

**14 – 28th November 2009**  
*"The funniest who-dun-it that Agatha Christie never wrote!"*  
*A light hearted and entertaining detective murder mystery.*  
**The Rose Centre, School Road, Belmont**  
**Wednesday - Saturday at 8pm, Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2pm**  
**Early bookings recommended • \$20 Adults • \$15 Concessions**  
**Bookings 445 9900 or email [rosecentre@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rosecentre@xtra.co.nz)**  
**More information go to [www.companytheatre.co.nz](http://www.companytheatre.co.nz)**

**MURDERED TO DEATH**

**Murdered to Death** is the first in a new trilogy of plays by British playwright Peter Gordon. The others are **Secondary Cause of Death**, and **Death by Fatal Murder**. All have enjoyed enormous success, with professional tours planned for the UK and USA in 2010. There have been 750 amateur productions of this show in the UK, USA, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand just in the last few years. The play is a spoof of the Agatha Christie genre, set in a country manor house in the 1930's. After a murder takes place, the inept and bungling Inspector arrives to try and solve the case. The puns and double entendres are scattered like suspects throughout the script.

**DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

I have greatly enjoyed directing this light hearted play with its cast of delightful characters. It has been a change of pace from the many farces I have previously directed for Company Theatre - **Run For Your Wife** (2003) **Caught in The Net** (2005) and **Funny Money** (2007). On researching a new play to direct, I was amazed to find so many comedy stereotypes, in one play - a sinister yet smiling Butler; a stiff upper lipped Colonel; his long suffering wife, a mysterious Frenchman, an ambitious society girl, a hostess and her spirited niece; an inquisitive neighbour - who just happens to be called Miss Maple, (so close to the famous Miss Marple); a keen young Constable, and attempting to control them all an Inspector named Pratt! A huge "thank you" to the extremely dedicated team behind the success of Company Theatre – and especially my Production Manager for this show, Ruth Chapman. We all hope you enjoy this deathly, comedy spoof!

**Sherry Ede**  
**Director**

**SYNOPSIS OF SCENES**

The action takes place in the drawing room of an old country manor house in the mid 1930s

**ACT I**      *Scene One*                      *Late Afternoon, autumn*  
                  *Scene Two*                      *The following morning*

**INTERVAL**

**ACT II**      *Scene One*                      *Two hours later*  
                  *Scene Two*                      *One hour later*



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

North Shore Music Theatre, CentreStage



**AUDITIONS AUDITIONS AUDITIONS**

Auditions for "WHO WANTS TO BE 100" by Roger Hall Directed by Sian Davis  
 At 1pm at The Rose Centre on Saturday 28 November 2009

Enquiries phone Sian on 483 4245

For scripts phone Richard @ The Rose 445 9900 or email [rosentre@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rosentre@xtra.co.nz)

Production Dates 13 - 27 March 2010



**CAST** (In order of appearance)

Mildred	Trudi Thumath
Dorothy	Nicola Cliff
Bunting	John Burton
Colonel Charles Craddock	John Clarke
Margaret Craddock	Sue Gross
Pierre Marceau	Scott Hayden
Elizabeth Hartley-Trumpington	Gina Dowding
Joan Maple	Donna Franks
Constable Thompkins	Joe Arrow
Inspector Pratt	Paul Norell

**PRODUCTION TEAM**

Director	Sherry Ede
Production Manager	Ruth Chapman
Stage Manager	Linda Camplin
Properties	Fred & Doreen Gould
Set Design	Mark Betty
Set Construction	Mark Betty with Richard Parmée, Caroline Parker, Alastair Fletcher, Tony Sandy, Scott Hayden, Nadine Gibson, Fred & Doreen Gould, John Burton, Scott Thomas, Nicola Cliff, Sue Gross
Set Dressing	Caroline Parker
Set Painting	Caroline Parker, Anne Rimmer, Nicola Cliff, Sue Gross, Nadine Gibson
Wardrobe	Cathie Sandy
Wardrobe Assistant	Gail Carran
Lighting Design & Operation	Scott Thomas
Sound Design	Sherry Ede
Hair & Make-Up	Nadine Gibson
Publicity	Kathy Gent, Sherry Ede
Poster Design	Sherry Ede, Copy & Offset Printing
Photos & Billboards	Sherry Ede
Programme	Richard Parmée
Bookings	Richard Parmée
Front of House Manager	Tony Sandy
Bar Manager	Alastair Fletcher
Box Office, Front of House & Bar Staff	Members of Company Theatre

**COMPANY THEATRE MEMBERSHIP**

For Membership of Company Theatre phone Kathy on 445 6447  
 or email: companytheatre@gmail.com www.companytheatre.co.nz

**CAST PROFILES**

**Trudi Thumath - "Mildred"**

This is Trudy's 4th production with Company Theatre, having previously appeared in "Kindertransport," "Caught in the Net" and "Daughters Of Heaven." She is delighted to be working with such a wonderfully talented cast and crew. As the "Lady of the Manor" she hopes you enjoy your stay at "Bagshot House."

