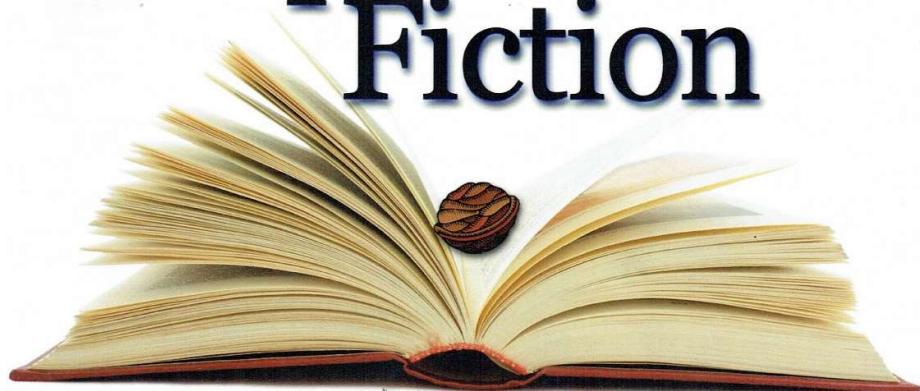




COMPANY THEATRE

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Improbable Fiction



A Comedy By Alan Ayckbourn
Directed by Lynne Davis

I have dipped my big toe (pointed of course) in various productions on and off stage for longer than I care to remember and there have been many exciting times; when I was offered the role of Ruth in the Norman Conquests fourteen years ago I was hooked on playwright Alan Ayckbourn and the stage became just that much more exciting. Since then I have jumped at the opportunity to be involved with his plays and when I read Improbable Fiction which contains everything from dark comedy to the absurd, I knew this had to be next on my list.

Working with this talented cast one could very easily remove the word 'amateur'; it is difficult enough to perform one role in a play let alone multiple roles. This has been their challenge which I believe with their energy, commitment and good humour they have achieved.

As always at Company Theatre I marvel at how the crew list multiplies, and I urge a round of applause for the unsung production team who have cheerfully given of their own special talents to bring to life this play which I hope you will enjoy watching as much as we have enjoyed being involved.

Lynne Davis

DIRECTOR'S PROFILE

Inspired by the love of dance, Lynne's theatre activities began at a young age; she attained qualifications as a dance teacher with the Royal Academy of Dancing, the British Ballet Organization, the New Zealand Association of Modern Dance and the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing. Lynne has directed and choreographed over twenty productions for The Torbay Dramatic Society where she is a life member, and will always be grateful to the Society for giving her the opportunity to direct several of her own children's musicals, and the WW2 musical revue 'Tin Hats & Gas Masks'. This is Lynne's third time in the director's chair for Company Theatre.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

The action takes place in the mock-Tudor home of Arnold Hassock somewhere in present day rural England a few weeks before Christmas

Act One **Early evening**
Act Two **A few seconds later**

There will be a 15 minute interval between Acts One and Two

15 - 26 November 2011

At The Rose Centre, School Road, Belmont

Evenings Tuesday - Saturday at 8pm
Matinée - Sunday 20 November at 2pm

OUR NEXT PRODUCTION

17-31 March 2012 will be three episodes from
Fawley Towers - The Hotel Inspectors, Communication Problems and The Germans.

Please contact the director Kathy Gent on 445 6447 for an audition or to help in any way.

Wonderful roles are Basil and Sybil Fawley, Polly, Manuel and The Major plus many hotel guests.

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Arnold Hassock, chairman of *The Pendon Writers' Circle* and writer of instruction manuals
Richard Parmée
Ilsa Wolby, shop assistant and carer of Arnold's mother
Jennifer Farr
Jess Bates, farmer and writer of historical romance
Naomi Madelin
Grace Sims, housewife and writer of children's fiction
Trudy Thumath
Vivvi Dickins, journalist and writer of crime - fiction
Donna Franks
Clem Pepp, council worker and writer of science – fiction
Rob Holland
Brevis Winterton, retired school teacher and writer of musicals
Steve Wright

CAST PROFILES

Richard Parmée

"Improbable Fiction" is Richard's 25th performance for Company Theatre at The Rose Centre since his first role in 1995 in addition to which he directed *Noises Off*, *Brilliant Lies* and *Boeing Boeing*. As with all the other roles, the journey has been fascinating, challenging and ultimately rewarding. Richard would like to thank Lynne for entrusting him with the glorious role of Arnold Hassock and to express his appreciation for the enjoyment he has got working with such a fabulous cast & crew. He hopes very much that audiences will enjoy Mr Ayckbourn's weird and wonderful 'Improbable Fiction'.

Jennifer Farr

Jennifer has a keen interest in drama and has been studying for a certificate in Media Arts this year. When performing, Jennifer relishes being totally immersed in her character. Previously she has acted in plays at Unitec and AUT - Cecily in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Didi in *What the Hell is an Almost Girlfriend*, Jessica in *Love's a Drag* and *Blackadder in A Small Rewrite*. Jennifer finds the role of Ilsa to be quite true to herself and hopes you enjoy the play as much as she has enjoyed her first acting experience with Company.

Naomi Madelin

Naomi Madelin studied Drama & Theatre Studies at Royal Holloway College, University of London, graduating way back in 1993. She was involved in a lot of theatre in the UK including *Summer Shakespeare*. Since living in NZ she has been in TV Ads and had a couple of roles on *Shortland Street*, also acting in one Shakespeare season. 'Improbable Fiction' sees her back on stage for the first time since 2006. Naomi is excited to be treading the boards again with such a great team and in such an uproarious play.

