

Man, Beast and Virtue (Cottesloe), Charles Wood's version of a hard, bright, hopefully blasphemous and not particularly funny little play by Pirandello (1919), in the printed text of which most of the characters are compared, after the fashion of *commedia dell'arte*, to cats, foxes, hens, horses and bears. The plot has only one idea: to persuade the bestial Capt. Perella (Terence Rigby) to sleep with his silly wife (Marion Bailey) once while on leave from his ship, since she is two months pregnant by Paolino (Trevor Eve), an hysterical private tutor. William Gaskill's production is loud and broad throughout, with most of the pleasure coming from Annie Smart's paintbox settings and Bailey's mauve madonna of Livorno, delicately retching into a hanky or smirking beneath a slug-like curl.

Ratcliffe on Man Beast

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