcasts have been made all over the world, including the Savoy Operas, in promenade concerts. He has appeared many times as Mr Noye in Britten's *Noye's Fludde* and with the Bath Bach and Aldeburgh Festivals and such special occasions as the devising, singing and narrating a concert at St Alfege's Church, Greenwich, to mark the centenary, on October 13th 1984, of the Prime World Meridian. From March 1986 he starred for nearly nine years in the lead as old Deuteronomy in the West End Andrew Lloyd Webber musical, *Cats*, celebrating the record of being the longest serving performer in this role.

Daniel Fredenburgh
The Young Man with the Clock

Daniel graduated from The Arts Educational School in 1993. His roles there included Armand Duval in *Camille*, and Sky Masterson in *Guys and Dolls*. After graduation he went straight into a season of weekly rep at Frinton-On-Sea, where parts played include Paul Bratter in Neil Simon's *Barefoot In The Park*. Film and TV work includes *The Knock* for LWT, *Douche Anglais* a French feature film, and *Faith*, an independent short film. This is Daniel's second visit to the Greenwich Studio Theatre. His last role was Fortunio in Chameleon Production's De Musset comedy *Le Chandelier*.

Anne Kavanagh
Mrs Kramer/Colonel's Wife

Anne's work includes Brian Friel's *Dancing At Lughnasa* (Rose) - Garrick Theatre and on tour, Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (Rosalind) - Belgrade, Coventry; *Macbeth* (Lady Macduff) - Theatre Clwyd; Ibsen's *Brand* (Schoolmistress) - Aldwych Theatre and Thorndike Theatre, Leatherhead; Horvath's *Faith, Hope and Charity* (Magistrate's Wife) and Whelan's *The Accrington Pals* (May) - Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith; Moliere's *Tartuffe* (Elmire), Henry James/Redgrave's *The Aspern Papers* (Miss Tina) and *On Golden Pond* (Chelsea) - Mercury Theatre, Colchester; Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls* (Isabella Bird/Joyce) - Latchmere; Dario Fo's *Elizabeth* (Martha) - Battersea Arts Centre, Horvath's *Judgement Day* - Old Red Lion. She last appeared at the GST in Holberg's *Erasmus Montanus* (Nille Berg).

Ray Llewellyn
God

Repertory at Lincoln, Bristol and London Old Vic, Birmingham Rep and Mermaid Theatre. Four years at the RSC including Derek Jacobi's *Cyrano* and *Much Ado About Nothing* in Stratford, London and Broadway. *Richard II* and *Richard III* (Phoenix Theatre), Mr Pugh in *Under Milk Wood* (Albery). Recently *Court of Monte Cristo* at The Royal Exchange, Manchester. TV work includes Huw in *Out Services*, *Dr Who*, *District Nurse*, *Madog* in *Brother Cadfael*. Films: *Thief of Baghdad*, *Lion of The Desert*, *Secret Life of Ian Fleming*. Radio: Mr Pugh in *Under Milk Wood* with Richard Burton.

Claire Macaulay
Colonel's Daughter

Claire trained at Middlesex Polytechnic gaining a degree in Performing Arts, also at Montclair School of Acting, New York and with tutors from the Moscow Arts Theatre. Theatre work includes: Tommy the Cat in *Dick Whittington and his Cat* (Wycombe

Swan), Jemima Cleveland in the award-winning restoration comedy *A Busy Day* at Bristol and The King's Head, Islington, Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel* (National Tour), Fairy in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Battersea), Alice Liddell in *How About Alice?*, Mary McPherson in *The Cheviot, The Stag and The Black, Black Oil*; Hermia and Miranda in *Access to Shakespeare* (British Tour). She is also featured in the Underground Advertising campaign! Following this production she will be playing Beth in a tour of *Little Women*.

Eddie Marsan Corporal Beckmann

Eddie has been a regular member of the GST Company performing in the inaugural season: Just in *Minna Von Barnhelm*, Jacob in *Erasmus Montanus* and Grain in *The Green Parakeet*. Other theatre includes Caligula in Albert Camus' *Caligula* (Antic Hay Theatre Company), Malvolio in *Twelfth Night* in the open-air (Oxford), the Ghost and First Player in *Hamlet* (Guildford). Eddie recently appeared as the comic brother, Antonio, in Chipping Norton's Pantomime *Puss in Boots*, a facist gangleader in *EastEnders* and in a short film for the RCA.

