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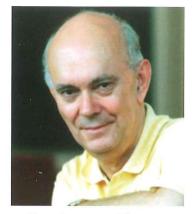
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Sir Alan Ayckbourn

Alan Ayckbourn was born in London in 1939 and has worked in theatre all his life Before establishing himself as a writer and director, Alan worked in roles as various as stage manager, sound technician, lighting technician, scene painter, prop maker and actor. He always claims that most of these talents he developed with the help of Stephen Joseph, his mentor and founder of the Library Theatre in Scarborough who first encouraged him to write. One of Alan's greatest achievements was the establishment of a permanent home for the company of which he has been artistic director since 1972 - the Stephen Joseph Theatre, This splendid two-auditoria arts complex opened in 1996. Probably one of the nation's most performed living playwrights, Alan Ayckbourn has written 72 plays, almost all receiving their first performance in Scarborough. Among his successes are: How The Other Half Loves, Absurd Person Singular, The Norman Conquests, Bedroom Farce, Just Between Ourselves, A Chorus of Disapproval, Woman in Mind, A Small Family Business and Comic Potential. More than 35 have been produced in the West



Sir Alan Ayckbourn

End or at the National Theatre since his first hit. Relatively Speaking, opened at the Duke of York's Theatre in 1967.

His plays have been translated into 35 languages, have won numerous national and international awards and are performed on stage and television throughout the world. They have been filmed in English and French, the most recent, Coeurs, Alain Resnais' adaptation of Private Fears in Public Places winning that great film director the Silver Lion Award at the 2007 Venice Film Festival. Alan's book, The Crafty Art of Playwriting, published by Faber in 2002 has, to date, been published in Germany, Spain, Sweden and the US. The holder of a number of honorary degrees, he is also the recipient of a Montblanc de la Culture

Award for Europe and a Sunday Times Award for Literary Excellence. A Fellow of the RSA, he was appointed a CBE in 1987 and in 1997, was knighted for services to the theatre.

Alan Ayckbourn stepped down as Artistic Director of the Stephen Joseph Theatre at the climax of the 2008 autumn season.

Biography supplied by Alan Ayckbourn's official website www.alanayckbourn.net





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Director's Notes

Game Plan was the first play in the trilogy Damsels in Distress written by Alan Ayckbourn and was premiered at the Stephen Joseph Theatre in May 2001. The trilogy was his first major triumph in the 21st century and ironically led to one of his biggest disappointments.

Considering the financial situation at the time Avckbourn set out to write two plays, Game Plan and Role Play which shared the same cast and the same set. Inspired by his company of actors he wrote a third play Flat Spin and the trilogy was born. After performances in Scarborough the plays went on tour and then moved to the West End. Although the plays were well received in London and the reviews were good the producers decided to reduce the performances of Flat Spin and Game Plan to play only at the weekend with Role Play running during the week. This decision naturally upset the cast and Sir Alan, Between 2003 and the Autumn of 2007 Alan did not allow his work to be produced in the commercial West End

In this play, Ayckbourn, in his unique humorous way, highlights current issues including – the world of the internet – family break up –



Poppy Flanagan
Director

personal relationships – and the pressures placed on young people to grow up quickly.

I am delighted to be presenting this play at The Little Theatre. My thanks go to: the cast who have returned from their Christmas break and are working hard to get this play ready on time; the stage crew who have put the panto to bed and are busy building the set and all those working back and front of stage. Finally, I am indebted to Norman, Christine and Barry Forshaw at "Ashley Kitchen & Bathroom Design Centre for providing and fitting the beautiful kitchen you will see on the set toniaht. Norman and Christine are subscribers and have been coming to see our productions for a number of years. I hope that you and they will enjoy tonight's performance.

> Poppy Flanagan Director

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Damsels in Distress A Background

The Damsels in Distress trilogy was Alan Ayckbourn's first major triumph of the 21st century and ironically, led to one of his biggest disappointments.

The origins of the project lay in Scarborough with Alan Ayckbourn deciding to return the Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough, to its repertory roots, whilst tackling the financial pressures facing the theatre at the same time. His solution was to write two plays, Game Plan and Flat Spin, which shared the same set and the same cast. The Stephen Joseph Theatre for much of its 40 years had predominately been a repertory company, but the move to its new home in 1996 had largely ended the repertory company system with the exception of the 10x10 season in 1998. Alan believed repertory was an important aspect of the theatre's heritage and had many advantages for the theatre, the company and the audience.

