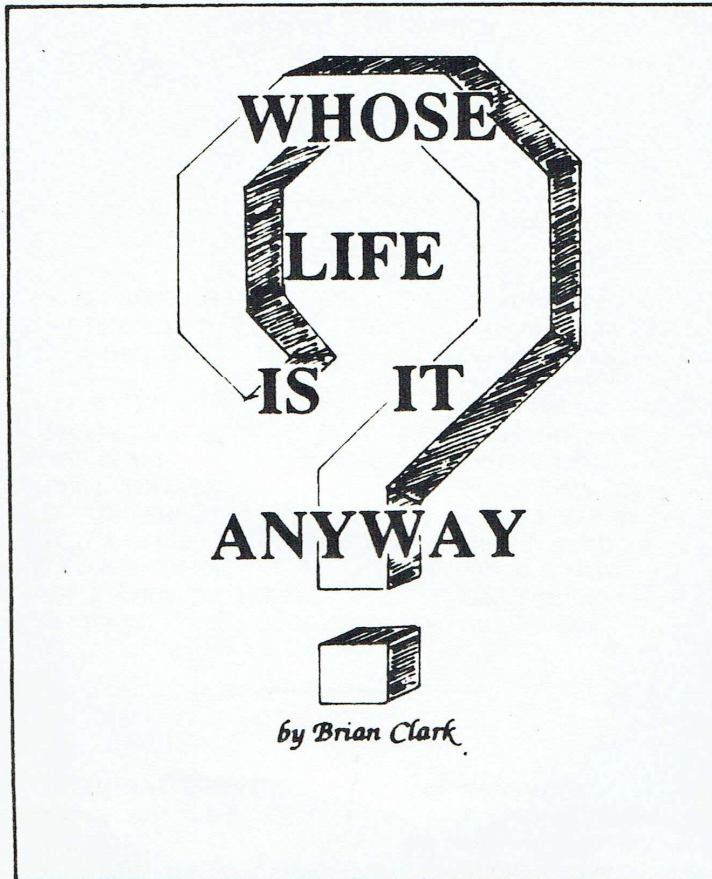


P&W S.

COMPANY THEATRE

presents



by Brian Clark

"WHOSE LIFE IS IT ANYWAY?"

by Brian Clark

Designed & Directed by
NEIL BURGHAM

Lighting Designed by
PETER FITZGIBBON

CAST

KEN HARRISON
SISTER SCOTT
KAY SADLER
JOHN
DR SCOTT
DR EMERSON
MRS BOYLE
PHILIP HILL
DR TRAVERS
PETER KERSHAW
ANDREW EDEN
MR JUSTICE MILLHOUSE
DR BARR

John Palmer
Margaret Hewitt
Barbara Simpson
Gray Kirkbride
Anne Potter
Peter Segrove
Lola Marshall
Peter Fitzgibbon
Leanne Watkins
Gary Parmenter
Steve O'Hara
Geoffrey Clews
Neil Burgham

PRODUCTION

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
STAGE MANAGER
PROMPT
LIGHTS & SOUND

PROPS & WARDROBE
SET CONSTRUCTION
PUBLICITY
FRONT OF HOUSE

Mason Price
Yvonne Burgham
Leanne Watkins
Dougall Love
Carl Watkins
Leanne Watkins
Anne Potter (et al)
Neil Burgham
Angeia Redmond

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

When I have been asked to describe this play I have invariably hesitated to offer a brief description. If one simply says that it concerns a quadriplegic who wants to be released from hospital and his life support and that this will result in his inevitable death, one risks giving a gloomy and false impression of this work. I believe the play is saved from being at all morbid by the dialogue, in particular that written for Ken Harrison, the central character. This gives him a kind of cheerful matter-of-factness which demands that we accept his point of view with the same equanimity as he himself has done.

I chose this particular play because I believe it has all the elements which appeal to me as a theatre-goer; it is entertaining, it makes me laugh, makes me feel and think. It also uses the English language in a way which is clever without being pretentious.

I hope you share my opinions of Brian Clark's work and enjoy your evening with Company Theatre.

Neil Burgham first directed for Company Theatre last year when we presented Roger Hall's "Fifty Fifty". He has appeared in a number of other productions, "Blithe Spirit", "Dear Delinquent" and "Move Over Mrs Markham".

SYNOPSIS

As the issues which this play confronts are universal, we have set it in no specific location or country. Its particular setting is, obviously, a hospital. The action takes place in Ken Harison's private room, and various other areas of the hospital over several days. The various scenes do not necessarily cover a continuous time span.

++++ CAST NOTES +++++

JOHN PALMER (Ken Harrison) John is a newcomer to Company but has an association with theatre which goes back to college and covers experience with the Northland Players in Kaikohe and three years in Western Australia where he studied drama at the Academy of Performing Arts.

ANNE POTTER (Dr Scott) It is some time since we saw Anne in a major role on stage - her efforts lately being concentrated on direction. These included two recent major productions, "The Pohutukawa Tree" and "Murder on the Nile".

PETER SEGROVE (Dr Emerson) Peter spends his time equally between acting roles and direction and as such is one of our busier members. In one year he directed for Company, Perkel Opera, Belmont School and acted in "Move Over Mrs Markham" (in between a major role as our President in 1988/89).

