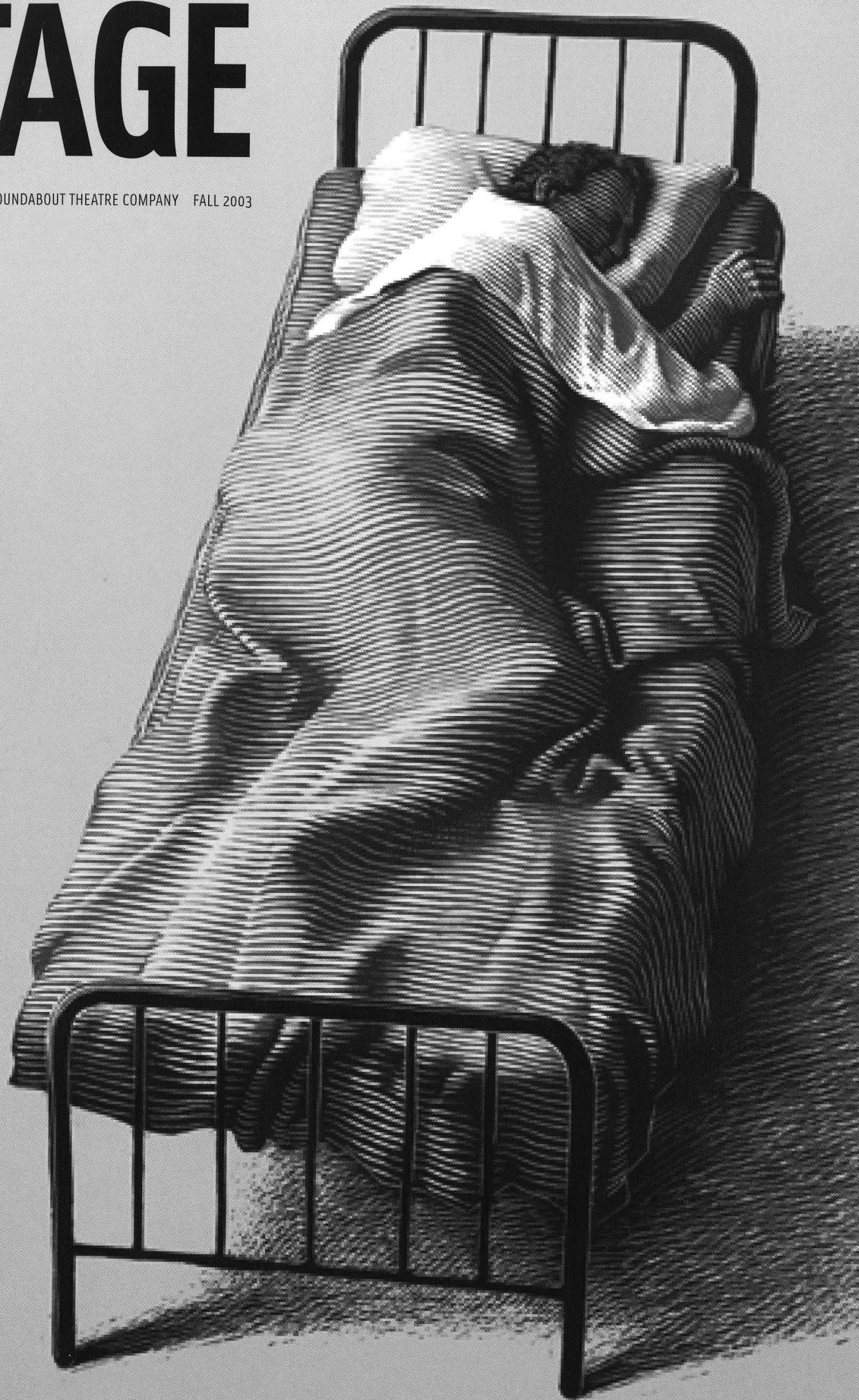


# UPSTAGE

A PUBLICATION OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AT ROUNDABOUT THEATRE COMPANY FALL 2003



THIS ISSUE OF *UPSTAGE* IS MADE POSSIBLE BY  JPMorganChase



Harold Pinter

Photo: Martin Rosenbaum

**UPSTAGE CONTRIBUTORS** ARLENE JORDAN *Education Director*; RENEÉ FLEMINGS *Senior Curriculum Advisor*; TED SOD *Research Consultant*; MEGAN WALTZ *Director of Educational Programming*;

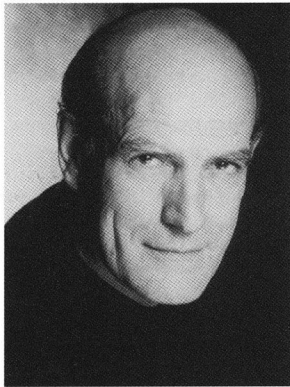
LINDSAY ERB *Education Program Associate*; TIM McCANNA *Design*; RYAN WEIBLE *Education Intern* **COVER:** Artwork for the Roundabout Theatre Company production of *The Caretaker*.

