

Coming next to the Genesian Theatre...



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An Ideal Husband

By Oscar Wilde

Genesian Theatre

29th October - 10th December 2011

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

In 1854 Oscar Fingall O'Flahertie Wills Wilde was born in Dublin. He went to Trinity College, Dublin, and then to Magdalen College, Oxford, where in the late 70's, he started the cult of 'Aestheticism', of making an art of life. His parents were both distinguished in their own way. His father, Sir William Wilde was the foremost eye and ear specialist of his time, and a physician of international repute. His mother, Lady Wilde, was a staunch Irish nationalist, who wrote fierce poems and articles for an Irish nationalist newspaper. She had three children, William, Oscar and Isola, who died when she was ten, to Oscar's lasting grief.

His first success on the stage was *Lady Windermere's Fan* (1892), followed by *A Woman of No Importance* (1893). In 1895, with *An Ideal Husband* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* running at the same time, Wilde was supreme in the London theatre. The superb wit and situations in his plays rank with the great comedies of any language. Wilde himself was a constant and discerning playgoer. He had a close knowledge of the contemporary theatre and socialised with a number of actresses and actors. His fine comedies were founded on more experience than was apparent and he was always closely interested and involved in the rehearsal process. Wilde was once quoted as saying that he cared little for any of his plays, yet they are more than they appear to be and his superb wit and style have lost none of their appeal. Sir Max Beerbohm said of Wilde: "I have had the privilege of listening to many masters of table talk. But Oscar was the greatest of them all-the most spontaneous and yet the most polished, the most soothing and yet the most surprising. Nobody was willing to interrupt the music of so magnificent a virtuoso."

In *An Ideal Husband*, Wilde's polished writing and sparkling repartee shine. He also provides an insight into Victorian ways of thinking. Some of these may seem rigid today but his observation of human frailties, morals, marriage and power remain timeless. One can only imagine how his wit would have explored the world of Facebook and Twitter. My grateful thanks to the many people who have given their time and energy to this production.

ACT 1

Octagon Room in Sir Robert Chiltern's house, Grosvenor Square, London

ACT 2

Morning-room in Sir Robert Chiltern's house

ACT 3

Library of Lord Goring's house, Curzon Street

ACT 4

Morning-room in Sir Robert Chiltern's house

The action of the play takes place over twenty-four hours

**SANDRA BASS – Lady Markby**

Sandra is a familiar face to Genesian audiences. Her past roles include Miss Marple, Jean Brodie, and Bridie in *Shoehorn Sonata* and more recently the formidable Lady Julia Merton in *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*. Her last appearance was as Mrs Bird in *The Adventures of Paddington Bear*, but as Lady Markby she is returning to elegance and Oscar Wilde.

JODIE LEE BEHRENDORFF – Mabel Chiltern

Jodie Lee trained with QUT graduating Fine Arts Acting in 2009. Her theatre credits include Lyubov Ranevskaya *The Cherry Orchard*, Angelique *The Hypochondriac*, Peter Quince *A Midsummer Night's Dream* & Scheherazade *Arabian Nights*. A commercial voice artist for various radio and television networks, Jodie has appeared in short films, film clips and commercials and presented for *Out and About Television* bringing audiences behind the scenes of theatrical performances.

**JOYCE BIRCH – Duchess of Maryborough**

Joyce Birch is delighted to have come out of retirement to play a small part in this production. She has directed 20 productions for the Genesians - the last ones being *Ring Round the Moon* and *Intent to Murder* in 2009. She has played many roles on stage over the years.

SIMON FRAME - Mason

Simon is a relatively newcomer to the Genesians and acting. Aside from having the pleasure of performing in the musical workshop, *Devil May Care*, *An Ideal Husband* will be Simon's first appearance on stage. In addition Simon is a certified Primary school teacher and hopes to apply what he learns by being involved in the Genesian Theatre to enrich his classroom.

**LYNDAL JUDGES – Lady Basildon**

Lyndal's favourite roles/plays include the loveable Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Vagina Monologues* and Jane in 2011 Short+Sweet entry *Mating in Captivity* which came second out of twelve during her Short+Sweet week. She has loved playing Lady Basildon! During 2011 Lyndal has studied at Screenwise fine tuning her onscreen acting skills. Her first love is the theatre though so she will always come back to it.

GEORGINA LLOYD – Mrs Marchmont

Georgina began formal dramatic training at the Macdonald College of Performing Arts, then NIDA, continuing her training in both Sydney and Melbourne. A trained vocalist and dancer with involvement in experimental and independent film, theatre, singing and dance performance; this is Georgina's debut performance with the Genesians. She feels privileged to be performing with these talented and generous individuals.

**FARAN MARTIN - Lady Gertrude Chiltern**

A 2009 CSU acting graduate, Faran has appeared in numerous productions for the University Theatre Ensemble including *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Three Sisters*, *Attempts on Her Life* and *Gormenghast*; *Separating the Dust* for Short+Sweet 2011; and she co-developed and performed *The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock* for the 2011 Sydney Fringe Festival. This is Faran's first production with the Genesians.

**JARETH NORMAN - Phipps**

Jareth's artistic background is in classical music. His baritone voice has enabled him to participate in several youth operas including *Carmen* and *Les Miserables*. He has been performing onstage since the tender age of four and is delighted to be making his Genesian debut in *An Ideal Husband*.

