



COMPANY THEATRE

# An Ideal Husband

A comedy of wit and warmth



by **Oscar Wilde**  
Directed by **Steven Arnold**

29 March - 12 April 2014

At The Rose Centre, School Road, Belmont  
Wednesday - Saturday at 8pm

Matinées Sun 30th March and 6th April at 2pm  
\$25 Adults • \$20 Concessions

Bookings 445 9900 or email [info@rosecentre.co.nz](mailto:info@rosecentre.co.nz)

[www.companytheatre.co.nz](http://www.companytheatre.co.nz)

## AN IDEAL HUSBAND – Director’s Notes

What if life were good? What if, after a spectacular career - a moment from your past came back to haunt you – and threatened to ruin it all?. What if everything is at stake? What would you do if someone tried to take away your wealth, power, status, respectability, and perhaps worst of all – those who love you?. Sir Robert Chiltern faces this challenge in the play “An Ideal Husband”, and his wife Lady Chiltern, his friend Arthur Goring, and nemesis Mrs Cheveley all play their part in this unravelling.

What ultimately is important in a relationship, career and friendship? How do we value our friends and when do we challenge those we love? What is the role of loyalty?

What attracts someone to direct Oscar Wilde is undeniably the wonderful language. Everyone who knows Oscar Wilde is excited about the text, and the astonishingly refreshing way of looking at society. What attracted me, beyond the language was the relevance to everyday life in Auckland, New Zealand, almost 120 years after it was first performed. After further research into the play, opportunities for sumptuous costuming, dynamic set and special effects presented themselves. The characters are three dimensional and face different problems so they each move through different arcs over the course of the play.

Even from the moment of audition, I felt myself to be enormously lucky with the talent that is within the cast. From then on, with a great script, we had a wonderful opportunity to tell a story of people just like you and I. People living their lives, with assumptions, joy, pain and hope; each telling their own tale of love.

Perhaps it was co-incidence that the media and local politicians have provided us with ample fodder for reflecting on the currency of politics in society, during the time of our preparation of this play. But, maybe Wilde’s point is exactly that – that politics are always dramatic, turbulent and often whimsical.

It isn’t just playwrights, actors and directors who make plays, there is a whole team of people who create the suspended reality of fiction. We are all grateful for everyone’s efforts.

**Steven Arnold**



**STEVEN ARNOLD - The Director**



Although new to the North Shore, and having had some time away from theatre, Steven continues to nurture his passion for acting and directing. Recently seen as John Clarke in Calendar Girls (Company Theatre April 2013), he returns to direct "An Ideal Husband".

Steven firmly believes in the experience of the actors, audience and all involved. "The process is part of the product. We present this story, as something to think about, and hopefully something to enjoy. We hope that you enjoy the presentation as much as we have enjoyed putting it together for you".

**OSCAR WILDE - Playwright**



Oscar Wilde's own life was a play. His challenge to society came first in his unusual command of language, and ability to describe and characterise those around him. He also challenged the assumptions that people make, about themselves and each other. While married with children, he found himself trapped in a world where expectations limited freedom of expression. Championing the cause of those he loved, and not one to shy away from tackling social issues head on, Wilde was ultimately tried under laws forbidding homosexual activity.

It is only recently that gay marriage has become legal in New Zealand, and so we see the tremendous strength of character that Wilde showed by taking on the justice system of the time, 1895. Wilde's work is funny. He has such a lightness of touch, an irony, a cleverness with words that sometimes we can listen and forget his very real message.

He paid dearly for his passions. He died estranged from family, living in self-imposed exile in France, having served two years of hard labour for following his own path. Even so, his legacy is that he encourages us all to follow our own path.