Illustration by Scott McKowen Production Photos by Joan Marcus **ROUNDABOUT THEATRE COMPANY** 231 West 39th Street, Suite 1200, New York, NY 10018

Telephone: 212.719.9393 Fax: 212.869.8817 [www.roundabouttheatre.org](http://www.roundabouttheatre.org) Copyright © 2003 Roundabout Theatre Company, Inc. All rights reserved.

# HAROLD & DAVID

## DIRECTOR DAVID JONES DISCUSSES PINTER AND ROUNDABOUT'S PRODUCTION OF *THE CARETAKER*



David Jones

**UPSTAGE:** Because of your history with and affinity for Harold Pinter's work, I'd love for you to talk a little bit about how that came about. How did you find yourself interpreting his work?

**DAVID JONES:** Well, I didn't know anything about Pinter until I found myself cast in a Pinter play. I was in the third-ever production of *The Birthday Party*, after it had had a disastrous opening in the West End in London. It ran for only one week. About a year later, I worked as a documentary moviemaker with the BBC. And there was a very dynamic director at the Tavistock Rep., London's leading community theatre and she said, "I've got this great new play by a guy called Pinter, called *The Birthday Party*. I want you to come and read for it."

So I read, and I got cast as the psychotic Irishman, McCann. And that was great, but the really great thing was that Harold came to a lot of the rehearsals. He was still trying to figure out why it hadn't worked the last time and what was wrong with it, if anything, and also whether he would go back to being a poet rather than a playwright, which is what he intended to be originally. The man playing Goldberg was in another show, and when he wasn't in rehearsal, Harold covered the role. Then those great interrogation scenes would start to take off – line after remorseless line, a hilarious duet pulverizing poor Stanley into silence. What I learned about the rhythm and how Harold heard the lines was just tremendous. Since then, I have directed many of

his scripts, including movies, as well as productions in which he himself performed.

**So tell me a little bit about the challenge of doing Pinter, because he is so unlike anyone.**

**JONES:** I think he has a great sense of mischief and of undercutting people. I think people are often reverential towards him, and indeed, Terrence Rattigan apparently said, regarding *The Caretaker*, "Well, you've written a play about God the father, God the son, and God the holy spirit," and Harold said, "Well actually, I've written a play about two brothers and an old tramp who wants to move in with them." His plays are often approached as though there's some deep inner meaning there--I think the plays do become mythic, but that doesn't help you do them at all. You have to do them as though these are real people in real situations. There is a line down the middle where I think Harold is extremely human and he has a lot of compassion, which people don't usually talk about, for the characters he writes about. I always try and get as much humor, but not false humor, out of the characters, and as much real human pain, and as much feeling for and awareness of each other as possible.

**What about being "Pinteresque"?**

**JONES:** There are certainly people who congratulate themselves on really understanding what is "Pinteresque". And they laugh at everything. I mean it's not really a laugh, it's sort of a "A-ha-ho, that's very funny, that's a very Pinter line." I think there was a time when Pinter enjoyed being the great writer and I think now, I mean, he was the first to say, "Forget all those pauses, I mean, we're really bored by the Pinter pause." And that's sort of funny, you know.

**Just a footnote, you know they toyed with changing the title of the movie to *The Guest*, but the change never happened.**

**JONES:** Well I hope not, because what's smart about the title is that you think about the job being offered to Davies. But Mick is already taking care of Aston, Aston's taking care of Davies, and Davies doesn't know who he's taking care of. Everyone has to "take care" in the play about what they do and say.

**So where does this story come from?**

**JONES:** Well, when Harold had the idea for the play, he was living under very strange circumstances in West London right at the beginning of his career in a house divided into apartments. Two brothers lived in one of the other apartments. One of them had had some sort of mental treatment, and the other one drove off in a van everyday. There was also an old local tramp and these brothers took him in at one point. Harold really knew nothing about what was going on but he walked past the door to their apartment one day and the brother who had had the mental treatment was gazing out of the window and the tramp was just talking, talking, talking. And Harold said that's where the play began. So it began out of something very, very concrete in the same house where Harold lived. Harold uses a lot of stuff that is very concrete that comes out of his experience.

