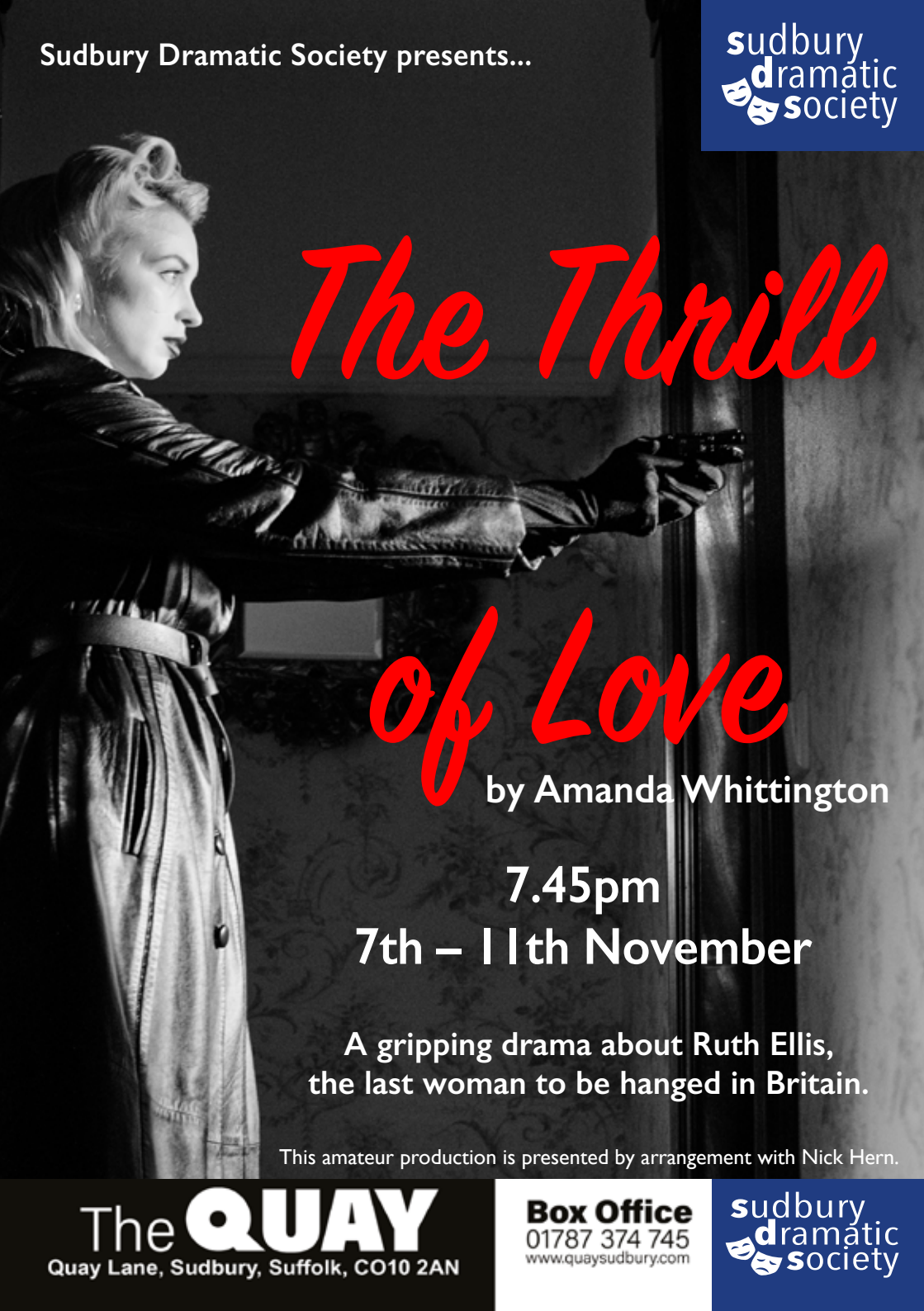


Sudbury Dramatic Society presents...

A black and white photograph of a woman in a trench coat, viewed from the side, holding a handgun. The image is dark and moody, with the woman's face and the gun being the primary light sources.

The Thrill of Love

by Amanda Whittington

7.45pm

7th – 11th November

A gripping drama about Ruth Ellis,
the last woman to be hanged in Britain.

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Nick Hern.

The QUAY
Quay Lane, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 2AN

Box Office
01787 374 745
www.quaysudbury.com



Sudbury Dramatic Society presents...

The Thrill of Love

by Amanda Whittington



Spoiler alert – Ruth Ellis is hanged

...The above won't spoil your evening of course as everyone knows Ruth Ellis was the last woman hanged in Britain for the murder of her lover David Blakely, so *The Thrill of Love* is more 'whydunnit?' than 'whodunnit?'

