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Stars of TV and film in rediscovered Rattigan drama at Theatre Royal Winchester

The rediscovered comedy masterpiece, **Less Than Kind**, is playing at the Theatre Royal from 12 – 17 March and features a cast of film and TV stars headlined by James Wilby (*Gosford Park*, *Maurice*, *A Handful of Dust*) and Sara Crowe (*Calendar Girls*, *Four Weddings and a Funeral*). Set in London during the blitz, with lavish costumes and sets to recreate the wartime era, **Less Than Kind** has received glowing reviews from a range of national press and media, and was voted critic's choice in *The Times* and *Time Out*.

The drama is set in 1944 and tells the story of Sir John Fletcher (Wilby), a senior member of Churchill's War cabinet who is conducting an illicit but passionate affair with a war widow (Crowe). When the widow's son returns from evacuation in Canada, now a highly politicised left wing teenager, the tension builds. Once he learns of the affair an explosive situation is triggered, leading to accusations of moral hypocrisy and exploitation.

Rattigan cleverly extracts comedy rather than tragedy from this explosive plot and the result is a witty but touching play. Libby Purves, who recently selected the play for *The Guardian's Critic's Choice*, said 'The great thing about Rattigan is that he knew a lot about misery, loneliness and disappointment – but didn't feel that he should leave an audience feeling that way'.

Rattigan is one of England's most treasured 20th century playwrights, celebrated for recent West End revivals *After the Dance* and *Flare Path*, which starred Sienna Miller. The recent film *Deep Blue Sea* starring Rachel Weisz, has further added to the Rattigan revival.

There is a post-show discussion on Mon 12 March, *Tea with Terry – Memories of Mr Rattigan* with the show's director, Adrian Brown, and a pre-show discussion on Tues 13 March at 6.00pm. All welcome.

-ENDS-

Less Than Kind is playing at Theatre Royal Winchester from Mon 12 to Sat 17 March at 8.00pm & 2.00pm (Wed) & 2.30pm (Sat). Tickets £22.00/£16.00(mats) on Mon-Thurs, £26.00/£18.00(mats) on Fri-Sat, Concessions £20.00/£14.00(mats) on Mon-Thurs, £24.00/£16.00(mats) Fri-Sat, Friends £19.50/£13.50(mats) Mon-Thurs, £23.50/£15.50(mats) Fri-Sat, Schools £16.00/£14.00(mats) for Mon-Thurs performances only. For further information or to book tickets, please call the box office on 01962 840440 or book online at www.theatreroyalwinchester.co.uk

Please note that card bookings are subject to a transaction fee. For press information/images please call Kate Raines or Emma Stafford on 01962 844600 or email comms@theatreroyalwinchester.co.uk