**Did he know anything else about those characters?**

**JONES:** When I was an actor working for him in *The Birthday Party*, I would ask all sorts of questions like, "Where do these characters live in London?" "How did they travel down to the South Coast?" - And he said, "I have no idea. Listen, I don't know anything about these

Below, left to right: Patrick Stewart, Kyle Maclaghlin and Aiden Gillen in *The Caretaker*



## **“Everyone has to ‘take care’ in the play about what they do and say.”**

people outside the room. I know what they do in the room. And that’s the play. The play is what they do in the room. What they do outside the room, don’t ask me, because I don’t know.”

I think he was the first person to realize you didn’t have to give a back history within the play. It’s as if we go to a party, suddenly we meet five new people and we hate them or we think they’re very sexy, or we think they’re interesting, but what do we know about them? Nothing but what we can find out by talking to them in that room at that time. I find that kind of fascinating because you’ve got to guess, you’ve got to fill in the gaps, you’ve got to work at discovering who the characters really are.

**Can you talk a little bit about the characters for us? Who are they?**

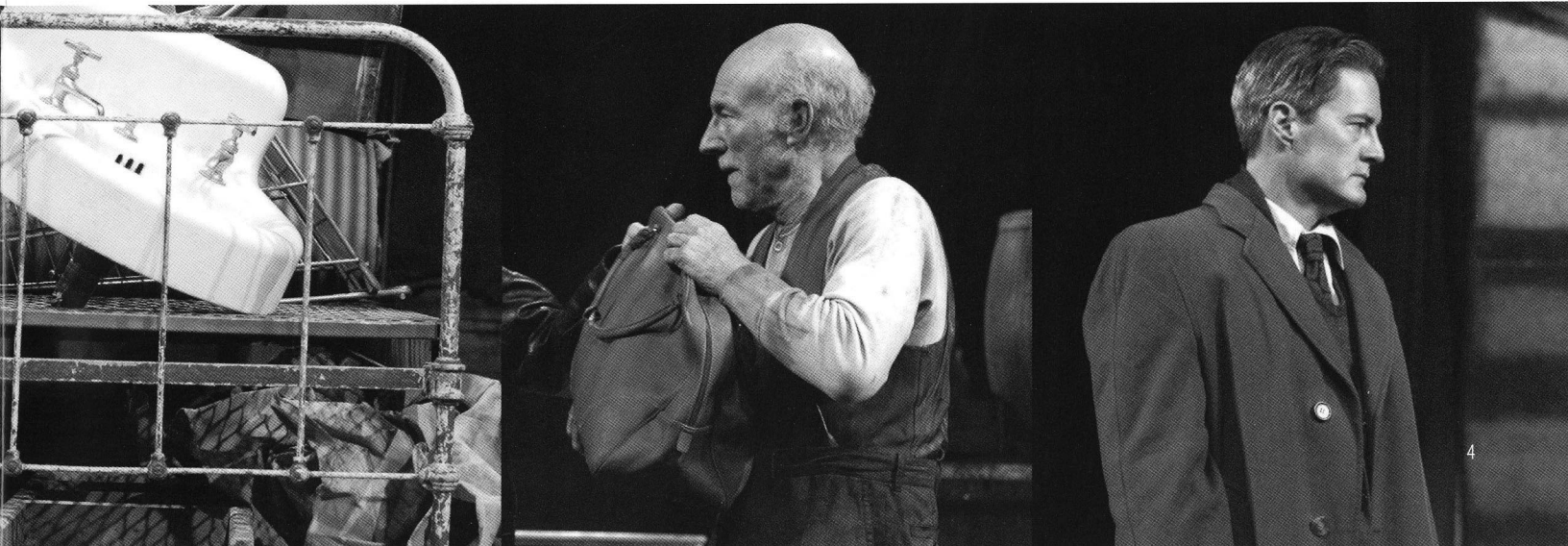
**JONES:** Actually, a lot of *The Caretaker* is quite explicit. I mean, you have to wait to find out about Aston so you don’t quite know why he’s a bit slow and careful. And then, Mick, for me, I think he carries colossal family guilt. I think he feels a great responsibility for how his brother is. I think Mick actually loves Aston but he’s continually guilty. I think when the tramp moves in, Mick’s furiously jealous because the relationship with Aston is so important to him. But Mick is very smart. He knows he can’t be the one that throws Davies out of the house. What he does is he winds Davies up to the point where Davies over-reaches himself and Aston says, “That’s it, you’re going.” But Mick kind of engineers that situation. Some people think that the two brothers are playing a game with Davies, but I don’t

— DAVID JONES

believe that. No, I think there is something of a holy innocence about Aston. I mean, I see Aston as being a genuinely good Samaritan charitable person who sees this guy about to be beaten up outside his restaurant where he’s a dishwasher, and he comes to his rescue. What I’m very interested in trying to bring out is the sweet, child-like, innocent quality of Aston, but also the idea that he shouldn’t be messed with. In the end, Mick always defers to Aston. Aston never pulls age, or weight, or authority, but once Aston has decided that Davies is disturbing him, that’s it! He’s history!