The play delves into the possible reasons why Ruth shot her lover dead whilst subsequently showing no apparent remorse or even trying to save herself. Using the device of film noir style detective Jack Gale, Ruth's working environment of gentlemen's drinking clubs and the people she associated with is examined by Gale who invests far more of his time and effort into the case than he strictly needs to.

As with many commentators at the time and down the years since, Gale is puzzled and disquieted as to Ruth's behaviour in the aftermath of the shooting: cool, calm and collected at the first interview after her arrest, through most of the trial and final interview in Holloway Prison as Gale has one last attempt at establishing the truth.

Through time shifts the play shows us Ruth's friends and work colleagues: her hard as nails 'seen it all before' boss at the Court Club Sylvia who, despite the way Ruth lets her down at times, undoubtedly has a soft spot for her; and there's her friend Vickie (like Ruth based on a real person) who shows us Ruth's lighter side in a friendship that ultimately founders.

Then there's the humanitarian nightclub char Doris who selflessly does her best to smooth relationships between Ruth, Sylvia and Vickie at various points.

We've endeavoured to evoke the mid 1950s atmosphere – an austere time when working at a gentlemen's club was seen as one of the few ways to a potentially better life for some young women; and the music of Billie Holiday permeates the whole with some songs entirely apposite to the unfolding scenes.

It's been an interesting challenge for myself and the hard working cast and crew bringing this play to the stage – we hope you enjoy the result.

Mark Scanlon, Director

The Thrill of Love

Cast

Ruth Ellis

Zoe Bell

Jack Gale

Neil Arbon

Sylvia Shaw

Helen Arbon

Vickie Martin

Lilli Hender

Doris Judd

Sarah Byham



The Thrill of Love

Production

Director	Mark Scanlon
Assistant to Director	Sarah Harvey-Wade
Stage Manager	Clive Clark
Light & Sound Operation	Darryl Poynter
Lighting Design	Joe Fawcett
Sound Effects	Peter Morris
Costumes	Anthea Halstead
Props & Set Dressing	Rosie West, Clive Clark & Darryl Wort
Set Construction	Clive Clark, Chris Wade & SDS members
Dance Arrangements	Belinda Hasler
Publicity	Helen Arbon
Photography	Natalie Allen
Rehearsal Prompt	Richard Fawcett



With thanks to: Adam Webster, the staff of The Quay Theatre, those who have lent us props or costuming items, Sally at Masquerade costume hire, local businesses and shops who display our posters, and everyone else who has helped with this production.

Amanda Whittington

One of the country's most popular playwrights, Amanda Whittington has written over 30 plays mainly focusing on women in a variety of settings from factory floors, women's football teams, race meetings, dance halls and more: her trademark is putting usually ordinary women into extraordinary situations and examining the result.

Her debut play 'Be My Baby' was an immediate success and she followed this up with others including 'Kiss Me Quickstep,' 'Player's Angels,' 'Bollywood Jane' and two plays featuring four women from Hull who visit Royal Ascot in 'Ladies' Day' and subsequently Australia in 'Ladies Down Under' – both performed by SDS.

Her more recent work includes a sequel to the above, 'Ladies Unleashed,' and a play about women's football 'The Invincibles' – inspired by the England Lionesses' exploits when winning the Euros in 2022 and reaching the World Cup Final earlier this year.

Amanda Whittington has also adapted other writers' works for the stage including Alan Sillitoe's 'Saturday Night and Sunday Morning' and 'Tipping the Velvet' by Sarah Waters. Many of her plays have been performed on radio including 'The Thrill of Love,' and she's also written original radio dramas.





Sudbury Dramatic Society offers a varied and stretching repertoire of productions each year, including classics, comedies and modern plays. In addition, our popular pantomime is a Sudbury tradition, enjoyed by several generations of local families.

We offer members a chance to enjoy making theatre with professional quality facilities, meaning we aspire to the highest standard in our productions and aim to attract the best local amateur performers. We always cast by open auditions, to make sure what we present is the best it can be.

We are the primary contributors of live drama to the Quay theatre, with around forty performances across six productions each year. We hire space in the theatre over two hundred times annually and base our costume department here. We can occasionally (!) be seen patronising the bar and, of course, attending productions as audience members in our own right.

We are proud to remain such significant supporters of the theatre that SDS members created fifty years ago. We don't receive any grants, so all our income comes from selling tickets to people like you. Thank you for supporting us and this lovely local theatre.

If you want to let us know what you thought of this production, or want to get involved in a busy friendly and focused group, contact us at the address below.

We love to hear from people interested in being part of things onstage or backstage. Find us on sudburydramatic.com, or contact us at: secretary@sudburydramatic.com

15th – 24th
December



Cinderella

*A magical pantomime
for Christmas*

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