Alex McSweeney Cabaretist/Colonel's Son

Theatre includes: *Twelfth Night* (Library Theatre, Manchester), *Savage In Limbo* (King's Head), *And Women Must Weep* (GST), *Our Country's Good* (Lyric Hammersmith), *Romeo & Juliet* (National Tour); *Rubber Dolly* (Old Red Lion); *El Salvador* (Festival Club, Edinburgh). TV and Film: *The Bill* (Thames), *Lord Byron* (BBC), *Misadventure* (Oxford Films), *Mild At Heart* (Chapter One Films), *Video Breaks* (Central Films).

Poppy Miller Girl

Poppy graduated from Webber Douglas Academy last July. Theatre includes: Desdemona in *Othello* (ADC, Cambridge); Chorus in *Dr Faustus* (Arts Theatre, Cambridge); Good Angel in *Eshu's Faust* by Gabriel Gbadamosi (Jesus College Chapel, Cambridge); Karen Wright in *Children's Hour* and Bidy in *Three Birds Alighting on a Field* (both at the Drayton Studio Theatre, London); *Under Milk Wood* (Wimbledon Studio Theatre); Agnes in *School For Wives* (Torch Theatre, Milford Haven); Tabs and the Countess in adaptations of Angela Carter's short stories (Bridewell, London) and Hermione and Chorus in *Agamemnon's Children* (Gate Theatre, London).

Andrew Muir The Optimist

Theatre includes: *The Love of a Good Man* (Arts Threshold), *Journey's End* (Village Theatre), *Wife Begins at Forty* (Tour), *Six Degrees of Separation* (Royal Court & West End), *Shadoulans* (Tour), *Paulou: The Dog & the Bell* (Teatro San Martin de Caracas, Venezuela). For the GST; *The Green Parakeet*.



David Plater
Lighting Designer

Trained in lighting design at RADA where he lit productions of *The Shelter*, *The Bright & Bold Design* and *Camille*.

Shows lit for the Greenwich Studio Theatre are: *Minna von Barnhelm*, *Erasmus Montanus*, *And Women Must Weep*, *The Storytellers*, *Cock-a-doodle do*, *The Nun*, *The Green Parakeet*, *A Spanner in the Works* and *The Will*.

Other lighting designs include the musical *The Relationship* (Riverside Studios Hammersmith), *Entertaining Strangers* (Lyric Studio Hammersmith), *Oliver* for the NYMT (George Square Theatre Edinburgh/Adam Smith Theatre Kircaldy), *The Fox & Dead Fish* (Man in the Moon), *The Cherry Orchard* (Capitol Theatre Horsham), *Girls Were Made to Love and Kiss* (Old Fire Station Oxford), & Rossini's Opera *Count Ory* for New Sussex Opera, (Gardener Theatre Brighton & Tour).

David is currently Deputy Chief Electrician at the Donmar Theatre in the West End.

Paul Rattee
Bauer/Neptune

Theatre work includes periods at Leeds Playhouse, Manchester Royal Exchange, Northampton Theatre Royal, RSC and Lyric Hammersmith amongst others. Some plays include *The Crucible*, *The Devils*, *Don Juan*, *Macbeth*, *Twelfth Night*, *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*, *The Broken Heart*, *Breaking The Silence*. Some recent work includes playing Stanislavsky in *Fresh Oysters* at the Edinburgh and Brighton festivals. Some TV and film work includes parts in *The Russia House*, *King Ralph*, *Last Days of Hitler*, *Killers Moon*, *Further Adventures of Oliver Twist*, *Bridge Too Far*, *Stand Up The Virgin Soldiers*, *Shoestring*, *The Return Of The Saint*.

Astrid Schulz
Costume Designer

Astrid was born in Germany and gained an Honours Degree in Clothing Design in Berlin, before studying costume design at the Wimbledon School of Art in London. She began her career as a fashion designer before turning to freelance costume design. Her work in this field includes the films *Daddy's Little Girl* and *Schulze*. In the theatre her work includes *Savannah Bay* for Konkrete Theatre Company and Athol Fugard's *A Place With Pigs* at the George Wood Theatre.