Alan did not intentionally set out to make any thematic links between the two plays (which became three plays) other than they feature a female protagonist in an extraordinary situation, but they deal with many familiar Ayckbourn themes: lack of communication, relationships, the failure of technology and the death of love among others. Although labelled a trilogy, the plays are connected only thematically and by the set and company.

The company of seven dubbed "the magnificent seven" by The Guardian critic Michael Billington - mixed long term Ayckbourn collaborators Jacqueline King, Bob Austin and Bill Champion with more recent additions Saskia Butler and Alison Pargeter alongside two completely new faces Tim Faraday and Beth Tuckey. These seven actors would prove to be a vital component in the impact and success of the plays, validating Alan's decision to return to repertory.

The first play, Game Plan, was premiered at the Stephen Joseph Theatre in May 2001 and was extemely successful with both audiences and critics, many of whom had suggested (again) Alan's playwriting days had come to an end with the failure of Virtual Reality. However, Game Plan proved that not

only was Alan on good writing form but was able to deal with very topical and contemporary issues in a way that he had failed to achieve in Virtual Reality. The play was not without some detractors who worried about its portrayal of prostitution and underage sex, but equally Alan was applauded for dealing with pertinent issues, such as the potential dangers of the internet.

Flat Spin was unveiled a month and a half later and was equally successful, although the play is generally regarded as the weakest of the Damsel plays. The play is far more straight forward than Game Plan and is , in effect, a Hitchcock inspired comedy-thriller. However, the response was good and Alan and his acting company were clearly enjoying the experience.

By Simon Murgatroyd From Alan Ayckbourn's official website www.alanayckbourn.net

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The concept of Damsels in Distress

One of the oldest themes in literature and drama is the damsel in distress, in which a young and presumably innocent woman is held in captive against her will by an evil-doer, or cannot free herself from a curse or some other psychological captivity. The only person capable of rescuing the Damsel in Distress is an altruistic hero figure, typically a knight in shining amour in Medieval literature. The roots of the archetypal "damsel in distress", however, can be traced back as far as Greek tragedies involving young female mortals and their harrowing encounters with gods and demigods.

Although the damsel in Damsel in Distress may sound Germanic in origin, it is actually a corruption of the French word 'demoiselles' suggesting a delicate young woman. In a literary context, a damsel would often be interpreted as a naive woman-

child with few natural survival instincts or real world experience, perhaps a sheltered member of a royal family or an untravelled country maiden. A damsel in distress such as Rapunzel*, however, might use her wiles to assist her eventual rescuer or lull her captor into a false sense of security.

One of the essential parts of a damsel in distress scenario is the heroic effort to rescue her. In many tales of damsels in distress, several would-be rescuers fail because they have ulterior motives of sexual conquest or otherwise lack the moral fortitude of a true knight in shining armour. The moral of many of these "damsel in distress" stories is not strictly about the rescuing process, but the altruistic reasons for the rescue. Evil must be defeated before the damsel can be released from its grip, and only the most heroic and purest of heart would have the power to succeed.

The concept of a dependent and helpless female relying on the largeness of a dominant or heroic male figure has become more controversial in recent times. Many women now consider the "damsel in distress" dynamic between men and women to be a polarizing remnant of a male-dominated society. As long as men continue to view women as submissive creatures in constant need of rescue and protection, true equality between the sexes may be a difficult thing to achieve. Perpetuating the classic "damsel in distress" theme may work well in romance novels and movies, but it may not work in the real world.

*Rapunzel is a figure in one of fairy tales in the collection of the Grimm brothers' stories.

Brain Teaser

Which is London's tallest building? Is it: 30 St. Mary Axe (The Gherkin), One Canada Square (in Canary Wharf), or the BT Tower? Answer on page 19.









Emilia Scott

Sorrel Saxon

At 16 Sorrel Saxon is the new woman of the dot com age. An academically bright girl, full of resentment of her father and subject to typical teenage mood swings, she has feelings but does not know what to do with them. She loves her mother but is irritated by her: the cigarette smoking, the coughing, the misery, the fact that she still carries a torch for her husband.



Diane Mackley

Lynette Saxon

Lynette Saxon and her husband did well on the internet market, moved into a smart apartment and sent their daughter, Sorrel, to a good school. When the business failed and the husband ran off with her business partner Lynette became a part-time office cleaner living on nerves, 40 cigarettes a day and microwave suppers. Although dumped she is still in love with her husband. Her daughter is now her life and she will do anything she can to make sure her future is not compromised.



Natasha Proffitt

Kelly Butcher

Kelly Butcher is everything Sorrel is not: naive, rather dull, not academically bright, and very much under her parent's thumb! Sorrel is her best friend in the world – in fact her only friend in the world. Kelly is the best sort of person to have as a friend though as she will do anything for you!

