

» **The Critics** | Theatre

Swinging Sixties recreated in dance to hits of the Stones

Work is part of an electrifying repertoire at Sadler's Wells

by **Bridget Galton**
bridget.galton@archant.co.uk

» The rock'n'roll swagger of The Rolling Stones and work by influential choreographers Merce Cunningham and Richard Alton make up Rambert's repertoire for their latest visit to Sadler's Wells.

Kym Alexander is among the ensemble of world-class performers for this month's run which brings together some of the 20th century's most celebrated figures in modern dance including work by several former Rambert directors.

Sassy

Rooster, Christopher Bruce's playful, electrifying celebration of the Swinging Sixties is set to the blues-fuelled rock of Mick Jagger and co as sharp-suited, snake-hipped men and sassy women perform courtship dances to *Paint It Black*, *As Tears Go By* and *Sympathy for the Devil*.

Four Elements, with a soundtrack by Gavin Bryars, is a classic by American dance legend Lucinda Childs, renowned for her sleek minimalism and intricate choreography that demands both stamina and technique.

Sounddance is a seminal



■ A scene from *Rooster* by the Rambert Dance Company

1975 piece by the late master of dance Merce Cunningham, an "ecstatic opus" inspired by Irish writer James Joyce that examines the minutiae of life as seen under a microscope.

It is set to an improvised electronic score played

nightly by the Rambert Orchestra.

And *Dutiful Ducks*, first created for the then 17-year-old Michael Clark in 1982, is Alton's short, sharp and witty solo set to a tongue-twisting word poem by Charles Amirkhania

which blends ballet with contemporary dance to stunning effect.

■ **Runs May 20-24 at Sadler's Wells, London, starting at 7.30pm. Tickets £12-38 from sadlerswells.com, or call 0844 412 4300.**

Rory Bremner makes theatrical debut in comedy classic

RELATIVE VALUES
Harold Pinter Theatre
★★★★☆

This revival of one of Noël Coward's well-known comedies brings together some of the UK's well-loved comedy talent.

Sir Trevor Nunn's production takes an uncomfortable look at the culture clash between 1950s Hollywood and the stiff upper lip of the English aristocracy.

In the setting of a stuffy stately home, a young earl causes shockwaves within his family when he announces he is to marry a Hollywood actress.

Flummoxed

This is consternation enough for the uber-posh family, but they are well and truly flummoxed when it comes to light that the sister of the starlet is none other than Moxie, long-time maid to the earl's mother.

In an effort to deal with what they perceive as a deeply embarrassing situation, the family dress poor Moxie up in her ladyship's fancy clothes and try to change the



■ Patricia Hodge as lady of the manor and Rory Bremner as the butler

way she talks and behaves, in an effort to pass her off as one of their own. It's a slow start and takes half an hour to really get going, but the performances are superb. Caroline Quentin is fantastic as the long-suffering Moxie.

Rory Bremner, making his theatrical debut, provides many of the laughs

with his portrayal of the smart-alec butler.

Patricia Hodge is the star of the show as the conniving matriarch trying at all costs to maintain control over her family and an outmoded set of values.

Clips of Pathé newsreels serve to set each scene and remind us of these prejudiced characters' disassoci-

ation with real life. And there is a stylish set with a beautiful drawing room elegantly put together by Stephen Brimson Lewis.

Hilarious throughout, this satire of snobbery is an indictment of the clash of values which in many ways still live on. Well worth a night out. Until June 21.

Emily Govan



■ **Orwellian tale of lives lived on social media**

Picture: Johan Persson

Drama reflects on oversharing and concerns in world of data

PRIVACY
Donmar Warehouse

★★★★☆

Leave your smartphones on when entering the theatre. But beware: playful audience participation comes at a price. You're not just sending a selfie – you're laying yourself open to brutal public data mining.

It's a neat microcosm of the social media age. We embrace conveniences like Google Maps and loyalty cards, without considering the algorithms tracking, predicting, even influencing our behaviour.

Not to mention the reams of metadata stored by shadowy government entities, as revealed by Edward Snowden via *The Guardian* and *Washington Post*.

Engaging

This Orwellian tale of conscious and unconscious oversharing could make for bleak viewing, but James Graham and director Josie Rourke present urgent ideas with a disarming lightness of touch.

It's a dazzlingly engaging theatrical experience. Debate about oversight careens in freeform jazz, Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights in doo-wop, and the protracted iTunes terms and conditions melds

with *The Tempest* and *Brave New World*.

Graham, whose extensive research includes interviews with politicians, journalists, spooks and campaigners, swaps earnest verbatim for bold, witty formal experimentation, supported by Lucy Osborne's inventive set, Duncan McLean's projections and Anthony Lilley's interactive content.

Infographics help us keep track of the 30-plus characters played by a stellar cast of six. Highlights include Joshua McGuire as Graham's troubled alter ego, Michelle Terry's fearsome director, Nina Sosanya compelling as Liberty's Shami Chakrabarti and Gunnar Cauthery trotting out William Hague's "Nothing to hide, nothing to fear".

Such reassurances are disingenuous. Every generation must reassess the balance of security and civil rights, even the complacent Brits. This explosion of ideas does mean human drama is mainly surface level, despite a romantic thread and introspective examination of identity.

Likewise, Graham lucidly summarises the debate rather than adding to it. Leaving room for a sequel, or perhaps his own conclusions are to be kept strictly private.

Until May 31.