

The Brigham Young University
Department of Theatre and Cinematic Arts presents



WINGS

by Arthur Kopit

directed by Ivan Crosland

October 22,23,24,27,28,29,30,31
November 3,4,5,6,7, at 8:00 P.M. in the Pardoe Theatre
Matinees November 2 and 7 at 1 P.M.
1981

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Mr. Kopit was motivated to investigate this condition of the mind because his father suffered a severe stroke. As his models for the central character of *Wings*, however, he used two women, one of whom had been a wing walker. To allow Mr. Wilkinson the opportunity to use this characterization and research as a major project leading to an MFA degree, Mr. Kopit has consented to changing the central character to a man.

Mr. Kopit says of his own father's stroke:

It was impossible to know how much he comprehended. Certainly there was no doubt that his capacity to comprehend had been drastically impaired and reduced. As best I could, I tried to understand what he was going through. It seemed to me that, regardless of how reduced his senses were, the isolation he was being forced to endure had to verge on the intolerable; clearly, he had not lost all comprehension . . . the look of terror in his eyes was unmistakable. To what extent was he still intact? To what extent was he aware of what had befallen him? *What was it like inside?* . . . The play is a case study, and in its execution I have assiduously avoided any kind of clinical or documentary approach. Indeed, it has been so conceived and constructed that its audience can, for the most part, observe this realm that *he* is in only through *his* own consciousness. In short, *Wings*, is a work of speculation informed by fact.

—From the preface to the play.

I weave in and out of the strange clouds, hidden in my tiny cockpit, submerged, alone, on the magnitude of this weird, unhuman space, venturing where man has never been, perhaps never meant to go. Am I myself a living, breathing, earthbound body, or is this a dream of death I'm passing through? Am I alive, or am I really dead, a spirit in a spirit world? Am I actually in a plane, or have I crashed on some worldly mountain, and is this the afterlife?

Charles Lindbergh, *The Spirit of St. Louis*

CAST

Amy
Mr. Stilson
First Doctor
Second Doctor
First Nurse
Second Nurse
Billy
Mr. Brownstein
Mrs. Timmins
Attendant

Kerrie Sue Hansen
M. Scott Wilkinson
John Thomas Bidwell
Jared L. Dunn
Christine Carter
Heidi Kaye Hubbard
D. Kay Jenkins
David Spencer
Robbin Olsen
Brian Keith Voiles

PRODUCTION STAFF

Director
Set and Lighting Designer
Costume Designer and Costumer
Technical Director
Aural Illusions (BYU Sound Services)

Ivan Crosland
Eric Fielding, USAA
Sandra Gray
O. Lee Walker
Mike McDonough

Assistant Director and Production Stage Manager
Assistant Technical Director
Resident Stage Manager
Lighting Technician
Lighting Crew

Robbin Olsen
Christine Smith
Katy Davis
Julie Foote
Lori Gray
Kaye Richardson
Eric Harding
Dean MacKay
Dean Lorimer
Chris Harris
Cindy Cook
Karla Barker
Rebecca Bernard
David Blaisdell

Scene Shop Foreman
Scene Painter
Property Mistress
Property Assistants

Sound (BYU Sound Services)

Ticket Office Manager
House Manager
Publicity Director
Publicity Photographer

Colleen Bird
Brad Stevenson
D. Terry Petrie
Mark Philbrick

COMING PRODUCTIONS

Margetts Arena Theatre

H·O·M·E·C·O·O·K·I·N·G W·A·S·A·T·C·H·R·A·N·G·E

by Jack Weyland • directed by Kaye Hanson

This is it! Jack Weyland's delightful spoof on BYU, dating, and the family (Mafia style). This rib-tickling play, written by the author of *Charley* and *Sam*, will leave you chuckling as the daughter of a rich New Yorker looks for happiness by pretending to be a "Utah Mormon." A play saturated with characters you'll like and situations you've experienced ... a guaranteed evening of fun.

November 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28
December 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, at 8 P.M. in the
Margetts Arena Theatre
Matinee November 30 at 4:30 P.M. in the
Margetts Arena Theatre
Tickets will go on sale Monday,
November 9, 1981

Pardoe Theatre



adapted and directed by Bruce Hertford
(Ph.D. dissertation) • music by Chris
Andrews • lyrics by Joan Maitland and
Jack Maitland • set and lighting design by
Karl T. Pope • costume design by
Catherine Ann McClellan

Tom Brown's Schooldays is a new musical freely based on the Thomas Hughes classic Victorian novel. It is a musical that promotes the defense of the weak against the strong ... the fight of young Tom Brown and his Rugby School headmaster, Dr. Arnold, against the brutality of Flashman, the upperclassman. This colorful and lively adaptation, set against the backdrop of the English school system, is a holiday treat for young and old alike.

November 26, 27, 28
December 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 at 8 P.M.
in the Pardoe Theatre
Matinees December 7 and 12 at 1 P.M. in
the Pardoe Theatre
Tickets will go on sale Monday

FILM FESTIVAL 81 Mystery!!!!

(Fall Semester 1981)

November 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 at 6 P.M. and
8 P.M. JKB 184

Alfred Hitchcock's *The Lady Vanishes*
(1938)

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The
Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1939)
Dashiell Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon*
(1941)

Orson Welles' *The Lady from Shanghai*
(1948)

Anthony Shaffer's *Sleuth* (1972)
Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient
Express* (1974)

Joan Lindsay's *Picnic at Hanging Rock*
(1975)

Neil Simon's *Murder by Death* (1976)

American College Theatre Festival

You are about to become involved in
more than a play produced by the local
college.

