

THE SEMICIRCLE

presents

DEAR CHARLES

A comedy in three acts

by

Alan Melville

adapted from

LES ENFANTS d'EDOUARD

by

Marc-Gilbert Sauvajon

and

Frederic Jackson

at the

BORROMAUM Theatre, Basle

on

Friday, January 13th at 8 p.m.

Saturday, January 14th at 8 p.m.

THE STAGE

PRODUCER Peter G. Broberg
assisted by Margot Sehringer

STAGE MANAGER Peter Nixon

COSTUMES and
MAKE-UP Elizabeth Seiler

PROMPTER Molly Arnold

FRONT OF
HOUSE Muriel Taylor

with the able assistance of many friends
of the Semicircle.

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A note on the SEMICIRCLE

The Semicircle (the name is a reference to its parent body, The British Circle, Basle, and to the semicircle of chairs used in playreading) arose from the realization in 1974 that we had among us a colleague who had trained in acting and producing at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London. Public playreadings under his direction - Wilde's *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* in 1975 and Shaw's *Hearthbrek House* in 1976 - are now followed by a full stage production of *Dear Charles*.

There is no formality about active membership of the Semicircle. It is *not* confined to members of the British Circle. Anyone who is keen on helping to put on plays in English in his or her spare time and on a purely voluntary basis is most welcome to join us. Details of forthcoming meetings and rehearsals can be obtained from Muriel Taylor, Krachenrain 58, 4059 Basle, phone (061) 35 96 39, or from any of the people mentioned in this programme.

THE CAST

(in the order of their appearance)

MARTHA, the maid	Barbara Haener
EDWARD, a doctor	Bryan Taylor
WALTER, Denise's elder son	Ron Hill
BRUNO, Denise's younger son	Ian Holmes
DENISE DARVEL, a novelist	Barbara Clark
MARTINE, Denise's daughter	Diana Zuger
SIR MICHAEL ANSTRUTHER	Tony Obrist
JAN LETZARESCO, a Pole	Bob Billington
DOMINIQUE LECLER, a Frenchman	Graham Simons
MADAME DUCHEMIN	Iris Linsi
LUCIENNE, her daughter	Diane Lang
JEAN-PIERRE, her son	Geoff Hoffmann

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The action of the play passes in the living-room of the DARVELS' house in Paris.

ACT I

A Spring morning

ACT II

A week later. Afternoon

ACT III

A week later. Evening

Time: the present

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There will be a 30-minute interval at the end of Act I.

The play was first produced in London at the New Theatre on the 18th of December 1952.

What tonight's play is all about

Denise Darvel, successful novelist and lecturer, lives with her three grown-up children in a comfortable house in Paris. The happy family draws strength from the all-pervading fatherly spirit of Charles, whose portrait hangs over the mantelpiece but who died too young for any of the children to remember him.

Denise's peace of mind is rudely shattered when two of her children announce their intention of marrying into the rich but puritanical Duchemin family. She is forced to confess to the children that Charles was not all he seems to be. In a desperate attempt to erect a façade of conventional respectability she summons up her cosmopolitan past by means of three identical telegrams. The 'past' duly appears but proves indigestible, and Denise braces herself to face the formidable Madame Duchemin with only the memory of Charles to protect her. Once again, the fatherly benevolence radiating from his portrait saves the day.