

NOEL COWARD'S HAY FEVER

HAY FEVER

A 1920's comedy
by Noel Coward



Directed by
Julian Harrison

8 - 22 August, 2015

Best described as a cross between high farce and a comedy of manners Hay Fever is set in an English country house in the 1920s. It revolves around the four eccentric members of the Bliss family and their outlandish behaviour when they each invite a prospective lover to spend the weekend unbeknownst to the others.

The Blisses and their two equally unconventional children live in a world where reality slides into fiction. Upon entering this world, the unfortunate weekend guests are repeatedly thrown into melodramatic scenes wherein their hosts profess emotions and react to situations that do not really exist. The resulting comedic chaos only ends when the tortured visitors tip-toe out the door.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE



JULIAN HARRISON

This is Julian Harrison's first production for Company Theatre. He has directed extensively throughout Auckland including a very successful production of Looking at Dolphin Theatre earlier this year. He also directed I hate Hamlet & Take a Chance on Me at Stables Theatre last year as well as picking up Howick Little Theatre's 'show of the year' award the last two years running.

"I'm very excited to be directing Hay Fever by Noel Coward for Company Theatre as part of their 2015 season. I have loved this play since I first acted in it 18 years ago at drama school. I then directed it 10 years later with teenage students at Howick Children's and Youth Theatre and am now ecstatic to finally be able to direct it with this talented adult cast".

THE CAST

THE CREW

Judith Bliss	Catherine Maunsell
David Bliss	Arthur Young
Sorel Bliss	Courtney Eggleton
Simon Bliss	James Coventry
Myra Arundel	Kate Birch
Richard Greatham	Max Golding
Jackie Coryton	Helene Holman
Sandy Tyrell	Alex Gleed
Clara	Liz Philipp

Director	Julian Harrison
Production Manager	Kathy Gent
Stage Managers	Liz Gill / Jan Judson
Set/Lighting Design	Scott Thomas
Lighting & Sound	Stephen Hood
Properties	Fred & Doreen Gould
	Linda Camplin
Set Construction Manager	Ian Birch
Set Construction	Nigel Adler, Russell Simpson, Caroline Parker, Tony Sandy
Costume Designer	Cathie Sandy
Wardrobe Team	Barbara Farron, Ruth Chapman Penny Davy, Daphne Abbott
Photos	Sherry Ede
Front of House Manager	Lesley Hawkey
Bar Manager	Alastair Fletcher

THE PLAY

The action of the play takes place in the Hall of the Blisses' house at Cookham in June

ACT I	Saturday afternoon
	15 minute interval - refreshments available in the foyer
ACT II	Saturday evening
ACT III	Sunday morning

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Company Theatre would like to thank:

Kath Hair	North Shore Music Theatre
Josh Kirk	Peninsular Players
Julie Zhu	Howick Little Theatre
Molloy's of Milford	Jenny Cotier
Carole Evans	Jennifer Gorbey

BIOGRAPHIES BIOGRAPHIES



COURTNEY EGOLETON

Courtney has been involved with community theatre from a young age, attending lessons at Howick Children's Youth Theatre and playing Hayfever's Judith Bliss as an 18 year old. More recently she has acted in Chekhov's *Gone With the Wind* and played thirteen different roles in a production of *Defensibility*. Courtney has just finished her BA at the University of Auckland and is looking forward to spending more free time in the theatre.



JAMES COVENTRY

James has acted in school productions, and for Howick Little Theatre and Howick Children's & Youth Theatre, including a 2010 production of *Hay Fever* in which he also played Simon. He was excited to be given the opportunity to revisit the character and improve upon his previous performance in this production. He has enjoyed rehearsing the play with a cast and crew of old and new friends.



CATHERINE HAUNSELL

This is Catherine's second outing on the stage with Company Theatre, her first play, being *Calendar Girls* in the part of Celia in 2013. Catherine is not unfamiliar with the plays of Noel Coward. *Hay Fever* is her third Coward play in as many years having previously played Amanda in *Private Lives* and Ruth in *Blithe Spirit*. Now she has the happy task of getting under the skin of possibly Coward's best female lead the outrageous Judith Bliss. As Judith would no doubt say, "At my time of life, I feel very fortunate to have been given this opportunity."



