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Oscar Wilde at Home

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From the preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

“The artist is the creator of beautiful things. To reveal art and conceal the artist is art's aim. Those who find ugly meanings in beautiful things are corrupt without being charming. This is a fault. Those who find beautiful meanings in beautiful things are the cultivated. For these there is hope. They are the elect to whom beautiful things mean only beauty. There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all. All art is at once surface and symbol. Those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril. Those who read the symbol do so at their peril. It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors.”

Notwithstanding this admonition, with hindsight, Wilde's work seems replete with coded references to his own history. One finds oneself wondering if his wife Constance attracted the same level of gossip as Lady Windermere, and whether she reacted to Bosie's presence in her home as Lady Wotton does to Dorian. Does the studied triviality of *The Importance of Being Earnest* conceal coded references to other kinds of double-lives. Not to mention the saucy symbolism of *The Remarkable Rocket!* This performance is above all a celebration of how the lasting popularity of Wilde's work transcended his own tragic end, but it also explores how life and art are inextricably interlinked, for all Wilde's protests to the contrary.

“A truth in art, Oscar Wilde remarked, is one whose contradiction is also true; and much the same could be said of Wilde's own brilliant, blighted career... As a celebrity who was secretly homosexual, Wilde lived out a conflict between his public identity and his private self; and this fissure between the two is interestingly typical of his age” **Terry Eagleton**

PROLOGUE

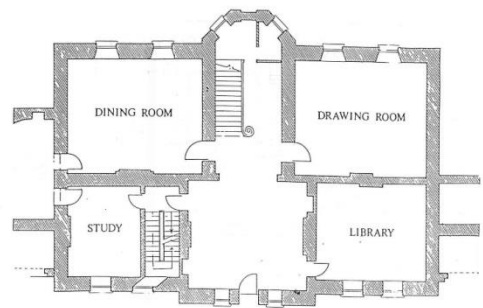
The Main Entrance Hall

Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde – Donal Morgan

Constance Wilde, née Lloyd (his wife) – Julie Lamberton

Speranza Wilde (his mother) – Antoinette Morelli

Lord Alfred Douglas (Bosie) – Sydney Bull



FLORENCE COURT HOUSE (Ground Floor)

'LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN' (1892)

Drawing Room, Dining Room & Countess's Room

Lady Windermere – Stephanie Dale

Lord Darlington – Richard Croxford

Lord Windermere – Stefan Dunbar

Mrs Erlynne – Antoinette Morelli

Parker – Curtis Reed/Marcus Crawford/Jack Breen

Lord and Lady Windermere seem to be the perfect society couple. But the town is rife with rumour. Who is the mysterious Mrs Erlynne? What hold does she have on Lord Windermere? And should Lady Windermere be told?

'THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST' (1895): A Trivial Comedy for Serious People

(Library & Venetian Room)

Lane – Curtis Reed/Marcus Crawford/Jack Breen

Algernon Moncrieff – Stefan Dunbar

Jack Worthing/Ernest – Patrick McBrearty

Lady Bracknell – Antoinette Morelli

Cecily Cardew – Julie Lamberton

Gwendolen Fairfax – Stephanie Dale

Ernest wants to marry Gwendolen and Cecily wants to marry Ernest until a complex web of false identities is quite exploded and the shallow mask of manners so evident in *Lady Windermere's Fan* is stripped away.

'THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY' (1891)

Dining Room & Servants Stairs

Basil Hallward – Richard Croxford

Lord Henry Wotton – Donal Morgan

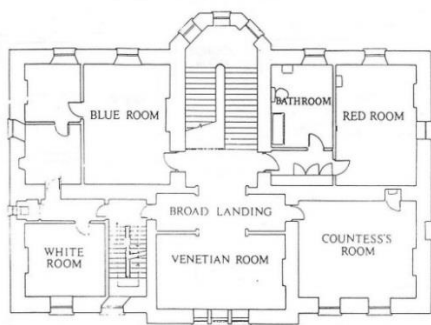
Dorian Gray – Sydney Bull

Lady Henry Wotton – Julie Lamberton

“How sad it is! I shall grow old, and horrible, and dreadful. But this picture will remain always young. If it were only the other way! If it were I who was to be always young, and the picture that was to grow old! For that—for that—I would give everything! I would give my soul for that!”

'REQUIESCAT' by Oscar Wilde (1881)

Read by **Richard Croxford**



FLORENCE COURT HOUSE (First Floor)

'THE REMARKABLE ROCKET' (1888)

Countess's Room

Oscar – Donal Morgan

"Every one, in fact, was a great success with the singular exception of the Remarkable Rocket. He was so damp (with crying) that he could not go off at all. So he sank deep into the mud, and began to think about the loneliness of genius."

Production Team

Stage Manager – **Bronagh McFeely**

Costume Design – **Enda Kenny**

Costume Assistant – **Holly Nedeljkovic**

Sound Design – **Sydney Bull**

Incidental Music – **Clara Schumann**

Sound Operator & Double Bass – **Seth Taylor**

Documentation – **Gerard Donnelly**

Company Manager – **Eamon Quinn**

Director – **David Grant**

Thanks to: Sean Doran, Heather White & Sally Rees at the Wilde Weekend; Holly Rutherford, Mhairi Walton, Gemma Elliott at Florence Court; Michael Alcorn, Craig Jackson, Ali Parks, Mary Tumelty, Ross McDade at Queen's University School of Creative Arts; Pat Musgrave and Erin Charteris at the Lyric Theatre; Rory Knox; Toni Johnson; Harry Rees; Matt Teal.

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900)

- 1864 Enters Portora Royal, Enniskillen
- 1871 Goes to Trinity College, Dublin
- 1884 Marries Constance; settles in Chelsea
- 1885 Elder son, Cyril, born
- 1886 Younger son, Vyvyan, born
- 1888 *The Happy Prince and Other Tales*
- 1891 *The Picture of Dorian Gray*
- 1892 *Lady Windermere's Fan*
- 1895 *The Importance of Being Earnest*
- Sentenced to two years hard labour
- 1898 Death of Constance
- 1900 Dies in Paris



Oscar Wilde at Home

A performed anthology conceived and directed by **David Grant** with costumes by **Enda Kenny**



From l-r: Stephanie Dale (*Lady Windermere & Gwendolen Fairfax*), Curtis Reed (*Parker & Lane*), Patrick McBrearty (*Jack Worthing*), Stefan Dunbar (*Lord Windermere & Algernon Moncrieff*), Antoinette Morelli (*Lady Bracknell & Mrs Erlynne*), Richard Croxford (*Lord Darlington & Basil Hallward*), Donal Morgan (*Oscar Wilde and Lord Wotton*), Sydney Bull (*Lord Alfred Douglas & Dorian Gray*), Julie Lambertson (*Constance Wilde, Lady Wotton & Cecily Cardew*).



FLORENCE COURT HOUSE

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Things are because we are them, and what we see, and how we see it, depends on the arts that have influenced us' OSCAR WILDE

