

# **Talking Heads**



**by**

**Alan Bennett**

**Directed by  
Pam Wilson,  
Mary Nelson and  
Tony Nelson**

**28th to 31st January 1998**

**Alan Bennett** was born and brought up in Leeds, first in Armley and after the war in Headingley, where his father, a butcher, had a shop. He was educated at Leeds Modern School and later at Exeter College, Oxford, where he “first realized I could make people laugh and liked doing it”. While teaching and researching mediaeval history as a postgraduate he became more involved in writing and performing cabaret, until finally, deciding that he “was not going to make a don” he took part in the Oxford Theatre Group’s contribution to the 1959 Edinburgh Festival. This success led to the Festival’s invitation to write and perform *Beyond The Fringe* in 1960, with Peter Cook, Dudley Moore and Jonathan Miller. The success of *Beyond the Fringe* effectively launched not only ‘the English Satire revolution’ but also Bennett’s career as a writer, actor and dramatist, a multi-faceted role in which he has continued ever since, encompassing theatre, film, radio and television and winning respect and acclaim in all these fields.

His television series *On the Margin* (1966) was followed by his first full-length stage play *Forty Years On* (1968), a West End hit whose success was repeated when the play was revived in 1985. Along with television plays such as *A Day Out* (1972) and *Sunset Across The Bay* (1974), the next two decades produced the stage plays *Getting On* (1971), *Habeas Corpus* (1973), *The Old Country* (1977), *Kafka’s Dick* (1986), and two double bills (originally written for television), *Office Suite* (1978)\* and *Single Spies* (1988), as well as the tremendously successful film *A Private Function* (1984).

His adaptation of Kenneth Grahame’s *The Wind in the Willows* for the National Theatre in 1990 was followed a year later by *The Madness of George III*, also at the National, his award-winning screenplay for the subsequent film following in 1994.

As a prose writer, Alan Bennett has contributed over the years to numerous periodicals and also written and performed for BBC radio and television. His collected writings have been published under the title *Writing Home*.

The six plays of *Talking Heads* were written and recorded for BBC television in 1987. Some of the six have since been performed in the professional theatre but Leeds Arts Centre’s production is the amateur premiere and no-one has yet presented all six plays as an entity. We are grateful to Mr Bennett for giving us the opportunity to perform *Talking Heads* in this way.

(\* The two plays comprising *Office Suite - A Visit from Miss Prothero* and *Green Forms* - were performed as a double bill by Leeds Arts Centre in April 1991, directed by Joyce King.)

# Talking Heads

Wednesday and Friday

## A Lady Of Letters

Irene Ruddock ..... *Gwyneth Hadley*

Directed by Pam Wilson

*Interval of fifteen minutes*

## Her Big Chance

Lesley ..... *Sarah Oldknow*

Directed by Pam Wilson

*Interval of fifteen minutes*

## A Cream Cracker Under The Settee

Doris ..... *Mary Nelson*

Directed by Tony Nelson

Thursday and Saturday

## Soldiering On

Muriel ..... *Joyce King*

Directed by Mary Nelson

*Interval of fifteen minutes*

## A Chip in the Sugar

Graham ..... *Tony Nelson*

Directed by Mary Nelson

*Interval of fifteen minutes*

## Bed Among the Lentils

Susan ..... *Pam Wilson*

Directed by Tony Nelson

# Production Team

Set Construction	<i>Richard Francis</i>
Consultant	<i>George Westmoreland</i>
Stage Manager	<i>Martyn Drake</i>
Assistant Stage Managers	<i>Shirley Broadbent, Margaret Savage</i>
Properties	<i>Doreen Parker, Denise Davies</i> <i>Matthew Holt, Danielle Colman</i>
Prompts	<i>Jean Blundell, Betty Triggs</i>
Sound Operation	<i>Darren Wood</i>
Sound Recording	<i>Jim Marshall</i>
Lighting	<i>Laurie Ball</i>
Wardrobe	<i>Maggie Rhodes, George Judd</i>
Front of House Managers	<i>Malcolm and Monica Brown</i>
Box Office Managers	<i>George Judd, Christine Wilson</i>
Poster and Programme Design	<i>Denise Davies, Gordon Wilson</i>
Publicity	<i>Marie Lindley and team</i>
Original Music	<i>Pam Wilson</i>

*There will be two fifteen minute intervals*

## Civic Theatre

Theatre Manager - *Steven Cartwright*  
Assistant Manager - *Vivien Simpson*  
Chief Technician and Lighting - *Peter Waddicor*  
Technicians - *Sandy Clark, Chas Elliott*  
Catering for Crown Point Foods - *Shirley Tarran*  
Box Office - *Helen Richmond, Shirley Shortall, Sylvia Gooding*

In accordance with the requirements of the Licensing Sub-Committee of Leeds City Council:

- The public may leave at the end of the performance by all exits and entrance doors and such doors must at that time be open. All gangways, passages and staircases must be kept entirely free from chairs or any other obstructions.
- Persons shall not be permitted to stand in any of the intersecting gangways, or stand in any other unseated space in the auditorium, unless standing in such a space has been specially allowed by the Licensing Committee. A notice is exhibited in that part of the auditorium in which standing has been sanctioned.
- The safety curtain must be lowered and raised once immediately before the commencement of each performance to show that it is in proper working order.

*Next Week:* **Limelight Drama Group**  
are pleased to present  
the Yorkshire premiere of

# KINDERTRANSPORT

by

**Diane Samuels**

Friends of Leeds Civic Theatre

Please join the friends and  
support this theatre

*Application forms available from the foyer*

# Leeds Arts Centre

**Leeds Arts Centre** was formed in 1945 as an amateur society. Our members come from all walks of life and include some who have worked in the theatre and others who hope to make a career on the stage. We are a friendly company who work together to maintain the high standards for which our productions are well known and enjoy ourselves very much in the process.

Each year we produce four plays here at the Civic Theatre and in recent years have entered the 'Walk the Plank' play festival in Wakefield where we have won at least one prize each time.

Our Green Room Group is very active with plays, readings and other forms of entertainment in the rehearsal rooms, giving members who are not in the current theatre production the opportunity to develop their acting or directing abilities and entertain the rest of us.

Our Fine Arts Group meets regularly throughout the year for life drawing, sketching and painting.

Last, but not least, we enjoy a variety of social activities including theatre visits, outings, parties etc.

**We are looking for new members...**

...so if you are interested in any of the following:

**acting, directing, producing, set building  
painting (scenery or pictures)  
making and repairing costumes  
helping back stage or front of house  
or even with publicity**

...why not have a chat with one of our members front of house this evening or in the bar after the show. Or write with a contact telephone number for further information to:

**The Secretary, Leeds Arts Centre  
c/o Civic Theatre, Cookridge Street,  
Leeds LS2 8BH**

Forthcoming LAC productions:

**Terry Pratchett's**

# Mort



**Adapted by Stephen Briggs**

**Directed by Laurie Ball**

**Wednesday 25th to Saturday 29th March 1998**

**7.30pm nightly + matinee Saturday at 2.30pm**

# Les Liaisons Dangereuses

**By Christopher Hampton**

**Directed by Joyce King**

**16th to 20th June 1998**