ARTHUR YOUNG

Arthur has had a passion for acting since his Otago University days. His favourite characters have included Prospero in *'The Tempest'* and a witch in *'Macbeth'*. *Hay Fever* is Arthur's first performance with Company Theatre but he has worked with Julian Harrison previously in *Take a Chance on Me* and in *Noises Off*. Arthur has found it a joy to work with the wit and words of Noel Coward and has enjoyed watching the other actors bring their characters to life: the rehearsals have been all the more enjoyable for it.



LIZ PHILIPP

Liz is enjoying her return to the stage after a long absence (she doesn't want to be too precise here) acting as the maid Clara, for the wonderfully mad Bliss family. She played the maid Dunyasha years ago in a student production of Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard*. Could she be type cast?



ALEX QUEED

Alex has been involved in over thirty productions as an actor or director since 2001 when he began taking drama classes at Howick Children's and Youth Theatre. These include *Noises Off* and *Take a Chance On Me* where he played more than twenty different characters. He has recently written a play called *The Leaf Jar* which will be performed at Howick Little Theatre in October.

BIOGRAPHIES



KATE BIRCH

A small part in the recent Company Theatre's Fawcety Towers production ignited Kate's desire to return to the stage. The opportunity to play the man eating, bitchy Myra was too good an opportunity to turn down! Not doing things by halves she's also joined the Company Theatre committee and is enjoying working on publicity especially getting the Company Theatre Facebook page energised. Previous roles include Ruth in Blithe Spirit, Jacqueline in Don't Dress for Dinner and Elizabeth Bennet in Pride & Prejudice.



HELENE FOLMAN

After completing a double degree in Performing Arts and Classical Music Performance at Otago University, Helene has relocated to Auckland to further her studies. Helene's passion for singing and acting has led her to be involved in many plays, films, musicals, and operas including Pygmalion, The Birthday Party, Caucasian Chalk Circle, and The Medium.



MAX GOLDING

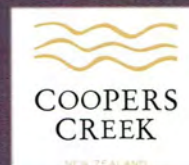
Max has appeared in Company Theatre productions since 1992 when he appeared in Habeus Corpus. His most recent Company performance was in 2011 as Adrian in Four Flat Whites in Italy. He recently played Wyatt in the Ellerslie Theatre production of Things My Mother Taught Me.

