

Issue No 1



March 2022

R E P E R T O I R E

Newsletter of Adelaide's oldest theatre group

Cast

Top row left - right
Malcolm Walton, Maxwell
Wigham & Simone Lancione
Seated left - right
Matthew Chapman, Kyla
Booth & Ivan Jankovic.



Loot

A play by Joe Orton
Directed by AJ Bartley

'Loot' is a two-act play by the English playwright Joe Orton. The play is a dark farce that satirises the Roman Catholic Church, social attitudes to death, and the integrity of the police force.

Set in London in 1965 and concerns the events surrounding the death and subsequent burial of the McLeavy family matriarch.

'Loot' saw its premiere in London in 1966 and remains one of the most potent works from this master of the macabre. It was awarded the London Evening Standard award for Best Play of 1966.

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7 - 9 and 20 - 23 April at 7.30pm

Saturday 23 April, Matinee at 2.00pm

and at 7.30pm

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DOUBLE VACCINATION IS MANDATORY

Loot

Adelaide Repertory Theatre
presents
'Loot',
a play by Joe Orton
Directed by AJ Bartley



A masterpiece of black farce, 'Loot' follows the fortunes of two young thieves.

When Joe Orton wrote 'Loot', he was out to shock his audiences. One of his greatest black farces, the play centres around two amateur thieves (and suggested lovers), Dennis and Hal. Dennis works as a hearse driver for an undertaker and the pair have robbed the bank next door to the funeral parlour. They

decide to hide their 'Loot' in the coffin of Hal's recently deceased mother. The hapless duo attempt to keep their plot from the other funeral attendees - Mrs McLeavy's mysterious and predatory nurse and Hal's long-suffering and clueless father.

This tricky situation is worsened further by the arrival of Inspector Truscott, who strangely disguises himself as a man from the local Water Board. Using the conventions of standard farce, the trio attempt to keep the body and the money away from the Inspector in an increasingly tangled web of deceit and corruption.

Orton viewed society from the vantage point of an observant outsider and his cynicism has lost none of its bite.

If Orton's play still shocks, it is because so much of its savage wit turns out to have a ring of truth.

The play is a gleefully anarchic attack on hypocrisy, that of the Catholic Church and the British Police. The character of Inspector Truscott is corrupt and easily bought, but no one comes out of Orton's play clean.

Important Notice

AGM

Will be held on Monday 21st March
at 7:00pm in the foyer at the ARTS
theatre. All welcome.



We must keep abreast of the times...

Media Release by Laura Antoniazzi

In the mid-Sixties, when London was swinging to the sound of the new world of sex, scandal and miniskirts, the theatre world was being shaken by the antics of playwright Joe Orton.

With his irreverent and shocking takes on attitudes towards the safety of the middle classes Orton was known as the "Oscar Wilde of the Housing Estate." Orton had the West End swinging from the chandeliers and pleasant, safe, boring Enid and Edna reaching for their pearls in outrage. Unashamedly gay, working-class and hedonistic and with a criminal record to boot, Orton schmoozed with the top echelons of the cultural world. But like that other Brilliant Playwright who he was often compared to, Oscar Wilde, Orton was subject to a dramatic and infamous downfall when he was murdered by his lover Kenneth Halliwell, bludgeoned to death with a hammer. Such a violent death was typical and fitting for a man who lived for the scandal, the brutality and the absurd brilliance of the world.

'Loot' is an extremely dark farce that takes aim at the final taboo: death. Mrs. McLeavy has died. Her husband is in mourning. Her nurse is shoring up her position (and her hem-line) in the McLeavy household. Her son meanwhile has more things to worry about than grief. The bank next to the funeral home has been robbed and he, along with his best friend (and sometimes more), who may or may not be involved needs a place to stash the cash. With the coffin about to make its final journey, and Inspector Truscott of the water board hot on their heels they stumble on a solution to both problems that is both hilarious and gruesome.

Let the funeral games begin...

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About the Author Joe Orton



John Kingsley Orton (1 Jan 1933 – 9 August 1967), known under the pen name of Joe Orton, was an English playwright, author, and diarist. His public career, from 1964 until his death in 1967, was short but highly influential. During this brief period he shocked, outraged, and amused audiences with his scandalous black comedies. The adjective Ortonesque refers to work characterised by a similarly dark yet farcical cynicism.

Orton met Kenneth Halliwell at Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in 1951 and moved into a flat with him and two other students in June of that year. Halliwell was seven years older than Orton; they quickly formed a strong relationship and became lovers.

After graduating, both Orton and Halliwell went into regional repertory work: They began to write together. They collaborated on a number of unpublished novels with no success at gaining publication.

Confident of their "specialness," Orton and Halliwell refused to work for long periods. They subsisted on Halliwell's money (and unemployment benefits) and were forced to follow an ascetic life to restrict their spending to £5 a week.

A lack of serious work led them to amuse themselves with pranks and hoaxes.

