

# A Chorus of Disapproval

## Director's Notes

Alan Ayckbourn has been said to be the most performed living playwright in the world. There is no plausible way either to prove or disprove this. But he is undoubtedly very, very, popular.....

My first experience with the Amazing Mr A was at the Criterion 32 years ago. I had been a member for 5 years and had been in a lot of plays, but this time I was working on Props. 'Absurd Person Singular' is a 3 act play with 3 complete, working kitchens. A props nightmare. But throughout rehearsals, I couldn't stop laughing at the acutely observed characters and the ridiculous, but painfully real, situations, and wondering at a hilarious comedy which yet contained a hard, black line weaving it's way through the play to an inevitable and frightful conclusion. I was hooked!

In the early 90s, I was lucky enough to be spending time every year in Scarborough, where I became an almost permanent fixture at the Stephen Joseph Theatre, seeing many Ayckbourn productions, as well as the exciting work of new, often young, dramatists who were nurtured and encouraged by the great man himself. This experience cemented my respect for his work but though I had been in an Ayckbourn production at the Criterion, I hadn't yet had the opportunity to direct one. So I was extremely happy and excited to be asked to direct 'A Chorus of Disapproval'.

As with all his plays, Ayckbourn explores the less pleasant aspects of the human condition, mirroring the setting of the 'Beggar's Opera' in the underbelly of a corrupt and violent 18th century London with the activities of a group of actors who are not all that they seem at first sight. The result, though very funny, is unexpected. As ever, no Ayckbourn character survives without a painful scar.

If you enjoy watching this production as much as I have enjoyed working with my talented and creative cast and crew, you're in for a real treat!

Annie Woodward - December 2009

Director  
Musical Director  
Stage Manager  
Production Assistant  
Rehearsal Pianist  
Prompt  
Lighting Design  
Lighting Operator  
Sound  
Wardrobe

Set Design  
Set Build  
Set Paint

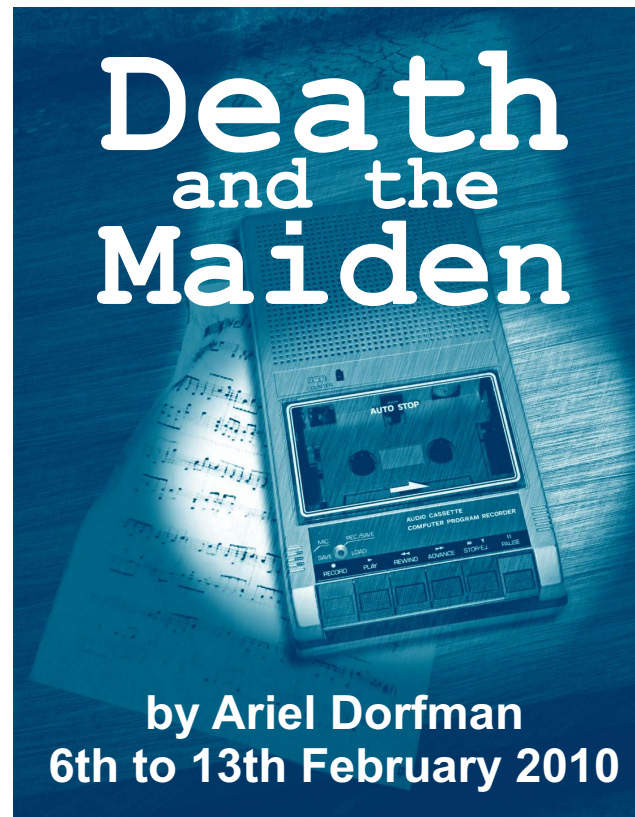
Props

With thanks to:  
Wigs and bonnets  
Daddy Doll

Annie Woodward  
Bill Bosworth  
Ben Woodward  
Nancy Silvester  
Lynne Adams  
Jonathan Rees  
Ian Knight  
Joe Fallowell  
Dave Cornish, Sara Beamish  
Wendy Anderson, Maureen Liggins,  
Pam Coleman, Clair Potts  
Doug Griffiths  
Doug Griffiths, John Griffiths  
Louise Bagley, Doreen Belton, Paul Wilkins,  
Judy Talbot, Judy Sharpe, Simon Sharpe,  
Sue Hadlum  
Aileen Rahilly, Les Rahilly,  
Debbie Relton-Elves, Sara Farman Farmai,  
Heather Dixon, Michelle Bird, Harry Leonard

