

HACKNEY EMPIRE STUDIO THEATRE, SAMUEL PEPYS

289 Mare Street, E8 (0181-985 2424). **Preparation** Satire on African coups from Bunmi Popoola. Tue-Sun 8pm, ends Aug 15, £8, concs £5.

MAN IN THE MOON THEATRE

392 Kings Road, SW3 (0171-351 2876). **Believe** Musical about New Age beliefs from Paper Cup. Tue-Sun 8.30pm, ends Sat 21 Aug, £10, concs £8. **The Man In The Paper Suit** Stand-up poetry from Jasper Holmes. Sat 14 & Wed 18 Aug, 7pm.

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Cromwell Road, SW7 (0207-942 5555). **Over The Edge: The World - 'I Didn't Know There Was So Much Stuff In It'** Four performances about the major discoveries of the 18th and 19th centuries. Fri 13 & Sat 14 Aug, 8.30pm, £12, concs £8.

NEW END THEATRE

27 New End, Heath Street, NW3 (0171-794 0022). **Between Love And Passion** Musical based on F. Scott Fitzgerald's compelling short story. Tue-Sat 7.30pm, mats Sat 3.30pm, ends Sun 15 Aug, £12-£14, concs £9. **Cabaret Verboten** See Cabaret listing. Tue-Sat 7.30pm, Sat & Sun 3.30pm, ends Sat 4 Sep, £12-£14, concs £8. **Portrait Of A Lady** Sarah Ingram in her one-woman show. Fri 13 Aug, 10.30pm, £9, concs £7.

PENTAMETERS THEATRE

Three Horseshoes, Heath Street, NW3 (0171-435 3648). **Charley's Aunt** Brandon Thomas's 1892 comedy of halcyon days. Tue-Sat 7.30pm, Sun 5pm, ends Sun 15 Aug, £8, concs £6.

PLEASANCE THEATRE

Carpenters Mews, off North Road, N7 (0171-609 1800/420 0180). **Titus Andronicus** The English Shakespeare Company's production directed by Malachi Bogdanov. Mon 16-Mon 23 Aug, 2.10pm, £5-£6.

RIVERSIDE STUDIOS

Crisp Road, W6 (0181-237 1111). **Under My Two Bare Feet** Rosalind Scanlon's expose of the plight of Irish women in the early years of this century. Fri 13 & Sat 14 Aug, 7.45pm, £5, concs £4.

ROYAL GEORGE THEATRE

85 Tanners Hill, SE8 (0181-692 2594). **The Maintenance Man** Richard Harris's bittersweet look at the collapse of a relationship. Tue-Sat 8pm, ends Sat 28 Aug, £7, concs £5.

TUDOR BARN THEATRE

Well Hall Road, SE9 (0181-969 2910). **The Tempest** Galleon Theatre's open-air production of the Shakespeare play. Wed-Fri 7.45pm, Sat-Sun 3pm, ends Sun 22 Aug, £7, concs £5.

TWO-WAY MIRROR THEATRE CLUB AT THE STARTING GATE

Station Road, N22 (0181-881 7977). **The Importance Of Being Earnest** Oscar Wilde's ubiquitous comedy. Tue, Thur, Sat 7.45pm, mat Sun 3.45pm, ends Thur 19 Aug, £7, concs £5. **Strangers In The Morning** Ricardo Pinto's comedy about two strangers who find themselves on a desert island. Wed, Fri, Sun 7.45pm, mats Sat 3.45pm, ends Fri 20 Aug, £7, concs £5.

WHITE BEAR THEATRE

138 Kennington Park Road, SE11 (0171-793 9193). **En Vacance** Insightful new comedy of sun, sea and sex from Trevor B. Maynard. Tue-Sun, 8pm, ends Sun 5 Sep, £8, concs £6.

WIMBLEDON STUDIO

103 The Broadway, SW19 (0181-540 0362). **Antigone** Musical adaptation of Sophocles's tragedy. Sun 15-Wed 18 Aug, 7.30pm, £10, concs £6.



TOM SHARPE ON...

THE BEASTLY CHRONICLES OF SAKI

It will be very interesting to see how this new dramatisation of the short stories and monologues by Saki (*below*) works. I've been fascinated by Saki since childhood. When I was at school there was a very good master who read us Saki, all these savage, brilliant stories about things like a polecat killing an aunt, and how the boy celebrates afterwards and reveres the animal like a god.

The play should be worth seeing because it also looks into Saki's life. And what a life. Saki - real name Hector Hugh Munro - was gay. He had a frightful childhood. His father was in the Burma police. Anyway, he was sent home like Wodehouse and Kipling and all these other poor devils, and brought up by two awful aunts. For the rest of his life (before he was killed in the First World War, where his last words were, 'Put out that match...') Saki was clearly very bitter and it is there in his writing. He clearly felt terribly about the treatment that children get.

