

Martin Sherman

BENT

Max has just returned from a nightclub where he picked up a gorgeous blond boy styling himself as 'Wolf.' His long-term live-in boyfriend, Rudi, is unimpressed. But Max has had a good time: lines of coke, dancing on tables and a lot of exciting sex. There is a knock on the door – and the SS rush in to arrest, beat up and murder his date; for this is Berlin in 1934, Rohm has been assassinated in the Night of the Long Knives and Hitler is setting his sights on eliminating anyone who does not conform to the Aryan standard of family morality.

From the nightclubs of Berlin to the horrors of Dachau, Martin Sherman's searing play, Bent, explores the persecution of homosexual men during the early years of Nazi Germany through the eyes of narcissistic, hedonist Max who will stop at nothing to survive. When, after years on the run, Max finds himself in a concentration camp the play asks this of him: can he finally put others before himself and commit to a political act which affirms his true identity...or is it too late?

Director
Simon Fuddy

Performance Dates Tuesday 10 – Sat 14 March
N.B. There will be a matinee on the Saturday

Performance Venue Seligman Theatre, Chapter

Rehearsal Dates Starting in January, days to be announced with a rehearsal on Saturday OR Sunday.



AUDITION PACK

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Tues 10-Sat 14 Mar 2026, Seligman Theatre, Chapter

Get-in/technical rehearsals: Sunday 8th Mar

Dress rehearsal: Monday 9th Mar

Auditions

Everyman Clubroom, Chapter

FRIDAY 12th December

Slot 1. 18.00-19.00

Slot 2. 19.00-20.00

Slot 3. 20.00-21.00

SUNDAY 14th December

Slot 1. 10.00-11.00

Slot 2. 11.00-12.00

Slot 3. 12.00-13.00

Call-backs:

FRIDAY 19th December 1800-2100

Book your audition:

CONTACT EVERYMAN

Email: sfutty@yahoo.co.uk

Please state your preferred slot

Preparation:

Please include as much information as possible on the accompanying form and send it **when booking your audition.**

You do not need to prepare anything in advance. Auditions will take the form of workshops and reading scenes from the script, handed to you at the audition.

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Eldorado nightclub famous gay haunt in the Weimar republic – later used as a Nazi headquarters

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

1. Background to the play/themes

The play was written in 1979 and had its premiere starring Ian McKellen at the Royal Court Theatre. The 1970s were a period of growing oppression for gay men (the rate of arrest in the years following legalisation in 1968 was far greater than the period where it was merely illegal) and the play is written as a warning for the future.

The play is very political and takes an uncompromising look at how ordinary people can suddenly find themselves in the hair trigger of state violence. Previously normal things

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such as holding hands in public become deadly the next day. But lurking beneath the terror is also the spirit of human resistance and how it can flower in unlikely circumstances.

2. Synopsis

The play follows a couple, Max and Rudi the day after Hitler's coup against the SA and the assassination of Ernst Rohm. Suddenly gay men are targeted rather than tolerated and they are forced on the run. After two years they are caught and on the train to Dachau Rudi is casually beaten to death.

In Dachau Max befriends cynic Horst a fellow inmate. An unlikely romance blossoms but with a tragic ending. However, despite this there is a curiously uplifting final moment where Max finally makes a stand.

CHARACTERS

All characters are male

Max – early/mid 30s, a narcissist and a survivor

Rudi – 30 A dancer, Max's live-in boyfriend

Wolf – early 20s Max's one night stand

Nazis:

Lieutenant

2nd Lieutenant

Officer

can be played by just 2 actors

Guard

Corporal

Captain

Greta – 40+ Nightclub owner, drag act and Nazi informer

Freddie – 50+ Max's closeted gay uncle

Horst – 35+ Inmate of Dachau – pink triangle wearer

Kapo (can be doubled with Wolf, Greta or Freddie)

Ideally, I'm looking for a cast of around 8.