Chris Ward  
Maureen Copping

## Our next production



**Death  
and the  
Maiden**

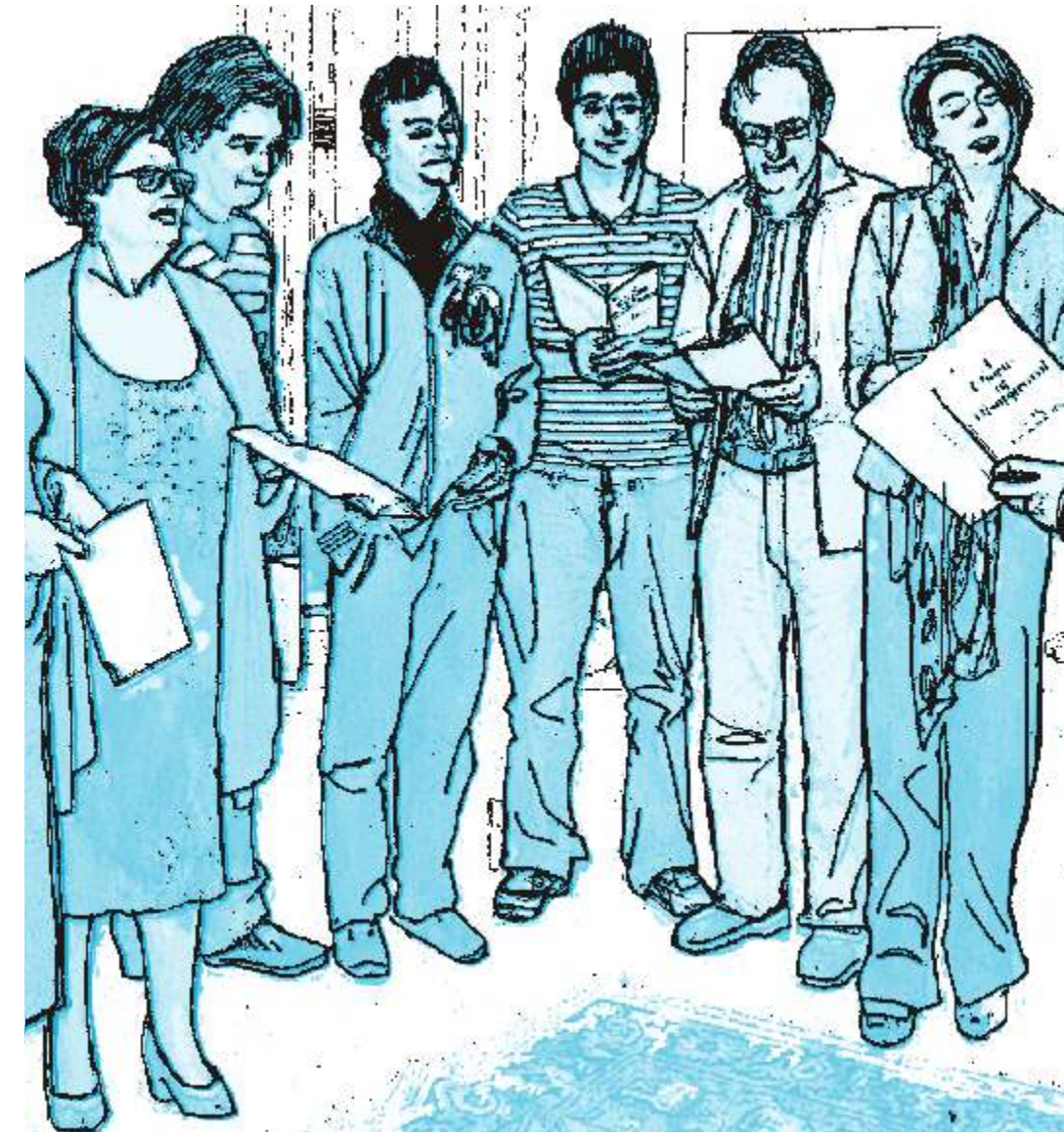
by Ariel Dorfman  
6th to 13th February 2010

A memorable and haunting classic play about a couple who are suddenly caught in a gripping passionate deadlock following the re-appearance of a former oppressor.



# A Chorus of Disapproval

by Alan Ayckbourn



## Programme

Produced by arrangement with Samuel French Limited

The Criterion is a non-smoking theatre.

