

The background of the entire poster is a deep blue color. Overlaid on this background is a large, faint, handwritten text in a cursive script, likely German. The text is written in a dark blue or black ink, matching the background color, which makes it subtle. It appears to be a letter or a journal entry, with words like 'Herrn', 'Hypocriten', 'Lachen', 'in', 'das', 'sein', 'traut', 'sich', 'nicht', 'an', 'sein', 'eigenes', 'Gefühl', 'und', 'in', 'der', 'Folge', 'das', 'er', 'nicht', 'will', 'daß', 'man', '17', 'Jahre', 'lang', 'das', 'selbe', 'tut' visible. The text is written in a fluid, personal style, with some words being underlined or emphasized.

GREENWICH STUDIO THEATRE

A Spanner in the Works

By Friedrich Dürrenmatt

25th November 1994 – 18th December 1994

Translated by Julian Forsyth

Directed by Margarete Forsyth

PROGRAMME

The Greenwich Studio Theatre Company
Presents

A Spanner In The Works

by
Friedrich Dürrenmatt

Translated by Julian Forsyth
Directed by Margarete Forsyth



Opening November 25th 1994

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THE COMPANY

Nigel Carrington Radio Announcer

Nigel has appeared for the GST as Klemens & Leo in *And Women Must Weep*. As well as numerous theatre and TV appearances he was Nigel Pargetter for three years in *The Archers* and a member of the BBC Radio Company. He still broadcasts regularly for the BBC, along with many voice-overs for commercial and corporate companies.

Jack Chissick Alfred Trap

Jack has worked extensively in theatres all over the country, including Lancaster, Hornchurch, Farnham, Leatherhead, Greenwich and Salisbury. Favourite roles include Feste in *Twelfth Night*, Peachum in *The Beggars Opera*, Truscott in *Loot*, the Police Officer in *Can't Pay Won't Pay*, and Pozzo in *Waiting for Godot*. He was co-author at Salisbury with the late David Horlock (the Artistic Director of Salisbury Playhouse so tragically killed in 1990) of four pantomimes in which he also played Dame. He has also worked with companies such as Paines Plough and CVI. In London he has been seen in *Chicken Soup with Barley* (Shaw), *Merry Wives of Windsor* (Mermaid), *Anchorman* (Theatre Upstairs), *St Joan of the Stockyards* (Half Moon), *Man is Man* (Hampstead), *Better Times* and *Fally* (Stratford East), *Commitments* (Bush), *All or Nothing at*

All and *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* (Tricycle) and *Line Em* (Royal National Theatre). He was in the national tour of *Driving Miss Daisy*.

On television he has played in four plays for today: *Terra Nova*, *Commitments*, *Bavarian Nights* and *Beyond the Pale*, as well as featuring in *Boon*, *Minder*, *Freud*, *Birds of Prey*, *The Bill*, *Forever Green*, *Lovejoy*, *Coasting*, *The Darling Buds of May*, *The Marshall and the Madwoman* and *Running Late*.

Films include *Escape from Sobibor*, *Comrades*, *Deptford Graffiti* and (just finished) *Restoration*. Latest theatre: *A Working Woman* (West Yorkshire Playhouse), Wimpy in *Popeye* (David Glass Ensemble at the Arts), *Ghosts* (Watford) and *Les Enfants du Paradis* (Cambridge Theatre Co.). Latest television: *The Bill*, *Heartbeat* and Stan Duggan (the bookie) in *Eastenders*.

Alison Darke Set Designer

Alison initially trained at Wimbledon School of Art, followed by illustration commissions and numerous film & television projects as an animatronic designer. More recently she completed the post-graduate theatre design course at the Slade School of Art. Since leaving she has designed *Peter Pan* (Midlands Art Centre), *Pendragon* (National Youth Music Theatre), and *Burning Love* a short film for Monkey Heaven Films - she is currently designing their next film production.

