



DIRECTED BY STEPHEN WRENTMORE

PERFORMED ON THE TEDFORD STAGE

NOV

FRI
01

7:30 PM

SAT
02

7:30 PM

SUN
03

2:00 PM

THU
07

7:30 PM

FRI
08

7:30 PM

SAT
09

7:30 PM

SUN
10

2:00 PM

ABOUT LOVE AND INFORMATION

Caryl Churchill has written *Love and Information* as an “open text”—she provides lines but has not assigned them to any specific characters. There are no stage directions to indicate where a scene takes place or describe what the performers should be doing. The text is arranged as a series of brief individual scenes or playlets, grouped into seven sections. Churchill specifies that each section should appear in the order of her published text, but the scenes within each section may be performed in any order. Further, there are a series of random things—often single lines—that can happen at any time in the performance. The open text provides the director and the production team great freedom and responsibility to interact with the text and create a specific, unique theatrical experience.

In typical Churchill fashion, the invention of a novel dramatic structure is in service of her subject matter. *Love and Information* invites us to consider how we “know” and how that knowledge informs the way we navigate our human experience. We live in a time when we have access to incredible amounts of information, which taxes our attention as we are bombarded with stimuli. The information lighting up our screens is often trivial or, more troubling, false. Though first performed in 2012, Churchill’s prescient play retains its timeliness. The rapid development of AI (artificial intelligence), with computers able to consolidate vast libraries of information-or simply hallucinate fabrications—almost instantly, lends greater urgency to the question of how whether we will have the wisdom to cut through the noise and discern what is essential.

Inventing a dramatic structure which mimics our jumpy changes of focus in contemporary daily life, Churchill eschews conventional use of the Aristotelian elements of plot and character, typically considered the most important dramatic elements in Western Theatre. Instead, she offers a suite of minimalist scenes, with each apparently unrelated moment actually forming a part of the overall pattern.

Love and Information invites audiences to engage with a theatre event in a new way. The play is not a puzzle that needs to be solved. Churchill is not interested in providing answers. (Indeed, even if the play could be reduced to a single meaning, Churchill, reluctant to speak or write about her plays, would not hand out a key.) Rather, she follows her curiosity to raise questions and explore ideas. The audience is encouraged to come along the ride, with the greatest rewards to those who are receptive and open to the experience.

This show runs approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes without intermission.

Love and Information is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

Love and Information was first presented by The English Stage Company at The Royal Court Theatre in the Jerwood Theatre Downstairs, London, England on 6 September 2012. The US premier was presented at New York Theatre Workshop, New York on 19 February 2014, directed by James McDonald.

Wake Forest University Theatre presents

LOVE AND INFORMATION

by Caryl Churchill

November 1-3 & 7-10, 2024

Director

Stephen Wrentmore

Scenic Designer

Rob Eastman-Mullins

Costume Designer

Karsen Green

Sound & Media Designer

Kevin Frazier

Lighting Designer

Kaylin Gess

Dramaturg

J.K. Curry

Fight Choreographer

Michael Kamtman

Choreographer

Caleb Walsh[§] ('26)

Stage Manager

Vir Gupta* ('25)

CAST

MaryAnna Bailey^{‡*}

Joe Bruno^{**}

Ashlyn Collings

Annabelle Daly

Emma Engle^{*}

Lillian Fendelman

Patrick Fenlon^{*}

Olivia Goldstruck

Bennett Haara^{*}

Ziqi Huang^{*}

Conner Hunt^{*}

Janiyah Lewis

Jorden Patino

Kat Petty

Leah Elyce Roy

Jiaying Song

Gertie Vance^{**}

Gabi Velinova[‡]

Xinqing “Tracy” Xie^{*}

Liwen Zhang^{*}

*denotes Anthony Aston Players member

[‡]denotes Presidential Scholar in Theatre

[§]denotes Presidential Scholar in Dance

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Caryl Churchill (1938--) is an influential and highly esteemed British playwright. Her wildly inventive works explore social, political and existential ideas in surprising and engaging ways. Churchill is widely admired by fellow playwrights, such as April de Angelis who has observed, “From her early historical, epic Brechtian plays to the more surreal later plays, Churchill has lit a blazing trail. Her career is unmatched in contemporary theatre and she stands with the greats in insisting, with brilliance, on her vision.” (The Guardian, Sept 7, 2012)

Caryl Churchill’s playwriting career has spanned more than sixty years. Her first plays were staged when she was a student of the University of Oxford. These were followed by several radio plays produced during the years she was raising small children. Her first professional stage production occurred in 1972 at the Royal Court Theatre with her play *Owners* (1972)—a black comedy satirizing capitalist ideas about ownership.