**An Ideal Husband by Oscar Wilde**

**THE CAST**

- |                               |                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Lord Goring</b>            | <b>Reuben Turner</b>   |
| <b>Robert Chiltern</b>        | <b>Paul Roukchan</b>   |
| <b>Lord Caversham</b>         | <b>Dave Miller</b>     |
| <b>Visconte / Phipps</b>      | <b>Peter Dodds</b>     |
| <b>Mr Montford</b>            | <b>Alastair Kirkby</b> |
| <b>Harold / James / Mason</b> | <b>Stephen Hood</b>    |
| <b>Lady Gertrude Chiltern</b> | <b>Elizabeth Gill</b>  |
| <b>Lady Markby</b>            | <b>Amelia Noble</b>    |
| <b>Mrs Marchmont</b>          | <b>Caitlin Miller</b>  |
| <b>Miss Mabel Chiltern</b>    | <b>Alice Allfree</b>   |
| <b>Mrs Cheveley</b>           | <b>Lara Simo</b>       |
| <b>Lady Basildon</b>          | <b>Kelly Phillips</b>  |

An Ideal Husband - The Play Synopsis

THE CREW

**Act One:** We are in the Chilterns' home. They are hosting friends at a party. Sir Robert Chiltern is an important politician, his wife Lady Gertrude Chiltern is in the Women's Liberal Association – a group that campaigned strongly for Women's Suffrage. All is well, until a stranger, Mrs Cheveley, enters the party, and starts to cause trouble. We soon learn of her intent to blackmail Sir Robert by threatening to reveal secrets of his past life.

**Act Two:** The next day in the Chilterns' lounge. Lord Arthur Goring, who is Sir Robert and Lady Chiltern's dearest friend is trying to help Robert deal with a tricky situation. Arthur has love troubles of his own. He is distracted by his paramour Mabel Chiltern (Robert's sister). Mrs Cheveley then arrives back at the Chilterns, and challenges Lady Chiltern as to how well she knows her husband implying he may not be the ideal, moral man she thinks he is. Feeling distraught, Lady Gertrude appeals to her husband, and he has to admit he has lied to her.

**INTERVAL – There will be an interval of 15 minutes. Refreshments are available in the foyer.**

**Act Three:** That evening, in Lord Goring's rooms. Arthur is keen to go out, but visits by his father (Lord Caversham), then an unexpected Mrs Cheveley and then Sir Robert thwart his plans. He ends up in a very compromising situation, coming face to face with his own past through Mrs Cheveley.

**Act Four:** The next day, back at the Chilterns' home. A potential promotion is in the air, but decisions have to be made about a future in politics after the humiliating events of the past 48 hours. Robert again turns to Arthur Goring for advice. It all looks like it might end well, but there is a further twist before happiness can be won, with a proposal, an acceptance and a new start.

<b>Director</b>	<b>Steven Arnold</b>
<b>Production Manager</b>	<b>Kathy Gent</b>
<b>Set Design</b>	<b>Anne Rimmer/Steven Arnold</b>
<b>Costume Design</b>	<b>Cathie Sandy</b>
<b>Lighting Design</b>	<b>Sam Mence</b>
<b>Lighting Operator</b>	<b>Max Griffiths</b>
<b>Properties</b>	<b>Doreen and Fred Gould</b>
<b>Rehearsal Prompt</b>	<b>Ann Baxter</b>
<b>Stage Manager</b>	<b>Anne Rimmer, assisted by Jessica Kennedy</b>
<b>Set Construction</b>	<b>Phil Davis, Richard Parmée, Anne Rimmer, Alastair Fletcher</b>
<b>Set Dressing/Painting</b>	<b>Caroline Parker, Tony Sandy</b>
<b>Wardrobe Sewers</b>	<b>Gail Carran, Mary Gardner</b>
<b>Wardrobe Dressers</b>	<b>Georgia Chilman, Sharon Lee, Mary Gardner</b>
<b>Hair</b>	<b>Anne Dennis, Madison Dennis</b>
<b>Make Up</b>	<b>Caitlin Miller</b>
<b>Photos/Programme</b>	<b>Sherry Ede</b>
<b>Billboards/Publicity</b>	<b>Sherry Ede, Kathy Gent,</b>
<b>FOH Manager</b>	<b>Sherry Ede</b>
<b>Bar Manager</b>	<b>Alastair Fletcher</b>
<b>Bookings</b>	<b>Richard Parmée</b>

**Acknowledgements:** Hawkes Bay Orchestra (Incidental Music), Carol Evans (Costumes), Dolphin Theatre (Costumes), Tess Soulie (Waltz Choreography), Phil Peleton (Poster Design) Jake Thumath, Devonport Drycleaners, Shakespear Regional Park - Peacock Feathers.