Steve Dykes *Garage Mechanic*

For the GST Steven has appeared in *Erasmus Montanus*, *The Nun* and most recently as Balthazar in *The Green Parakeet*. Other recent theatre includes Jim Cartwright's *To* (King's Head & Edinburgh), John Byrne's *Colquhoun And Macbryde* (Theatre Exchange, Minneapolis) and *Stand* by David Bown (NXT in Valencia, Spain).

Reg Eppey *Monsieur Pilet*

Reg left teaching six years ago to take a Post Graduate Course in acting at the London Theatre School.

Since then he has almost constantly been performing in plays, musicals, opera and as a baritone soloist in choral works. Among the most notable of these works are Brecht's *The Life Of Galileo* (Young Vic Studio) and *Minna Von Barnhelm* (Greenwich Studio Theatre) both directed by Margarete Forsyth, *Barefoot In The Park* (Chelsea Arts Centre), *A Christmas Carol* (Oldham Coliseum), *Pinocchio* (Hounslow), *Measure For Measure* and *The Merchant Of Venice* (Mermaid Theatre).

He has appeared at the Edinburgh Festival for three seasons in operas and a play; sung with Opera Livica (Holland Park Festival) as Don Alfonso in *Così Fan Tutte* and Sharpless in *Madam Butterfly*.

Reg was in *Me and My Girl* (Adelphi Theatre), and has appeared in 'Discovering Lost Musicals' at the Barbican, having taken part in four musicals including Gershwin's *Strike*

Up The Band. He is to be King in *Jack And The Beanstalk* in Porthcawl this Christmas.

Television credits are *Not A Penny More Not A Penny Less*, *Hercule Poirot*, *House Of Elliot* and *Miss Marple*.

Margarete Forsyth *Director*

Margarete is the Artistic Director of the GST. She took an MA Degree in English and German at the University of Erlangen in Germany before teaching for four years at Goldsmiths College, University of London.

Since then she has embarked on a career as a theatre and opera director, directing regularly for Carlos Opera and founding The Rude Mechanicals for whom she directed Goethe's *Faust*, Büchner's *Danton's Death* and Brecht's *Life of Galileo*, all at the Young Vic Studio.

Margarete has also directed a wide range of European classics at some of London's leading drama schools. For the GST she has directed *Minna Von Barnhelm*, *And Women Must Weep* (Nominated for Best Director - London Fringe Awards 1993/4) which she also translated, *The Nun* and *The Green Parakeet*. As a designer Margarete created the sets for the GST's *Erasmus Montanus* and *Minna Von Barnhelm*.

For Margarete's first season at the GST the theatre was awarded a Time Out Award for Outstanding Achievement.

Julian Forsyth

Translator

Julian taught at Erlangen University in Germany before training as an actor at Webber Douglas Academy. As associate Director of the GST he has adapted and directed *Erasmus Montanus* (for which he received the Best Director award at the 1994 London Fringe Awards), adapted *The Nun* and *The Green Parakeet*, played Major Tellheim in *Minna Von Barnhelm* and Gilbert & Dr Witte in *And Women Must Weep*.

His other recent work has been in the West End production of *St Joan*, with the RSC in Trevor Nunn's productions of *The Blue Angel* and *Measure for Measure*, at the Almeida in Wedekind's *Lulu* and Howard Barker's *Scenes From An Execution*, with the Wrestling School in Barker's *The Europeans* (seen last April at the Greenwich Theatre), as Fagin in *Oliver* at Sadler's Wells and the Crucible, Sheffield, and in several West End musicals.

His TV work includes *Poirot*, *Heroes*, *This is David Lander*, and *Do The Right Thing*.

Over Christmas he will be appearing as Dr Manette in *Tale of Two Cities* at the Greenwich Theatre.

Joe James

Counsel for the Defence

Joe trained at RADA and has worked all over the UK for many different companies, including the Old Vic Company in the Olivier/Richardson seasons in London and on Broadway. He then worked in Australia for many years, in film, TV, radio and theatre,

with companies from Queensland, Sydney and Melbourne. Among favourite parts played were Shylock, Professor Higgins, Williy Loman in *Death of a Salesman*.

