



# GREENWICH STUDIO THEATRE

## The Storytellers

By Richard Leander

5<sup>th</sup> May 1994 – 15<sup>th</sup> May 1994

Translated by Margarete Forsyth,

Beeke Ropers & Peter Christian

Adapted & directed by Mark Feakins



## PROGRAMME



*The Greenwich  
Studio Theatre Company*

presents

*The Storytellers*

by  
Richard Leander

translated by Margarete Forsyth, Beeke Ropers and Peter Christian

adapted and directed by Mark Feakins

May 5th to May 15th 1994



## THE COMPANY

### Mark Feakins

Director

After gaining a degree in Librarianship, Mark trained at Mountview Theatre School.

Since then his work as an actor has ranged from Puck at the Bridge Lane Theatre, Young Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* at the Chichester Festival Theatre, seasons at Sadler's Wells and the Mermaid Theatre, a national tour of Benjamin Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* which included a performance to "lifers" in Wormwood Scrubs, and the Anglo-Japanese production of *Tango at the End of Winter* at the Piccadilly Theatre.

More recently Mark has recorded a radio play, *For Lizzie*, for the Women's Radio group, an episode of the new TV series *Moving Story*, and has just returned from a national tour of *Wind in the Willows*.

For the GST Mark has appeared in *Minna von Barnhelm* and the title role in *Erasmus Montanus*.

### Andrew Fettes

The Doctor

Andrew trained at the Webber Douglas Academy. His first job was in weekly rep at Southwold, playing a different part every week. He then played Tommy the Cat in panto at the Kenneth More Theatre. He toured extensively with Polka Childrens Theatre as the Indian Little Arrow, and in Touchstone's production of *The Country Wife*, and with 6,15 Theatre Company. He recently completed a national tour of *Wind in the Willows*.

Andrew understudied half the male cast in *Dry Rot* at the Lyric Theatre in the West End. Fringe performances include Edgar in *King Lear* at the Tabard, and *The English Kiss*, a new comedy at the Boulevard

Theatre. TV includes *Crimewatch*, *EastEnders* and *London's Burning*. He is currently writing a one man show, teaches mime and runs a puppet theatre company.

### Margarete Forsyth

Designer and Producer

Margarete is the new Artistic Director of the Greenwich Studio Theatre. 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.

She then 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*, Buchner'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's opening season she directed *Minna von Barnhelm* and designed the sets for *Minna* and *Erasmus Montanus*.

She has most recently directed and designed the GST's production of a cycle of Schnitzler plays under the title *And Women Must Weep*, for which she has been nominated as best director in the London Fringe Awards.

### Halcro Johnston

Johannes

Halcro comes from a farming family in Aberdeenshire and studied at Aberdeen University and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

He began his career at Scottish Opera, subsequently appearing with the Scottish Theatre Company in *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaites* and *The Life of Galileo*. He has played in national tours of *Jesus Christ*

*Superstar* and *My Fair Lady* and in the West End musicals *South Pacific*, *Les Miserables*, *Matador* and *Kiss of the Spiderwoman*.

His latest roles include Inspector Fix in *Around the World In Eighty Days* and Jeronimus in *Erasmus Montanus* at the GST.

## Claire Macaulay

Claire trained at Middlesex Poly (BA Hons Performing Arts), Montclair College, New York (BA Acting) and with tutors from the Moscow Arts Theatre.

Theatre includes; Jemima Cleveland in LWT's award-winning production *A Busy Day* National Tour of *Jungle Book*; Alice in *How About Alice* (New Grove); Fairy in *Midsummer Night's Dream* (Bridge Lane); National Tour of *Alice Through the Looking Glass* playing Alice; Gretel in *Hansel & Gretel* (King's Theatre, Edinburgh); Mary McPherson and the Gaelic Singer in *The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil*.

In July Claire will again be playing Jemima Cleveland in a revival of *A Busy Day* at the King's Head, Islington. Claire lives happily in Enfield with her red Aga.

