

AUDITION NOTICE – “THE LAST OF THE HAUSSMANS”
BY STEPHEN BERESFORD
DIRECTED BY JULIE CUMBO

Performance: 21st to 26th February 2022

Rehearsals will be mostly Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, starting at 7.45, and with some Sundays, at 2.30, towards the end of the schedule. There will be a handful of rehearsals in December before taking a break for Christmas and New Year.

Read through on Tuesday October 12th at 8 o'clock

Auditions: Tuesday 2nd November at 7.30 and

Sunday 7th November at 2.30.

Scripts available from: Anne Franks at afoaklands@aol.com or phone 07966092243

For further information, email Julie Cumbo at juliecumbo1@gmail.com

The play was first performed at the National Theatre in 2012 with a stellar cast, the three main parts being taken by Julie Walters, Rory Kinnear and Helen McCrory. The part of Daniel was taken by an almost unknown Taron Egerton, recently winning awards for his role as Elton John in “Rocketman.” It’s a new play, the first from writer Stephen Beresford who is better known as an actor. “The Guardian” called “The Last of the Haussmans” “a knockout – entertaining, sad and outrageous.” It’s a savage black comedy about a dysfunctional family coming apart at the seams, focusing on the complexities of their relationships and emotions.

The action takes place over several months, beginning in the height of summer and ending in winter. The ageing, outrageous, ex-hippie Judy has just had a cancer scare and so members of her family come to join her under the roof of her dilapidated art deco house on the Devon coast, overlooking a picturesque estuary. The results are chaotic, humorous and touching as long-held resentments emerge: the idealism of the oldies (Judy and Peter) clashes with the realism or cynicism of the generation down (Libby and Nick.) The social change that Judy and Peter hoped for in the 60s when they dreamed of rebellion and revolution is mocked by Libby and Nick, the generational conflict continuing in Summer’s constant conflict with her mother.

The Characters

Judy – 60s, maybe plus a bit. She is a feisty, anarchic, high society drop-out, a left-over from the 1960s when she rebelled against her parents and her conventional upbringing, enjoyed free love, took a load of drugs and went off to India. She still has many of these hippie attitudes which haven't benefited her children: she's particularly at odds with her daughter, Libby. A warm but outrageous character, she begins the play having just had a cancer scare.

Judy's audition pieces:

- 1) P.31, with Nick "Isn't it wonderful?" to top of P.33.
- 2) P. 92 (bottom) to middle of P.93 "...wasted it."

Nick – 30s/40s. Judy's son, slightly younger than his sister Libby, he is a wreck of a man, full of demons and insecurities and there's a sense of wasted intelligence about him. Judy adores him but some of his instability has no doubt been caused by her erratic, and sometimes absent, parenting. A gay former smack addict in eyeliner, nail polish and some eccentric outfits, he's damaged and volatile, running away when he can't cope, such as when he briefly falls in love with Daniel during the play.

Nick's audition pieces:

- 1) P.61 – bottom of P.62 – Libby and Judy have one line or two.
- 2) With Judy, top of P. 91 to "little silence" middle of P.93.

Libby –40s. She is Judy's daughter, Nick's older sister and Summer's mother. Like Nick, she seems to teeter on the edge of a breakdown and begins the play having recently been dumped. She is highly-strung, broke and rather needy when it comes to relationships, clinging to men from whom she hopes for emotional support. During the play, she begins an affair with Peter who lures her into a bad financial arrangement which emerges at the end. She can seem embittered and acidic but is human and fallible: she loves her daughter and is fond of her mother despite Judy's irresponsible parenting and exasperating attitudes.

Libby's audition pieces:-

- 1) P. 101 – With Peter, top of page to "...hydrangeas" on P.103.
- 2) With Daniel and Nick, top of P.106 to top of P.109.

Summer –15. She is Libby’s daughter and Judy’s granddaughter, quite the stropic teenager. She is unsympathetic to her mother’s romantic problems and is confrontational. She starts the play refusing to go and see her father in France. He’s suddenly asked to see her after being absent from her life since she was born. When she returns from France, she seems calmer and less in conflict with her mother. She’s been so charmed and beguiled by her father’s way of life with his wife that she wants to go and live with him: it seems that she does so.

Summer’s audition pieces:

- 1) P.14, with Nick, to “....bisexual” on P.16.
- 2) P.76, with Libby, Nick and Judy to bottom of P.77 “...disgrace her family.”

Daniel – 19. He is a troubled local boy, a neighbour, with hopes of becoming a competitive swimmer. Visiting most days to use Judy’s pool, he’s caught the eye of both Summer and Nick though he has his sights set on Libby on whom he has a schoolboy crush. It seems that he is willing to use some underhand tactics to get his way. Awkward and shy at first, especially near Libby, he matures during the play, his competence in swimming and success in competitions giving him a new confidence and composure at the end.

Daniel’s audition pieces:

- 1) P. 74, from Peter’s exit to end of scene – no need to kiss!
- 2) Top of P.106 - to top of P.109, with Libby and Nick.

Peter –50s. He is a local doctor who is treating Judy and is another old hippie who spends the evenings getting drunk with her and reminiscing about the 1960s. He tries to get Judy to make over the house to Libby at once before she dies and then, later in the play, it seems that he’s done an equity-release deal with Libby and so when Judy dies, the house will be his. He has an affair with Libby during the play but had no intention of leaving his wife for her. At the end, he claims he loved Libby but there seems to be something of the hypocrite about him.

Peter’s audition pieces:

- 1) P. 42, with Judy and Libby, to bottom of P.44
- 2) P. 101, with Libby, top of page to “...hydrangeas” on P.103.