Trudy Thumath

This is Trudy's sixth play with Company Theatre. She last appeared as Rita in *Brassed Off* and had roles in *Kindertransport*, *Daughters of Heaven*, *Caught in the Net* and *Murdered to Death*. She is delighted to be working once again with some old friends (and of course with some new friends too). "It is great to be part of such a dedicated and fun team!" She hopes you enjoy the journey through Ayckbourn's wild and wonderful world of books.

Donna Franks

Donna first acted in *The Beautyqueen of Leanne* at the old Devonport Victoria Theatre and has since acted with Mairangi Players, Ellerslie Theatre Society and Company Theatre. Her last appearance with Company Theatre was as an old lady in "Murdered to Death" and she says she had forgotten the excitement from being in a play – she is pleased her characters are getting younger! This is not the first of Alan Ackbourn's plays she has acted in-: Donna loves his dry sense of humour and the fact that (in this play at least) he does not take life too seriously. Sit back and enjoy.

Rob Holland

This is Rob's third appearance on stage for Company Theatre and he has once again found it a superbly enjoyable and rewarding experience working with this wonderfully supportive, professional group. After a three year hiatus from being on stage, the challenges of playing four different characters have been a great way of "Jumping in the deep end" and getting his acting muscles working again! Rob has been involved with various productions over the last six years, mainly with Shoreside Theatre, where his next role is as Banquo in the 2012 'Shakespeare in the Park' season of *Macbeth*.

Steve Wright

During a Geriatric OE of nearly 3 years in Oxford whilst a member of the Oxford Theatre Guild, Steve was delighted to be cast in two outdoor Shakespearian productions - in a 2005 production of "The Merry Wives of Windsor" at Merton College Gardens, and in 2006 as Stephano in "The Tempest" at Trinity College Gardens. More recently he has played an Albanian speaking refugee in "Tom Dick and Harry", Ernest in "Bedroom Farce", and Leo in Roger Hall's "Who Wants to be 100" at The Rose Centre. An occasional appearance in *Hercules* and *Xena* and TV ad's are among his other credits..

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director	Lynne Davis
Production Manager	Kathy Gent
Stage Manager	Kath Hair
Set Design	Phil Davis
Wardrobe Manager	Kim Pharo
Wardrobe Consultant	Cathy Sandy
Wardrobe Assistants/Dressers	Sheila Copus, Nadine Gibson, Rosemary Cobb
Set Construction	Phil Davis assisted by Richard Parmée, Caroline Parker, Alastair Fletcher, Rob Holland, Steve Wright
Set Painting	Caroline Parker, Anne Rimmer, Tony Sandy, Phil Davis
Set Dressing	Caroline Parker
Properties	Fred and Doreen Gould
Lighting Design	Scott Thomas
Technical Operator	Bob Stevens
Music Composer	Graeme Webber
Publicity and Programme	Kathy Gent
Photos	Sherry Ede
Front of House Managers	Sherry Ede and Sue Gross
Bar Manager	Alastair Fletcher
Front of House & Bar Teams	Members of Company Theatre

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS...



Torbay Theatre, Richard and Pip Gay and all others not listed here who have helped in so many ways

COMPANY THEATRE MEMBERSHIP
 We welcome new members. Please contact Richard on 445 9900
 or go to our website www.companytheatre.co.nz

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Novels get a life of their own in Improbable Fiction



“Are you sure you’re not an alien Clem?” Arnold (Richard Parmée) queries Clem (Rob Holland) while Vivvi (Donna Franks) finds his science fiction writings fascinating, at the Pendon Writers’ Circle’s monthly meeting



Ilsa (Jennifer Farr) and Grace (Trudy Thumath) go back in time from the monthly meeting of the Pendon Writers’ Circle to the Victorian era

Never would members of an innocuous writers’ group consider themselves characters worthy of a hilarious comedy. On the North Shore we have the Mairangi Writers, the North Shore Writers Group and the Rose Centre Writers plus countless book groups who meet each month to discuss their favourite books over a glass of wine.

Playwright Alan Ayckbourn saw the opportunity to delve deeper into these bookish minds and see how the fictitious characters from their novels might come alive.

Company Theatre’s final production of 2011 is Alan Ayckbourn’s ingenious ‘Improbable Fiction’ in which six colourful personalities meet to share their efforts in amateur writing. They are all complex characters from the droll council worker Clem played by Rob Holland to the timid children’s writer Grace played by Trudy Thumath. Into the mix enters the host Arnold’s co-worker Ilsa who also looks after his elderly mother during the meetings. In the first act we see nothing untoward but after the interval, hilarious chaos ensues as the audience is drawn into an increasingly bizarre series of disconnected events.

New Company Theatre members Naomi Madelin and Jennifer Farr join a group of ‘Company stalwarts’ in this fun, fast-paced production.

Director Lynne Davis loves Alan Ayckbourn’s plays and directed ‘Relatively Speaking’ for Company Theatre in 2009. Sets and props become ever more complicated - for Four Flat Whites in Italy, Company’s last show, they built a car and a gondola. For this play there is an equally amazing contraption on stage, which has to be seen to be appreciated.

The season of ‘Improbable Fiction’ runs from Wednesday 16 November through to Saturday 26 November, with performances at 8pm from Wednesday - Saturday and a Matinee at 2pm on Sunday 20th November. Tickets are \$25 or \$20 for concessions and can be booked on 445 9900 or rosecentre@xtra.co.nz.

