

Alan Ayckbourn at 80

60 Years of Playwriting

Alan Ayckbourn: A Short Biography

This is the officially approved short biography for Alan Ayckbourn. It has been compiled by Alan Ayckbourn's Archivist, Simon Murgatroyd, and is available to reproduce for free providing Alan Ayckbourn's Official Website www.alanayckbourn.net is credited.

Alan Ayckbourn

Writer / Director

2019 marks Alan Ayckbourn's 80th birthday and the 60th anniversary of his professional playwriting debut with *The Square Cat* at the Library Theatre, Scarborough, in 1959.

Alan has worked in theatre - predominantly as a playwright and director - for over sixty years, rarely if ever tempted by television or film, which perhaps explains why he continues to be so prolific. To date he has written 83 plays, many one act plays and a large amount of work for the younger audience. His latest play, *Birthdays Past, Birthdays Present* will premiere at the Stephen Joseph Theatre this summer. His work has been translated into over 35 languages, is performed on stage and television throughout the world and has won countless awards.

His major successes include *Relatively Speaking*, *How The Other Half Loves*, *Absurd Person Singular*, *Bedroom Farce*, *A Chorus of Disapproval* and *The Norman Conquests*. Thirty-nine of his plays have transferred to either the West End or the National Theatre and his work is regularly produced around the world. During 2018, he directed his play *A Brief History Of Women* at the 59E59 Theatres, New York, for the *Brits Off Broadway* festival.

He was Artistic Director of the Stephen Joseph Theatre from 1972 to 2009, where practically all of his plays have premiered during the past six decades. He was appointed the company's first Director Emeritus in 2018 and he continues to direct both his new work and revivals for the company founded by his single most influential mentor, Stephen Joseph.

His many awards most recently include the Oxford Literary Festival's Honorary Fellowship and he has been inducted into American Theatre's Hall of Fame, received the 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.