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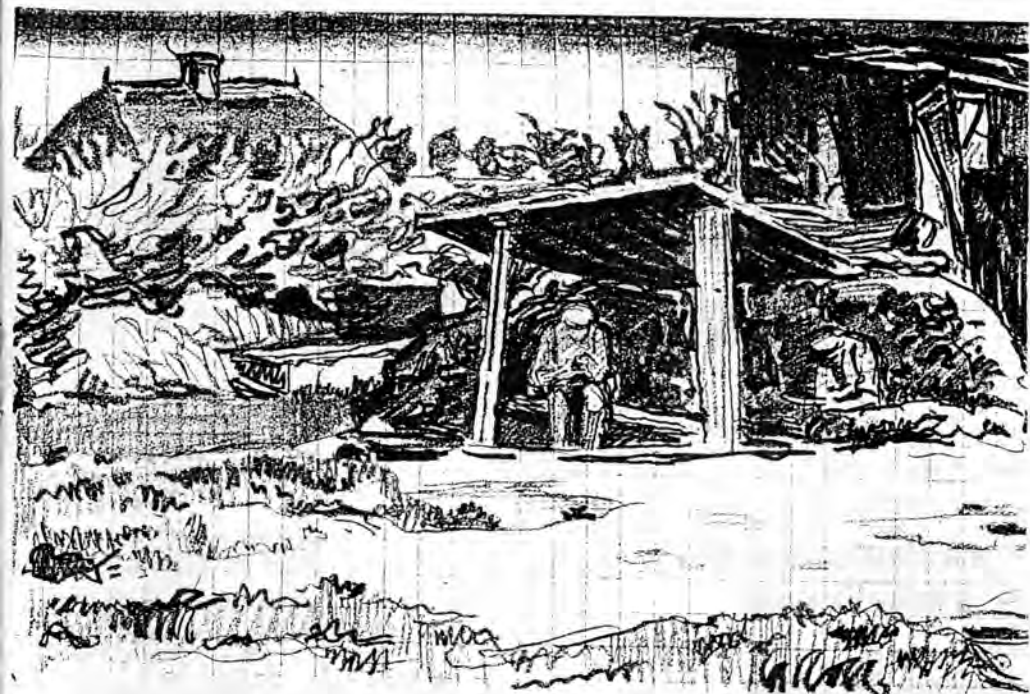
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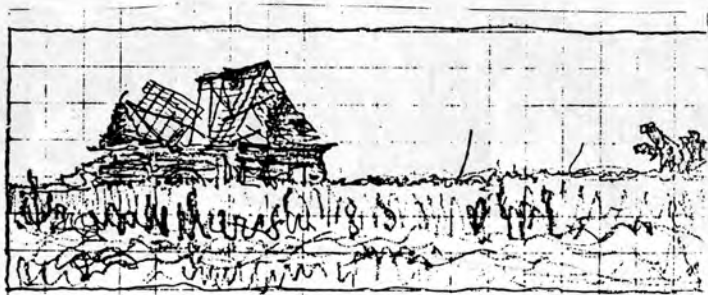
OUT IN THE COLD

by Wolfgang Borchert
translated by Julian Forsyth

CAST

Cabaretist/Colonel's Son
Undertaker/Colonel
God
Corporal Beckmann
Elbe
Optimist
Girl
Young man with the clock
Colonel's Wife/Mrs Kramer
Colonel's Daughter
Cabaret Director
Mr Kramer
Bauer/Neptune

Alex McSweeney
Donald Francke
Ray Llewellyn
Eddie Marsan
Imogen Bain
Andrew Muir
Poppy Miller
Daniel Fredenburgh
Ann Kavanagh
Claire Macaulay
Jack Chissick
Terry Edwards
Paul Rattee



THE PRODUCTION TEAM

Directors
Set Design

Margarete Forsyth & Julian Forsyth

Margarete Forsyth

Vicky Emptage

David Plater

Lighting Design

Ciprian Dragomir

Sound

Astrid Schulz

Costume Design

Beeke Ropers

Assisted by

Julia Crampsie

Casting Associate

Ciprian Dragomir

Stage Manager

Renato Nadal

Lighting Operator

Patricia Benecke

Assistant Director

Norma Atallah

Choreographer

Richard Clayton

Set Construction

Renato Nadal

Scene Painting

Margarete Forsyth

Vicky Emptage

Dorian Millman

Tom Millman

Property Buyers

Hannah Lindsay

Louise Wilson

Photography

Camilla Watson

Publicity Design

Vicky Emptage



The illustrations in this programme are taken from the First World War diaries of Private Albert Lange of the German Army (see programme note).

For The Greenwich Studio Theatre

Artistic Director
Associate Director
Company Manager
Front of House Manager
Stage Manager
Wardrobe
Administration Team

Margarete Forsyth
Julian Forsyth
Julia Crampsie
Helga Bertazzo
Renato Nadal
Beeke Ropers
Mark Feakins
Antonia Loyd
Evelyn Costello
Delphine Lettau
Siobhan O'Kane

The Greenwich Studio Theatre is allowed to operate by kind permission of Bill Bridges, the Landlord and Leaseholder of The Prince of Orange Public House. The room in which the theatre is situated is dedicated to the memory of Dean Bridges.