**What about Davies then? Do you think he’s an opportunist?**

**JONES:** Yeah, I think he’s a survivor. I think what you see is what you get in a way. I mean, he’s almost incapable of making a straight statement -- he doesn’t want to be pinned down. He thinks if he gives away any fact about himself, he’s going to be clobbered in some way. He’s a survivor. What I find really funny about it is that he is so ungrateful; he’s picky. Anything Aston comes up with, the shoes, or the shirts, or whatever, they’re always wrong, you know. In a way, though, Davies understands Mick. Mick attacks him physically and is abusive to him, and Davies has to get his knife out, but Davies can understand that. That he can deal with. But there’s something about Aston that really puzzles him, you know. Goodness and charity, they’re hard to accept when you’re used to fighting for everything. And there’s something almost tragic about how lost Davies is at the end of the play. He ends up the loneliest of the three. ●





# TOYS IN THE ATTIC

SET DESIGNER JOHN LEE BEATTY  
& COSTUME DESIGNER JANE GREENWOOD  
TALK FREUD, COLLABORATION AND THE  
DESIGN PROCESS FOR *THE CARETAKER*

# U

**PSTAGE:** You two have worked on numerous productions together. Could you talk a little bit about what may have inspired your collaboration on this piece?

**JOHN LEE BEATTY:** The director, David Jones, on the first day I met with him, brought work by Lucian Freud, who is an English painter. And Lucian Freud isn't quite my cup of tea, I thought, until now.

**JANE GREENWOOD:** Till now, and now you praise him...

**BEATTY:** And now I love Lucian Freud. I don't want anything else except Lucian Freud. At first we looked at the painting that looked the most like where the play took place, but I passed that by really fast and I started to get really interested in how he put the paint on the canvas.

**GREENWOOD:** He started off, doing quite, sort of, normal sized paintings...

**BEATTY:** Then he literally sews a patch on. But he sews patches when he decides...

**GREENWOOD:** ...he adds on if he wants to make a painting bigger.

**BEATTY:** Oh, yes, I loved that, and did the same thing when I was sketching. I pasted on a little piece and kept going. I thought I was the only person.

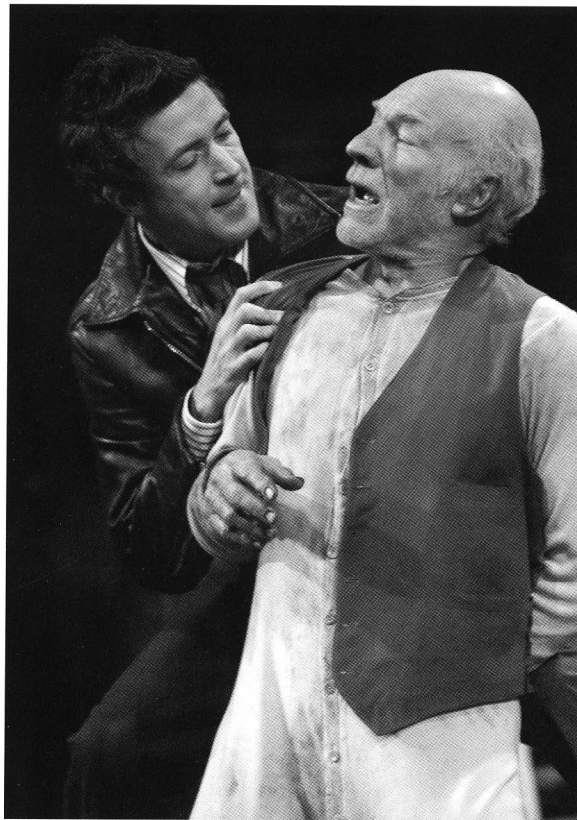
**What is it like for you two, working together?**

**GREENWOOD:** John and I have very wonderful, intangible...

**BEATTY:** Yeah, we don't talk about colors, we don't talk about...

**GREENWOOD:** We don't talk about it.

**BEATTY:** We just know.



Aiden Gillen and Patrick Stewart in *The Caretaker*

**GREENWOOD:** I think it's because we have the same gut feelings and basic aim. For example, we're both talking about Freud here now for *The Caretaker*, and I don't necessarily see the clothes that are in Freud, and John doesn't necessarily see the room or anything else, but here we are, we're both talking about this painter, we're both working on this play, and somehow we will both bring something of this painter into it, and that pulls it all together. The script also helps in collaboration. You need to do certain things that are built into the action. In a way, you're given certain parameters from the characters and the script themselves.