Since returning to the UK Joe has worked on two feature films, *Year of the Comet* and *Son of the Pink Panther*. Recent theatre includes *Enigma*, *Irish Hebrew Lesson*, *Blood Red*, *Think of England* and *Old Flames*. He directed and played in *Voices* by Ruth Worrell, and appeared as Dad in Andrew Davies' comedy *Thermal Underwear*.

Recently he played Hardcastle in *She Stoops to Conquer* (Pentameters Theatre), and was seen as Cunja in *Kiss in the Gutter* at the Edinburgh Festival & the Battersea Arts Centre.

Ian Lindsay

Counsel for the Prosecution

Ian trained at RADA. After three years with the RSC and two with Malvern Festival he went to New York to direct David Halliwell's *The Experiment*. Returning to Britain, he played Alistair Spensloe in *Move Over Mrs Markham*. He appeared regularly in the TV series *Bognor* and also in *Thomas Hardy*. Ian played Hardy in *Laurel And Hardy* at the Liverpool Playhouse and has appeared in many productions at Regent's Park Open Air Theatre and the Bristol Old Vic, playing parts as varied as Einstein in *Insignificance* and the Duke of Plaza-Toro in *The Gondoliers*. Ian's recent work includes a year with BBC Radio, playing Ben in the TV series *Inside Out*, Mr Beales in *Seal Morning*, Ted Hubbard in *Forever Green*, and Detective Superintendent Torrance in *The Paradise Club*. Earlier

this year Ian completed seven months in *Travels With My Aunt* at the Whitehall Theatre, and has just finished a third series of *Men Behaving Badly*. Films include *The Tall Gut*, *The Fool* and *Little Dorrit*. Ian wrote *The Bass Player* And *The Blonde* for ATV and a stage play which was performed at the Soho Poly. Ian last appeared at the GST in Chameleon Production's *Le Chandelier* earlier this year.

Antonia Loyd Simone

Trained at The Arts Educational Schools. Most recently played Roberta in *The Railway Children* (Cheltenham Everyman Theatre). Her theatre work includes *The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe* (Lyric, Hammersmith), *The Magician's Nephew* (Westminster Theatre), *Seven Brides For Seven Brothers* (National Tour), Wendy in *Peter Pan*, *Westside Story*, (Mercury Theatre, Colchester), *Macbeth* (New End Theatre), a season at the Unicorn Theatre and *The Railway Children* (Birmingham Rep). Antonia's Television work includes *The Bill*, and Kate Blore in *Blore MP* for BBC Screen One.



Hugh Munro Judge

Hugh was born and educated in Scotland, and made his debut with the Brandon Thomas Co. in Edinburgh. Until the beginning of the war he appeared in repertory theatre and in various tours. After demobilisation from the Navy in 1946 he became a regular broadcaster and appeared in the second drama production transmitted from Alexandra Palace. Hugh's theatre work in London includes *Boys in Brown*, *Frenzy*, *The Girl In The Woods*, *Morning Departure*, *The Moonstone*, *Golden Rain* and last year he played Old Merriman in *The Importance Of Being Earnest* at the Aldwych Theatre for six months. Television plays over the earlier part of his career include *Dr Findlay's Case Book*, *The Bachelor*, and *No Hiding Place*. In 1955 he became a television director and worked on *Compact* (BBC), *Mary Britain M.D.* (STV), *Coronation Street* (Granada), *Orlando*, *No Hiding Place*, *Shadow Squad*, *Saki* (Associated Redifusion), *Hunter's Walk*, *General Hospital*, *Crime Busters* (ATV), *Castle Haven* (Yorkshire). Hugh decided to return to acting a few years ago, and has played Old Joe Clark in Bob Eaton's musical play *Out With A Bang* at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield. Recent TV credits include *The Bill*, *Casualty*, *Centre Point*, *Poirot*, *Selling Hitler*, *This Is David Harper*, *Chancer*, *Paul Merton Series*, and *The Russ Abott Show*. Recent films include *Hazard of Hearts*, and *Orlando* directed by Sally Potter.