PETER FITZGIBBON (Philip Hill) Another of Company's multi-talents, Peter's name frequently appears as lighting designer. This is his second role for us, "Fifty Fifty" in 1988 being the first.

BARBARA SIMPSON (Kay Sadler) Barbara made her debut with us in "Dangerous Corner" in 1983 and returned for "Murder on the Nile" after a break for maternal duties.

MARGARET HEWITT (Sister Anderson) Children's theatre, Winnie the Pooh", and a role in "The Boy Friend" for the Te Awamutu Operatic Society, followed by a time in Apia with

the Repertory Society, make up Margaret's dramatic experience. We welcome her to Devonport and Company Theatre.

LEANNE WATKINS (Dr Travers) Leanne last appeared for Company in "Move Over Mrs Markham" but has been seen quite regularly in our productions since her debut in "Tomb With a View" almost five years ago.

GRAY KIRKBRIDE (John) Gray's part in this play is quite a contrast from the straight up and down Doctor Bessner in "Murder on the Nile". In between that play and this, he has appeared in "Annie" for Music Theatre Productions.

GEOFFREY CLEWS (Mr Justice Millhouse) Life as a busy lawyer, whilst providing valuable experience for his current role, at the same time, prevents more frequent appearances on stage. Geoffrey is best known for his inimitable chairmanship of Company Theatre's Victorian Music Halls.

LOLA MARSHALL (Mrs Boyle) Lola first appeared on our stage in "Bonaventure" and more recently in "Murder on the Nile".

GARY PARMENTER (Peter Kershaw) Gary is making his first appearance for Company Theatre and his stage debut.

STEVE O'HARA (Andrew Eden) Steve is never quite sure how he is persuaded to make what so far have been very brief appearances on stage. Consequently, we're not yet sure what talents he's hiding!

COMPANY THEATRE wishes to thank the following organisations for their assistance with props and wardrobe:

- Howick Little Theatre
- Green Lane Hospital
- Auckland Hospital
- North Shore Hospital

NORTH SHORE COMPANY THEATRE & DRAMATIC SOCIETY INC.

Patron Wyn Hoadley

President Geoffrey Clews

Vice President Neil Burgham

Secretary Ros Clews

Treasurer Peter Segrove

Committee Anne Potter, Ruth Mathieson
Leanne Watkins, Steve O'Hara
Angela Redmond, Cathy Sandy

New members are always welcome, in whatever capacity.
If you would like to join us, please call Ruth Mathieson on
456-939, or Ros Clews on 458-928.

COMPANY THEATRE'S NEXT PRODUCTION
WILL BE A VICTORIAN MUSIC HALL
DIRECTED BY PETER SEGROVE
FOR PRODUCTION IN MID-NOVEMBER



Geoff Clews

on 479-1593.

Whose life is it anyway?

“WHOSE Life Is It Anyway” has been chosen by Company Theatre as its mid-year production for 1989 and is now in rehearsal under director Neil Burgham.

The play concerns the struggle faced by Ken Harrison, paralysed from the neck down as the result of a motor accident. Ken was a sculptor prior to his accident and now faces the prospect of life under constant hospital care. He chooses not to be what he calls a “medical achievement” and petitions the court to be allowed to die. The issues raised in the play are as topical now as they were when the play was first written and are not concerned with suicide but rather who has the right to decide for people totally dependent on medical care.

The season runs from July 27-29 and August 2-5 at St Michael's Hall, Belmont. Reservations can be made by telephoning 456-939.

Play poses tricky question

Whose Life Is It Anyway? is the question asked in Company Theatre's production opening in Bayswater this month.

Ken Harrison (played by John Palmer) is the central character and the person who asks that question throughout the play.

Ken is a quadriplegic after being in a car accident, and he decides the price for continuing to live is too high.

He remains mentally alert and acutely sensitive about never leading a meaningful and productive life again.

The question pointedly asked in *Whose Life Is It Anyway?* is who should decide if a person lives or dies — the doctors or the patient?

The play deals with the question of a man's right to control his destiny, and does so in a thought-provoking way.

Ken asks for the right to decide to leave the hospital which sustains his life.

In opposition is Dr Emerson (Peter Segrove), a committed professional determined to save Ken's life rather than help him destroy it.

Despite the awful circumstances, Ken's humour and courage are revealed in his dealings with the hospital staff.

He is helped by his lawyer to bring proceedings against the hospital in order to determine his own fate.

Written by Brian Clark, the play was first performed in London in 1978 and drew capacity houses for two years.

It also had a successful season on Broadway and has since been seen around the world.

Director Neil Burgham describes the play as compelling, moving and humorous.

He directed a production of *Fifty Fifty* for Company Theatre last year.

Company Theatre is the only recreational theatre group presenting plays in the Devonport/Belmont area.

The group has been running for nine years and presents at least one major production each year.

Whose Life Is It Anyway? runs from July 27 to 29 and August 2 to 5 at St Michael's hall in Bayswater.

For bookings telephone 456-939.



Peter Segrove, John Palmer