## Eddie Marsan

*Eduard*

Eddie has been a professional actor for the last three years, graduating from Mountview Theatre School, and is now a regular student of the Science of Acting.

His theatre work includes Just in *Minna von Barnhelm* and Jacob in *Erasmus Montanus* (GST), Caligula in Albert Camus' *Caligula*, Malvolio in *Twelfth Night* in the open air (Oxford), the Ghost, First Player and Fortinbras in *Hamlet* (Guildford) and St Pior in *Noonday Demons* by Peter Barnes (GST).

TV Credits include *The Bill*, *Piglet Files*, *Crime Monthly* and *Dame Edna's Neighbourhood Watch*.

## David Plater

*Lighting Designer*

Before moving to London, David lit many semi and professional productions. He then trained in Stage Electric and Lighting Design at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art where he lit productions of *The Shelter* for Alby James, *The Bright and Bold Design* for Caroline Eves and *Camille* for Claire Venables.

He has lit regularly at the Greenwich Studio theatre, productions include *Minna von Barnhelm*, *Erasmus Montanus* and most recently *And Women Must Weep*. Plays lit for the touring company Gold are *Beirut* and *Single Spies*.

David's most recent lighting design has been for the new musical *The Relationship* at the Riverside Studios in Hammersmith. He will also be lighting the forthcoming production of *The Nun* at the GST.

## Beeke Ropers

*Costume Design/Wardrobe*

Beeke first started making and designing costumes during her three years at Goldsmiths College (University of London).

Since her graduation in 1991 she has worked on several fringe productions including *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 designed the costumes for the GST's productions of *Minna von Barnhelm*, *Erasmus Montanus* and *And Women Must Weep*.

*Foreword by Richard Leander  
from the first publication of his fairy tales*

"Just as the terrible thunderstorm releasing its violent force in wave after wave is succeeded by the dreary endless rain, so the fierce battles in the first weeks of the French-German war were followed by the monotonous weeks of the siege of Paris.

And like the wanderer, who during the first onslaught of the elements forgot his travels to seek shelter under a friendly roof, now that the last thunder has died away steps to the window again and again and looks out onto the grey, drenched landscape, annoyed at the ceaseless rain - just so we were waiting and wondering when the bright sunbeam of peace would finally allow us to return to our own homes.

But week after week and month after month went by without the white flag of peace appearing over the walls of the fort!

So after the day's work was done and darkness fell from the beautiful hillsides around Paris, we would sit around the firesides in the deserted French villas and castles. And with the fires singing and the sparks dancing, many would feel old and strange thoughts flooding back into memory. These thoughts would take shape and step out behind the big dark curtains or rise from the coloured wallhangings, and they would crowd in on the dreamer. And facing them in wonder, he would recognize them as old familiars, some long forgotten - maybe since childhood. For it is amazing what a German soldier sitting by a French fireside can dream up. *Spécialité de rêveries allemandes. Allez donc !*

It was the same with this story-teller. And every now and then, when the snowflakes were dancing outside his window, he took up the quill and attempted to put those dreamlike shapes down on paper. And the field post carried his light sketches back home, to the woman this book is dedicated to. And when he finally returned to his native land, to his own hearth surrounded with his children, he realized in amazement that those few posted sheets had grown into a proper volume.

So let it go out into the world in memory of this great, glorious time, with which it can claim only a very slight and insignificant connection, for it has grown out of the love for our ideals, out of the love for my home and my people."

*Richard von Volkmann-Leander  
Leipzig, Easter 1871*



## Richard Leander

Richard von Volkmann-Leander was born in Germany in 1830. He grew up in and around Dorpat and Halle, where he later studied medicine. In 1863 he became Professor Leander, and in 1867 was created Surgeon General of the Prussian Army. He returned to his wife in Germany in 1871, and published the fairy tales that he had written in the deserted French Chateaus around Paris during the siege, and they became an instant favourite among adults and children alike. In later life he became an expert and pioneer of orthopaedic medicine. Leander died in 1899, at the age of 69.