David Plater

Lighting Designer

David trained in Lighting Design at RADA where he lit productions of *The Shelter*, *The Bright & Bold Design* and *Camille*.

He has lit regularly at the GST, productions include *Minna Von Barnhelm*, *Erasmus Montanus*, *And Women Must Weep*, *The Storytellers*, *Cock-A-Doodle-Do!*, *The Nun* and *The Green Parakeet*. Plays lit for the touring company Gold are *Beirut* and *Single Spies*.

Other recent work includes the musical *The Relationship* (Riverside Studios, Hammersmith), *Oliver!* for the National Youth Music Theatre (George Square Theatre, Edinburgh & Adam Smith Theatre, Kircaldy), *The Rivals* (Southwark Playhouse), *The Fox and Dead Fish* (The Man In The Moon) and *The Cherry Orchard* (Capitol Theatre, Horsham).

David is currently the Deputy Chief Electrician at the Donmar Warehouse Theatre.

Beeke Ropers

Costume Design/Wardrobe

Beeke first started making and designing costumes during three years at Goldsmiths College. Since her graduation in 1991 she has worked on several fringe productions including *The Life of Galileo* directed by Margarete Forsyth at the Young Vic Studio, and *Vitus Bering* at the ICA. She has also worked with the National Youth Music Theatre on *Aesop*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Billy* and *Poppy*. Most recently she has designed

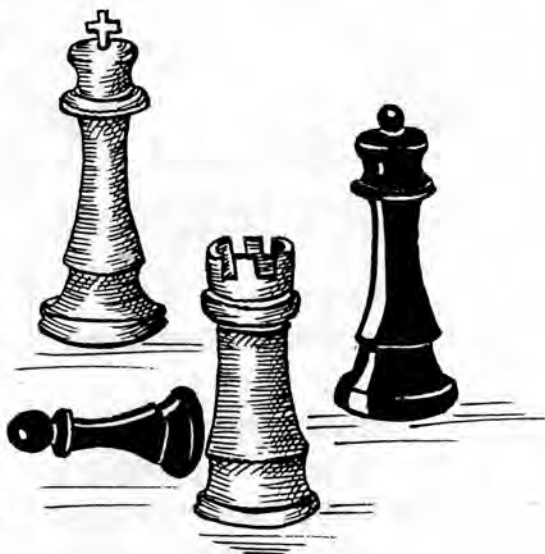
costumes for all the GST's productions of *Minna Von Barnhelm*, *Erasmus Montanus*, *And Women Must Weep*, *The Storytellers*, *The Nun* and *The Green Parakeet*.

John Stanley

Toby/Production Manager

John has appeared twice at the GST, firstly as Horatio in *Hamlet* for Made-Up Theatre Company, and then for the GST Co. in *The Green Parakeet*.

He has also directed several shows for the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and worked as Production Manager on *The Hydra* with Made-Up Theatre Company and *What's Wrong With Angry* with the Wild Justice Company at BAC in July 1994.



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A Spanner In The Works

by
Friedrich Dürrenmatt

CAST

Alfred Trap
The Judge
Counsel for the Prosecution
Counsel for the Defence
Monsieur Pilet
Simone

Radio Announcer
Garage Mechanic
Toby



Jack Chissick
Hugh Munro
Ian Lindsay
Joe James
Reg Eppey
Antonia Loyd

Nigel Carrington
Steven Dykes
John Stanley

The action of the play takes place in a village in Switzerland.

