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EDINBURGH FESTIVAL FRINGE 1990

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THE QUESTORS THEATRE

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President: Dame Judi Dench

Vice-Presidents: Sir Brian Batsford, Alfred Emmet, OBE, Roger Rees, Michael Williams

Theatre Manager: Elaine Orchard

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AUTHOR'S NOTES

Apart from Shakespeare's immortal creations, Sherlock Holmes is probably the world's most famous fictional figure. All over the earth there are clubs dedicated to keeping his memory alive. Since the copyright expired in recent years there has been a new surge of interest with plays, films and television programmes about the Great Detective.

Yet Holmes remains an enigma, an aloof man who appears at times to have no emotions. His demeanour is that of a scientist delicately dissecting a piece of tissue. He boasts he knows nothing of any matter not connected with his profession. And as for women, he has no time for them at all. When overtaken by what Conan Doyle vaguely describes as "brain fatigue" in *The Reigate Puzzle* he can only be persuaded to rest at a house in the country on the firm assurance "that it will be a bachelor establishment".

Yet this is the man who can be roused to fury when his best friend, Dr. Watson, is threatened. "If Watson had died you would not have left this room alive" he snarls at a villain who had the temerity to shoot the good doctor in the thigh (*The Three Garridebs*).

One reason for the glorious riddle of Holmes' character is that Conan Doyle, his creator, to whom the world owes an immeasurable debt, came to regard him as a nuisance who got in the way of his real literary work. Indeed, he tried to kill him off at the Reichenbach Falls in 1891 and had to resurrect him by popular demand and keep him going for another twenty years or more. But such a theory is blasphemy to a real Holmes' addict, because it presumes that the detective is a fictional character when everybody knows he is completely real and any discrepancies are due to poor old Dr. Watson's errors as a biographer. How can he be fictitious when we know where he lived in Baker Street and what he wore and what he smoked? To this day, the building society with premises covering the original address at 221b Baker Street receives hundreds of letters every year addressed to the detective. If Sherlock Holmes is a fictional character, then so is Father Christmas!

In this play I have attempted to put forward an explanation as to what really went on behind Holmes' ice-cold facade and to throw light on the mystery of his emotional (or non-emotional) life. I need not apologise for this. Most Holmes' fans regard the account of his death as somewhat unconvincing. We are asked to believe that he deliberately let Moriarty trap him and that the arch-criminal, instead of shooting Holmes, was foolish enough to grapple with him, both falling to their deaths.

It is a sign of a great fictional character, such as Hamlet, that he is discussed and treated as if a living person. I can think of no greater tribute to Conan Doyle than the fact that so many other authors, including myself, have stolen his great creation for their own purposes.

Michael Green

THE REAL DEATH OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

by Michael Green

CAST

Sherlock Holmes	MICHAEL LANGRIDGE
Dr. Watson	DAVID PEARSON
Mrs. Hudson	MONYENE KANE
Professor Moriarty	COLIN PRONGER
Molly Smith	CAROLINE BLEAKLEY
Walter Hudson	TONY DIGGLE

CREW

Director	MICHAEL GREEN
Designer	JOHN STACEY
Lights	PETE WALTERS
	JENNY RICHARDSON
Sound	STEVE HAMES
Wardrobe	SARAH ANDREWS
Stage Manager	EDDIE CULLEN
Deputy Stage Manager	JIM CAITHNESS
Props	CHERRY KANE
Assistant Stage Managers	JULIE TULLOCH
	GLEN WILSON

THERE WILL BE AN INTERVAL OF TEN MINUTES

AUTHOR'S NOTES

In *D Minus*, Ceri Jones has created the role of Dee Watson, librarian, orphan and mother. The play tells her story, of how she became a librarian, an orphan and a mother.

D Minus is also about children. Or, to be more precise, babies.

Peer closely at the lay-back buggy being proudly paraded along the High Street and you will see an infant wrapped up tight in a Mothercare cellular blanket and its parents' ambivalence.

Those little arms outstretched in a wordless, but irresistible, entreaty produce a warm wash of happiness flooding through your body. They also mean that you have to learn to cook a spaghetti bolognese using only one hand and leaning sideways, baby clamped onto your left hip.

