

Alan Ayckbourn Short Biography (updated January 2012)

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Alan Ayckbourn

Writer/Director

As one of Britain's most performed playwrights, Alan Ayckbourn has, to date, written 75 plays. Almost all received their first performance at the Stephen Joseph, with more than 35 of his works being subsequently staged in the West End, at the National Theatre or by the Royal Shakespeare Company. Major successes include *Relatively Speaking*, *How the Other Half Loves*, *Absurd Person Singular*, *Bedroom Farce*, *A Chorus of Disapproval*, *A Small Family Business*, *Henceforward...*, *Comic Potential*, *Things We Do For Love* and *House & Garden*.

In 2009, Matthew Warchus' hit in-the-round production of *The Norman Conquests* first seen at the Old Vic transferred to Broadway, earning a Tony for Best Revival of a Play. Christmas 2010 saw the National Theatre's staging of his 1980 play *Season's Greetings* to great acclaim and in January this year a revival of *Absent Friends* began at the West End's Harold Pinter Theatre. Although he stepped down as Artistic Director of the Stephen Joseph Theatre in 2009, a post he held for 37 years, he continues to guest direct there; last year saw *Dear Uncle* (his adaptation of *Uncle Vanya*) and *Neighbourhood Watch*, and he will be directing yet again this summer.

His plays have been translated into 35 languages, won numerous awards nationally and internationally, and have been performed worldwide on stage and television.

In recent years, he has been inducted into American Theatre's Hall of Fame, received the 2010 Critics' Circle Award for Services to the Arts and became the first British playwright to receive both Olivier and Tony Special Lifetime Achievement Awards. He was knighted in 1997 for services to the theatre.