

# THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES



“The Hound of the Baskerville” by the company “Théâtre en anglais” was a very interesting play because they tried to modernize the play as much as possible at the cost of skipping a small part of the plot.

As it was my first Sherlock Holmes story and my first theater play, I didn’t know a lot about the plot and the Theatre world. The story as Conan Doyle wrote it wasn’t exactly transmitted but it was easier for me to understand the play, especially thanks to the body language of the actors.

I liked the way David Stanley played the role of Sherlock Holmes because even if some people like Sherlock Holmes’s attitude in Conan Doyle’s books, I was fed up with all the cliches I had heard before in my life. But my personal favorite character was Dr. Watson. I really enjoyed the way he was acting. It was very dynamic and every time he spoke I was captivated by his powerful speeches. I think Dominic Gould had lots of text to learn, but even if he was very often on stage, his face showed a lot of emotions that made his character more understandable. Camille Lecointre had to play all the female roles. I think it is very hard to change voices and accents as soon as you change your character, but she did it very well. Serge O’Sullivan was playing Jack Stapleton and Sir Henry Bakerville who are respectively the victim and the murderer. With the help of the props, he embodied the main character Jack Stapleton and the weak Sir Henry well.

I think the company doesn’t have a lot of money to include many props and sound or light effects in the play. However I didn’t like the way they were using the screen, especially when the hound attacked, I enjoyed it much more when they were playing with a simpler staging. This is why I would have preferred to see only small and simple props and no big screen which, I think, didn’t bring anything to the staging.

I liked when the characters were climbing down from the stage to interact with the audience, it was very useful for them to keep the attention of the audience. Even if it can’t please everyone, I really enjoyed the way they modernized the play with some humorous touches.

Romain

Last Friday, on April, 1<sup>st</sup>, we went to the theatre L'Alhambra to see a play entitled "The Hound of the Baskervilles". The play was performed by the company "Théâtre en Anglais". There were four actors: David Stanley embodied Sherlock Holmes, Dominic Gould played Dr Watson and Serge O'Sullivan Jack Stapleton and Sir Henry. Camille Lecointre played all the female roles, it was very impressive! The director was Lucille O'Flanagan.

This play begins at Holmes and Watson's place, in Baker Street. Sir Henry Baskerville is there to ask the famous detective for advice. Indeed, his uncle, Sir Charles Baskerville died in strange circumstances which remind of the death of his ancestor Hugo Baskerville. The Baskerville family is said to have been cursed since Hugo Baskerville caused the death of a young maiden. Watson follows Sir Henry at Baskerville Hall while Sherlock Holmes is supposed to stay in London. He actually goes onto the moor next to Baskerville Hall to investigate more discreetly. Watson investigates and sends notes to Holmes. He first suspects the butler and his wife, the Barrymores, but he finally understands that they are innocent. One day, the two friends meet on the moor. They suspect Jack Stapleton of being the culprit because he pretends to live with his sister although she is actually his wife. They eventually save Sir Henry, and Jack Stapleton dies in the marshes when he tries to flee.

There was a screen at the back of the stage and I didn't find it useful. It allowed us to understand where the scene took place, but I think that we could have seen it with some little things as a table and chairs or a sofa. At the beginning, I liked the sound effects but I quickly found that they used too many sound effects. The actors sometimes overplayed and I didn't like it, especially when it was supposed to make us understand words that we already knew.

I didn't like the humour, except at some moments. For example, I liked when Sherlock Holmes took Henry's jacket and did nothing while we thought he would say "Gee Willikers" like Watson and Mrs Hudson before. I think that the actors spoke a bit too slowly, but at least we understood almost all that they said. That was a good point.

I wouldn't recommend seeing this play, because I didn't like the acting, but some people might like it because of the humour. However, it is a good exercise to practise English and it reminded me of the very good story of the Hound of Baskervilles.

Hélène

Last Friday we saw *The Hound of the Baskervilles* at the theatre l'Alhambra. It was played by the company "Théâtre en anglais" and the story was about Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson, played by David Stanley and Dominic Gould, who have to solve a case linked to the death of Sir Charles Baskerville, an English nobleman living in Baskerville Hall. Everyone knows that he has died because of a heart attack. However, Sir Henry, played by Serge O'Sullivan, says that he saw the footprints of a gigantic hound not far from the dead body. As a result, Watson comes with him on the moor to investigate and he meets a few suspects such as Stapleton, who lives in the neighborhood.

