



Yesterday it was The Woman In Black, today I am following Werewolves! These are the scary days!

Saw The Woman In Black last night down in Drury Lane at Covent Garden. This show, in its 18th year, is all about scaring the bejeezus out of the audience. It is basically a very well told ghost story of which we watch the developing dramatization. Various gimmicks and effects are employed to shock and frighten us. Well, my first fright was seeing that fully a quarter of the audience were third and fourth form students (think American high school junior and senior) . They were quite rowdy, carrying on before the show, and I feared for my enjoyment of the show. They did calm down well once the show started, and I will admit to feeling proud of them for their constraint. They did shriek a lot during the scary bits, but what can one expect.

The show was a treat. It is morbid and a very depressing story, but well done, and a rollicking good time. Next to me were a 20 year old girl and her auntie. The auntie kept telling me how they were both the wimpiest people in their family, and should not have been allowed to come to this show together. They had themselves worked into a twirl before the show even started. On the other side were a young couple who had actually moved back a row during interval. When I asked why they pointed forward to the couple in front of their previous seats and said, "Getting away from the lovebirds." Ha!

Today I went and got a seat for opening night for the revival of Noël Coward's "The Vortex" at the Apollo. This regular morning trip to Leicester Square is routine now, but today I found a nice little Italian café which has been in the same locale since 1888 and had a cappuccino and brownie while I waited for the Photographer's Gallery to open. Raul, over at [Heading East](#) tipped me off to a good show there, [Deutsche Börse Photography Prize 2008](#). My favourites were the John Holt slide show of his 1970's trip through the poverty and racial and class tension of the American south. Quite moving.



One of the refreshing differences between the Photographer's Gallery and most public galleries is the actively maintained and well presented and staffed Print Sales facility. One can browse the portfolios of dozens of the highest calibre professional photographers, including those in exhibition, and buy prints in a variety of sizes, even custom, framed, etc. A free admission, I was glad to drop a few pound into the collection box. The place was swarming with art students, all furiously writing notes about the photographs. Whenever I see such a thing I am reminded of a quote variously attributed to Frank Zappa and Elvis Costello: "Writing about music is like dancing about architecture."

The swarm of art students was so thick that I actually left the galleries and strolled Chinatown for an hour waiting for them to leave. It was a nice interval, and I found the restaurant I would return to for lunch after the gallery: Lee Ho Fook.



Warren Zevon fans may remember this place from the lyric to the popular Werewolves Of London:

I saw a werewolf with a Chinese menu in his hand  
Walking through the streets of Soho in the rain  
He was looking for a place called Lee Ho Fook's  
Going to get a big dish of beef chow mein  
Ah-oooo, werewolves of London  
Ah-oooo  
Ah-oooo, werewolves of London  
Ah-oooo

So I had myself a big dish of beef chow mein and came home to read up on Prague and prepare for theatre tonight. As it's opening night, curtain is unconscionably early, at 7:00. Getting to the West End for a 7:00 show will be a nightmare on the tube, so I may well just walk.

Ta!