And would you swap that smile of pride and joy, as granny gurgles over her first grandchild, for a few hours' sleep as you pace the bedroom floor at 4 am singing *The Teddy Bears' Picnic* for the thirty seventh time?

Dee Watson has no such ambivalence.

D Minus tells you why.

Kevin Madley

D MINUS

by **Kevin Madley**

CAST

Dee Watson **CERI JONES**

CREW

Director **KEVIN MADLEY**

Sound **IAN HOWLETT**

Technical Operators **STEVE MOLE**

KATE MADLEY

Thanks are due to **JOHN ROLFE**,
GRAHAM and **SANDRA JOWETT**, and for their singing,
VICTORIA LORD and **SALLY** and **JENNY MADLEY**

THERE WILL BE NO INTERVAL

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE ON "THE FIGARO FILE"

In February and March this year, we presented at our West London theatre — The Questors — three plays which were collectively entitled "*The Figaro File*". They were Beaumarchais' *The Barber of Seville* and *The Marriage of Figaro* and Von Horváth's *Figaro Gets a Divorce*.

This project began, so to speak, with its ending — *Figaro Gets a Divorce*. In recent years we have presented three of Von Horváth's plays at The Questors Theatre and produced one of them at the Fringe in 1985, so it was not surprising that we should turn our attention to "Divorce". This exciting work led us to look again at *The Marriage of Figaro*, the play on whose characters it is based and whose plot Von Horváth uses as a starting point for his play. That play led us in turn to its progenitor, *The Barber of Seville*.

Rehearsal schedules at The Questors theatre are tight as we present 24 productions every year. The constraints of the schedule prevented an actor being in all three plays, so I opted for overlapping casts. The five characters of "Barber" reappear in "Marriage" and were played by the same actors in both productions. Of the characters who were new in "Marriage", almost all reappear in "Divorce", so the actors taking these parts were in the two latter plays while other actors were brought in to play the main (and conveniently older) protagonists of "Divorce", and also play those characters solely in "Marriage".

Here in Edinburgh, where we are only presenting "Marriage" and "Divorce", some further adjustments have been made so that all the actors are in both plays.

On the design and technical side, several people joined me in having responsibility for all the productions. We planned to give some cohesion to the project without ignoring the fact that these plays have very different styles. The plays are, however, united not only by their common characters and themes, but by the humour and courage of their authors.

THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

Beaumarchais probably began work on this play in 1776, following the success of *The Barber of Seville*. The work was submitted to the Comedie Francaise in 1781, however, due to the opposition of King Louis XVI and his censors it was not given its first public performance until 1784.

The play's combination of comedy and outspoken social comment captivated and excited the audiences of the day. Marceline's speeches demanding justice for women were, however, just too much even for the actors to take. They feared they would be attacked if they gave voice to such sentiments, and they insisted that Beaumarchais should cut the offending lines. But when the play was published, Beaumarchais was equally insistent that they should be included.

Bartholo: Remember that a wise man doesn't meddle with the affairs of the great.

Figaro: But remember also that once a man is known to be faint-hearted he is at the mercy of every rascal that comes along.

Carol Metcalfe

THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

OR THE FOLLIES OF A DAY

by **Pierre-Augustin Beaumarchais**

Translated by John Wood

CAST

Figaro, valet to Count Almaviva	DANIEL SMITH
Suzanna, maid to the Countess	HEATHER NAYLOR
Marceline, formerly Rosine's governess, now the châtelaine of the castle	FRANGCON WHELAN
Bartholo, formerly Rosine's guardian, a doctor of Seville	PHILLIP SHEAHAN
Cherubin, a page	LUKE HEALY
Count Almaviva	DAVID SLOTTVED
Bazile, a music master	JOHN MARTIN
Rosine, the Countess	DEBORAH HUNT
Antonio, the gardener	KELVIN WEST
Fanchette, his daughter	TESS WALSH
Don Guzman Bridoison, the judge	MICHAEL GERRARD
Doublemain, a clerk	PAUL VINCENT
Gripe-Soleil, a cowherd	HUMPH JAMES
Pedrillo, a huntsman	ALAN KYLE
Servants and Peasants	SARAH ANDREWS LISA DAY SUE WEST
The Older Figaro	MICHAEL GERRARD