Next Production



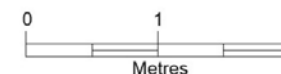
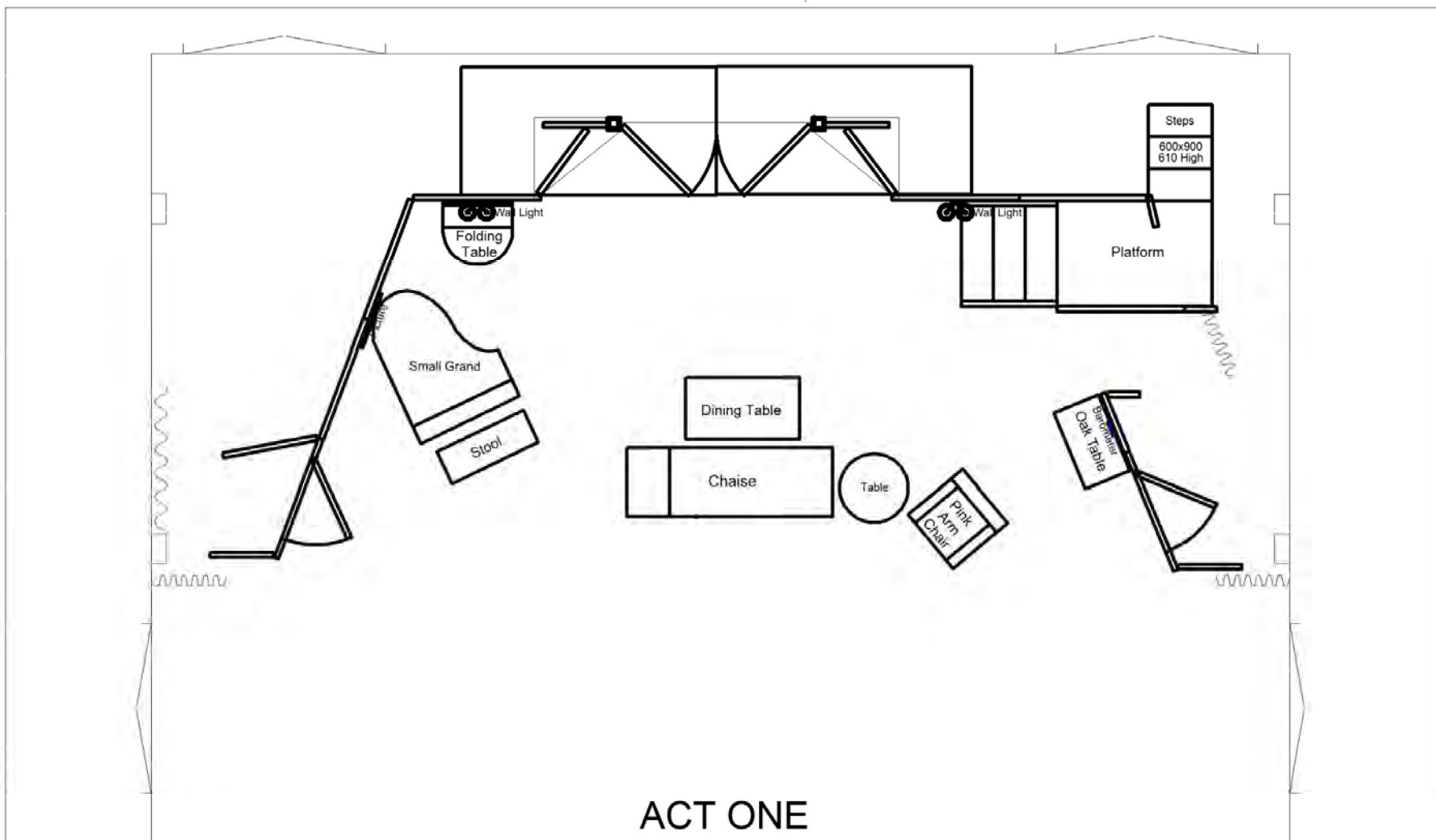
COMPANY THEATRE
Don't Dress For Dinner
 A comedy by Marc Camoletti
 Directed by Elena Stejco
 "A saucy farce!"
 Another hilarious rollicking frolicking romp by the author of Boeing Boeing!
14 - 28 November 2015
 Weds - Sat 8pm, Sundays 2pm
 The Rose Centre, School Road, Belmont
 Tickets \$25 • \$20 Concessions
 Bookings 445 9900 or info@rosecentre.co.nz
www.companytheatre.co.nz

Auditions are at 1pm on Sunday August 30th in The Company Room upstairs at The Rose Centre Belmont. More information about the auditions can be found on our website www.companytheatre.co.nz





Thank you also to Penny Davy, Daphne Abbott, Nigel Adler, Russell Simpson and all the volunteers for Front of House and Bar.



Event	HAY FEVER	Director	Set Design	Lighting Design	Date
		Julian Harrison	Ian Birch	Scott Thomas	22.06.15
		Producer	Performance	Venue	Rev
		Company Theatre Inc.	8-22 August 2015	Rose Centre	0.7



What's on at the Rose Centre...

Company Theatre Presents *Hay Fever*
A 1920's comedy by Noel Coward, Directed by Julian Harrison

Noel Coward wrote *Hay Fever* in 1924 and it was first performed in 1925. He based it on a Bohemian theatrical family, and always envisaged "a great star" in the lead role... starting with Marie Tempest, then sixty years, who was as theatrical as you can get, having moved from opera to comedy. Felicity Kendall plays the role in the current London revival of this classic. Coward himself said that the play has no plot and few witty lines. However it gives everyone on stage a chance to ham it up hilariously, and it always seems to work.

Stage star Judith Bliss, her novelist husband and their two grown children Sorel and Simon have each invited houseguests for the weekend. But as the Blisses indulge their artistic eccentricities in an amusing whirlwind of flirtation and histrionics, the guests begin to wonder if they've landed in a madhouse – and if they can survive the weekend with their own wits intact. Misjudged meetings, secret seductions and scandalous revelations proliferate during one outrageous weekend in Berkshire.