The Greenwich Studio Theatre would like to thank the following people and companies for their support in realising this production:

Cathy Bell, Louisa Gummer, Lee Weller at KwikFit,
Nauticalia, 25 Nelson Road, Greenwich
Martin at the Army Shop in Westcombe Park
Annette Schroeder for her moral support and inspiration

*Special thanks to all those people who gave their time
and talents for free, to make the costumes and set
and to refurbish the theatre.*

Chair Sponsors

Mrs C Johnstone, Karl Pfeiffer, Teo Maler, Gisela Ropers, Marianne Eggers, Nigel Forsyth, Joan & Mark Forsyth, Nicola Fawcett, Cornelia Graffam-Lewis, Dietrich L Graffam, Christopher and Elke Graffam, Professor Dr. Wolfgang Lottes, Schlaepfer, Theaterkreis Bortfeld, Transtelex Plc, Dudley Dods, John Humphries and Nicole Canuet, Jane Wynn Owen, Dera Cooper, Peter and Suz Buckhurst, Professor Dr. Hölting, Sigrid and Herbert Bohn, Frank Hübner, Jörg Stegert, Ray Jones (Centre Stage), Rudolf and Martina Beck, Peter-Paul Schnierer, Ted and Margaret Batley, Wyn Moyes, Axel Treu, Trudy Lawrence, Christine & Philip Brady, Dagmar Brunow & Bernd Hinrichs. Nigel Andrew, Anna and Lorenz Lorenz-Meyer.

If you would like to sponsor a chair at the GST, please ring 081 858 2862 or pick up a form in the foyer.

Helping the GST

Competition for arts funding is fierce and there is very little money to go around, at present the GST remains unfunded, except for kind donations for specific productions. You can help the GST achieve its aims by.....



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For £45, we will place a plaque on a chair in the auditorium, commemorating your kind support. You will also become a GST 'Friend for Life'.

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For a minimum donation of £15, you will receive a quarterly GST Newsletter, regular information on forthcoming productions, and an invitation to join the cast at the First Night Part of Each GST Company production.

.....by making a donation to our heating fund

The auditorium and dressing rooms are unheated in the winter and uncooled in the Summer, making it far from ideal for audiences and artists alike. To provide the correct atmosphere means a heating & cooling system which will cost £2,500. We need help to raise this sum, therefore a donation box is situated in the Box Office.

***IF YOU ENJOYED THIS PRODUCTION PLEASE HELP
US TO ENSURE THE GST'S FUTURE.***

If you would like to help the GST or would like any further information on either of these opportunities, please contact us on 0181 858 2862, or fill in the form available in the foyer.

WOLFGANG BORCHERT 1921-1947

On 3rd October 1941 Adolf Hitler summed up events on the eastern Front as follows: "I say it today, and not until today was I ready to say it: the Russian enemy is already broken and will never rise again." This exaggerated optimism was largely fostered by the astonishing speed with which the Wehrmacht had overrun Poland and territory to the north and in western Europe. But the early onset of the Russian winter in 1941 and the fierce battles west of Moscow in temperatures ranging between 30 and 50 degrees below zero subjected the German troops in the east to a trauma from which they could never fully recover. Finding themselves inadequately equipped, with insufficient ammunition and drastic shortages of anoraks, snowboots, fur caps, anti-freeze and white camouflage gear, they were as likely to freeze to death in a snowstorm as they were to be killed or wounded in action. Among the German troops fighting at Kalinin and suffering from the sense of being abandoned in a strange, terrible, anonymous, snow-covered terrain was the 20 year old Wolfgang Borchert, scribbling poems and short stories whenever he could and burning with a sense of his frustrated literary and artistic vocation. Borchert's talent, like that of the English First World War poet Wilfred Owen, was forged in the furnace of war, and like Owen's, his life was cut short in his twenties before he had a chance to let that talent mature.

Wolfgang Borchert was born on 20th May 1921 in Hamburg, the son of a modest, reserved schoolteacher father and a sensitive mother from a rural background who overcame her hatred of city life by retreating into her memories and her imagination and developing a literary bent, writing stories for newspapers and literary magazines that nostalgically evoked an idealised German village existence. Wolfgang's own youthful sensibilities were dominated by a deep-seated horror of conformism, security and material success, and a sympathy for the outsider and the underdog.