**Nicola Cliff - "Dorothy"**

"This is Nicola's first production appearance with Company Theatre, which is proving to be an extremely entertaining production, what with its funny and talented cast and crew! Previous shows this year include "Where there's a Will" and "The Bear- one act play" both with Ellerslie Theatre Company. Drama lessons at the tender age of 8 sparked off a love of acting in Nicola, leading her to become involved with school musicals, teach Speech and Drama privately for 6 years, and appear in New Zealand television and film. Nicola hopes that the audience for 'Murdered To Death' is as greatly entertained by the show and its twists and turns, as she has been rehearsing it!"

**John Burton - "Bunting"**

Having recently returned from the "sticks" of Te Puke where he performed in 'Taking Leave' and 'Middle Age Spread', John says it's great to be back at his "home theatre". He is looking forward to a fun season as 'Bunting' the butler.

**John Clarke - "Colonel Charles Craddock"**

John is very pleased to be back on stage with Company Theatre after a fairly longish break. He has been involved in many productions at Company over the years including "Arsenic and Old Lace, 'Funny Money', 'Brilliant Lies', 'How the Other Half Loves', 'Run for Your Wife', 'Take a Chance on Me', 'Noises Off', 'Daughters of Heaven'. One of the reasons he accepted the role of 'Colonel Charles Craddock', was the character reminded him so much of his favourite 'Fawlty Towers' character - 'The Major'. John appears occasionally on television dramas and commercials. Hope you all enjoy this crazy, and I hope (we need an audience!), very funny play.

**Sue Gross - "Margaret Craddock"**

I am thrilled to be working with Sherry again along with several "new to Company" cast members as well as the "old, tried and tested ones"! The Colonel's wife is of course a station befitting my heritage and despite the balderdash I do love the Colonel (on stage and off!) Great support cast and crew - how absolutely super!

**Scott Hayden - "Pierre Marceau"**

Following up his last role at Company Theatre as the Italian Captain Bertorelli in 'Allo 'Allo, Scott further expands his accent resume with Pierre in Murdered To Death. Having covered a number of accents previously, including English as Charley in The Darling Buds of May, American as Colonel Jessup in A Few Good Men and Kiwi as Dingwall in State of the Play, Scott is excited to further expand his repertoire amongst such a fine group of actors and supported by a wonderfully dedicated crew.

**Gina Dowding - "Elizabeth Hartley-Trumpington"**

Gina began her acting career at 16 when she joined Red Roofs Theatre school in the UK. Since graduation she has appeared in a variety of roles from Frenchie in Grease to Laura in The Glass Menagerie and many more. Now firmly settled in beautiful New Zealand after spending time in Asia and a year in Sydney, Gina is extremely pleased to be back on stage again with her 1st show for Company Theatre. "Its been a privilege to work with director Sherry Ede" said Gina "And the cast have been fantastic too, it's made the whole experience so much fun."

**Donna Franks - "Joan Maple"**

It is great to be back on stage with Company Theatre. I performed earlier this year with another company in a comedy role playing someone my own age. Most of my characters I have played have been younger or about my age. This is the first time I have played someone OLDER. (The makeup does not take very long. Ha Ha). I have totally enjoyed the challenge of playing this role (luckily my mother had taught me to knit many years ago) and working with some old friends and meeting some new ones. I hope you enjoy the show.

**Joe Arrow - "Constable Thompkins"**

This is Joe's first show with Company Theatre having just been on The Rose Centre stage as Farid, the Egyptian husband, in 'The Secret Life of a Belly Dancer'. Prior to this he was involved in youth theatre for the last five years in such shows as 'Fairytale The Musical', 'Berin and Lutrien', 'Romeo and Juliet' and 'Space Odyssey'.

**Paul Norell - "Inspector Pratt"**

Inspector Pratt is the latest in a long line of outrageous and misfit roles which Paul has enjoyed during his stage career; roles which include Dracula (Dracula); Malvolio (twice) (Twelfth Night); the Marquis de Sade (Quills); Barrymore (I Hate Hamlet); and King Henry (The Lion in Winter). MURDERED TO DEATH will be Paul's third appearance this year at The Rose Centre, preceded in March by Geoff Allen's KING OF THE ROAD (a two-person show based on Paul's experiences in LORD OF THE RINGS), and then in September by THE SECRET LIFE OF A BELLY DANCER (Geoff Allen writer and director). "Under Sherry's direction, I have been able to explore Pratt in a very spontaneous and intuitive way."