ANDREW O'CONNELL – Sir Robert Chiltern

Andrew first appeared at the Genesians in 2009 as 'Horatio' in *Hamlet* and most recently returned as 'Victor' in *Private Lives*. Andrew also enjoys writing and is keen to produce one of his plays next year. This is not Andrew's first experience with Wilde - he played the cheeky 'Algernon' in *The Importance of Being Earnest* at Hunters Hill Theatre last year. This time, however, a very different role...

**JOHN WILLIS-RICHARDS – Lord Arthur Goring**

John recently played Elyot in Genesian's revival of *Private Lives*. John graduated from UWS Theatre Nepean in 2009, after a year abroad at San Francisco State University. There he adapted David Williamson's *Emerald City* to an American stage and played Packer in Caryl Churchill's *Vinegar Tom*. Previous credits include Winston Churchill in *The Power of The Dog*, Toozenbach in *Three Sisters* and Shakespeare in *Dead White Males*.

MELANIE ROBINSON – Mrs Laura Cheveley

Melanie's Genesian Theatre credits include *Worry Warts*, *The Hollow*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Noises Off* and *Hay Fever*. At the Chester Street Theatre this year she appeared in *God of Carnage* and *The Blonde, the Brunette and the Vengeful Redhead*. For Epicentre, *Daylight Saving*, *Harbour*, and *Money and Friends*. Melanie majored in Theatre Studies at UNE, and completed The Core with ACTT.

**JASON THORNE – Mr. Montford**

Jason has enjoyed acting as a consuming hobby since his first role in junior school as Pharaoh in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Keen to get involved, he has worked in a number of performances including a modern rendition of *Romeo and Juliet* set in a disco, *Daughters of Heaven*, *Move Over Mrs Markham* and *City of the Plains*. Recently he played the Devil in *Devil May Care*, a rock & roll musical romance by Genesian member - Rod Stewart.

CHRISTOPHE TRUSCHEL – Vicomte de Nanjac

Still a beginner in the theatre and film industry but advanced in his career vision, Christophe Truschel is a "bloody" French actor who started his acting career in Australia. He has been a follower of the Meisner Technique for nearly two years under the guidance of acting teacher Billy Milionis at the reputable Actor's Pulse studio. Voila!

**GARY ESMONDE WOODS – Lord Caversham**

Gary returns to the Genesians after an absence of ten years, and a succession of roles portraying silly old geezers, culminating in the ultimate mad old knight, *Don Quixote* in 2009. In 2010 he transmorphed into a mad old tart: Lady Dodo, the Dame in *Poppy*, an adult Panto. He's very happy to return to more familiar territory.

PRODUCTION

Director.....Timothy Bennett
Assistant Director.....Lilianna Komljenovic
Set Design.....Owen Gimblett
Costume Design.....Peter Henson
Lighting Design.....Mark Banks
Sound Design.....Tom Massey, Timothy Bennett
Production Manager.....Roger Gimblett
Set Construction.....Debbie Smith, Owen
Gimblett, Paul Gilbert, Members of the Cast
and Company
Rehearsal Prompt.....Nanette Frew
Photography.....Mark Banks
Program.....Ross Oblea
Acknowledgements: Sandra Bass, Shane Bates,
Susan Carveth, Anne Evers, Grant Fraser, Paul
Gilbert, Wendy Gimblett, Wendy Greenfield,
Mark Nagle, Amy Roberts, Pamela Whalan, Gary
Woods

CREW

Stage Manager.....Caroline Gage
Lighting and Sound Operation...Emma Medbury,
Frances Attard

CAST

Mrs. Marchmont.....Georgina Lloyd
Lady Basildon.....Lyndal Judges
Mason.....Simon Frame
Lord Caversham.....Gary Woods
Mabel Chiltern.....Jodie Lee Behrendorff
Lady Markby.....Sandra Bass
Lady Chiltern.....Faran Martin
Mrs. Cheveley.....Melanie Robinson
Duchess of Maryborough.....Joyce Birch
Vicomte de Nanjac.....Christophe Truschel
Sir Robert Chiltern.....Andrew O'Connell
Lord Goring.....John Willis-Richards
Mr. Montford.....Jason Thorne
Phipps.....Jareth Norman

About the Genesian Theatre

Born in 1944 and named for St Genesius, Patron Saint of Actors, The Genesian Theatre Company has developed into a strong community-based organisation that boasts among its alumni numerous household names in Australian theatre.

The Company is a non-professional group operating from an historic church in Kent Street. While still retaining links with our origins, the Catholic Church, we do not shy away from meeting the challenges of plays that comment on the human condition.

The building which houses the Company was originally St John's Church, and dates from 1868. It has served as a church, a poor school, and was the first Matthew Talbot Hostel. Since 1954 it has been the home of The Genesian Theatre Company.

Over the years The Genesian Theatre Company has become a community theatre group providing a training ground for young actors and a place where those who love the theatre can meet, share, and extend their knowledge of the performing arts. The Genesian Theatre is one of Sydney's most active theatre companies. In addition to six main stage productions each year we run classes, workshops and many other activities.

Membership

If your interest is in acting, directing, stage management, sound, lights, publicity, admin, etc, or if you just want to experience being a member of the group, we would welcome you as a member. You don't need to be experienced, we can provide training and can cater to different levels of involvement. Please see our web site for further information.