Leaving school in 1938, Wolfgang announced his intention of becoming an actor, only to be persuaded (or coerced) by his parents into taking the sensible course and becoming apprenticed to one of Hamburg's largest bookshops. For a while he earned a living listing and packaging books, while secretly taking classes in acting and tap-dancing. In early 1940 he made his first close contact with the security apparatus of the Third Reich. Denounced for the contents of a poem he had read to a colleague at work, he spent a night in police cells and was interviewed by the Gestapo. The

poem in question, which has not survived, seems to have been an attempt to imitate a classical ode on the subject of one young man's love for another (those teenage poetic experiments which have survived scarcely suggest the potential for a great literary career). The Gestapo, who already had access to a letter by Borchert in which he had written of his love of a man called Rieke, put two and two together. Wrongly, since Borchert's sloppy handwriting had been misinterpreted and "Rieke" turned out to be Rainer Maria Rilke, Borchert's favourite German poet and the figure whom, next to Shakespeare, he was most anxious to emulate.



Borchert's burning sense of his poetic mission must have seemed hugely inflated to his parents (who had to listen to and comment on his teenage outpourings), since not a single one of his early literary attempts shows any spark of originality. To his mother's exasperated complaint that he was neither a great writer nor a genius he replied that a plaque bearing his name would one day adorn the front of the house and force her to eat her words.

The discrepancy between his idealised image of himself as a great poet and what he was actually able to achieve at this time extended into the realm of personal relationships. He was continuously falling in love with girls and singing their praises in verse without seeming willing or able to fully enter into, let alone sustain, a proper relationship.

Abandoning his apprenticeship in the book trade, Borchert was engaged by a touring theatre based in Hannover early in 1941 and spent three happy months living the life of a professional actor, not in the major classical roles of which he had dreamed like Hamlet or the great protagonists of Schiller's dramas, but in a series of light social comedies in which he won good reviews for his "pleasing presence" and "restrained passion". This happiness was short-lived, as in May 1941 he was called up and after military training in Weimar was sent to the Russian Front as a messenger with a tank division - "From now on I shall live in my memory and dream of the future", he wrote. For several months he saw action with the 9th Army attempting to encircle the Russians at Kalinin.

Early in 1942 Borchert suffered a wound to his left hand after a reported tussle in a trench with a Russian soldier. It is indicative of the distrust he had already aroused in his superiors through his less than enthusiastic commitment to the Nazi cause that he was suspected of having caused the wound himself and returned to Germany, first to a military hospital to recover from attacks of an as yet undiagnosed fever, then to face trial in Nuremberg. He sat in solitary confinement for three months awaiting his fate, knowing that, if the court refused to believe his story, the outcome could only be the death penalty by firing-squad demanded by the prosecution. The court reluctantly accepted his version of events, but he remained in prison awaiting further trial for having expressed the following sentiments in his letters from the front: "My comrades who arrived here two weeks ago have all been killed. For nothing. Absolutely nothing."

In November 1942 his prison sentence was curtailed so that he could be returned to the front where he took part in the violent tank battles around Toropez. In December he was back in a military hospital at Smolensk. His health was now seriously damaged and his moods changed alarmingly with the onset of fever attacks that still defied diagnosis, and he was subsequently sent back to Germany - to a military hospital in the Harz mountains, where his dreams of finding an artistic niche for himself once the war was over began to take shape: "A few crazy ideas have been going round in my head. Is it utopian to dream of renting a little old cinema in Hamburg after the war and turning it into a chamber theatre? I don't want to revolutionize all the existing theatre conventions, just to show that we youngsters also have something to offer. With a lot of energy and will-power, I think it should be possible." The rapidly deteriorating state of his health meant, however, that any activity requiring a lot of energy was likely to be beyond him. Returned to barracks in Jena, his application for leave was finally granted in August 1943 and he went home to Hamburg, which, in a few nights between 25th July and 3rd August, had been half destroyed by allied bombing. Here he made regular nightly visits to the *Bronzekeller*, a meeting point for frustrated artists, actors, singers, poets and officers on leave. There Borchert, his face now yellow with suspected jaundice, was encouraged to sing or recite some of the verses he had composed in prison or at the front.

