

## Glitz, glamour ... and great expectations



this week's incoming session with support from alt-rockers April's Ghost and metalheads Something Inside. Doors open at 8pm and admission is £4 (free for members).

**FRIDAY** Hardcore party punks Rat Attack bring the noise to Harlow. Touring in support of their self-titled debut EP, the Devon-based four-piece have built up quite a reputation for their incendiary live shows. Support comes from The Smoking Hearts, Three Months To Kill and Tonight, We Ride. Doors open at 8pm and tickets cost £5 in advance.



**SATURDAY** Wig out with eccentric Japanese psych-rockers Bo Ningen (*above*) and their cacophonous drone rock. The four-piece already have a critically-acclaimed UK debut album under their belt and will be playing Yoko Ono's Meltdown festival in London next month. Support comes from electro-grunge loons The Strangerhood and shoegazers She. Doors open at 8pm and tickets cost £6 in advance.

# Players get to the heart of the matter

## review

**Side Effects**  
**Moot House Players**  
**Moot Hall, TheStow**

A HEART transplant saves the life of an Anglican vicar but he soon finds that life turned upside down when his behaviour undergoes a radical change. Has he received the heart of a fairground wall-of-death rider or has the dead man taken over his body?

Written by *Rising Damp* creator Eric Chappell, *Side Effects* takes a sideways look at life and love, generating lots of laughter in the process.

The action revolves around confirmed atheist Frank Cook, an invalid admitted to

a nursing home with a rare condition that leaves him unable to walk.

In a masterly comic performance by Geoff Leeds, he is cynical and cantankerous with a wonderfully offbeat sense of humour, constantly bickering with his Christian wife, June. Devout she may be, but June (an assured and sympathetic Jenny Southwell) gives as good as she gets in their marital point-scoring.

June is delighted that the Rev Paul Latimer is staying at the same nursing home as her "Cookie", but Frank is suspicious. Something isn't right about this man of the cloth. For a start, why is a pretty young woman

following him?

This young woman is Tracey (an engagingly determined Kerry Rowland), grieving girlfriend of dead fairground worker Melvin. She longs to be close to his heart, the heart that belongs to her. And if that heart is now in the body of Paul, she just has to get close to him.

Michael Rees gave a suitably bewildered performance as the vicar, confused by the changes in his personality and unnerved by Tracey's pursuit of him. His wife, Sarah (Catriona Macleay), a bishop's daughter who proclaims she's not a typical vicar's wife, dons some eye-catching outfits in an effort to regain her husband's attention – but

Paul is too busy examining his own life.

What is the heart? Is it just a piece of meat? Does the brain control emotions, or is it the heart? And if it is the heart, what happens when it is transplanted? Deep questions with no simple answers but nothing is quite as it seems, and by the end of the play both Paul and Frank have had their prejudices challenged.

This was Kerry Rowland's directorial debut and, ably assisted by MHP production manager Anne Farr, she succeeded in drawing out all the humour of the script without swamping the pathos and confusion of the central theme.

**Jane Gyamfi-Sarkodie**