**Well, what about this play? How have you been responding to it?**

**GREENWOOD:** Well, I tell you, when I read it first, years and years and years ago, I didn't really get it. This time when I read it, I just felt devastated. So much of it is so painful. It's also so feisty.

***“Simple is the word.  
The goal is to become simple,  
but not empty, just simple.  
That’s the hard part.”***

— JOHN LEE BEATTY



Set design renderings for *The Caretaker* by John Lee Beatty

**BEATTY:** It’s really nervy. Like in your face simple nervy. You think how did this guy have the nerve to just write like this? I find it like working on a new play, though. I don’t feel like I’m doing a revival. When I started working on this production, I didn’t know *The Caretaker* backwards and forward. I hadn’t ever seen it, I don’t think.

**So where do you start?**

**BEATTY:** Jane and I usually go to the library and research what the original looked like just so we won’t accidentally copy it, but I don’t feel the need this time. We’re bringing to it something of today. It’s not a period piece per say, I mean, it takes place in post-war England in the late fifties, I guess, but it’s not necessary to have it be in that period to understand it.

**GREENWOOD:** No. Even the pieces of clothing that they write about in the script are brought in and out. I mean, they could be other pieces of clothing. It’s symbolic really. It doesn’t have to be a specific night. It’s the interplay, taunting and ringing and taking.

**There is that concept with the shoes...**

**GREENWOOD:** The shoes, and the trousers. Every time he takes his trousers off, you hear, “They’re going to take them away from you.”

**BEATTY:** Yeah, is that a post war thing, or is that just poverty?

**GREENWOOD:** I think it’s post war poverty. You see,

everyone had been on clothing rations all through the war, so there had been very little, and the poor really couldn’t take care of themselves.

**BEATTY:** Yeah, there was just nothing there. I went to school as a child in England around 1956 and the memories of that were really helpful in designing, to just remember what England felt like in the 50’s, everything was so...

**GREENWOOD:** Everything was so depressing...

**BEATTY:** Depressing and dark and dirty...and not dirty by habit, but dirty because there had just been so much smoke and dirt around them during the war.

**GREENWOOD:** I can remember when I went home towards the end of the war, and Liverpool was crumbling, and buildings were just falling apart. Buildings had been bombed out, and there would be just window frames hanging in the breeze, and all the air raid shelters were still up; they were built in the streets, they were built of brick. There was cement and ironwork on the tops so that the bombs wouldn’t go through, and they were abandoned, because there wasn’t the bombing anymore. They were just horrible, people tried to sneak in if they were derelict. They smelled of urine and dirt -- I mean they were quite awful. I can remember the gangs of children that would run around from one street to the other playing in these awful buildings. There wasn’t enough soap, there wasn’t anything really to give you anything to cheer for, and that went on for a long time.



**BEATTY:** People didn't realize just how long...

**GREENWOOD:** Clearly, when Pinter wrote the play, this was still continuing, it's probably part of what drove a lot of those plays to exist in that period of time.

**What about these three men in the play?**

**GREENWOOD:** They're all mystical.

**BEATTY:** I think more about the house. (laugh)

**Can we talk about the attic?**

**BEATTY:** Well, the one thing Harold said when David called him with a few questions was that it's an attic room. And, a few words from Mr. Pinter are worth a lot, because he doesn't say things he doesn't mean and doesn't give you a lot of free, extraneous information. So, I was surprised when he said attic, because I just thought it was a room. Clearly we had to change course a little bit to make sure that it was clearly an attic, of sorts, a top floor.

**GREENWOOD:** Because all these people were coming back after the war, and nobody really seemed to have anywhere to stay. All the houses were taken over. Every room was used, and it was like they were all clamoring to get into these rooms. So if you got a room, you got a little electric kettle, and if you were lucky there was a sink in the corner or at the end of the hall, but nobody had their own bathroom.

**BEATTY:** I think in this play, they're probably going down these two flights to find the one working toilet in the building, if there was one. But you know, the joke of the play is that they're talking about a makeover really. They're talking about interior decoration, and it's like Theatre of the Absurd. They've moved into the last livable room in the house when every other room in the house is un-inhabitable. I mean, there are holes in all the floors. I think that was for me when I had to say, "Is it just me, or is it incredibly funny that they have done this?"

