
Absurd Person Singular

Tuesday 10 – Saturday 14 March
A London Classic Theatre production
By Alan Ayckbourn
Directed by Michael Cabot

London Classic Theatre return to Oldham this March with their production of Alan Ayckbourn's comic masterpiece ***Absurd Person Singular***.

Three married couples. Three kitchens. Three Christmas parties.

Sidney Hopcroft, a small-time tradesman, persuades wife Jane to throw a party hoping to find favour with a bank manager and local architect. As celebrations begin, class differences and naked ambition combine to hilarious effect as, one by one, the characters seek refuge in Jane's kitchen.

Over the next two years, the Jacksons and Brewster-Wrights take turns to host festivities. But Sidney's star has begun to rise and roles are increasingly reversed as the cracks in the other couples' marriages begin to show.

Michael Cabot directs **John Dorney** (Geoffrey Jackson), **Felicity Houlbrooke** (Jane Hopcroft), **Helen Keeley** (Eva Jackson), **Rosanna Miles** (Marion Brewster-Wright), **Graham O'Mara** (Ronald Brewster-Wright) and **Paul Sandys** (Sidney Hopcroft).

John Dorney plays Geoffrey Jackson. Previous credits for the London Classic include *Hysteria*, *Absent Friends*, *The Caretaker* and *Humble Boy*. Other theatre credits include *Flight*, *Peter Pan* (National Theatre), *Better Watch Out* (Hampstead Theatre), *At the Back*, *Out of Focus* (Soho Theatre), *Volpone* (Wilton's Music Hall), *The Revenger's Tragedy*, *The Stranger* (Southwark Playhouse), *A-Team: The Musical* (Gilded Balloon, Edinburgh), *Coalition* (Pleasance, Edinburgh and Islington) and *Seasons Greetings* (Union Theatre).

Felicity Houlbrooke plays Jane Hopcroft. Felicity will be familiar to Coliseum audiences from her previous roles in London Classic's *My Mother Said I Never Should* and the Coliseum's production of *Hard Times*. Her other credits include: *The Railway Children* (King's Cross Theatre), *Echoes* (Arcola Theatre) *The King's Speech* (Chichester Festival Theatre and Birmingham Repertory Theatre), *Black Coffee* (UK tour), *The Diary of Anne Frank* (York Theatre Royal/UK tour) and *Gore* (Charing Cross Theatre).

Helen Keeley plays Eva Jackson. Previous credits for London Classic include *Private Lives* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Other theatre credits *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Trafalgar Studios/UK tour), *Yap Yap Yap* (Battersea Arts Centre), *Half*, *To the End* (Southwark Playhouse) and *A Summer Day's Dream* (Finborough Theatre).

Rosanna Miles plays Marion Brewster-Wright. Previous theatre credits include *Below Stairs* (Arts Theatre), *The Crucible* (UK tour), *When Holly Met Ivy* (Nuffield Southampton Theatres), *Cinderella* (Winchester Theatre Royal), *Walking the Tightrope* (Arcola Theatre), *Beyond Nora* (Exeter Northcott Theatre), *Le Jardin* (Bath Theatre Royal) and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (UK tour). Television credits include *The Grimleys*, *Teachers* and *Specials*.

Graham O'Mara plays Ronald Brewster-Wright. Previous credits for London Classic include *No Man's Land*. Other theatre credits include *Government Inspector* and *The Three Musketeers* (Young Vic), *Borders* (Arcola Theatre), *Fatzer: Downfall of an Egoist* (North Wall Arts Centre), *Punts and Cans* (Theatre503), *BU21* (Trafalgar Studios), *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Othello*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Wind in the Willows* (Storyhouse, Chester), *Sense and Sensibility* (The Watermill Theatre), *Alice* (Sheffield Theatres), *A Man of Letters* (Orange Tree Theatre) and *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice* (Theatre Royal Bury St. Edmunds). For television his credits include *Friday Night Dinner*, *Sirens* and *The Queen: 1974*.

Paul Sandys plays Sidney Hopcroft. Previous credits for London Classic include *Private Lives*, *Entertaining Mr Sloane* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Other theatre credits include *Peter Pan* (New Vic Theatre) and *Friend or Foe* (UK tour). For television his credits include *Apple Tree House* and for film, his credits include *The Sprint King*.

Michael Cabot directs and is the founder and Artistic Director of London Classic Theatre. He has directed all forty-one LCT productions since their touring debut in 2000, including *No Man's Land*, *My Mother Said I Never Should*, *Private Lives*, *Hysteria*, *The Birthday Party*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Absent Friends*, *Entertaining Mr Sloane* and *Equus*. His freelance work as director includes three recent collaborations with award-winning playwright Henry Naylor, *The Collector* (Arcola Theatre), *Angel* and *Borders* (Edinburgh Festival Fringe).

Alan Ayckbourn is an award-winning playwright. Theatre credits include *Absurd Person Singular* (Evening Standard Best Comedy Award), *The Norman Conquests* (Evening Standard Best Play Award and Tony For Best Revival Of A Play), *Bedroom Farce*, *Just Between Ourselves* (Evening Standard Best Play Award), *A Chorus of Disapproval* (Olivier Best Comedy Award and Evening Standard Best Comedy Award), *Woman in Mind*, *A Small Family Business* (Evening Standard Best Play Award), *Henceforward* (Evening Standard Best Comedy Award), *Man of the Moment* (Evening Standard Best Comedy Award), *House & Garden* and *Private Fears in Public Places*, among others.

London Classic Theatre was launched in 2000 as a touring theatre company with David Mamet's *Oleanna*. This inaugural tour lost a small fortune but doors had opened and, crucially, the work was being seen. Twenty years and forty-one tours later, London Classic Theatre is now a successful, established part of the commercial UK touring theatre scene. The company has never received any funding or sponsorship for its work. As Artistic Director, Michael Cabot has programmed a repertoire of classic and modern classic plays, a mixture of the challenging and the commercial, big titles and less well-known, including two UK premieres - Hugh Leonard's *Love in the Title* and Joanna Murray-Smith's *Nightfall*. As venues and audiences have become more familiar with the work, he has been able to push the boundaries of what LCT offers, both in ambition, scale and complexity.

Absurd Person Singular comes to Oldham as part of a national tour.

- Ends -----

Notes to Editor:

Absurd Person Singular runs from Tuesday 10 – Saturday 14 March at Oldham Coliseum Theatre.

Tickets can be booked on 0161 624 2829 or at www.coliseum.org.uk

Link to production page: <http://www.coliseum.org.uk/plays/absurd-person-singular/>

For further press information, please contact Shelly Ramsdale on 0161 785 7012 or shellyramsdale@coliseum.org.uk

Cast:



John Dorney
as *Geoffrey Jackson*



Felicity Houlbrooke
as *Jane Hopcroft*



Helen Keeley
as *Eva Jackson*



Rosanna Miles
as *Marion
Brewster-Wright*



Graham O'Mara
as *Ronald
Brewster-Wright*



Paul Sandys
as *Sidney Hopcroft*

Oldham Coliseum Theatre

Oldham Coliseum Theatre is a cultural and educational charity that works with over 150,000 individuals per year.

The Coliseum has a rich history in Greater Manchester dating back to 1885. It provides a wide variety of distinctive theatre performances and participatory activities for people from all communities in Oldham, Greater Manchester and beyond. It creates original productions each year which are presented at the Coliseum and on tour. Intrinsic to the town's on-going regeneration, the theatre works with its local communities and young people to develop creative programmes to facilitate learning, engagement and community cohesion.

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