In the 1970s Churchill collaborated on projects with theatre companies through workshops in which actors explored a selected topic via improvisation, providing ideas and inspiration for scripts written by Churchill. One interesting result was the play *Vinegar Tom* produced by Monstrous Regiment in 1976. The play offers a feminist critique of 17th c. witch trials as a mechanism for controlling women’s behavior and is interspersed with songs performed by actors in contemporary dress, highlighting parallels between past and present day. A collaboration with Joint Stock Theatre Company in 1979 resulted in the play *Cloud Nine*, an exploration of contemporary sexual politics with a first act set in British colonial Africa. The play’s second act takes place 100 years later, though the characters have only aged 25 years.

Churchill established her international reputation with *Cloud Nine*, along with *Top Girls* (1982), a play about a successful career woman during the Margaret Thatcher era, and the cost of individual prosperity. *Top Girls* opens with a fantastical first scene in which six women from history and fiction gather to celebrate the central character’s promotion.

Once successful Churchill was not content to repeat herself, instead writing plays exploring a great variety of subjects and forms. These include *Serious Money* (1987)—a satirical look at stock market trading, written in verse. *Mad Forest* (1990) an exploration of the 1989 Romanian revolution, which features a section of documentary style, first-person accounts along with more surreal scenes including one with a vampire and a talking dog. *The Skriker* (1994) is a dark fairytale exploring damage to individuals and to the earth. According to German playwright Marius von Mayenburg, “With each play, she discovers new genres and forms. She then discards them and moves on, opening up possibilities for other playwrights to explore . . . She’s changed the language of theatre.” (quoted in Mark Ravenhill, “She Made Us Raise our Game,” The Guardian, Sept 2, 2008)

Throughout her varied dramas, Churchill has displayed a great ear for dialogue, often writing highly realistic stage speech with characters speaking over each other, trailing off, hesitating, and expressing thoughts in less than complete sentences. Frequently she employs naturalistic stage speech in absurd situations—but always there is a great precision in the language, with Churchill selecting the exact words needed to convey an idea.

From *The Skriker* on, Churchill’s plays can be read as ruminations on several big questions. What are we doing to our environment? How are we using science and technology? How do people make sense of the world and why do they behave the way they do? Can humanity find ways to harness knowledge for good or are we destined to destroy each other? Facing the questions may cause discomfort or even despair. It may move us to appreciate the beauty and fragility of life as we know it.

In Churchill's later work there is also a shift toward minimalism, a stripping down to the bare essentials in the drama. This minimalism can be seen in the less than an hour long *Far Away* (2000), a dystopian drama, where characters are shown drifting toward disaster through complicity with violence. Her play *A Number* (2002) raises questions of nature versus nurture and the implications of new scientific developments, as a father interacts with his son and two clones (the latter three all portrayed by the same actor.) Another two-hander, *Drunk Enough to Say I Love You?* (2006) uses a relationship between two gay men in a political allegory about the United States and its international partners. In *Escaped Alone* (2016) four women, all at least 70 years old, enjoy tea together and also peer into the abyss of an impending catastrophe.

A very brief play by Churchill, *Seven Jewish Children—A play for Gaza* (2009), is significant as her first play where, as with *Love and Information*, dialogue is not attributed to any particular character. It is also Churchill's most controversial play to date, intended as a fundraiser for the British charitable organization Medical Aid for Palestinians. In seven brief scenes, adults grapple with how to explain violent conflicts to a child.

Other notable works by Churchill include *Objections to Sex and Violence* (1975), *Traps* (1976), *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire* (1976), *Three More Sleepless Nights* (1980), *Fen* (1983), *Softcops* (1983), *Icecream* (1989), *Lives of the Great Poisoners* (1991), *Blue Heart* (1997), *Ding Dong the Wicked* (2013), *Here We Go* (2015) *Glass, Kill, Bluebeard's Friends, Imp* (short plays, all 2019), and *What If If Only* (2021).

SYMPOSIUM

There will be a pre-performance symposium on neuroscience, religion, philosophy, and artificial intelligence as related to the themes of the production on Thursday, November 7 at 6:00 pm on the Tedford Stage. The event is free and open to the public. Event panelists are:

- Dr. Anthony Sali, Assistant Professor of Psychology
Research focus: Cognitive Flexibility
- Dr. Stavroula N. Glezakos, Associate Professor and Chair of Philosophy
Research focus: Intersection of Philosophy of Language, Ethics, and Social Philosophy
- Dr. Kevin Jung, Professor of Theological Ethics and Moral Philosophy
Research focus: Metaethical and Metaphysical Issues Pertinent to Theology and Science
- Dr. Fan Yang, Assistant Professor of Computer Science
Research focus: Trustworthy AI

The symposium organizers are Stephen Wrentmore, Assistant Professor of Theatre and Director of *Love and Information*, who will also moderate the discussion, as well as Dr. Wayne Pratt Professor and Associate Chair of the Department of Psychology and Director of the URECA Center.