On the very brink of being released from the army as unfit for military service, Borchert was rearrested for telling jokes about Propaganda Minister Goebbels in a cabaret sketch and imprisoned once again, this time in the notorious Moabit prison in Berlin, living once more in fear of the death

penalty - or of being blown to bits in one of the many allied bombing raids, during which prisoners were not permitted to escape to the cellars - until his final release and return to military barracks in Jena in September 1944 after a combined total of 17 months in prison. In early 1945, with defeat looming for Germany, Borchert's company was ordered into action south of Frankfurt and he and many of his comrades were captured by the French. Managing to escape in a forest from the lorry taking them to a prisoner-of-war camp in France, he set out on the slow, exhausting 600-kilometre walk back home to Hamburg. There, after the war, he tried to pick up the pieces of his life where it had begun before military service interrupted it - in the theatre, appearing as an actor and cabaret performer, and working as assistant director on a production of one of the German classics banned by the Nazis: Lessing's "Nathan the Wise", a play with a Jewish hero about the virtue of tolerance. Borchert's optimism and enthusiasm in all these activities belied the fact that his health was already ruined. The fever was with him almost constantly, his liver had swollen, he suffered excruciating pains in his back and was only able to appear onstage by feeling his way along the wall in the darkened wings or crawling on all fours. By the winter of 1945/46 he was more or less confined to bed. All of his remaining energies were now concentrated on writing, with the growing awareness, supported by the advice of various doctors to his parents, that he had only a year or two to live. To the short stories and poems he had managed to write at the front or in prison he now added many more, most of them of a startling originality he had never shown before, and one complete play, *Draußen vor der Tür* (Out in the Cold, also translated as *The Man Outside*), which he wrote at home in bed in January 1947 in the space of 8 feverish days. To his surprise, the play was taken up immediately by German radio and broadcast on the 13th February, causing huge controversy and winning him numerous admirers who flocked to Hamburg to visit him. Borchert had already dubbed it: "a play that no theatre wants to put on and no audience wants to see."



The rigours of that winter of 1946-47, with fuel and proper food in short supply, had further damaged his health, but friends and patrons offered a brief respite by paying for him to travel to a sanatorium in Basel, Switzerland, where he arrived in late September and continued to write stories (and an anti-war manifesto) as far as his health permitted. He died there on 20th November 1947. The next day *Draußen vor der Tür* received its world premiere at the Hamburg *Kammerspiele* Theatre.



The play is dominated by the figure of Beckmann, the soldier returning to Hamburg from the Russian front who in despair over the meaningless carnage he has witnessed and his own exclusion from civilian life decides to drown himself in the river Elbe. The strange sequence of scenes and the partly allegorical figures he encounters could almost be interpreted as the dream of a drowning man. The immediate target of Beckmann's rage in 1947, which culminates in the original play with a mounting litany of unanswered questions about the purpose of the war - Why? Why? Why? - was a German public that wanted to forget what had happened as quickly as possible and get on with rebuilding their lives. That rage, divorced from the specific circumstances that gave rise to it, has less sting for an English audience in 1995, though the play seemed to us particularly relevant in the immediate aftermath of the VE Day celebrations. To widen the play's perspective for an audience that does not feel personally addressed by Beckmann's angry questions, we have trimmed some of Beckmann's wordy speeches and framed the action with an extract from one of Borchert's stories, *The Long Long Road*, and have also inserted another, *The Kitchen Clock*.

Julian Forsyth
Translator

My German grandmother Margarete Lange fought tooth and nail to prevent her 18-year-old son Dietrich being drafted into the SS in 1943. Her wish was granted, but, having escaped the clutches of the SS, my uncle was drafted instead to the Russian Front where he suffered the same fate as every single one of his classmates from school, being killed within a few weeks.



Borchert's play is a tribute to that wasted generation that was too young to understand what was going on, let alone do anything about it. The sketches in this programme are by Dietrich's father, my grandfather Albert Lange, who fought in Flanders in the First World War and secretly wrote a war diary in the trenches - in code - that was both a daily record of life at the Front and a critique of the aims and conduct of the war. Filled with illustrations of which only a few are depicted here, the diary has been preserved since his death in 1944 but has only recently been decoded. Here is the closing entry, written the day before he received a wound in the lung which took him out of the war:

"The Old Masters depicted God the Father throned on high above the fortresses of Zion with sceptre and globe in His hand.

Why does His noble hand not shudder at the touch of that slimy, slippery ball of earth? Why does He not cast it from Him and let it fall into the abyss?

But we have been taught that He looks upon each individual soul, that though He may let the planet earth stray and fall as it wills, He gives comfort to the poor and the weak who are crushed by the wheel of fate.

God have mercy upon us!"

*Margarete Forsyth
Director*

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