Company Theatre's production of *Hay Fever* is directed by the experienced Julian Harrison. Company Theatre at The Rose Centre promises a talented cast, a period set, sumptuous costumes and the warmest of welcomes.

"laughs are a mad mixture of acid wit well-sprayed and deft physical comedy" – London Free Press

"a hit among theatre-goers this season, so much fun to watch" – Broadway World

8 – 22 August Wed – Sat 8pm Sun 9 & 16 Aug 2pm Bookings phone 445 9900 or info@rosecentre.co.nz

Liz back to the theatre after 45 years

The sparkling wit and captivating comedy of Noel Coward's *Hay Fever* has tempted Liz Philipps back onto the stage after a 45-year absence.

Philipps appears as Clara the maid in *Hay Fever*; Company Theatre's second production of 2015. A volunteer at the Anglican op shop, a member of the Devonport Walkers and the

Rose Singers, she sees acting as another way to be involved in a community she loves for its "space and tranquility". Philipps last acted for Otago University Drama Society in the 1960s and then appeared in Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard* in Wellington in 1970.

Phillips says she is enjoying her return to acting, and learning from Julian Harrison, who is directing for Company Theatre for the first time. Harrison brings a wealth of directing experience from productions at Ellerslie, Howick and the Dolphin Theatres.

Hay Fever audiences will be treated to sublime costumes and a beautiful detailed set. Those who enjoy the spirit of dressing up are encouraged to come along in 1920s costume on 'Flapper Friday', Friday 14 August.

Hay Fever runs from 8-22 August, Wednesday to Saturday at 8pm and Sundays at 2pm. Tickets are \$25, concessions \$20. Bookings: the 445 9900 or info@rosecentre.co.nz



Back on the boards...
Liz Philipps

Sophisticated wit, comedic chaos and melodramatic manners

Company Theatre's upcoming production *Hay Fever* is one of the funniest of Noel Coward's plays and epitomises the sophisticated wit of the era between the two world wars.

It's a comedy of (very bad) manners, about a family whose theatrical excesses torment a group of unsuspecting visitors.

Inspired by a weekend he spent at the house of the actor Laurette Taylor, Coward wrote the play in just three days.

Upon its 1925 London debut, it won praise from both audiences and critics, considered by many to be cleverly constructed, wittily written, ever so slightly cynical and undeniably entertaining.

The Bliss family includes Judith, an actress in late middle age who is finding retirement in the country very dull indeed, her husband David - who writes very dull novels in his private den upstairs and two bohemian children who squabble and tear



Catherine Maunsell and Arthur Young star as Judith Bliss and David Bliss in *Hay Fever*.

each other's hair out.

The plot revolves around four visitors - a proper diplomat, a shy flapper, an athletic boxer and a fashionable sophisticate, each invited by a family member for a weekend in the country. The trouble is that none of the family has told the others about these guests, there isn't any food in the house and there aren't enough bedrooms. Melodramatic scenes

ensue and the play ends in comedic chaos.

Company Theatre pays great attention to detail with the 1920s style set and sublime costumes designed by Cathie Sandy and the talented cast under Julian Harrison's direction are wonderfully larger than life.

Julian is a real aficionado of *Hay Fever* having acted in it 18 years ago at drama school and then 10 years ago he directed the play with teenage students at Howick Children's and Youth Theatre. He promises audiences of this current production "an evening of glamour and laughter".

The play runs for two weeks from August 8-22 at The Rose Centre in Belmont, with the opportunity on Flapper Friday - August 14 - for audiences to join in the fun by dressing up in 1920s costume.

■ To book phone 445 9900 or email info@rosecentre.co.nz. Tickets \$25, concessions \$20.



Flappers... Catherine Maunsell (left) who plays Judith Bliss and Kate Birch from Bayswater, who plays Myra

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All in a flap at the Rose Centre



Flashback to the 1920s... Rose Centre Bar manager Alastair Fletcher with front of house manager Lesley Hawkey (right) and usher Greta Lawson

Glamour was back in style at last Friday's performance of Noel Coward's *Hayfever* at the Rose Centre. Not only those on stage but

also the audience and volunteer staff were dressed in 1920s flapper-style, to mark the opening of the Company Theatre production.



Stylish... Lynn Hughes