One of the biggest problems was that there were only four actors and it was very hard for them to perform that many roles, and especially for Camille Lecointre who played all the female roles, therefore she had to overplay and to adopt several exaggerated accents and ways of speaking. Moreover, the director, Lucille O'Flanagan, decided to project pictures on a screen, which were unfortunately not realistic and made the play funny, and not scary. For example, they showed the hound on the screen but he was ridiculous and only his noise might have been better. However, the play was really funny and I didn't expect that. The stereotypes on the British and the American made me have a good laugh, so you should see it only if you are a fan of comedy.

Tristan

We saw « The Hound of the Baskervilles » last Friday evening at l'Alhambra. The name of the company is Théâtre en Anglais ». There were four actors in the play.

First I am going to speak about them. I found that they overplayed, however I think it was difficult to do it another way because they had to embody many characters. For example Camille Lecointre had to do all the female roles. Furthermore, I found that she embodied all of them pretty well.

From my point of view Watson was more charistic than Holmes, it was a bit weird.

Secondly, for me, the staging was not an amateur one. But I have to say that I would have preferred to have real props and sets instead of a projector and a screen. For example, I think it would have been better to have just the sound of the hound and not its picture because instead of being scary it was funny, so not appropriate for this part of the play.

Now let's speak about the lights and the music : they contributed to creating an atmosphere, especially at the beginning of the play which was one of my favorite parts because it make me feel totally in the play.

The play was very clear thanks to the actors who spoke very slowly.

However, I found the play a bit boring, especially after the intermission, and the humor was not as original as I thought it would be. But it corresponded to the idea that I had of the story.

Philippine-2<sup>nd</sup>6

After a teatime party, I was lucky enough to see the Hound of the Baskervilles : it's one of the famous books written by Arthur Conan Doyle and adapted by « Théâtre en Anglais » as a theater play. I saw it at the Alhambra theatre, and this play was performed by famous actors that I' m sure you know like David Stanley for Sherlock and the famous Dominic Gould, not to mention Camille Lecointre for female roles.

Just a little recap of the plot if you have not seen it yet or have not read the book (shame on you!).

The story takes place in London in the 20th century. An important man was just killed in strange conditions with no suspect. Holmes, the famous detective, is ready to solve the case with his assistant Dr Watson. They go across the moor, that horrible land were strange things happened, to find the murderer and help Sir Henry to inherit Baskerville Hall.

It lasted two hours and a half and I can tell you that I saw the time passing. The first part was a surprise for me because the cheap aspect was totally intentional, it made the play funny with stereotypes of each character. But it wasn't what I expected. They really tried to adapt the play without following the original story ; they didn't tell the story as well as it had to be. I didn't understand the whole story but I was delighted because of the staging. As I told you before, there was not much money for the play so they made an effort to turn the story into a comedy, which created a cool atmosphere. I didn't understand the aim of the director ; maybe she tried to adapt an old story for a French speaking public by speaking slowly, but the funny elements were too big and not funny when you repeat it severaal times. The animations were just horrible, when you have this budget just use light-effects and sound because the hound just looked liked a sore-thumb. After the intermission, the play focused on solving the case as if they really wanted to finish faster. They forgot the atmosphere of Conan Doyle and that was a mistake. But I was interested in seeing a play like this which looked simpler and not professional but also with a proximity with the actors (like old friends).

Paul

Last Friday, the company « Théâtre en anglais » was playing The Hound of the Baskerville at L'Alhambra. I was expecting a giant theatre but it was little and the seats were not comfortable. The director of the play was Lucille O'Flanagan and the cast was composed of David Stanley for Sherlock Holmes and three other people for all the other roles. The costumes were really good.

At the beginning, they were singing with little lamps, which created a mysterious atmosphere, I really liked the song so I thought that it would be a good play. Even if it was not in the story we studied, it was a new thing that was a good idea. Then, one of the scenes we studied on class was on stage. I was a bit disappointed because it was nearly the same dialogue. There was a screen behind them where we could see all the setting. I didn't think it was appropriate because in the story, it is Sherlock Holmes who searches for who killed Sir Charles, a man who was loved by all his neighborhood and who wants to kill Sir Henri, his heir. The story is set during Victorian times, one part takes place in Sherlock Holmes's home and other homes like Baskerville manor, but mostly on the moor. I would have preferred a traditional setting, it fits better with the times. Even if there is this problem, I loved one use of the screen : when they were running to take the train on time, the screen helped very well to give this impression. However that was the only time when I thought « This screen is useful ! », because it brings nothing to the play and it even ruins some scenes. For example, when they were telling the story of Hugo Baskerville with a short movie on the screen with cheap drawing effects, or when we saw the hound, it was ridiculous and not even funny, it would have been better if they had only left the sound. By the way, I didn't like the sound effects. When they were on the moor, there were no crows crowing but birds which sang « twit, twit », it was not frightening at all. It was a part of the unsubtle humour we had to put up with during all the play. They also spoke very slowly, which was boring.

