

1969



Night Must Fall

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

For more than thirty years British and American theatre and motion picture audiences have seen Emlyn Williams, the Welsh actor, who is also a playwright and a director. Beginning as an actor in a small part in a London stage production in 1927, Williams the next year had his first play produced, and five years later made his first screen appearance. By 1935 he was acting and directing his own plays and since then has often functioned simultaneously in these three capacities, both on the stage and on the screen. Of his twenty some plays, NIGHT MUST FALL and THE CORN IS GREEN, the latter an autobiographical account of the author's early years in a Welsh mining community, are the best known to American audiences.

In May 1935, with the warm reception given to his play NIGHT MUST FALL and his performance in it, Williams' reputation as both actor and playwright was firmly established. The creation of Danny, the psychopathic bellhop, had its origin in a chance attendance by Williams at the appeal trial of a murderer whose nonchalance was notorious. The play ran for a year in London and then went to New York in September 1936 where critics acclaimed the play and the actor.

Perhaps the most enthusiastic praise of Williams as an actor came from Walter Kerr, New York drama critic. Referring to Emlyn Williams' solo performance of the works of Charles Dickens, Mr. Kerr said: "Williams is an actor of striking range and great virtuosity as well, and the result is a combination of personal charm and adroit theatrical mimicry which rivets audience attention to him for two solid hours and which, miraculously, becomes increasingly compelling as it goes along."

Current Biography



Fontbonne Theatre

presents

Night Must Fall

by

Emlyn Williams

directed by

DON GARNER

scenery and lighting

designed by

John Dunivent

produced by

Sister Mary Charity

production stage manager

Terry Carney

February 13, 14, 15, 16

Fontbonne College

Saint Louis, Missouri

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(in order of appearance)

Mrs. Bramson Kathy Ryan
Olivia Grayne Paula Gucich
Hubert Laurie Hugo Buehring
Nurse Libby Sister Maureen O'Hara
Mrs. Terence Cathy Nieland
Dora Parkoe Judy Nagle
Inspector Belsize John Faust
Dan Don Garner

* * * * *

The action of the play takes place in the sitting-room of Forest Corner, Mrs. Bramson's bungalow in Essex, England.

ACT I

A morning in October, 1935

ACT II

Scene I: An afternoon twelve days later.

Scene II: Late afternoon, two days later.

ACT III

Scene I: Half an hour later. Nightfall.

Scene II: Half an hour later.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Production Stage Manager Terry Carney
Stage Manager Debby Barylski
Electricians Marilyn Schmidt
Georgeann McCarthy
Sound Mary Rita Meyer
Sister Ann Lutz
Costumes Geneva Hallet
Yolanda Evans
Sandy Gurnsey
Properties Sue Lyster
Pat Gallo
Program and Publicity Joan Simms
Michelle Mullen
Yolande Nicholson
Sandy Gurnsey
House Manager Lisa Schumacher
Assistant House Manager . . . Sister Mary Lenore
Assistant to Mr. Dunivent Marilyn Schmidt
Production Crew Polly Edwards
Anne Marie Gagnon
Lyn McCarty
Mary Lee Nigro
Rosemary Sullivan

Production Photographer George Tichacek
*Mr. Tichacek's photographs are being exhibited in the
Fine Arts Lobby.*

*No food or drink is allowed in the theatre. Please confine
smoking to the outer lobby area only. Taking pictures during
performance is not permitted.*

*Cleaning out or throwing away? The Fontbonne Theatre
would be grateful for any discarded wardrobe items, furni-
ture or carpets, etc. Please call Ray Mather, Theatre Manager,
at VO 2-3456- Ext. 200.*

A director's approach
Twice Have The Trumpets Sounded
Guthrie, Davies, MacDonald

The director of a play, in the modern theatre, is its principal interpreter. The actors, the designer, the composer of the music, all bring their abilities to the service of the finished production, but these abilities must be co-ordinated by the director and given their appropriate place and emphasis in a play which he has already formed. Long before rehearsals begin he has made his plan, and at the first rehearsal he will explain it, in broad outline, to everyone concerned.

The director's most important task, of course, is to decide what his approach to the play will be, to form his opinion about it, and to choose the means which he will use to carry it out. His intellectual equipment is strikingly similar to that of the conductor of an orchestra. The conductor has stored away in his brain the scores of a large number of major musical works; he knows them in the minutest detail; he knows what he can get out of a first-rate orchestra in the performance of a particular work, and he knows pretty shrewdly what he can get out of a strange orchestra, not of the first rank, if he has to conduct without adequate rehearsal . . . the director too can judge very quickly what he will be able to bring out of a particular company of actors. This analogy must not be carried too far, however, for music permits of certainties which are impossible in the theatre.

What is the essential truth of a play? If it were possible to define it in precise terms, which everyone could understand and apply equally well, first-rate directors and first-rate critics would be commoner than they are. The essential truth of any work of art is elusive and may present itself partially, and in disguised forms, to many gifted seekers . . . But if the director is an expert at his job, he will bring unusual qualities of insight and sympathy to his study of the play which he is to put on the stage; he will seize upon what is important in it, and he will find a way of imparting his conception of the play's real meaning to his audience.

But first he must impart it to his actors. Some directors work very well from an armchair, but Sir Tyrone Guthrie, the renowned director, is not one of them. He roams the theatre as he works, sometimes shouting his suggestions to the actors from the very back of the theatre, in an immense but carefully modulated roar; at other times he is right on the stage with them, demonstrating what he wants with broad gestures and occasional pushes and shoves, not unlike the presiding adult at a children's party. At the best of times Guthrie may criticize actors in terms which carry a certain sting, but they are not meant to hurt, nor do actors take them amiss. The skillful rider uses whip and spur without injuring the horse. Nor does any of this rebuke carry a personal edge; it is clear to the whole company that though he may, at times, loathe, execrate and despise them as actors, he is genuinely cordial toward them as human beings.

Dr. Guthrie has said that the director, who knows the play intimately, and who is deeply sensitive to the actor's part, is the man eminently worth acting for, and it is his commendation which, in the heart of the actor must outweigh that of a whole theatre of others.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Fontbonne Theatre would like to express its gratitude to:

Mr. John Faust, who is playing the role of Inspector Belsize in tonight's production.

Mr. Hugo Buehring, who plays the role of Hubert Laurie.

Miss Maggy Reese, for her assistance in costuming.

Mrs. Leah Jansky, of the Department of Drama at Maryville College, for the use of the hat box.

* * * * *

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Studio Theatre III
SARATOGA SHAKESPEARE
March 10-11 8 p.m.

OUR TOWN
by Thornton Wilder

April 24-27 8:30 P.M.
Sunday Matinee 2:00 P.M.



Fontbonne College
Saint Louis, Missouri