

## DIRECTOR'S FINAL WORD – PICKING THE RIGHT PLAY

The opportunity to direct a play for Stage Two Downham is, in part, a real privilege and in part, a daunting prospect. There are many things to consider – the time of year, the people and the play; most importantly, of course, the play.

Picking the right play is key to everything else that happens and there are so many questions, so many plays to read, before you can decide. Firstly, for the Director, its 'do I like it?', or love it even? I think you must believe in your play and feel confident that you will keep on believing in it for the next 3-4 months, if you expect others to enjoy it too. And then, will our cast like it? Will they want to be in it? Can we all keep motivated enough, by this play, to put in the hard work and remember as well, to enjoy the fun of it, even on the hardest days?

Before I discovered *The Dresser*, it was quite a rigorous process. With every play it was a case of is it too long or not long enough? Is the cast big enough or too big? Is it funny, silly, happy or sad enough? Is it interesting and well written enough? Is it good enough?

Finding *The Dresser* was an exciting moment. It ticked all the boxes for me and the cast. With its full-on wit and comedy capers through to the touching humanity of some emotionally charged scenes, *The Dresser* seems to give all of us that rollercoaster ride of a captivating drama.

So, that leads us on to the final and most important question of all and one we are yet to answer, one that we alone cannot answer... when we have truly given it all we have, loved it, honoured it, cursed it and caressed it and we take our final bows, will our audience like it, love it even?

We truly hope so, but only you will know – unless you'd like to tell us of course. So now it's time to sit back and enjoy *The Dresser*, presented to you by Stage Two Downham.

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### About Stage Two

Stage Two Downham is an amateur dramatics group based in the beautiful village of Downham, near Clitheroe in east Lancashire's 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. Our regular productions are the perfect choice for a night out at the theatre with friends or family.

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](http://www.stagetwodownham.co.uk)



STAGE TWO  
DOWNHAM

A red, textured poster for the play 'The Dresser' by Ronald Harwood. The poster is mounted on a brick wall. At the top of the poster is a white crown icon. Below the crown, the text reads 'THE DRESSER BY RONALD HARWOOD' in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

THE  
DRESSER  
BY  
RONALD  
HARWOOD

At Downham Village Hall  
12th – 15th June 2024

Programme by donation

noda  
Be inspired by amateur theatre

# THE CAST

The King is suffering from a form of senile dementia. His moods come and go as does his concentration,



**Robert Crane** – Norman

Robert has been with Stage Two for ten years and appears regularly for them. His play credits include: *Ghost Train*, *Confusions*, *Flight Path*, *The Admiral Crichton*, and *The Servant of Two Masters*. He is relishing the opportunity to portray the iconic role of Norman in this production.



**Kate Herron** – Her Ladyship

Kate always wanted to try acting, following in her late mother's am dram footsteps. She finally started with three lines in the Stage Two production of *A Bunch of Amateurs*. Her first real role came in 2022 as Grace in *The Winslow Boy*, followed by another formidable character, Mrs Higgins in *Pygmalion*. Kate is looking forward to playing Her Ladyship in this Stage Two production.



**Marianna Morante** – Irene

This is my first show with Stage Two Downham, which I will be involved in along-side studying for a degree in Musical Theatre. I have spent the last few months with Blackburn Musical Theatre Company, performing in their recent show, *Sunshine on Leith*. I cannot wait to work alongside the amazing people at Stage Two.



**Warren Seddon** – Mr Oxenby/Edmund

Warren is excited to make his acting debut, with Stage Two Downham, as Mr Oxenby in *The Dresser*. When not on stage Warren enjoys playing tennis and the occasional set building!

## Voices Off

**Alan Herron** – Kent

**Richard Hubbard** – Gloucester

**Steve Cooke** – Albany

## Director – Jacqui Shepherd

Jacqui has been with Stage Two Downham for 6 years and has been involved with many productions in that time. From supporting backstage and appearing in several productions including *The Admirable Crichton* and *Pygmalion*, Jacqui had her directing debut in 2021, with *The Winslow Boy*. She is now excited to be directing *The Dresser*.

## Crew

**Richard Hubbard** – Recording Technician & Front of House

**Alan Herron** – Poster Design & Bar Manager

**Fran Osborne** – Production and Actor Support

**Paddy Keane & Alfie Bentley** – Lighting & Sound

**Warren Seddon, Roger Astin & Kim Croydon** – Set Design and Build

**Cynthia Croydon** – Continuity



**Kim Croydon** – Sir

I've been given the part of an ageing actor! Whoever thought of that! It is a wonderful, challenging role however and it's so interesting to have an insight into wartime theatre companies. The idea of performing three or four different plays concurrently is pretty frightening!



**Helen Coles** – Madge

I am delighted to be working with Stage Two again - my previous roles included a murdering old lady in *Arsenic and Old Lace* and a straight-laced housekeeper in *Pygmalion*. After over half a century of taking on many varied roles, I am now playing a Stage Manager! I have had plenty of experience of those... but none quite like Madge who I portray in *The Dresser*!



**Roger Astin** – Geoffrey Thornton

Recently retired, Roger joins the company in his first production since his youth. He worked as an Interior Designer for 47 years in the furniture industry. He has varied interests, which include travel, sport and motorcycling.



Angry, hurt, frightened, lucid, bewildered. Have I made the wrong decision?