Music by Ronald Binge



THE PRODUCTION TEAM

Director
 Set Design
 Lighting Design
 Sound Design
 Costume Design
 Company Manager
 Production Manager
 Lighting Operator
 Set Construction



Publicity Design
 Photography

Margarete Forsyth
 Alison Darke
 David Plater
 Rhys Davies
 Beeke Ropers
 Julia Crampsie
 John Stanley
 Renato Nadal
 Alison Darke
 Margarete Forsyth
 Renato Nadal
 John Stanley
 Giorgio Frare
 Vicky Emptage
 Camilla Watson

For The Greenwich Studio Theatre

Artistic Director
Associate Director
Administrator
Company Manager
Front of House Manager
Stage Manager
Wardrobe
Administration Team

Margarete Forsyth
Julian Forsyth
Mark Feakins
Julia Crampsie
Helga Bertazzo
Renato Nadal
Beeke Ropers
Antonia Loyd
Louisa Gummer
Evelyn Costello

The Greenwich Studio Theatre is allowed to operate by kind permission of Bill Bridges, the Landlord and Leaseholder of The Prince of Orange Public House. The room in which the theatre is situated is dedicated to the memory of Dean Bridges.

The Greenwich Studio Theatre would like to thank the following people and companies for their support in realising this production:

Christopher Webber for the choice of music
and Bill Bridges, Sarah Bridges, Neil Fraser, Zol Hoffmann, Joy Westendarp and The Swiss Embassy for their support

Special thanks to Impact, The Junk Shop
And all those people who gave their time and talents for free, to make the costumes and set and to refurbish the theatre.

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If you would like to sponsor a chair at the GST, please ring 081 858 2862 or pick up a form in the foyer.

Friedrich Dürrenmatt 1921 - 1990

Friedrich Dürrenmatt, the son of a Protestant minister, was born and raised in the village of Konolfingen in the Swiss canton of Berne. His later schooling took place in Berne itself, where his father took over a parish, and led to university studies in Zürich and Berne, which were unorthodox and never led to a degree, as the young man pursued whatever aroused his fancy: philosophy, science, literature, art. His interest and skill in painting and sketching pointed at first to a career as an artist, but at the age of 25 he married an actress, decided simultaneously to become a writer, and after a few years of financial struggle rose to literary pre-eminence in the German-speaking world, firstly as a major playwright for the theatre and radio, secondly as the author of bestselling crime fiction of unique literary quality.

F.D. - he was fond of abbreviating his name - was convinced that the formative influences on any human being's development are the early impressions of childhood. As the son of the minister in a tiny Swiss village, young Friedrich spent his early years under the constant prying gaze of a closed community. Everything the boy did was measured against what his father preached in church. Any falling short of the high standards expected of him was a source of pleasure to others. Under these circumstances he experienced the village as a kind of prison and lived amongst children of his own age without ever feeling he was one of them. Even the adults spoke in hushed voices, or fell silent when the minister's son approached. Small wonder that, in looking back on his childhood in Konolfingen, he felt himself to have been unjustly burdened with the expiation of some unexplained guilt, a guilt that he did not feel was his. In adult life he could not overcome an irrational grievance against his father for unwittingly subjecting him to these early difficulties (not unlike Franz Kafka, another writer in German whose work is dominated by unexplained feelings of guilt).

Friedrich's mother, besides being an excellent chess player, was a passionate believer in the power of prayer, and infuriated her agnostic son by interpreting everything that happened around her as the fulfilment of her personal pact with the Almighty. F.D. owed all of his later literary successes, in his mother's opinion, to divine intervention. Paradoxically, his most successful plays sometimes contained scenes that his mother found offensive, and, while thanking the Lord for his patronage of her son, she would tearfully exhort Friedrich to cut the offending passages.

The figure who features prominently as a formative influence on his early years is his paternal grandfather Ulrich, who died before he was born. As a boy, F.D. seems to have been inordinately proud of Ulrich, whose reputation as a teacher, journalist, satirist, fighter for public causes, and scourge of authority recommended him to his grandson's acute sense of being an outsider. In tales of that small, bearded, bespectacled, stubborn, argumentative grandfather, Friedrich discovered an eternal non-conformist, waging a personal battle in speech, prose and verse to preserve the loose, federal, predominantly agrarian character of his homeland against what he saw as a concerted drive to turn Switzerland into a modern industrial state. F.D. particularly admired his grandfather's poems - satirical verses of ten or twelve lines at a time, recording Ulrich's forthright views on the political questions of the day - and went to the trouble of learning many of them by heart, though less perhaps for their literary merit than because their publication earned grandfather Ulrich regular terms of imprisonment, an honour his grandson was never to achieve.