**Audiences sometimes feel that they miss something when they see Pinter, what are your opinions?**

**BEATTY:** I do remember people saying that in the 60's. Is it still true? I think he seems a lot more accessible now than he did then.

**GREENWOOD:** I think that if you have good actors, it becomes simple.

**BEATTY:** Simple is the word. The goal is to become simple, but not empty, just simple. That's the hard part. I think it's interesting to approach this material with the idea to do it very simply, and yet with telling detail.

**GREENWOOD:** Or, truthfully is the hard part... in a good way. Truthfully. ●



***"Or truthfully is the hard part... in a good way. Truthfully."***

— JANE GREENWOOD

R80 CLR L174

R80 CLR L174

R80 CLR L174

148 145 142

147 144 141

147 144 141

STRIPLIGHT

C

6'-0" R40 FL 500W STRIPLIGHT

B

6'-0" R40 FL 500W STRIPLIGHT

A

3E

# SHEDDING LIGHT

## LIGHTING DESIGNER PETER KACZOROWSKI DISCUSSES ILLUMINATING MOMENTS IN *THE CARETAKER*

**UPSTAGE:** From speaking with the director, I sense that this production will strive for realism. How does that affect you?

**PETER KACZOROWSKI:** Architecture provides the biggest challenge, because the set has a ceiling and it's walled in on both sides. There is basically one incandescent light source in the room and one window that looks out onto the rest of the world which is all the way upstage in the back wall of the set. So, in an evening scene, of which there are several, I have to find a way make it seem like it's just that one bare bulb that lights the room. It's going to be difficult to keep everybody in focus, allow a certain level of comedy light into play, and still make it look like the room is just lit by that bulb and whatever moonlight comes from the upstage window. During the daytime scenes I think there will be a more high-energy light that comes from the window, and that's what we're going to sort of splash around the room.

This is all exacerbated by the fact that the actors are obviously going to play the show towards the audience, so all of the actual light sources that could potentially be in the room are all behind them. Obviously we can't do the play with only backlight on people. Although I think we can get away with some of that. I mean there is some danger in this play and a fair amount of comedy. What I'm interested in doing is pushing the boundaries of the problem as presented and yet honoring the requests of the author as laid out in the script.

**I know that John Lee Beatty and Jane Greenwood, the set and costume designers, have used the artist Lucien Freud as part of their research. Have you?**

**KACZOROWSKI:** We've all been looking at Lucien Freud paintings for this, and one of the paintings David actu-

ally pointed to and said, "This is what they look at out their window." And it was just a view of those British row houses, with a kind of a gray sky. But we decided that that is what they look at just for ourselves; we are not planning to actually depict that on the stage. The vista through the window will be blander than that.

**Do you sense what the next scene is, what's going to happen next at the end of the play?**

**KACZOROWSKI:** The way the play ends, you mean? I asked that very question of our director David Jones. Pinter is usually very specific about either a blackout to end the scene, and lights up into the next scene, or a curtain coming in. But he doesn't say at the end of this play that the lights go out, like he does at the end of the other acts or internally for scenes. He just says, "Curtain". So I think it is ambiguous as to whether Davies really leaves or if he stays on and this weird dance continues.

**What about the mood of the piece?**

**KACZOROWSKI:** This play is about having these three strong chemistries that push this dialogue to a boiling point. That point is maintained and held because they're really kind of strange, dark, characters. There's mystery, and there's a little bit of scariness. There's also the comic side of their existences. I think it has to work as an atmospheric totality. I am just going to try to help it be beautifully dark, beautifully menacing, and electrically illuminated. It would be interesting if somebody started their speech in the dark and walked into a little bit of light from the window, to kind of emerge into the light - to find interesting places to play on the stage. I think those kinds of devices will help build this atmosphere and give sustenance to a rather strange play. ●