- New play opens at Rose Centre



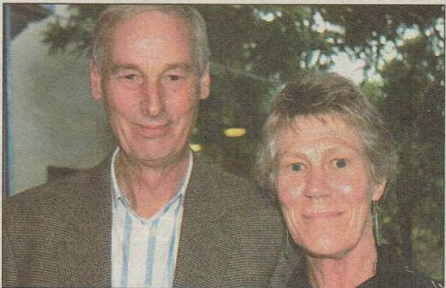
**Director Sherry Ede and production manager Ruth Chapman.**

Company Theatre's latest and final offering of the year, *Murdered to Death*, proved to be a fitting finale to an excellent season.

Written by Peter Gordon and directed by Sherry Ede, the light hearted and highly entertaining detective murder mystery, is a spoof of the Agatha Christie genre.

The Gala opening night was a full house and guest included the Mayor of North Shore City, Andrew Williams.

**Hammer Hardware's Harry Jenny and his wife Roelvink at right and Company Theatre stalwart Bob Stephens and Anne Rimmer below right**



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Murdered to Death at Rose Centre



**John Burton as Bunting the Butler**



**Paul Norell as the Inspector and Donna Franks as Miss Maple**

Company Theatre's latest production is an Agatha Christie-style detective mystery called *Murdered To Death* by English comedy playwright Peter Gordon, directed by Sherry Ede. It is a comedy spoof on the detective genre. The plot twists and turns as the bumbling Inspector attempts to solve the crime. It is being performed at The Rose Centre from November 14 - 28.

Set in an English country house in the mid 1930s, the play opens with the hostess Mildred (Trudy Thumath), her niece Dorothy (Nicola Cliff) and her Butler (John Burton) welcoming an eccentric array of guests for the weekend.

The guests include Colonel Haddock (John Clarke), with pre-requisite stiff upper lip and full moustache, his long suffering wife Margaret (Sue Gross), a charming French painter (Scott Hayden) and a young society girl (Gina Dowding).

Next door is the very inquisitive Miss Maple (Donna Franks) - a character based on the famous fictional detective Miss Marple. By the end of the first scene, one of the house guests is dead, and so in comes the bumbling, aptly named Inspector Pratt (Paul Norell) who tries everything he knows, and more, to solve the crime, assisted by his young Constable Thomkins (Joe Arrow.) Tickets can be booked through The Rose Centre on 445 9900 or email [rosecentre@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rosecentre@xtra.co.nz). More information: [www.companysite.co.nz](http://www.companysite.co.nz). Performances are Wed - Saturday at 8.00pm. There are two Matinees on Sunday 15th and 22nd at 2.00pm. Cost \$20 and \$15 concession.





Inquisitive neighbour: Miss Maple knits the plot together.

# Murdered to Death at Rose Centre

Company Theatre's last show for the year will be an Agatha Christie-style detective mystery called *Murdered To Death* by English comedy playwright Peter Gordon, directed by Sherry Ede.

The play is a spoof on the detective genre. The plot twists and turns with funny red herrings and double entendres, as the bumbling inspector attempts to solve the crime.

The play opens with the hostess Mildred (played by Trudy Thumath) and her not so loyal, and rather evil looking butler (played by John Burton) welcoming an eccentric array of guests for the weekend. Mildred is helped by her downtrodden but spirited niece Dorothy (played by Nicola Cliff.)

First to arrive is Colonel Haddock (played by John Clarke) with prerequisite stiff upper lip and full moustache to match, and his wife Margaret (played by Sue Gross).



Mysterious Frenchman: Scott Hayden as Pierre is confronted by Inspector Pratt.

Next is a very charming French speaking painter (played by Scott Hayden) accompanied by a beautiful young society girl (played by Gina Dowding) who has suffered "dreadfully" by travelling through the "nasty working class areas" on the train ride down.

Who should live next door to this motley list

of guests but the very inquisitive Miss Maple (played by Donna Franks) - a character obviously based on the famous fictional detective Miss Marple.

By the end of the first scene, one of the house guests is dead, and in comes the bumbling and inept, but very aptly named Inspector Pratt (played by Paul Norell).

He tries everything he knows, and much, much more, to solve the crime and is continually corrected in everything he does by his young Constable Thomkins (played by Joe Arrow.)

The lines in this play sparkle with malapropisms. It is scattered with puns that pop out unexpectedly and combine to produce two de-

lightly comic hours on stage. You will be drawn into this mystery as the plot moves on, to quote Inspector Pratt "from the unmistakable to the...errr...un-unmistakable."

*Murdered To Death* will be performed at The Rose Centre in Belmont from November 14 to 28.

A beautiful stage set of a typical English country house manor in the 1930s has been created by Caroline Parker and her team of helpers, and 1930s style costumes have been adapted by wardrobe mistress Cathie Sandy.

Tickets for this entertaining show can be booked through The Rose Centre on 445 9900 or by emailing rosecentre@extra.co.nz.

More information can be found at [www.companytheatre.co.nz](http://www.companytheatre.co.nz).

Performances are Wednesdays to Saturdays at 8pm, with matinees on Sundays November 15 and 22 at 2pm.

Tickets are \$20 and \$15 concession.