To conclude, there were some good ideas but not good enough to pay 16 euros, you should go and watch Five instead, it has just come out.

Justine 2°7



Last Friday I saw *The hound of the Baskervilles* with my class. It was a great play and I really enjoyed it.

Before beginning the play, the 4 actors walked in the audience and spoke with us. That was surprising. Then the play started just after a creepy song and we understood who was Watson and who was Sherlock. Sherlock Holmes was supposed to be the main character but in this play it was Watson who wrote a diary to inform the audience on what happened. My class didn't like this part but personally I found it original. All the actors were good especially Camille Lecointre. In fact she used her body language and her voice to make different kinds of accents and she did great. Considering the fact that she had all the female roles, she succeeded her mission to make all the characters believable and credible.

The company was a bit cheap but the props were good. Indeed the umbrella transformed into a wheel was very clever. But I would have preferred no screen at the back because the landscapes as well as the animations were ridiculous. It was supposed to be scary, not funny! Anyway the costumes were good, the light and sound effects were fabulous unlike the horrible screen... By the way I thought that the moor was very credible with the lightning, for example.

I really understood the play because it was a bit overplayed but it didn't disturb me. In fact, it helped me to understand better.

To finish I'll say that I wasn't expecting that kind of play. That's why I first thought that it would be boring and incomprehensible but it wasn't. This play was funny and full of good ideas. And last but not least, I'm very grateful to Lucille O'Flanagan and the other actors because they taught me a lot of things about theater.

Elise Girard 2.7

"The Hound of the Baskervilles" is an adaptation of the famous novel written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's. This play was performed by a company called "Théâtre en Anglais" on the first of April in the theatre "L'Alhambra". The story takes place in Victorian England, between London and Dartmoor. An old man called Sir Charles has died in strange circumstances. His nephew and sole heir, a Canadian man, Sir Henry, comes to London and asks Sherlock Holmes for some help.

This well-known story of Sherlock Holmes was really badly adapted by Andrew London. He tried to create a comedy with a creepy plot. Some elements didn't belong to Holmes's universe. Furthermore, Watson was leading the investigation while Holmes was nearly absent from the play.

Even if the company tried to add some suspense, they removed all the investigation part and preferred to play with stereotypes. I think it doesn't correspond to the real Hound of the Baskervilles. The actors were overplaying while some repetitive pictures were projected on a screen behind them. Moreover, the staging was ridiculous and grotesque. The play becomes highly farcical when a little toy was used and when the actors, particularly Camille Lecointre exaggerated their accents. The end of the Hound is supposed to be creepy, with a big beast coming from hell, making terrifying sounds. Instead, a few pictures of a dog are projected with only a little noise. If I was the director, I would have used only sounds and music with all the stage in a deep darkness.

I really disliked this interpretation of Conan Doyle's book. I do not recommend seeing it. If you have already read it, it will be disappointing. Else, I recommend reading the book first and then watch a movie about The Hound. "Théâtre en Anglais" is a young company that deserves a good future but their Hound of the Baskervilles is not a success.

David

Dear audience, last Friday, on a day off, I went to see a quite classic story: "The Hound of the Baskervilles" played by David Stanley for Sherlock Holmes, the charismatic Dominic Gould for Dr Watson, the talented Camille Lecointre who played all the female roles and the interesting Serge O'Sullivan for both Stapleton and Sir Henry Baskerville. This cast is from the Théâtre en Anglais Company which plays only for French audiences at L'Alhambra theatre in Paris.

To help you imagine the characters I have to remind you of the facts in their fictional context.

Sir Henry has revealed to Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson a mysterious curse, which haunts the Baskerville family and may have caused the strange death of Sir Charles: The Hound of the Baskervilles, which comes from Hugo Baskerville's time. Sir Henry is now in danger because of the fact that he will inherit Baskerville Hall, so the play deals with Sir Charles's mysterious death and the future of Sir Henry at the head of Baskerville Hall.

I found the play interesting but with an amateur staging and sometimes overplayed because of the funny elements the actors wanted to add to the scenes. I love the fact that one actor can play different characters and it must be difficult, but the effects of the staging and the modern touch the director wanted to add were failures and sometimes ridiculous.

To sum up, I would have preferred a more genuine staging and I think that we felt it in the audience. However, I recommend seeing it if you're not busy because it's still a quite funny play with a family atmosphere.

