


Upcoming Company Theatre Productions



The Cherry Orchard
by Anton Chekov
31 Aug – 14 Sept

The Sex Fiend
by Stephen Sinclair
23 Nov – 7 Dec

Steve Wright, Director

Steve returns to the directing chair after taking a break to do a Media Studies course at Massey University. Company Theatre's production of *Outside Edge* was the last time Steve sat in the Directors chair. He has been known to tread the boards himself occasionally and did so last year in a play by Fiona Samuels called *One Flesh* for Mairangi Players. And following this production will be appearing with Pilgrim Productions in Pitt St in a play by Tom Griffin called *The Boys Next Door*, after which he will direct *Market Forces* by Roger Hall for Howick Little Theatre. Steve also directed *Social Climbers* another Roger Hall play for Company Theatre in 1998.

Director's notes

Although not my favourite genre of plays *Curtain Up On Murder* certainly endeared itself to me after only one read. The characters are believable and familiar. The setting has a real atmosphere that lends itself to the possibilities that the play suggests without stretching the imagination too far.

I've thoroughly enjoyed working with this very dedicated and professional cast, and appreciate their commitment. Company Theatre, as always, has been a wonderful supportive host.

Cast

Sandra	Helen-Marie Cooper
Ginny	Sarah-Jane Burton
Harry	Richard Parmee
Alex	Nigel Flockhart
Sylvia	Sue Gross
Martin	Chris Chambers
Moppet	Helen Ann Davies
Linda	Jill Chamberlain

Crew

Director	Steve Wright
Production Managers	Richard Parmee, Sherry Ede
Stage Manager	Sheila Stevens
Asst Stage manager	Nicola Clarke
Lighting Design	Laura McClean, Billy Duncan
Sound Design	Sherry Ede
Lighting/Sound Operation	Laura McClean, Billy Duncan
Costume Advisor	Cathie Sandy
Wardrobe	Karen Haigh, Sophie & Andrea Chamberlain
Props	Maureen Kenny
Set Construction	Tony Sandy and helpers
Set Dressing	Jill Chamberlain
Front of House	Doug Bourke
Box Office	Anthony Whitehouse
Bar	Tony Sandy
Publicity	Kathy Gent
Programme	Andrew Wooding
Photography	Peter Millar

Synopsis

An amateur drama company rehearses in their theatre at the end of a pier. Storms rage overhead and suddenly they realise the doors are locked...

Act One

Scene One Shortly after 7 pm
Scene Two Several hours later

Act Two

Scene One A few minutes later

An INTERVAL of 15 minutes during which refreshments are available in the foyer. You may like to try a glass of our mulled wine.

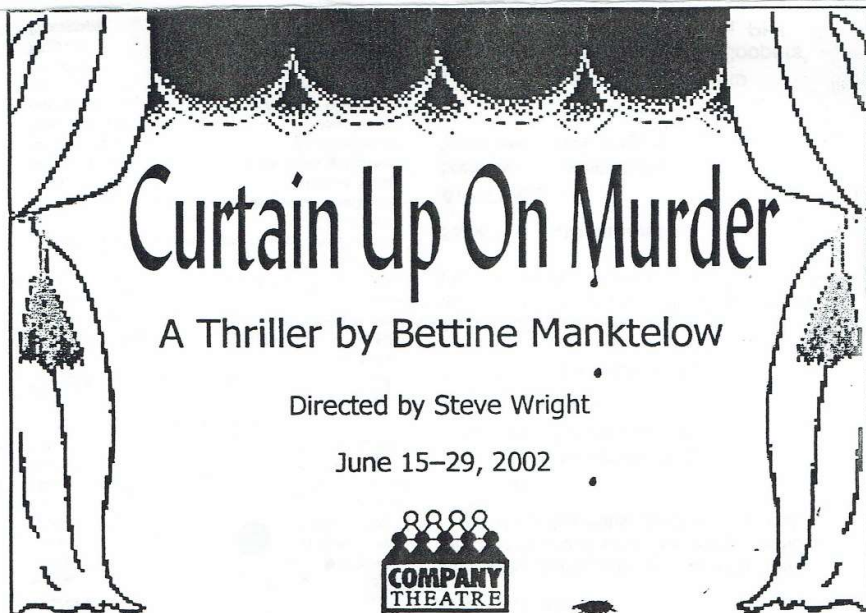


Scene Two Half an hour later

Act Three

Scene One Twenty minutes later
Scene Two Early morning

Company Theatre would like to acknowledge the support of Coopers' Creek Wine, Mairangi Players, Phil Searle & Robert Langden




Curtain Up On Murder

A Thriller by Bettine Manktelow

Directed by Steve Wright

June 15-29, 2002



Cast Biographies

Chris Chambers:

Chris' most recent appearance was as Maxim de Winter in Mairangi Players' production of *Rebecca*. He has worked with Mercury Theatre, and in various TV commercials and modelling assignments.

