



STAGE TWO
DOWNHAM

God of Carnage

by Yasmina Reza
translated by Christopher Hampton

At Downham Village Hall
29th November—2nd December 2023

Programme by donation

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God Of Carnage

God of Carnage was first performed in French in 2006, and Christopher Hampton's translation was a smash hit in the West End and Broadway, winning amongst many awards the 2008 Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Comedy. It was made in to a film in 2011, simply called *Carnage*, starring Kate Winslet, Jodie Foster, Christoph Waltz and John C. Reilly, and directed by Roman Polanski.

The ebb and flow between the four superb characters raises important questions about human nature, morality, justice and society. How do we deal with conflict? How do we cope with stress? How do we relate to others? How do we define ourselves? Are we ever interested in anything but ourselves?

Our cast have brought the Vallons and the Reilles beautifully to life and we hope you enjoy the evening as much as we have enjoyed preparing *God Of Carnage* for you.

Yasmina Reza

Yasmina Reza is a French playwright and novelist, based in Paris. Her plays, including *Art*, which has been revived in the West End several times, have been translated into more than 30 languages and are performed all over the world. She has won many awards, including the 1997 Laurence Olivier Award for Best Comedy for *Art*, the 2009 Tony Award for Best Play for *God of Carnage*, and the 2010 Molière Award for Best Playwriting for *God of Carnage*.

Christopher Hampton

As well as translating many author's works, Christopher Hampton is in his own right a prolific author for stage and screen. His musicals include collaborating on Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Sunset Boulevard*. His screen plays include *Atonement* and *Dangerous Liaisons*, which was based on his own stage play *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. His work has garnered several awards, including two BAFTAs and an Oscar (Best Adapted Screenplay, for *Atonement*).

Part One

*In the living room of the Paris apartment
belonging to Véronique and Michel Vallon.*

Annette and Alain Reille are visiting.

Interval

20 minutes, during which refreshments will be available

Part Two

The same



Jenny Spurrett as *Véronique Vallon*

Jennifer has always been a drama queen, but first appeared in a play with Stage Two in 2017's *A Servant of Two Masters*, following a brief and unsuccessful foray into musicals! Jennifer can't wait to get her teeth into this modern role after appearing in a couple of Georgian era productions! It is her 6th production with Stage Two Downham.



Chris Bowers as *Alain Reille*

Chris is celebrating his 10th year with Stage Two, having tread his first board with the society in 2013's *Ghost Train*. Chris is excited to be co-directing and performing in a much more modern play which highlights the broadness of Stage Two's range. He's looking forward to acting in the round with a superb cast and to acting alongside his wife Kella for the first time in over 20 years!



Peter Lambert as *Michel Vallon*

Peter is thrilled to be debuting with Stage Two having spent 10 years at Clitheroe where he was twice nominated for best comedy performance, winning the award in 2022. Peter is excited to be joining good friends & to be involved in something a little darker than the normal farce comedy that he's been used to!



Kella Bowers as *Annette Reille*

Kella's last play with Stage Two Downham was *A Bunch of Amateurs* in 2019 and she is excited to be back playing the wife to her real-life husband Chris Bowers. The pair last performed together on stage 22 years ago in J B Priestley's *When We Are Married*, before they were actually married. So Kella has spent the last 20 years preparing for this role!



Crew

<i>Directed by</i>	Richard Hubbard & Chris Bowers
<i>Production Manager</i>	Jacqui Shepherd
<i>Baking</i>	Fran Osborne
<i>Lighting & Sound</i>	Paddy Keane
<i>Special Effects</i>	Kella Bowers
<i>Poster Design</i>	Alan Herron
<i>Photography</i>	Jacqui Shepherd
<i>Front Of House</i>	Kim Croydon
<i>Refreshments</i>	Warren Seddon
<i>Continuity</i>	Geralyn Lambert

Our thanks also go to the following, without whom the production would not have gone nearly so smoothly.