From January 1959, Orton and Halliwell began surreptitiously to remove books from several local public libraries and modify the cover art or the blurbs before returning them. A volume of poems was returned to the library with a new dust jacket featuring a photograph of a nearly naked, heavily tattooed, middle-aged man. The couple decorated their flat with many of the prints. They were discovered and prosecuted in May 1962. They were found guilty on five counts of theft and malicious

damage, admitted damaging more than 70 books, and were sentenced to prison for six months (released September 1962) and fined £262.

Orton began writing plays in 1959.

On 9 August 1967, Kenneth Halliwell bludgeoned 34-year-old Orton to death at their home in Islington, London with nine hammer blows to the head, then killed himself with an overdose of Nembutal.

Orton's Works

- *'Fred and Madge'* (written 1959, published 2001)
- *'The Visitors'* (written 1961, published 2001)
- *'The Ruffian on the Stair'* (first performance 1964)
Radio play
- *'Entertaining Mr Sloane'* (first performance 1964)
- *'Loot'* (first performance 1965)
- *'The Erpingham Camp'* (first performance 1966)
- *'The Good and Faithful Servant'* (first performance 1967)
- *'Funeral Games'* (first performance 1968)
- *'What the Butler Saw'* (first performance 1969)
- *'Up Against It'* (screenplay)

Novels

- *'Head to Toe'* (published 1971)
- *'Between Us Girls'* (published 2001)
- *'Lord Cucumber and The Boy Hairdresser'* (co-written with Halliwell) (published 1999)

**SA's own internet
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Supporting local theatre productions.
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www.theatreguide.com.au

Official Website for the Theatre Assoc of South Australia

Message from the Chair Rose Vallen



Last year, 2021, was our first year after the dreaded COVID closures and my first year as Chair of the Rep.

2021 was a year of successful productions, well received by critics and audiences alike.

The year started with *'Crimes of the Heart'* that had (and I quote the critics) outstanding performances by a phenomenal cast, directed by Geoff Brittain, with a set by Ole Wiebkin described as a masterpiece of sprawling domesticity.

Next was *'We'll Always Have Paris'* which was a 'heart-warming' two hours of theatre that had us leaving the theatre with an inner glow. I saw Paris with my best friend Carol and we spent the rest of the evening drinking wine and reminiscing about our own times in Paris and wishing we were there.

Our September play was *'Good People'* the TASA critic described it as a spell-binding performance by the Adelaide Rep that truly affirms the Rep's well established reputation for high quality theatre in Adelaide. Each member of the cast, the director Nick Fagen and Brittany Daw's set were all given high praise.

The last show of the year was *'Humble Boy'*, directed by Kerrin White, critics described this one as having delightful lines, making a most worth-while and enjoyable performance - there were many waves of hearty laughter, indeed.

I sincerely thank and appreciate the hard work and hours of script reading put in by the Board Members and others on the play reading committee for once again coming up with such a wonderful season.

Unfortunately, although we had 4 fabulous shows last year our audiences are not back to our pre-covid numbers. It seems there are still many people out there, especially in the elderly age bracket, who are cautious about entering a crowded theatre.

Cheers *Rose* 

Vale Matt Byrne 1958 - 2021



Much loved and one of a kind, SA Arts legend- actor, director and reviewer, creator of Matt Byrne Media, died at 63 on November 30th, 2021.

His death will leave an irreplaceable gap in Adelaide's theatre scene. Matt was Publicity Officer for the Rep several years ago. He brought each of his musicals to our ARTS theatre every year.

Critic Samela Harris says he was one of the "most colourful and prolific characters ever to stride the boards in Adelaide", with "that magic theatrical quality we call chutzpah". "Matt was producer, director, writer, entrepreneur, critic, publicist and a wildly enthusiastic song and dance man," Harris says. "He loved nothing better than a punch line – and a laughing audience."

Thank you Matt for the joy you have brought to all of us in the SA Arts.

Vale Russell Starke 1939 to 2022



Yet another, arts identity has 'quietly exited stage left' from Adelaide's arts community. Russell Starke, died on Thursday, February 10, 2022, following a short illness.

One of the more flamboyant characters Russell was a warm, generous and colourful figure in the Adelaide Arts scene for decades. He was a splendid actor, art critic, media personality and gallery owner. He infused all he did with humour and humanity.

Russell attended every opening night at the Rep for years.

His most recent shows at the Rep include *'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof'* where he played Big Daddy and *'Quartet'*.

*Russell in Quartet.
Pic by Norm Caddick.*

R E P E R T O I R E

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Rehearsal Pics by Richard Parkhill



Moore St Parking

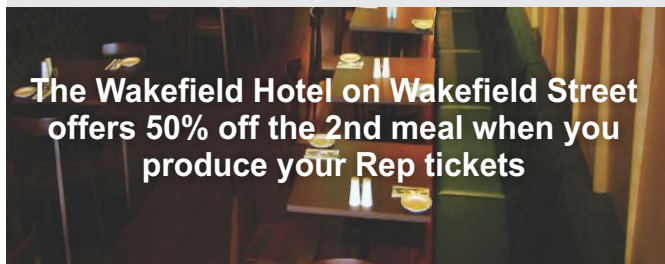
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Undercover parking
6pm 'til midnight



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