

## The Wychwood Players Humble Boy

This recent Wychwood Players Production of Humble Boy by Charlotte Jones was a memorable tour de force. It was a psychologically raw and truthful



depiction of your run-of-the-mill dysfunctional family unit. There were some very humorous moments, but overall the message was deep and profound. For two hours we were unnoticed interlopers hidden in the lush garden of the Humble home, watching a car crash of insensitivity, selfishness, neediness and misplaced affection.

### **Persuasive Performances**

Richard Hartley dug deep into himself to bring Felix Humble to life, and it was a persuasive and moving performance of a person on a scary emotional roller-coaster. He held the audience in his grasp throughout and the stutter was an unqualified success.

Joanna McKerlie's vain and superficial Flora showed us just the right combination of unsuitability as a mother, and selfish arrogance. Her Eureka moment at the end would never last, that was clear to us. (May we know your couturier, please?)

Ticket holders were warned in advance that the play contained strong language, and who better to deliver it than our favourite chameleon, John Trevers, who displayed his limitless talent as a complete Cockney boor, George Pye.

Emily Lewis played Rosie Pye, George's daughter. She was the most stable member of this group, a single mother of Felix's seven year old daughter. Her scenes of mock

seduction with Felix were superb, completely at ease, and teasingly sincere.

### **Humble Pye**

Amanda Keighley's Mercy Lott was brilliant as the loyal and devoted servant who tries to prevent ructions but always fails. Her denouement came when she tried to say grace over the gazpacho which she had 'seasoned' with the ashes of Mr. Humble. Her plea to the Heavenly Father brought spontaneous applause. Charles Keighley was a quiet, observant and contemplative Jim the Gardner. His cameo reincarnation of the deceased beekeeper was well and sensitively played.

The carefully crafted set provided the ideal setting for this demanding plotless play, which was so ably directed by Mandyrae Large. The buzzing of bees, drove the action of the play, and saw off both Mr. Humble and Mr. Pye (Humble Pye, get it?) and took Flora's name as a reward.

All in all this hugely demanding play was a credit to all participants, and cements the Wychwood Players reputation for professional level productions despite their amateur status.

**Trudy Yates and Peggy Walmsley**