CREW

Director	CAROL METCALFE
Set designed by	JOHN STACEY
Costumes designed by	BRAD ASKEW
Lighting designed by	MARTIN SAPSED
Sound designed by	IAN HOWLETT
Stage Manager	LINDA ZIEBA
Assistant Stage Managers	NIGEL LAWRENCE JANE STACEY
Wardrobe Mistress	ANNE TOWNLEY
Sound Operator	PETER TOMPKINS
Construction	JIM CRADDOCK TOM MORTON
Prompt	JANE DAVIE
Music composed by	ROY MARGOLIS
Music arranged by	ROY MARGOLIS JEREMY BENHAM
Flowers by	MARY ANGUS MARY ANDERSON KATH HARRINGTON
Make Up by	LINDA LATONA LUCIA TSAPPIS MARTINE MITCHELL of GREASEPAINT

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Little could we imagine, over nine months ago when we began working on "*The Figaro File*" that *Figaro Gets a Divorce* would assume such astonishing pertinence. At the time, the Eastern Bloc was largely intact and the Berlin wall unbreached.

Today the barbed wire has gone, a dissident playwright is President of Czechoslovakia, and most recently Germany has united and Berlin will once again be the capital of the whole country.

Events could not have better emphasised the link between theatre and reality. The background scenario for *Figaro Gets a Divorce* unfolded before our very eyes, echoing uncannily specific scenes:

"*You see it all: his head, the rifles. Bang! Down he goes.*"

Von Horváth has taken the characters whom Beaumarchais left in such delicious suspension, and pushed them a short step beyond the Revolution. The dilemmas they face in the new situations are the dilemmas we in Europe need to address today.

Alan Widdrington

FIGARO GETS A DIVORCE

by Ödön von Horváth
Translated by Roger Downey

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Figaro, valet to Count Almaviva	MICHAEL GERRARD
Count Almaviva	PAUL VINCENT
Countess Almaviva	FFRANGCON WHELAN
Suzanna, Figaro's wife, chambermaid to the Countess	SARAH ANDREWS
Guard/Inspector	DANIEL SMITH
Soldier/Customer	HUMPH JAMES
Soldier/Pedrillo	ALAN KYLE
Officer/Basil	PHILLIP SHEAHAN
Forester	DAVID SLOTTVED
Midwife/Directress	SUE WEST
Schoolmaster/Voice of the BBC	JOHN MARTIN
Adalbert/Antonio	KELVIN WEST
Josepha	DEBORAH HUNT
Children	DOMINIQUE GERRARD HAIDEE SHEAHAN, MATTHEW SHEAHAN
Fanchette	TESS WALSH
Secretary/Customer	HEATHER NAYLOR
Cherubin	LUKE HEALY
Customers in the Café played by members of the company	

CREW

Director	ALAN WIDDRINGTON
Set designed by	JOHN STACEY
Costumes designed by	BRAD ASKEW
Lighting designed by	JONATHAN PARTINGTON
Sound designed by	IAN HOWLETT
Stage Manager	HELEN HEAP
Assistant Stage Managers	NIGEL LAWRENCE, JANE STACEY PAUL BOTLEY, HELEN TYRRELL
Construction	TOM MORTON
Sound Operator	PETER TOMPKINS
Props	MARGARET BERRY
Music composed by	ROY MARGOLIS, JEREMY BENHAM, ALAN WIDDRINGTON
Wardrobe	GRACE LACAILLE, LIZ PRITCHETT, DEBBIE WARD, SUSAN SHEAHAN

THE ACTION TAKES PLACE SOMEWHERE IN MIDDLE EUROPE IN THE 1930s.