The action of the play takes place in a riverside apartment in London's Docklands.

Act 1 - Scene 1 November, 6am

Scene 2 The same evening, 6pm

Scene 3 A week later, early afternoon

Act 2 - Scene 1 The same evening, 11pm

Scene 2 A fortnight later, 6pm

Scene 3 Three weeks later, 4pm

There will be an interval of 20 minutes between the two acts Why not pre-order your drinks in the bar for the interval

Cast



Leo Tyler

Leo Tyler grew up 'over the shop,' married the daughter of a close personal friend of his mothers and took over the family dry-cleaning business with his wife. Since the death of his wife and not having been blessed with children Leo has little to fill his life now that ill health has forced him to give up the business.





Brendan Gillow

Dan Endicott

Detective Sergeant Endicott's career has not really gone as he might have hoped. He is not at the top of his game and is possibly rather too nice to be a successful detective. He has become rather disillusioned with life as a whole. especially where teenage daughters are concerned.



Catherine Leight

Grace Page

WPC Grace Page is young and eager for promotion and so leaves no stone unturned when investigating any case. It is not enough for Grace to catch the criminals; she wants to "save" them. However, being prone to lengthy biblical quotations could prove to be a disadvantage to her career prospects.



Eric Chadwick

Troy Stephens

Troy Stephens is a tabloid journalist from "As It Is" an upmarket gossip magazine! This is not where Troy thought journalism would take him when he started his working life but he is giving it his best shot until something better comes along.



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Staging

Stage Manager.....Lindsay Haywood Assistant Stage Manager (Book).....Sheila Furlong

Set Design.....Syd Coley

Lighting.....Syd Coley, Roy Carr

Sound......Brian Hodge, Chris Ratcliffe

Props......Mo Leefe, Sandy Town,

Kate Lockie

Wardrobe.....James Hughes-Alty and Cast

Set Construction......The SDC Construction Team

Scenic Artist.....Bob Jessamine

Photographs.....Fletcherhill Photography

Programme Editor.....Jørgen Petersen

Programme Layout & Design......Mitchell & Wright Printers Ltd

Music used during the production

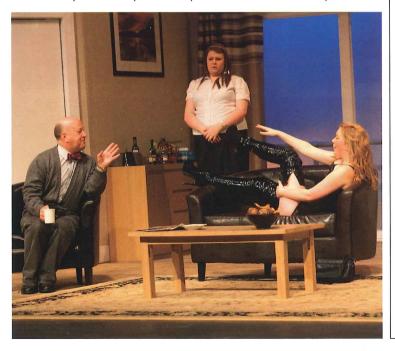
The money song; You can count on me; So clear to me; Midnight; Money won't make you happy; I'll take the money and Carmina Burana - Carl Orff.

Acknowledgement

The director would like to thank:

James Hughes-Alty for his help with the costumes

Cameras and recording equipment may not be operated during performances Kindly ensure that your Mobile phone is switched off. Thank you.



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- Should you arrive after the performance has started, you will be guided to your seats when a suitable opportunity occurs.
- At the end of the performance, exits will be open at both the front and back of the auditorium.
- First Aid assistance is regularly provided by volunteers from the St. John Ambulance Brigade. Should you require help, please advise our stewards on duty in the Foyer.
- Patrons with hearing impairments should note that the auditorium has an Induction Loop System for your assistance. Hearing wands are also available from our stewards.

Designated premises Supervisor, Alan Newport



















DOTCOM Companies

A dot-com company, or simply a dot-com is a company that does most of its business on the internet, usually through a web site that uses the popular top-level domain "com" (in turn derived from the word "commercial")

While the term can refer to present-day companies, it is also used specifically to refer to companies with this

business model that came into being during the late 1990s. Many such start-ups were formed to take advantage of the surplus of venture capital funding. Many were launched with very thin business plans, sometimes with nothing more than an idea and a catchy name. The stated goal was often to get big fast and have an exit strategy with a large pay-out for the founders.

With the stock market crash around the year 2000 that ended the dot-com bubble many failed and failing dot-com companies were referred to as **dot-bombs**, **dot-cons** or **dot-gones**.

Among the casualties we apparently find Lynette Saxon's company.

