



Stoke-on-Trent Repertory Theatre
College Road, Shelton, Stoke-on-Trent
Telephone: Stoke-on-Trent 44784

The Last of the Red Hot Lovers

by Neil Simon

**Tuesday, 20th - Saturday, 24th and
Tuesday, 27th - Saturday, 31st
March, 1984**

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The Last of the Red Hot Lovers

CAST

Barney Cashman	RICHARD MASTERS
Elaine Navazio	SUE THOMPSON
Bobbi Michele	DEBBIE MOUAT
Jeanette Fisher	JOAN BENNETT

Directed by JUDITH FRANKLIN

Assisted by GEORGE GOODALL

The play is set in Barney's mother's apartment
on New York's East Side.

Act I	December
Act II	The following Summer
Act III	The following Autumn

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PRODUCTION TEAM

Stage Manager	Graham Mouat
Lighting	Tina Richardson
Sound	Edwin Dutton
Properties	Margo Perkins, Gill Chesworth, Alison Townsend, Norma Rogers
Assistant Stage Managers	George Goodall, Bill Hancock, Peter Franklin, Nick Bloor, Madeline Pottinger, Pauline Turner, Jackie Whittaker, Shelley Riddell, June Hodson
Set originally designed by	Steve Brothwell
Adapted by	Tina Richardson & Graham Mouat
Photographer	Peter Croft.
Publicity	Bryan Rawlings, Ann Tunnicliffe

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The Author Neil Simon

The List of 'Tony', theatre and film awards bestowed on Neil Simon is endless. If the titles of his works were written down for posterity, the paper would stretch from here to his birthplace, the famous (or is it infamous) Bronx of New York.

He is a writer who picks a pertinent occasion or crisis out of suburban American life. He adds a few, but believable, shades of colouring to some of the characters to give warmth and full-bodiedness. Then slowly pours out a light, but very dry critical and financial success, Simon knows just how much pathos to allow, to quench our pity, but leaves us sufficiently intoxicated to be still giggling when we get home. And the morning after the night before we realise the story did have a moral, and perhaps reproach ourselves for indulging as little as we did.

Not very much is written about his private life except the usual facts. He was born on American Independence Day - July 4th 1927. He graduated from New York University in 1943 later moving to Denver University and from 1945-46 Simon served in the U.S. Army Airforce.

Joan, his first wife died in 1973 after twenty years of marriage. He then remarried later in the same year, a fairly well-known American actress Marsha Mason.

Neil Simon is America's most successful modern writer. He has probably received more awards and accolades than President Reagan's make-up artist, and is the only American author to have four plays running simultaneously on Broadway. His sketches have been used for television since the 1950s, his plays like 'Plaza Suite' and 'Barefoot in the Park' have been made into films and he has written screen plays like 'California Suite' and 'The Sunshine Boys'. As yet there is still no sign of a halt to his successful writing, and as long as his work continues to be a popular tippie I don't suppose anyone will complain.

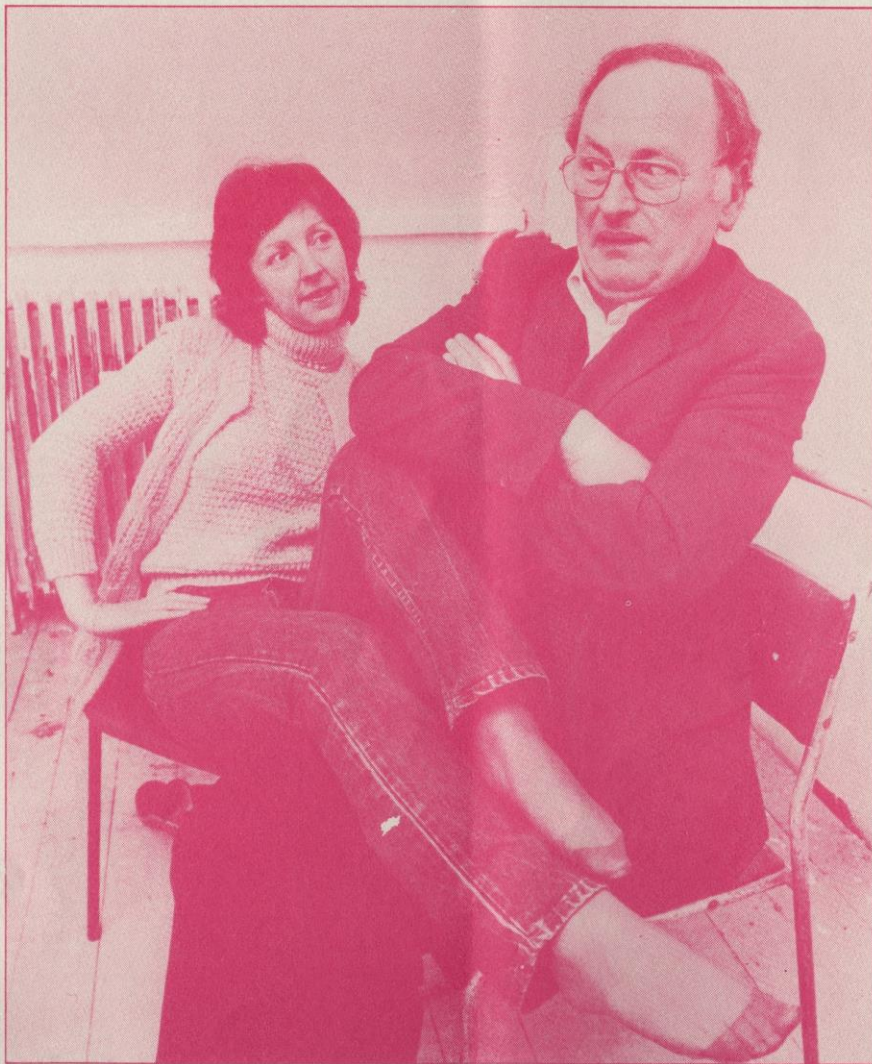
In 'The Last of the Red Hot Lovers' Barney Cashman at 47 feels that life is passing him by. He has been faithful to his wife of 23 years unerringly, but is attracted by the sexual revolution that exists in the life outside his seafood restaurant.