# The Storytellers

by Richard Leander

translated by Margarete Forsyth, Beeke Ropers and Peter Christian

adapted by Mark Feakins

## The Cast

(in order of appearance)

The Doctor

Andrew Fettes

Johannes

Halcro Johnson

Eduard

Eddie Marsan

and  
Claire Macaulay

The action takes place in a barn to the south of Paris,  
in January 1871.

There will be no interval





## The Production Team

Director  
Set Design  
Lighting Design  
Costumes designed and made by  
Stories edited by  
Company Manager  
Stage Manager  
Lighting Operator

Mark Feakins  
Margarete Forsyth  
David Plater  
Beeke Ropers  
Peter Christian  
Julia Crampsie  
Renato Nadal  
Giorgio Frare

Set Construction

Giorgio Frare  
Renato Nadal  
Vicky Emptage

Publicity

Louisa Gummer

The director would like to thank Margarete Forsyth for all her support and advice during the preparation of this production

## *For The Greenwich Studio Theatre*

Artistic Director	Margarete Forsyth
Associate Director	Julian Forsyth
Administrator	Mark Feakins
Company Manager	Julia Crampsie
Front of House Manager	Giorgio Frare
Stage Manager	Renato Nadal
Wardrobe Mistress	Beeke Ropers
Publicity	Louisa Gummer

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.*

Bill Bridges, Sarah Bridges, Steven Dykes, Neil Fraser,  
Rhys Davies, Davy's Wine Bar, Greenwich Parks Department,  
RADA, Royal National Theatre, Goldsmiths' College Drama Department,  
Scott, Jonathan and David.

*And all those people who gave their time and talents for free, to make the costumes and set and to refurbish the theatre.*

## *Chair Sponsors*

Mrs C Johnstone, Karl Pfeiffer, Teo Maler, Gisela Ropers, Marianne Eggers, Nigel Forsyth, Joan & Mark Forsyth, Nicola Fawcett, Cornelia Graffam-Lewis, Dietrich L. Graffam, Christopher and Elke Graffam, Professor Dr. Wolfgang Lottes, Schlaepfer, Theaterkreis Bortfeld, Transtalex Plc, Dudley Dods, John Humphries and Nicole Canuet, Jane Wynn Owen, Deira Cooper, Peter and Suz Buckhurst, Professor Dr. Hölting, Sigrid and Herbert Bohn, Frank Hübner, Jörg Stegert, Ray Jones (Centre Stage), Rudolf and Martina Beck, Peter-Paul Schnierer, Ted and Margaret Batley.

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

## A Brief Look at the Franco-Prussian War and The Siege Of Paris

France declared war on Prussia on July the 15th 1870. At once she found herself without friends or allies. For one reason or another the other countries of Europe, as well as the United States were reluctant to support France or stand against the Germans. They had to fight alone.

Despite the population of Prussia being considerably less than that of France, they managed to enable an army of 1,183,000 men within eighteen days. Nothing had even been seen on this scale before in Europe. The Prussians were well prepared for war, and decided upon an offensive campaign that would hit the enemy hard before it was ready: a technique used again by the Germans in two later European wars. The French Army, however, was chaotic in comparison. The Prussian troops were given Maps of France marked with roads that were not yet marked on the maps of the French Ministry of war. The French were so convinced that they would be victorious that the only maps issued to their Army were of Germany, not France. They were never used.

In weapons, the French had a distinct advantage in their cartridge-firing-*chassepot* rifle, but they had nothing to compare with the steel breech-loading cannon which the Prussians had been given by a Herr Krupp, and that the French had not taken seriously when they were offered the gun. The Prussian guns were overall superior in range, accuracy, and rapidity of fire.