Steve Cooke; Kate Herron; Jennifer Whiteside; Paddy Darnell-Walsh and our friends at Blackburn Drama Club; Lesley and Brian Howarth;

This amateur production of "God of Carnage" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

Directors' Notes from Richard Hubbard & Chris Bowers

This is the second time either of us have directed. For both of us the first time was when we co-directed *The Admirable Crichton* for Stage Two Downham in 2018. When we first discussed the idea of a second one, we both immediately knew we wanted to do something intense and a little off the beaten track for Stage Two.

God Of Carnage is just that play. It's been important to us throughout rehearsals that it's clear to you how each character's veil is slowly removed, and how their relationships become laid bare. The beauty of *God Of Carnage* is very much "there, but for the grace...", but maybe we are just kidding ourselves.

We have both been members of Stage Two for about 10 years. You might have seen us on stage already this year – Chris as Higgins in *Pygmalion* and Richard as Frank in *Educating Rita*.

In The Round

"A living room, no realism, nothing superfluous"

– Yasmina Reza's complete description of the set for *God Of Carnage*

You've probably already noticed that we aren't using the main stage this time. The most common way of presenting a play – on a stage, in front of an audience all looking roughly the same way – has the feel of watching the action via a CCTV feed. This works very well, it's been established as a technique for decades if not centuries after all.

Some plays though, *God Of Carnage* among them, cry out for a more intimate presentation. By putting the stage in the centre of the hall, and surrounding it with seats ("in the round" in theatre speak), we're able to bring you right in to Véronique and Michel's living room.

Presenting in the round isn't without it's challenges, but Stage Two has never been above a challenge.

Stage Two Downham

Stage Two is based right here in the beautiful village of Downham in the Ribble Valley. We stage an autumn and a spring production and are looking to stage a further event in early summer.

We try to be innovative in our choice of plays, ranging across the classics, modern plays, comedies, dramas and thrillers. Just a browse through our website will give you an idea of our versatility and originality. Our reputation locally is excellent, we have a loyal, regular audience, and with each new production new audience members are attracted.

Stage Two Downham was formed in 1989, and since then we have, collaborated with other societies, participated in several community projects, and *God Of Carnage* is our 60th production. We members of Noda, a national national society for amateur theatre groups, from whom are very proud to have received three regional awards to date.

Backstage and onstage, we are always welcoming to new members who are encouraged to become involved in whatever way they wish. So, please look through our web site for an idea of what we do and, if you are interested, get in touch with us! We will be really pleased to meet you!

www.stagetwodownham.co.uk

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Our Productions

Out next production will run from 20th to 23rd March 2024.

For details, keep an eye on www.stagetwodownham.co.uk, or ask to join our mailing list by sending an email to info@stagetwodownham.co.uk.

2023	Educating Rita; Pygmalion
2022	The Winslow Boy
2019	Wait Until Dark; A Bunch Of Amateurs
2018	The Admirable Crichton
2017	The Servant Of Two Masters; The Weekend
2016	Arsenic And Old Lace
2015	Barefoot In The Park; Sherlock Holmes And The Case Of The Jersey Lily
2014	Confusions; Flare Path
2013	The Ghost Train; Panic Stations
2012	Out Of Order; Strictly Murder
2011	Living Together; 84 Charing Cross Road
2010	Table Manners
2009	Round And Round The Garden; Habeas Corpus
2008	Frankenstein
2007	Natural Causes; Pictures Of Clay; Noises Off
2006	In Two Minds; The Diary Of Anne Frank
2005	Bus Stop / Costa Del Packet / Last Tango In Little Grimley
2004	A Fly In The Ointment; Gaslight
2003	See How They Run
2002	Beyond A Joke; Haywire
2001	Love Begins At Fifty
2000	Talking Heads; Blithe Spirit
1999	Time Of My Life; The Village Fete
1998	Post Horn Gallop; Season's Greetings
1997	High Profiles; When Did You Last See Your Trousers
1996	Local Affairs
1995	Key For Two; Plaza Suite
1994	Move Over Mrs Markham; A Murder Has Been Arranged
1993	Daisy Pulls It Off; Woman In Mind
1992	Your Obedient Servant; The Other Fellow's Oats
1991	Month Of Sundays; Pardon Me Prime Minister
1990	Pack Of Lies; Celebration
1989	Round And Round The Garden; When We Are Married