His lack of suavity and appeal of any kind is made up for by his determination to have an extramarital relationship. But his first attempt moves a little too quickly for him. A married customer to his restaurant finds her advances held in abeyance while Barney tries to get to know her better.

Act 2 gives him another chance, but perhaps pop singers with strange smoking habits and even stranger flatmates are not what Barney had in mind either.

Perhaps his wife's bestfriend will be a little more understanding and co-operative.

OUR LATEST COMPETITION



You might think that the Rep has gone competition crazy, but we just could not resist the opportunity of running the unusual competition for a night out with *The Last of the Red Hot Lovers*, in which Evening Sentinel readers had to invent a caption for this picture.

The initial idea was producer's Judy Franklin, she suggested the night out as a joke. Realising what good fun it might be we contacted Mr. R. A. Randall of The Evening Sentinel. He thought it was a good idea too, so arranged to run the competition in his newspaper and offered a bottle of champagne as part of the prize. He also agreed to take on the difficult task of judging the entries along with the President of the Rep, Sir Richard Bailey, the Chairman Peter Dutton and Mr. Arthur Ballham of the 'Old Vicarage Hotel and Restaurant' in Hanford who is kindly donating the dinner.

Richard Masters, seen opposite as *The Last of the Red Hot Lovers* took on more than he bargained for when he acquired the role of Barney. He did not realise that he was also to be part of the prize in our competition, but being a real trouper still agreed to take part. Richard has been a member of the Rep for eleven years, but has never encountered anything like the competition before. He admits to being 'panic-stricken' by the possibility of the evening out and in no way lives up to the image the title implies. Regular members of the audience will recognise Richard from previous plays. 'Death of a Salesman' and 'The Entertainer' are two of his favourites. He also takes an active part in the backstage work - quite different from his full-time job of Group Catering Manager at Royal Doulton Tableware.

Sue Thompson, the lady in the picture, is a relative newcomer to the theatre. Her first role here was as a bookstall keeper in 'Still Life'. She acted with Richard in last season's 'Birds on the Wing', playing Elizabeth one of two international con-girls, and later the part of murderess Olwen Peel in J. B. Priestley's 'Dangerous Corner'. During the day she is a Primary School teacher, so was a good choice for reading the children's stories in our Marathon Read-In last year.

Debbie Mouat, who plays Bobbi Michele, is a post-graduate student in Chemistry at Keele University, where she is an active member of the Drama Society. Also a newcomer, this is Debbie's first major role, but she has acted on the Rep stage before, performing her award winning one-woman show based on the life of Nell Gwynne. Later in 1984 she hopes to take her show to the Edinburgh Festival fringe.



The Last of the Red Hot Lovers is not the first Neil Simon play at the Rep for Joan Bennett. She appeared as the mother in 'Barefoot in the Park' a few years ago. Other favourites of Joan's are 'Cause Celebre' and 'Conduct Unbecoming', but she still cannot decide whether she prefers dramatic or comedy parts. Joan likes every aspect of the theatre and works hard helping to organise social and fund-raising events for the theatre.

Although a member since 1970, this is Judith Franklin's directing debut at the Rep. Her last acting appearance here was as Martha in 'Arsenic and Old Lace', before that she played in poignant part of the married woman in 'Still Life'. Judy is a part-time drama teacher and has recently done voice-overs for radio advertisements on local commercial radio, but she says her chief occupation is that of housewife.

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