THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

BY OSCAR WILDE
"Exquisitely trivial, a delicate bubble of fancy, and it has its philosophy: we should treat all the trivial things of life very seriously and all the serious things of life with sincere and studied triviality" — so, wrote Oscar Wilde about The Importance of Being Earnest — probably the wittiest comedy in the English language: it is certainly the least earnest.

"A trivial comedy for serious people" — a play about the only subject Oscar Wilde would admit to taking seriously — wit, elegance, and paradox. The genius of the greatest conversationalist of his day has been preserved in the framework of this play.

Before its first production Wilde wrote to George Alexander, the eventual producer "The real charm of the play, if it is to have a charm, must be the dialogue. The plot is slight, but I think adequate. An amusing thing with lots of fun and wit might be made. If you think so too and care to have the refusal of it, do let me know and send me £150. If when the play is finished you think it too slight — not serious enough — of course you can have the £150 back".

The first night on 14th February 1895 brought triumph and acclaim — Wilde once said "I never write plays for anyone. I write plays to amuse myself. Later, if anyone wants to act in them, I sometimes allow him to do so".

Oscar Wilde was arrested in April 1895. A month later, after two trials, he was sentenced to two years imprisonment with hard labour for homosexuality. * After serving his sentence he went into exile and died in Paris in November, 1900. He was 46 years old.

'I am sorry my play is boycotted by the press. However I hope some of the faithful, and all the elect, will buy copies. If you hear anything nice said about the play, write to me; if not invent it.'

Oscar Wilde (after his arrest).

* The Oxford Companion to the Theatre.
THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST
A trivial comedy for serious people
by OSCAR WILDE

Characters in order of appearance

Lane (Mr. Moncrieff's man-servant) ............ Neville Bradbury
Algernon Moncrieff ............................. Gavin McQueen
John Worthing (of the Manor House, Woolton, Hertfordshire) .......... Tony Barber
Lady Bracknell ................................. Heather Godley
Hon. Gwendolen Fairfax
(her daughter) ................................. Vivienne Patterson
Cecily Cardew (John Worthing's ward) ....... Alison Wilson
Miss Prism ...................................... Paulina Nichol
Rev. Canon Chasuble (Rector of Woolton) Ken Ratcliffe
Merriman (Butler to Mr. Worthing) .......... Peter Holmes
Footman ........................................ Chris Wallock*
Maid ............................................. Linda Buxton

*Chris Wallock is a member of the Questors Student Group.

Directed by John Wilson
Sets designed by Beth Crowley
Lighting designed by Martin Stoner
Costumes designed by Stella Bond
Sound by Tony Swaby

Music used in this production: Bach's Overture, Suite No. 2.
ACT I
Algernon Moncrieff's Rooms in Piccadilly.

ACT II
The Garden at the Manor House, Woolton.

ACT III
The Morning Room at the Manor House, Woolton.

THE ACTION OF THE PLAY IS SET IN 1895.

There will be TWO intervals of 15 minutes and 10 minutes respectively.

The performance, including intervals will last approximately two and a half hours.

Set Construction
assisted by
—— Neville Gillett
—— Gordon Miller & Roger Sturm

Properties
assisted by
—— Iris Phelps
—— Glyn Backshall

Wardrobe
—— Mary Angus, Stella Bond, Anne Gilmour, Lesley Harris, Jackie Hulbert, Julie Matthews, Valerie Palmer, Sue Peckitt, Edith Ricket, Gail Sharp, Nikki Tait

Lighting Operator
—— Liz Wood

Sound Operator
—— Tony Swaby

Wigs & Make-up
—— Julie Cruttenden and members of the 'Greatorpaint' course

Stage Management
—— Brian McLoughlin, Jenny Richardson, Caroline Bleakley, Linda Buxton, Wendi Harrison, Friedl Landau, Elizabeth Marshall, Clare McKeown, Gordon Miller, David Palmer, Jeremy Scottowe, Roger Sturm, Tracey Tomlinson

Flowers and Garden Decorations
—— Chris Brandt

With thanks to Cecily Blyth, Pauline Garrett, Colin Horne, Joe Phelps and Geoff Moore

Bread and cakes provided by Clark's (Ealing) Ltd.

Plants provided by Barralets (Ealing) and Parks Department, London Borough of Ealing
OPEN DISCUSSION ON THIS PRODUCTION

TUESDAY, 16th OCTOBER at 7.45 pm
in the SHAW ROOM

It is 90 years since *The Importance of Being Earnest* was first performed and about 15 years since it was last seen on The Questors stage.

Is this classic comedy ‘fixed’ or does it change with the times?


DO COME ALONG, EITHER TO CONTRIBUTE YOUR OWN VIEWS OR TO LISTEN TO THOSE OF OTHERS.

ALL ARE WELCOME  ADMISSION FREE

REMEMBER THE DATE
TUESDAY 16th OCTOBER 7.45 pm, THE SHAW ROOM

HOTPLATE

Delicious food is available in the Upper Foyer from 6.30 pm during the run of Playhouse productions.

Interval refreshments will be served and you can buy tea or coffee tokens in advance.

Orders for Interval drinks can also be given at the bar prior to the performance.

Patrons are respectfully asked to refrain from taking refreshments into the auditorium.

New and Prospective Members evenings are held every WEDNESDAY, commencing at 7.45 pm in the Grapevine bar. Included in the programme will be a comprehensive tour of the acting areas, workshops, wardrobe and rehearsal space.
Forthcoming Attractions

IN THE PLAYHOUSE

November 3 – 17
HENRY IV Part I
by William Shakespeare

November 26 – December 3
DON JUAN COMES BACK FROM THE WAR
by Odon von Horvath
translated by Christopher Hampton

CHRISTMAS ATTRACTIONS

December 31 – January 12 Evenings
SHERLOCK HOLMES
by Conan Doyle and William Gillette

December 28, 30, January 1, 5, 6, 12 Matinées
THE FANTASTIC FAIRGROUND
A musical play by Bernard Gross

IN THE STUDIO

October 31 – November 3
KNACKERING FOR ALL
by Boris Vian
translated by Simon Watson Taylor

December 7 – 9
THE RAPE OF LUCRECE
A Poem by William Shakespeare

FUND RAISING CONCERT IN AID OF THE NEW BUILDING PROJECTS
SUNDAY 11 NOVEMBER at 7.45 pm
INSTANT SUNSHINE
TICKETS £3.50