

Alarms and Excursions

By Michael Frayn

Produced by Gwyn Halsall

Act 1

Alarms

Director Lorraine Cheshire

Nancy Tessa Bell

Nicholas Paul Knox-Kennedy

Jocasta Tess Oliver

John Josh Taylor

Finishing Touches*

Victoria Cyn Kimble

Edward Roy Kimble

Look Away Now

Director Shelley Pitter

Cabin Crew Director Jenny Allen

Aptly David Bell

Bloss Dermot Flaherty

Charr Chris Little

Interval

Licensed bar available

Act 2

Pig in the Middle

Director Chris Little

Lucy Tessa Bell

Alan Ben Brown

Doubles

Director Gwyn Halsall

Melanie Jo Knox-Kennedy

Miles Dermot Flaherty

Lynn Mo Peters

Laurence Chris Little

**Finishing Touches has been pre-recorded, as Cyn and Roy are unable to be with us due to a family emergency.*

Set Construction

Stage Crew Derek Pitter
Lynn Lee, Derek Pitter, Jane Brown

Lighting Paul New

Sound Citi Cheshire, Paul Knox-Kennedy, Nick Lowe, Ben Brown

Make Up Shelley Pitter

Props Jane Brown and the company

Costumes the company

Business Manager Heather Flaherty

Programme Chris Little

Poster Design Derek Cheshire

Front of House, Bar thanks to all our willing helpers!

WhatsOnStage writes:

Why does the heating always break down in the middle of a cold snap? Or the fridge/freezer go on the blink during a heat-wave? Why does the cashpoint swallow your debit card and the airline's website crash at the first sighting of a solitary snowflake? Why do machines which are supposed to save us time and make our lives easier actually waste time and drive us to impotent fury?

Such mysteries supply some of the themes evident in *Alarms and Excursions*. The plays do not attempt to give answers to these modern-day irritants but take a deliciously humorous look at our tortuous relationship with technology, at our inability to communicate with one another and at our confusion when confronted by today's soulless uniformity that renders every high street and every hotel bedroom indistinguishable from all the others.

What made Frayn choose to put these miniature plays together in one collection? He answers with a culinary analogy. 'I rather like the idea of a tapas evening, when you have a lot of small dishes and I often find that a more attractive proposition than sitting through a huge meal. I can't claim that these plays are Greek tragedies; they are in fact expressions of ideas which have occurred to me now and again over the years and which continue to strike me.

Most of *Alarms and Excursions* is about our relationship with machines and how treacherous they can be in their dealings with us. We have always had this relationship with tools and the progress which they are supposed to bring has always been double-edged.'

In *Doubles*, two couples book adjoining rooms in one of the identikit hotels which are such a feature of modern-day travel. 'I'm pointing out how things today are made affordable by repeating the same pattern over and over again. When the hotel rooms are exactly the same as each other, different couples fall into similar patterns of behaviour.

People have become dependent on things always being the same - which is why when one of the men gets up in the middle of the night to have a pee, he's conditioned to finding the loo in exactly the same place as it was in the hotel room where he slept twenty-four hours earlier. But he's forgotten that he's in a different hotel and in his confusion he falls over the furniture.'