THE EDINBURGH COMPANY HOUSE STAFF

Artistic Director JOHN DAVEY

Director of Design RAY DUNNING

Technical Directors ROGER BRACE, DOUG KING

Tour Director JIM CRADDOCK

Venue Manager JENNY RICHARDSON

Publicity Manager ROBERT GORDON CLARK

Accommodation LISA GORDON CLARK, MONYENE KANE

Design JOHN ROLFE, JOHN STACEY,
GEOFF MOORE, JIM CAITHNESS

Front of House and Box Office ALISON DIXON,
CHRISTINE GARLAND, ANN GERRARD, TRISH KNIGHT,
MARGUERITE MINSTER, SARAH MULBERRY, SUE OLIVER,
BELLE PEREIRA, JO PERSE, ANNE SAWBRIDGE,
HARRIET SIMON, BRIDGETT STREVEENS, SYLVIA WALL

Catering LUCILLE ALLEN, MARGARET BERRY,
BERYL DENNY, DIANA KILBURN, JEAN MASTERS,
ANNE SCURFIELD, AND MANY OTHERS

Get in Team TINA HARRIS, STEVE HAMES,
JAMES LINEHAN, TOM MORTON, RACHEL SEAMAN
JOHN STACEY, GEOFF WEBB, DAVE WHEATLEY, PETE COLLINS

FOR THE QUESTORS THEATRE

Artistic Director DAVID EMMET

Stage Director STEVE ANDERSON

Theatre Manager ELAINE ORCHARD

With thanks to JILL GEE, LINDSAY UDELL,
RICHARD BROADHURST

THE QUESTORS THEATRE

On Saturday November 18th 1989 the Questors Theatre presented a rehearsed reading of *The Best People* by David Grey and Avery Hopwood. The significance of the performance was that it celebrated the opening of the same play sixty years ago to the day, which was the very first production staged by the newly formed Questors Theatre. On that day a young Alfred Emmet played the male lead, and sixty years later he read the part of the butler!

In those sixty years, the Questors Theatre has grown into the largest amateur theatre company in the country, and it has won an international reputation for the quality of the productions and, especially, for the experimental and innovative work.

The theatre in Ealing comprises a highly flexible main playhouse, that was designed for the round as well as traditional proscenium arch staging, and a simple studio, which offers enormous scope for innovative work. Added to these are rehearsal rooms, excellent back stage facilities and, of course, a friendly bar that has been recently refurbished. 24 plays are presented every year to the 3500 members and their guests. Of these members, some 800 are actively involved in running the theatre, all of them giving their time and energy to the aim of producing theatre of the highest quality.

New writing and touring are two of the cornerstones of Questors tradition. It is not surprising, therefore, that two of the plays being produced here are by active members of the theatre — Michael Green and Kevin Madley. Supplementing this work, the Questors Theatre sponsors a National Student Playwriting competition and has an ongoing commitment to finding and producing new work.

Apart from extensive tours of their own, the Questors Theatre has developed international theatre seasons which have attracted amateur theatres from Poland, Romania, Italy, France, America, Czechoslovakia and many other countries. Plans are afoot for an International Amateur Theatre Week in 1992.

Former Questors productions at Edinburgh have been: Michael Green's *The Coarse Acting Show* (1977); *Coarse Acting Two* (1979); Strindberg's *The Ghost Sonata* (1981); James Saunderson's *Hans Kholas* (1982); Geoff Webb's *Foul Play* (1985) and in 1988 *Coarse Acting Strikes Back*, Nigel Swain's *The Brick, Wealth* adapted by Steve Fitzpatrick and Beth Hert's *State of the Art*.

To join the Questors Theatre is easy. Simply ring 081 567 0011 and speak to Elaine, Lindsay or Jill — they will be happy to help you.

THE QUESTORS THEATRE AT EDINBURGH 1990 VENUE 45

THE REAL DEATH OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

Michael Green's new play that unravels the famous mystery
a delightful combination of drama and comedy.

August 13 to 18 at 6.15pm (8.15pm) £4.00 (£3.00)

D MINUS

Kevin Madley's movingly observed study of the pains and
pleasures of early motherhood.

August 13 to 18 at 2.30pm (3.15pm) and

August 20 to 25 at 11.00pm (11.45pm) £2.00 (£1.50)

THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

Beaumarchais' brilliant, satirical and ebullient comedy
the revolution already in action.

August 20 to 25 at 6.00pm (8.00pm) and

August 27 to September 1 at 2.30pm (4.30pm) £4.00 (£3.50)

FIGARO GETS A DIVORCE

Von Horváth's witty 1930s sequel
prophetic then and relevant now

August 20 to 25 at 8.30pm (10.30pm) and

August 27 to September 1 at 5.00pm (7.00pm) £4.00 (£3.50)

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