



PLAYBILL

THE 39 STEPS



THE 39 STEPS

ADAPTED BY PATRICK BARLOW
FROM THE NOVEL BY JOHN BUCHAN
FROM THE MOVIE
BY ALFRED HITCHCOCK



APPROXIMATE RUNNING TIME: 2 HOURS & 20 MINUTES
THERE WILL BE ONE 20 MINUTE INTERMISSION

ARTIST NOTE: RAVI JAIN

The 39 Steps is a play that is a love letter to the theatre. It was born out of a playful “poor” theatre where actors used their imaginations to create incredible feats of theatrical magic, using only a few trunks, some shadows, doors on wheels, and their bodies. Since its creation it has become a West End and Broadway hit, with productions being remounted in cities across the globe. And for good reason, it is silly and peppered with some magic that reminds us why the theatre is so special- it engages our imagination to believe in the impossible.

In Toronto, this “poor style” has been made popular by artists like Dean Gilmour, Michele Smith, Leah Cherniak and Martha Ross. In the early ‘80s they returned from a very special school in Paris that encouraged this spirit of imaginative play and they influenced an entire generation of theatre creators – myself included!

With this show, the audience is the most important character in the play - don’t worry, there isn’t audience participation! Your imaginations are a major part of the

telling of the story: in this kind of theatre, we are all complicit in the journey together. Tonight you will be playing with incredibly skilled and very funny actors as they play in a way that honours and pokes fun at this wonderful Hitchcock film.

Underneath the silliness of the story is the desire for a better world where people live in harmony and war is replaced with empathy and love, which is not an “outmoded sentimental notion”! In light of the chaos and violence in the States I have decided to not use guns in our production. Again, a reminder of the power of imagination in the theatre and also the suggestion to live in a world without guns. Laughter is an important medicine. In a world where people are murdered for their sexual orientation or the colour of their skin, now is when we need laughter the most.

RAVI JAIN,

Associate Artistic Director
& Director of *The 39 Steps*

CREATIVE TEAM

THE 39 STEPS

CAST

Kawa Ada
Richard Hannay

Raquel Duffy
*Annabella Schmidt,
Margaret, & Pamela*

Anand Rajaram
Clown 2

Andrew Shaver
Clown 1

PRODUCTION

Ravi Jain
Director

Ken MacKenzie
Set Designer

Jackie Chau
Costume Designer

André du Toit
Lighting Designer

Verne Good
Sound Designer

Kelly McEvenue
Alexander Coach

Simon Fon
Fight Direction

Casey Hudecki
*Metcalf Foundation
Fight Director Intern*

Robert Harding
Production Stage Manager

Laurie Merredew
Assistant Stage Manager

SOULPEPPER PRODUCTION

Jacqueline Robertson-Cull
Head of Hair & Makeup

Kathleen Johnston
Natalie Swiercz
Coordinators

Geoff Hughes
Cutter

Ilana Harendorf
Sewer

Barbara Nowakowski
First Hand

Janet Pim
Dresser

Bill Stahl
Carpenter

Jes Macduff
Mattea Kennedy
Scenic Painters

Greg Chambers
Tracy Taylor
Props Builders

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An original concept by Simon Corble and Nobby Dimon.

The 39 Steps may be a deliriously crazy romp but the history of the play is almost as improbable as its storyline. It began in 1915 with a novel written by John Buchan. 20 years later, Alfred Hitchcock adapted the novel into a classic adventure film. 50 years further on, a pair of English writers turned the Hitchcock film of the Buchan book into a play. Its brilliantly simple concept was this: stage the 150-character film using only four actors. Finally, in 2005, Patrick Barlow rewrote the stage adaptation, retaining the original tory and the four-person cast but transforming a serious spy tale into a frenetic farce. To say that it took off is an understatement. It landed in London's West End and stayed for a remarkable nine years. Across the pond its riotous run on Broadway went from 2008 to 2010.

The story concerns a dashing, ridiculously handsome hero named Richard Hannay, played here by the criminally attractive, ostentatiously talented Kawa Ada. Hannay is on the run from various factions who want him dead. The police are after him for a crime he didn't (of course) commit. And a shadowy, inscrutable spy organization called *The 39 Steps* are on his trail too. Can the determinedly debonair Hannay elude the potentially lethal clutches of the good guys and the bad guys? Suffice it to say that his chief asset is an upper lip that's as stiffly starched as his collar. He's in peril throughout the show: murder, mayhem, secret agents, and a bevy of beautiful women, all played by the delectable Raquel Duffy. Every other role in the show – heroes, villains, men, women, children,

inanimate objects – is played with shape-and-gender-shifting genius by Anand Rajaram and Andrew Shaver. Their feats of quick change alone are worth the price of admission.

Director Ravi Jain is the perfect ringmaster for this silly, superb, Pythonesque ride. Have you got 100 minutes? Have we got a summer show for you!

PLAYWRIGHT BIOGRAPHIES

PATRICK BARLOW'S acting credits include roles on stage, radio, television and films. His adaptation of *The 39 Steps* appeared in 2005. Most of his other writing credits are in the name of his comic alter ego, Desmond Olivier Dingle, the founder, Artistic Director and Chief Executive of the two-man National Theatre of Brent.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK born in England in 1899, was known as "The Master of Suspense." His film version of *The 39 Steps* came out in 1935. It's a classic thriller, one of the first to feature a Hitchcock staple: a wrongfully accused innocent man on the run. Hitchcock became a U.S. citizen and died there in 1980.

JOHN BUCHAN the 1st Baron of Tweedsmuir, was born in 1875. He wrote *The 39 Steps* at breakneck speed in 1914 to take his mind off a painful stomach ulcer. In 1935 he was appointed Governor General of Canada, a post he held until his death in 1940.

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FOR ATTENDING!



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