This fascination with Saki stayed with me into adulthood. There is a very nasty streak in his writing - I've got one too. In 1975 I wrote the introduction to a collection of his short stories. There had been so many introductions (including one by Noel Coward, which I don't like) that I didn't know what to write. Except the name Saki puzzled me, because it doesn't fit in with what he wrote. His sister, who became guardian of his papers and burned many of them, presumably because of his homosexuality, said he took the name Saki from the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam, where the name is mentioned. This got me thinking. A saki is also a South American monkey. It looks charming, except that it has a very nasty temper - rather like Saki. So I invented this supposition that he wasn't talking about the *Rubaiyat* but this monkey. More than a coincidence?

The Beastly Chronicles Of Saki, opens Tue 17 Aug, Jermyn Street Theatre, 16B Jermyn Street, SW1 (0171-287 2875).



CABARET

BAR AQUARIUS

Downstairs at Manila Café Bar, 153 Charing Cross Road, W1 (0171-439 9730). **Steam-Age Karaoke** Brand new cabaret act combining traditional good ol' knees-up stuff with the joys of karaoke, courtesy of Donald Leverage and Bella Borgia. Sun 8pm, £3.50.

CANAL CAFE THEATRE

Bridge House Pub, Delamere Terrace, W2 (0171-289 6054). **Sprout** Improvised games, sketches and songs from Catherine Standen, Alisdair Buddington, Jo Emery, Richard Felber, Grant Westbrook and Dave Bourne. Sun, 7pm, £6, concs £4, plus £1 mem'ship. **The Wacky World Of Henrietta Burton-Crumph** Euphonious monologue written and performed by Ciaris Perry-Bowden. Fri 13 & Sat 14 Aug, 8pm, £5, concs £3, plus £1 mem'ship.

CENTRE STAGE, MOUNTBATTEN HOTEL

20 Monmouth Street, WC2 (0171-836 4300). **Centre Stage Cabaret** An evening of after-dinner cabaret at this intimate setting. Fri 13 & Sat 14 Aug, 10pm, £43 with dinner.

DONMAR WAREHOUSE

41 Earlham Street, WC2 (0171-369 1732). **Divas At The Donmar: Patti Lupone** American Broadway legend LuPone performs *Matters Of The Heart*, a diverse set featuring songs from Sondheim, Lennon, Newman and Rodgers & Hammerstein. Mon-Sat 8pm, mats Sat 4pm, ends Sat 21 Aug, £15-£34.

KABARET CLUB

16-18 Beak Street (entrance Upper John Street), W1 (0171-287 8111). **Kabaret** An eclectic evening of mixed cabaret featuring special guest artistes. Tue-Sat 9pm, free.

LANGHAM HILTON

1 Portland Place, Regent Street, W1 (0171-636 1000). **Dining With Divas** Top stars from the West End perform at this lavish venue. Mon 16 Aug, dining from 7.30pm, shows 9pm & 10pm, £20, £55 with dinner.

LITTLE HAVANA

1 Leicester Place, WC2 (0171-287 0101). **Viva Cabaret!** Quirky cabaret acts take the stage at this Cuban-style club. Wed 18 Aug, 8pm, free.

MADAME JOJO'S

8-10 Brewer Street, W1 (0171-734 2473). **Swingers** Les Miserable hosts this evening of sleazy listening and Sixties soundtracks from DJ Dogboy, with smatterings of live cabaret performances from familiar faces. Tue 9pm, £7, concs/ before 10.30pm £5.

MILLENNIUM OF LONDON

Westminster Pier, WC2 (0171-237 5134). **London Showboat** All aboard for cabaret, cocktails and a four-course dinner. Fri & Sat 7pm, £39 inc welcome drink and a half-bottle of wine.

NEW END THEATRE

27 New End, Heath Street, NW3 (0171-794 0022). **Cabaret Verboten** Berlin cabaret between the wars featuring songs by Brecht, Weill and Eisler and more performed by Effie Gillmore, Paul Hull, Judith Paris and Julian Stolzenberg. From Tue 17 Aug, Tue-Sat 7.30pm, Sat & Sun mats 3.30pm, ends Sat 4 Sep, £12-£14, concs £8, dinner & show £25.

THE ORANGE

22 Kingsland Road, E2 (0171-729 6097). **Sonnie Mann's Chapel Of Karaoke** John Sonnie and his faithful DJ sidekick the Sheriff at this glitzy Vegas-style cathedral of song. Thur 8.30pm-2am, Sat 5.30pm-8.30pm, free before 9.30pm, £3 after.