



Frayed Knot Theatre Company

Presents

Requiem for

MARKREAN



By Rob Farrow

The Court Theatre,

Pendley, Tring

4th to 9th May 2001

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Frayed Knot Theatre Company

Ten years ago, at Marsworth Village Hall, Phoenix Theatre Company and I co-promoted a production of Marreau and the Chocolate Policeman. We had a lot of fun performing it and so I decided to write a sequel. Meanwhile the cast of Marreau were keen to perform some "Course Acting" plays. In order to enable us to do the sort of plays that we wished to without imposing upon Phoenix we decided to form our own theatre company. That is how Frayed Knot was born. Ten years later we're still going strong.

A glance down the list of our past productions will show that this is our 22nd outing - if you include that original Marreau - with a total of 25 plays performed.

There have been high points and low points. Some plays have been quite experimental, some have been old favourites. The vast majority have been comedies of one sort or another, though there have been exceptions with melodramas, ghost stories and even a tragedy. We have had something like fifty different people act with us - and probably the same number again have helped in one way or another with production.

We believe we offer a warm welcome to anyone who is interested in performing with us - or helping in any other way with productions. This show alone includes three new faces that have never acted with us before.

I would like to express my thanks to Matthew Homes Limited for sponsoring us again this year, and to our other advertisers for their contributions which help us to survive as a theatre company at a time of ever-increasing costs.

As always, I, the committee, cast and company hope that you thoroughly enjoy tonight's show. If this is your first "Marreau" then I hope the play is a pleasant surprise for you - if you've seen one before then I hope that it lives up to whatever expectations you may have formed over the years !

We look forward to seeing you at our next production - and hope that you will become a "Frayed Knot" regular.

**Rob Farrow, Chairman
May 2001**

Frayed Knot Theatre Company

presents

Requiem for Marreau

By Rob Farrow

Previous Productions

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1991 | Marreau and the Chocolate Policeman
(co-production with Phoenix Theatre Company) |
| 1992 | Marreau and the African Moon |
| 1993 | Marreau and the Curse of Cardiff
D.F.C. / Moby Dick : Double Bill |
| 1994 | Marreau and the Bloody Carpet
Blithe Spirit |
| 1995 | Marreau and the Sword of Carthage
Sweeney Todd, The Demon Barber |
| 1996 | Farndale Avenue Macbeth
Marreau and the Clouds of Death
Party Piece |
| 1997 | The Importance of Being Earnest
Knightsbridge / Never the Twain / Pastiche : Treble Bill
Farndale Avenue Christmas Carol |
| 1998 | Arsenic and Old Lace
A Murder Has Been Arranged
Marreau and the Chocolate Policeman (revisited) |
| 1999 | How the Other Half Loves
Trivial Pursuits |
| 2000 | Habeas Corpus
They came from Mars Farndale Avenue |

Requiem for Marreau

The Cast

Simon Simpson	Graham Double
Gwendolyn Bayne	Jenny Booth
Sprote	Matthew Barrett
James Arbroath	Nigel Froment
Isabel	Vi Malcolm
Hamish	Colin Bryer
Murdo Gruttock	Jeremy O'Gorman
Lily	Maxine Reece
Bessie	Claire Smith
Farmer	Rob Farrow
Edgar	Ian Wells
Bertie	Mick Sane
Laura Taft	Naomi Glasser
Mavis Travis	Sue Fuchter
Mrs Gruttock	Jan Jones
Dr. Protheroe	John Ross

Requiem for Marreau

The period is early 1930s.

Act I

Scene 1 : Simpson's country home in Hertfordshire, morning.

Scene 2: MacTallach Castle, near Oban. Morning

Scene 3: The same, a little later.

Act II

Scene 1 : Early afternoon

Scene 2 : A little later.

Scene 3 : The denouement : A little later still !

For the production

Director	Rob Farrow
Producer	Lynn Devonshire
Stage Manager	Margaret Sabatini
Make-up / Hair	Paint by Numbers
Lighting	Gary Stratton
Front-of-House Manager	Lynda Hunt
Wardrobe	Jean Byegate
Publicity & Posters	Image House
External Box Office	Michael Edmunds, Estate Agents
Programme	Rob Farrow, printed by Almar

Marreau - The story so far

Hemlock Montrachet Boniface Etienne Marreau's first appearance was in **Marreau and the Chocolate Policeman** where we found him investigating the murder of Lady Eustace and subsequently of her son, Edward who was married to Isabel ... the same Isabel that features prominently in this play.

Marreau is usually ably assisted in his cases by his secretary Gwendolyn and helped or hindered by his affable, noble but rather dim friend Simpson. The second adventure found them attempting to recover some fantastically valuable stolen jewellery in **Marreau and The African Moon** - a case which quickly became far more serious with a succession of murders, including that of the fearsomely unpleasant Raging Ranulph.

Marreau never seems quite sure whether he is French or Belgian ... or indeed from Monaco, Switzerland or Luxembourg ... or any other francophone country for that matter - often changing his mind several times during a play. He considers himself the greatest detective who has ever lived, he is, however probably sadly deluded. In the fourth adventure, **Marreau and the Bloody Carpet**, we met his arch enemy, Professor Maurice Hearty. This evil genius not only caused problems for Marreau but was also responsible for the murder of Gwendolyn's husband, New Mexico Smith - known as Mexi - who was suffocated with a newt during the investigation of **The Sword of Carthage**, the fifth adventure. Gwendolyn had met him originally during the mysterious murders of the third play - centred on an ancient Egyptian mummy in **Curse of Cardiff**.

By the sixth adventure, **Clouds of Death**, Hearty's malign influence had become intolerable and in a dramatic final scene first Hearty claims that Marreau is actually English and then that he himself is Marreau's half-brother. In the ensuing tussle Hearty plummets down the "bottomless" well in Wildboar Castle. Tragically however at the very moment of his victory over his *bête noir*, Marreau stumbles and follows him down into the unfathomed depths - never to be seen again !

Two other characters regularly crop up in nearly all the Marreaus. Doctor Protheroe, who was having an affair with - and has since married - Edward's sister Jane in the original play. The other is Farmer, a bumbling rustic policeman who gained swift promotion on the back of Marreau's successes until one fateful day when he arrested the Prince of Wales and was demoted from Chief Constable to just Constable.

So, at the beginning of this play we find the two surviving members of the famous trio pondering life without their friend Until a letter arrives

Frayed Knot Theatre Company

Join the happy bunch !

A warm welcome awaits anyone who would like to join our society.

Whether you've been "treading the boards" for sixty years or have never appeared before an audience in your life ... or anywhere between the two ... you'll be welcomed by our society.

Or perhaps you have no interest in acting but would like to help out backstage or constructing the set or operating the lights or the sound effects we've got plenty for you to do too !

Or maybe you're a good organiser who could help run the company committee posts are "up for grabs" at most AGMs so if that's what you fancy join the society and get elected !

So, with one of the cheapest membership rates you're likely to find for any society anywhere (just £5 a year) why not give one of us a ring, or collar any member of the society.

Here are some contact numbers :

Society : Web Site	www.btinternet.com/~enquiries.mh
email	rhf.mh@btinternet.com
Rob & Jackie Farrow	(01707) 655550 {Work} (01442) 381739 {Home}
Lynne Devonshire	(01442) 822688 {Home}
Matthew Barrett	(01296) 434052 {Home}

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with their production of

Requiem
for
Marreau

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