**BACKSTAGE PROFILES**

**SET DESIGN – ANNE RIMMER & STEVEN ARNOLD**



At the Rose Centre’s inaugural concert in 1992 Anne was the lighting operator. Since then, for Company Theatre, she has created costumes, designed sets, managed publicity and has been a Stage Manager and Director. Anne values the camaraderie and team work that goes into putting on a major production.

**COSTUME DESIGN – CATHIE SANDY**



Cathie Sandy joined Company Theatre in 1982 and has been designing, sewing, creating and looking after Company’s wardrobe ever since. Her personal highlights are the Victorian or Edwardian eras and this show has allowed her to enjoy her passion. Company Theatre is very indebted to her hours of work.

**LIGHTING DESIGN – SAM MENCE**



Sam has a background in all things electrical, and worked for the Oceania Audio repairs department, Xytech Lighting systems and The Maidment Theatre. He designed a range of shows in 2013, from the La Traviata (Hawkes Bay Opera House) to the musical The Last Five Years (Auckland Music Theatre) to an Electrica Dance Party (The North Shore Events Centre) and the Death Wave Disco (The James). Sam enjoys the art of theatrical lighting.



Max Griffiths, Georgia Chilman, Jessica Kennedy.



Alastair Fletcher



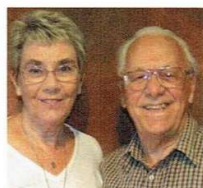
Kathy Gent



Richard Parmée



Sherry Ede



Fred & Doreen Gould

**BIOGRAPHIES**

**Reuben Turner**



Born in New Zealand, Reuben Turner has worked as a professional actor in Los Angeles, London and his native Auckland. Having trained in New Zealand and at the renowned TVI Actors Studio in Los Angeles, Reuben has worked on a wide variety of projects. His breadth of experience includes lavish productions of musicals such as Cats, international commercials, screen work, children’s theatre, music videos, stage drama and performing for His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

**Paul Roukchan**



Paul has played lead roles in the Auckland theatre scene for over ten years. As well as being an actor, he is also a professional stand up comedian with appearances in various TV shows like Eating Media Lunch and The Neighbourhood (TV 1). This is Paul’s third appearance on the Company Theatre stage, after playing Christopher Wren in “The Mousetrap” (2012) and Greg in “It’s Just Sex” (2013) .

**Lara Simo**



Lara Simo is a British/Spanish performer and puppeteer from the UK. She has a degree in Drama and Theatre Studies, has trained in mask and puppet making, comic acting and physical theatre. She has performed in several solo and ensemble theatre productions, has devised puppet shows for international festivals for children and adults and as a clown has played out ‘Romeo and Juliet’ to kindergarten children. Lara has also written and performed comedy shows, ‘stand up’ and performance art pieces. She is very happy to be playing Mrs Chevely, her first ‘baddie’.



BIOGRAPHIES

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**Alice Allfree**

Alice has always loved theatre and performance and has been involved in productions in high school, amateur theatre groups, competitions and drama classes. In 2013 she was a member of the Shakespeare's Globe Centre New Zealand Young Shakespeare Company and travelled to the Globe in London to attend workshops and perform as Hermia in "A Midsummer Nights Dream" on the Globe Stage. She is currently studying English and Psychology at Auckland University and hopes to continue being involved in theatre in her spare time.