In his early childhood experiences in Konolfingen may be rooted the adult Dürrenmatt's fondness for the paradox and the grotesque. He recalled farmers reading the bible while milking the cows. He remembered how a local missionary designed a map of the world in which only one place was marked on the continent of Europe: the village of Konolfingen, creating the impression for the inhabitants of that backwater that they were rooted in the centre of God's universe. As for the mysteries of procreation, they could be observed daily amongst various forms of livestock by every child in the village, but the pious Dürrenmatts determined to keep their son ignorant of sexual matters for as long as possible (to the extent of omitting the tale of Adam and Eve from bedtime bible stories). And on either side of the house where he was born, death was everpresent: in the abattoir, where he could freely observe the carnage; and in the church and adjoining cemetery, where he and his sister would hide in the freshly dug graves, on one occasion climbing out belatedly, and to general disapproval, when his father had already begun the burial service.

As the world of his immediate experience was small - at times suffocatingly small - so the world of his imagination, nurtured through books, was correspondingly large and unfathomable, and this contrast was to continue into adult life. Even Berne, capital of the Swiss Federation, but numbering in 1935 only 150,000 inhabitants, was and is parochial by the standards of European cities. Yet the adult Dürrenmatt was content to remain, with the

exception of the occasional journey beyond Swiss borders, within a relatively small terrain bordered by Zürich, Basel, Geneva and Berne, unlike his Swiss literary contemporary and rival Max Frisch, who travelled extensively as a stimulus to his writing. The best place from which to observe mankind, F.D. argued many times, was a spot just beyond the moon, and the world that could be observed from that vantage point frequently resembled a labyrinth.

For a writer trying to make sense of human activity in that labyrinth, it was no longer possible in the 20th century, in Dürrenmatt's view, to write tragedies. "Tragedy" he wrote, "presupposes guilt, authority, responsibility. In our muddled century there are no guilty or responsible individuals any more ... we are all collectively guilty." From now on, only comedy was possible. Yet as the German critic Urs Jenny points out, Dürrenmatt's comedies are all fundamentally concerned with the usual subjects of tragedy: "responsibility, treachery, guilt, atonement, loyalty, freedom and justice: in the most absolute sense of the word, with morality."

There is a strong puritannical and moralizing tradition in Swiss culture, but it frequently expresses itself in satire. Grandfather Ulrich, in his own modest way, and the better known 19th century Swiss writers Jeremias Gotthelf, who wrote satires in defence of the good old ways and against the dangers of new-fangled liberal ideas, and Gottfried Keller, who poked fun at the petit bourgeois pretensions of Swiss society in his *Seldwyla* stories, were all exponents of this tendency. Satire became the natural form of expression for Friedrich Dürrenmatt, and his preferred target, as his skills as a writer developed through the years of the German economic miracle and its effect on neighbouring countries like Switzerland, was the unthinking adulation of money and economic success to the exclusion of everything else, including moral considerations. In his best known and most successful play *The Visit*, written in 1955 (and recently revived at London's National Theatre by Théâtre de Complicité), the inhabitants of the small, impoverished Swiss town of Gullen are bribed, cajoled and blackmailed into murdering one of their own by the richest woman in the world, who, as a girl, had been seduced, ill-treated and hounded from that very town and now returns in old age as a "benefactress", offering millions to rehabilitate Gullen in exchange for "justice" for herself, the death of her former lover. None of the townspeople is brave or ruthless enough to commit the crime individually. But as the town's economy revives through the promise of riches to come and the seemingly innocent extension of credit, the murder becomes inevitable and the people of Gullen become "collectively guilty".