Helen Ann Davies:

Helen acted in Steve's successful production of *Social Climbers* and also appeared in *How The Other Half Loves* and *King Arthur* the pantomime. As well as acting she is also a singer and most recently a dancer delighting audiences with her Egyptian belly dancing!

Helen-Marie Cooper:

Having spent a few years in amateur theatre in the UK, acting, directing and teaching theatre to teenagers, she returns to the stage after a five year break and is relishing playing the role of Sandra. She would like to thank the cast and crew for making her first play in New Zealand such an enjoyable experience.

Jill Chamberlain:

Jill is a newcomer to Company Theatre but has recently appeared on the Shore in Torbay's production of *Two for 2002*. Jill is a designer by profession and has brought her design skills to the set for *Curtain Up on Murder*.

Nigel Flockhart:

This is the second time Nigel has acted in a play directed by Steve Wright; in *Outside Edge* he played a pretentious cricket playing lawyer...in this one a pretentious actor. Other productions with Company Theatre include *Hedda Gabler*, *Lord Arthur Saville's Crime* and *Darkness Falls*.

Richard Parmee:

Richard says he never misses a chance to work with Steve Wright; in fact Steve was Stage Manager for Richard's recent production of *Brilliant Lies*. Last year Richard appeared in *Arsenic and Old Lace* and *Darkness Falls*, he is a longstanding committee member.

Sarah-Jane Burton:

Following in her father's footsteps Sarah-Jane steps onto the stage for the first time. Sarah-Jane has worked hard back stage having filled the role as Sound Tech for *Darkness Falls* and then Props Manager for *King Arthur* which was all credit to her as it was her first time in charge of props.

Sue Gross:

Sue is equally happy on stage and backstage and has even had a stint on Company Theatre's committee. In her last two shows with Company she was busy organising her stage husband John Burton in *How the Other Half Loves* and *Outside Edge*; she misses him in this production but is enjoying it nonetheless.

'Curtain up on Murder'



"POOR LITTLE THING": Moffat (Helen Davies) comforts Ginny (Sarah-Jane Burton).

Who's murdered whom? How did they die and why? Was there just the one murder....or murderer?

'Curtain up on Murder' has all the expected thrills of the traditional whodunnit, plus an element of the unexpected. It is light-hearted entertainment for a Winter's evening,

embracing the tragic and comic sides of human nature. In this production directed by Steve Wright audiences will recognise familiar faces - Nigel Flockhart, Sue Gross, Richard Parmee and Helen Davies and also be introduced to new Company Theatre actors Chris Chambers, Helen-Marie Cooper, Sarah-Jane Burton

and Jill Chamberlain. Steve previously directed Social Climbers and Outside Edge for Company.

Company Theatre is presenting a year of international drama in 2002. Earlier this year audiences enjoyed the harsh realities of sex and success in the Australian drama 'Brilliant Lies'. Later this year, Company



"YOU'RE PROVOKING ME, YOU REALLY ARE!": Linda (Jill Chamberlain) exclaims to her husband Alex (Nigel Flockhart).

will present the classic 'The Cherry Orchard' and then as their Christmas production, the New Zealand farce 'The Sex Fiend'.

'Curtain up on Murder' can be seen at The

Rose Centre Belmont June 15-29, Wednesday to Saturday at 8pm and at 2pm on Sunday June 23. For more information /bookings, phone 445-6447.



Company's next production is

CURTAIN UP ON MURDER

A thriller By Bettine Manktelow

Curtain up on Murder is a modern English thriller. Although written in 1998, it follows the same format of mystery thrillers that have entertained audiences for many years. When watching the show you know that there will be a murder... but you don't know WHO has done it or WHY.

The story revolves around a drama company rehearsing in their theatre, situated on the end of a Pier, somewhere in England. There are storms raging overhead and suddenly the actors realise the doors are locked and they are trapped.

Events take a sinister turn when a mysterious, ghostly presence is felt passing across the stage and someone falls to certain death through a trapdoor. It slowly becomes evident that there is a murderer in their midst, a murderer, it soon transpires who will not stop until they are all dead....

The writer's aim in presenting a mystery thriller is to make the action as realistic as possible. None of the characters should "look suspicious" and there should be subtle actions that indicate guilt and distracting actions that indicate innocence!

Steve Wright, the director of this production has carefully underplayed dramatic effects to ensure the play is as realistic as possible. He intends to make the audience feel completely involved in the suspense and the sequence of unfolding events.

JUNE 15 – 29 2002



