

## Interview with Steven Pinder

Ahead of the opening night of *Deathtrap*, we caught up with actor Steven Pinder for a quick interview about the play, his role as Sidney Bruhl and performing at the Oldham Coliseum.

### Firstly, tell us a little about the character you play in *Deathtrap*.

I play Sidney Bruhl, a very famous playwright who is suffering from writer's block. Eighteen years ago he wrote a hit play, *Murder Game* and has been living off the success of this ever since. He's since written four plays but they've all flopped. At the beginning of the play he's in a bit of a mess. As a character Sidney is very bright, he has very changeable moods and you really don't know what he's going to do next. He's got that sort of look on his face and you don't really know whether he's telling the truth or not. I find him quite strange but because of this he's a very interesting character to play.



### How have you prepared for playing the role?

I haven't prepared for the part as Sidney Bruhl as such, but I am in a very good position because I have done quite a few thrillers before. *Dial M for Murder*, one of the thrillers that I've been in is very famous. It's a busy play and this one has a similar feel. It's imperative that when you do a thriller like this, that you know technically what you are doing.

### What have you enjoyed most about rehearsals for this show?

At the moment we're in the middle of rehearsals. It's the first time that I've been directed by Kevin Shaw, the Coliseum's Artistic Director. Everyone working on the show is having a good time and the other four actors that I'm working with appear to be enjoying rehearsals as well, which should make for a good show.

### Having previously performed at the Coliseum what makes this theatre different from other ones that you have performed in?

The Coliseum is close to my heart because I originally come from Blackburn and before making my first appearance on stage here, had seen several shows at the theatre. There's something quite enclosed about the Coliseum, it has its own style, and special warmth, which is very appealing for an actor.

Oldham Coliseum Theatre Ltd., Fairbottom Street, Oldham, OL1 3SW  
Box Office: 0161 624 2829 • Admin: 0161 624 1731 • [www.coliseum.org.uk](http://www.coliseum.org.uk) • [mail@coliseum.org.uk](mailto:mail@coliseum.org.uk)  
VAT. 305 6831 67 • Reg. No 1415547 • Charity No. 508829

### **What made you want to pursue acting as a career?**

It was when I was a teenager, I realised that I wanted to become an actor. I was inspired by American film actors such as Steve McQueen. I especially liked the way he performed on screen. Charles Lawton is another favourite actor of mine. I really started being interested in the theatre at school. My school, just outside of Blackburn had a very good drama studio and that's what set me off. I went on to join the Manchester Youth Theatre which was run by Geoff Sykes and his wife Hazel. They've both passed away now but they encouraged me to go on to drama school.



### **Do you have a favourite character that you've played?**

I really don't have one. I've played lots of different parts and of course appearing on television I have played parts longer than if I was appearing in a stage play. The longest part I've ever played is of course Max in *Brookside*. I've been in two or three soaps altogether but played Max Farnham for about 10 years. I suppose Max is the most memorable part that I've played on television and hopefully in about seven weeks' time, I'll be able to say that Sidney is the favourite part that I've played on stage!

### **Do you get recognised as Max from *Brookside*?**

People do still recognise me as Max. Sometimes it's a bit unnerving, especially when some people walking down the street think I was their history teacher. For some reason a lot of people think I played a regular part in *Emmerdale*, I don't know who on earth they thought I was!



### **What advice would you give to anyone who wants to become an actor?**

If I was to give any advice to anybody becoming an actor, I would suggest that they think very hard about why they want to do it. You need very badly to want to become an actor because it's a very intangible business—perhaps more so today than ever. I went through the drama school route and from a teenager wanted to be an actor working in a rep theatre, which is why I'm really enjoying being at the Coliseum.

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If you really want to be an actor you need to think very seriously about what kind of training you are going to undertake. There are many great avenues for learning and training to become an actor. I went to a drama school in the 70s in London called Drama Centre, it's still there and I'd recommend it to anybody who wants to go to drama school.

Steven will be appearing as Sidney Bruhl in *Deathtrap* at the Oldham Coliseum from 8 September – 1 October. To book your tickets or call 0161 624 2829 or visit [www.coliseum.org.uk](http://www.coliseum.org.uk)

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