UPLIGHT CLR

1

49

0'-6" TO PL

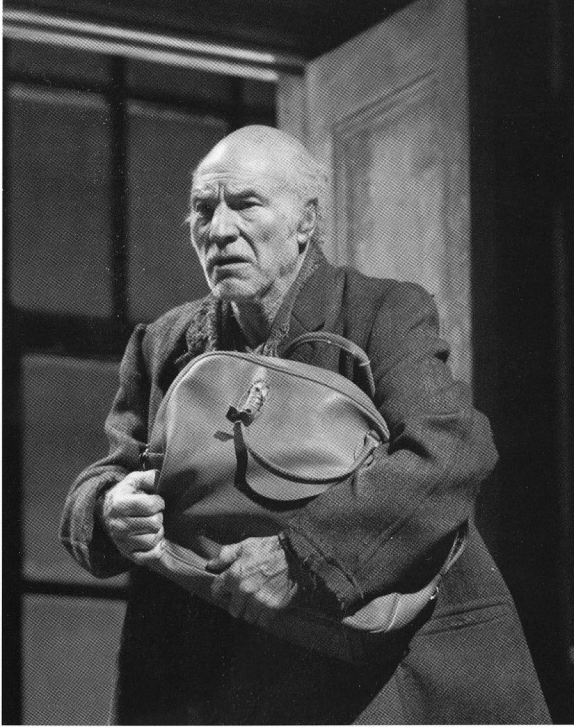
DUCT +18'-4" AFF

183

LIGHTS

SHINN

SLOTS

Patrick Stewart in *The Caretaker*

## Activities

### BEFORE YOU GO

Identify and explore the relationships you have in your life. Do you have any siblings?

- ◆ Who are these people? How old are they?
- ◆ Is there anyone you call your brother, sister or even cousin who is not actually related to you by blood? Why do you call them your brother or sister?
- ◆ What is the most important part of this relationship?
- ◆ Who takes care of whom? How?
- ◆ Does the age of this person affect your relationship?

Think also about your own life and your own space.

- ◆ Do you have your own personal space? What did you do to make it your own? How does that space reflect who you are?
- ◆ How do you feel when others invade that space? Are you willing to share that space?
- ◆ What kind of space do you share with others - your family and friends? How do people treat each other in this space? Is this a comfortable space, or a place where some people may feel trapped?

Draw a picture or write a short descriptive paragraph of your personal space, as it is now. Then, either draw or write about your ideal personal space.

- ◆ What makes up this space?
- ◆ How would you describe this space? What words would you use?

Left: Lighting schematic by Peter Kaczorowski

## AT THE THEATRE

Watch and listen for the various ways the two brothers (Mick and Aston) interact with the old man (Davies) that has come into their home.

- ◆ How does the behavior of the brothers shape their relationship with each other and with Davies?
- ◆ What is different and what is the same about how Mick and Aston treat Davies?
- ◆ How does Davies change in his interaction with each brother?
- ◆ Who is in charge here? In what ways do each of the men take on the position of "caretaker"?
- ◆ How do the lighting, set, and costume design create the world of the play that you see on stage? What have they to do with the action of the play and the script?

## AFTER THE SHOW

Create a drawing, painting, or sculpture that might symbolize the relationships you saw. As you are creating, think of the following questions:

- ◆ How are these three men similar? How are they different?
- ◆ How do these men relate to each other? What other things interact in a similar way? (Cat and mouse? A tennis match?)
- ◆ How do your symbols represent the characters?

OR, Write the next scene in the play. As you create this scene, think of the following questions:

- ◆ What does each character want that they can't seem to get during the course of the play? Why can't they get it?
- ◆ How can they get what they want in the next scene?
- ◆ What is characteristic about Harold Pinter's writing style?
- ◆ What do you still have questions about? How could they be answered in the next scene?

**SEND YOUR WORK TO ROUNDABOUT,  
AND WE'LL SHARE IT WITH THE ARTISTS  
WHO CREATED *THE CARETAKER*.**

Mail it to: Education Department  
Roundabout Theatre Co.  
231 W. 39th St., Suite 1200  
New York, NY 10018

Or email to: [lindsay@roundabouttheatre.org](mailto:lindsay@roundabouttheatre.org)

# When you get to the theatre...

BELOW ARE SOME HELPFUL TIPS FOR MAKING YOUR THEATRE-GOING EXPERIENCE MORE ENJOYABLE.

## TICKET POLICY

As a student participant in *Page To Stage* or *Theatre Access*, you will receive a discounted ticket to the show from your teacher on the day of the performance. You will notice that the ticket indicates the section, row and number of your assigned seat. When you show your ticket to the usher inside the theatre, he or she will show you where your seat is located. These tickets are not transferable and you must sit in the seat assigned to you.

