

The Review Exhibition

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sister who has taken it for granted that the National Trust will rescue the estate, but her ladyship has other ideas, which include using the house as a pornographic film set. There are plenty of memorable dotty moments and some great one-liners, as well as a sustained attack on the National Trust and a very funny scene where 'Reach for the Thigh' is shot on a four-poster bed, but I'll leave it to you to decide whether it all comes together in the last scenes.

The real treat, which kept me absolutely engaged for 3 hours, is *This House* by James Graham, which is set in the parliamentary whips' offices in Westminster in the mid-to late 1970s. The Cottesloe is done out as the House of Commons, and we sat on the opposition front bench. The cast is marvellous and Philip Glenister (yes, he of *Ashes to Ashes*) as the labour deputy chief whip and Charles Edwards, as his Tory opposite number, are superb throughout, particularly in the very moving ending. The battleground is the rejection of the pairing arrangements for voting in very closely-run debates by the Tories after a probably inadvertent breach of the agreement by the Labour whips. This resulted in MPs on oxygen and with post-operative dressings still in place being hauled in to the House to maximise the vote on key motions. The fast-paced action and riveting dialogue is peppered with famous events — Heseltine swinging the mace, John Stonehouse faking his death, Norman St John Stevas preening and mincing, and that woman from Finchley confounding them all. Kill for a ticket.

Roger Jones,
BJGP Editor, London.

The Effect is at the Cottesloe theatre until 23 February 2013, *People* is at the Lyttleton theatre until 2 April 2013, and *This House* is sold out and re-opens at the Olivier theatre on 23 February 2013. All at the National Theatre, South Bank, London.

DOI: 10.3399/bjgp13X660931

BRONZE

Royal Academy of Arts

15 September – 9 December 2012

In the Main Galleries, Burlington House

The first object that visitors see sets the tone for the whole exhibition. It is the haunting figure of a dancing boy, caught in the timeless, graceful act of a twisting body. It was created by a Greek sculptor in the 4th century BCE, and was found by fisherman working off the coast of Sicily in 1998. The curators have brought together a collection of bronzes covering an astonishing range of time and space. The chronological range span is from a Danish chariot of the sun, dated to the 14th century BCE, up to contemporary sculpture, including a Louise Bourgeois spider; the geographical from Europe, through Africa including some stunning heads from Benin, religious figures from India, and ritual vessels from China. All pieces are made out of a metal alloy of copper and tin that celebrates simultaneously the triumph of human technology and the artisanship

Dancing Satyr, Greek, Hellenistic period. Bronze, with white alabaster for eyes, H. 200 cm Museo del Satiro, Church of Sant'Agidjo, Mazara del Vallo Photo Sicily, Regione Siciliana — Assessorato Regionale dei Beni Culturali e dell'Identità Siciliana, Dipartimento dei Beni Culturali e dell'Identità Siciliana — Servizio Museo Interdisciplinare Regionale Pepoli Trapani.



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© Louise Bourgeois Trust

Louise Bourgeois, Spider IV, 1996. Bronze, 203.2 x 180.3 x 53.3 cm. Collection The Easton Foundation, courtesy Hauser & Wirth and Cheim & Read. Photo: Peter Bellamy.

of the caster: one astonishing figure was created specifically in order to show off the caster's skill.

If the only purpose of the exhibition were to show technical skill it may not be of much interest; instead, combining the technology and craft with artistic genius has created objects to make your hair stand on end with their beauty. My personal favourites were a wonderfully lifelike head of King Seuthes found in Bulgaria, a strigil of great simplicity whose handle was in the form of a naked female figure, herself holding a much smaller strigil, and a collection of tiny exquisite pieces, some cast from nature and used as gold weights in West Africa. They are only personal: I would challenge anyone to have toured the exhibition and not come across something that made them gasp in wonder. But taken as a whole, the exhibition was quite simply a celebration of the human race showing both its commonality and its diversity by means of a shared language.

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DOI: 10.3399/bjgp13X660940