London Docklands History

Docklands is the semi-official name for an area in northeast and southeast London. It forms part of boroughs of Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Newham and Greenwich. The docks were formerly part of the Port of London, at one time the world's largest port. They have now been redeveloped for commercial and residential use. The name **London Docklands** was used for the first time in a government report on redevelopment plans in 1971 but has since become virtually universally adopted. It also created conflict between the new and old communities of the London Docklands

In Roman and medieval times, ships tended to dock at small quays in the present-day city of London or Southwark, an area known as the Pool of London. However, this gave no protection against the elements, was vulnerable to thieves and suffered from lack of space at the quayside. The Howland Great Dock in Rotherhithe (built 1696 and later forming the core of the Surrey Commercial Docks) was designed to address these problems, providing a large, secure and sheltered anchorage with room for 120 large vessels. It was a major commercial success and provided for a two phases of expansion during the Georgian and Victorian eras.

The first of the Georgian docks was the West India (opened 1802), followed by the London (1805), the East India (also 1805), the Surrey (1807), St.

Katharine (1828) and the West India South (1829). The Victorian docks were mostly further east, comprising the Royal Victoria (1855), Millwall (1868) and Royal Albert (1880). The King Georg V was a late addition in 1921.

The London Docklands was bombed during the Second World War, and was hit by over 2,500 bombs.



The Royal Docks - 1930

Today

Over the past 30 years, the population of the Docklands has more than doubled and the area has become both a major business centre and an increasingly acceptable area to live. Transport links have improved significantly, with the Isle of Dogs gaining a tube connection via the Jubilee Line Extention (opened 1999) and the Docklands being extended to Beckton, Lewisham, London City Airport, North Woolwich and Stratford. Canary Wharf has become one of Europe's biggest clusters of skyscrapers and a direct challenge to the financial dominance of the City.

Although most of the old Dockland wharves and warehouses have been demolished, some have been restored and converted into flats. Most of the docks themselves have survived and are now used as marinas or water sports centres (the major exception being the Surrey Commercial Docks, now largely filled in). Although large ships can – and occasionally do – visit the old docks, all of the commercial traffic has moved down-river.

The revival of the Docklands has had major effects in rundown surrounding areas. Greenwich and Deptford are undergoing large-scale redevelopment, chiefly as a result of the improved transport links making them more attractive to commuters.

The Docklands' redevelopment has, however, had some less beneficial aspects. The massive property boom and consequent rise in house prices has led to friction between the new arrivals and the old docklands communities, who

have complained of being squeezed out. It has also made for some of the most striking disparities to be seen anywhere in Britain: luxury executive flats constructed alongside run-down public housing estates.

In London Docks they have their own free newspaper, The Docklands, launched in 2006 by Archant London. This is a mixture of news, sport and lifestyle, and comes out every Tuesday. It is delivered to properties in the area and is available to pick up from various locations in Canary Wharf, Greenwich and the Royal Docks. It is the newspaper with the highest circulation in the area. A sister title The Peninsula, was launched in 2007, covering the Greenwich Peninsula.

Future Developments

The continued success of the Docklands redevelopment has prompted a number of futher development schemes, including: Extentions of the Docklands Light Railway, possibly to Dagenham. Crossrail main line link between Canary Wharf, central London and Heathrow Airport. New skyscrapers to be built at Canary Wharf.

Further development of Canada Water. Redevelopment of Blackwall Basin and Wood Wharf, east of Canary Wharf.



London Dockland Regeneration



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THE RISE AND FALL OF

Robin Hirsch Director

by Jim Cartwright

The SDC's next production is "The Rise and Fall of Little Vioice" by Jim Cartwright under the directorship of Robin Hirsch. It will run in the main theatre from 18th - 26th February, 2011.

Written in 1992 this multi award-winning play was first performed at the Royal National Theatre before transferring to the Aldwych Theatre in London's West End. The cast included Jane Horrocks, Alison Steadman and the late Pete Postlethwaite. It gained both the Laurence Olivier and London Evening Standard Awards as best Comedy of the Year. The film, including Brenda Blethyn, Michael Caine and Ewan McGregor followed in 1998 also to great acclaim.

The play poignantly tells the story of a painfully shy reclusive girl named Little Voice who lives alone, in the North of England, with her larger than life, but out of control mother, Mari. Mari's over-bearing personality drives LV into the seclusion of her bedroom where she listens and learns to mimic long-playing records of famous singers, such as Judy Garland, Marilyn Monroe and Shirley Bassey, left to her by her beloved, deceased father.

The latest of Mari's boyfriends, a small-time working men's club impresario called Ray, tries to push her towards stardom, but "the best laid plans" of mice and men do often go awry!"

As well as providing many hilarious comedy moments, this well-written play depicts strong emotional and very moving human relationships. **Not to be missed!**



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