INFORMATION

In consideration of everyone in the theatre, especially the cast who have rehearsed for weeks, please observe the following:

- Turn off and put away your cell phone or any device that might ring, buzz, or light up.
- Laptops are not allowed; pens and paper are great alternatives for taking notes.
- Copyright laws prohibit recording in any format of any performance. Flash photography can be especially hazardous to performers and is a distraction to the rest of the audience.
- Eating and drinking (other than water) are never allowed inside the theatre.

Thank you, and enjoy the show!

PRODUCTION STAFF

Director of Theatre.....	Corey Gilliam
Technical Director.....	Thomas Williams
Costume Studio Manager.....	Alice Burton Barsony
Costume & Wardrobe Technician.....	Jacquelyn Loy
Audience Services Coordinator.....	Leslie Spencer
Academic Coordinators.....	Lara Ianni, Lu Anne Simpson
Assistant Stage Managers.....	Jane Ivey Johnson*, Mati Romagnoli*
Properties Head.....	Maya Roth*
Assistant Lighting Designer.....	Ananya Bali (*24)
Assistant Costume Designer.....	Addie Vogt*
Vocal Coach.....	Brook Davis
Music Advisor.....	Caryn Greko
Head Electrician.....	Kaylin Gess, Kevin Frazier
Electricians.....	Emma Engle*, Bennett Haara*, Mati Romagnoli*, Gertie Vance** Taylor Nisbet*, Margaret Williams*, Ethan Anderson*, Allison Sweeney* Sarah Cadena*, Gabby Miller* [§] , Casey Salzman*, Davis Long Ziqi Huang*, MaryAnna Bailey** [‡] , Xinqing “Tracy” Xie, Ellie Howell*
Scene Shop Assistants.....	Gabby Miller* [§] , Thomas Bauserman, Sarah Cadena* Callie Wittmann** [‡] , Celina Seo*, Riley Shanaghan* [§] , Bradley Jiang*
Carpenters.....	THE 155 - Stagecraft class: Joe Bruno** [‡] , Yijia Fu, Vir Gupta* Ziqi Huang*, Bradley Jiang*, Kenzie Lawson, Gabby Miller* [§] Abby Parr*, Riley Shanaghan* [§] , Jiaying Song, Liwen Zhang*
Costume Studio Assistants.....	Tatiana Bicalho, Grace Clark, Nina Clayton* Sadie Macdonald, Maggie Payne*, Alyssa Worley, Yue Yu
Wardrobe Supervisor.....	Jacquelyn Loy
Wardrobe Crew.....	Nina Clayton*, Senya Li, Kyra Marty
Wardrobe Swing.....	Alyssa Worley
Stage Crew Chief.....	Abby Parr*
Stage Crew.....	Mackenzie Himel*, John Mark Stowers* [§]
Swing Crew.....	Alyssa Cheng*, Gabby Miller* [§]
Light Board Operator.....	Margaret Williams*
Sound Board Operator.....	Natalie Howell** [‡]
Followspot Operator.....	Yijia Fu
Camera Operator & Video Archivist.....	Anna Schiltz*
Photographers.....	Mike Liu, Bill Ray III, Lyndsie Schlink
Social Media Assistant.....	Zac Anderson** [‡] , Natalie Howell** [‡] , Ella O’Neill-Bryant
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Playbill Assistant.....	Zac Anderson** [‡]
Ushers.....	Anthony Aston Players, APO Service Fraternity WFU Dance Company, Theatre & Dance students

*denotes Anthony Aston Players member

[‡]denotes Presidential Scholar in Theatre

[§]denotes Presidential Scholar in Dance

SPECIAL THANKS

Lucas Bradley
Carole Eastman
Dr. Stavroula N. Glezakos

Dr. Kevin Jung
Tim Kerr
Dr. Wayne Pratt

Dr. Anthony Sali
Wesley Todd
Dr. Fan Wang

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January 1 - October 23, 2024

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[†]Wake Forest alumni

Fall Faculty & Guest Artist Concert

Directed by Nina Lucas Rice

Dance faculty and guest artist choreographers include Nina Lucas Rice, Chris and Laura Martin, Sam Shapiro, Trisch Casey, and Tina Yarborough Liggins

November 21-23 at 7:30 PM

November 24 at 2:00 pm

Tedford Stage

Tickets on sale November 12.

theatre.wfu.edu 336-758-5295



Dead Man's Cell Phone

by Sarah Ruhl

Directed by
Brook Davis

Feb. 7-8 & 13-15 at 7:30 pm

Feb. 9 & 16 at 2:00 pm

Ring Theatre*

Tickets on sale January 21.

theatre.wfu.edu

336-758-5295

**Note: Limited seating.
No late admission.*

