

Alan Ayckbourn: A Short Biography

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Alan Ayckbourn

Writer / Director

Alan Ayckbourn has been writing for more than 60 years. He is rarely if ever tempted by television or film, which perhaps explains why he continues to be so prolific.

He has written numerous plays. These have been translated into over 35 languages, are performed throughout the world and he and they have won countless awards. Nearly all were first staged at the SJT and he continues to direct and premiere his new work here. He was Artistic Director for 37 years, retiring from the post in 2009; he was honoured to be appointed the SJT's first Director Emeritus during 2018. During 2020, he debuted his latest play, *Anno Domini*, online in a response to the Covid-19 situation.

Since 2005, he and the SJT company have been regular visitors to the Brits Off Broadway Festival at 59E59 Theaters, New York, their work always attracting first class reviews. They have received a Drama Desk nomination and have twice been included in *Time* Magazine's Top Ten Productions of the Year; his most recent visit in 2018 was no exception as his play *A Brief History of Women* garnered universally enthusiastic reviews and regularly featured in *The New York Times* Critics' Choice list.

During the past decade, there have been major revivals of *Season's Greetings* and *A Small Family Business* at the National Theatre; *Communicating Doors*, *Relatively Speaking* and *How The Other Half Loves* in the West End and, at Chichester Festival Theatre, *Way Upstream* and *The Norman Conquests*. 2019 also saw the publication of his first work of prose fiction, *The Divide*.

He has received many Honorary Doctorates including, happily, in 2018 the very first Honorary Doctorate from CU Scarborough. The University of York acquired his archive for the nation in 2011. A recipient of the Critics' Circle Award for Services to the Arts, he has been inducted into American Theatre's Hall of Fame and became the first British Playwright to receive both Olivier and Tony Lifetime Achievement Awards. He was knighted in 1997 for services to the theatre.

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