This production is entered in the
American College Theatre Festival, and
the actors, actresses, and crew members
hope it to be one of the productions
chosen to be performed in a national
festival in the spring of 1982 in the John
F. Kennedy Center for the Performing
Arts in Washington, D.C.

From the local campus to the regional
level, more than 450 productions and
13,000 students will compete for awards,
scholarships, and special grants for
actors, playwrights, designers, and
critics.

The American College Theatre Festival is
possible because of pluralistic support of
the arts in America. The ACTF is
produced by the University and College
Theatre Association, a division of the
American Theatre Association. The
Kennedy Center and the Alliance for Arts
Education contribute public sector
financial and administrative support. The
Amoco companies, for the twelfth year,
are the corporate sponsors of ACTF, and
their contribution is to help college
theatre grow and receive more
recognition for the work being done on
the campus.

Presented by the John F. Kennedy
Center for the Performing Arts
Produced by the University and College
Theatre Association,
a division of the
American Theatre Association
Supported in part by a grant from the U.S.



WINGS

Wings . . . was originally written for Earplay, that admirable project which commissions the best of our dramatists to write plays for radio broadcast. That Wings is visually as convincing and effective as it is aurally . . . should come as no surprise to admirers of Mr. Kopit's other plays, among them Indians and Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Mama's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feelin' So Sad.

Edith Oliver
New Yorker

Kopit's play is more than a description of a diseased condition. It is a metaphor, indeed a multi-metaphor. The patient and central figure is a middle-aged [man] of some cultivation and sensibility who had been in [his] youth an amateur [aviator]. While we watch [his] tormented effort to emerge from [his] breakdown, we are made aware of the puzzle and miracle of the human soul which science can detail but not explain. That is what Wings accomplishes and what gives it its special value.

. . . . Language itself is perceived here as a wonder, a divine gift which in our heedlessness we take for granted. It is a part of the noumenal paradox of life itself.

Harold Clurman
Nation

Outdoors one day with Amy, [his therapist, Mr. Stilson] sees snow on a bench and is unable to name it. In what is a key passage of the play, [he] asks Amy where she gets names from. "In here," says Amy, touching her head. "Do you know how?" "No." "Then how am I supposed . . . to learn?" In an abstract sense, Wings is about the mystery of language and our mysterious ability--or, in this case, inability--to take command of it.

Edith Oliver
New Yorker

Some commentators have suggested that this is a profound question about language and the process of learning, but in Wings it stands as a searching question asked by a patient, not a broad inquiry into an intriguing subject. One is tempted to ask, for example, how language does begin and how children learn to speak. Also, the implication of [Mr. Stilson's] inquiry is that the process by which a normal person reproduces words is the same as that by which a person who has suffered a stroke recaptures words [he] once knew but has since lost. But is this so?

Such questions are not the subject of Wings. What the play does demonstrate is the importance of speech, not only in communicating with others, but in achieving a sense of personal identity. . . .

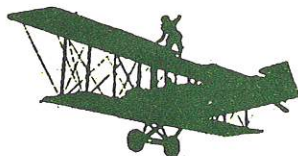
Edwin Wilson
Wall Street Journal

The play takes us through the stages of the stroke and the beginnings of a gradual recovery. At first [Mr. Stilson] sits alone, talking brokenly of a mixture of memory of the past and bewilderment at the present. [He] is not sure where [he] is; [he] thinks perhaps [he] has been flying and has crashed in a strange country. Perhaps the doctors are Rumanians--they can't understand [him] when [he] delivers what [he] thinks are perfectly lucid answers to their questions; and at other times they seem to be talking gibberish.

Later [he] manages painfully to respond; the effort is huge when [he] identifies a toothbrush. But we are inside [him]; this wry, luminour mind seems in no way deformed to us but lost, and we are lost with it. And [his] brief triumphs are our triumphs as well.

But this is much more than a play about a stroke, and the battle to recover from it. It is a play about life and death; and [Mr. Stilson] is hauntingly suspended between the two. The great image that moves throughout the play is [his] memory of flying an old biplane and doing stunts on the wings.

Richard Eder
New York Times



How does our memory work? For example, why when we see snow . . . can we instantly retrieve the word "snow" without conscious thought or effort? It is obviously analogous to the electronic workings of a computer bank--at least it is if our brain cells have not been greyed-out, and consequently our memory impaired by this strange sudden thing we know as a stroke.

The circuits can be, at times, it seems, totally repaired. Motor mechanisms can be persuaded to work once more, and the presumably behaviorally-based patterns of memory recognition be re-established. This is what Kopit is writing about so engrossingly and yet movingly in Wings.

Clive Barnes
New York Post

The circuits in the brain somehow get crossed. You tell your arm to move, you think you see it move, but it doesn't move. It's as though you turn on the light switch and instead of the light going on, hot water comes out of the tap.

A stroke is the most frightening prospect that confronts us. It confronts all of us, and Arthur Kopit has written a great play capturing that fear.

. . . Wings is an hour of fear, terror and compassion.

Joel Siegel
WABC-TV