# A Chorus of Disapproval

**Alan Biddle (Mr Ames)**

Alan was Music Advisor to Coventry schools from 1973 to 1992. He has been Musical Director of Youth Operetta Group and Coventry, Solihull and Bromsgrove Operatic Societies. His most recent productions with the renamed Coventry Musical Theatre Society were Scarlet Pimpernel, Witches of Eastwick and Copa Cabana. He plays for caberet, recitals and mid-day variety shows at The Belgrade Theatre. This is a new venture for Alan and he is pleased to have a small speaking part.

**Bill Bosworth (Jarvis Huntley-Pike/ Lockit)**

Bill has been a Musical Director for twenty- five years and has been involved, both as performer and MD, with productions at the Loft, Priory, Rugby and Criterion Theatres. For the Criterion, Bill has musically directed Red Hot and Cole and Oh! What a Lovely War and has appeared as Harry in Brassed Off, reprising this part when he was also MD in the same show for The Loft this year. He always enjoys his association with this talented and convivial Company to which he was first introduced by Keith Railton in 1975. He has Amadeus and Into the Woods, both at The Loft, planned for next year.

**Cathryn Bowler (Fay Hubbard/ Dolly Trull)**

Cathryn trained under Priscilla Morris as a child and appeared in many productions at the Hinckley's Concordia Theatre, where her parents are founder members. A move to London brought further training and productions such as Beau Jest, Plaza Suite and The Seagull. Cathryn's Criterion debut was as Goody Proctor in The Crucible and she has since appeared in Life x 3, Oh What a Lovely War, Brassed Off, Hedda Gabler, A Russian in the Woods, Memory of Water, The Blue Room, Four Nights in Knaresbrough, Sex, Drugs & Rick 'n Noel. Cathryn has also appeared in Educating Rita at The Loft Theatre in Leamington.

**Jon Elves (Daffydd ap Llewellyn)**

Jon first appeared at The Criterion in the early 1990s and has since appeared in various productions including Wind in the Willows, Amadeus, The Madness of King George, Stop the World I Want to Get Off, Abigail's Party, Return to the Forbidden Planet, Brassed Off, Hedda Gabler, A Russian in the Woods, Two, The Reduced Shakespeare Company's The Complete Wrks of Wllm Shkspr (Abridged), Four Nights in Knaresbrough and Sex,Drugs & Rick 'N Noel.

**Rebecca Fenlon (Linda Washbrook/ Lucy Lockit)**

Rebecca made her debut at The Criterion in 2007 as Elaine in The Graduate and has since appeared in productions including Cider with Rosie, Blue Remembered Hills, Sex, Drugs & Rick 'N Noel and most recently as Estella in Great Expectations.

**Anne-Marie Greene (Hannah ap Llewellyn/ Polly Peachum)**

Anne-Marie made her debut performance in The Darling Buds of May in 2005 and since then she has performed in Return to the Forbidden Planet, Oliver Twist, Daisy Pulls it Off, Hedda Gabler and The Memory of Water.

**Doug Griffiths (Ted Washbrook/ Mr Peachum)**

Doug's first interest in the theatre was stage effects and set design but he soon started performing, first with Tempo Theatre. He has played many leading roles with the Guildhall, Blue Triangle, Hinckley and Nuneaton Operatic Societies and at The Loft. He has been designing, building sets and performing at The Criterion for 30 years, most recently playing roles in Oh! What a lovely War, Brassed Off, Holy Ghosts and Lady in the Van.

## Cast of Characters

**Daffyd ap Llewellyn**  
**Hannah ap Llewellyn**  
**Guy Jones**  
**Enid Washbrook**  
**Ted Washbrook**  
**Linda Washbrook**  
**Rebecca Huntley-Pike**  
**Jarvis Huntley-Pike**  
**Fay Hubbard**  
**Ian Hubbard**  
**Bridget Baines**  
**Crispin Usher**  
**Sue Lee**

**Jon Elves**  
**Anne-Marie Greene**  
**Paul Vickers**  
**Chris Ingall**  
**Doug Griffiths**  
**Rebecca Fenlon**  
**Anne Houston**  
**Bill Bosworth**  
**Cathryn Bowler**  
**Matt Sweatman**  
**Gennie Holmes**  
**John Waters**  
**Shirley Jobson**

The action of the play takes place in and around a small, provincial theatre in the present day. The play opens in July with a successful production of John Gay's 'The Beggar's Opera' by the Pendon Amateur Light Operatic Society (PALOS). The action then takes us back 6 months to a cold February day and the beginning of the PALOS rehearsals.

