

LOFT THEATRE
Victoria Colonnade,
Royal Leamington Spa

75th
ANNIVERSARY

11th - 21st September, 1996
7.30 p.m.

WOMAN IN MIND

by Alan Ayckbourn

LIKE TO SWOP YOUR FAMILY?

BOX OFFICE TELEPHONE: (01926) 426341
Box office opens: Sunday, 31st August, 10.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.
and subsequent Saturday mornings.
Weekdays 7.00 p.m. - 8.30 p.m.

WOMAN IN MIND by Alan Ayckbourn

Director: Stuart Waterworth

CAST

Susan - SUE MOORE
Bill, her doctor - JOHN FENNER
Andy, her husband - RICHARD MOORE
Tony, her brother - MARK PITT
Lucy, her daughter - LIZ HUNTER
Gerald, her husband - MICHAEL RAYNS
Muriel, her sister-in-law - ANNE WOOD
Rick, her son - DAVID BENNETT

THE SETTING

The action occurs within forty-eight hours and takes place in Susan's garden and beyond.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Assistant Director LIZ COMPTON
Set Design DAVID ELLIS
Stage Manager SARAH PICKERING
Lighting Design MIKE CRISWELL
Sound Design EAMON PICKERING & RICHARD CORFIELD
Wardrobe MARY MACDONALD
Properties LIZA BECKETT
Lighting Operators MIKE CRISWELL & PETE BARTLETT
Sound Operators EAMON PICKERING & RICHARD CORFIELD
Assistant Stage Manager HELEN WALL
Set Construction RON GREY & DAVID ELLIS
Theatre Technician SUE HAMILTON
Photographs CHRISTOPHER BRADBURY
Programme Cover & Poster Design GUS MACDONALD

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks to: Graham Beaty of Beaty's Garden Centre in Lillington Road for the generous loan of garden urns, ornaments and plants; Rev Ken Lindop, Loft Theatre Chaplain, for kindly sourcing the Bishop's mitre, cope and crozier.

☆☆☆ REVIEWS ☆☆☆

Fantasy mixes with reality for a tragic party

WOMAN IN MIND, Loft Theatre, Leamington, until September 21. Running time: 2 hr 15 min.

Few plays which have claimed to be tragic-comedies turn out to be sad or funny.

Woman in Mind, the Alan Ayckbourn play which opens the Loft's 75th birthday season, is both.

Pulled apart by both emotions is Susan, a middle-aged housewife losing her grip on both fantasy and reality. A bump on the head leads her to

create an ideal fantasy family. But the fantasy becomes embroiled with real life - a dormant sex life, a dull husband and a dysfunctional relationship with her son (enter tragedy).

The actress is Sue Moore and the performance is great.

Anne Wood as the sister-in-law Muriel, brings her own parcel of comedy to the production. If the rest of the Loft's birthday celebrations are this good it should be quite a party.

Scott Jones

Loft makes perfect choice

Woman in Mind by Alan Ayckbourn, Loft Theatre, Leamington, running until next Sunday.

THE Loft opened its 75th year with one of Ayckbourn's most acclaimed works.

This powerful production delved into the mind of troubled housewife Susan, who, ignored by her dull husband and son, invents her own ideal family.

But soon she is unable to distinguish fantasy from reality, bringing the play to a gripping climax tinged with tragedy.

Stewart Sue Moore takes the leading role as Susan, with Richard Moore and Michael Rayns lending support as her two husbands.

Characters were strong and convincing throughout the performance, and all actors fitted comfortably into their given roles.

Like many Ayckbourn plays, the humour seemed a little too subtle for the audience's tastes. There were funny

moments, but it was in witty undertones rather than slapstick-style joking, which hardly raised a titter.

But Anne Wood pulled in the laughs with an exceptional performance as Susan's bitty sister-in-law Muriel, whose delivery of one-liners and series of culinary disasters had the audience in stitches.

All the action was contained within the simple yet effective setting of Susan's back garden, and imaginative lighting conjured a dramatic atmosphere in the final scene when Susan's apparent fantasies had led her up the garden path to a nervous breakdown.

The play, in true Ayckbourn style, tested the barriers between reality and fantasy and once again left us questioning what we really want from life.

Woman in Mind is a compelling play and the perfect choice for the Loft's new season. **Rebecca Key**

OUTLOOK Rating * * * *



Michael Rayns and Sue Moore at The Loft.



Woman in Mind - The Loft Theatre

Reality and fantasy collide in Alan Ayckbourn's acclaimed tragic-comedy *Woman in Mind*.

Trapped in an unhappy marriage with a dull husband, Susan falls into a fantasy world after a brush with a garden rake.

Creating the perfect fantasy family to replace her husband Gerald and fruit cake sister-in-law Muriel, Susan soon finds reality and fantasy colliding with disastrous consequences.

Woman in Mind is the

perfect aperitif for The Loft's 75th birthday season, and draws quality performances out of the experienced cast.

Sue Moore revels in the confusion as the middle-aged housewife heading towards a nervous breakdown.

Michael Rayns plays pompous husband Gerald with an air of bewilderment, while Anne Wood milks every laugh out of the role of Muriel.

Director Stuart Waterworth has started The Loft's 75th season in style.

