

Director's Note

Sometime in the mid seventies Maureen Copping told me about a hilarious Ayckbourn play that she had seen in London with a wonderful part for me in it. It was a fanatical housewife who locks herself out in the rain during her own Xmas drinks party. As fate would have it some time later I was cast in it with Keith Railton as my husband and his wife Jane as the suicidal Eva. Amazingly it was lit by newcomer Ian Knight and the sound operator was new member Dave Cornish! So here we are again reunited in different roles with Ian and Dave heading their departments. We all had a whale of a time and the original production was hugely popular. As part of our 50th celebration Keith has chosen this play as one of the Criterion past successes to be revived.

Alan Ayckbourn is probably our most popular playwright. Based since 1959 at the Stephen Joseph Theatre in Scarborough where he is artistic Director he has written over 80 plays translated into 40 languages and performed throughout the world. In 1997 he received a knighthood for his services to the theatre.

Absurd Person Singular was first performed in London at ...The Criterion Theatre! The play revolves around 3 dysfunctional marriages resulting in three neurotic wives. It is familiar Ayckbourn territory, hilarious situations with pain at the core. Comedy can be a very cruel affair. We are presenting the play in the seventies as it is very much of it's time in its attitudes and philosophy and specifics such as the new fitted kitchen, gadgetry and labour saving devices. Ayckbourn writes so brilliantly about relationships and the darker side of human nature that Peter Hall says he will probably be being performed in a hundred years time. This play will probably become a classic!

Wendy Anderson



www.criteriontheatre.co.uk



Let's rip it up!

25th and 26th February 2011

Coventry's very own super-group, Rock-It, perform some 50 of the greatest songs from the golden age of rock and roll (1956 to 1964) to get our 50th anniversary celebrations off to a rip-roaring start. They play music from some of the world's greatest artists, with whom they often also performed.

The group comprises Don Fardon (Indian Reservation, a worldwide No 1 hit), Robbie Woodward (1970s No 1 smash hit Mouldy Old Dough), Phil Packham, who toured the world with Don as a member of The Sorrows, Paul Rollason, formerly of The Boss Cats and Nigel Lomas, a long-time stalwart of the rock circuit, on drums.

"A glimmer of humour shines through this powerful and touching story."



A Day in the Death of Joe Egg
by Peter Nichols

26th March - 2nd April 2011

Joe Egg is the name given by Bri and Sheila to their severely disabled child. To make their lives bearable they have evolved an elaborate series of fantasy games about Joe. Yet ten years of devotion to a human vegetable have created terrible strains on their marriage and when Bri sees an opportunity of allowing Joe to die, he takes it. The attempt fails; Joe's living death will continue.

The Criterion is a non-smoking theatre.

"A hilarious dark tale from the master of comedy."

**ABSURD
PERSON
SINGULAR**
by Alan Ayckbourn

Programme

By arrangement with Samuel French Ltd

ABSURD PERSON SINGULAR



Jane Railton

Jane's first appearance on the stage of the Criterion was in the 1973 production of "Jane Eyre" as Blanche Ingram. Since then she has worked in a wide variety of shows, both as an actor and as part of the production team. In more recent years two of her favourite roles were Mrs. Nickleby in David Edgar's adaptation of Dickens' "Nicholas Nickleby", and Mrs. Betterton in "Playhouse Creatures". Although they have worked together in many productions, including the Criterion's 1977 production of 'Absurd Person Singular', this is the first time Jane and husband Keith have played a married couple on stage.



Keith Railton

Keith Railton first joined the Criterion in 1965 and in 1977 played the part of Sidney Hopcroft in their first production of Absurd Person Singular. His more recent appearances at the Criterion have been as Fagin in Oliver Twist, Marc in Art, Sigmund Freud in Hysteria, Frank in The Memory of Water, the General in And Then There Were None and Jagers in Great Expectations. He has also directed Treasure Island, Oh! What a Lovely War, Brassed Off, The Graduate and The Herbal Bed. Keith is currently Artistic Director of the Criterion.



Trev Clarke

This is Trev's third appearance at The Criterion, after Blue Remembered Hills (2009) and Pleasure & Repentance (2010). He has also appeared at other local theatres and, before that, Nottingham and Leicester.

Sidney
Jane
Ronald
Marion
Eva
Geoff

Trev Clarke
Rebecca Fenlon
Keith Railton
Jane Railton
Gennie Holmes
Andrew Bayliss

The setting:

Each act takes place at a Christmas celebration at one of the couples' homes on successive Christmas Eves.

There will be 2 intervals of 15 minutes each

Director: Wendy Anderson
Stage Manager: Ben Woodward
Prompt: Jonathan Rees
Set Design: Doug Griffiths
Lighting Design: Ian Knight
Lighting Operator: Joe Fallowell
Sound: Dave Cornish
Wardrobe: Maureen Liggins, Pam Coleman
Set Build: Doug Griffiths, John Griffiths
Mike Tooley, Des Ali
Set Paint: Paul Chokran, Judy Talbot
Sue Hadlum, Nora McGeever
Vicky Ola, Doreen Belton
Pam Coleman, Steve Wood
Props: Frances Dixon, Sally Patalong
Chris Gabriel, Nikki Muckle
Ruth Miller, Jackie Crisp
Les Rahilly
Stage Crew: Tony Cuttiford, Mike Tooley
Dave Holmes, Dave Crisp
Bill Butler

Gennie Holmes

Gennie has been involved at the Criterion since she was 13, appearing in Wait Until Dark. Since then she has done almost every job at the theatre, including cleaning the toilets for the 40th Anniversary. Apart from that, other highlights include directing Canterbury Tales with the Youth Theatre, being an "ugly sister" in Beauty and the Beast, running the length of the theatre whilst changing costume in Nicholas Nickleby and I suppose meeting her husband Matt. If you desire to know more about her, find her or the rest of her family in the bar afterwards.



Andrew Bayliss

When not on the local theatre stages, Andrew is normally to be found frightening small children and adults alike in the Castle Dungeon at Warwick Castle or else taking people on tours of the state rooms there. He doesn't do anything in his spare time as he never seems to have any spare time.



Rebecca Fenlon

Rebecca Fenlon made her debut at The Criterion in 2007 as Elaine in The Graduate. Since then she has appeared in Great Expectations, A Chorus of Disapproval and Moonlight and Magnolias. Her most recent performance was as Audrey in Little Shop of Horrors.