## PALOS presents The Beggar's Opera by John Gay

**Cast of characters:**

Macheath  
Polly Peachum  
Mrs Peachum (Polly's mother)  
Mr Peachum (Polly's father)  
Lucy Lockit  
Mr Lockit (Lucy's father)  
Mrs Vixen  
Dolly Trull  
Jenny Diver  
Matt of the Mint, Beggar  
Filch  
Mrs Slammekin

**Played by:**

Guy Jones  
Hannah ap Llewellyn  
Enid Washbrook  
Ted Washbrook  
Linda Washbrook  
Jarvis Huntley-Pike  
Rebecca Huntley-Pike  
Fay Hubbard  
Bridget Baines  
Ian Hubbard  
Crispin Usher  
Sue Lee

**Director**  
**Musical Director**  
**Lighting**

Daffydd ap Llewellyn  
Mr Ames  
Raymond Robinson

The Beggar's Opera is a ballad opera in three acts written in 1728 by the poet John Gay. The story concerns Macheath, a famous highwayman, Peachum a corrupt thief-catcher, his daughter Polly and Lucy Lockit, both of whom Macheath agrees to marry.

**Gennie Holmes (Bridget Baines/ Jenny Diver)**

Gennie joined the Criterion twenty years ago playing Gloria in Wait Until Dark. She enjoys being on the stage as much as directing: most recently she has directed The Unexpected Man, Brighton Beach Memoirs and Dinner. On stage she has most recently appeared in The Lady in the Van, Cider with Rosie and Beauty and the Beast for The Criterion and Once a Catholic at the Loft Theatre.

**Anne Houston (Rebecca Huntley-Pike/ Mrs Vixen)**

Anne performed regularly at the Swan theatre Worcester and the Norbury theatre, Droitwich, She joined The Criterion in 2002 for The Cemetery Club. Since then she has played in Equally Divided, Barefoot in the Park, Hedda Gabler, Animal Farm, Tom's Midnight Garden, Oliver Twist, Nicholas Nickelby and Memory of Water. Appearances at The Loft theatre include Present Laughter, Pride and Prejudice, Brief Encounter, Jane Eyre, Relative Values, The Cripple of Inishmaan and Glorious!

**Christine Ingall (Enid Washbrook/ Mrs Peachum)**

Chris joined The Criterion in 2004 but hadn't performed as an actor for 30 years, having concentrated on singing. She has appeared in Oh! What a Lovely War, Speaking in Tongues, Return to the Forbidden Planet, Oliver Twist, Brassed Off, Hysteria (for Two Hats), The Unexpected Man, Holy Ghosts and Beauty and the Beast. She has also appeared in Blithe Spirit, The Christmas Music Hall and The Hired Man at The Loft. In 2007 she appeared in 3 TV pilot films for Rapid Pictures. Chris was last seen as the hostess Paige in Dinner and is currently the theatre's Director of Marketing and Publicity.

**Shirley Jobson (Sue Lee/ Mrs Slammekin)**

Shirley has been a Criterion member for 5 years and has worked backstage for wardrobe on Oh! What A Lovely War and continuity on Speaking in Tongues. She has also taken to the boards in Oliver Twist and Brassed Off.

**Matt Sweatman (Ian Hubbard/Matt of the Mint/Beggar)**

Matt has undertaken many roles for the theatre over the last 20 years both on stage and off. He was most recently seen as the womanising Noel in Sex, Drugs & Rick 'n Noel.

**Paul Vickers (Guy Jones/ Macheath)**

Since graduating in acting from Bretton Hall College, Paul has appeared mainly at The Loft theatre, playing Cripple Billy in The Cripple of Inishmaan, Hornbeck in Inherit The Wind, Derek in Once a Catholic and Andy in Brassed Off. He played Benjamin in The Graduate in his debut production for The Criterion and since then has appeared in Beauty and the Beast.

**John Waters (Crispin Usher / Filch)**

John joined the Criterion at 7 years old as part of the fledgling Saturday morning drama classes, picking up child roles in "Forty Years On" and "Nicholas Nickleby". He moved up to the Youth Theatre and played a more adult role in "Oh What A Lovely War" as well as choreographing the swordfights for "The Canterbury Tales" and more recently the fights for "The Complete Works of Shakespeare" and this show! He was last seen in a hospital bed as Gary in It Can Damage your Health.

