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SHAFFER

The Moot House Players

present

FIVE FINGER EXERCISE

by Peter Shaffer

Characters in order of appearance:

STANLEY HARRINGTON	..	..	..	Derek Moody
LOUISE, his wife	..	..	..	Una Smith
CLIVE, their son	..	..	..	John Edwards
PAMELA their daughter	..	..	..	Julie Evans
WALTER LANGER, Pamela's tutor	..	..	..	John Childs

The action takes place in the Harringtons' country cottage in Suffolk, circa 1960

Act 1 Scene 1 : Saturday morning, early September
Scene 2 : Saturday night, November

Act 2 Scene 1 : The following morning, Sunday.
Scene 2 : The same night, after supper

The play produced by Victor Moody

Settings by Robin Harcourt and Bettina Hewlett; costumes by Laws;
Lighting by Harry Edwards; Stage Staff: Liz Cross, Christine Edwards.

There will be one major interval after Act 1, during which refreshments will be available in the foyer and Moot House Bar.

THE AUTHOR AND HIS PLAY

FIVE FINGER EXERCISE was Peter Shaffer's first play and was seen in London in 1958 in a production by John Gielgud and it seemed at the time that Shaffer was a 'middle road' dramatist offering a series of carefully observed character studies couched in naturalistic terms, but dealing with current human problems without becoming too obviously 'problem plays'. His work since those early days has shown an immense diversity, ranging from the epic *ROYAL HUNT OF THE SUN* to the classic farce of *BLACK COMEDY*. The Moot House Players have, in fact, given most of his work to date, with the exception of his latest piece, *BATTLE OF SHRIVINGS*, and this early one, *FIVE FINGER EXERCISE* ...we are happy to close a gap! The play looks at the relationships and tensions in a middle class family and the impact of a 'catalyst' in the shape of a young German tutor on the family and the consequent exposure of undercurrents and prejudices previously decently hidden! One of the extremely important issues raised by the play is difficulty of real communication between a child and his parents where the child has received an education at a much higher level than they. This and other aspects of the piece are as relevant to-day as in 1958 and the only reason for dressing the characters in the style of 1960 is the large number of date references to the Second World War.

FUTURE PROGRAMME

On November 28th the Players recital group will give *THE ESSEX HUNDREDS* in the Studio Theatre at the Harlow Playhouse. Please note that this date has been changed from that originally publicised.

The Childrens' Play this year, *ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS*, is now fully booked and will be touring Harlow Primary Schools during the week ending December 18th. Any of our audience wishing to see the piece should get in touch with Jack Mitchley (Harlow 25959) who will be happy to give them details of schools and times etc.

The Players New Year programme is still being considered — there is even the possibility of a version of Orwell's '1984' being available. Full details will be circulated as soon as possible...will patrons please note that the next major production will be in Moot Hall during the week of January 24 - 29, 1972.