Antoine 2°6

Last Friday night, I went to the theatre "L'Alhambra" in Paris to watch a play named "The Hound of the Baskervilles" a Sherlock Holmes story written by Arthur Conan Doyle, played by a company called "Théâtre en Anglais" which usually performs for French audiences only. It was directed by Lucille O'Flanagan, with whom I had the chance to talk to after the play. There were only four actors : Sherlock Holmes was played by David Stanley, and Dominic Gould played Dr Watson. All the female roles (there were four of them) were interpreted by Camille Lecointre, and Serge O'Sullivan played the roles of Stapleton and Sir Henry. Lucille told me what she wanted to do with this story but you first need to know the plot!

The story takes place in Dartmoor, a land in the South-West of England on a very strange moor with a lot of marshes and an unsteady weather. A man, Sir Charles Baskervilles, died in very strange circumstances, of a supposed heart attack. The nephew and only heir of the dead asks for Sherlock and Watson's help to find out what really happened that night.

I found the plot rather interesting and I really liked the play. As Mrs O'Flanagan said "It is supposed to be funny and sometimes a bit stereotypical" and it was. It was a story with a lot of suspense but they added some jokes to make it funny. It worked. Everybody, well almost, was laughing and having fun. The staging, props and costumes were great for a not that rich company! The only thing I regretted was the fact that Sherlock Holmes was not as present as Watson. In fact Watson was the main character, the one we saw in every scene almost. But it was cool, I liked it a lot and I would like to see it again. I would recommend it to kids or adults but not for teenagers, I think it would be a bit long and maybe boring for them. Anyway, great play, congrats to them!

Thanks for reading!

Angela

« The Hound of the Baskervilles », originally written by the famous author Arthur Conan Doyle was recently performed on the first of April at the Alhambra theater in Paris, by the company « Théâtre en Anglais ».

Sherlock Holmes, the main character, was interpreted by David Stanley, Dr Watson by Dominic Gould and Serge O'Sullivan played Sir Henry.

Sherlock Holmes, the very famous detective of the 19th century in England has been asked to look at a mysterious death. Sir Charles Baskervilles, one of the heirs of Baskerville hall died in front of his mansion. Unfortunately, Sir Henry Baskervilles, another heir coming from Canada thinks that his death might be related to a curse. His life being in danger, Dr Watson must protect him from the gigantic hound presumed to have killed his ancestor. During his stay, Sherlock Holmes continues his investigation. At the end, Stapleton is found to be the culprit. He wanted to inherit Baskervilles Hall and was even ready to kill people to achieve his goal.

I actually liked the story a lot. The plot is really interesting and Sherlock Holmes's deductions are very clever. However, I didn't enjoy this play. The director wanted this play to attract people : he added a lot of comic elements to make it more modern but the comic elements weren't as funny as we could expect them to be. Moreover, they used a lot of sound effects and animations which sometimes were not very pleasant because there were too many of them.

The story was shortened a lot and some elements of the book were missing. However, I found the actors really good. It wasn't an easy thing to play multiple characters, but they managed to switch their accents and their personalities, which was very impressive. Sometimes, their accents were a bit too pronounced and it was disturbing, but overall, they did an excellent job concerning their acting.

To conclude, I won't recommend seeing it because I found it banal, but considering their small budget and the number of actors, I would say that it was a decent play.

Victoire

Last Friday, I saw a theatre play : "The Hound of Baskervilles", a famous detective story with Sherlock Holmes, obviously, and his assistant Watson known by everyone. The play was performed at the Alhambra in Paris.

It was played by a company called "Théâtre en anglais" with David Stanley in the role of Sherlock Holmes, Dominic Gould as Watson.

It was directed by Lucille O'Flanagan and, as we all know, Conan Doyle was the writer of the story.

First, when you came into the theatre all the character were there and we could have a brief idea of each character. The introduction of the play was a really well done song with two of the characters who were in the public and it created a disturbing atmosphere which was amazing.

Then, during all the play, stereotypes of England and France produced a comic effect and the atmosphere was comfortable as it was funny. The sound effects were quite realistic, for example to evoke the rain or screams.

The company also had good ideas as there were not a lot of objects in the play and they succeeded in making a good job in the way they used them.

In the middle of the play, I realized that there were only four characters who were playing in front of us, and from that point of view, they also did a great job because Camille Lecointre who played Mrs. Hudson also played all the female roles and succeeded in having different voices with each characters she embodied.

Unfortunately, even if the play had good elements, there were also wrong choices. First, a projection was made on the stage to evoke the different places where the characters are supposed to be, but it was a bit too much and sometimes it was static and we didn't see the real necessity of the projection.

Then, I was a bit disappointed by the fact that we didn't really see the clue of the mystery solved by Sherlock Holmes.

Also, the characters sometimes overplayed and didn't make the play realistic.

To conclude, I recommend this play for young teenagers (13-15 years old) because they succeeded in making humor accessible to all and easy to understand.

Marion Poussin