In France itself the country was in disarray. The whole nation surged with men travelling frenetically to and fro. On the third day of mobilization, a General telegraphed in despair:

*"Have arrived at Belfort. Can't find my brigade. Can't find the divisional commander. What shall I do? Don't know where my regiments are."*

At one point in the war, one of the German Commanders had over 40,000 men in supreme fighting trim and 1,440 guns concentrated on the far side of the Rhine, against less than 250,000 partially organised men that Louis-Napoleon, the Emperor of France, had been able to muster.

On August 30th Emperor Louis-Napoleon surrendered to Bismark after the Battle of Sedan, and was taken to Germany for imprisonment. He surrendered with 104,000 troops, but the rest of the French Army fought on, under the new leadership of a new revolutionary government.

Paris was under the grip of revolution again, and all faith was lost in the Emperor and his advisors. A chaotic new government was set up, and by mid-September Paris was a fortress. The whole city was built to withhold oncoming attacks, as it was surrounded by a huge wall, thirty feet high and divided into ninety-three bastions linked with masonry 'curtains'. In front of the wall was a moat ten feet wide, and behind ran a circular railway supplying troops to the ramparts.

Paris began to prepare for a siege as the Prussian forces moved closer. At these times nothing is more fundamental than food and provisions for the people to survive. The Bois de Boulogne had been transformed into temporary downland. One observer of the times wrote:

*"..over every open space, down the long, long avenue all the way to Longchamp itself, nothing but sheep,sheep.sheep! The South Downs themselves could not exhibit such a sea of wool."*

There were in fact some 250,000 sheep, as well as 40,000 oxen. However, in a grave oversight they had overlooked the need for milk - cows, which later caused terrible suffering among the children. The market-gardeners from the outskirts of the city brought all their produce inside the city walls, so as to not leave anything for the enemy.

By September 17th the encircling of Paris had begun, and the Prussians were surprised to come up against little resistance. The first battle of the siege occurred at Chatillon on the 19th of September. It was a chaotic affair, and it sent the French scurrying back into Paris. Soon Versailles was taken, without a shot being fired, and by September 20th the siege was set.

Within the city people suffered as the food ran low, and food prices doubled and trebled. Soon people were resorting to other forms of meat and food, some of which were to become an established part of the French diet. Horse meat for instance, appeared in butcher's windows for the first time during the winter of 1870-1871. Eventually people resorted to eating domestic dogs and cats. According to one contemporary American calculation 300 rats were eaten during the siege, compared with 65,000 horses, 5,000 cats, and 1,200 dogs. Towards the end of the siege even the zoo's of the city were providing fresh meat, and people dined on elephant and kangaroo.

On January 27th the French leader Favre, signed an agreed armistice with the Prussian General Moltke. And so ended the most disastrous war in the long course of French history. The French casualties numbered 150,000 killed, and a similar number wounded. On the German side 28,208 were killed and 88,488 were injured. Figures show that during the siege 28,450 French soldiers were injured, and 4,000 were killed. Total deaths during the siege were 6,251, of which only six people were listed of having died '*apparently from want of food*', though there were a further 4,800 infants, infirm, and aged '*whose death may be said to have been hastened by want of food or by bad food*.'

Mark Feakins

(See *The Fall Of Paris: The siege and the Commune 1870-71*. Alistair Horne. Pub. Papermac 1965)

The Greenwich Studio Theatre Company presents

# the nun

adapted from the novel by Denis Diderot

May 26th - June 26th 1994

Tuesdays - Sundays at 8pm

Diderot's gripping study of a young woman's attempts to escape convent life is one of the most remarkable literary works of the 18th century. Yet the supreme French genius of the Enlightenment began writing *The Nun* as a practical joke. The joke got out of hand and spawned a novel in dialogue form (with linking narrative) which offers far more exciting dramatic material than any of Diderot's plays.

With its scathing attack on a debased institutionalised Christianity and its startlingly sympathetic portrayal of a lesbian Mother Superior, *The Nun* could not be published until after the French Revolution, twelve years after the author's death.