**Elizabeth Gill**

While at Auckland University, studying Drama, Elizabeth acted in many Stage 2 Productions and other one off shows. Her involvement continues as a drama teacher at Northcote College. Taking on this role of Lady Chiltern has been a complete contrast to that of Claire in "Calendar Girls" (Company 2013) and a challenge as she moves from the director's chair to on-stage.



**Peter Dodds**

Peter is a British actor and stand-up comedian. He is making his New Zealand Theatre debut in "An Ideal Husband" after treading the boards for the past ten years in the U.K. His roles in London's West End have included a season at the National Theatre in "His Dark Materials" and at the Old Vic in "On the Middle Day". He is performing regularly at The Classic Comedy Club where he has gained a reputation for his risqué humour.



**Stephen Hood**

Since high school Stephen has played numerous roles, highlights being a Jewish fruit shop owner in Nazi Germany and the third murderer in Macbeth. He was also Manuwatu Summer Shakespeare's webmaster for a couple of years and was recently a pre-programmed lighting desk operator for "The Crucible". After working at the Palmerston North City Library for over a decade he bravely ventured north and now works in the IT sector. This is Stephen's first show with Company Theatre, and as their name suggests "they do make rather good company".



**Amelia Noble**

From London, Millie has been interested in theatre since attending a professional Shakespeare workshop. Currently completing a BA in English and Film (Auckland Uni), she plans to return to England later this year to pursue postgraduate studies at drama school. In N.Z. she has studied at the Young Actors' Studio at Wellington Performing Arts Centre and the A\* Acting Studio to study the Stanislavski system. She was selected as a Young & Hungry Arts Ambassador, and through this gained the lead role in "Sick!" produced at the Bats Theatre in Wellington.



**Kelly Phillips**

Kelly is completing a Bachelor of Arts degree at Massey University. She has always had a passion for acting, be it making home movies with siblings or playing a slave girl in a TV series. She simply loves being able to delve into another world through this magical art form and has had immense fun working on this production, learning a great deal in the process ( particularly how to survive a night in a corset!) A great fan of Oscar Wilde, she believes he brings out the witty comedian in us all.



## BIOGRAPHIES

**Alastair Kirkby**

Alastair has been involved in Drama both in High School and in amateur theatre across the North Shore. He has held several large and small roles in a number of productions as well as fulfilling the roles of Stage Manager, Lighting Director and Director of a full production. Most memorable was playing Mussorsky in a stage adaptation of "Pictures of an Exhibition". Outside of theatre he is studying a Law and Arts conjoint degree at the University of Auckland. He intends to remain involved in the theatrical community.

**Caitlin Miller**

Caitlin has been involved in performing arts since age five, more recently with Mairangi Players and Waitemata Theatre. Returning to Auckland after attending the Sir Anthony Hopkins School of Dramatic Arts in Invercargill, Caitlin was eager to jump back into theatre feet first and is delighted to have been picked for this play, with such a wonderful cast.

**Dave Miller**

Dave has a B.Mus from the University of Auckland. His instruments include drum kit, keys and guitar and he plays rock and jazz. He has performed on drums in Nonsense (Dolphin), in Brassd Off (Playhouse) and with the University of Auckland Concert Band. Dave has also produced an album of his orchestral and vocal compositions. He is an electronic engineer and has several patented inventions in the field of mobile communications. This is Dave's second acting role after appearing in "Off the Hook" (Hunua Theatre). Dave says: "I'm thrilled to be working with and learning from Steven Arnold and the wonderfully talented cast and crew at Company Theatre!"

**AUDITIONS NOTICE:**  
A Shortcut to Happiness by Roger Hall  
Directed by Sian Davis**AUDITIONS**

Sunday May 4th at 2.00pm in The Company Room,  
The Rose Centre, School Road, Belmont.

Full details on our website on the AUDITIONS page at

**[www.companytheatre.co.nz](http://www.companytheatre.co.nz)**

For a copy of the script email Sherry on [sherryede@hotmail.com](mailto:sherryede@hotmail.com)

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