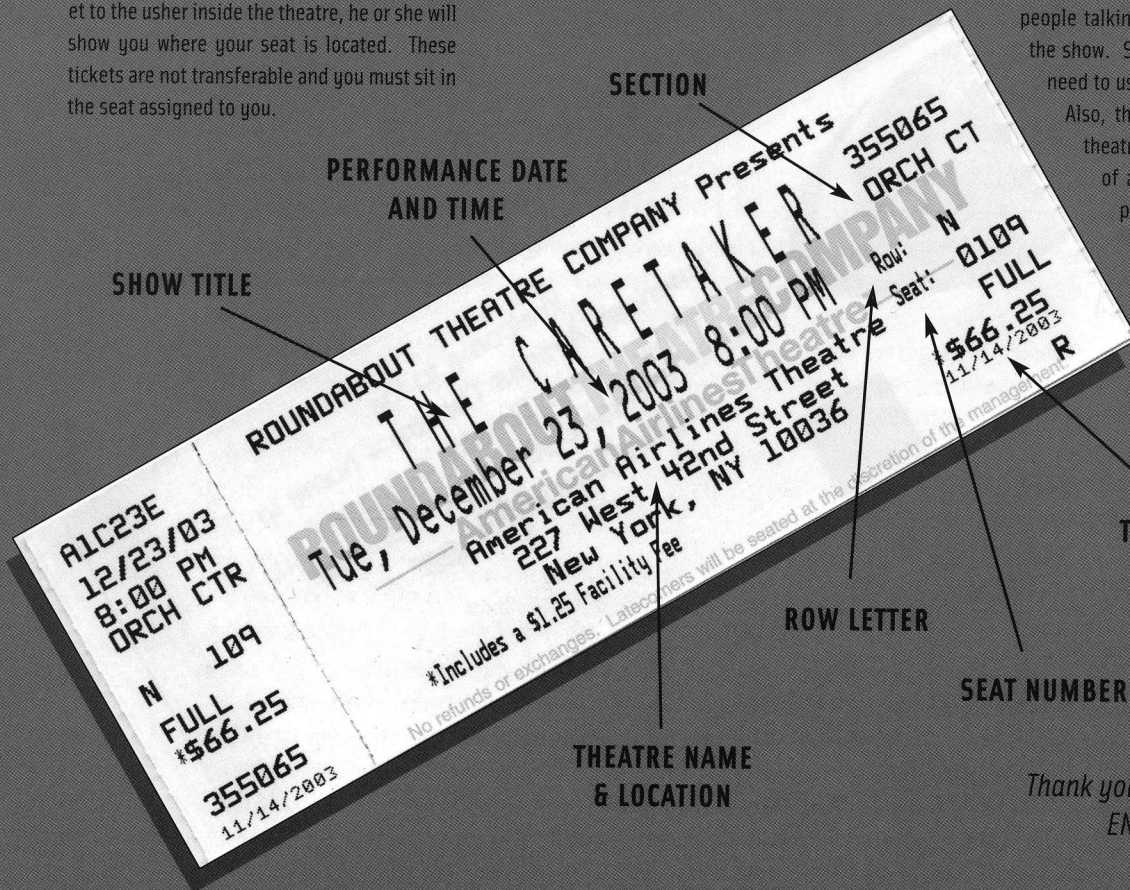
## PROGRAMS

All the theatre patrons are provided with a program that includes information about the people who put the production together. In the "Who's Who" section, for example, you can read about the actors' roles in other plays and films, perhaps some you have already seen.

## AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

As you watch the show please remember that the biggest difference between live theatre and a film is that the actors can see you and hear you and your behavior can affect their performance. They appreciate your applause and laughter, but can be easily distracted by people talking or getting up in the middle of the show. So please save your comments or need to use the rest room for intermission.

Also, there is no food permitted in the theatre, no picture taking or recording of any kind, and if you have a cell phone, beeper, alarm watch or anything else that might make noise, please turn it off before the show begins.



Thank you for your cooperation.  
ENJOY THE SHOW!

## ROUNABOUT THEATRE COMPANY GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR EDUCATION PROGRAM:

The Aeroflex Foundation  
American Airlines  
American Theatre Wing  
Axe-Houghton Foundation  
Rose M. Badgeley Residuary Charitable Trust  
The Center for Arts Education  
Citigroup Foundation  
Con Edison  
The Samuel and Rae Eckman Charitable Foundation

The Heckscher Foundation for Children  
HSBC Bank USA  
Mark and Carol Hyman Fund  
JPMorgan Chase  
The League of American Theatres and Producers  
The McGraw-Hill Companies  
Mellam Family Foundation  
Merrill Lynch & Co. Foundation, Inc.  
National Endowment for the Arts

Newman's Own  
New Visions for Public Schools  
New York City Department of Cultural Affairs  
New York Community Trust  
New York State Council on the Arts  
The New York Times Company Foundation  
Henry Nias Foundation  
One World Fund  
The Rudin Foundation

Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation  
Adolph and Ruth Schnurmacher Foundation  
Lawrence Schulman Family Foundation  
The Starr Foundation  
Theatre Development Fund  
The Michael Tuch Foundation, Inc.  
Verizon Foundation  
Anonymous