Dürrenmatt's tragicomic style, both in *The Visit* and in *A Spanner in the Works*, is a peculiarly Swiss brand of grotesque and paradoxical humour that combines the funny and the macabre. To quote Urs Jenny again: "For Dürrenmatt the theatre is a matter of meaningful exaggeration, achieving its effects not with nuances but with the strongest possible contrasts." A striking example of Dürrenmatt's use of the grotesque is his fondness (perhaps not unconnected with the diabetes which plagued his adult life) for including Gargantuan feasts in his plays and novels as an accompaniment to the administration of some kind of justice or the consideration of some moral imperative. For example, at the climax of his best-known detective novel *The Judge and his Hangman*, the detective hero Bärlach, terminally ill with stomach cancer, derives grim enjoyment from the sumptuous meal he has prepared for the final confrontation with the criminal; in the play *The Physicists*, three scientists decide, over a delicious three-course lunch, that they have a moral obligation to keep their dangerous knowledge safe from the political regimes that would exploit it, and vow to spend the rest of their lives feigning madness in a lunatic asylum; and in *A Spanner in the Works* the mock trial of the salesman Alfred Trap unfolds during the eating of an elaborate dinner. (Of necessity, the huge quantities of food and drink that are consumed in the radio version have been reduced for our purposes to a modest buffet.)





A Spanner in the Works

Dürrenmatt produced some of his finest writing for the radio, and *Die Panne*, which I have loosely translated as "A Spanner in the Works", is the best known of his radio plays. However, the story exists in three versions: the radio play, written in 1955; a short story, completed the following year; and a less successful two-act stage version written and performed in 1979. (There is also *The Deadly Game*, a full-length American stage play freely adapted from the short story, which was performed at the Ashcroft Theatre, Croydon in 1963.) The light-hearted ending to the original radio play is diametrically opposite to the macabre denouement of the later versions. Dürrenmatt's experiments with different endings, here and elsewhere, represent not only his readiness to modify his work when required (as he did, for example, when transferring his detective novel *The Pledge* to the screen,) but also his basic philosophy: that human activity is governed by chance, and therefore anything may happen; some chance event may turn any given situation on its head.

The word *Panne* of the title, scarcely translatable into English in all its meanings and connotations, encapsulates this element of chance that is the cornerstone of Dürrenmatt's view of the universe. The first - literal - use of the word, meaning the breakdown of a car, refers to the chance occurrence that triggers off the whole action of the play: the unexpected failure to start of Alfred Trap's normally reliable Studebaker. The figurative meaning coined later on by the defence counsel is of a malfunction or aberration in a human being's perception of reality, a spiritual crisis or moral collapse. The short story version is preceded by an introductory chapter in which Dürrenmatt refers to "*diese Welt der Pannen*" - "this world of mishaps", and which is a statement of his belief that the concept of "fate" is no longer valid for our time, and that what governs drama, as it does life, is the haphazard workings of chance:

"Fate has left the stage and is now lurking in the wings, outside the valid concerns and conventions of drama. The onstage action is now determined by accidents, illness, crises. Even war has to wait on whether the electronic

brains decide if it is worth fighting, which of course will never be the case, now that we know mathematically - assuming, of course, that the computers are functioning properly - that in war there can only be losers. God help us if the computer hackers start feeding deliberate errors into the system; though even that is less disturbing than the possibility of a screw coming loose, a spool malfunctioning, a key failing to respond; the end of the world resulting from a technical error or malfunction. What governs and threatens us now is not God, not Justice, not Fate, as in Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, but traffic accidents, bursting dams, explosions in nuclear weapon factories, the fault of a negligent technician. Through this world of potential mishaps lies our road, and at the dusty roadside, beside the posters advertising Studebakers and ice cream and the memorials to the victims of accidents, a few stories can still be told, stories in which humanity peers out from a dozen faces at once, in which arbitrary misfortune becomes a general condition, in which right and justice and perhaps even mercy are still visible, but all caught and reflected in the monocle of a drunken man." (*Die Panne*, short story, Part I)

Julian Forsyth

Acknowledgements:

F.J. Alexander's Introduction to Die Panne (Oxford University Press)

Dürrenmatt: A Study of his Plays by Urs Jenny (Eyre Methuen)

Friedrich Dürrenmatt by Lutz Tantow (Heyne Biographien)



The Greenwich



Studio Theatre

GRAND DRAW

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